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Mahathir-nationalist

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MELAKA, Sept 4⁹¹ (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today the people should not be nationalistic to the extent of being reluctant to let foreigners help develop the local tourism sector.

+When we still lack the know-how, it is best that we use foreign manpower. Perhaps, one day we can lend our expertise to others when we have the necessary experience,+ he added.

Launching the Pulau Besar holiday resort, near here, he said the people should not adopt the passive attitude of waiting for tourists to visit the country without making efforts to attract them.

+We should intensify our promotional efforts to attract them. We must also take stock of our capabilities and weaknesses if we wish to be more successful in this field,+ he added.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir said the local tourism industry had achieved progress and this was evident everywhere.

+Even during the Gulf War, the local tourism sector was not as badly affected as those in other countries,+ he said. -- more

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Mahathir-nationalist 2 (last) Melaka

He added that certain countries had failed to attract tourists for some reasons but this was not so in Malaysia where the hotel occupancy rate exceeded 50 per cent.

He expressed confidence that the holiday resort, 15 minutes' boat ride from the Umbai jetty, would be a success although two previous projects, on livestock and tourism, had failed to be implemented there earlier.

He said: +An idea will not be successful until the time is ripe and, in fact, it might not succeed if implemented too early.+

He added that the management of the resort could come up with a legend on the island to attract tourists.

Efforts to develop the tourism sector should be on a sustained basis as success would only come with determined efforts by those concerned, he said.

Present at the launching were Cabinet ministers, Chief Minister Tan Sri Haji Abdul Rahim Tamby Chik and State Executive Councillors. -- Bernama

♥04/09/21-35MST