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Mahathir-Identity

GET RID OF NEGATIVE CULTURE, MAHATHIR TELLS YOUTH

LANGKAWI, Feb 29 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today called for continued efforts to get rid of the negative culture infiltrating the community, particularly among the youth.

He said this was necessary in order to create a Malaysian people who practiced a noble culture and possessed an identity in striving towards achieving the objectives of Vision 2020.

"Malaysia is not spared from facing various problems among its young people. As such, we must strive to eradicate unhealthy activities in order to create a noble society," he added.

He was launching the "Rakan Muda" and "Champs" range of sports goods and sportswear marketed by the Rakan Muda Corporation at Dataran Lang, here. Also present were Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohamed Ali, Youth and Sports Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin, Culture, Arts and Tourism Minister Datuk Sabbaruddin Chik and Kedah Menteri Besar Tan Sri Haji Osman Aroff.

Dr Mahathir said with that in view, the government launched the Rakan Muda programme to involve the youth in healthy activities and avoid negative ones which could destroy the noble values of the people and nation.

It was hoped the programme would succeed in portraying an identity of the youth as positive-thinking and well-behaved people, he added.

Commending various groups for their efforts in striving for those ideals, Dr Mahathir commended the Rakan Muda Corporation for its initiative in introducing sports goods and sportswear for youth.

The launching ceremony was marked by Dr Mahathir activating the Rakan Muda Corporation's home page on its products on the Internet, the worldwide information network.

Guests were entertained to marshal arts, rollerblade and cycling demonstrations staged by youths.

Earlier, Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali flagged off the Langkawi prelude leg of "Le Tour de Langkawi" a 1,500-km cycle race, in front of the Langkawi Development Authority (LADA) headquarters building.

A total of 138 cyclist from 18 countries, including Australia, Britain, China, France, Germany, Holland, Japan, New Zealand, Slovak Republic, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates and the United States, are participating.

"Le Tour de Langkawi," based on the concept of the noted Tour de France, was mooted by Dr Mahathir who patron of the event.

After the 75-km Langkawi leg, the riders will set off on the tour from Kangar on the mainland.

The tour will take them to Georgetown (190km), Georgetown-Ipoh (175km), Tanjong Malim-Genting Highlands (63km), Kuala Lumpur-Melaka (170km), Muar-Johor Baharu (177km), Mersing-Kuantan (202km), Kuantan-Paka (110km), Paka-Kuala Terengganu (110km), Kuala Terengganu-Kota Baharu (167).

From Kota Baharu, the riders will be flown back to Langkawi for the last leg round the island on March 10. -- BERNAMA

ZAA LDB