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Stop thinking the world owes you, film-makers told

Hamisah Hamid

PRIME Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad last night urged Malaysian film-makers to discard the mentality that the world, the Government and everybody owe them.

He said they should not insist that the Government fight for what they want, especially when the Government has already provided various facilities and incentives to benefit them.

"We are living in an era of survival of the fittest," he said. "For instance, the Multimedia Super Corridor (MSC), it has no precedent. We have no source of reference.

"There is no model to look to as an example but we have to be brave to pioneer it, and after we established it, we have to market it aggressively," he said in his address at a dinner hosted by the Malaysian Artistes Association (Seniman) in Kuala Lumpur last night.

The Government's efforts have borne fruit and the world is beginning to have confidence in Malaysia where to date 90 companies have applied for MSC status, Dr Mahathir said.

Similarly, local film-makers must be daring in venturing into new areas and after getting into it, to market it aggressively.

"It is the same for films. Hollywood films are leading the industry not because of big budgets but because of aggressive marketing to every part of the world," he said.

To become successful, film-makers must also be successful entrepreneurs, the Prime Minister said, adding that they must possess the art of negotiation and establish good relations with everyone in the industry.

He said to ensure that those involved in the film industry receive protection for their creative work, the Government, through the Multimedia Bill of Guarantees, has among other things made it a condition that the MSC would be a regional leader in intellectual property protection and cyberlaws.

In this respect, film producers should grab the opportunities and make use of the multimedia technology, such as digital graphics, since there is now a guarantee that their work will be protected. In addition, the new technology is already widely used in locally-made TV commercials.

Film-makers should also not see television as a threat as they can produce TV films as well. "If our films are of good quality, it will be well-received in the global market," he said.

However, the local film-makers must make films based on more concrete issues, rather than concentrating on romance as the main theme.

There is also no need to copy films produced in the West.

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