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AZMAN HASHIM DENIES ARAB-MALAYSIAN BANKING GROUP BEING INVESTIGATED

KUALA LUMPUR, Sept 3 (Bernama) -- Tan Sri Azman Hashim, the chairman of the Arab-Malaysian banking group, has denied that the group was being investigated for short selling activities.

"The rumours are not true," he told Bernama in a telephone conversation here today.

There has been talk in the market that besides the Arab-Malaysian group, another major financial group was being probed for similar allegations and helping foreigners in manipulating the currency and stock markets.

Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim said earlier that no prominent bankers would be charged in court for activities related to manipulating the market.

Meanwhile, Azman welcomed the setting up of RM60 billion fund to support the Kuala Lumpur stock market announced by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr. Mahathir Mohamad today.

"It would be good news for Malaysians as they would be able to acquire shares and even be encouraged to hold onto their shares," he said.

Even with share prices cheap, investors would not be encouraged to buy especially in a weak market, he said.

However, now that the shares would be acquired through the fund and sold to Malaysians at a premium, local investors would be encouraged to buy, he said.

The fund will be pooled from local institutions and used to finance share acquisitions on the Kuala Lumpur Stock Exchange. -- BERNAMA

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