

27/02/1997

Dr M takes sip of Japanese tradition

PRIME Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, his deputy Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim and Cabinet ministers yesterday took part in a Japanese tea ceremony - a refined and disciplined act of serving tea - after their weekly meeting at Bukit Tinggi.

Dr Mahathir, speaking to reporters after the tea ceremony, said the ministers had suggested the visit during last week's Cabinet meeting, to enable them to see for themselves how the Japanese are able to discipline themselves.

"Last week, we talked about the tea ceremony as an event that can teach us discipline," he said at the Bukit Tinggi Resort, near Janda Baik in Pahang.

"It was a normal meeting where several matters and problems were discussed. We wanted to attend the tea ceremony to learn how the Japanese disciplined themselves and they (ministers) agreed that an appropriate place was the Tea House at the resort.

"However, they felt that it was not right to come here only to watch the tea ceremony. Thus, it was agreed that we hold the Cabinet meeting here," he added.

The Japanese Tea House is part of the Bukit Tinggi Resort and 18-hole golf course development, which also includes the first phase of the Bukit Tinggi township managed by Berjaya Group Bhd. The first phase costs RM850 million.

Berjaya Group property and development general manager Chin Chean Fui said besides the resort and golf course, the Bukit Tinggi development comprises a concept township, park, theme park, bungalows, condominiums, French-style "Colmar" village and hotels.

"All these projects, covering about 1,200ha under the first phase, are expected to be completed between three and four years. These are part of the many phases of projects to be developed on a 6,400ha site that will probably take between 20 and 25 years to complete," he added.

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