

Joy, tears as M'sians come home

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By AUDREY EDWARDS

SEPANG: Passengers and crew members of the first Malaysia Airlines (MAS) flight out of New York since terrorists struck the United States last Tuesday arrived safely at the KL International Airport last night.

Flight MH91 from Newark Airport landed at the KLIA at 9.50 pm with 176 passengers and crew members. While most remained calm, some broke down when they saw their loved ones at the arrival hall.

Among them was Lilian Kwan who was overcome by emotions when she Dr Leow Soo Kar greeted her.

"It's a relief to be back home. It was a shock to see the whole thing," she said.

"I never dreamt that such a thing (planes ploughing through the World Trade Centre towers) could have happened," she said.

For Public Works Department engineer Azwi Hassan, the attacks on the tallest buildings in New York was his second experience of witnessing a tragedy in the United States.

"I was also in Oklahoma City in 1995 when it was bombed. It (New York) was a traumatic experience because I was taking a shuttle when I saw the towers being hit by the first plane and by the second plane shortly after that," he said.

United Nations envoy Tan Sri Razali Ismail, who also returned on the flight, said he was saddened by the tragedy in the United States.

"I am traumatised. I lived for 10 years in New York and I love it (the city). It is terrible the way New York has been brutalised," he said.

Flight attendant Wan Azli Mohamad also described the experience as "terrible".

"I'm happy to be back in Malaysia," he said.

"I was looking forward to coming back ... I didn't have enough clothes with me and it's a relief to be back home."