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Mahathir-Opposition

OPPOSITION'S ALTERNATIVE BUDGET A JOKE, SAYS DR MAHATHIR

PUTRAJAYA, Sept 16 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today that the alternative budget which the opposition intends to table before the tabling of the national budget 2003/2004 in the Dewan Rakyat on Friday is a joke.

"It's a joke. It's a joke because they (the opposition) do not know how much money we have and they want to make (table) a budget. All they know is how to spend money and become popular," Dr Mahathir, who is also Finance Minister, told reporters after attending the Treasury's monthly assembly and the opening of its building at the new federal administrative centre here.

At the function, Dr Mahathir also presented excellent service awards to the Treasury staff.

The Prime Minister said that if he had wanted to spend government money and become popular, he could also follow the footsteps of the opposition, which is bent on tabling the so-called alternative budget by Friday in the Dewan Rakyat.

The alliance of PAS, Keadilan and Parti Rakyat Malaysia, calling itself the Opposition Front, announced last week that they would table a separate budget to oppose the national budget scheduled to be tabled by Dr Mahathir.

"I can also do that but I've to be responsible. They (the opposition) are not responsible for collecting and administering the money," he said.

Dr Mahathir said that the intention of the opposition led by PAS to table the alternative budget was because they had a political motive.

"Their budget is of course a political budget, to show how good they are and why people should support them...they don't know (how much) money we have," he added.

-- BERNAMA

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