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Sorting through foreign media `errors`

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WHEN the Prime Minister of Malaysia Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad blasted the foreign media on Sept 24 for telling lies, I felt the comments may have been a bit harsh but when I saw CNN's `Biz Asia` on the evening of Sept 25, I could appreciate his anger.

In that programme, presenter Lorraine Hahn, expressing CNN's frustration that they were unable to show any pictures of an unrest at the National Mosque in Kuala Lumpur, commented that 10,000 demonstrators took part in a demonstration after the Friday prayers.

Earlier, Stuart Pallister of CNBC reported (every half an hour) that he was near the Mosque and there were about 10,000 Muslims who went there for prayers and about 1,000 people participated in the demonstration after the prayers.

Although both sources of information are foreign, CNN had a `slight` difference of an additional zero.

This is not the first time CNN has made this type of convenient errors in `zeros` and `decimal points`.

I still recall the occasion when the exchange rate of the US dollar to ringgit was quoted by CNN as US\$1=RM4,200 instead of RM4.20.

After nearly 30 years of peace and growth (with some minor hiccups along the way), the nation is going through an uncomfortable period.

What we do not need now is irresponsible foreign media who behave like looters, taking advantage of a natural disaster.

Meanwhile I would to thank the Malaysian Government for continually allowing foreign newspapers such as the `Asian Wall Street Journal` and TV broadcasts such as CNN and CNBC to be available in Malaysia.

As responsible citizens we will, on our part, try to separate the facts from the trash.