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Mahathir-products

HAVE FAITH IN LOCAL PRODUCTS, SAYS DR MAHATHIR

KUALA LUMPUR, Aug 14 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said Malaysians should have faith in made-in-Malaysia products which are just as good, if not superior than imported ones, including from developed nations.

"We would want Malaysians to believe in our products...they are of world quality, that is why exhibition like this is important," he said opening the Expo Cintai Malaysia 99 or Love Malaysia Consumer and Trade Fair, here.

Malaysians should be ready or willing to pay a little more for local products of good quality, he said.

They had to develop a sense of patriotism in buying local goods which could help Malaysian industries and the country to prosper, he said while reminding local manufacturers to produce high quality products that conformed to international standards.

Dr Mahathir said Malaysians by and large did not have faith in locally-made products believing that such items were not as good as imported ones from developed country.

But, he said, Malaysians sometimes bought items like garments overseas only to find out later that they were manufactured in the country.

"Others are prepared to accept our goods. Now it's the Malaysians who must buy Malaysian made products not only out of sense of patriotism but because knowing that the quality is good," he said.

Dr Mahathir said it was sometimes difficult to persuade Malaysians to buy local goods although they were invented by Malaysians using local materials and manufactured with Malaysian labour.

He said although the stress was for Malaysians to buy local goods, it did not mean that Malaysia would stop buying products from other countries.

The prime minister said this was because Malaysia believed in creating wealth for itself and for other countries when it imported goods from them.

In urging local manufacturers to produce quality goods, Dr Mahathir said they should never try to market inferior items which could reflect badly on Malaysia.

"The products must be exactly as described in brochures or manuals (of manufacturers)," he said.

As Malaysia was recovering from the regional economic and financial crisis, he said it was necessary for the country to conserve and also increase its foreign reserves by exporting more goods.

The government did not spare any effort to turn around the economy with various signs indicating that it was already on the mend, he said.

"We are in a much better shape than one year ago," he said.

While complementing government's effort to spur economic recovery, the fair is mainly aimed at encouraging Malaysians to buy local products, promoting domestic market and exploring export market by inviting foreign buyers to the event.

The fair is acknowledged by the Malaysia Book of Records as the country's largest consumer and trade show.

With more than 600 booths and 340 companies participating, this year's fair offers Malaysian-made products and services, including information technology, financial institutions, properties and hotels that were not included in last year's exposition.

The organising committee has also embarked on roadshows to China and

Asean countries and invited foreign buyers to visit the fair.

Business-matching and import sourcing activities are being arranged during the fair, thanks to the presence of about 500 foreign delegates from Thailand, Myanmar, Vietnam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Brunei, the Philippines and China.

The Aug 13-22 event in Seri Kembangan is organised by the Kuala Lumpur and Selangor Chinese Chamber of Commerce and Industry in collaboration with the Malaysia International Exhibition and Showroom (M.I.N.E.S).

-- BERNAMA

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