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Perdana lecture on currency speculation by London don

KUALA LUMPUR, Mon. - Professor Jonathan Michie from the University of London will give the 1999 Perdana lecture on currency speculation at the Putra World Trade Centre on Friday.

He will speak on the case for reform and need for global response where currency speculation is concerned.

Michie, the Sainsbury Professor of Management at the Birkbeck College of the university, has been invited to give the lecture by the Program Pertukaran Fellowship Perdana Menteri Malaysia.

Last December, Michie, together with 400 economists from Europe jointly submitted to the European Union a memorandum entitled: "Full Employment, Solidarity and Stability in Europe".

In a statement in conjunction with the memorandum, Michie had stated that the global economic crisis demonstrated the urgent need for action.

Michie says "there is nothing inevitable or natural about the current international financial arrangements. Indeed, financial speculation introduces `systemic' risk that governments have to check."

He adds that although speculators will factor in the costs and benefits to themselves of the choices they make, they will not factor in the wider costs to society of their activities.

"Few activities have proved more anti-social than international currency speculation. If ever there was an activity crying out for taxation and control, this is it," states Michie.

His lecture will give Malaysians an opportunity to listen to a view that is thought provoking in its analysis of the Asian currency crisis, said a statement from Program Pertukaran Fellowship Perdana Menteri Malaysia.

Michie's suggested policy measures will challenge orthodox and well-worn assumptions on international financial markets, it added.

The lecture, scheduled for 4pm, is by invitation and the guest-of-honour is Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

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