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Team shares 4x4 adventure with shoppers

KUALA LUMPUR, Sat. - The 55 members of the Silverstone TransAfrica 4x4 Expedition who travelled across 12 African nations in 33 days brought their mission of "Peace, Goodwill and Harmony" to Sunway Pyramid shoppers today.

Members of the team, who traversed 17,000km from Cape Town in South Africa last Dec 1 to Cairo in Egypt, distributed leaflets of their adventure and souvenirs to the shopping mall's visitors at its grand entrance.

Earlier, the 16 four-wheel-drives were parked in front of the shopping centre.

Organising chairman George Wong said the mall visit was a chance for the members to mingle with the public and make them aware of the expedition.

The 45-minute "friendly session" was a crowd-puller of sorts as visitors were curious and attracted to the 16 vehicles escorted into the mall's compound by the police.

The expedition carried a means of goodwill, with members acting as ambassadors to Africa, strengthening bilateral ties between the two countries. After being flagged off in Cape Town, the team journeyed through Botswana, Namibia, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Tanzania, Kenya, Uganda, Ethiopia, Erithea and Sudan before finishing in Cairo.

Wong said the 16 vehicles had their own functions; one acted as the expedition leader, one for logistics, a command car, four camera cars, a communications car, an ambulance, a medical support car, two mechanical support cars, a camp and safety car, a convoy manager's car and two sweeper cars.

He said members were selected on the basis of by their prowess in driving 4x4 cars, physical fitness, mental alertness and agility.

The expedition, under the patronage of the Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, is to date the world's biggest organised effort to take on the treacherous route across Africa.

Their adventure has earned them an entry into the Malaysia Book of Records.

Later, members were honoured at a gala dinner attended by Deputy Foreign Minister Datuk Dr Leo Michael Toyad, Silverstone Berhad chairman Tan Sri Zain Hashim and dignitaries from South Africa, Namibia, Zimbabwe, Sudan, Egypt and Kenya.

The dinner was to honour members for their achievements in accomplishing their aims.

Toyad said the expedition widened the area of diplomacy between the two countries as members met with dignitaries of the 12 countries along their way. He said the mission lived up to the "Malaysia Boleh" motto.

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