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Photo exposition on Dr M next year to mark his 21 years as PM

KUALA LUMPUR, Thurs. - A photo exhibition to mark Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's 21st year as Prime Minister is being planned for August next year.

The exhibition, to be co-ordinated by the Information Ministry with the co-operation of all electronic and print media, is scheduled to be held at the National Art Gallery during the Merdeka Day celebrations.

Information Minister Tan Sri Khalil Yaakob said some 90,000 photographs of Dr Mahathir, largely candid shots of him taken locally and abroad by Press photographers and photojournalists, will be on display.

"Malaysians, especially photo enthusiasts, will get to see pictures taken of Dr Mahathir at various functions, meetings and events, both locally and overseas, over the last 21 years," he told reporters.

He was speaking after launching the World Press Photo (WPP) 2002 exhibition at the National Art Gallery here today.

He said the exhibition would also be an educational programme for schoolchildren and students in tertiary institutions.

Khalil said a panel comprising professionals from the print media would be set up to select pictures submitted by newspapers, news agencies, broadcasting stations and foreign media.

"A media committee will also be set up to oversee the successful implementation of the exhibition," he added.

"These pictures may not have been used by newspapers due to space constraints but they tell a great story of the man who has been constantly photographed in Malaysia, by professional or amateur photographers." He said it should be an interesting effort to gather all photographs of Dr Mahathir in an exhibition as a mark of respect to the man "who had brought us the developments we enjoy in Malaysia today".

Besides the unused photographs, the exhibition would also display those used by newspapers.

"Foreign publications could do their part in the exhibition by contributing some of their pictures of Dr Mahathir," he added.

Khalil said the photographs exhibited would be later turned into an album.

A total of 49,235 photographs have been submitted by 4,171 photographers from 123 countries for the WPP exhibition.

Of this number, about 30 photojournalists are from Malaysia.

Khalil thanked the WPP Foundation for its effort in organising the exhibition annually.