

Najib: Govt to raise standard of golf through PGA Tour
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PUTRAJAYA (Sept 6, 2011): The government intends to elevate the standard of professional golf in Malaysia to new heights by leveraging on the PGA Tour platform – the leading professional golf organisation in the world.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Abdul Razak said Malaysia is rapidly emerging as Asia's leading golf destination, with over 207 golf facilities, representing an investment of over RM20 billion.

"Local industry players are encouraged to work with promoters to offer creative packages that attract foreign golfers to Malaysia to experience not only our facilities but also Malaysia's fascinating attractions, delicious cuisine and unique cultural heritage that are truly Malaysian," he said.

Speaking at an event at his office here today, Najib said he was proud to welcome the return of the CIMB Asia Pacific Classic Malaysia which will be held from Oct 27 to 30 at the Mines Resort & Golf Club.

He said Malaysia is in a unique position to spearhead the development of sport in Asia.

"We also enjoy abundant natural environments which form some of the region's most sought-after professional golfing destinations," he said, adding that Malaysia represents the cornerstone of the Asean region as a gateway to Asia's heritage, hospitality and culture.

"Not only do we have world-class golf facilities, but we also possess the tourism infrastructure and the cultural heritage to complement a golfing experience like no other.

"It is our pride and privilege to play host to numerous and diverse world-class sporting events and we have no doubt that we will continue to excel as the region's foremost destination for professional golf," Najib said.

Describing CIMB Asia Pacific Classic as an excellent example and pinnacle of the aspiration to develop golf tourism industry locally, he said the government will make substantial financial contributions to the tournament.

He also said the Tourism Ministry undertook an evaluation of last year's event and has expressed enthusiasm in extending support towards the development of a long-term and sustainable programme aimed at developing golf in Malaysia.

Meanwhile, CMB Group chief executive Datuk Seri Nazir Razak said there will be some changes in the tournament, including increasing the winner's purse from US\$1 million (RM3 million) to US\$1.3 million.

This makes it the largest winner's purse for an officially sanctioned event in Asia Pacific.

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