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Daim: Budget will offer some good news for the people

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SUBANG, Mon. - Finance Minister Tun Daim Zainuddin today said the country's Budget for next year, which will be announced on Friday, will offer a "little" good news for the man in the street.

Answering questions from reporters on whether there would be any good news for everyone or something to look forward to in the Budget, he quipped: "There is nothing for me."

He later said there would be a "little" good news but refused to elaborate, except "wait for Friday".

Daim said this after launching the Asia Pacific Auction Centre here. Also present was chairman of Malaysia Airports Berhad Tan Sri Basir Ismail.

Last week, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said the 2001 Budget would be a surplus Budget.

He had said it would be a good one, adding that he was happy the economic recovery had enabled the Government to table a people's Budget.

Daim, in his speech at today's function, congratulated the people behind APAC for giving K-economy a major impetus in its role as an international marketplace for goods.

"This is clearly in line with the vision where businesses and individuals seek avenues to buy and sell through organised, efficient and transparent portals."

"This means Malaysia now provides a world-class auction portal. This will encourage worldwide commerce and reinforce Malaysia's status as a major trading nation. This is an exciting possibility to exporters as they seek to reach out to a wider spectrum of international customers."

Daim said he was sure the auction centre would complement Malaysia's first-class cargo facilities. "I was told it is the only auction centre in the world with a dedicated 747-runway that enables goods to be airlifted in and out with minimum fuss and expense.

"Now we need ingenuity and hard work to promote this product, of which, I am confident, is staffed with hardworking personnel."

Daim also said there should be a comprehensive and interactive website on Kuala Lumpur in accordance with growing global appeal.

"Kuala Lumpur should now be served by an extensive website that provides information such as hotel bookings, car rentals, tourist spots, restaurants, 24-hour banking facilities, ticketing and links to prices of shares and properties.

"Hong Kong sees itself as a world city. Others have their plans. But Kuala Lumpur's population of expatriates is fast expanding, a fact that amplifies our potential.

"Tourism planners, too, have gone into the Net to promote their products, giving them a wider reach at lower cost."

Daim said the success of the economy would also hinge on the status and attraction of Kuala Lumpur as a hub for trade and investment, as a city with culture, traditions, efficient banking system, unbelievably wide offerings of food and shopping, open spaces, wooded walkways, and fast, efficient public transport.

Later, Daim witnessed an auction in which three pieces of jewellery were auctioned for RM35,000.

The items were donated by Habib Jewels and the proceeds were donated to Bakti.

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