

07 APR 1996

Gallery - Premier

`Galeria Perdana' OPENS TO THE PUBLIC

LANGKAWI, April 7 (Bernama) -- The `Galeria Perdana', the gallery which holds more than 10,000 gifts and souvenirs belonging to Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad is now open to the public.

The gallery, located at Kilim about 10km from Kuah, was opened to the public on Monday.

It is open daily except on Monday from 10am to 5pm and admission fees of RM2 for an adult and RM1 for children below 12 years are charged.

The RM16 million gallery built on a 5,300 sq metre site was opened by Dr Mahathir on December 3 last year and is managed by the Langkawi Development Authority (LADA).

Lada General Manager Datuk Halil Mutalib said the items on display were gifts and souvenirs given to the Prime Minister locally and abroad.

He said Dr Mahathir considered the gifts as the property of the government and the Malaysian public who therefore had the right to see them.

"The gallery is a symbol of the Prime Minister's and Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohamad Ali's appreciation to those who gave the presents," he told a news conference here.

So far about 4,500 items are on display while others will follow later.

Halil said the exhibits were in two blocks of buildings with Block A displaying items made of wood, leather, glass and crystals, musical instruments and stone wares.

The gallery's main attraction is a bicycle made of wood except for its steel chain which was presented by students of Sekolah Vokesional Muadazam.

He said the ceramic collections, Islamic Arts, weapons, replicas and textiles were on the first floor of Block A.

"Block B exhibits collections made from various metals and also local and foreign honours and awards and on the first floor visitors will be able to see the Dr Siti Hasmah's collections," he said.

Halil said the ground floor in Block A and B housed 11 types of vehicles presented to Dr Mahathir since he became Prime Minister.

He said the gallery was another tourist attraction on the duty-free resort island. -- BERNAMA

ZAA ARA AO