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NAM-Film Festival

KHALIL GOES TO THE GROUND TO GAUGE RESPONSE FOR KL WORLD FILM FEST

KUALA LUMPUR, Feb 17 (Bernama) -- Information Minister Tan Sri Khalil Yaakob was at the Golden Screen Cinema at the Mid-Valley Megamall today to gauge public response to the movies being screened in conjunction with the Kuala Lumpur World Film Festival 2003.

Khalil, who was accompanied by his ministry's Secretary-General Datuk Dr Arshad Hashim, spent more than an hour checking on the response and preparations made by the theatre management.

He also took time off to watch the movies.

Khalil said he was satisfied with the response and cooperation of the theatre management which had set up two counters to facilitate the public to get free tickets to watch the movies.

"The response today from the public, including from students, is good. The movies screened also depicted the theme of the festival," he told reporters.

Khalil said many aspects would be taken into account when hosting the next film festival to ensure smooth conduct of the festival.

"We've many officers, media representatives and artistes attending the festival. We'll try to gather the best. It will serve as a reference when we organise film festivals in future," he said.

Asked to comment on the call by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad to the film industry to produce movies with good values instead of depicting violent scenes, Khalil said movie makers should take heed of the call.

Of the 12 local films produced every year, one or two movies would have the theme as required by Dr Mahathir, he said.

"This depends on the script and the people investing in the movie. It also depends whether movies with serious story line received good response from viewers or otherwise," he said.

A check by BERNAMA at the Golden Screen Cinema showed overwhelming response from the public who had queued up since 11am to get the free tickets for the movies screened today and tomorrow.

A viewer Zulhisham Kahar, 27, said a film festival such as this could prove to the world that Malaysia was capable of organising major film festivals.

He said it was a rare opportunity, especially to view movies filmed abroad.

"Although I'm working, I came to watch the movies during my rest time," he said.

Zulhisham said he had a passion for movies from Britain and France.

A student only known as Eesiew said film festivals would pave the way to forge closer cultural ties from other countries.

"I want to watch a movie from Iran to know the culture of Iranians because Iran is very far away from us. Through their movies, cultural ties can be enhanced," he added.

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