

Friday, Jun 21 2019



Lim (centre) and Mohamaddin (right) at the launch. Also seen is BPMB president and group chief executive officer Arshad Mohamed Ismail.

KUCHING: Malaysia Development Bank Berhad (BPMB) has launched the RM1 billion Tourism Infrastructure Fund to help the country achieve its target of attracting 30 million overseas visitors to generate RM100 billion in tourism income by 2020.

Finance Minister Lim Guan Eng along with Minister of Tourism, Arts and Culture Datuk Mohamaddin Ketapi launched the fund during a ceremony held at Pullman Hotel here today.

The fund is aimed at encouraging more industry operators to develop travel facilities as part of the government's efforts to achieve the set target.

Under the fund, which is available until Dec 31 next year or the fund is fully utilised – whichever comes first, BPMB is offering a competitive financing rate from four to 5.5 per cent per annum.

The fund can be used to finance acquisition of land, construction of buildings, purchase machinery and other assets related to tourism activities or to finance the working capital requirements of the eligible companies.

It can also be utilised by companies in developing infrastructure that will contribute to the growth of the tourism industry such as hotels, convention centres or facilities related to medical and agro tourism.

The fund is a reintroduction of an existing fund managed by BPMB which has recorded a utilisation rate of 69 per cent as at Dec 31 last year.

It is the fourth in a series of funds BPMB has launched this year as part of a government mandate under Budget 2019 to serve various economic development agendas.

The latest financing facility comes after the RM3 billion Industrial Digitalisation Transformation Fund, the RM1 billion Sustainable Development Financing Fund and the RM500 million Public Transport Fund.

At the launch, Lim was quoted as saying: “We hope the fund will play a catalytic role to spur investments in the development of tourism facilities.”

Mohamaddin said: “We are working very hard to boost the visitor numbers so that we will achieve the tourist arrivals and income targets set for next year.”

“I hope more industry operators will take advantage of the financing facility with a subsidised interest rate provided by Bank Pembangunan Malaysia under the Tourism Infrastructure Fund to create and innovate more tourism products that will help us attract more overseas visitors to come experience the beauty of Malaysia.

“Next year will be an exciting one as we roll out the Visit Malaysia 2020 campaign to help us meet our long-term goals in both tourist arrivals and tourism income. Let’s all play our part to ensure we succeed as a nation,” he added.