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Specialise for accuracy

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Journalists must understand subject thoroughly, says PM

PETALING JAYA: Journalists should specialise in the fields they report in to ensure accuracy of reports, said the Prime Minister last night.

Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said members of the press must also abide by their code of ethics and be responsible for their reporting.

"All kinds of reporting can be made, but the reporter must understand the subject thoroughly. If not, the report will not be understood by the reader, or it may even be misunderstood," he said when launching the Malaysian Press Institute (MPI) Awards Night here.

"So members of the press should be specialists, like in the issue of fuel price increase. Otherwise, the report might not be right.

"There are many changes happening besides politics. The increase in fuel prices and the food crisis are not issues which can be easily handled or that can be ignored," he said.

Abdullah said he had given much freedom to the media until certain parties said that he was too liberal.

"When writing or reporting, you can get carried away when writing news or commentaries.

"There are many laws relating to journalism which you (the media) must understand," he said.

On the online journalism training course organised by the MPI, Abdullah said he hoped the training would benefit the new media group which has emerged strongly such as



Memories: Abdullah (left) admiring the photo-montage souvenir presented to him at the MPI Awards Night yesterday. Standing beside him is MPI chief executive officer Datuk Chamil Wariya.

bloggers.

"When you become influential, it is very important to be responsible, understand and realise that your role comes with responsibilities," he said.

The Star's Chin Mui Yoon took

home the Features Journalism award while N. Rama Lohan won the Entertainment Journalism category.

The Star's photographers Azhar Mahfof and Rapa'ee Kawi swept the first and second prize for the photo

essay category.

However, there was no winner for the top prize, the Kajai award.