

11/12/1997

Seven Spanish-speaking envoys at UKM event

BANGI, Wed. - A record number of seven ambassadors from various Spanish speaking countries graced Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia's inaugural 'Spanish Language Day' event today.

They were Nicolas Moreno of Uruguay, Jorge Bayona of Peru, Ricardo Villanueva from Mexico, Enrique Morreo Bustamante of Venezuela, Alberto Arturo Infante Villarrea of Colombia, Sergio Barcellos Telles of Brazil and Pedro Undurraga of Chile.

"The Spanish language plays a vital role in the integration of politics, economics and culture between Latin America and Malaysia," said Moreno in his opening address.

Moreno explained that Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's visits to Latin America and reciprocal visits to Malaysia by South American ministers had shown the importance of the language in promoting knowledge and understanding between the countries.

"We have noted an increase in the number of businessmen visiting Malaysia and student exchange agreements at both the official and private levels have doubled."

Second-year information technology student Ong Siew Shin, 22, said she decided to take up the language as it was interesting.

Highlights of the event included a fiery flamenco dance performance, a rendition of a Spanish song by the students and a dialogue between the students and the ambassadors.

Also present were charge d'affaires of the Embassy of Ecuador Dr Marco Turlio Cordero Zamora, deputy chief of mission of the Spanish Embassy Carmen Moreno and dean of the Language Studies faculty Associate Professor Dr Fadillah Merican.

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