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TSM Global and Marriott to Launch Five-Star Hotel in Petaling Jaya

TSM Global Bhd has partnered with Marriott International to convert Eastin Hotel Kuala Lumpur into the five-star Petaling Jaya Marriott Hotel, with a total investment of nearly RM100 million. The hotel, located in Seksyen 16, Petaling Jaya, remains operational during its ongoing renovation. The conversion will span 18 months, with phase one—focused on the lobby and select guest rooms—scheduled to complete by end-2025. Full completion is targeted for December 2026.

Once completed, the hotel will offer 393 rooms and upscale features, including an exclusive club lounge, dedicated spaces for Elite and Club members, diverse dining options, and a kids club. The project reflects TSM Global's commitment to enhancing hospitality offerings, while Marriott views the conversion as a strategic step in strengthening its presence in Malaysia's key commercial hubs.

Strategically positioned near the Sprint highway and Phileo Damansara MRT station, the hotel is only 15 minutes from KL Sentral, with seamless access to KLIA.



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SC Estate Builder Sells Kedah Land to Fund Solar Projects

SC Estate Builder Bhd is divesting a 0.58-hectare freehold land parcel in Bandar Alor Setar, Kedah for RM8.8 million. Its subsidiary, SC Estate Construction Sdn Bhd, signed a sale and purchase agreement with Novium Pinnacle Sdn Bhd, a newly formed company engaged in real estate. The vacant land, designated for resort development, was originally acquired in 2021 for RM6.28 million, with a lien caveat placed by SC Estate Construction in 2020.

Although the land's market value remains unchanged, the company secured a higher selling price, generating an estimated profit of RM2.52 million. The buyer has already paid a RM200,000 deposit and has up to 24 months to complete the full payment. There are no outstanding loans or encumbrances on the property.

The sale proceeds will primarily reinforce SC Estate Builder's working capital and support its renewable energy ventures, particularly solar power projects and sustainable housing developments featuring solar rooftops.



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CORONATION SQUARE

THE CITY CENTRE

Ascott to Anchor Johor's Coronation Square with Serviced Residences

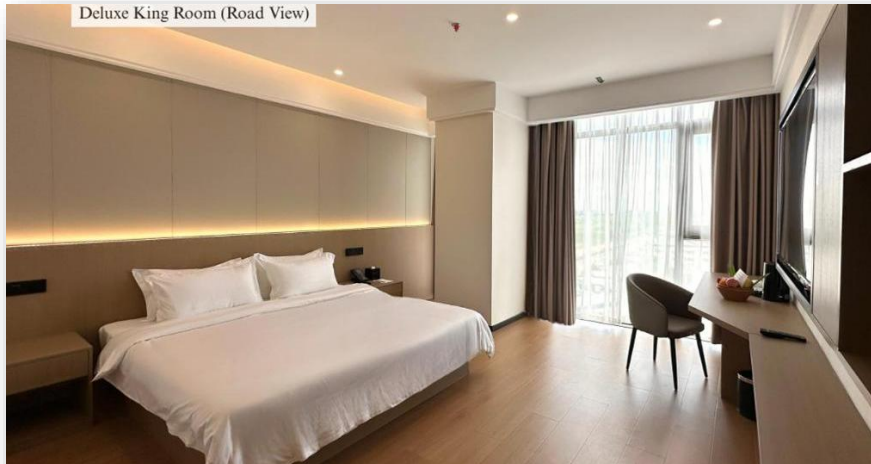
Coronade Properties and Singapore's Capital Tower Holdings are bringing The Ascott Limited into Coronation Square, located within the Sultan Ibrahim Business Centre. Operating as The Ascott Coronation Square, it will serve as the anchor serviced residence operator, reinforcing Johor's position as a cross-border business hub. The partnership is expected to be formalised next month in Singapore, witnessed by Johor Menteri Besar Datuk Onn Hafiz Ghazi.

The project forms part of the Ibrahim International Business District (IIBD), Johor's flagship urban regeneration initiative. Coronation Square is the first integrated development under the IIBD and will feature retail, offices, serviced apartments, medical suites and a hotel. The location, adjacent to the CIQ complex and Causeway access, is ideal for regional and Singapore-based business travellers.

Capital Tower Holdings, backed by CapitaLand Investment, manages over 950 properties globally. Analysts believe this deal may catalyse interest in other IIBD assets, with projections showing a potential RM9 billion economic contribution by 2028.



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Majulan Hotel to Boost Penampang Tourism and Local Economy

Penampang will soon welcome Majulan Hotel, officially opening on August 20 with Sabah Head of State Musa Aman officiating. Owned by a prominent Kadazan businessman, the hotel completes the ITCC Complex, which includes a mall, office blocks, and residences. Featuring 163 rooms, a pool, gym, dining options, and event spaces, Majulan Hotel targets both leisure and business travelers.

CEO Alexander Hugo Malukun said the hotel enhances Penampang's hospitality offerings, meeting growing demand from events and tourism. Its strategic location and modern facilities aim to attract domestic and international visitors, supporting local economic growth and job creation. The hotel also promotes local products from the Penampang community.

Chairman Datuk Seri Clarence B. Malakun expressed confidence in the hotel's impact on Penampang's economy, aligning with Visit Malaysia Year 2026 goals. The hotel's interior features a sculpture honoring Sabah's natural beauty and cultural heritage, reflecting the district's identity and ancestral roots.



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Malaysia Sees Strong Tourist Growth Ahead of Visit Year 2026

Malaysia welcomed 16.94 million foreign tourists from January to May 2025, marking a 20.4 percent increase compared to 14.07 million visitors during the same period in 2024. Singapore led with 8.34 million visitors, rising 26.5 percent year-on-year. Indonesia followed with 1.82 million, China with 1.81 million, Thailand with 1.06 million, and India with 664,811 visitors, all showing notable growth.

Long-haul markets also contributed to the positive trend. Australia and the United Kingdom recorded visitor increases of 16.6 and 8.7 percent respectively, adding nearly 385,000 combined arrivals. The Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture credited the results to strategic initiatives, including the Visa Liberalisation Plan, government incentives, and targeted digital campaigns through partnerships with airlines and platforms.

Looking forward, the ministry is targeting 47 million tourist arrivals in 2026. Focus will remain on high-growth markets across Central Asia, the Middle East, Asean, Europe, and Oceania to support Visit Malaysia Year 2026.



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MOTAC Strengthens Enforcement to Safeguard National Tourism Standards

The Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture (MOTAC) issued 13 notices during 22 enforcement operations across Malaysia in early July. These operations covered 180 vehicles, 30 tourism companies, four accommodation premises, and 33 tour guides. In Perak, several inspections were conducted based on public tip-offs involving unlicensed tourism operations.

Entities found guilty of offences under the Tourism Industry Act 1992 face fines up to RM500,000, imprisonment of up to 10 years, or both. MOTAC urged all individuals and companies involved in tourism services—whether in transport, accommodation, or activity planning—to immediately obtain proper licensing to avoid legal consequences.

MOTAC is reinforcing strategic cooperation with enforcement bodies such as the Road Transport Department, Royal Malaysia Police, National Anti-Drug Agency, and the Malaysian Maritime Enforcement Agency. The ministry also encourages public and industry stakeholders to report suspicious tourism-related activity through the SISPA platform, reinforcing a shared commitment to industry compliance and sustainable growth.



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Siti Khadijah Market Revamp to Boost Kelantan Tourism Appeal

The Siti Khadijah Market in Kota Bharu is undergoing a RM7 million upgrade ahead of Visit Malaysia Year 2026. Funded by a RM5.5 million federal allocation and RM1.5 million from the Housing and Local Government Ministry, the works aim to enhance comfort for visitors and 1,500 local traders. Upgrades include modern toilets, new wiring, fresh paint, and improved interior spaces, all to attract more tourists and strengthen the market's identity.

Minister Nga Kor Ming stated the project aligns with the MADANI Economy framework to promote inclusive growth through tourism. He also highlighted the MyKiosk initiative, where 17 kiosks are now fully occupied by local entrepreneurs. With rent set at RM150 monthly and six months offered rent-free, the programme supports income generation and local business sustainability.

MyKiosk also features solar energy, reducing traders' operating costs and contributing to low-carbon city goals. Over 7,000 families, especially from B40 groups, have benefited from similar programmes nationwide.



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HONOR and Tourism Malaysia Unite to Promote Travel Through Tech

HONOR and Tourism Malaysia have signed a Memorandum of Collaboration to support Visit Malaysia Year 2026. The partnership aims to spotlight Malaysia's cultural and natural attractions through mobile photography, powered by HONOR's latest smartphone innovations. Activities include national photography contests, workshops, and exhibitions, with the HONOR Magic Moments Awards offering Malaysians a global platform to showcase the country's beauty.

HONOR's South Pacific president Justin Li said the collaboration empowers youth and promotes cultural storytelling, while Tourism Malaysia's deputy director general Lee Thai Hung emphasised the strategic value of public-private efforts in strengthening global visibility. Both parties aim to inspire Malaysians and tourists alike to engage with the country in new, creative ways.

As part of the initiative, HONOR will roll out travel content using its Magic V5 smartphone. Features like AI Translate, city navigation tools, and an advanced camera system will enhance the tourist experience while reinforcing Malaysia's image as a modern, connected destination.



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Malaysia-Thailand Boat Race Aims to Boost Border Area Economy

Kelantan plans to organise a cross-border boat race with Thailand at Sungai Golok, aiming to revive a shared cultural tradition and stimulate the local economy. The initiative is expected to benefit small traders, homestay operators and tourism providers in Pasir Mas and nearby areas. The proposed location at Pohon Jambu is already a known hub for Malaysian and Thai communities, offering suitable conditions and existing facilities for hosting the event.

The Kelantan Tourism Committee intends to expand the event by involving more teams from both Kelantan and Narathiwat province, with the goal of making it an annual affair. A unique blindfolded boat race is also in the pipeline to attract wider public interest. This year's two-day trial event drew around 1,000 spectators and featured 40 teams, including five from Malaysia.

With strong support from local authorities, the event is seen as both a cultural preservation effort and a strategic move to revitalise tourism in the border region.



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Affordable Langkawi Tourism Package Launched to Boost Regional Appeal

Tourism Malaysia's Northern Region office has launched a Rahmah tourism package offering a three-day, two-night stay in Langkawi for just RM500. The initiative, developed with local tourism operators, includes at least five curated experiences and supports both the Visit Kedah Year 2025 and Visit Malaysia Year 2026 campaigns. It aims to enhance accessibility while promoting holistic health tourism for local and international travellers.

The package includes visits to Maha Tower and Langkawi National Art Gallery, island-hopping by jet ski, and unique marine foraging activities such as sea cucumber and crab catching. The offering blends nature, culture and wellness, reinforcing Langkawi's position as a versatile tourist destination. It was created following a familiarisation trip involving strategic tourism stakeholders.

With new direct international flights to Langkawi from Bengaluru and the United Arab Emirates, the package is expected to attract visitors from India and the Middle East, broadening the island's tourism market.



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Melaka Safeguards Bukit Melaka Heritage with Archaeo-Tourism Plan

The Melaka government is implementing strategic and technical measures to protect archaeological heritage at Bukit Melaka, following discoveries near Taman Larangan that include the Melaka Fort alignment and Bastion Hendrica Lisa. Ongoing excavation works aim to preserve historical elements while supporting the area's transformation into a new tourism attraction under the Archaeo-Tourism initiative.

Key steps include preserving laterite stone structures on-site and integrating them into open-air exhibits or a future heritage interpretation centre. Visitors will be able to witness archaeological research in progress, enhancing cultural appreciation and supporting Melaka's tourism potential. The initiative was outlined during the state legislative assembly session.

To further strengthen awareness, the government is conducting seminars, exhibitions and workshops while introducing QR-coded informational boards at the site. Development activities will be regulated to safeguard heritage integrity. These efforts align with long-term goals in heritage conservation, public education and the growth of sustainable tourism.



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KL Wellness City Inks Key Healthcare Pact With China's Boao LeCheng

KL Wellness City (KLWC) and KL International Hospital (KLIH) have signed a strategic partnership with China's Boao LeCheng International Medical Tourism Pilot Zone, establishing the first formal link between a Malaysian hospital and the Hainan-based zone. This agreement marks a major milestone in regional medical tourism and healthcare innovation, aligning with broader ambitions to strengthen cross-border medical collaboration across Asia.

The partnership includes joint work in clinical research, technology exchange, specialist training and medical tourism, reinforcing KLWC's mission to position Malaysia as a regional hub for integrative wellness. KLIH, a 624-bed smart hospital within KLWC, will anchor these efforts. Equipped with advanced infrastructure, it is scheduled to open in late 2026 and serve both domestic and international patients.

Boao LeCheng, China's only national-level medical tourism pilot zone, brings global expertise, expedited access to new treatments and leading-edge facilities. The collaboration also commemorates 50 years of Malaysia-China diplomatic relations.



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Tawau Poised to Become a Leading Medical Tourism Hub in Borneo

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Malaysia Targets RM15 Billion Medical Tourism Sector by 2030

The government wants to grow Malaysia's medical tourism from RM12 billion to RM15 billion by 2030. Health Minister Datuk Seri Dr Dzulkefly Ahmad said medical tourism helps hospitals and other industries like airlines, hotels, and transport. To support this, Malaysia launched the Year of Medical Tourism 2026 campaign. The campaign's theme is "Healing Meets Hospitality" and it aims to show Malaysia's quality healthcare and friendly service. It also supports the bigger Visit Malaysia 2026 effort to boost the economy.

Despite the recent 6% sales and service tax on foreign patients, Dr Dzulkefly remains confident in Malaysia's competitiveness within the region. Ranked among the world's top 10 medical tourism destinations, Malaysia continues to attract mainly visitors from Indonesia, India, and neighboring countries, with plans to expand its market reach.

Separately, the Pasir Gudang Hospital opening has been postponed to January 2026 to ensure operational readiness. Meanwhile, over 4,300 new doctor positions will be created, converting many contract roles to permanent to improve retention and morale.



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Selangor Accelerates Growth as Regional Medical Tourism Hub

Selangor is rapidly advancing to become a leading medical tourism destination in the region. Datuk Ng Suee Lim, chairman of the state's tourism committee, highlighted ongoing promotions showcasing Selangor's 42 private hospitals and world-class healthcare. Currently ranked third after Penang and Melaka, Selangor targets Indonesian medical tourists seeking treatments such as health screenings, cosmetic surgery, and consultations. These visitors often bring families, boosting local hotels, attractions, and retail sectors.

To expand reach, Selangor collaborates with the Malaysia Healthcare Travel Council to promote the state in Indonesian cities like Surabaya, Yogyakarta, and Makassar. A campaign featuring a theme song, "Liburan Sehat Ya Di Selangor Aja," supports Visit Selangor Year 2025 and Visit Malaysia 2026. This effort also targets Indonesians who previously preferred Singapore, now deterred by currency strength.

The strategy shows results, with medical tourist arrivals rising over 10% in the first half of 2025. Most visitors seek fertility, gastroenterology, and oncology treatments, primarily from Indonesia, China, and India.



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Malaysia Airports Expand Global Reach with New International Routes

KL International Airport (KLIA) and Penang International Airport (PEN) reinforced Malaysia's status as a global aviation hub with five new international air services launched in June 2025. Two new airline partners joined the network, with Cambodia Airways starting flights between Phnom Penh and PEN, and Juneyao Air adding routes from Shanghai to KLIA. These additions enhance regional connectivity, especially with East Asia.

Existing airlines also expanded their presence, including Batik Air Malaysia's new service to Dili, Timor-Leste, AirAsia Cambodia's route to Sihanoukville, and AirAsia's flights to Darwin, Australia. This signals continued confidence in Malaysia's aviation market.

Passenger movements across MAHB's airports reached 12.7 million in June, with Malaysia's airports handling 68% of this volume. Sultan Abdul Aziz Shah Airport saw a 9% rise in passengers, driven by strong load factors and local holiday travel. This growth reflects healthy demand across both international and domestic routes.



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Malaysia Airports Revisits Airside Connectivity Plan for KLIA Terminals

Malaysia Airports Holdings Bhd (MAHB) is revisiting plans to enable airside connectivity between Kuala Lumpur International Airport's two terminals. This would allow passengers to transfer between terminals without exiting and re-entering security, improving the customer experience. MAHB is collaborating with the Ministry of Transport, which fully supports the initiative.

The concept, first proposed nine years ago, was halted due to resistance from airlines. However, recent feedback from airlines has been more positive, signaling a shift in sentiment. MAHB's managing director Datuk Mohd Izani Ghani noted that while there is interest, the project's complexity means no timeline has been set.

Previously, airlines like AirAsia opposed the plan, favoring a dual-hub model with separate terminal roles. Other carriers at KLIA T2 were also hesitant to create interline partnerships with KLIA T1 airlines, which would allow seamless transfers on a single itinerary. The renewed focus aims to enhance passenger convenience and operational efficiency.



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MAHB Targets 62 Million Passengers and Regional Airport Expansions

Malaysia Airports Holdings Bhd (MAHB) aims to reach 62 million passengers at its Kuala Lumpur International Airport (KLIA) terminals by year-end, restoring pre-pandemic traffic levels. From January to June, KLIA recorded a 10% increase to 30.1 million passengers, contributing to 50 million across all Malaysian airports. This growth is partly driven by Malaysia's ASEAN chairmanship and increased flights from China, with Chinese carriers doubling since before the pandemic.

KLIA has welcomed five new airlines in 2025, including three Chinese carriers, with a total of 12 new airlines expected by year-end. MAHB manages 39 airports nationwide and also owns Istanbul's Sabiha Gokcen International Airport.

Meanwhile, MAHB is advancing expansion and upgrades at regional airports like Penang and Kota Kinabalu, both approved by their governments. Projects aim to increase capacity and improve facilities, with additional upgrades planned for Tawau, Miri, Kota Bharu, and Langkawi airports, maintaining Malaysia's strong aviation infrastructure.



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Palembang Airport Regains International Status, Boosting Tourism Growth

Sultan Mahmud Badaruddin II Airport in Palembang has restored its international status with AirAsia Malaysia resuming flights from Kuala Lumpur on July 18. This renewed connectivity is expected to enhance South Sumatera's tourism sector and overall economy. Governor H. Herman Deru highlighted that the route's activation should increase hotel occupancy and stimulate tourism-related growth. The region currently reports a 51.85% occupancy rate at star-rated hotels in 2024.

Indonesia aims to attract up to 16 million foreign tourists in 2025, with improved access to secondary cities like Palembang forming a key part of this strategy. Enhanced air connectivity supports broader tourism and economic goals.

AirAsia Malaysia now flies to 15 destinations in Indonesia from Kuala Lumpur and Penang, including Jakarta, Bali, Medan, and Yogyakarta. Additionally, services to Semarang are scheduled to start in September, further expanding regional access and travel options.



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Capital A and KTMB Partner to Transform Malaysia's Travel and Logistics

Capital A Bhd has signed a 12-month memorandum of understanding with national railway operator KTMB to integrate travel services and logistics across Malaysia. The partnership aims to modernize the travel landscape by combining KTMB's rail network with Capital A's portfolio, which includes Teleport logistics, Santan food services, AirAsia MOVE, and AirAsia Rewards.

Together, they will conduct feasibility studies on cooperation opportunities, focusing on seamless multimodal travel, cargo efficiency, and enhanced passenger experiences. Initiatives may include bundled flight and train bookings, last-mile shuttles to Senai Airport, integrated cargo networks, and in-train catering.

Passengers stand to benefit from loyalty point exchanges between Rail Points and AirAsia Rewards, with BigPay as a possible payment option. Capital A's shares closed slightly down at 86.5 sen, reflecting a 15% decline year-to-date amid ongoing market challenges.



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