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Promote music industry, says Dr M

KUALA LUMPUR, Fri. - The local music industry should be developed to make it world class, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

There were many aspects of the industry which could be aggressively promoted with the close co-operation of all those involved in it.

"Music, in terms of manufacturing, the wholesale and retail trade, education and entertainment, is big business worldwide and Malaysia is yet to gain a significant foothold.

"There is still much to be done to develop the music industry in all its facets in Malaysia," he said.

The manufacture and distribution of musical instruments, education, event management and talent management could be promoted as the country had the infrastructure.

Speaking before declaring open Expomuzik 2001 at the Mid Valley Mega Mall here this morning, he said the industry must also aim to nurture and develop local talent to world-class standards.

"I must stress that even if we have the best concert halls in the world and the best facilities for performing arts in the country, it is meaningless if we do not have or are not able to nurture our own Malaysian talents of world-class standards to perform in them.

"As it is often said, genuine talent is something we cannot buy, we need to search for it within ourselves," Dr Mahathir said, adding that the contribution of such talents was vital for the development of a viable and sustainable entertainment industry.

Also present was Datuk Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohamed Ali who is the patron of the Festival of Music Kuala Lumpur 2001.

Expomuzik 2001 incorporates the Festival of Music which comprises a series of performances and competitions culminating in a varied three-day programme starting today

Themed "Celebrating Music, Sound and Harmony" the musical extravaganza aims to bring the different facets of music to the public.

During the launch this morning, the Prime Minister was serenaded with a piano rendition of "Happy Birthday" and a medley of songs by 85 pianists, a presentation which was later endorsed by the Malaysia Book of Records as the largest participation in piano performance.

Dr Mahathir turned 76 on Dec 20.

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