

**Najib Hopes MITE 2012 Will Emerge As Best Travel Show**  
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SERDANG, May 31 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Abdul Razak hopes that the Malaysia International Tourism Exchange (MITE) 2012 will emerge as among the best travel trade shows in this region, if not in the world.

Najib said targeted to strategically bring together the relevant vendors and service providers under one roof to explore and seize opportunities from the tourism industry globally, MITE also opened doors of opportunities to would-be investors to consider Malaysia as an avenue to invest in tourism-related business.

"In this regard, MITE inevitably creates a platform for networking, collaboration in the development of value-adding complementary services and for sharing ideas," he said at the launching of MITE 2012, here, today.

Also present were the prime minister's wife Datin Seri Rosmah Mansor and Tourism Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ng Yen Yen.

The four-day event has attracted more than 600 exhibitors from 33 countries and 120 dedicated buyers from 23 countries, and expected to draw some 600,000 visitors.

The prime minister said tourism's impact on the livelihoods of many Malaysians could not be underestimated, as there was a large work force engaged in sectors contributing either directly or indirectly towards the tourism industry.

"Tourism spans a range of activities. It is really an agglomeration of related but separate crosscutting services like transport, lodging, food services, recreation, retail and other forms of activities.

"Without creative intermediaries such as tour operators, travel agencies and marketing professionals to construct innovative packages, tourism as an industry is not likely to succeed," he said.

Najib said an efficient and competitive tourism sector would ultimately translate into economy-wide improvements, especially with the inflow of private sector investment meant to tap into a lucrative and burgeoning market.

Not only enhanced role of the private sector was critical, he said, the entire ecosystem in this country must also be fully geared towards making tourism an industry which had the support of the society at large.

"If you visit the country and you are welcomed by very friendly immigration officers, friendly taxi drivers who are not mourning and complaining about this and that, and you have access to very clean toilet facilities...these are some of the things that really will make Malaysia a top place for global tourism.

"We all have to work together; it is not enough to have a passionate tourism minister but we all must also be equally passionate.

"We can do all kinds of wonderful promotion and marketing but the people who go through

the experience of visiting, whether for business or for pleasure or to have fun, they all must have that wonderful experience in Malaysia and nothing is worse than the visitor who goes back home complaining," he said.

"All must make sure that Malaysia is peaceful, free from violence, people respect the rule of law and we must honour our commitment to the international community.

"I am very confident that if we are committed and work closely together under the spirit of 1Malaysia, we will accomplish endless possibilities," the prime minister added.

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