

Spanish league deepens roots in Malaysia with grassroots, sponsorship

SPANISH football league Laliga is stepping up its presence in Malaysia with a focus on long-term sponsorship and grassroots development.

At the Laliga Extratime Malaysia 2025 event, strategy for partnerships with local industry players were outlined.

This included plans to nurture young talent through structured academies and youth tournaments.

The event brought together stakeholders from the sporting, commercial and media sectors for panel discussions.

Topics included sponsorship opportunities and the future of youth football in the country.

Two themed panels were held where one was on sponsorships, featuring representatives from Laliga, Astro, Ampersand Sports, Milo Malaysia, Grab and Selangor FC.

The second panel was on stakeholders in grassroots football, with speakers from Laliga Academy Malaysia, Football Association of Malaysia (FAM),

JDT FC Grassroots, Villarreal Academy Malaysia, Sambill Park and RCD Espanyol.

The event was attended by FAM representative Datuk Zainal Abidin Hassan and Spanish Ambassador to Malaysia Jose Luis Pardo.

Laliga head in Malaysia Adrian Prol said the league had seen its commercial turnover rise from €74mil (RM368.5mil) to over €160mil (RM796.8mil) in seven years, crediting this growth to global sponsorships that increased brand recognition.

"In Malaysia, one of our main objectives is to secure new sponsorships that become long-term local partners, not just one-off collaborations," said Prol.

"We are particularly interested in industries such as energy, watches, airlines, finance and insurance.

"At the same time, we remain flexible in adapting our sponsorship model to meet mutual goals with each partner."

Prol added that partnerships with clubs and broadcasters

were key to building sustained engagement.

On the grassroots front, Laliga has completed over 840 youth football projects in 57 countries, involving over 800 Laliga coaches, 25,000 local coaches and 240,000 young players.

Malaysia is home to one of eight Laliga academies worldwide – the Laliga Academy Malaysia – which trains players aged eight to 18 using the Laliga methodology under technical director Diego Gutierrez.

In addition, Malaysia hosts both the Laliga Youth League and the Laliga Youth Tournament that help raise the competitiveness of local talent.

At the event, organisers also announced that the fifth edition of the Laliga Youth Tournament will take place July 11-13 at Universiti Putra Malaysia in Seri Kembangan, Selangor.

Local project partner Sambill Park confirmed the participation of over 70 teams from nine countries, including China, India

and Pakistan.

"Laliga is recognised globally for its commitment to grassroots football," said Prol.

"Our clubs' youth academies are consistently among the best in the world, as seen with Villarreal CF and RCD Espanyol, who are participating this year.

"We remain strongly committed to developing football around the world, and we are pleased to once again host the Laliga Youth Tournament in Malaysia."



(From left) Prol, Zainal Abidin and Luis Pardo after officiating the event.