

CNS7845

U GE 15-10 00188 EG676

aae tbe

CONTROL TOWER FIRE SHOULDN'T HAVE HAPPENED, SAYS PM

Mahathir - Subang

From Azman Ujang

(P) Mahathir - Overseas' tips

HONG KONG, Oct 15⁹² (Bernama). -- This morning's control tower fire, at the Kuala Lumpur International Airport in Subang reflects the still, poor state, of maintenance of key points in Malaysia, the Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said.

The fire should not have happened, he told Malaysian reporters covering the Prime Minister's three-day visit here which ended today.

+I'm very sad that yet another fire happened at the Kuala Lumpur International Airport. All parties should have learnt from the last experience to take all precautions that such an incident will not happen again. I don't know what caused the fire, + he said.

+It shouldn't have happened. Why it happened embarrasses us. The bottom line is that it all depends on the people entrusted at all levels and they should have been careful (in doing their job), + he said.

He said most of such incidents were caused by human failure and this should be taken care of. -- more

▼15/10/13-30MST

CNS7861

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Mahathir - Subang 2 Hong Kong

The Prime Minister said although today's fire at first appeared to be disastrous, he was informed that the airport could be re-opened to handle international flights from 11.30 am.

+While I'm saddened by this fire, I congratulate all those concerned for being able to put things back to normal fast, + he said.

Asked whether there was a need to set up another committee of inquiry to investigate the fire, the second at the airport this year, the Prime Minister said: + That's what we are hoping for, but we do have an investigating committee and yet it happen again. +

An early morning fire last April 6 destroyed the airport duty-free shopping arcades and three Department of Civil Aviation security personnel perished in the incident.

The Prime Minister acknowledged that one problem in Malaysia was that of unreplaced old wiring system in old buildings which could cause electrical short-circuit. -- more

▼15/10/14-01MST

CNS7875

U GE 15-10 00179 EG678

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Mahathir - Subang 3 Hong Kong

Dr Mahathir said if electrical short-circuit had actually been the cause of today's fire, then the government would conduct a more, intensive re-checking of the wiring system at specific installations especially old buildings.

Asked whether the government was satisfied with the level of safety at key places in Malaysia in the wake of two fires at the Kuala Lumpur International Airport within a short lapse of time, the Prime Minister said: + Of course we are not satisfied as the matter should not have happened. +

To another question, Dr Mahathir replied -that the reason for the Kuala Lumpur International Airport not having an alternate control tower was that the Royal Malaysian Air Force base nearby also had one. . . .

Besides, there was also the Fire Brigade's control tower which could be used during emergencies.

+ This is why we are able to normalise operations quickly. If we were to provide for everything, it would cost us a lot, + he said. -- more

♥15/10/14-25MST

CNS7916

U GE 15-10 00150 EG679

aae tbe

Mahathir - Subang 4 (last) Hong Kong

During his stay at this Asian financial hub, Dr Mahathir held discussions, with Hong Kong Governor Christopher Patten and addressed the Europe/East Asia Economic Forum yesterday.

The forum, attended by 380 chief executive officers of top multinationals, and corporate and government decision-makers world-wide, discussed global economic and political issues.

This morning Dr Mahathir, who was accompanied by his wife Datuk Seri Datin Paduka Dr Siti Hasmah Mohamad Ali, met more than 200 Malaysians over breakfast at the Island Shangri-La Hotel..

He then left for Tokyo for a one-week visit to Japan.

In Japan, Dr Mahathir will deliver a key-note address at a conference organised by the Mitsui Institute and hold talks with Prime Minister Kiichi Miyazawa.

He **is** also scheduled to visit several projects in Sapporo. -- Bernama

♥15/10/14-46MST

CNS7932