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Mahathir-Tourism

MORE MODERN WATER SETTLEMENTS TO ATTRACT TOURISTS

LANGKAWI, March 1 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad wants more tourism centres based on the concept of water settlements of international standard to be built to attract more foreign tourists to this country.

The Prime Minister believed that water settlements could attract foreign tourists who wanted to experience life in such settlements as found in Sabah, Sarawak and Brunei.

"If we can have clean water settlements with modern and comfortable facilities, I am sure we can attract rich foreign tourists," he said after opening the Langkawi Lagoon Resort at Padang Matsirat here.

Dr Mahathir said for instance port settlements based on the concept of Port Grimaud in France, which had shops, restaurants, hotels and a marina could be set up in this country.

"I visited the place and found there are similarities between that place and water settlements in Malaysia. If we can develop such water settlements, I am sure foreign tourists will come to experience our life here," he said.

He said water settlements in Malaysia were not very attractive particularly in the west coast as the sea water was not clear and clean as a result of the mud brought along by river water.

The Government was studying ways of overcoming this situation but had not been fruitful yet.

"Our sea water is actually clear for instances 10KM from the coast such as at Pulau Payar, the water is very clear for tourists to appreciate marine life," he said.

Dr Mahathir urged coastal land developers to learn the technology that would prevent mudflow into the sea.

He said the government would develop more marina to attract big yachts to anchor and visit the surrounding attractive places.

He said the government would develop marina at suitable places such as Pulau Tioman, Penang and the east coast states.

Replying to a question, Dr Mahathir said the government wanted to see more foreign tourists visiting Malaysia.

"My target is one foreign tourist for every resident of Malaysia and I want this to be achieved by tomorrow if possible."

Opening the resort, Dr Mahathir said the hot weather conditions in this country should not be an obstacle to foreign tourists particularly from Europe from visiting this country.

"The hot weather makes the skin smooth without any wrinkles and that is why Asians look younger every day," he said to loud applause.

The RM100 million five-star Langkawi Lagoon Resort was built by MKLand Holdings Berhad.

It faces the Andaman Sea and offers suite and kampung-style accommodation with all necessary facilities.

This is MKLand's third project after Bukit Merah Laketown Resort and Taiping Golf and Country Club.

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