



Friday October 10, 2008

Immigration Department seeking to reduce passport fees

PUTRAJAYA: The Immigration Department is looking for ways to reduce the cost of making passports.

Director-General Datuk Mahmood Adam said on Friday that certain security features in the passport were overlapping and by removing the redundant features, the cost of making a passport could be reduced.

A proposal would be ready before the end of the year for the Home Ministry's approval and the Government would then decide on the new passport fees, he told reporters after the department's monthly meeting. Currently, a passport application fee costs RM300 for 32 pages and RM600 for 64 pages.

"When new security features were installed, they overlapped with the old ones. If the redundant ones are removed, the cost can go down," said Mahmood.

The cost of the security chip in a passport is RM56, not including the installation and other elements, he said. The department also had problems with the nano-organic ink that caused certain passport paper to warp and that needed to be ironed out before the proposal was submitted, he said.

At the same time, the department was also stepping up efforts to increase its efficiency in tracking Malaysian passports over a longer journey to reduce the number of abuse and misuse, he added.