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Going, going, gone... for a good cause

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IN just over two hours, more than RM750,000 was raised by the Darling Child committee at the Darling Child charity auction.

The initial target was to collect RM200,000 but with over 100 beautiful items, and people, on auction, the moneyed crowd could not resist the temptation.

Proceeds from the auction, held at Aseana in Suria KLCC, will go to Institut Tengku Ampuan Afzan, Future Mind Centre and two others, which will be announced at a later date.

The most sought-after "item" was a dinner to be cooked by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad for 12 people.

The opening bid for this was RM50,000 and ended in the hands of Vision KL, part of the Vision Four Media Group, for a staggering RM135,000, the highest bid!

Another auction that caused quite a sensation, especially among the women, was "an evening with the Raja Muda Selangor Tengku Idris Shah".

Many well-heeled women kept raising their hands for Tengku Idris, whose starting price was RM10,000.

Well, one of the emcees for the night, Martin Soong of CNBC Asia, did say that the eligible Raja Muda would treat the highest bidder to a ride on his Harley Davison.

The bid was finally settled at RM22,000 by someone who wishes to remain anonymous.

Another member of royalty who was on auction was Tengku Imran Tuanku Jaafar who promised to play golf with the highest bidder. It went to Jeff Yap of Olympia Leisure who paid RM11,000 for the privilege.

Other items on auction were holidays in private homes and luxury hotels in Bali, Sydney, New York, Las Vegas and Pangkor Laut.

There were also antique furniture, porcelain, carpets and textiles as well as high-end fashion from Christian Lacroix, Chanel, Gucci, Wolford and Christian Dior.

Donors included Toh Puan Habibah Yusof who parted with her Chanel carrier valued at RM2,500, Puan Sri Molly Low who gave away a two-night stay in a deluxe suite at the Duxton, Singapore, worth RM4,000, and Tom Abang Saufi who donated a RM2,500 three-piece pua outfit.

Celebrities who came included singers Sheila Majid and Camelia, and former Miss Malaysia/World Arianna Teoh who, together with actress Kavita Sidhu, modelled a few outfits on auction.

The Darling Child committee comprises 10 women of which Melium Group president Farah Khan is chairperson.

She said the name Darling Child was decided because it reflects the urgency of love for a child.

"Children need constant care and attention, what more children with special needs. They need to be nurtured and taught in a manner that mainstream schools are not equipped to handle."

Which is why, part of the proceeds will go to the Future Mind Centre, a school set up in 1998 dedicated to the education and development of children with special needs.

"We must understand the needs of a special child, whose learning abilities need to be honed and developed further than a normal child.

"The centre, being a non-profit organisation, needs financial assistance in order to continue their excellent work. And what better way to do this

than raising funds through a night of fun."
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