

30 SEP 1998
ISIS-NATIONAL CONGRESS
PM TO HOLD OPEN DIALOGUE SESSION AT CONGRESS

KUALA LUMPUR, Sept 30 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad will hold an open dialogue session at the close of the two-day National Congress on Economic Recovery on Oct 7.

The congress is jointly organised by the Institute for Strategic and International Studies (ISIS) and the Asean Strategic and Leadership Institute (ASLI).

Special Functions Minister Tun Daim Zainuddin is expected to deliver a keynote address on the opening day on Oct 6, said ISIS chairman Tan Sri Dr Noordin Sopiee here today.

Daim will also attend a question and answer session that will set the tone and pace of the interactive panel discussion to follow at the congress. It will be attended by some 250 to 300 local participants from various government and corporate agencies.

Other speakers include Bank Negara Malaysia's new governor Tan Sri Abul Hassan Sulaiman, Johor Menteri Besar Datuk Abdul Ghani Othman and the Director General of the Economic Planning Unit, Datuk Dr Samsudin Hitam.

Dr Noordin said the organisers believed that the congress would be an important and timely forum to share developments and concerns that could help shape the recovery path.

He said the congress would examine recent events and policy decisions that had altered the Malaysian economic and corporate environment,

It will also seek to consolidate, expand as well as cover new ground on topics relevant to the country's economic recovery.

Attention will be drawn to the rationale and implications of attaining ringgit stability through capital controls.

Dr Noordin noted that the first plenary session of the congress entitled, "Stabilising the Ringgit and Exchange Controls", will provide a platform for clarification, discussion and debate on the nature of such controls, possible revisions to eliminate inherent drawbacks as well as Malaysia's move to fix the ringgit at RM3.8 to the U.S dollar.

Special workshops will also be held to address sectoral concerns, he said, adding that the session would serve to detail the progress of the National Economic Recovery Plan (NERP) policy actions.

They will also seek to gain feedback and suggest additional proposals to aid the various sectors' recovery efforts.

Dr Noordin said recommendations for new policy actions are expected from the workshops on "Property Constructions and Infrastructure" and "Manufacturing".

The two-day congress is aimed at mobilising greater public support for the NEAC's NERP, discussing the specific roles of government, corporate sector, media and trade unions in implementing the NERP.

It will also enable the private sector to obtain further clarification on specific aspects of the NERP and to build a national consensus on "The Way Forward". -- BERNAMA

ZMY KTC SHY