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## Local firms open franchises abroad to tap vast market

MARANG, Thurs. - More Malaysian companies are opening their franchises abroad to tap into the vast overseas market as part of their expansion plan, Entrepreneur Development Deputy Minister Datuk Idris Jusoh said today.

He said Le' Wangi De' Wangi Traditional Collection Sdn Bhd, a local cosmetic company, would open its first overseas franchise in Dubai while Bits and Bytes Multimedia Station, a retail computer outlet belonging to Sistemaju Holdings Sdn Bhd, will set up its franchise in China.

"In view of the growing trend, it seems that there is a bright future in the franchise industry. For instance in the United States, one third of its retail sales is done using the franchise concept.

"Therefore, local entrepreneurs should use it (the franchise mechanism) as an instrument to progress, especially during the current economic crisis," he added.

Idris said this after attending a closing ceremony of a seven-day "Bakti Siswa" project at Darul Falah, Bukit Payong, here.

He said Langkawi Kristal Sdn Bhd which deals with crystals was also successful in the franchise business.

"Langkawi Kristal has managed to set up franchise outlets in four overseas locations namely Sydney, Brisbane, Germany and the United Kingdom within a short period.

"As a result of its impressive progress, the company has been named the best company in terms of overseas performance by the ministry."

In another development, Idris also urged the public as well as the local entrepreneurs to come to the three-day Malaysia Franchise Exhibition and Conference '98 at the Putra World Centre starting from tomorrow.

"The Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad is scheduled to launch the event," he said, adding that the event had received good response from 300 participants and 82 franchisers.

The exhibition will be open to the public between 9am and 5.30pm.

It was reported that the conference and exhibition would allow local franchisers to promote and expand their businesses abroad.

Meanwhile, Idris added, the Asia Pacific Franchise Confederation would form a co-operation at regional level to strengthen the development of the franchise industry.

"Malaysia has been given the honour to host the first meeting which started today.

"Among the confederation members are Australia, New Zealand, Japan, Indonesia and the Philippines," he said.

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