

RI shows off culture in Davos

Linda Yulisman, The Jakarta Post, Davos | Headlines | Sat, January 25 2014, 10:59 AM



White summit: The view of Davos with the Congress Center in the early morning of the annual meeting of the World Economic Forum (WEF) 2014 in Davos, Switzerland, on Friday. The annual Davos gathering, which draws thousands of the world's most powerful people, will welcome more than 40 heads of state and government this year to focus on questions about the world's future, organizers said on Wednesday. (Reuters/Ruben Sprich)

Indonesia is using “cultural diplomacy” to promote trade, investment and tourism at the prestigious annual World Economic Forum (WEF), running from Wednesday until Saturday in Davos, Switzerland.

The forum is being attended by 2,500 officials and captains of industries from around the world.

The Trade Ministry teamed up with the Investment Coordinating Board (BKPM) to hold an Indonesia Night at the Morosani Schweizerhoff Hotel on Thursday to display the country's rich

cultural heritage through cuisine, fashion, jewelry, dance, traditional cosmetics and spa, and other arts products.

The event, under the banner of Remarkable Indonesia, was attended by more than 300 officials and business executives, including WEF founder and executive chairman Klaus Schwab, Finance Minister Chatib Basri, Tourism and Creative Economy Minister Mari Elka Pangestu, Foreign Minister Marty Natalegawa, BKPM chief Mahendra Siregar and Bank Indonesia Governor Agus Martowardojo.

Top Indonesian business leaders, including Bank Mandiri president director Budi Gunadi Sadikin, Bakrie Group CEO Anindya Bakrie, James Riady and John Riady of the Lippo Group and Indika Energy president director Wishnu Wardhana, were also present at the event.

Amid the winter chill of the snow-covered mountain resort town, the guests were warmed by Indonesian food such as nasi goreng (fried rice), a variety of satay (chicken, beef and goat) and rendang (beef simmered in coconut milk and spices), and by songs performed by local singers Joy Tobing, Yemima Putri Alma Lamtiur and Soul ID.

Three famous Indonesian dances were also presented — Bali's Kecak and Kembang Girang dances and Java's Kuda Lumping dance.

BKPM chief Mahendra Siregar said that cultural displays like the Indonesia Night would supplement the message that Indonesia was an attractive destination for trade, investment and tourism, backed by its strong economic performance and natural beauty.

Finance Minister Chatib Basri said: "Such a kind of [cultural] diplomacy can be far more powerful and forceful compared to our promoting Indonesia in formal forums."

Indonesia, Southeast Asia's biggest economy, saw its position jump by 12 places to 38th in the WEF's Global Competitiveness Report 2013-2014.

The country hit a new investment record, drawing Rp 398.6 trillion (US\$32.72 billion) last year, up 27.3 percent from 2013, according to BKPM.

Foreign direct investment (FDI) made up 68 percent of the total realized investment, amounting to Rp 270.4 trillion, which was 22.4 percent higher than a year earlier. Japanese investors led the figure, followed by those from Singapore and the United States.

The country's exports stood at \$165.57 billion and imports settled at \$171.17 billion in the January-November period last year, according to the Central Statistics Agency (BPS). It was a 5.19 percent decline for exports and a 2.8-percent fall in imports from a year earlier.

The number of inbound tourists rose 9.12 percent to 7.94 million in the same period last year, the BPS said.

Source: <http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2014/01/25/ri-shows-culture-davos.html>