

# ISSUE 282

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## WEEKLY INSIGHTS

## HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY NEWSLETTER



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# Iconic Group Unveils Iconic Marjorie Hotel in Partnership with Marriott International

Iconic Penang Sdn Bhd, a privately-held entity under the esteemed Penang-based property developer, Iconic Group, has unveiled the opulent five-star Iconic Marjorie Hotel at the grand Icon City in Bukit Mertajam.

The hotel's grand opening marks a significant milestone, as it is set to join the illustrious Tribute Portfolio by Marriott International through a newly signed franchise agreement. Iconic Group Chairman, Datuk Seri Tan Kean Tet, expressed their commitment to expanding in the hotel industry, leveraging Marriott's renowned brand.

The Iconic Marjorie Hotel, expected to open in 2024 in Bayan Lepas, Penang, will feature 298 rooms, various dining options, an outdoor pool, and a versatile Pearl Ballroom.

The partnership was celebrated in the presence of Penang's Chief Minister and other dignitaries. This venture follows Iconic Group's successful Iconic Hotel in Seberang Perai, Penang, opened in 2016.

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# New Hyatt Place Welcomes Guests in Bukit Jalil, Kuala Lumpur

Hyatt Place has marked a significant milestone with the opening of its inaugural property in Bukit Jalil, Kuala Lumpur, making it the first international hotel in this vibrant area.

The new hotel boasts 250 spacious guestrooms thoughtfully designed with separate spaces for sleeping, working, and leisure, including a comfortable corner sofa-sleeper.

Strategically located in a well-connected area near the national stadium, convention centers, golf courses, and recreational parks, the hotel provides direct access to major highways. It's just a 30-minute drive from Subang airport and 45 minutes from Kuala Lumpur International airport.

Kevin Flynn, the general manager, expressed excitement about adding the first Hyatt Place to Bukit Jalil's flourishing landscape, providing guests with smartly designed spaces to seamlessly balance work and leisure during their travels. [READ MORE](#)



# Hospitality Industry Urges Higher SST Threshold in Budget 2024

Tourism-related associations are urging the government to raise the Sales and Services Tax (SST) annual threshold for the hospitality sector from RM500,000 to RM1.5 million in the upcoming Budget 2024. They argue that this change would keep room rates affordable.

The Malaysia Tourism Federation (MTF) secretary-general is also advocating for the swift implementation of Short-Term Residential Accommodation (STRA) guidelines to bolster the hotel industry's sustainability. Unlicensed businesses have been evading taxes such as SST and Tourism Tax, causing tax revenue losses for the government.

Datuk Mohd Khalid Harun, president of the Malaysian Tourism Agency Association (Mata), hopes that Budget 2024 will allocate funds for training local workers in the tourism sector to reduce dependence on foreign labor, infrastructure maintenance, and support for Islamic tourism. [READ MORE](#)



# Keck Seng Set to Close Tanjong Puteri Golf Resort as Part of Liquidation

Keck Seng (Malaysia) is commencing the voluntary liquidation of its 99.97%-owned subsidiary, Tanjong Puteri Golf Resort (TPGR), which operates a 54-hole golf course in Johor.

TPGR has faced significant challenges, including a declining number of golfers, aging assets, increased maintenance costs, and the impact of COVID-19, resulting in consistent financial losses and substantial debts.

"As a consequence, TPGR has incurred consistent financial losses over several years and has accrued substantial debts," Keck Seng (Malaysia) said. TPGR's total outstanding liabilities to short-term unsecured creditors stood at RM57.66 million as of September 22, 2023, the filing showed.

An interim liquidator has been appointed, with shareholder and creditor meetings scheduled within 30 days. The winding-up is not expected to affect Keck Seng (Malaysia)'s financial performance for 2023. [READ MORE](#)



# Tourism Minister Champions Malaysian Arts and Culture Promotion

Datuk Seri Tiong King Sing, Malaysia's Minister of Tourism, Arts, and Culture (Motac), emphasized the role of Motac in not only promoting tourism but also introducing Malaysian culture and arts.

He believes that cultural activities such as dance and music, which require teamwork, can foster unity in Malaysia's diverse society. Tiong spoke at the Putrajaya Cultural Festival 2023, an event organized by Motac to bring the public closer to Malaysia's arts, culture, and tourism offerings, with a focus on promoting unity through cultural arts.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim officially opened the Putrajaya Cultural Festival 2023 on Saturday night. The festival is a collaborative effort between Motac, Putrajaya Corporation (PPj), and Istana Budaya, and it runs from September 28 to October 1.

The festival features various activities, including traditional performances, cultural runs, and demonstrations of heritage food and crafts, aimed at attracting tourists and showcasing Malaysia's cultural diversity. [READ MORE](#)

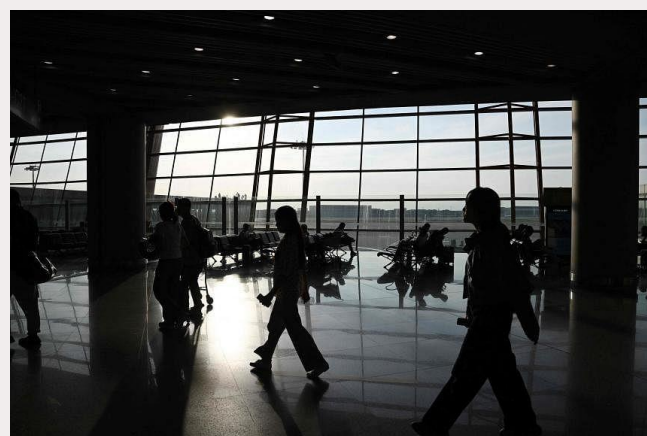


# Malaysia Sets Sights on Surging Tourist Influx with the Start of China's Golden Week

As China's eight-day Golden Week holiday kicks off, Malaysia's tourism industry aims to rebound after years of pandemic-related challenges. This annual week-long celebration, encompassing the Mid-Autumn Festival and National Day, began on September 29 this year.

While tourist arrivals are not yet back to pre-pandemic levels, there has been a steady increase in visitors from China, according to Mint Leong, Deputy President of the Malaysian Inbound Tourism Association. Leong emphasized the importance of policies like visa-on-arrival and longer visa durations to enhance Malaysia's competitiveness as a preferred destination for travelers seeking extended post-pandemic experiences.

Additionally, she highlighted the opportunity to attract Northern Hemisphere travelers looking to escape winter towards the end of the year, calling for swift action to capitalize on this trend. [READ MORE](#)



# Tourism Malaysia and Malaysia Aviation Group Take Off with 'Fly Borneo Specials Vol.1'

Tourism Malaysia, in partnership with the Malaysia Aviation Group (MAG), has introduced its latest travel brochure, "Fly Borneo Specials Vol.1 – The Adventure Begins Here!" This initiative is part of Tourism Malaysia's robust campaign to promote intra- and interstate travel in Sabah, Sarawak, and Labuan through collaboration with airlines like Firefly and MASwings.

The brochure showcases more than 44 thematic holiday packages, ranging from day trips to week-long adventures, all-inclusive of airfare and ground tours, highlighting the diverse attractions of Malaysian Borneo.

Dato' Dr. Ammar Abd. Ghapar, Director General of Tourism Malaysia, expressed optimism about this collaboration's potential to boost domestic tourism, particularly in East Malaysia, while Mr. Ahmad Luqman Mohd Azmi, CEO of Airlines from Malaysia Aviation Group, emphasized its role in enhancing connectivity within the region.

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# Tourism Malaysia Ventures into New Territory: Unveils Online Gaming-Centered Show

Tourism Malaysia is embarking on an exciting journey into the world of gaming, bridging the gap between tourism promotion and immersive digital experiences.

Their latest endeavor, titled "Let's Go MRXD Season 2," is set to take place on the metaverse platform known as Spatial, offering an innovative approach to showcasing Malaysia's central and southern states, including Negeri Sembilan, Melaka, Johor, and Kuala Lumpur featuring Mr. Xiao Dong (MRXD) in the virtual travel vlogs.

The show, featuring popular Malaysian TV personality Thomas Kok, known as Mr. Xiao Dong (MRXD), will utilize detailed mapping and Web3 technology to immerse viewers in a virtual travel adventure.

Additionally, Season 2 offers the opportunity to explore 12 iconic Malaysian attractions, such as the Penang Bridge and Batu Caves, through mini-games within the Mini Malaysia segment of the virtual experience. [READ MORE](#)

