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Deepavali cheer for warded children

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THE recent Deepavali festivity at the paediatric ward of University Malaya Medical Centre in Petaling Jaya received an international touch when the Sri Lankan High Commission presented gifts to the children warded there.

Sri Lankan High Commissioner Rose Senanayake visited 50 children at the hospital and gave each of them Deepavali gifts. With her were the recently crowned Miss Malaysian Indian 2003 winners.

The trio of beauties - Danutcha Chelliah, Gowri Aruncuncethan and Sharmila Ariaratnam - also gave goodie bags to the young patients which elicited broad smiles not just from the children but also the parents and hospital staff.

Senanayake said this was Sri Lanka's way of saying thank you to the people of Malaysia, especially to Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad and the Government.

"Sri Lanka and Malaysia share a historical bond rooted in friendship and economic understanding.

"Over the years the Malaysian leadership has shown its concern and extended its unconditional support in terms of investment and socio-cultural development in Sri Lanka, despite global perspectives.

"This gesture from the children of Sri Lanka to the children of Malaysia in conjunction with Deepavali, is our way of saying thank you to the people of Malaysia."

Senanayake added that they hoped to continue sharing in the festive spirit of hope and kindness, which permeated every religion in the world.