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Mahathir-coconut

DIVERSIFY THE USE OF THE COCONUT FRUIT, SAYS PM

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LANGKAWI, May 28 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri ~~Dr Mahathir Mohamad~~ Mohamad said today efforts should be intensified to diversify the use of the coconut fruit to further develop the coconut industry.

The Prime Minister said that the coconut industry could be made more viable if efforts were not concentrated only on producing young coconut fruits for the juice or the production of coconut oil.

The coconut husks could also be fully utilised, he said when launching the International Coconut Festival and the Farmers, Livestock Breeders and Fishermen Water Sports Carnival '94 in Kuah here.

Dr Mahathir also said that coconut trees could be grown only for its shoots to be used in salads.

In this respect, he said that the Agriculture Ministry could conduct a research to come up with clones of coconut trees that could produce shoots within two or three years. -- more

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Mahathir-coconut 2 Langkawi

He said that the shoots could be scientifically processed and canned to be marketed.

Commenting on the young coconut promotion, he said that it was so successful that supply could not meet the demand.

However, he said, efforts should be made to further improve quality.

He said that the young coconuts offered for sale should be carved to make them more attractive and light for the convenience of the consumers.

On the festival, Dr Mahathir said that it should be made an annual or biennial affair as it had proved to be a good way to attract tourists to the resort island. -- more

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Earlier, Agriculture Minister Datuk Seri Sanusi Junid said that the festival was proof that the agricultural sector could make positive contributions in promoting the tourism sector in the country.

He said that nine countries including Maldives, Papua New Guinea, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Fiji and Malaysia were participating in the festival first held in 1987.

Later, Dr Mahathir launched three Langkawi Development Authority (Lada) ferry boats at the Kuah jetty.

The three ferry boats -- Lada I, Lada II and Lada III -- costing RM8 million each, will operate from Kuala Kedah and Kuala Perlis to Langkawi.

-- Bernama

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