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Raising prices, rates will harm economy

Teoh Cheng Siang

WE have whole-heartedly supported the Prime Minister in his call to keep from falling deeper into the "quicksand" by refraining from spending unnecessarily and buying "Malaysian" instead.

We have also heard the call by Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad to the edible oil manufacturers to refrain from increasing prices. To be fair, the control should be on the crude palm oil producers to be "patriotic" and not increase prices.

They should be pleased with the increased revenue in ringgit terms and not tie local prices to the international market or siphon local supply for export, creating a reduced supply.

But the local authorities seem to be acting contrary to the Prime Minister's call to be more thrifty.

The Majlis Bandaraya Johor Baru is increasing assessment rates by up to three times the original rates for no reason whatsoever.

Given today's economic problems, this will force small businessmen to give up and property owners to sell to avoid the additional burden.

Isn't this tantamount to stifling the Prime Minister's objectives to keep everything as normal as possible and not create panic?