

Plans to be a marine hub

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STOCKHOLM (Sweden): Malaysia plans to be a destination for yachting and activities related to marine leisure, said Transport Minister Datuk Seri Chan Kong Choy.

Chan attended the Monaco Yacht Show over the weekend to promote the Langkawi International Yacht Registry which provided incentives and tax exemption to yacht owners and companies that had registered their yachts in the island.

The three-day show is the only international yacht event devoted exclusively to luxury yachting and the biggest in-water display in Europe of super and mega yachts.

By having the yacht owners and companies register in Malaysia, Chan said it would attract other related activities

that would have a direct impact of the economy.

"It will also bring investment opportunities.

"This is a new area that will have a positive impact on the country," he said adding that the response from the Monaco show was positive and encouraging.

Chan was speaking to reporters here after attending a dinner hosted by Malaysian Ambassador to Sweden Jasmi Md. Yusoff on Saturday.

He said Malaysia had a good chance of attracting yacht owners due to its attractive places such as Langkawi, Penang, Pulau Pangkor, Pulau Tioman and Pulau Redang.

"Unlike the Caribbean and Mediterranean where yachting has been long established, the yacht owners can only cruise six months due to the weather," he said.

"The owners have looked at other destinations especially in Asia for a change. So we want to grab this opportunity to attract them to come to our country."

Chan said Malaysia's political stability, multi-cultural aspects and food variety would attract the owners.

"Our country can also offer cheaper fuel and parking bays compared to the other countries," he said adding that the Government had invested a lot in the industry such as constructing new marinas.

Chan said a workshop would be held for yacht clubs and marina operators, yacht builders, brokers and charters to promote Malaysia as a destination.

"We like to invite successful marinas and yacht operators from the Caribbean and Mediterranean to talk about their experiences," he said.