

PM: We can host world fair in future

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SHAH ALAM, Sat. — It's only a matter of time before Malaysia hosts a world fair in the class of the world fairs of New York and Osaka, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said tonight.

Although the country had yet to reach a level of development to be able to host a world fair now, the Prime Minister said that with the rapid progress and the increasing standards of expos held in the country, Malaysia would definitely be in a position to host a "World Fair Malaysia" in a few years.

Launching the Shah Alam International Fair 1990 here, he said it was a step towards holding a world fair in the country.

"This is not just an international expo for Selangor; it shows the increase in standards of our expos.

"In the past, we held small expos participated by small companies, local and foreign. But this fair is a step towards holding a world fair."

The Prime Minister hoped that before reaching that stage, more local and foreign industrial giants would take part in the expos organised and bring international-class displays

to Malaysia.

Also present at the opening were Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohamed Ali Selangor Menteri Besar Tan Sri Muhammad Haji Muhammad Taib and his wife Puan Sri Rohani Asbi.

Dr Mahathir also congratulated the State Government for having transformed Shah Alam in 25 years from estate land to a modern State capital and industrial centre.

Although Selangor had sacrificed a portion of its land for the creation of the Federal Territory, it had also reaped great benefits because of its proximity to the Federal capital.

He urged Government departments and agencies to ensure investors were given efficient and fast service so that the country could develop and prosper.

In his message in the SAIF souvenir book, he said Malaysia had started attracting world attention as a country with many commercial and investment opportunities.

"This good development is the result of ample educated labour force, vast raw materials and a good infrastructure network.

"Another factor is our excellent record of political

and economic stability, which guarantees national policies do not change much."

Tan Sri Muhammad, in his speech, said the fair could become an important window to Malaysia for investors and tourists.

This, he added, was because the fair was an international expo on trade, investment and tourism.

"Eighteen countries are taking part in this fair compared with just three when it was first held in 1988.

"In time, it can become as famous and important as expos in other countries."

Among those present at the official opening was the Deputy Governor of Liaoning Province, China, Wen Shi-Zen. Liaoning Province is one of the biggest exhibitors at the fair with a delegation of 100, including businessmen and trade representatives.

The 16-day fair attracted about 40,000 visitors on the first day.

Organised jointly by the State Development Corporation and Dawnlee Organisers Sdn Bhd, the fair is expected to attract 700,000 visitors.