

Langkawi plan 'achievable'

THUMBS-UP: Dr Mahathir welcomes targets set in RM5 billion tourism blueprint



Tun Dr Mahathir delivering a keynote address at the Malaysian Industrial Development Finance Investment Forum in Langkawi yesterday.

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FORMER prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad gave the thumbs-up to the Langkawi Tourism Blueprint, involving RM5 billion to be invested in tourism projects over five years.

"That should make up for five years of total disregard for Langkawi," he said after delivering a keynote address at the Malaysian Industrial Development Finance (MIDF) Investment Forum here, yesterday.

Some 100 participants, comprising corporate leaders, fund managers and analysts, attended the one-day forum, organised by MIDF Amanah Investment Bank Bhd.

Also present were MIDF Bhd chairman Tan Sri Mahmood Taib and MIDF managing director Datuk Mohd Najib Abdullah.

Dr Mahathir said he believed the targets, spelt out in the blueprint such as 4,200 jobs to be created, 3 million annual tourist arrivals and RM3.8 billion in tourism receipts,

were achievable. He said he welcomed the blueprint though he was not present at the launch.

The blueprint, launched by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak on Thursday, here, comprises 14 initiatives under three themes — product, infrastructure and enablers.

The road map in the blueprint is the second phase of the development plan for Langkawi, after the first one initiated by Dr Mahathir.

In the 1980s, Dr Mahathir, the country's fourth prime minister declared Langkawi a duty-free island which saw tremendous growth on the island.

Earlier, during a question and answer session, Dr Mahathir fielded various questions from participants at the investment forum about the economy, finance, politics and the 13th general election.

He said, in his reply to a question, that the opposition had no concrete programmes as it was just a *pakatan*.

Dr Mahathir said his sequel to *The Malay Dilemma* would touch on the educated Malays, as well.