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Zon: Johor's one-stop duty-free complex

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ONE OF the largest duty-free complexes in the region, the Johor Baru Duty Free Complex or Zon, will be officially launched by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad tomorrow.

Developed by Kelana Megah Sdn Bhd, a member of the public-listed Sriwani Holdings Bhd group, Zon offers one-stop duty-free shopping, dining and entertainment, transportation, accommodation and convention facilities.

To ensure that tourists and locals have a wide array of merchandise selection, Zon offers a shopping podium comprising four levels and a basement, over 30,000 sq m of retail space and more than 180 boutique shoplots.

As Zon has been accorded duty-free status, all imported goods are sold at prices before imposition of any Malaysian duties and taxes. Popular items include perfumery, cosmetics, apparel, footwear, confectionary, jewellery and toys.

Besides imported products, quality made-in-Malaysia goods are also available as the recent currency movement has made these goods very attractive to tourists.

Another integral part of the Zon is the Eden Garden Hotel, the only hotel in Johor Baru with direct sea-front view. Besides luxuriously appointed guest rooms with sky-light lobby, the hotel has excellent facilities for meetings, incentives, conventions and expositions.

The JB Expo Centre can accommodate up to 5,000 people in an exhibition and is well-equipped with state-of-the-art electronic, lighting, sound and projection systems.

The large column-free Grand Ballroom is ideal for holding functions for up to 1,000 people. The two multi-level auditoriums, meanwhile, can seat 80 people and 250 respectively.

Other facilities include six well-appointed meeting and function rooms, business centre, a 25,000 sq ft Roman Spa and Health Centre; an extra large swimming pool; a VIP lounge and the delights of five international food and beverage outlets.

There is the "Salt n' Pepper Cafe Restaurant", "Palm Lounge" and "Palm Bistro", "Lotus Garden Shark's Fin" and "Abalone Restaurant", and "Sukhothai" - A Touch of Authentic Thai Cuisine.

Another attraction is the "Eden Floating Palace", which takes Malaysians and tourists alike to a brand-new dining and entertainment experience.

The Eden Floating Palace features fine and exclusive Mandarin cuisine; a wide selection of fresh seafood; wide range of wines and premium thirst-quenchers; a world-class entertainment and all-night partying at duty-free prices.

Anchored at a pier fronting Zon, a four-decked fully air-conditioned vessel houses three outstanding food and beverage outlets namely "VOR Viking Discotheque" on Deck 1, "Eden Floating Palace Seafood Restaurant" on Decks 2 and 3, and "Ceasar's Palace Karaoke Lounge" on Deck 4.

Under the flagship of Sriwani, the Eden Group of Companies is best remembered for their unique, exotic ambience, exemplary service and renowned as the creator of a gourmet's paradise that has put in great efforts to masterfully create this extraordinary dining-and-entertainment paradise from an old Penang ferry.

The transformation took two years and now there is a "Fair Lady" floating atop the glistening waters of the "Straits of Johor". Visitors

also have a wide choice of value-for-money meals at the basement Food Court and several fast food outlets at the shopping podium.

Another integral component of the Zon is the Johor Baru International Ferry Terminal, which is fully equipped with modern facilities and manned by all relevant government departments such as Customs, Immigration and Health authorities. It is designated to be an official entry point by sea at the Southern Peninsular Malaysia.

The terminal provides visitors with convenient international ferry services from Zon to Tanah Merah in Singapore, Batam and Bintan Islands in Indonesia and Tanjung Belungkor in Johor and vice versa.

It also has direct links to numerous regional passenger seaports in the Riau Archipelago, Tioman and Sibu Islands. With the huge population in its vicinity, the terminal serves as a catalyst for the development of domestic and regional maritime travel industry, whether for leisure or commuting.

The terminal has four ferry berthing slots which have a capacity to handle up to 8 "arrivals" per hour.

The fast, safe and air-conditioned catamarans (maritime commuters) which transport passengers are of specifications approved by the Harbour and Marine Departments for the comfort and safety of passengers.

Other outstanding features include one-stop ticketing and check-in facilities for the convenience of the out-bound traveller; friendly, courteous and efficient ticketing staff, customs and immigration officers and comfortable waiting and departure halls with piped-in music.

Zon promises to be an exciting new gateway into Malaysia with its strategic location at the popular Stulang Laut area in Johor Baru, just 2km from the existing Johor Baru-Singapore causeway.

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