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People's market in heart of KL

Shuib Taib

OUTSIDE Pasarakyat in Jalan Melati, in the heart of Kuala Lumpur, the smell of local fruits, especially durians, permeated the air, while others like rambutans, mangosteens, salak, petai and langsung could be seen in abundance.

These, and others, were the draw of a recent Fruits Fair launched by Housing and Local Government Minister Datuk Seri Ong Ka Ting, who was accompanied by wife Datin Seri Wendy Ong.

Pasarakyat, a new-concept market for city folk, is all about local produce and handicraft.

"Pasarakyat was conceptualised in response to a call by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, who said small-holders did not have a place to market their produce," said Ong.

"Many people still do not know about the market. Pasarakyat allows farmers to market their produce directly to consumers without having to go through middlemen. This will improve their income.

"The location is excellent. You won't find a similar location elsewhere in the Golden Triangle at such cheap rental rates. This is to help the farmers," he said.

Ong added that in time to come, Pasarakyat would be another tourist attraction.

"Tourists on short trips here will not have time to travel to the kampungs to enjoy home-grown produce. So, they can come here instead," he said.

Pasarakyat managing director Steve Wong said traders were allowed free promotions and provided kiosks to conduct their business.

A beautifully-landscaped garden greets visitors as they enter the grounds.

Pasarakyat is open daily. It offers shoppers free parking.