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MAHATHIR-IDENTITY
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- 25 (P)

KUALA LUMPUR, APRIL 3 (BERNAMA) -- THE TOURISM SECTOR AND RELATED INDUSTRIES SHOULD BOOST THE COUNTRY'S IMAGE BY PRODUCING ARTICLES REFLECTING MALAYSIA'S IDENTITY AND CULTURAL WEALTH.

PRIME MINISTER (DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD SAID THIS WHEN OPENING THE +100 YEARS OF MALAYSIAN POTTER EXHIBITION+ AT MUZIUM NEGARA HERE.

HE WAS CONFIDENT THAT DEVELOPMENT OF THE TOURIST INDUSTRY WOULD MAKE IT A SIGNIFICANT REVENUE EARNER FOR THE COUNTRY.

DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR ALSO CALLED ON THE TOURIST INDUSTRY TO PAY ATTENTION TO POTTERY WHICH HE FELT COULD BE POPULAR WITH TOURISTS.

THE POTTERY DESIGN COULD BE IMPROVED UPON FROM THE PRESENT DESIGN WHICH SUITED ONLY LOCAL AESTHETICS FOR ENGAGEMENT OR WEDDING CEREMONIES.

+LOCAL POTTERY MAKERS SHOULD COOPERATE WITH INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER LEARNING SUCH AS MARA OR THE UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MALAYSIA (UTM) AND GET THEIR ADVICE ON DESIGN AND USE OF MODERN METHODS IN MAKING POTTERY,+ HE SAID. -- MORE
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POTTERY PRODUCED BY THE LOCAL PEOPLE AT PRESENT WAS NOT WELL RECEIVED BY FOREIGNERS BECAUSE OF THEIR DESIGN WHICH WAS NOT TO THEIR TASTE.

THIS COULD ALSO BE BECAUSE OF LIMITED OUTPUT AND POOR METHODS OF PRODUCING AND MARKETING THE ITEMS.

IN EFFORTS TO UPGRADE THE TOURIST INDUSTRY IN THE COUNTRY, EFFICIENT SERVICES AND FACILITIES SHOULD BE PROVIDED FOR BOTH LOCAL AND FOREIGN TOURISTS.

THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THE AVAILABILITY OF BASIC FACILITIES WAS AN IMPORTANT FACTOR WHICH MADE THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN POPULAR TOURIST CENTRES AND THOSE WHICH WERE UNKNOWN AND YET TO BE DEVELOPED.

REFERRING TO THE USE OF LOCAL MATERIALS IN PRODUCTION, HE SAID THE USE OF SUCH MATERIALS FOR PROCESSING INTO SEMI-MANUFACTURED GOODS WAS RELATIVELY STILL UNSATISFACTORY.

+THE GOVERNMENT ENCOURAGES THE USE OF LOCAL MATERIALS BY THE MANUFACTURING INDUSTRY,+ DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID.

FOR INSTANCE, THE REBATE OF \$700 FOR EVERY TONNE OF TIN ORE PROCESSED LOCALLY WAS TO ENCOURAGE MORE OF THE METAL TO BE PROCESSED LOCALLY. -- MORE
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MANUFACTURERS SHOULD ALSO IMPROVE THE DESIGN OF THEIR PRODUCTS AND DEVISE THE CORRECT MARKETING STRATEGY.

+THESE ARE VITAL FACTORS WHICH WE SHOULD CONSIDER WHEN WE FACE THE EXPORT MARKET,+ DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR SAID.

THE TOURIST INDUSTRY SHOULD ALSO PAY ATTENTION TO THE FAST FOOD INDUSTRY IN THE COUNTRY.

CAREFUL PLANNING AND CLEAN PREPARATION OF MALAYSIAN FAST FOOD WOULD MAKE IT POPULAR WITH TOURISTS.

ALSO PRESENT AT THE FUNCTION WERE DATUK SERI DATIN PADUKA DR BITI HASMAH ALI, MINISTERS AND MEMBERS OF THE DIPLOMATIC CORPS. --
BERNAMA