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PM: Use brand names to develop KLIA's image

SEPANG, Sat. - Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad wants the Kuala Lumpur International Airport here to develop its image by associating with world-renowned brand names.

This can be done by inviting established brands to set up duty-free retail outlets at the airport.

"KLIA is a new airport and it has to make a name for itself and one way to do this is to be associated with great names," said Dr Mahathir when opening the Harrods World Signature Shop's duty-free outlet at KLIA today.

Harrods is globally acknowledged to be one of the most prestigious and unique department stores in the world. Its outlet at KLIA is the first in the region.

Dr Mahathir said Malaysia aimed to become the region's leading shopping destination.

"We think we shall be very attractive as a shopping centre because our costs are much lower than those in some of the neighbouring countries."

He said the only problem in achieving this goal was that local franchise rights for many established outlets were given to companies in other countries.

As such, Dr Mahathir said he hoped Malaysians would try their best to secure franchise rights for the newer brands which had not yet been fully developed in Asia.

"This way, Malaysia will become the region's distribution centre for goods of high quality," he said.

Located at the Contact Pier building, which is immediately beyond the airport's Departure Terminal, the duty-free retail shop is accessible only to air travellers.

The outlet is operated by Amtek International Sdn Bhd, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Amtek Holdings Berhad. It offers a range of goods comprising signature souvenir and gift items and a dining area offering an English-style buffet menu.

Amtek Holdings Berhad chairman Datuk Syed Abdul Jabbar Syed Hassan said the outlet offered a golden opportunity for Malaysian-made products to be distributed and sold in Harrods stores worldwide.

He said his company might open another Harrods outlet at the KLCC in Kuala Lumpur.

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