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Mahathir-airport

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MELAKA, Sept 4 (Bernama) -- The ~~Selangor~~ ^(P) area in Selangor has been gazetted as the site for the new international airport and all land transactions in the area have been frozen, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

+No one can buy land in the area as such transactions have been frozen,+ he told a press conference after chairing the weekly Cabinet meeting here.

Yesterday, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said the government had decided to build a new international airport in Sepang, costing \$20 billion.

He said the government had yet to decide what to do with the Kuala Lumpur International Airport in Subang but he mentioned that it might be turned into an air force base or be used for domestic and cargo flights.

Today's Cabinet meeting was the third to be held outside the federal capital after Langkawi and Kuching.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said the decision to build a new international airport in Sepang was made because the existing airport in Subang could no longer be expanded to cope with future demand.

There was a need to build another runway at Subang in view of the anticipated increase in air traffic by the year 2020, he added. -- more

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+We have a choice whether to build the second runway at Subang or a new airport elsewhere. We are of the opinion that a new airport is more appropriate to meet future demand,+ he said.

Asked when work on the new airport would begin, he said the government was still studying the matter.

He said the cost of \$20 billion he mentioned yesterday was only an estimate and not the actual allocation for the project. The new airport would be built according to the needs of the country.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said the four-hour meeting today confirmed the allocation of \$236 million to the Melaka government for the project to draw water from the Muar river for its water supply.

The project would involve the installation of a pipeline from the Muar river to the Durian Tunggal reservoir to overcome the water crisis which had been plaguing the state since last January.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir praised the Melaka government for using its own money to implement several projects.

He said the state government built a dual carriageway and several tourism projects without asking for federal assistance.

The Federal government was prepared to consider the state government's request for assistance in other projects, he added.

Melaka Chief Minister Tan Sri Abdul Rahim Tamby Chik was present at the press conference. -- Bernama

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