

PM: Preserve beauty, legends of Langkawi

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“Tourists will not come if it is fully developed”

LANGKAWI, Wed: Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad called tonight for the natural beauty and legends of Langkawi to be preserved.

He said that if Langkawi is fully developed like other major cities, tourists will not come.

“The natural setting of the island must be maintained. Its islands, sandy beaches, mountains, padi fields, hot springs and waterfalls must be preserved or Langkawi will lose its allure as a tourism destination,” he said.

He said this during the launch of the week-long Fiesta Langkawi programme, attended by more than 2,000 guests.

Later, fireworks and traditional music helped to signal the start of the programme which is the anchor event held in conjunction with the 10th anniversary celebration of the Langkawi Development Authority (**Lada**).

Mahathir also said the many legends connected with the island, especially the story of Mahsuri, should be preserved as part of its identity as a tourism hot spot.

“I hope that **Langkawi** becomes the number one tourist destination,” Mahathir said, adding that the federal government is willing to pour in more investments through **Lada**.

He also launched a book entitled **Legends of Langkawi**, written by Dewan Rakyat Speaker Tun **Mohammad Zahir Ismail**, who is

a history buff.

Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Syed Razak Syed Zain urged the federal government to consider extending the tenure of **Lada** beyond 2010.

He said Langkawi is **Lada** and without the body, no intensive development can be realised.

Syed Razak, who is also a co-chairman of **Lada**, said **Lada's** contribution is invaluable to the island and its people.

He said Langkawi has a long-term future as a great tourism destination based on the number of investors who have indicated their interest

to set up businesses here.

Lada was set up in April, 1990 as a statutory body through an Act of Parliament.

Syed Razak also appealed to Mahathir to declare Langkawi a tourism city as such a status would bring greater development.