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Tourism

SARAWAK CONFIDENT OF CLOSER TOURISM COOPERATION WITH SABAH

KUCHING, March 4 (Bernama) -- Sarawak is confident that its cordial relationship with Sabah, particularly in the tourism industry, will be enhanced with the appointment of Sabah Umno liaison chairman Datuk Musa Aman as the next Sabah Chief Minister.

Sarawak Tourism Minister Datuk Sri Abang Johari Tun Openg said today his ministry was looking forward to working with Musa, when he takes over the leadership from Datuk Chong Kah Kiat, whose term ends on March 27.

"With his (Musa's) vast experience in the corporate sector and support from other Barisan Nasional (BN) component parties and leaders, I am sure he can help steer Sabah's economy to a new horizon," said Abang Johari, who is also Parti Pesaka Bumiputera Bersatu (PBB) deputy president.

Speaking to reporters after launching the Sayang Sarawak 1 river cruise here, he said the two states had been doing very well to promote the World Heritage Sites of Mt Kinabalu and Mt Mulu National Park on the international tourism map.

The appointment of Musa, who is Sabah Finance Minister, under the rotation system practised in Sabah, was announced by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad in Kuala Lumpur today.

On the catamaran-styled cruise along the Sarawak River, Abang Johari said it was part of efforts to add value to the industry apart from other boat trips such as the traditional Malay water taxis "perahu tambang" and Chinese-styled "kapal kotak".

The custom-built boat, with a capacity of up to 30 guests for informal reception cruises, is owned and operated by a local company, AeroTRAIN Charter Sdn Bhd.

He said through its package tour, including crocodile watching and wetland cruise, visitors would have the opportunity to capture Kuching and its history, culture and way of life from a different perspective.

The Sarawak river was an important and historic waterway for the people of Sarawak with its chartered history directly tied to the river, when an Englishman, James Brooke with his "Royalist" yacht arrived here in 1839 to quell a rebellion, he said.

He was happy to note many entrepreneurs were willing to take up the challenges of providing tourism-related products and services to add additional impetus to the growth of tourism in the state.

-- BERNAMA

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