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Mahathir-media

DR MAHATHIR CALLS FOR THE SETTING UP OF ASIAN MEDIA

By: Ali Mamat

BEIJING, Aug 19 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today called for the setting up of an Asian media to counter slants and distorted reporting of certain western media.

He said the major concern among East Asian nations has been the slanted and distorted reporting of global events to Asian audiences and similar reporting of Asia to other parts of the world.

"This has led to attempts by some Asian media circle to stem the tide by providing alternative sources of news reporting and dissemination," he said in a key-note address at the Third Malaysia-China Forum, here.

Dr Mahathir said East Asian English-language newspaper editors had met twice in Kuala Lumpur to discuss the need for informing Asia about Asia by Asian.

Although the Bangkok-based Asia Times had sought to do just that since 1995, it was unfortunately shortlived and the paper folded two years later.

"While individual country efforts could be undertaken, yet owing to necessary technology and capital, regional joint efforts would undoubtedly be far more effective.

"In this respect, Malaysia and China could work together with other regional states for the setting up of an Asian media. This is due to the overwhelming dominance of Western media reporting on regional and global affairs throughout the present century," Dr Mahathir said.

The prime minister also spoke on the need for the United Nations Security Council to be restructured and the United Nations itself to be reformed if the world body is truly to become the central organisation for promoting world peace and stability, as it should.

He called on China, as Asia's only (permanent) member in the Security Council, to work together with Malaysia to promote reforms of the UN.

Expanding the membership of the Security Council to reflect the interests of developing countries in vastly new circumstances since the UN was established more than five decades ago would help create a more equitable political world order, he said.

"China and Malaysia share the common desire for an undominated UN to be the highest authority on matters affecting the international community. Thus, it is time for the two countries to jointly consider some bold initiatives for changing the UN," he said.

Dr Mahathir's address titled "Malaysia and China Relations: Challenges and Opportunities In the 21st Century" also touched on the need for the Asean Regional Forum (ARF) to be assiduously promoted for ensuring lasting peace and stability for East Asia and the wider Asia Pacific.

Apart from that, Dr Mahathir said, Malaysia and China could also strive together to promote peace in East Asia as a whole based on Asean Peace or Pax Aseana, by boldly beginning to build an East Asian community.

He also warned that the very last years of this century have shown how vulnerable East Asia can be to external forces bent on exploiting the weaknesses of this region.

"Therefore, for mutually beneficial bilateral interests and that of the wider East Asia, both China and Malaysia must rise to the challenges," Dr Mahathir added.

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