

03 FEB 2004

Mahathir-Cuttlefish

DR M RELATES EXPERIENCE CATCHING CUTTLEFISH IN LANGKAWI

LANGKAWI, Feb 3 (Bernama) -- After landing eight kilogrammes of cuttlefish in only four hours here last night, former Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad suggested that such activities be explored fully to be turned into a new tourism product in Langkawi.

"Yesterday, I took a boat to catch cuttlefish near Pantai Chenang from 11pm till 3am. I found there are more than 100 boats also fishing cuttlefish, like a town lit by lights...there are plenty of cuttlefish," he told reporters after launching the Emkay Youth Excellence programme in Taman Sungai Kuala Melaka here today.

Dr Mahathir, who mooted many tourism projects on this tourist island, said perhaps those engaged in the tourism sector did not know how to cash in on the tourism prospects in Langkawi.

Dr Mahathir, who enjoyed relating his experience in catching cuttlefish, said the small boat he was in brought back eight kilogrammes of cuttlefish.

"We can promote cuttlefish-catching activities. The Japanese like to eat cuttlefish, we can bring them here and invite them to go out to the sea to catch cuttlefish," he said.

Dr Mahathir said many more attractions like feeding the eagles, exploring the natural beauty of mangrove swamps and tracking dolphins could be initiated to woo tourists.

He also said the Telaga Harbour Park Marina project at Pantai Kok would have three hotels -- each with six, five and four star ratings -- to cope with the sailors arriving there.

Telaga Harbour Park, has become a beautiful place after being developed into a town with marina facilities.

On the Emkay Youth Sports Excellence Programme, Dr Mahathir said it was a good programme to train youths to excel in sports.

"To be an expert in a particular sports, it should start from young as was done by successful athletes in western countries.

"Unfortunately, in our country, not many athletes are trained from young. I congratulate Emkay for coming up with the idea to train children in golf and tennis," he said.

He also hoped more corporate companies would come forward to carry out various activities for the society as a "return the favour gesture."

Under the programme, 30 children will be trained in golf and 13 in tennis fully financed by the Emkay Group.

The children are selected from several primary schools around Padang Matsirat here.

Present was Emkay Group Executive Chairman Tan Sri Mustapha Kamal Abu Bakar.

-- BERNAMA

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