



PRESS RELEASE

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TOURISM MALAYSIA WELCOMES HOME “FUNNIEST PERSON IN THE WORLD”

PUTRAJAYA, 14 December 2016: Tourism Malaysia is proud to welcome Harith Iskander home, fresh from winning the “Funniest Person in the World” title at Laugh Factory’s global competition in Lapland, Finland.

The title awards him a prize money of USD100,000 along with a year-long comedy tour of the USA and worldwide media coverage.

Director General of Tourism Malaysia, Datuk Seri Mirza Mohammad Taiyab, said, “We are pleased to have given our support to Harith and his team to compete in the semifinals and finals in Finland. He certainly deserves to win, and as all Malaysians, we are proud of his accomplishment.”

He added, “This title, and the comedy tour of the United States that will be arranged for him as part of the prize, will shine a positive light on Malaysia. It will be a great opportunity to promote Malaysia through joy and laughter.”

Harith was ecstatic about the win, saying, “It was an overwhelming moment on stage when I was officially named Funniest Person in the World by Jamie Masada. Thank you to everyone for being there for me and for supporting me, and a special thanks to Tourism Malaysia for their support.”

Harith “outwitted” almost 90 other contestants worldwide to grab the winning title at the finals held on 8 December at Hullu Poro Arena in Levi, Lapland. Wearing a black “Malaysia Truly Asia” t-shirt in the final round, Harith shared funny anecdotes about life in Malaysia. His performance was streamed live on the laughfactory/YouTube channel to a worldwide audience for online voting. Harith emerged the clear winner amassing over 3.6 million votes.

The panel of judges included Jamie Masada from LA, CEO and founder of Laugh Factory; Michael Addis from LA, a well-known producer of BET Network; and Michael Schmidt from Germany, CCO of Red Arrow Entertainment.

Masada said, "Harith is obviously very professional, has star quality and he will go far."

He added, “He will act as an alternative ambassador for peace, the kind that brings diplomacy and builds bridges between countries and nations through smiles and laughter.”

Background info:

Laugh Factory is a chain of comedy clubs in the US, opened in 1979. Laugh Factory's "Funniest Person in the World 2016" kicked off with 89 comedians from 56 countries around the world vying for the prestigious title. The next edition of the competition will be in 2018.

MALAYSIA TOURISM PROMOTION BOARD

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MALAYSIA TOURISM PROMOTION BOARD OR TOURISM MALAYSIA is an agency under the Ministry of Tourism & Culture, Malaysia. Tourism Malaysia focuses on the specific task of promoting Malaysia at all levels. Since its inception, Tourism Malaysia has grown by leaps and bounds and it has emerged as a major player in the international tourism scene. In 2015, Malaysia registered 25.7 million tourist arrivals and RM69.1 billion in receipts.

Through the Tourism NKEA (National Key Economic Area), collaborative efforts between the Ministry of Tourism and Culture, other Government agencies and the private sector have been enhanced to help secure Malaysia's position as a leading tourist destination and achieve the country's target of 36 million tourist arrivals and RM168 billion in receipts by 2020.

The targets set under the Tourism NKEA will be achieved through the implementation of twelve Entry Point Projects (EPPs) clustered under five themes: Affordable Luxury; Nature Adventure; Family Fun; Events, Entertainment, Spa and Sports; and Business Tourism.

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