

07 JUL 2001

Mahathir-Speculation

PM DISMISSES SPECULATION ON APPOINTMENT OF NEW FINANCE MINISTER

KUALA LUMPUR, July 7 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today dismissed speculation on the appointment of a new finance minister to replace Tun Daim Zainuddin, saying it was baseless.

"I do not understand why many people speculate. All are baseless but people still want to hear them," he said at a news conference at the end of the Barisan Nasional (BN) Convention here.

Dr Mahathir was asked on a news report today that the economic adviser to the prime minister and former Bank Negara Governor Tan Sri Ali Abul Hassan Sulaiman would be made second finance minister.

"The newspaper can speculate that. You wait and see whether all these speculations are worth anything at all," he said.

The prime minister said he has a good team comprising two deputy finance ministers, Datuk Dr Shafie Mohd Salleh and Datuk Chan Kong Choy, Finance Ministry Secretary General Datuk Dr Samsuddin Hitam and Bank Negara Governor Tan Sri Dr Zeti Akhtar Aziz to help him manage the economy. "I have advisers namely Tan Sri Ali Abul Hassan Sulaiman and Tan Sri Nor Mohamed Yakcop," he said.

Dr Mahathir assumed the post of finance minister when Daim resigned on June 1, this year.

To a question, the prime minister said that the government still maintained a loan growth target of 8 per cent for this year.

-- BERNAMA

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