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Assurance on supply of essential items

SHAH ALAM, Tues. - Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today gave an assurance that there will be adequate supply of essential items at reasonable prices during the coming festive season.

"The Government will ensure an adequate supply of beef, chicken and other essentials. People should not buy at a higher price because there is an adequate supply."

Dr Mahathir was speaking to reporters after launching the Royal Mint of Malaysia and the first production of Malaysian gold bullion coins here.

He, however, cautioned that there would be some unscrupulous people who would try to raise the prices.

"But actually this year the inflation rate is quite low, below three per cent. This means that by and large prices have not been raised even though the price of fuel has gone up," Dr Mahathir said.

Asked about Malaysian doctors returning from overseas facing long delays in getting practising certificates, he said the issuing authority should look into the matter.

"We need many doctors as our own doctors do not want to serve with the Government.

They prefer to work in the private sector as they get a higher income."

Asked if civil servants could expect a bonus this year, Dr Mahathir said: "You have to ask the Finance Minister (Tun Daim Zainuddin). I would not know. If we have the money we'll give the bonus, if there's no money, we won't."

Asked whether civil servants could still expect something in lieu of a bonus, he said: "I don't know. I heard the Finance Minister is considering."

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