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PM to table Eighth Malaysia Plan (2001-2005) today

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KUALA LUMPUR, Sun. - Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad will table the Eighth Malaysia Plan (2001-2005) in Parliament tomorrow.

The new socio-economic development plan will be the first phase in the implementation of the Third Outline Perspective Plan (2001-2010) that was unveiled by Dr Mahathir in Parliament earlier this month.

"The OPP3 has given the broad development framework. The Eighth Plan, along with the Ninth Plan to be introduced in five years' time, will be to operationalise or spell out strategies and programmes within the parameters of the OPP3," said an economist.

Thus, the main objectives and targets of the Eighth Plan should be in line with those of the OPP3.

These include poverty eradication and restructuring of society, development of a knowledge-based economy, expanding the usage of information communications technology, and restructuring of key economic sectors.

As for economic growth, the Eighth Plan should target an annual growth rate of 7.5 per cent as in the OPP3.

The Eighth Plan will also provide an assessment of the progress made in the various sectors during the five-year plan it succeeds.

It will identify the major issues and challenges facing the country in the next five years and the strategies, programmes and projects to address them.

Through the new plan the Government could reiterate its commitment on efforts to improve the quality of life of the people, including through the provision of better social services.

Strengthening the nation's economic resilience should also be high on the agenda in view of ongoing globalisation and liberalisation.