

# It's all a question of responsibility, says

# PM criticises airport

**By Saiful  
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GURUN, Thurs. -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, expressing dissatisfaction with security at the Kuala Lumpur International Airport, said if people assigned security duties do not do their job, robbers may some day even steal the aircraft.

"If we are responsible, we not only do our duties within the stipulated scope of duties but perform beyond that," he said when asked to comment on the RM12 million gold bar robbery at the airport cargo complex yesterday.

He said he would only be satisfied with the security measures at the airport if incidents such as the robbery did not recur.

He said the airport management system could be reviewed over and over again but if people did not work hard there would be no positive effects.

"We must work hard and be more responsible. But the culture of this country is that mediocrity is rewarded. Do whatever we can do, not too hard. When some work a little bit harder, they say they are trying to butter up," he said.

Dr Mahathir had earlier visited Perwaja Steel Sdn Bhd's nail-making plant, the first series of downstream activities introduced by the company.

In the robbery, seven men impersonating policemen held up five security guards and took away 12 gold bars

weighing a total of 303kg.

This is the second incident in four months where gold bars were stolen from the cargo complex. In mid-April, 25 gold bars worth RM818,817 were reported missing after airport security personnel found one of the boxes in a consignment missing.

On Aug 21, a 16-year-old boy from Padang Jawa, Klang, was caught by MAS security guards for trespassing at the MAS hangar near Terminal Two.

He told police that he had climbed a tree underneath one of the two overhead bridges which link Terminal One and the MAS cargo complex, before walking towards the MAS hangar.

When asked by reporters for his views on the lax security at the airport which could have led to the robbery, the Prime Minister said for the moment he would not say he was satisfied with the security measures at the airport.

"I will not dare say ... if I say I am satisfied ... what if there is another robbery? I will be satisfied when there are no more incidents," he said.

When some reporters asked whether the Government would consider using the army to improve security measures at the airport, Dr Mahathir said:

"It is a matter of responsibility ... if we have to give everything to the army, we might as well have military

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## Those given important duties must be responsible, says PM

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rule. But some military-ruled nations are unsuccessful."

Dr Mahathir said the success of the management of the airport very much depended on the person in charge and added that he had numerous times stressed that it was important for those who were given important duties to be responsible.

Asked whether the weak selection of managers could have contributed to the poor management of the airport, Dr Mahathir said the Government was aware of the matter.

"There are people who are not good but were given promotions so that they no longer hold bigger responsibilities. This could be the cause for the erosion in quality.

"There are those who are lazy to act against indiscipline and this perpetuates the problem.

"This happens most of the time. When the Government takes action against these people, there will be others who want to protect them," he added.

Dr Mahathir said the New Remuneration Scheme was introduced to promote capable people as it would ensure that those who are not

interested in carrying out their duties would not be promoted.

However, Dr Mahathir said, the Government was being pressured to revert to the old system where lazy and inefficient people also get their annual increment and as a result they become "deadwood".

Asked to comment on the perception among some quarters that the Department of Civil Aviation director-general's post was considered a hot seat, Dr Mahathir said:

"If we fear becoming the director-general, we might as well give up independence."