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Children's musical dazzles crowd

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KUALA LUMPUR, Thurs. - Judging from the applause and praises, the children's musical Taman Baginda which ended here last night could only be described as captivating.

"It was very nice," Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad told reporters as he was leaving the Malaysian Tourist Information Centre auditorium in Jalan Ampang after the show.

The Prime Minister, was accompanied by Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali, Culture, Arts and Tourism Minister Datuk Sabbaruddin Chik, Deputy Primary Industries Minister Datuk Hishammuddin Tun Hussein and Culture, Arts and Tourism secretary general Datuk Ismail Adam.

Present to welcome the Prime Minister and his wife were Utusan Group executive chairman Tan Sri Kamarul Ariffin, FACB president cum chief executive officer Tan Sri Dr Chen Lip Keong, Kretam Holdings Bhd chief executive officer Datuk Ahmad Zahid Hamidi, New Straits Times group editor Datuk A. Kadir Jasin and Utusan Group chief editor Datuk Johan Jaaffar.

The multimedia theatre production story-line revolved around the cyber age of 2050 and traditional kings and queens as well as the magical world of fairies.

It also featured traditional Malay songs and dances as well as dangdut.

Directed by Zaifri Husin and written by Adlin Aman Ramlee, Taman Baginda was first staged in July as part of Flora Fest 97.

Fifty children aged seven to 15 held the audience in awe with their two-hour performance since Dec 12.

The children form the core group of youngsters who attend Tunas Budaya's weekend programmes in dance, drama, music and vocals.

Formed in 1993, Tunas Budaya is part of Kompleks Budaya Negara and dedicated to the development of children's theatre.

It operates under the Federal Territory Culture and Arts Department and tonight's musical is the fourth in a series of children's musicals staged by Tunas Budaya since last year.

It is also the first children's musical to receive corporate sponsorship totalling RM250,000 from FACB subsidiary Nexus Golf Resort Karambunai and Kretam Holdings Berhad and also from organisers Utusan Malaysia and the New Straits Times.

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