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## Dazzling start to carnival

K. Bala

LANGKAWI, Sun. - A dazzling 20-minute fireworks display kicked off the 16-day Langkawi Arts Carnival '99 last night at Dataran Lang.

As soon as Menteri Besar Tan Sri Sanusi Junid launched the carnival, the large gathering which included foreign tourists was treated to the display despite a steady drizzle.

About 220 events, focusing on arts, culture and crafts, are planned for the festival until Dec 6.

These events were organised as a side attraction to the Langkawi International Maritime and Aerospace exhibition from Nov 30 to Dec 5.

Other highlights include concerts, yacht race, bag-pipe presentation, military tattoo, snake show, martial arts, painting and fishing contests, karaoke and shopping carnival.

In his opening speech, Sanusi who had earlier filed his nomination papers to defend his Kuah State seat, took advantage of the large crowd to drive home the track record of the Barisan Nasional Government.

Urging the people not to be misled by the Opposition, he said the peace, prosperity and stability the people were now enjoying were due to the capability of the BN Government which the Opposition could never match.

Citing Langkawi as an example, he said there were no proper roads or prosperity on the island of one-time struggling fishermen and farmers a decade ago.

But the island has now been transformed into an international resort due to the single-mindedness of Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

Earlier, carnival organising committee chairman Datuk Abdul Halil Mutalib said the hospitality service industry must play its part in promoting the island.

Abdul Halil, who is the Langkawi Development Authority general manager, said measures by the Government to further popularise the island would be negated if the service industry did not provide quality and friendly service.

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