

House heats up with air-con down

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IT was a heated exchange when the motion by an opposition MP to cut RM10 from the salary of Prime Minister and Finance Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad was debated, and the air-conditioning which broke down did not help to "cool" the Dewan Rakyat.

According to Deputy Speaker Datuk Muhamad Abdullah, the centralised air-conditioning in the House was not working due to a burst pipe and the Dewan was without air-conditioning for the whole morning.

The usually "cool" Dewan became "heated up" when Datuk Hassan Mohd Ali (PAS - Parit

Buntar) who tabled the motion became the target of bashing by backbenchers.

Hassan had earlier questioned Dr Mahathir's absence throughout the sitting except when he tabled the Budget, including "the waste of people's money" on the Prime Minister's private jet and mega projects.

Datuk Mohd Zin Mohamed (BN - Shah Alam), in opposing the motion, questioned Hassan's own "doings," including tax evasion for possessing forest products.

Hassan objected to the statement, saying it was subjudice to discuss the matter since the case

was still pending.

The atmosphere became tense when the backbenchers and the PAS MPs raised their voices at each other to defend their own camps.

Speaker Tun Dr Mohamed Zahir Ismail's persistent call for the MPs to stop the fight was ignored.

Earlier, Datuk Ruhanie Ahmad (BN - Parit Sulong) opposed the motion by saying that PAS should not smear other people, particularly when it was the first day of Ramadan.

The motion was rejected and the air-conditioning was fixed by noon.