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Dr M raps Suaram over rights report

KUALA LUMPUR: Hm Dr Mahathir Mohamad yesterday dismissed a human rights report released by Suaram, which said Malaysia's deteriorating human rights situation signalled a return to his era.

The former prime minister also said the report showed poor judgment and described the human rights non-governmental organisation as a lackey to foreign countries or some politicians.

"If you are concerned about human rights, you must not be concerned about human rights in this country only.

"In Gaza, people are being killed. Did they say anything about it?" He said this after attending the Mara Junior Science Colleges' Ideapreneur Innovation Programme 2010 at the Malaysian Technology Park Auditorium in Bukit Jalil near here yesterday.

Present were Rural and Regional Development Minister Datuk Seri Shafie Apdal and Deputy Science, Technology and Innovation Minister Datuk Fadillah Yusof.

In its *Civil and Political Right Report 2010* released yesterday, Suaram said that violation of human rights this year, including arrests made over public assemblies and clampdowns on media, were signals of a "closing society".

Dr Mahathir also claimed that the report was political in nature.

"They are thinking politically in Malaysia and they must accuse people whom they are against. That is not a good judgment.

"I can also say they are guilty of breaching human rights because I have the right to say... they are just lackeys of some other countries or some politicians," he said. — Bernama