

23 MAY 2003
SUNWAY-TOURIST
SUNWAY LAGOON OUT TO ATTRACT MORE TOURISTS

KUALA LUMPUR, May 23 -- Sunway Lagoon Resort Hotel is spending some RM6 million on strategic promotional activities this year to attract more domestic and regional tourists.

The spending has already resulted in a gradual pick-up in business, deputy managing director of the property investment of Sunway City Bhd, Ngeow Voon Yean said.

Booking rate for this month has slowly picked up at 16 percent compared with almost none last month, he said.

He said the promotional activities were aimed at attracting tourists from regional countries such as India, Indonesia and Singapore.

"We are offering a world class resort within the city at a very attractive price. We believe we should concentrate in attracting the regional market first before we can convince tourists from other parts of the world to come," he told reporters after introducing three flexi package for day trippers and inter-state holidaymakers at the hotel today.

At RM380, Sunshine Package 1 offers a one night stay at the hotel, RM80 food and beverage credit, two adult and two child tickets to the theme park and complimentary access to fun interactive games, while RM134 Sunshine Package 2 offers two buffet meals, Theme Park entrance and RM27 Sunshine Package 3 offers one ticket to the Theme Park.

The packages will be offered between June and August, available at the hotel's main lobby and the Theme Park ticketing office.

Ngeow said to bolster local tourism industry, Malaysians should take the opportunity to spend the coming school holidays at the country's resort.

Meanwhile the hotel's general manager, Peter D. Gibbons, who was also present at the press conference said 60 percent of the hotel's revenue were generated by the locals.

With the postponement of many corporate functions at the hotel to July and August, he expects the business to slowly pick up and the result to be reflected in its third quarter of the financial year.

Asked to comment on the economic package announced by Prime Minister, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad last Wednesday, he said as a short term measure, it would help the company's cashflow.

"However the quantum may not be significant because as you know the rate of occupancy is still quite low. For cost cutting exercise, we are also doing it from time to time without affecting the quality of service provided," he said.

Gibbons said last year, the hotel registered a RM77 million revenue, while the first quarter this year saw some growth.

However, he added the second quarter did not look so good due to the impact of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) outbreak and the recent Iraq war.

He said as worldwide tourism industry was resilient, he was confident that it would be a matter of time before the industry would bounce back.

"That is why we didn't stop any of our expansion project or the promotional activities. We are also very confident with the government's commitment and effort to help boost the industry," he said. -- BERNAMA

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