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Arts And Culture Industry Has Potential To Generate Higher National Income - DPM

By Rhoma Ahmad Razali

KUALA LUMPUR, March 24 (Bernama) -- Arts and culture is a promising industry, and has the potential of generating higher national income in the future, notes Deputy Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin.

He said it was a known fact that France had been particularly, successful in arts and culture-based tourism, earning as much



as USD256 billion annually, via tourism.

"It is good to learn from France and other cities and countries around the world on how they have been successfully developing strategies to promote the tourism and arts industry as the main contributor to national economic growth.

"The city of Paris is a great example of how arts and culture have become the main tourist attraction, contributing to its high Gross Domestic Product (GDP), and ranks as one of the five wealthiest regions in Europe," he said when opening the Art Economy Conference 2015 and launching the 'Rekayasa Kebudayaan' book here today.

The book in Bahasa Malaysia is translated from the French book, 'L'ingenierie Culturelle' (Cultural Engineering) authored by Claude Mollard.

Muhyiddin said in Malaysia, the creative industry which included arts and culture contributed about RM33 billion to the country's GDP.

He noted, under the Economic Transformation Programme, the creative industry had received a RM17 million grant to carry out short-term programmes known as 'Quick Wins' for art performance for a period of between 2012 and 2014.

In line with efforts to create a culturally-rich society, Muhyiddin said various programmes were undertaken by the government to enhance appreciation of culture and arts among Malaysians.

"The government has been supporting the creative arts industry and will continue to emphasise the development of the industry which can potentially contribute to a higher GDP," he said.

Muhyiddin, who is also education minister said there were a number of universities, colleges and higher learning institutions which currently offered arts and design courses in Malaysia, such as Universiti Teknologi MARA, International Islamic University of Malaysia, University of Malaya and Akademi Seni Warisan dan Budaya.

These institutions, he said, would produce high quality professionals who would contribute to the promotion and development of the arts and culture industry in the future.

The deputy prime minister said the tourism and culture ministry, through the National Visual Arts Gallery, had also played an important role in promoting visual arts by organising exhibitions, seminars, workshops, competitions and arts activities aimed at nurturing greater awareness, understanding and appreciation of arts among Malaysians.

On the conference, Muhyiddin said it would serve as a good platform for the experts and industry players to deliberate in greater detail, on the potential and future direction of the arts and culture industry in Malaysia.

The two-day conference beginning today, and held for the first time in Malaysia, attracted about 200 local and foreign participants.

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