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Meetings-Bureau

MALAYSIA NEEDS TO FORM CONVENTION BUSINESS BUREAU

KUALA LUMPUR, June 16 (Bernama) -- Malaysia needs a good convention of business bureau in order to attract big international meetings to be held in Malaysia, the International Congress and Convention Association said today.

Its Executive Director Tom Hulton said meeting industries were a big business and many countries have set up this bureau for the purpose and were in the process of formalising it.

"I would urge the Malaysian people to really set up the bureau and formalise that as quickly as possible," he told reporters after the opening of the Joint Meeting Industry Council Millennium Leaders Summit at the Palace of the Golden Horses Hotel in Seri Kembangan, near here.

The summit was open by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

Speaking at the same news conference, president and CEO of the International Association of Convention and Visitor Bureaus Edward Nielsen said the capital control policy in Malaysia would greatly benefit the meetings industry.

Nielsen said having predictability of the exchange rate in terms of what one would be able to buy for a meeting, which was normally planned for the future, and delivering it, was extraordinary.

"I think the potential in this country is astronomical, you are a turn around story, par excellence in terms of what Malaysia has done as a country within the context of your infrastructure and specific to the industry that we represent, Malaysia is a benchmark country.

"And that is not rhetorics, you have demonstrated that by performance alone," he said.

Meanwhile, president of the Joint Meeting Industry Council, Vito Marzo said Malaysia was really in some way an unique example on how well the capital control could work in order to raise the living standard of the people.

"The benefit, the money produced within the country is to a very significant extent, kept within the country and reinvested on productive activities within the country, is contributing to keeping the productivity high and inflation low," he said, adding that, this was the key factor for economic development of any country.

The four-day summit is being attended by some 100 leaders of the meetings, incentives, conferences and exhibitions (MICE) industry and high profile media practitioners from around the world.

This is the first time ever such a meeting is being organised aimed at making a clear statement of intent on five major issues facing the MICE market namely globalisation/regionalisation, industry recognition, education, technology (not e-commerce strategies) and standards and best practices.

The summit is organised by JMIC with the support of the Malaysian member of the ICCA, Malaysian Tourism Promotion Board (Tourism Malaysia) and Malaysia Airlines.

JMIC is the umbrella organisation representing organisations and associations that represented specific sectors of the MICE industry on an international basis from the national convention and visitors bureaus to the conference centre and to the professional conference organisers.

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