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Malaysia to host Nobel Prize centennial event

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KUALA LUMPUR, Fri. - Thanks to Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad's vision, Malaysia will be the first Southeast Asian country to host the prestigious Nobel Prize Centennial Exhibition next year, a "must-see" exhibition on 700 Nobel Laureates aimed at inspiring Malaysians to strive for scientific excellence.

Academy of Sciences Malaysia executive director Datuk Dr Samsudin Tugiman said it was truly an honour for Malaysia to host the exhibition themed "Cultures of Creativity: Individuals and Milieus", to be held at the National Science Centre from March 20 to June 27 next year.

The exhibition, he said, would be a significant event for the country as it strives to produce a Nobel Laureate by 2020, a challenge thrown by Dr Mahathir in 1998.

The exhibition is a duplicate of the one displayed in Stockholm and has been on an international tour with stops in Norway, Japan, South Korea and the United States.

"We are the third Asian country to host it, after Japan and Korea," he said.

Samsudin said the Academy of Sciences Malaysia had established a strong relationship with its sister organisation in Sweden, the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences which allowed Science, Technology and Environment Minister Datuk Seri Law Hieng Ding, who visited the Nobel Museum in Stockholm to personally invite the Nobel Foundation to come to Malaysia.

The exhibition will be accompanied by various other events such as the International Forum on Creativity on March 20-22 and an International Conference on Primary and Secondary Schools science and mathematics education.

Samsudin said the creativity forum would see invited Nobel Laureates, representatives from the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences and local speakers discuss how a creative environment for individuals, schools and families could be established.

"We will invite 300 to 400 participants to listen to what they have to say. We regard creativity as an important factor in cultivating a culture that encourages people to think and create new things," he said.

He also said there would be lectures, science motivation sessions and special fora that will allow scientists from overseas to network with local scientists.

"Six Nobel Laureates will visit different localities in Malaysia to give talks and meet our scientists.

"They will go to Universiti Malaysia Sabah, Universiti Malaysia Sarawak, Universiti Sains Malaysia in Penang, Universiti Teknologi Malaysia in Johor, Universiti Putra Malaysia in Selangor and Kolej Universiti Sains dan Teknologi Malaysia in Terengganu."

Samsudin said all Malaysians should visit the "once in a lifetime" exhibition.

The presentations on the 700 Nobel Laureates would be extremely interesting and attractive, he said, with the use of high technology and innovative displays.

"All six disciplines in the Nobel Prize will be displayed and the presentations will be very easy to understand and written in layman's terms. The findings are explained in a simple manner and the way it is presented is bound to excite people," he said.

