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Mahathir: Malaysians should have sense of history

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MALAYSIANS should have a sense of history, because without knowing where we came from it will not be possible to know where we are going, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said.

"Maybe they think they are moving forward but actually they are moving backwards. This is the problem of people who do not know their history," he said in Langkawi yesterday.

Launching a photography exhibition in conjunction with the 10th anniversary of Langkawi as a duty-free island, Dr Mahathir said Malaysians generally do not realise that what they go through now will one day become history.

Dr Mahathir said during the Japanese Occupation, for example, Malaysians used Japanese money or banana currency, which had little value of less than 1 sen.

"No one thought to keep this money because it had little value. Today it is very difficult to find, even though we know it is part of our history," he said.

The photography exhibition is organised by New Straits Times (NST) and the Langkawi Development Authority (Lada).

NST group editor Datuk A. Kadir Jasin said the exhibition will highlight the successful development of the island, achieved through the cooperation between the federal and state governments and Lada.

Dr Mahathir said through NST's coverage of the island's developments, photographs taken, and from its archives, the public can catch a glimpse of Langkawi over the years and the changes it has undergone.

"This can help create awareness, or nostalgia, about Langkawi before and Langkawi today," he said.

Dr Mahathir said as a measure of the island's success in the last 10 years, when Langkawi first obtained duty-free status, 30,000 tourists visited the island. Today tourist arrivals to Langkawi number about two million a year.

The 10-day exhibition is co-sponsored by the MetroGiant Group, Canon Marketing (M) Sdn Bhd, Le Proton Exhibitions Sdn Bhd, Sheraton Perdana Resort, Pelangi Beach Resort, City Bayview Hotel, LADA Langkawi (Holdings) Sdn Bhd, Huswah Exhibition Sdn Bhd, Metroplex Bhd, Central Hotel, Amanah Saham Anak Langkawi, Jetty Point Complex, Burau Bay Resort, and Bright Mark Sdn Bhd.

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