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# 'A draw for upmarket tourists'

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## PREMIUM HOTEL:

St. Regis will put Langkawi on the world map, says Najib

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St. Regis Langkawi has the potential to draw upmarket tourists to the popular tourist island, said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak.

He said he had been informed that many upmarket tourists had already made reservations at the hotel from August to year-end.

"St. Regis is a hotel that is of a high quality, not just in terms of facilities, but also in its concept and design. It is a premium hotel, truly living up to its international status.

"The hotel is a joint-venture between the Federal Government and Rajawali Corporation.

"With this hotel, we can enhance Langkawi's status by putting it on the world map," he said at the opening ceremony of the hotel last night.

Najib said that while Langkawi had been successful in terms of mass and mid-level tourism, it had yet to draw upmarket tourists.

"When we can do that, we will be able to generate more income and provide more high-paying jobs, especially for the locals.

"We will also get higher demand for handicrafts and local produce, and boost local shopping hubs and luxury car rentals.

"There will be many multiplier effects. It will also boost Langkawi's connectivity with the world," he said.



Yang di-Pertuan Agong Tuanku Abdul Halim Mu'adzam Shah signing a plaque for the Langkawi Integrated Waterfront Masterplan. With him are Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak and Rajawali Corporation chairman and chief executive officer Tan Sri Peter Sondakh. Pic by Amran Hamid

Najib added that at this juncture, there was no upmarket shopping in Langkawi, and no luxury brands were available on the island.

"To bring in all these, we need people with purchasing power.

"When we have the numbers, we can open business opportunities at the international level," he said.

On when this could be achieved, Najib said it would take five years before the subsequent phase could

be launched as infrastructure development and the build-up in terms of tourists and marketing would take some time.

Yang di-Pertuan Agong Tuanku Abdul Halim Mu'adzam Shah signed a plaque to mark the opening of St. Regis Langkawi.

The ceremony took place to much pomp and splendour at the luxury resort here.

Present were the prime minis-

ter's wife, Datin Seri Rosmah Mansor, Kedah Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Ahmad Bashah Md Hanipah, Rajawali Corporation chairman and chief executive officer Tan Sri Peter Sondakh, his wife, Puan Sri Evie Sondakh, members of royal families and cabinet ministers.

The resort is the brand's 37th address, offering four private over-water villas and 85 luxuriously appointed suites.

Each suite is distinct in design, with bold accent hues and imaginative paintings by esteemed local artists. Each suite offers expansive, unobstructed views of the sea from spacious terraces.

Tuanku Halim also signed a plaque for the Langkawi Integrated Waterfront Masterplan.

Earlier in the day, the prime minister was taken on a tour of the hotel.