

27 JAN 2000

MAHATHIR-DAIM

MAHATHIR IS FINE & ENJOYING HIS HOLIDAY, SAYS DAIM

KUALA LUMPUR, Jan 27 (Bernama) -- Finance Minister Tun Daim Zainuddin joined Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Abdullah Ahmad Badawi in dismissing rumours about Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's health and said that the Prime Minister "is fine and enjoying his holiday" abroad.

"I am in touch with him all the time," Daim said today when asked by reporters on the matter after opening the Southeast Asia Central Bank Governors Conference here.

He said Dr Mahathir would be flying to London soon and would be in Paris on Jan 29 for a meeting with French President Jacques Chirac.

Dr Mahathir is expected to be in British capital later today after holiday trip to Argentina and the Caribbean.

Daim said the rumours surfaced because some people made up stories especially after Malaysia's economy and markets were recovering.

Yesterday in Kota Kinabalu, Abdullah rejected rumours that the Prime Minister was ill and that he had a fall after riding a horse in Argentina as "outright lies".

The rumours caused the Kuala Lumpur Stock Exchange's Composite Index to dip by 11.11 points to 940.95 but the stockmarket opened higher today when the KLCI opened at 947.53 on bargain-hunting activity.

The finance minister also said that Dr Mahathir would chair the Cabinet meeting in Putrajaya next Wednesday. -- BERNAMA

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