

PM: We'll accept findings of genuine experts

By PAUL GABRIEL

ALOR STAR: The Government is prepared to accept Asian Rare Earth's operations in Bukit Met-ah as being detrimental if "fair-minded and neutral" experts find it so, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said yesterday.

He said this was strictly a matter for genuine experts to decide, and not for those famous for opposing.

"We wish to hold to the truth here. If a non-partisan, neutral expert finds that the (ARE) factory is dangerous, we will abide by his decision," he told newsmen at the Sultan Abdul Halim airport.

"But if he finds nothing wrong, we have to accept that too," he said.

Dr Mahathir was asked about the Supreme Court's ruling on Aug 5 allowing ARE's application

to suspend a High Court order to stop operations.

The Supreme Court had ruled that the trial judge had not found ARE negligent in storing or disposing its toxic or radioactive waste.

The Prime Minister said experts had examined the site many times and there were those who found no danger.

"If we keep asking experts (at random) there will surely be those who will find fault as they specialise in condemning we cannot accept them," he added.

Dr Mahathir, who arrived here to attend the wedding reception of Menteri Besar Tan Sri Haji Osman Aroff's son, said the Supreme Court's decision on the controversy should be accepted by all.

"If we claim to respect the law and our judicial system, we should accept," he added.