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Malaysia-Harrods

HARRODS SHOWS MALAYSIAN SHOWCASE

By: Wan A. Hulaimi

LONDON, April 2 (Bernama) -- In the presence of Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad and Foreign Minister Datuk Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, Harrods, the top peoples' store, launched its first showcase of Malaysian-made goods under the banner of 'From Tradition to Innovation'.

Three Malaysian companies, Amtek International (suppliers of garments, food and furniture), Langkawii Crystaal, and Malaysia Electric Corporation (MEC) also signed an agreement with Harrods chairman Mohamed Al Fayed to continue the supply of Malaysian goods, and Harrods to continue the promotion.

Dr Mahathir, who said that he was "very happy and very proud" of this link with what he called "this most prestigious and the greatest department store in the whole world" spoke in jocular fashion expressing hope that this would increase Malaysia's export to Britain which the British would surely not mind because we needed the extra pound.

"We are going to have not just a promotion but a permanent display of Malaysian products in this department store," he said.

Referring to the theme 'From Tradition to Innovation', Dr Mahathir said that "it was aptly chosen because even though Malaysia decided to industrialise, we still retained something of our tradition."

Earlier, Countess Rayne Spencer, on behalf of Harrods International, delivered an elegant welcoming address expressing her hope that with Harrods' links with the travel trade they would be able to help increase the flow of British tourists to Malaysia.

Some 140,000 Malaysian tourists came to Britain last year, she said.

She said that there would soon be a Harrods duty free shop in the new International airport in Sepang, adding to the 60 already in existence worldwide.

Countess Spencer, otherwise also widely known as the stepmother of the late Lady Diana Spencer and daughter of the prolific romantic novelist Dame Barbara Cartland, said that she must return to Malaysia to see this crocodile farm where her chairman assured her that the crocodiles were not only splendid but were also taught to dance.

Continuing in this light-hearted vein, Amtek Holdings director Syed Azmin Nor presented a silver kris to Al Fayed on behalf of the Malaysian signatories, managing to say only "You can use this..." before his voice was drowned in appreciative laughter.

The Malaysian showcase display, located on the third floor of Harrods, has a range of display of both the traditional and the modern from Malaysia, from Malaysia's first fuzzy-logic computerised rice cooker to a demonstration of traditional songket weaving.

"MEC's omelette maker is another technological first with worldwide patent pending," a colourful brochure circulating among the distinguished guests said while also extolling the virtues of many other products which made one proud to stand tall with Malaysia.

Among other products seen in the display were artsitically blown and crafted wares of the now famous if oddly named 'Langkawiicrystaal', eco-friendly rubberwood furniture, and leather goods and fashion house apparel made in Malaysia.

Although this was not the first time that Malaysian-made goods are displayed in this department store (Selangor pewterware being one of the pioneers for many years), this is the first time that so many goods from

Malaysia are displayed here in a thematic attention-grabbing display. --
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