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SAUCE-HOT

MUSLIM BEST INTRODUCES HOT NEW CHILLI SAUCE

By: Shamsuddin Mohamed

KOTA BAHRU, June 19 (Bernama) -- Muslim Best Distributors Sdn Bhd, a fully bumiputera company aims to produce 1.15 million bottles of its latest chilli sauces under the "Sos Cili Malaysia" brand beginning this September.

The chilli sauces, available in four levels of "hotness", would be for both local and overseas market.

Its executive director Sheikh Ahmad Dasuki Sheikh Mohamad said the company was inspired to produce the chilli sauces by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's call to Malaysian entrepreneurs to diversify their products.

The four types of sauces would be of the "less hot", "hot", "average hot" and "extra hot" variety, he told Bernama here today.

He said the trial production of 200,000 bottles started earlier this month and would go on until August.

The response so far for the product has been good and looks set to capture a good share of the local chilli sauce market in view of its competitive price, he said.

Ahmad Dasuki said Muslim Best would begin its mass commercial production in September by producing 48,000 cartons per month. Each carton would have 24 bottles of the sauces.

He said 70 percent of the "Sos Cili Malaysia" produced was for the domestic market especially for the A&W network of fast food restaurants owned by Kumpulan KUB Berhad.

The remainder is for export, mostly to the Middle East countries as "hot" food has a good market there, he said.

The chilli sauce is a result of a technology transfer from MARDI and produced from 100 percent fresh local chillies.

He said Muslim Best was also currently negotiating with FAMA to get a fixed contract for the supply of chillies.

He said once commercial production begins, the company would require 200,000 kg of fresh chillies worth RM800,000 a month.

He also hoped that the planting of the chilli kulai, a larger sized chilli variety planted in big scale in Kelantan, would become more commercialised in view of a regular monthly demand for it.

Malaysia presently imports dried chillies worth RM500 million a year, mainly from India and Myanmar.

A portion of that is used by local chilli sauce makers, he added. --

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