

# Bring back the smiles, courtesy and good treatment

MALAYSIANS should not take the country's booming tourism industry for granted.

Every Malaysian must treat tourists with warm hospitality to make them feel welcome so they will return to our shores to spend their vacations again and again.

Malaysia is known throughout the world for its warm and hospitable people. Why should we treat tourists to this country any differently from our own house guests?

We have worked so hard to get on the right track and with the impending Visit Malaysia Year 2007, we must rally together to make this event a big success and ensure tourism continues to become a big revenue generator for the country.

Tourism is the second biggest foreign exchange earner for Malaysia after manufacturing. Next year, it is expected to bring in 20.1 million visitors and RM44.5 billion in revenue.

One must not forget that the Malaysian tourism industry employs some three million people — both directly and indirectly.

The Malaysian Government and Tourism Ministry hope that Visit Malaysia Year 2007 will take Malaysia

to greater heights and make the country one of the most visited destinations not only in this region but also in the world.

In order to do that, we also have to change our mindset and think tourism — all the way, and bring back the forgotten smiles, courtesy and good treatment, which we accorded to tourists in the past.

To be successful, we have to be humble and remember our roots.

Malaysians also have to embrace the importance of providing world-class service to tourists in order to remain competitive in the fast changing world of tourism, which has seen new players luring away tourists from our shores.

Being arrogant is not going to work for us but humility is.

Our Asean neighbours, such as Singapore, Thailand, Indonesia and Vietnam, are going the extra mile for tourists because they know the importance of tourism and the foreign exchange it earns for the country.

Then, there are the other countries, such as Turkey and Lebanon, and even Dubai, who are big players in the industry and who will continue to woo tourists. India and China are also competitive markets.

People worldwide are spoilt for choices with existing and new destinations.

We are celebrating Visit Malaysia Year next year to commemorate the country's 50 years of independence. This is also our big chance to show the world that we are a tolerant and united country that offers a multi-ethnic and multi-cultural society.

Other countries in the world can learn a thing or two about living peacefully together despite the various races and religions practised.

Malaysia wants to lead by example.

**Datuk Seri Tengku  
Adnan Tengku Mansor**

**FROM THE  
TOURISM MINISTER**

