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460 firms taking part in exhibition

MORE than 460 companies from 34 countries are participating in the Food and Hotel Malaysia 1997 exhibition being held at the Putra World Trade Centre until Saturday.

Reflecting the strong growth of the tourism and hospitality industry, the exhibition organised by Malaysian Exhibition Services Sdn Bhd is being supported by the Malaysian Association of Hotels.

Also supporting the event open to trade professionals only is the Veterinary Services Department.

Malaysian Exhibition Services director Brendan Kelly said the International Trade and Industry Ministry's approval of about 420 hotel projects involving capital investments worth RM22.2 billion from 1992 till June this year had contributed significantly to the growth and expansion of the hotel, hospitality and distributive trade sectors.

"The tremendous on-going hotel development projects in the country and the targeted building of 1,340 hotels by the year 2000, have buoyed the need for latest technologies and services to improve quality, productivity and efficiency of the related sectors.

"We are confident that the four-day FHM '97 exhibition will accommodate the hospitality and related industries' needs to keep abreast of the latest technological developments and trends," Kelly said.

He added that the exhibition would provide the necessary linkages for both domestic and foreign entrepreneurs to tap the increasing business opportunities on offer in Malaysia.

"Since the inauguration of FHM in 1993, and for the first time ever, this year's show has been strongly dominated by 134 Malaysian companies.

"Overseas exhibitors include three national pavilions, with the United States being represented by 67 companies followed by Australia with 32 and Britain with 28 participants," he said.

Various aspects of the food and hospitality industries, including food and food ingredients, all types of food and beverage equipment, furnishings for restaurants and hotels, computerised hotel management systems, agricultural products, entertainment equipment for restaurants, hotels, pubs and many others will be displayed at the exhibition.

The largest local exhibitor will be NKR Continental (M) Sdn Bhd, a leading manufacturer of commercial kitchen equipment.

Among the new products to be featured are a German-made Winterhalter Rack Conveyor Dishwasher with a high throughput of up to 120 racks per hour, the ClimaPlus Combi multi-functional oven and the Alto-Shamm mobile satellite kitchen.

The ClimaPlus Combi Oven, which involved a research and development investment of about RM32 million, was launched in Europe last month. It is a highly intelligent, fully automatic and user-friendly oven with 99 cooking programmes that enable baking, roasting, grilling, steaming, poaching and boiling at the touch of a button.

In conjunction with the show, two complementary events, the Fourth International Meat and Poultry Show '97 and Culinaire Malaysia '97, both open to the public, are also being held.

A variety of products and services for the fast-growing meat, poultry and agriculture companies including Australian Meat and Livestock Corporation, Pok Brothers, Prima Agri/Angliss Food and Sinnah Food industries, are also participating.

Culinaire Malaysia '97 expects to draw some 700 chefs from member and non-member hotels as well as independent restaurants nationwide to display their skills and artistic talents in the Johan Kemahiran Malaysia competition.

The patron of Johan Kemahiran Malaysia being Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, the winners of the competition will receive the coveted Prime Minister's Golden Hand Award Trophy in addition to cash prizes and certificates.

Tickets for Culinaire Malaysia '97 will be sold at the entrance of PWTC at RM5 each for adults and RM3 each for children.

In anticipation of the release of the new Food Hygiene Regulations, a one-day hygiene workshop for the food service industry has also been organised by UNIPEQ, the Food Quality Research Unit of the Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia.

Among topics to be discussed are The Law and Food Hygiene, Food Safety Challenge, The Hygienic Environment and The Role of Training In Food Hygiene.

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