
PM: No immediate need **for** full **radar coverage**

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ALOR STAR: Malaysia does not see an immediate need to have its own radar to take over traffic control of air space in certain parts of the country which are currently being monitored and controlled by Singapore.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said although the air space might be controlled by Singapore, the republic had to pay fees to Malaysia.

He said payment was made for every plane that flies through Malaysian air space even if the air space was under Singapore's control.

"So, without having to invest in equipment, we can get the same returns.

"We don't think, at the moment, we should waste time on having our own radar," he said after closing the Malaysia Unit Trust Week 2002 here yesterday.

He was commenting on a letter in a local English daily which called on the Government to ensure that Malaysian traffic controllers take over the duty and responsibility currently undertaken by Singapore.

The writer, aircraft pilot Capt Adnan Rashid from Batu Caves, reportedly said that although the task would take time and a lot of money, the move could help enhance national defence in the long run.

He added that Singapore monitored, controlled and direct commercial planes flying over parts of peninsula Malaysia, particularly over Johor and Pahang.

Dr Mahathir said payment by airlines using Malaysian air space might be collected by Singapore but the money would be paid to Malaysia.