

CNS2433

R GE 22-10 00158 EF278

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PM DOES NOT RULE OUT SABOTAGE IN AIRPORT FIRE

Mahathir-fire

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ALOR SETAR, Oct 22 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad does not rule out the possibility that the Kuala Lumpur International Airport control tower fire recently was caused by an act of sabotage.

He said this was because the scene of the fire did not leave any indication to suggest that the blaze was sparked off by short circuit.

Speaking to reporters after opening the 1992 Kedah Umno Convention here, he said: +We cannot rule out sabotage .+

However, the Prime Minister said he had yet to receive a full report on the cause of the fire because the police, were still investigating.

+We have not determined the cause of the fire. However, we have found that the fire should not have started from where it did,+ he said. -- more

▼22/10/21-13MST

CNS2445

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Mahathir-fire 2 Alor Setar

Asked whether security at the airport, could have been lax, he said the fire should serve as a lesson to all concerned. not to view lightly the question of security.

On the Department of Civil Aviation (DCA) Director-General's apology to the people and government and his statement that he was prepared to be transferred following the fire, Dr Mahathir said: +That is not for him to decide. It would be different if he has erred. If he is not in the wrong, why should he be transferred?+

+But if there is any plan by the government, please do not relate it to this matter,+ he said.

On the proposed increase in parliamentary seats, he expressed the hope that it would not lead to unhealthy contests for the additional Umno division chiefs' posts.

+There can be healthy contests as Umno is a democratic party but democracy can lead to destruction if not properly used,+ he said. -- more

▼22/10/22-04MST

CNS2447

R GE 22-10 00110 EF282

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Mahathir-fire 3 (last) Alor Setar

On the reshuffle involving editorial staffers of the Utusan Melayu Group, Dr Mahathir said it was the decision of Utusan Melayu Executive Chairman Datuk Khalid Abdullah.

The Prime Minister, however, said he felt very disappointed when +I am accused of, lying by Utusan Melayu+.

He said if Utusan had doubted the accuracy of his statement it should have done some' research to verify it.

+I am slighted because people can doubt me to that extent,.. Why should I lie? This matter is something which can be easily verified,+ he said. -- Bernama

▼22/10/22-05MST