

14/01/2003

## Carlsberg sees market boost for Chang Beer

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CARLSBERG Brewery (M) Bhd expects its Chang Beer to capture between 5 and 10 per cent share of the market by the year-end.

The company, which competes locally with rival Guinness Anchor Bhd, currently has 65 per cent share of the beer market, with products such as Carlsberg and Carl's.

Commercial director Chin Voon Loong said Chang Beer has captured 1 to 2 per cent market share with sales worth RM10 million since its launch in July last year.

"Currently, we are producing some 20,000 hectolitres of Chang Beer," he told reporters in Shah Alam, Selangor, yesterday.

Carlsberg's agreement with Chang International Ltd in July last year to manufacture, sell and distribute Chang Beer in Malaysia is part of a plan to counter competition from cheaper labels from the Asean (Association of South-East Asian Nations) region, such as Singha, Panther and San Miguel.

Chang Beer, priced RM3.30 to RM3.60, is marketed as a value-for-money beer and is targeted at adults in their 20s and 30s. The alcohol content of the Malaysian-brewed Chang Beer is 5 per cent to accommodate local tastes, slightly lower than the above 6 per cent for the Thai-brewed beer.

Chin said Carlsberg is confident of maintaining sales of RM850 million to RM900 million this year.

It posted a revenue of RM841.1 million for the year ended December 31 2001. For the nine months ended September 30 2002, Carlsberg recorded a revenue of RM663.6 million.

"We also see our beer market growing in line with growth of the country's gross domestic product (GDP)," Chin said after launching Chang Beer's Chinese New Year "Yee Sang" prosperity promotion in Shah Alam.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said recently that he expected Malaysia's GDP to grow between 4 and 5 per cent this year. The official forecast for this year is between 6 and 6.5 per cent.