



Festival-like atmosphere: Lim opening the Greatest Tourism Carnival at the Putra World Trade Centre in Kuala Lumpur yesterday.

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Malaysia plans Asia travel mart

Fair to bring international players together

KUALA LUMPUR: Malaysia will invite travel agents from all over Asia for the first travel mart for them here next year.

Deputy Tourism Minister Datuk Donald Lim Siang Chai said the event would not only introduce Asian countries to the world but also bring more visitors to Malaysia.

He said that although numerous travel fairs are held every year in the country, some lacked the involvement of international travel agents, especially those from the Asian region.

"There is Berlin's Internationale Tourisme Bourse and London's World Travel Mart that cater to the European countries.

"The Arabic Travel Mart in Dubai is for those in the West Asian countries.

"But in Asia, we still do not have an annual travel fair that gathers all the travel agents from the region and which allows international players to meet with their suppliers in this part of the world," he told a press conference after opening the Malaysia International Travel Mart, dubbed the Greatest Tourism Carnival, here yesterday.

The three-day event at the Putra World Trade Centre is organised by the Malaysian

Chinese Tourism Association and Asia-Pacific Tourism Events. *The Star* is the official media.

Lim also launched the "VMY 2007 Domestic Holiday Packages" and "VMY 2007 Special Hotel Packages" free booklets, which feature travel deals and hotel offers selected by Tourism Malaysia.

He said Tourism Minister Datuk Seri Tengku Adnan Tengku Mansor had agreed to have the travel mart in Malaysia, although the date had yet to be set.

He added that the travel mart would not affect the existing travel fairs that are held annually in the country.

Eighty exhibitors have taken up 380 booths at the Malaysia International Travel Mart, which aims to attract 60,000 to 80,000 visitors.

Singer-actress Karen Mok, who is the Hong Kong Shopping Festival ambassador, made heads turn when she visited the Hong Kong pavilion.

Although she stayed for only about 10 minutes, she caught the attention of the morning crowd as she posed for photographs and distributed pamphlets on the Hong Kong Shopping Festival.