

**Dr M warns of long financial crisis**  
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**By Shannon Teoh**

KUALA LUMPUR, Oct 8 — Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad warned the ongoing global economic crisis will continue long into the future as the West continues spending in a “state of denial.”

The former prime minister said in his blog yesterday that Western countries continue “believing that they can somehow continue to remain rich. They are unable to behave like poor people.”

On the same day Datuk Seri Najib Razak tabled a budget that aims to rein in the deficit to 4.7 per cent, Dr Mahathir (picture) said the West “will not recover because they are still in a state of denial.

“They still believe they are rich, as rich as before they plunged into the crisis. They must keep up the big power wealthy country image even if their people have no jobs, riot and protest.

“The great financial crisis will be with us for a long time. Even when it is resolved the aftermath will see slow recovery for the giants of the West,” he wrote.

“How nice it would be if our pocket is picked, we are allowed to print some money to replace what is lost,” he said, mocking the United States’ quantitative easing measures which has seen its federal reserve print US\$3 trillion (RM9.5 billion) since the start of the financial crisis in 2008.

“Now Britain is following in the footsteps of elder brother,” he added, referring to the United Kingdom’s recent move to print £75 billion (RM370 billion) to help distressed banks.

The debt crises in Europe and the US have caused the global economy to wobble in recent months and is likely to stunt Malaysia’s export-driven economy in the near future.

Analysts said yesterday that Najib’s prediction of a 5 to 6 per cent growth for 2012 is “too high” which may in turn see Putrajaya fail to meet its deficit forecast.

The prime minister tabled a budget yesterday which saw cash handouts, more money for civil servants, schools and a fund for “high-impact development” projects to put cash in the pockets of voters ahead of a general election expected soon.

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