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Mahathir-Animation

MALAYSIANS ENCOURAGED TO PURSUE STUDIES IN ANIMATION FIELD

KUALA LUMPUR, Aug 19 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today talented Malaysians keen in pursuing their interest in animation overseas will be granted scholarships by the government.

He said that although the government no longer encourage Malaysians to study abroad in the wake of the economic slowdown, exemption would be given for studies in the field which is new to the country.

"It is up to those interested in upgrading their knowledge in the field and in this way further contributing to this new industry," he said in his speech at the premiere of the first local animated film, "Silat Lagenda" at the Putra World Trade Centre here.

The futuristic film produced by Peninsula Pictures Sdn Bhd is about five friends who are warriors in the 21st century fighting against rogues from the era of the Melaka Sultanate.

Dr Mahathir said that Malaysians had capability to venture into high technology fields but it was only now that they were earnest in their ventures.

Commenting on animated films, he said that although the local production could not yet match Disney or Warner Brothers films, repeated attempts would result in improvements.

"I am confident that if we try and try again, we will be able to improve our quality. This is God's gift...if we were to keep on trying, we will soon be perfect," he said.

Dr Mahathir was happy to note that the first local animated film carries the story which is related to history.

The production of the film took three years involving some 100 local animators while the script, design, financial support and post-production were also by Malaysians.

Nationwide screening of the film will commence on Aug 27.

At the function, Dr Mahathir received RM150,000 from Peninsula Pictures, Kelab Automotif Perodua Malaysia and Moccis Trading Sdn Bhd for the National Special Fund.

-- BERNAMA

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