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SMALL TOURISM OPERATORS URGED TO TEAM UP WITH MAJOR PLAYERS

KUALA BERANG, Aug 19 (Bernama) -- Small tourism operators should team up with the large players through equity shareholding to ensure higher returns, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said.

The Prime Minister said it was pointless for small operators to build chalets or hotels which lacked every type of facility and were only able to attract tourists such as "hippies".

He said Malaysia does not need this kind of tourists.

"We have entered an era when we require large investments to ensure quality and perfection," he told a news conference at Kenyir Lake Golf Resort, 40km from here, today.

Dr Mahathir said he was impressed with the rapid development of the tourism infrastructure at Kenyir Lake and described Kenyir Lake Golf Resort, a development by Hicom Leisures Sdn Bhd which is a subsidiary of DRB-Hicom Group, as evidence that the tourism industry could grow without damaging the natural environment.

Dr Mahathir, who arrived for an overnight stay at the resort yesterday, today inspected the construction of an 18-hole golf course by Perspec Prime (M) Sdn Bhd, another subsidiary of the DRB-Hicom Group, at Pulau Pupi near the resort.

Accompanied by Terengganu Menteri Besar Tan Sri Wan Mokhtar Ahmad and DRB-Hicom Group chairman Tan Sri Yahya Ahmad, the Prime Minister also inspected several other areas at the lake in a speedboat which he drove himself. -- BERNAMA

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