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BUDGET-TRANSPORTATION

KLIA MANAGEMENT MUST BE MORE AGGRESSIVE, SAYS PM

KUALA LUMPUR, Sept 20 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said that the management of Kuala Lumpur International Airport (KLIA) must be more aggressive in their efforts to attract more airlines to use KLIA as their regional hub.

"We plan to make KLIA a hub for air transport services. Towards this end, we have developed all facilities," the Prime Minister said when tabling the 2003 Budget at Dewan Rakyat here today.

He said that the government also intended to attract other air transport companies to locate their operations in Malaysia.

At the moment, international courier company DHL, has located its global operational centre in Cyberjaya.

Dr Mahathir said the rail transport should also be expanded with the completion of double tracking in the Peninsular.

The rail transport will be more efficient compared with road transport which increasingly is becoming more congested, he said.

"The rail transport has the potential to generate new and profitable businesses. Express rail services can contribute towards the development of the transport industry and link us with neighbouring countries."

"Malaysia continues to experience deficit in the services account. However, in recent years we have been able to reduce slightly the deficit," he said.

Dr Mahathir said it could be further reduced if services that were in demand were provided.

He said that the country had been successful in accelerating the growth of its port services through more aggressive promotion to attract foreign vessels.

"Ten years ago, all ports in Malaysia handled only one million containers. Today, Port Klang alone handles four million containers while the Port of Tanjung Pelepas handled two million containers in its second year of operation."

With greater concerted efforts, our port services can be further developed, he added. -- BERNAMA

MKO KTC