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PM: Photographs can aid physical growth of nation

LANGKAWI, Mon. - Chiding Malaysians for lacking a sense of history, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said proper documentation of articles and photographs can help provide a sense of direction for everyone.

The Prime Minister said photographs especially would not only help create awareness on the importance of history among Malaysians, but also assist in the physical development of the country.

He said this when opening a photograph exhibition jointly organised by the New Straits Times and the Langkawi Development Authority. He was accompanied by his wife, Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali, Kedah Menteri Besar Tan Sri Sanusi Junid and his wife, Puan Sri Inangda Manyam Keumala.

Dr Mahathir said these photographs would not only evoke a sense of nostalgia, but also provide focus in the pursuit of development. He was confident that the photographs displayed would not only achieve their objectives in enlightening the people of Langkawi's progress, but also spur new ones.

The exhibition is held in conjunction with Langkawi's 10th year of duty-free status. It features about 120 photographs, newspaper cuttings and cartoons depicting the island's development since the 1940s.

Held at the foyer of the Lada complex in Kuah from 9am to 9pm and open to the public, the exhibition is the first of its kind depicting Langkawi's development.

Dr Mahathir, who arrived at the complex about 5.20pm, was given a traditional welcome, accompanied by the beating of drums.

On hand to greet him were Sanusi who is also Lada co-chairman, NST Group Editor Datuk A. Kadir Jasin, his deputy Ahmad A. Talib and deputy general manager of Lada, Mohd Puat Ali.

Some of the pictures were of special interest to Dr Mahathir who had served as a medical officer on the island. He spent about an hour going through the photographs.

Kadir, in his brief welcoming remark, said the exhibition was to highlight Langkawi's growth after it was granted duty-free status in 1987. To mark the occasion, the NST also published a 20-page supplement distributed nationwide today.

Said Kadir: "The NST first organised an exhibition last year to commemorate Umno's 50-year struggle. This was followed by a roadshow when the pictures were exhibited all across the country, except in two States.

"The success of the first exhibition encouraged us to come with the second one. Perhaps, we can organise yet another exhibition on a slightly wider dimension in the future."

The Langkawi exhibition also displays some old photographs kept by property developer Metro Giant Group. Apart from thanking Metro Giant, Kadir also thanked Amanah Saham Anak Langkawi, Canon Marketing Malaysia Sdn Bhd, Le Proton Exhibitions, Huswah Exhibition Sdn Bhd, Sheraton Perdana Resort, Hotel Central, Pelangi Beach Resort, Burau Bay Resort, City Bayview, Jetty Point Shopping Complex, Lada Langkawi Holdings and local florist Bright Mark Sdn Bhd.

He also thanked all those who gave their co-operation to the exhibition including the police, Customs and Excise, Langkawi District Council, Langkawi District Office, Tenaga Nasional Bhd and the Press.

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