

PM: Better a heretic than being colonised

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By LIM CHYE KHIM

TOKYO: Malaysia prefers to be a "heretic" or even a "pariah" than being colonised by greedy people who have no compassion, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said yesterday.

He said that when Malaysia decided to cut itself off from the "new religious creed" as presented by the free market, the country knew "it would be burnt at the stake."

"But we really have no choice. Being a heretic is better than being colonised by people who believe in greed as the sole motivation for their ac-

tions, who worship greed, who declare that greed is great," he said at a symposium on "How to get out of the economic crisis in Asia."

"We see how they have destroyed countries and regions, thrown millions out of jobs, precipitated starvation, riots, political unrests and overthrown governments," he said.

The symposium, organised by the *Mainichi* newspaper, Japan External Trade Organisation and the Malaysian Embassy, is supported by the Japanese Foreign Ministry and Ministry of International Trade and Industry.

Dr Mahathir said that although they were seen doing such things, yet they not only disclaimed responsibility but also blamed others for what they had done.

He added that the only way to avoid colonialism was for Malaysia to protect its currency and shares from being manipulated by these people.

Dr Mahathir also said that there had been much rhetoric but no agreement on what to do to tackle the economic crisis.

The remedies taken so far were piecemeal, unintegrated and isolated from one another, he said.