

13 OCT 1998

Sabbaruddin-Promotion

TOURISM INDUSTRY NEEDS RENEWED FUNDING FOR PROMOTION

LANGKAWI, Oct 13 (Bernama) -- Malaysia's tourism industry needs renewed government and private sector funding for its effective promotion over a long-term period, Culture, Arts and Tourism Minister Datuk Sabbaruddin Chik said today.

He said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad had recognised the need for an extensive tourism promotion to help the industry recover from the region's economic downturn which had seen a decline in the number of tourist arrivals.

"In fact Dr Mahathir is chairing a meeting at 2.30 pm today and what the Prime Minister is going to tell us.. I don't know what ..something related to promotion maybe working with the private sector", he said after opening the 13th Meeting of Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Tourism Working Group (TWG) here.

Some 60 tourism officials including those from Australia, Indonesia and Singapore are attending the two-day meeting.

He said the private sector and government must work together in promoting the industry.

"We need support to revive the tourist industry and we need money for promotion as it should be done all the time especially during tough times", he added.

Opening the meeting, Sabbaruddin said there was a need for greater and more active role through cooperation among APEC member economies to alleviate the effects of the currency crisis by promoting tourism growth in the affected economies.

"Malaysia therefore, seeks the cooperation of all member economies and together we shall find solutions to overcome the problems facing the tourism industry", he said.

Sabbaruddin said in this time of financial crisis in some of the APEC member economies where the tourism sector had been adversely affected, it was even more important to reexamine the TWG programmes to ensure sustainable growth of the industry.

He said capital controls though might inconvenience tourists in the beginning, it was hoped it would eventually facilitate the promotion of tourism growth and economic recovery.

Sabbaruddin also said Malaysia supported the APEC objectives set in the Seoul APEC Declaration of November 14, 1991 and concurred with the recommendation that sustainable growth of tourism in the APEC region should be encouraged as a means of generating benefits for all member economies.

He said efforts should be made to remove impediments in order to facilitate the flow of tourists whilst human resource development should be promoted to ensure quality tourism service.

As for Malaysia, Sabbaruddin said, the tourism industry had been accorded high priority by the government to promote and assist the development of the industry.

He said the government and the private sectors had cooperated in the development of the industry and would continue to do so in the future.

"Malaysia has now shifted its emphasis in marketing from selling Malaysia as a whole, to one of more specific product based campaign and also has adapted a new strategy for growth of the tourism industry through staging of international sports and recreation events," he added.

-- BERNAMA

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