

Dr M: We should exploit Tioman's potential

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KUANTAN, Mon. — Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today that while Pulau Tioman was an island with "a lot of tourism potential," it needed a "bit more attention" to exploit this potential.

The Prime Minister, who spent the night on the island yesterday, said that the Federal Government had discussed with the Pahang Government various measures that could be taken to ensure that Pulau Tioman realised its potential.

"It may be necessary to station an assistant district officer either full time or part time on the island," he told reporters at the Royal Malaysian Air Force base here before leaving for Kuala Lumpur.

Dr Mahathir and Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah had arrived in Pahang yesterday to open the Mentakab Umno division delegates meeting, after which they flew to Pulau Tioman where, according to *Bernama*, they had an audience with the Sultan of Pahang.

The Prime Minister, his wife and other members of their party — including Pahang Menteri Besar Datuk Najib Tun Abdul Razak and his wife Tunku Putri Zainah — stayed at the island last night.

This morning, the Prime Minister and Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah stopped over in Kuantan to visit the scene of the air crash yesterday in which two Royal Malaysian Air Force pilots were killed.

The Prime Minister was sent off by Menteri Besar Datuk Najib Tun Razak, his deputy Datuk Haji Abdul Rashid Abdul Rahman and State VIPs.

The State Government is in the process of drawing up comprehensive plans to enhance Pahang's image as a tourist centre.

Pulau Tioman is among several established tourist spots like Cameron Highlands, Fraser's Hill, areas in the vicinity of Genting Highlands, Cherating Beach, Gunung Tahan and Taman Negara that have been identified for further development.

The areas were chosen because their maximum potential has yet to be realised.

Plans to enhance Pulau Tioman's tourist image included the upgrading of an existing 74-room resort hotel to about 400 rooms.