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Alternative source of news needed to counter biased reporting

THE Global 2000-LID yesterday called for the establishment of an alternative news source to counter bias reporting from certain news services against Asia, Africa and other developing countries.

The discussion between the delegates and senior editors from Malaysia and African nations took place at two special sessions chaired by New Straits Times Press executive director Tan Sri Abdullah Ahmad and Chief Secretary to the Government Tan Sri Abdul Halim Ali.

The delegates discussed the aspirations of the various heads of State and Government in seeing more balanced reporting on developing nations.

They felt the dialogue partners should work on suitable mechanisms for the exchange of news among news organisations in developing economies.

The editors also submitted several proposals at the dialogue session.

However, sources said leaders were close to agreeing to use the Internet as a medium for the exchange of news items as "it is effective and cheap".

Heads of State and Government expressed stressed the need "for the news organisations to present reports from our perspective to the world".

The leaders are expected to announce their decision before the end of the dialogue.

The decision to establish a news network and forging close co-operation among developing countries to fight the Western media's bias reporting was reached at the end of the Global 2000-Southern Africa Dialogue in Maputo in August.

At the meeting, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad had suggested that the Internet was the best option because it was not costly.

The fact that many mainstream newspapers had gone online should facilitate the exchange of news between countries in Asia and Africa.

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