Wooing tourists by improving sports and health services

SPORTS and health services will help to develop the tourism industry, besides other efforts to promote Malaysia as a safe and tourist-friendly destination for foreign visitors.

Apart from existing annual events such as the Formula One race, Le Tour de Langkawi and Formula One Powerboat race, the Government will also be promoting other activities for sports tourism.

For health tourism, which generated foreign exchange earnings of RM28mil last year, the Government will provide incentives to further develop the sector.

The Government’s special tourism fund, currently holding RM200mil, will be increased to RM400mil while a tourism infrastructure fund with RM200mil has been approved for industry players to obtain loans at attractive rates. The Infrastructure and Development Bank will manage this fund.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said promotional efforts would be intensified through the Malaysia Truly Asia campaign, focusing on Europe, China, Australia, Japan, India, the Middle East and regional markets.

“Continuous efforts will be undertaken to promote Malaysia as a safe and tourist-friendly destination, with emphasis on quality services and promotion of attractive events, such as Mega Sales Carnival and Colours of Malaysia month.

“Kuala Lumpur will also be popularised as a tourist and shopping destination.

“The City of Kuala Lumpur will be lighted with street and flood lights and beautified with landscaping and the planting of flowers,” he said.

He added that tourist arrivals were expected to increase to more than 15 million in 2003.

IN DEMAND ... employees of National Printers Malaysia Berhad attending to a customer who sought a copy of the Economic Report 2002/2003 in Kuala Lumpur yesterday. — Bernamapic

I think in a way, on a lighter side, it will encourage more people to have children, especially for my Cupid Club because they are so worried about having children.

— MCA Wanita Chief Datuk Dr Ng Yen Yen on the dollar-to-dollar matching grant for students.