

Setting sights on top 10 spot in global tourism

MALACCA: Malaysia aims to become one of the top 10 global tourism players by 2015 and will contribute some RM115bil towards the nation's annual gross domestic product.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak said the Government had set this objective under the 10th Malaysia Plan which was in line with the aspiration of enhancing economic value with regard to the industry.

"Tourism is among the 12 sectors that have been identified as the National Key Economic Areas.

"We intend to enhance our position to become among the top 10 in terms of contribution to the tourism global stage by 2015," he said when opening the RM140mil Philea Resort & Spa in Ayer Keroh here yesterday.

He added the industry would also create some two million jobs by 2015.

Najib said the nation's tourism industry had chalked impressive growth over the past 12 years with tourist arrivals in 2009 hitting 23.6 million compared to 5.5 million in 1998.

However, he said the sector must source and develop niche markets if it was to remain competitive on the global tourism scene.

Najib also announced the Federal Government had approved allocation for the state government here to implement plans to extend its river cruise route along the Malacca River.