

**Dr Mahathir hears voices on 'another great Pak Lah idea'**  
**Malaysiakini.com**  
**Jan 6, 2008**

His detractors and critics have long argued that Dr Mahathir Mohamad has lost his marbles and the 82-year-old former prime minister today admitted that he 'hears voices'.

However, there is no cause for alarm as he assured: "No, I am not mad yet."

According to Mahathir, the voices he hears concerns the possible construction of a new airport in the country.

"We have three airports in and around the capital city, Kuala Lumpur. One in Sungai Besi, one in Subang and one in Sepang.

"Sepang was designed for 125 million passengers a year. It can have two terminals, four satellites and five runways," he said in a posting on his blog Che Det, entitled 'I hear voices'.

"Right now, the voices tell me we are handling only 25 million passengers. So we have capacity for another 100 million passengers more.

"But the voices said we will be building a new airport (the whole caboodle) at Labu in Negri Sembilan. It is to be exclusively for the low-cost airlines, eg AirAsia," he added.

**'Enlighten' the public**

Delving into the financial archives, Mahathir said the government forked out RM8 billion for the Kuala Lumpur International Airport in Sepang.

labu low cost carrier terminal lcct 060109Even a small airport at today's prices, he pointed out, would be near to RM2 billion.

"The distance to Kuala Lumpur (from this airport) would be longer but of course it would be nearer to Seremban and other parts in Negri Sembilan.

"But that's all right as you don't pay any fare for the flights, only for the fares to the airport," he said.

With his trademark wit and sarcasm, Mahathir stressed that the building of the new airport would also help stimulate the nation's economy.

"Somebody can make quite a bit selling land. A government-linked company will get the job and contract it out to some lucky bloke. There will be a whole lot of other contracts to look forward to. It could even help with the coming recession," he said.

The government has last month approved plans by budget carrier AirAsia and conglomerate Sime Darby to build a new low-cost terminal, to be called "KLIA East @ Labu".

It will be built on a 2,800 hectare site (6,919 acres) under a private finance initiative, costing RM1.6 billion.

The project will also anchor Sime Darby's developments in nearby Labu, which include five new townships that will offer education, health, sports, high technology, recreation and entertainment services

Transport Minister Ong Tee Keat said that plans to expand an existing low-cost terminal were insufficient to handle the projected 30 million passengers by 2014.

### **Yet another great idea from Pak Lah**

Nevertheless, Mahathir noted that these were 'only voices' and called on the government to 'enlighten' the public as to why Sepang or even Subang were not suitable.

"Has the Sepang Formula One circuit taken up all the land so we cannot build any more facilities in Sepang?"

"What happens to the low-cost terminal at KLIA we have built only recently with such great speed? Do we close it down or do we transport the whole lot to Labu?" he asked.

As for the customary swipe at his handpicked successor Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, the former premier ended his posting by saying, "After thinking up about raising buffalos in Langkawi, Abdullah must be congratulated for yet another great idea."

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