

Work towards a healthy tourist industry—PM

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MELAKA, Fri. — With stiff competition from so many countries in the tourist trade, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today called on all those connected with the industry to co-operate and contribute positively to ensure a healthy tourist industry in Malaysia.

He also urged Government agencies to monitor any matter that could raise dissatisfaction among tourists and the public, especially cleanliness and beauty of the environment.

Speaking at the opening of the Melaka Historical Museum at the Stadthuys, the red brick Dutch-era administrative centre here, the Prime Minister suggested that Melaka, a State rich in history but poor in natural resources like ore or timber, should turn to tourism as a new source of development.

Melaka as a flourishing trading centre, its Sultanate system and its 456 years under the Portuguese, the Dutch and the British would be of prime interest to tourists, not only from within Malaysia but also from overseas

CALL FOR WARM AND HONEST SERVICE

While commending the State Government for embarking on several projects to attract tourists, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir also reminded the people that they would have to co-operate with the authorities not only in giving tourists a service that was "efficient and superior" but also one that is warm and honest.

"If the taxi fare is \$1, don't, at the sight of a foreign face change the fare

to \$2.

"Once cheated, that person will lose his trust in us. This will not only affect the tourist industry, but also our image. If this is not controlled overseas, tourists will remind others to be careful when paying taxi fares or buying handicraft in Malaysia.

"In the end, tourists will be afraid to come to Malaysia," he said, reminding the people of some cities in other countries which have been known as places full of cheating, poor service, rude residents and corruption.

He urged the people to think about the good that will come in the long run before they become trapped with the thought of immediate gain.