



MEDIA RELEASE

BANK NEGARA URGED TO REVIEW STRICT LOAN RULES

Minister of Culture, Arts and Tourism, Malaysia; Dato' Paduka Abdul Kadir bin Haji Sheikh Fadzir has urged Bank Negara to review some of its policies pertaining to loan approval for tourism development projects.

He said some banks do not conduct proper studies on the feasibility of tourism-related projects and refused to grant loans to deserving project managers.

"This has not only hindered the developers from pursuing their projects, but also disrupts the progress of the tourism industry and the nation's growth as well," he said at a press conference after a site visit at the Danga Bay project at Pantai Lido in Johor Bahru today.

Abdul Kadir cited Limbongan-Ekoveest Management -Danga Bay's project manager, difficulties in getting a loan from Maybank.

"The application is only for a bridging loan of RM230 million to develop a certain part of Danga Bay. For a *giant* like Maybank, I do not understand their reasons for rejecting the application when this

huge project is giving the city of Johor Bahru a new look apart from drawing more tourists from Singapore and elsewhere,” he added.

Abdul Kadir further said he will meet with Bank Negara Governor, Tan Sri Zeti Akhtar Aziz to discuss the matter and raise the issue at the Cabinet meeting.

About 90 percent completed, Danga Bay is a world-class recreational and maritime venue built for both local and tourists. Spread over 1400 acres, the project consists of a shopping mall, a water theme park, a commercial centre, a cultural centre, plus residential apartments and condominiums.

The Johor state government will host three events at the Danga Bay’s Celebration Grounds in December. They are the *Kongsi Raya Aidil Fitri* Open House Celebration on 21 December 2003, the Christmas Open House on 25 December 2003 and the New Year Countdown on 31 December 2003.

Abdul Kadir later visited the Tanjung Puteri Entry Point to observe the flow of motorists into the country. He later instructed the Immigration Department to look into ways to set up temporary booths at the entry point to ensure a smooth traffic flow during Malaysia’s festive season, from December this year until February 2004.

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