

PM: We can learn from Mozambique

By WAN HAMIDIHAMID

MAPUTO: Mozambique may be seen as one of the poorest African country but Malaysia is willing to learn from it on ways to prevent attacks on the ringgit.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said it was important for Malaysia to learn more because Mozambique, which is rapidly progressing, had managed to sta-

bilise its currency.

Dr Mahathir, who explained the economic situation in East Asia to the Mozambican cabinet yesterday, said the Government tried to identify the reasons why the metical (MT — Mozabican currenchy) was not attacked.

"There's a lot for us to learn from Mozambique because apparently they have done something which prevented currency traders from attacking

their currencies.

"This we want to learn because it may have relevance to how we handle our currency in Malaysia," he said at a joint press conference with Mozambican president Joachim Chissano at the end of his three-day official visit.

The exchange' rate for metical is about Mt11,600 to US\$1, maintained since 1996, although it was down by half after the first democratically-

held election in 1994

Even when the South African rand is being attacked at the moment, the metical does not seem to be affected.

The Prime Minister said his talks with Mozambican ministers related to exchange of ideas as both parties made comparisans between Malaysia and Mozambique on the currency issue.

Chissano said he understood that the economic problems in

Malaysia were not caused by Malaysians but due to external forces

"However, we are happy to know that Malaysia has the people to work hard to overcome the problems," he said, adding that Dr Mahathir would have the support from countries of the South.

Earlier, Dr Mahathir and Chissano witnessed the signing of economic, scientific, technical and cultural co-operation

agreements between the two countries, at the president's office.

Malaysia was represented by Energy, Telecommunications and Posts Minister Datuk Leo Moggie while Mozambican Minister of Trade and Tourism Oldemiro Baloi represented his country.

Dr Mahathir left yesterday afternoon for Johannesburg, South Africa, en route to Kuala Lumpur.

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