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Mahathir-nature

PM TELLS MALAYSIANS TO EMULATE NEW ZEALAND ON NATURE CONSERVATION

By: Ali Mamat

AUCKLAND, March 28 (Bernama) -- Malaysians should emulate the people of New Zealand for their self-initiative in protecting the environment without solely depending on the government, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

He said New Zealanders valued environmental cleanliness and kept most of their lakes and rivers clean to the extent that in some places it was said that their waters could be drunk untreated.

"They also give priority to the cleanliness of their house compounds and take the initiative to beautify the views along roads," he told Malaysian journalists covering his four-day visit to New Zealand.

Dr Mahathir had visited the Taupo Lake, a holiday destination known for its natural beauty and clear and clean waters which is situated south of the city here.

He also took a ride on the MV 'Osprey' cruise ferry from the Hobsonville wharf to the Viaduct Basin wharf here to view the beauty and cleanliness of the area.

Dr Mahathir, who is obviously impressed with New Zealand's maritime achievements, said Malaysia could learn a lot from this South Pacific nation in composite technology and boat building industries.

To a question, the Prime Minister said New Zealand could become a developed and rich country because it was willing to develop its forests into sheep and cattle farms.

"Without felling trees in its forests, it would have been impossible for New Zealand to become developed and rich," he said.

In this connection, Dr Mahathir said: "We also need areas to build houses, industries and farms."

Dr Mahathir said he believed New Zealand was now truly interested in forging good ties with Malaysia and other Asian countries.

"New Zealand is now aware that the establishment of cooperation with Malaysia benefits both sides a lot.

"...and this effort to be closer to Asia is not only because of the region's rapidly expanding economy but also because they find that their link with Europe has loosened, especially after the formation of the European Union," he said. --

-- Bernama

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