

PM expects little change in second quarter growth

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KUALA LUMPUR: The second quarter Gross Domestic Product of the country will be similar to that of the first quarter, which is 3.2%.

"The second quarter growth is not like what we expected to see," Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad told reporters here yesterday.

The Prime Minister attributed the projected low growth to the slowdown in the US economy.

"It is not just affecting our trade with the US but also with other countries," he said after launching the 20th session of the Albaraka Islamic Economic symposium here.

Dr Mahathir said Malaysia is bidding to host the proposed Islamic Financial Services Organisation which will set standards and

practices in Islamic banking.

"The setting up of this institution will help establish and maintain the soundness of Islamic banking," he said, adding that Bahrain had also made a bid.

He said many countries have set up Islamic banks but the practices were not uniform. They must be standardised to ensure better communication, he added.

This is the first time the symposium is being held outside the Middle East.

The symposium is organised with the help of the Dallah Albaraka Group. It was founded in 1969 and is now one of the world's leading Islamic institutions with diversified investments of over US\$3bil (RM11bil).