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PM: Unite to defend economy

KUALA LUMPUR, Wed. - Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today despite not having ulterior motives against developed nations, Malaysia had come under their constant attacks.

Briefing Umno delegates ahead of the party's general assembly which begins with the Youth and Wanita meetings tomorrow, Dr Mahathir said these attacks included criticisms against Malaysia, saying that it was undemocratic and violated human rights.

"They advocate freedom of speech but when we speak against them, they become angry. So, where is the freedom of speech?" he said, adding that this showed they were not tolerant. He cited his meeting with United States Secretary of State Madeleine Albright in July where she refused to accept his views, saying that they did not reflect those of the present generation.

Dr Mahathir, who is Umno president, said Malaysia did not wish to make enemies with anyone but as others were trying to find fault with it, the country had to defend itself.

He added that his frequent attacks on the West was because he was anti-injustice and not anti-West as claimed by certain quarters.

"The Government is responsible for protecting the interests of the people. So does Umno."

Dr Mahathir said Malaysia believes in the "prosper thy neighbour" policy, and despite its limited resources, had extended assistance to several countries.

He also spoke at length on American billionaire George Soros who he accused of wreaking havoc on Malaysia's economy.

Dr Mahathir urged delegates to unite in defending the economy.

"We have to plan to save our country. So, all parties must support the government."

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