

11 SEP 2003

Zainuddin-Threat

NO NEED TO BOW TO THREATS FROM FOREIGN MEDIA, SAYS ZAINUDDIN

SHAH ALAM, Sept 11 (Bernama) -- Malaysian leaders need not bow to threats from the foreign media to discredit the country because the foreign media have lost their credibility, Deputy Information Minister Datuk Zainuddin Maidin said today.

He said the foreign media had lost their credibility, especially among Asians, after the Iraq war and the lies of the big powers regarding Iraq.

"Just ignore them. Why should we really care. The foreign media have no credibility," he told reporters after opening the Malaysian Students Film Festival 2003 here.

He was asked to comment on Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's statement yesterday that he had received a letter from the New York-based Business Week threatening to write negative things about him and Malaysia if he refused to entertain its request for an interview.

Zainuddin said that if the foreign media were to discredit Dr Mahathir's leadership, Malaysians would not believe their reports.

Zainuddin said the foreign media were highly respected in the past but now the people were critical of their reports.

"They're dreaming. They still think that Asians believe their media. In reality, many are disappointed with the foreign media," he said.

He said the foreign media had been "unfriendly" since the time of the first prime minister, Tunku Abdul Rahman, but Malaysia still treated them with openness.

"We have been democratic in our treatment of the foreign media until now although in some places they have been shut down and banned," he said.

-- BERNAMA

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