

Western media wants to shut us out, says PM

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KAMPALA: The western media is trying to black out coverage on Malaysia whenever there is a positive development, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said.

He cited the Global 2001 Smart Partnership Dialogue here as an example.

Dr Mahathir said the BBC in its report about the dialogue named most of the countries participating but did not mention Malaysia — one of the joint organisers.

"Instead, they mentioned that Taiwan was participating. Taiwan is not even here.

"If they (the western media) can, they want to shut us out," he told Malaysian reporters on Tuesday night.

Another example of the blackout was his suggestion of a world tax to build infra-

structure in poorer countries.

"I have spoken about the world tax three times; once in Boao, Hainan, China last year, in Japan earlier this year and here tonight (Monday night).

"The western media has refused to report about it. There is tremendous resistance against the proposal, especially from the developed countries," he said.

Dr Mahathir said such a tax would ensure that globalisation would be more equitable.

Asked about his observation of the dialogue in the past two days, Dr Mahathir said he noticed that there had been a change in the mindset of the African leaders on the need to form smart partnerships.

He added that changing mindset was a difficult thing and the fact that African leaders were able to do so "was much more important than any physical (change)

you can see."

He said African leaders now realised the need to work together and to take common stands on issues.

"Of course, they have their differences but they now realise how important smart partnerships are.

"The World Trade Organisation is ahead of us and if we go as fragmented countries we will not be able to influence it on globalisation. They now agree to have a common stand."

He said the African participants were keen to learn from Malaysia's experience.

"An example is the danger of allowing the free flow of capital. We learned a bad lesson in 1997.

"It is our duty to inform them to watch out for the sudden withdrawal of capital which will affect their economy adversely," he added.