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Mahathir-West

MALAYSIA HAS A RIGHT TO CRITICISE THE WEST, SAYS PM

KUALA LUMPUR, Aug 27 (Bernama) -- Malaysia has a right to criticise any nation including western countries on their attitude which are not favourable to this country but it does not mean that Kuala Lumpur has to be enemies with those nations, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

"We reserve the right to criticise anything that is negative but we praise anything positive that is done by anyone including the West," the Prime Minister said.

He said Malaysia is friendly with people who are friendly with us.

The Prime Minister said this when questioned whether Malaysia's move to establish close relations with China and other East Asian nations means that this country no longer pays much attention to the Western countries.

Speaking to reporters at the Sultan Abdul Aziz Airport, here on his return from a four-day working visit to China, Dr Mahathir said countries like China do not say that Malaysia is not democratic or violates human rights or try to teach Malaysia how to administer the government or country.

"So with such countries we can be friendly (but) not to become enemies with the West. But sometimes they (the West) are proud, arrogant and try to teach us how to develop the country while their country, they cannot administer properly.

"So it is difficult for us to have close relations with countries that are proud. On the other hand, we do not become their enemies," he said.

When asked whether Malaysia's dependency on the West is on the decline, Dr Mahathir said Malaysia wants to trade with everybody.

"Eighteen per cent of our trade is with the United States and we value this. With Europe, it is almost 20 per cent. We want to continue this. But we reserve the right to criticise their action which is not right and praise them if they do something good," he said.

The Prime Minister said although Kuala Lumpur has trade relations with the West, they have never praised Malaysia.

"They say we are bad. (The West say) although race relations in Malaysia appear to be good it is actually rotten inside.

"This is their view all the time. Anything to erode confidence so that people will not invest in Malaysia. -- BERNAMA

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