

05/04/2000

Bollywood producers to shoot films in Malaysia

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MALAYSIA will be featured prominently in Indian movies following the pledged by six film producers from Bollywood, one of the world's largest film industry, to start filming part of their movies at various locations in the country this year.

The first movie expected to be partly filmed on Malaysian soil by next month is "Paagalpan" or "Madness" by Shogun Films.

Shogun Films producer Olivia Augustine said her company would highlight Malaysia's natural scenic beauty and explore the Malaysian architecture, both traditional and modern, in making "Paagalpan".

Augustine was among six other Bollywood movie producers who called on Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

They were accompanied at the meeting by Culture, Arts and Tourism Minister Datuk Abdul Kadir Sheikh Fadzir.

The other five producers in the delegation are Mr Deepak Bahry of Bahry Films, Mr Rakesh Nath of Dashaka Ads Entertainment, Mr Kuku Kohli of AK International Motion, Ms Priti Sapru of Sai Sapru Creation, and Mr Vimal Kumar of Shimram Chitya Motion Pictures.

They will leave today for Langkawi, Kuching and Kota Kinabalu, until Sunday to scout locations for their films.

Dreamz Unlimited, a company owned by Bollywood film star Shah Rukh Khan, has also indicated interest to shoot its new movie in Malaysia, its second after "Phir Bhi Dil Hai Hindustani".

Mr Raj Bhatt of the Pro-Imej Productions Sdn Bhd, a local company which deals with Shah Rukh Khan's production house, said the film star has indicated interest to shoot 50 per cent of its second film in Malaysia. Besides Shah Rukh Khan, actress Juhi Chawla will act in the movie.

"If work goes well, they may start in July," he said.

At the same press conference, Priti said she was very much interested to shoot locations in Malaysia as she found that the country has many beautiful natural sceneries for her film locations.

"When I visited Malaysia recently, I did not have the chance to really see the beautiful sites of the country. But now with the help of the Malaysian Government, I foresee no problems in shooting films in Malaysia," she said.

She said Malaysia's beautiful film locations, coupled with the Government's assurance to fully facilitate film producers, would woo more film makers to the country.

"Switzerland is a good example of a country which gives all the help necessary for film makers and this was one of the reasons Bollywood producers have taken shots at more than 100 locations in that country," she said.

Meanwhile, Kuku of AK International Motion, expects his company to be in Malaysia next month or the month after to shoot its film and would be using local dancers, as well as local production laboratory facilities.

To attract more movie and television producers to shoot films in the country, Kadir said the Ministry has set up a special unit which will serve as a one-stop agency to facilitate the producers to shoot locations in the country.

For instance, he said the producers can now just apply for approval to shoot at certain locations through the ministry.

"The Ministry will also assist them in seeking potential locations for

shooting in Malaysia," he said, adding the Prime Minister also showed his interest to help the Indian producers to use Malaysia as their shooting locations.

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