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Tourists-Carnival

AUGUST MEGA SALE CARNIVAL TO BOOST TOURIST ARRIVAL

KUALA LUMPUR, July 23 (Bernama) -- The Government hopes to attract 15.3 million tourists this year with various tour packages and the upcoming nation-wide August Mega Sale Carnival.

With attractive price cuts and various other promotions during the carnival, from Aug. 2 to 31, more tourists are expected to come to shop in the country, Deputy Culture, Arts and Tourism Minister Datuk Fu Ah Kiow said.

"The carnival is expected to make Malaysia one of the leading shopping destinations in the world by the year's end," he said when launching the August 2003 Mega Sale Carnival here today.

The 15.3 million target was set by the Prime Minister, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, when tabling the 2003 Budget late last year.

Last year, the country's earnings from foreign tourists rose by four per cent to RM25.2 billion compared to RM24.2 billion in 2001.

From the amount, 21.4 per cent, or RM5.2 billion, was from shopping, he said.

The carnival was among efforts by the government to revive the tourism sector which was badly affected following the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) outbreak, Fu said.

Tourist arrivals in the country from January to May this year dropped by 27.4 per cent to 3.8 million, compared to 5.33 million during the same period last year.

The Mega Sale Carnival Malaysia, previously known as Karnival Jualan Mega Malaysia, is held three times a year -- in March, August and December.

Themed 'Fashion and Accessories', the upcoming 11th carnival will feature a variety of contemporary and traditional collections from local and foreign fashion designers, including Bill Keith, Tom Abang Saufi, Zang Toi and Datin Sarimah Adzrina.

The carnival will be officially opened by Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin at the Esplanade in Kuala Lumpur City Center (KLCC) here at 8.30pm on Aug 2.

-- BERNAMA

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