

Mahathir: Plan to be more aggressive

IPOH: The Eighth Malaysia Plan to be tabled in Parliament at the end of the month will among others focus on producing more knowledge workers and reducing poverty.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said the multi-pronged plan would consider the challenges posed by globalisation.

"We see that we will face a globalisation challenge. There is also a possibility that America's economy will slow down.

"This will affect us as we produce a lot of goods which are being exported to America," he said at a press conference at Sultan Azlan Shah Airport here after concluding his 24-hour visit to the state.

Also present were Perak Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Mohd Tajol Rosli Ghazali and Umno secretary-general Tan Sri Khalil Yaakob.

The Seventh Malaysia Plan (1996-2000) expired last year.

Dr Mahathir said since bumiputra involvement in the economy had shrunk during the economic slowdown, the plan would stress a more aggressive approach.

He said the Government would concentrate on more investments in information technology and ensure all new development centres would involve people of all races.

To a question on efforts to improve ties with the United States, Dr Mahathir said the Government did not like to be an enemy to any country.

When questioned whether Malaysia was expecting anything positive from renewed ties with the US, Dr Mahathir said: "Nothing positive but just on investment."