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Lift controls, DAP urges Government

PENANG, Sat. - Opposition Leader Lim Kit Siang today called on Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad to lift exchange rate controls to restore international confidence and speed up the nation's recovery.

Lim said the Prime Minister's claim that the controls imposed on Sept 1 last year, were the main cause for the signs of economic recovery in Malaysia, was debatable.

He said: "This contention is debatable as other countries where economic recovery may be faster, like Thailand and South Korea, have not imposed capital controls.

"The efficacy of capital controls remains a matter of controversy as many economists are of the view that there would have been recovery of growth in the country regardless of capital controls."

The DAP leader added that an important element of the Government's economic strategy was to blame foreign speculators, foreign powers and media of conspiracy against Malaysia's economic advancement.

Lim, speaking at the launching of the DAP nation-wide "Justice For All" campaign at the Kampung Kolam constituency, also called on Second Finance Minister Datuk Mustapa Mohamed to explain why he had not responded to the International Monetary Fund's critical comments about Malaysia at the Asia-Europe Finance Ministers' Meeting at Frankfurt, Germany.

"It would appear that Mustapha had failed to defend the honour of Malaysia at the meeting a week ago when the management of the Malaysian economy was questioned by the International Monetary Fund," Lim said.

He said the DAP's nation-wide campaign was not just about the party's deputy-secretary general Lim Guan Eng and former Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim's "black eye" while under police custody.

"It is about justice in the widest meaning of the term, embracing political, economic, educational, social, cultural, religious and human rights for the 22 million Malaysians,"

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