



Ministry of Tourism, Malaysia

MEDIA RELEASE

“WALKING IN UNITY – 1MALAYSIA”

Tourism Ministry to Kick Off its First “Malaysia International Shoe Exhibition”

featuring Malaysian-born and world renown shoe couturier Professor Datuk Dr Jimmy Choo

KUALA LUMPUR, 9 March 2010 – Come April, shoe fashionistas from within Malaysia as well as around the world will have lifetime opportunities to personally view Professor Dato' Dr Jimmy Choo's shoe couture at the “Malaysia International Shoe Exhibition” starting 2 until 4 April 2010 at the Putra World Trade Centre.

Named as the “Million Dollar Shoe Showcase Gallery”, the shoe couture currently being exhibited only in London will feature Professor Dato' Dr Jimmy Choo's ten of his most successful creations.

Professor Dato' Dr Jimmy Choo, who is also Malaysian Tourism Ambassador, will also share his knowledge and give insight on the shoemaking industry globally and how to elevate the status of Malaysian shoe industry.

Joining him will be Peter Chow, a renowned London-based trade buyer and the owner of Davina Fashion Shoe boutique. Mr Peter Chow will be giving an inspirational talk on how to attract more buying interest on Malaysian shoes from the international buyers.

The launching ceremony of Ministry of Tourism Malaysia's first “Malaysia International Shoe Exhibition” will be graced by Yang Amat Berbahagia Datin Paduka Seri Rosmah Mansor, wife to the Prime Minister of Malaysia, on 2 April 2010.

“With the support from Professor Dato' Dr Jimmy Choo, we believe our dream to establish Malaysia as an international hub for shoe fashion and become a shoe buyer's centre is possible.

We believe this event will not only create an economic opportunity but will also attract more tourist influx into the country," said Minister of Tourism Malaysia, Dato' Sri Dr Ng Yen Yen at a Press Conference held here today.

Themed "Walking in Unity – 1Malaysia" the exhibition is organised to coincide with the Malaysian GP Sale as well as acts as platform to inspire young shoe designers to showcase their talents. The Malaysia International Shoe Festival is organised by the Ministry of Tourism Malaysia, Tourism Malaysia and co-organised by the Malaysian Footwear Manufacturers Association.

The main objective of this festival is to reinforce Malaysia's position and reputation as a leading producer and world-class exporter of quality and innovative footwear, and to use this as another tourism product to attract more visitors to Malaysia.

"In the ASEAN region, there is no shoe festival and Malaysia's shoe industry is quite big although we are not aware of it. We want to develop this as an economy. We also want to expand the RM1 billion local shoe industry and attract foreign tourist to spend in Malaysia, especially during the Malaysia Formula F1 Grand Prix period," said Dato' Sri Dr Ng Yen Yen.

The footwear industry in Malaysia is believed to be one of the oldest manufacturing activities in the country. There are currently about 1,000 footwear manufacturers, employing workforce of some 30,000. They are mainly located in the states of Perak, Selangor and Johor. The annual production capacity is estimated at 70 million pairs.

In the quest to create an identity for their products, Malaysian footwear manufacturers have successfully marketed their own brands such as **Vincci, Bonia, Sembonia, Carlo Rino, Jukebox, Asadi, Dr. Cardin, Nose, Lewre, Crocodile, John Bird** and **Larrie**. These local brands will also be exhibited during three-day exhibition. Visitors can also be able to place orders for custom-made shoes during the Festival.

Last year, the Malaysia shoe export boast RM600 million in the foreign market and RM500 million in the domestic market. Malaysia's total import of footwear grew at a commendable rate of 29.7% during the 2007 – 2008 period as compared to 9.01% between 2006 – 2007. Basically, a large portion of Malaysia's total production of footwear comes from the backyard industry located in Seri Kembangan, Selangor.

The Festival will “bring down” its curtain on April 30, 2010 with a gala dinner event in Ipoh, Perak. At this event, there will be a prize presentation ceremony to the Malaysia Footwear Manufacturers Association “Young Designers Competition” winners.

Other highlights will include:

- Shoe History Gallery
 - A display of the history of shoes in Malaysia (including our traditional shoes such as the Malay Royal Court Shoes/Sandals and our intricately-designed beautifully-beaded Nyonya shoes) as well as the different types of shoes in the market today.

- Shoemaking Process Gallery

- Young Designers' Creative Corner
 - Showcases the creative works of the designers who have won in the yearly Malaysian Footwear Manufacturers Association's Shoes Design Competition.

- Shoes on Parade
 - Fashion shows on shoes.

- Other Activities
 - Cash vouchers will be given out daily for the first 100 early birds.

 - Win a pair of Zang Toi's limited edition shoes worth RM300 on every RM150 spent at the exhibition.

 - Meet and greet session with Professor Dato' Dr Jimmy Choo

 - Photo competition, creative shoe painting competition and “Search of Big Foot” competition.

ABOUT THE MALAYSIAN FOOTWEAR MANUFACTURERS ASSOCIATION

The Malaysian Footwear Association aims to reinforce Malaysia's position and reputation as a leading producer and world-class exporter of quality and innovative footwear. With a membership of 470, the association represents the interest of one of the oldest industry in the country mainly composed of small-and medium-sized footwear manufacturers. It regularly organizes marketing events overseas to gain access to new markets and enhance the industry's image.

Through the association's efforts, the industry has notched up impressive export earning over the years. Malaysian footwear exported fetched more than RM900 million in 2004. The leading markets are Italy, Singapore and Spain.

* Source : Facts and figures for Malaysia Footwear industry is from www.ice.it/paesi/asia/malaysia