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First royal visitors to Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia

THE Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia received its first royal guests when the Sultan of Kedah Tuanku Abdul Halim Mu'adzam Shah graced the premises recently.

The Sultan was accompanied by the Sultanah Tuanku Bahiyah and their youngest daughter Tengku Intan Shafinaz.

The museum, opened on April 20, aims to foster global understanding and appreciation of Islamic arts, culture, lifestyle as well as its civilisation.

Inspired by the Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad it is the only museum of its kind in the Asia-Pacific region.

Located at Jalan Lembah Perdana in Kuala Lumpur, the museum was built and managed by the Albukhary Foundation.

The museum's head of marketing and communications department Saadah Sheikh Mahmood said many of the items displayed are from the Islamic Centre and on long-term loan.

The museum is open to the public from 10am to 6pm daily except Mondays.

Entrance fee is RM8 for adults and RM4 for visitors aged below 18, students, senior citizens and pensioners. Students in uniform who come in groups of 30 and above will only be charged RM3 each. Entrance is free for children aged below six.

Among the highlights at the galleries are mosque architecture, calligraphy, manuscripts, Islamic arts of the Chinese and Malay worlds, the Standard Chartered Ottoman room, textiles, coinage, arms and armour as well as ceramic, glass and metalwork.

Weekly events include special calligraphy courses at the educational workshop by lecturer Mahmood Awang. This course is held every Saturday from 2.30pm to 5.30pm for adults and on Sunday from 10am to 1pm for children. The fee for the six-month course is RM390 per person.

A national calligraphy competition called Manifestasi Perdana Seni Khat 1999M/1420H, has also been jointly launched with Utusan Melayu (Malaysia) Bhd and the National Association of Calligraphy plus a personal contribution from Datuk Dr Nik Mohamed Mahmood. Closing date for submitting participation forms for all categories is Monday.

For details call 03-22742020 (general line) or the Education Department at 03-22705101/5111 or fax 03-22740529 or e-mail education@iamm.org.my.

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