

# PM: Boating can be major tourist draw

SHAH ALAM, Thurs. — Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said boating could become a major tourist attraction in the near future.

The country has many seaside resorts and islands and the availability of more boats will encourage more foreign tourists to come.

"With growing interest in boats, the local boat-building industry will also grow," he said.

Dr Mahathir who visited the Second Malaysia Boat Show at Shah Alam Lake Gardens here, also said the Government did not wish to impose regulations that would restrict the growth of the boating industry.

However, it will monitor its growth to ensure "everything goes on well".

Commenting on the boat show, Dr Mahathir said the exhibits of low-cost boats

would encourage many people to take up boating.

Dr Mahathir was accompanied by Datuk Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali, and their children Mazahar and Mazurah, both eight, in the two-hour private visit.

Sixty-three boats from as far as the United States, United Kingdom and Sweden are on show.

The boats, priced between \$1,000 and \$1.2 million, will be at the Western lake until Sunday. Hovercrafts, water scooters and jetskis are also on display. Special booths have been set up to entertain visitors' questions on marine insurance and finance.

The boat show, aimed at promoting boating as a pastime, complements efforts to show the country as a holiday destination for boating enthusiasts.

The show is also to put

Shah Alam on the international tourism map.

The response to the show has been overwhelming and the organiser, Protemp Services, hopes to organise another show on a bigger scale next year.

"We would display some of the smaller boats at Shah Alam Lake Gardens and the bigger ones at Port Klang," its marketing director Ronald Chiew said.

Next year's show will be incorporated as part of the visit Malaysia Year 1994 programme. Boat shows provide avenues for shipbuilders to promote their products and appoint agents.

"More than \$20 million worth of boats were sold by two of the biggest participants in the first boat show last year. We also expect a good sale this year," Chiew said.