

25 JUN 2001

Mahathir-Building

KEEP BUILDING LIGHTS ON FOR MERDEKA CELEBRATION

KUALA LUMPUR, June 25 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad has urged all building owners here to keep their lights on at night, especially from Aug 17 to the middle of September.

He said this effort was important to make Kuala Lumpur more striking and beautiful at night as a way to lure tourists to the country.

"I ask you to do that (keep the lights on) for tourism, the country and the celebration for National Day," he said at a dinner and discussion with associations involved with tourism industry here today.

The Prime Minister said Tenaga Nasional Berhad had even made a commitment to give a 50 per cent discount on electricity bills for buildings which use more electricity than they normally do.

"I hope everybody could respond to this," he said.

He also expressed the hope that one day Kuala Lumpur could be as beautiful as New York at night.

Dr Mahathir said he would monitor the efforts made by building owners to keep their lights on during the stipulated period.

"I will go driving at night and jot down," he said.

He also hoped that all building owners and others like petrol stations would fly the Malaysian flag and distribute it to motorists.

"Please help by contributing as much as you can in distributing flags," he said, adding that they should also encourage tourists to get involved in the celebration.

Dr Mahathir also advised all hotel operators and others involved in the local tourism industry to give good and hospitable services to all tourists.

"Be kind to these tourists that help us to become rich," he said.

Earlier, Culture, Arts and Tourism Minister Datuk Abdul Kadir Sheikh Fadzir said since December last year Malaysia had registered tourist arrivals of about one million every month.

"For the half year, Malaysia has achieved seven million tourist arrivals," he said.

He said this achievement was very encouraging and should be maintained.

However, it would be very challenging to continue to attract such large numbers of tourists as neighbouring countries were also working hard to woo tourists, he said.

He said the private sector should work closely with the government to promote the local tourism industry.

-- BERNAMA

MHI AKT YBY