

# Trust your own media, says Dr M

'Foreign reports are biased, we should not support them'

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**SHAH ALAM**, Thurs: Developing nations should learn to trust their own media rather than rely on the western media for accurate information, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

In this day of the Internet, he said, news can be distributed as soon as it happens and it is possible to get them directly from the countries concerned.

"But, I'm afraid, newspapers in the south do not trust the news coming from the south. I doubt if other countries would publish what *Bènama* hands out or whether we would publish what the Islamic news agency would give out as news.

"We keep on wanting to go to *Reuters*, *CNN* and the rest, knowing fully well that their reports on our country are wrong, and therefore their reports on other countries will also be the same kind of fabrication," he said.

He was speaking to reporters after launching the International Conference on

*The Role of Media in Non-Aligned Countries* here today.

On freedom of the press, Mahathir said the reporting of events should be factual and there should be no bias.

"It is not right, for example, to describe a terrorist as a 'Muslim terrorist' unless

the religions of all terrorists are always stated in reports."

However, Mahathir admitted it is **difficult** for the press to be balanced as accurate news does not always sell.

"If the press **find it difficult** to do what is right and fair, why should it expect oth-

ers including the government, to always do the right thing?" he said.

"If we don't **change our mindset**, if we keep on believing that these wire agencies are giving out correct news ... then we are supporting them, **so** they will thrive," he said.