

200ha for leisure and living

State emphasising more on providing quality recreation avenues for its youths, says CM

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KUCHING: A resort city, complete with a water theme park, safari park, accommodation and much more, will be built in Samariang near here as part of the state government's vision to make Kuching a seaside city.

The Borneo Samariang Resort City (BSRC) is a 200-hectare (500 acres) development plan that is to materialise within a 10-year time frame comprising an integrated resort city for leisure and suburban living.

It is to feature world-class theme park attractions such as a water park and safari park, resort accommodation with more than 2,000 rooms, a MICE facilities, Brand Village and facilities for extreme outdoor activities.

Of the total area, 120ha (300 acres) would consist of a mixed development plan comprising mainly quality affordable housing.

Chief Minister Tan Sri Abdul Taib Mahmud launched the project yesterday, saying that for the first time ever, the state government was shifting towards emphasising more

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on providing quality recreation avenues for its youths.

"I believe that for the first time in our history, we are going to emphasise on the needs to get our younger people to have the opportunity to enjoy themselves in a more vigorous way," he said during the launch at Borneo Convention Centre Kuching.

He felt that this would in a way refrain them from engaging in unhealthy activities.

In addition to this, he said the



Strategic alliance: Taib with Housing Minister Datuk Amar Abang Johari Tun Openg and Second Resource Planning and Environment Minister Datuk Amar Awang Tengah Ali Hasan witnessing the exchanging of documents between Curtis (left) and Gan (second from left) and Entabang (right) at the launching ceremony of Borneo Samariang Resort City in Kuching yesterday. — ZULAZHAR SHEBLEE / The Star

resort city supported quality living and would represent a correct setting for people to gather.

He said many were sceptical on the idea of developing Samariang in the past but today, the area accommodated some 3,000 houses and now it was time to take it up a notch by providing a recreational venue there.

"Our housing estates are located all over the city from Batu Kawah to Matang and also Samarahan but there is something unique about Samariang because it leads towards the sea. It is an ideal spot where you can exercise your imagination to provide entertainment to the people."

He said this was timely with the rising tourist arrivals to the state whereby in the past one year, there was a sudden surge from just under three million to slightly above four million.

Taib said this exhilarating pace of development would also realise his dream of transforming Kuching into a seaside city.

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is not yet one but I believe it will be achievable in less than 20 years from now."

Even now, he said links with cruise companies were being established and there were plans that discussed joint ventures to develop the beach areas in Santubong right up to Sematan.

All this, he said, would give Sarawak a full boost in its development potential.

Sentoria Group Berhad, responsible for Kuantan's highly successful Bukit Gambang Resort City, is undertaking this project and it would be their third resort city.

Sentoria announced the purchase of 200ha from a subsidiary of Cahya Mata Sarawak Berhad back in August this year.

The components of the resort city have been identified and revealed to the public during the said project launch.

BSRC is strategically located between Kuching city centre and the renowned Santubong area, which is the venue of the world famous Rainforest World Music Festival.

The leisure and hospitality seg-

ment of BSRC is estimated to cost RM0.73bil whereas the mixed property development component is estimated to have a gross development value of RM1.27bil.

Earlier, Sentoria joint managing director Datuk Gan Kim Leong said that the development of BRSC would benefit the state and its people as it would enhance the attractiveness of Kuching as a tourist destination as well as a venue for quality family outing.

"It also creates new job opportunities just like our Bukit Gambang Resort City, which is currently employing some 800 employees, all of whom are equipped with proper training," he said.

The resort, he said, was poised to bring spillover effects, which supported the local business community too.

He said BSRC would not compete but instead complement Sarawak's other natural attractions while contributing to the tourism revenue.

"This resort city is expected to be another reason for tourists to extend their stay in Sarawak."