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## Immortalising our successes

Fauziah Ismail

POS Malaysia has immortalised Malaysia's shining successes in a collection of 30 999.9 gold-plated silver stamp ingots minted in Switzerland. Only 5,000 sets of the Malaysian Collection will be minted, the first of which will be presented to Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

Each will be identical to its original stamp but only in size, not in thickness.

Pos Malaysia executive chairman Tan Sri Zainol Mahmood said selecting only 30 stamps was like choosing key pictures from the country's archives.

"There's so much to choose from. In the end, painstaking research and expertise resulted in this definitive collection, immortalising the Malaysian spirit and sense of nationhood," he said, in a booklet on the Malaysian Collection entitled "The Road to a Golden Future: Immortalising Malaysia's shining successes".

In his message in the booklet, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said the effort is a fitting tribute to the tribulations and triumphs of Malaysians.

"Someone said that a country's history is only as rich and as colourful as its people.

"Given our rich cultural heritage and our distinctly unique multi-racial community, Malaysia's story of progress is more than enough to do everyone proud.

"Let it be a celebration, commemorating the country's triumph all the way to 1998 (when it hosts the Commonwealth Games) when the whole world will look at Malaysia, its accomplishment and its progress," he said.

The stamps chosen include the 1957 Independence Day stamp, the 1921 stamp depicting the Terengganu ruler, the Kuala Lumpur '98 Games stamp, the Malaysian East Asian satellite (Measat) stamp, and the Petronas Twin Towers stamp which will be released by Pos Malaysia at the end of the year.

Each stamp image is enlarged, the design painstakingly sculpted by hand on a brass or plaster template. This is placed on a three-dimensional reduction pantograph. The craftsman meticulously removes any microscopic flaws by hand.

A blank ingot is struck by a 160 tonne proofing press, and the resulting 2.2mm thick, mirror-polished pure silver ingot is diamond cut to ensure an impeccable finish.

Finally, the minted pieces are plated with 999.9 gold.

Upon completion of minting, the master die will be defaced to ensure that they will never again be used.

The price of each ingot, regardless of size, is fixed at RM288. This includes delivery charges, collector's case, layout guide, jeweller's cloth, lifting tool and a Certificate of Authenticity, which will be delivered to a collector separately during the course of his collection.

The ingots will be sent to the collector at the rate of one per month.

The ingots can be viewed at Stamp Heritage Engraving Sdn Bhd's premises at No 4A, Jalan Telawi in Bangsar Baru, Kuala Lumpur and the Philatelic Bureau at the Pos Malaysia headquarters, Dayabumi Complex.

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