

Challenges the LTdL 2020 organiser will have to overcome

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KOTA KINABALU, Feb 5 – Le Tour de Langkawi (LTdL) 2020 organiser, Human Voyage (M) Sdn Bhd, says the 2019-nCoV outbreak in China is one of the challenges it will have to deal with in order to ensure Asia's most prestigious cycling event runs smoothly.

Already, the epidemic has led to two Chinese teams -- Hengxiang Cycling Team and Giant Cycling Team – pulling out from the Union Cycliste Internationale (UCI) ProSeries event which is taking place from Feb 6 – 15.

The other challenges are the lack of world teams and higher logistical costs due to the event also being staged in Sabah and Sarawak for the second time since 1997, reveals company chief operating officer, Shahaizereen Abdul Hamid.

However, the company that specialises in cycling events, has taken extra measures to ensure everything goes well.

“Everyone, including the local agencies, know their responsibility. We have prepared for every eventuality and hope to provide a safe environment for the riders, their convoy and officials,” he says.

Being billed as a silver jubilee edition, LTdL 2020 will feature two new support races: the Malaysian International Criterium Race and Malaysian Classic.

Human Voyage believes that the non-attendance of the Chinese teams won't make a lot of difference to LTdL 2020 as there will be exciting rivalry between the 21 other teams that are attending, including NTT Pro Cycling Team from South Africa and a world top rider, Youcef Reguigui (the LTdL 2015 overall winner).

The Malaysian challengers are Terengganu Cycling Team (TSG), Team Sapura Cycling (TSC) and the national team with riders like Nik Mohd Azwan Zulkifle, Anuar Manan and Sofian Nabil Omar Mohd Bakri.

Not only are spectators encouraged to cheer on the riders at the event themed 'Sports Unite, Cycling Contributes', there are also some parallel activities lined up at each of the eight stages of the race like a cycle ball mini tournament and BMX freestyle show, to enjoy.

The 1,114.9km race will take the riders to Sabah, Sarawak, Terengganu, Pahang, Selangor, Perak, Pulau Pinang, Kedah and the Federal Territories, and will be broadcast live by Eurosport 2 and Eurosport Asia-Pacific, China's Hainan TV, Qinghai Satellite and Zhibo TV, as well as Radio Televisyen Malaysia's (RTM) TV1.

The event was conceived by Prime Minister, Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad, to put Langkawi on the tourist map, and since it was initiated in 1996, the island's tourism industry has grown and the best teams take part in LTdL.

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