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Dr M opens RM200 million Zon complex

JOHOR BARU, Sat. - The RM200 million Johor Baru Duty Free Complex, popularly known as the Zon complex, was officially opened by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad tonight.

Spread over 6.8ha in Stulang Laut, the Zon is a development of Kelana Megah Sdn Bhd, a subsidiary of Sriwani Holding Berhad, and is reputed to be the largest integrated duty-free complex in Southeast Asia.

Within this duty-free enclave are an exclusive four-storey shopping podium, the 400-room Eden Garden Hotel, the Eden Floating Palace restaurant-cum-entertainment centre and the Johor Baru International Ferry Terminal.

The Zon shopping complex consists of 30,000 sq feet of retail space for duty-free shopping, and includes a supermarket, a department store, fast-food outlets, a food court and 168 boutique shoplots.

The complex has attracted an estimated 800,000 shoppers since its soft opening on August 1, last year. It is expected to attract an estimated one million shoppers each year.

The Eden Garden Hotel boasts some of the largest and grandest facilities for meetings, conventions and exhibitions in the region.

The imposing hotel features a 1,200-capacity grand ballroom, a 24,000 sq feet Roman spa, an executive floor with an exclusive lounge for private meetings, and six food and beverage outlets specialising in Continental, Chinese and Thai cuisine.

The unique Eden Floating Palace was converted from an old Penang ferry. The four-decker, fully air-conditioned vessel is anchored at a pier fronting the Eden Garden Hotel.

It can accommodate up to 1,100 people at a time, and boasts 16,000 sq feet of prime dining and entertainment space, including a popular seafood restaurant, a discotheque and a karaoke lounge.

The Johor Baru International Ferry terminal offers comfortable high-speed, catamaran ferry services to regional destinations, including Tanah Merah in Singapore, and Batam and Bintan Islands in Indonesia, as well as several destinations in Johor.

This afternoon, Dr Mahathir, accompanied by Menteri Besar Datuk Abdul Ghani Othman, toured the complex and took a cruise from the ferry terminal.

Dr Mahathir also witnessed the signing of a memorandum of understanding between Johore Tenggara Oil Palm Bhd and Teknik Segar Sdn Bhd, and signing of a research and development agreement among Universiti Teknologi Malaysia, Equiventures Sdn Bhd and French-based company Suez Lyonnaise Des Eaux.

He also officiated at the Sungai Johor Water Treatment Plant, one of the two plants constructed by Equiventures under the State's water supply privatisation project.

He then he witnessed the presentation of ISO 9002 to Equiventures by the Standards and Industrial Research Institute of Malaysia.

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