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MUSTAPA-NEAC

NEAC TO MEET ON MEASURES TO REDUCE EFFECTS OF US ECONOMIC DOWNTURN

KUCHING, Sept 17 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad is expected to chair a National Economic Action Council meeting in a week or two, to discuss ways on reducing the effects of the US' economic downturn on the country, NEAC's executive director Datuk Mustapa Mohamed said.

"The government would assess the situation and suitable measures would be certainly looked into to protect the interest of the Malaysian economy," he told reporters after a meeting with the Association of Bumiputera Contractors Malaysia here last night.

Dr Mahathir is the chairman of the NEAC Exco.

Mustapa said that up till now, no particular measure had been finalised while the elements that would be considered had yet to be analysed in detail.

The American economy is expected to be further affected by the recent terrorist attack on the country's financial landmark, the World Trade Centre in New York and the headquarters of its defence department, Pentagon, in Washington.

Malaysia had on Sept 13 established a special force comprising government and private sector representatives to monitor on a daily basis the effects of the terrorist attacks on the local economy.

Following the attack, electronic products exported to the US by air could not be transported due to the closure of airports in the US.

"We monitor every day but we would need more time before coming up with a suitable action plan. We would need more time to study the real situation," he said.

What is most important is that Malaysia monitors the situation very carefully, Mustapa said.

Being an open market economy, Malaysia depends greatly on external trade and its tourism industry, he said.

If the world's economy is affected by what has happened in the US, then Malaysia would be affected too, he added. -- BERNAMA

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