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Sabbaruddin: Carnival '98 will be better and bigger

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THE Shopping Carnival '98 to be held between October 3 and November 1, will be better and bigger with more shopping complexes, shops and hotels throughout the country taking part in the event.

In announcing the event, Culture, Arts and Tourism Minister Datuk Sabbaruddin Chik said only five major towns participated in the Shopping Carnival '97 last year.

"Based on the suggestion by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, the Shopping Carnival this year will be extended nationwide, covering various goods and services to assist local companies affected by the economic turmoil," he said in a media conference to announce the event in Kuala Lumpur yesterday.

This year, the carnival comes with a theme, "Malaysia Your Top Value Shopping Destination".

It aims at promoting Malaysia as an attractive shopping destination that offers variety quality goods and services with reasonable prices.

"In line with the objective of Shopping Carnival '98 to increase the country's income through shopping activities and assist local companies, the concept of this year's shopping carnival lies in the promotion of locally-made goods and service.

"As such, many attractive and interesting activities have been planned to promote local goods not only to foreign tourists but also to local people," he said.

Sabbaruddin said the drop in the value of the ringgit compared with the main currencies in the world have given foreign tourists more purchasing power to shop in the country.

Thus, shopping is one of the activities that could boost the number of tourists coming into the country, he said.

To date, about 166 shopping complexes and shops nationwide have agreed to participate in the carnival.

Sabbaruddin said the main activity will be the discount sales of between 10 per cent to 70 per cent on local products, branded products, clothes, electrical goods, food, leather goods and services.

The launching of the national level of Shopping Carnival '98 will be held at the Suria KLCC on October 2 at 5pm.

The launching ceremony will also be the curtain-raiser for "Malaysia Fashion Week", to be held between October 3 and 9 in Kuala Lumpur.

"The fashion week is organised by Kumpulan Utusan Melayu Bhd with an objective to showcase latest development in local fashion industry.

"For the first time in Malaysia, fashion designers, suppliers, sellers, manufacturers and fashion colleges will have the chance to showcase their products and services," he said.

A total of 55 hotels throughout the country will take part in the carnival by offering discounts and attractive room and food packages.

Sabbaruddin said local car dealers such as the Edaran Otomobil Nasional (EON) have already conducted promotion and car sales which had received encouraging support.

MAS Golden Holidays and Malaysia Airlines are also taking part in the event by offering special packages of "Experience Malaysia for Free" and "Malaysia Showcase".

Every state in the country including Sabah and Sarawak also have attractive programmes and events for the carnival in the pipeline.

On the Commonwealth Games, Sabbaruddin said between 60,000 and 80,000 foreign visitors are expected to visit Malaysia.

"I am sure that those who have visited Malaysia will come back again for following visit. Statistics show that out of 10 people who visit Malaysia, 8.7 of them will visit the country again," he said.

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