

Use your 'weapons' wisely, Dr M tells bloggers
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Dr Mahathir Mohamad today called on bloggers to adhere to a certain code of ethics and ensure their blog articles are backed by truth in order for blogs to become a respected medium for the betterment of the society.

The former prime minister said the blogging ethics should be voluntary because these were for the bloggers' own good and from which they would build their reputation in the eyes of the people.

Dr Mahathir, himself a blogger, said the society had access to blogs, a medium which he said was "almost beyond the control of any authority", and that if bloggers were ethical and write the truth, more people would make blogs their source of information.

NONEIf bloggers adhered to these ethics, he said, "I think eventually people will come to respect blogs."

"If we are not saying the truth, people will desert blogs like (how they desert) the ordinary media today," he said in his keynote address at the Asian Bloggers and Social Media Conference 2010 in Kuala Lumpur today.

The two-day conference, themed 'Reflections of the Social Media Revolution', is organised by My Events International and is attended by about 400 people across Asia.

Dr Mahathir said although bloggers were free to blog what they want, they should do so in a responsible manner and not abuse the medium.

"(Bloggers) should not say nasty things or curse people; don't do that because people will get annoyed and they can take action against you," he said, adding that "even if we don't like a person, we should not say things which are not true (about that person)."

Avoid anything untrue

Dr Mahathir, who runs a popular blog at chedet.co.cc/chedetblog/, said it was imperative for bloggers to be able to back what they say.

He said that although bloggers had the advantage in terms of freedom, they must make use of the freedom to shape the opinion towards building a better world community and for the betterment of the people.

"No one can stop or correct you because you are in charge; you are the writer, the editor and the publisher... when you have the weapons, don't use it indiscriminately.

NONE"Bloggers must always exercise restraint and avoid anything that is not true and things that hurt people," he said.

Dr Mahathir said while some blogs were very good, there were others which were "worthless" and that certain skills were needed to sort out blogs which reported the truth from those that contained mere propaganda.

"Problems arise because there are so much news coming in; you get confused and when

you get confused you make the wrong decision. So you have to sort out the news," he said.

Dr Mahathir also said that the ordinary press would not be able write everything because of space constraint.

He said that because of such constraint he turned to blog to provide him with the space to express his views.

Dr Mahathir also said that his blog was being read by people from many countries, including from Israel.

If bloggers write with responsibility, they and their blogs would become popular, he added.

- Bernama

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