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Daim conveys Government's commitment on Langkawi

KUALA LUMPUR, Sun. - The Government is committed to transforming Langkawi by the turn of the century into a holiday resort and convention centre on par with other leading destinations of the world.

Langkawi Development Authority co-chairman Tun Daim Zainuddin said as the groundwork had already been laid to transform Langkawi into a top tourist destination in the region, future efforts would be channelled to cater to the diversified and particular needs of the discerning tourists.

This will be done by providing world class service in terms of transportation, accommodation, shopping, social needs and the like, he was quoted as saying in an interview in the New Straits Times special supplement on Langkawi titled Langkawi Into The Next Millennium to be distributed with the NST tomorrow.

"Newer, better and more attractive tourism products that capture the uniqueness of Langkawi will have to be created.

"A theme-based concept can also be explored in the same manner that some of the top tourist destinations in the world have been promoted," he said.

Daim, who is also Economic Adviser to the Government, said that while in the next millennium the Government would continue to provide the infrastructure to propel the growth of the island, the private sector would be actively encouraged to increase their investments in hotel accommodations, recreational spots and related services.

"Also important will be the need to balance the ecology with man-made development. Proper planning carried out in a coordinated and integrated manner coupled with aggressive marketing will ensure that this vision of Langkawi will be a reality."

The resultant investment will provide economic spin-offs to the locals in the form of greater employment, business and commercial opportunities.

Daim said the World Tourism Organisation had projected that by year 2010, East Asia and the Pacific's share of world tourist arrivals would have increased from the current 14 per cent to 20 per cent.

"Amidst this scenario, there is a huge market potential that Malaysia can tap and with proper and integrated tourism planning, Langkawi has plenty to offer to the discerning tourists."

Daim also said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad had been the driving force behind much of Langkawi's development, giving the push for closer collaboration between the public and private sector.

"Under his guidance and direction, more coordinated planning was undertaken with specific targets set, particularly in terms of infrastructure support and facilities."

(Read the full interview in the supplement.)

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