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DR M: MY LEAVE SHOULD NOT BE USED AS AN EXCUSE TO PULL OUT OF KLSE

SEPANG, May 17 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today urged investors not to use his two-month leave as an excuse to pull out of the stock market.

He said his decision to go on leave should not make the market nervous because his deputy, Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim, had been given full authority to run the country during his absence.

"You know these people who play the market...they are looking for all kinds of signs and they are quite unrelated," he told reporters after performing the ground-breaking ceremony for Cyberjaya and launching World Telecommunications Day here.

Dr Mahathir was asked to comment on the negative reactions on the Kuala Lumpur Stock Exchange which had been associated with the depreciation of the Thai baht and his planned two-month leave beginning on Monday.

The Prime Minister said there were other leaders who took six-month sabbatical leave and it did not cause any unnecessary reaction.

The Prime Minister said he would have to cut short his leave if there was "anything very special happening".

"So I hope you (the press) will not create anything that will be a problem to me," he said.

Dr Mahathir said investors should focus on the fundamentals of the companies listed on the KLSE as they were all profitable.

"However, because of something happening elsewhere, they (the investors) resort to withdrawing their investments," he said.

Dr Mahathir said the Malaysian economy was doing as well as ever and the fundamentals were good. -- BERNAMA

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