

29 MAR 2002
India-Islam
PM TO OPEN ISLAMIC ART OF INDIA EXHIBITION

KUALA LUMPUR, March 29 (Bernama) -- The Islamic Art of India exhibition to be held for three months at the Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia here is the first such exhibition in the region, according to Indian High Commissioner to Malaysia Veena Sikri.

She said that Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad would open the exhibition tomorrow.

"It is being held in collaboration with the National Museum of New Delhi," she told Bernama here.

Sikri said that 174 pieces of sultanate and Mughal Indian works of art from the collection of the National Museum of India in New Delhi would be displayed at the exhibition.

"The artifacts have been specifically selected to promote a deeper understanding and appreciation of Islamic Indian art and culture, as well as its parallels and influences on the art of the Islamic and the Malay world," she said.

These include historically significant illustrated manuscripts depicting the annals and antiquities of the Mughal emperors, illuminated firmans (royal decrees), specimens of calligraphy, glittering miniature paintings, masterpieces of decorative art, lavishly ornamented jewellery, luxurious textiles, historical arms and armours and gold and silver coins.

"Certain masterpieces have never been displayed outside of India and will for the first time, be exhibited here," she said.

One of the exhibits is a 15 century folio of a miniature of the Holy Quran written in Naskh script on gold sprinkled paper. The cover page bears the seal of the Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan, hence dating the Quran between 1627 AD-1657 AD.

Sikri said that the exhibits would chronologically cover the salient features, artistic achievements and the influences that led to the flourishing arts of India under Islamic rule.

A series of lectures by scholars from local institutions and India specialising in Indian Islamic art and history, traditional Indian craft demonstrations, children activities and a Kathak dance performance will also be held in conjunction with the exhibition.

An exhibition and sale of Indian jewellery sale will also be held.

A catalogue written by Dr Nasim Akhtar and other curators of National Museum of New Delhi but designed and edited by the Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia which accounts the history of Islam and Islamic arts in the Indian sub-continent will be on sale at the museum shop at RM75 per copy.

-- BERNAMA

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