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Mahathir-Langkawi

LANGKAWI TOURISM INDUSTRY WILL GROW, SAYS KATA DR MAHATHIR

LANGKAWI, May 5 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today expressed confident that the island's tourism industry will grow in future.

"Even now it is growing and I think it will continue to grow in future," he told reporters at the Langkawi international airport in Padang Matsirat here before returning to Kuala Lumpur after inspecting the progress of development projects here.

Langkawi recorded almost two million arrivals of local and foreign tourists last year compared to 1.8 million arrivals the year before.

During the six-hour visit, Dr Mahathir was accompanied by Kedah Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Syed Razak Syed Zain and Member of Parliament for Langkawi Datuk Abu Bakar Taib.

He said the project to build a cable-car linking the integrated shopping complex, Oriental Village and the 708-metre high Mount Machinchang in Teluk Burau was going smoothly and would be completed as planned.

The RM46 million project, jointly undertaken by Dopple-Mayer from Austria and a local company, is expected to be completed in June and fully operational in August.

Dr Mahathir also viewed the project from a helicopter during the visit.

Meanwhile, the project consultant Dr Peter A.Wyss said the project, spanning 2.2km from the Oriental Village to the Machincang mountain would enable visitors to reach the peak in nine minutes using the largest six-seater gondola.

He said there would be two stations for the cable-car project, one at the top and the other on the eastern bridge.

Mt Matcinchang has rock fossils called sandstones which are one of the oldest in the country lasting about two million years. It has a crater and two position peaks with an awesome view of the island resort and its surrounding 99 sister islands.

Earlier on arrival at the island, Dr Mahathir visited the Langkawi Harbour Park project in Teluk Burau.

The project will provide various facilities needed by foreign tourists in addition to a marina which can accommodate 100 yachts at any one time.

A three-star hotel and apartments will also be built at the harbour park covering 12 hectares.

Dr Mahathir also took a boat ride to see the RM29.6 million project to rehabilitate the Kok beaches, including the construction of two man-made islands which will serve as wave breakers to prevent erosion.

-- BERNAMA

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