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Sabbaruddin-Holiday

GIVE THE HOLIDAY ON THE MONTH'S FIRST SATURDAY - MINISTRY

KUALA BERANG, Oct 27 (Bernama) -- The Culture, Arts and Tourism Ministry wants the once-a-month Saturday holiday proposed for civil servants to be given on the first Saturday of each month.

Minister Datuk Seri Sabbaruddin Chik said people would have money to spend in the early part of the month and it was also the time when they decided on the family budget.

"For the sake of tourism, we feel that the first Saturday of each month is the best choice," he told reporters after opening a tourist boat operating course at Tasik Kenyir here.

In the 1999 Budget presented last Friday, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad proposed the once-a-month Saturday off for civil servants to encourage them to go visiting and thereby boosting tourism.

Sabbaruddin said that under the Budget, the ministry was allocated RM170 million for tourism promotional activities.

He said that apart from the traditional markets of Europe and the United States, the ministry would also focus on China and India and explore new markets like Central Asia.

The government had relaxed entry requirements for people from China and India and more tourists were expected to arrive from the two countries, he said.

Sabbaruddin also hit out at the pro-reformation demonstrations carried out in Kuala Lumpur since the sacking of former Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

He said they affected tourism and the earnings of traders in areas where the protests took place.

Sabbaruddin, who is also Umno secretary-general, alleged that the demonstrators were trying to prevent Anwar, who has been charged with corrupt practices and sexual misconduct, from being tried in court.

-- BERNAMA

SBJ SK