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RISK 30 - 31 October 2012
PARKROYAL Kuala Lumpur


October 05, 2012 21:23 PM

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Malaysia, Singapore Cooperatives To Foster Trade Ties During Expedition

By **Tengku Noor Shamsiah Tengku Abdullah**

SINGAPORE, Oct 5 (Bernama) -- Co- operatives (co-ops) from Singapore and Malaysia will foster budding trade relationships between the two countries at the Co-op Wheels Adventure 2012, which flagged off Friday morning.

The road trip aims to strengthen ties between Singapore and Malaysian co-operatives and to enable cross-border collaborations that will benefit the co-operative movement in both countries.

Seah Kian Peng, Member of Parliament, flagged off the Singapore convoy this morning in his capacity as Advisor to the IYC National Committee Singapore and board member of the International Co-operative Alliance (ICA).

The three-day expedition is organised by Singapore co-ops - Customs Credit Co-operative Society (S) Ltd, TCC Credit Co-operative Ltd, Singapore Amalgamated Services Co-operative Organisation Ltd, Singapore Government Staff Credit Co-operative Society Ltd and Citiport Credit Co-operative Ltd.

Co-op Wheels Adventure also promotes the sharing of best practices between Singapore and Malaysian co-operatives as they learn from one another's successes.

Supported by the Singapore National Co-operative Federation (SNCF), this initiative is organised by co-operatives, for co-operatives, and is part of the United Nations International Year of Co-operatives (UN IYC) Singapore Programme 2012.

The entourage of one bus and 14 cars, carrying more than 80 members from 12 co-ops, is personally led by SNCF's Chairman, Chan Tee Seng, and Chief Executive Officer, Dolly Goh.

They will travel to Kuala Terengganu where they will meet and network with Malaysian co-ops and Angkatan Koperasi Kebangsaan Malaysia Bhd (Angkasa), the national co-operative organisation of Malaysia.

Singapore co-ops participating in this road trip include the Singapore Government Staff Credit Co-operative, Premier Security Co-operative, The Singapore Teachers Co-operative, Singapore Bank Employees Co-operative, Customs Credit Co-operative, Statutory Board Employees Co-operative, AUPE General Services Co-operative, TCC Credit Co-operative, Bedok Multi-purpose Co-operative and Citiport Credit Co-operative.

They will be meeting their Malaysian counterparts such as Noor Arfa Batik Terengganu, Koperasi Niaga Losong, Koperasi Homestay and more.

This initiative aims to widen the success of cross-border co-op partnerships.

Angkasa President Prof Datuk Dr Mohd Ali Baharum meanwhile said: "Structurally, Malaysia co-operatives movement can be segmented into the flourishing urban segment which is financially strong and the rural segment comprising various types of agro-based and fishermen's co-operatives.

"Our societal needs are different, so the co-op scene evolves differently, too. But we are happy that this road trip gives us a chance to refresh our understanding towards each other.

"The opportunity to meet and interact with the Singapore co-operators is valuable. We believe given the proximity of the two nations, there will be immense synergies which we can tap into as the interaction continues," he added.

This initiative aims to widen the success of cross-border co-op partnerships hot on the heels of the successful IYC Regional Conference organised by SNCF which was held on October 3 here.

The conference saw a large number of overseas delegates in attendance, particularly from Angkasa.

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