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PM-MORE MEASURES

MORE MEASURES WILL BE INTRODUCED TO STRENGTHEN ECONOMY, SAYS MAHATHIR

KUALA LUMPUR, Sept 25 (Bernama) -- The government will implement more measures to place the country's economy on a stronger footing although signs of a recovery are already there, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said here today.

While declining to reveal them, Dr Mahathir, who is also First Finance Minister, said the economy was recovering and businesses were no longer under pressure.

"Exports have exceeded RM26 billion and we have successfully reduced imports which has placed us in a surplus balance of payments position," the prime minister said.

He said that the country now had sufficient foreign exchange reserves to service its foreign debts.

"The situation is now stable especially with the ringgit pegged at RM3.80 and with the lowering of interest rates," he said at the opening of the Malaysian Franchise Exhibition and Conference.

Dr Mahathir, who is also the patron of the Malaysian Franchise Association, said that there was no more economic turmoil in the country and neither was there uncertainty.

Against such a scenario, he called on the business community to draw up their business plans.

Saying that the financial turmoil has been reduced to a more manageable level, he attributed the success of having been able to manage the economic turmoil to the capital control measures instituted early this month.

"Liquidity in the banking system has improved and is partially resolved following the return of ringgit funds from abroad," he said.

Dr Mahathir also said that Malaysia was not isolating itself as misconstrued by some quarters in view of the exchange controls implemented on Sept 1, 1998, but that "we were managing the economy for our benefit".

"We are not allowing others to manage us, that will be disastrous to us," he said.--BERNAMA

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