

PM: Langkawi can be another Penang

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KUALA, Tues. — Pulau Langkawi has the potential of becoming another Penang or even Singapore because of its free port status, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr. Mahathir Mohamad said today.

"But this will take time and a great deal of effort on the part of the people and Government," he said in a speech to about 300 community leaders.

He urged the people of the island to co-operate with the Government and investors in advancing the development of the island.

One of the ways in which they could help was by allowing investors from outside the island to obtain land to start their businesses.

"At the same time land owners should take the opportunity of trying to own shares in business ventures

for their own benefit," he said.

The Prime Minister also called on the people to treat tourists to the island well because the tourists, in turn, helped to ensure the success of the tourist industry.

On criticism by certain quarters about the increased consumption of liquor and cigarettes, which are cheap on the island, he pointed out that residents who do not consume liquor or smoke cigarettes should avoid doing so.

He said the Government's intention in granting Langkawi the free port status was mainly to increase the people's living standards.

"The free port status has cut their cost of living by 25 per cent and development on the island will be stepped up," he said.