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Dr M: Deadline no cause for concern

PRIME Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad yesterday shrugged off suggestions that he was worried about the Sept 1 deadline when selective capital controls instituted on the same date last year expire.

"Worried? There is no worry," he said to a question by a Dow Jones reporter during a dialogue with South Korean journalists in Langkawi yesterday.

The Prime Minister was responding to suggestions that foreign funds would be repatriated once the curbs instituted by capital controls are lifted on Sept 1 to allow foreigners to repatriate funds.

Dr Mahathir said there would not be a large outflow of funds because:

- * most of the shares were being bought by locals;
- * other foreigners were pumping money into the local bourse while others would be taking money out; and,
- * the country had sufficient ringgit to be converted into foreign funds.

Dr Mahathir had earlier witnessed the signing of a MoU between Golden Life Bhd, a Korean-Malaysian joint venture company, and Emkay Bhd at the Langkasuka Port.

He said the Kuala Lumpur Stock Exchange Composite Index which had languished at 260 points last year was now at more than 800 points.

"We have improved very fast although it is natural that corrections are made," he said, referring to profit-taking recently.

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