

PM: Lada should get free hand in Langkawi

By PAUL GABRIEL
6 JUL 1992

PULAU LANGKAWI: The Langkawi Development Authority (Lada) should have a free hand to develop the island, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said yesterday.

The Prime Minister said matters "on policy and development" were under Lada's control although the state govern-

ment had certain powers.

If regulations "governing other towns were applied too rigidly here," Langkawi's progress would be stunted, he said.

"We cannot afford to be too bureaucratic if Langkawi is to become an international tourist destination," he told reporters at the Delima Resort after an inspection of project sites.

"We need to have short-cuts (here), but not to the point of totally overlooking the law."

Dr Mahathir was welcomed at the airport by Mentri Besar Tan Sri Haji Osman Aroff, Lada general manager Haji Halil Mutalib and district officer Ku Nahar Ku Ibrahim.

Asked whether the Government had any intention of declaring

Langkawi a Federal Territory to hasten development, the Prime Minister said it was unnecessary.

"Lada (as the mechanism) is enough. And don't tell me the Mentri Besar won't co-operate ... he has worked well with us," he said.

Dr Mahathir said buildings and other structures here should be innovative and attractive.

"Standard homes and buildings built along a stretch are very unattractive," he said.

"We should emulate tourist spots in the United States and Europe which allow non-standard development of hotels and towns."

He visited the multi-million ringgit cultural village project in Air Hangat among other places.