

Hotel coffee houses may stay open round the clock

KUALA LUMPUR: Coffee houses in hotels in the city's Golden Triangle may be allowed to open around the clock as part of efforts to attract more foreign tourists.

Federal Territories Minister Datuk Zulhasnan Rafique said the suggestion was raised at yesterday's meeting of *mentris besar* chaired by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi in Putrajaya.

He said it was proposed during the discussion on the Tourism Ministry's idea of extending the operating hours of entertainment outlets for the benefit of tourists.

Coffee houses in hotels in the city used to operate around the clock until the 1997 economic downturn.

"Twenty-hour food and beverage outlets will be especially popular with tourists from the Middle East who

prefer to go out at night," Zulhasnan said after renaming Pan Pacific Hotel Kuala Lumpur as Best Western Premier Seri Pacific Hotel Kuala Lumpur.

He said it would be safe for hotel coffee houses to stay open later at night since they are located in a controlled environment.

However, no decision had been made on the proposals yet.

The rebranding of Pan Pacific Hotel Kuala Lumpur marks the new partnership between Residence Hotel and Resort Sdn Bhd, the company which manages the hotel, and Best Western International. The 5-star hotel is currently being refurbished at a cost of RM36 million.

Best Western is the world's largest hotel chain with; 4,300 hotels. — Bernama