

Air safety downgrade: Malaysia demands FAA explanation - Dr Mahathir

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PONTIAN, Nov 14 -- Malaysia is demanding an explanation from the United States' Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) regarding the downgrade of the country's air safety rating from Category 1 to Category 2.

Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad said the explanation was important for Malaysia to rectify and improve its weaknesses.

"We want to know (the reasons behind) the downgrade so that Malaysia can find ways to improve the situation. If they say (we) are inefficient and such, (we have managed and turned) KLIA (Kuala Lumpur International Airport) into one of the 20 largest airports in the world.

"In fact, our company (Malaysia Airports Holdings Bhd) was given the responsibility to manage Istanbul Sabiha Gokcen International Airport (in Turkey), which is not small.

"We also have received invitations from other countries to manage their airports," said Prime Minister, adding that Malaysian pilots had been easily accepted to work in countries such as Indonesia and China.

"We are known as capable people. If our people work overseas, they don't work as unskilled workers but as professionals such as pilot, engineers and architects, and received the same salary as professionals from Europe," he added.

Dr Mahathir who is also Pakatan Harapan (PH) Chairman said that to reporters after having breakfast with Tanjung Piai non-governmental organisations, here today.

Home Minister who is also PH Deputy President Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin and Johor Menteri Besar Datuk Dr Sahrudin Jamal were among those present.



Previously, Dr Mahathir was reported as saying that the government would take necessary actions to rectify any weakness in the Civil Aviation Authority of Malaysia (CAAM).

It was reported that as the consequence of the FAA downgrade, airlines licensed by the CAAM are restricted from adding new routes to and from the US.

FAA downgraded the CAAM to aviation regulator Category 2 following a review that was carried out by FAA in April this year.

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