

27 JUL 1999  
Mahathir-Media  
MAHATHIR VISITS LID MEDIA CENTRE

LANGKAWI, July 27 (Bernama) -- Putting smart partnership between government and the media to work, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad took some time off from his busy schedule at the fourth Langkawi International Dialogue (LID) to visit the media centre at the Berjaya Beach and Spa Resort here, today.

Dr Mahathir arrived there at 2.30pm and spent 20 minutes mingling with local and international journalists busy filing their stories.

He was accompanied and briefed on the LID media operations by Asia Public Relations Consultants Sdn Berhad regional managing director Kamaralzaman Tambu.

The prime minister's unscheduled "stop-over" at the centre caught many journalists by surprise.

Dr Mahathir also browsed over the copy of some of the journalists, including Bernama's on President Robert Mugabe's statement on the possibility of Zimbabwe imposing Malaysia-style capital controls to insulate its economy against destabilising external market forces.

The prime minister reacted immediately saying that Zimbabwe did not need to impose the controls as her currency was non-convertible.

As some pressmen were about ready to approach him to follow on that comment, Dr Mahathir left the centre but not before jokingly lamenting that the media centre hosts have not served him refreshments.

Earlier, as the prime minister was entering the centre, a Bernama journalist greeting him pointed to a caricature by Lat in today's New Straits Times on a notice board outside.

Lat portrayed Dr Mahathir, holding a microphone behind the camera and greeting viewers with "Good Evening!", about to file the latest on-the-scene report as CNN's man in Southeast Asia.

Dr Mahathir said he had seen the caricature and asked the journalist: "But what does it mean?"

To which the journalist replied: "It means you have taken over our role."

Lat's caricature came two days after Dr Mahathir led a group of leaders from developing nations to ask questions instead of giving answers to journalists at a special session between heads of state/government and media representatives at the LID.

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