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Locally-made products are not inferior: PM

THE call to buy Malaysian is not a call to buy inferior products, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said last night.

"World-class jeans are made in Malaysia. High-quality electronic components are manufactured in Malaysia. We can make cars and lorries in Malaysia that can be exported," he told a crowd of some 20,000 people at the "Semarakkan Semangat Cinta Malaysia" performance organised by the Malaysian Chinese Association in Kuala Lumpur.

Dr Mahathir said Malaysian-made goods are "different from before" and the country has been making products for the world.

Foreign goods, he said, are not necessarily better; in fact, he added, many foreign brands have Malaysian-made components.

"When we called for buying of Malaysian-made products, we are not urging the rakyat to buy inferior goods. We simply urge them to buy local products as this can help to strengthen the economy."

He said buying local will help reduce the outflow of the ringgit while at the same time improve the local businesses.

"It is most critical to protect our currency, and this can be done by buying Malaysian-made products ... This gives strength for us to fight the present economic problems," he said.

Dr Mahathir said Malaysians should support campaigns on buying locally-made goods.

"When we buy Malaysian-made products, it shows that we love the country and willing to sacrifice to defend the nation and its economy ... Malaysia belongs to all of us. If we don't, who else would love this nation?"

Dr Mahathir said the Government will do everything it can to defend the country and ensure it weathers the economic storm.

He also called on the people to act rationally and sensibly in dealing with the problems facing them as a result of the region's financial crisis.

"In other multi-racial nations, there are problems and even racial riots due to the crisis. In Malaysia, we do not have this. No race in Malaysia is living in fear or feeling threatened. This is our advantage. We must value this," he added.

The country's balanced economic development as well as the strong unity of its multi-racial population are the country's edge in overcoming the current downturn.

Dr Mahathir said the country's racial harmony is intact because all the races in Malaysia are sensitive to one another's feelings.

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