

20 DEC 1997

IMPORT OF GOODS WILL NOT BE CURBED, SAYS PM

KUALA LUMPUR, Dec 20 (Bernama) -- Malaysia will not curb imports as a move to overcome the economic problems in the country but Malaysians should be prudent in their spending and buy more local goods, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

Sacrifices by the people in respect of their spending habit would help revive the country's economy within the short-term, he said in a special interview with RTM at Angkasapuri here today.

"...we must bear in mind that our income has been reduced...when we are prosperous, we can live a life of luxury...when we are not prosperous, we cannot pretend to live a life of luxury.

"If we are prepared to make sacrifices now, God willing our nation's economy will recover within a short span of time," he said.

Dr Mahathir said that in view of the escalating prices of imported goods, the people should not only change their spending habit and buy local goods but also be wise enough to shop at places offering fair prices.

"A way to counter (escalating prices) is to reduce the consumption of sugar and butter for instance. Why do we need to use butter if we can use locally-produced margarine," he said.

The Prime Minister said that although the prices of local goods had also increased due to the higher prices of imports, it was not a big issue.

"If we were to buy at supermarkets and not at normal places, surely there will be an increase. On the other hand, we found that goods at hypermarkets are a lot cheaper," he said.

He also reminded the people to be more thrifty and not overspend for Christmas, Chinese New Year and Hari Raya.

The Prime Minister was at Angkasapuri to record his New Year message. He also attended a pledge-taking ceremony involving officers and staff of the Information Ministry. -- BERNAMA

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