

No crisis

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KUALA LUMPUR, Fri.
— The Government's paring down of the projected economic growth rate does not mean the country is facing a "catastrophe or a disaster," **Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad** said today.

"We are only being realistic about what we can achieve," he said.

The Prime Minister also took to task the business community which he said panicked too easily just because the projected growth rate was revised.

"They are so used to eight or 10 per cent growth that when we say it will be one or two percentage points down, it is like a catastrophe or disaster," he

said at a Press conference.

Malaysia, **Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir** said, is not facing any economic crisis "and in fact, is far better off than most countries in the world."

The Government had announced a few days ago that the growth rate had been revised to five per cent this year. The rate was projected at 7.2 per cent when the Budget was presented in October last year and lowered six months later to 6.5 per cent by Bank Negara.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said the Government had to be realistic about the targets that can be achieved, and in line with this, the austerity drive was being undertaken.

"We just can't be starry-eyed and say the economy is going to get better.

"We are undertaking the austerity drive until such time the economy recovers from the world-wide recession which has hit us," he said.

He said Malaysia is still in a strong economic position, holding about four months' reserves.