

New attraction - a mural of Dr M in Alor Setar

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Walking along Pekan China and Pekan Melayu divided only by the main road in Alor Setar which is lined by a row of old buildings has now become even more interesting with the presence of a mural of former prime minister, Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

The mural, located in Jalan Pekan Melayu, is a state government initiative in conjunction with the 'Tourism Month of the Legend Kedah', which was launched by Kedah Menteri Besar Mukhriz Mahathir, in Tanjung Chali, yesterday.

Sporting a native Kedah Malay shirt and black songkok and smiling from a two-story building wall, the 30.48 metre-wide mural of the former premier enlivens the street.

Beside it is the mural of the Petronas Twin Towers and Malaysia's first car, the Proton Saga, both of which became icons of Malaysia's 'Father of Modernisation'.

The project Manager, Mustakim Ismail, 24, from Medium Touch, Kuala Lumpur, said he and two other painters, Abdul Qoyyum Mohd Nadzri 22, and Mohd Zulfadli Ahmad Nawawi, 29, began it on June 1 and completed it yesterday.

Aided by state government

Mahathir was chosen as the subject for the mural following discussions with the Kedah state government, he told Bernama.

Using true life images recorded by Malaysiakini photographer, Lim Huey Teng, they started work by doing the basic sketch on the wall.

"After that we started the process of painting layer upon layer, continuing to colour the sketch using spray paint," he said.

Finally, the finishing touches were given to refine the painting to ensure there were no defects. The state government specially provided scaffolding aid and skylift for the artists.

Hundreds of cans of montana gold spray and Dulux Weathershield paint brought from Kuala Lumpur were used for the mural, which can last for at least 10 years without having to be repainted, said Mustakim.

Kedahans proud

Pride and excitement was the reaction of visitors who came to take pictures of the mural of Mahathir.

Checks by Bernama today found an increasing number of visitors coming and going, not

wanting to miss the opportunity to capture memories there, some even doing pre-wedding shoots there.

Ida Ashikin Abdullah ,19, from Alor Setar, said she came to know of the painting via Facebook, before deciding to visit with her friends.

Ida was pleased with the mural of Mahathir, who is her idol and whom she describes as one of the most prominent leaders in the world.

Mohammad Farhan Mohd Salleh, 19, said he no longer had to go to Penang Street or Ipoh in search of the art of mural painting, as it can be found here now.

"It can draw many local and foreign tourists, since 2016 is 'Visit Kedah Year'," he added.

- Bernama

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