

KERATAN AKHBAR

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Second ferry service may set sail

JOHOR BARU: Tourism industry players welcome the possibility of a second ferry service being introduced between Johor and Singapore.

Malaysia Tour Guides Association president Jimmy Leong said it would be a good move if both Malaysia and the island republic have a second ferry service linking Puteri Harbour in Iskandar Puteri and Tuas. The current service is between Desaru and Singapore.

“More channels must be opened up to allow people to travel from one side to the other without facing much hassle.

“With the Rapid Transit System (RTS) expected to ease congestion at the Causeway, there must be a similar transport system in place at the Second Link that could resolve the jams there,” he said yesterday.

Leong, who is also Johor Tourist Guides Association chairman, added that previously, a suggestion had been mooted of having a ferry service between Changi in Singapore and Puteri Harbour but it would take a longer travel time as ferries would have to go through Keppel Harbour.

He said having ferry services between Puteri Harbour and Tuas would save travellers a lot of time.

“This ferry service will be useful for Malaysians using the Second Link to travel daily into Singapore due to work commitments as well as Singaporeans coming across during the weekends or holidays.

“Having a ferry service to and from Singapore in Puteri Harbour will also help make the area much livelier which is underutilised despite having infrastructure there,” he said.

Johor Malaysian Association of Tour and Travel Agents (MATTA) chairman K. Subramaniam said it was a good idea to have the service between Puteri Harbour and Tuas.

He added that the ferry service between Desaru and Singapore was providing a vibrant growth for the local tourism sector there.

He said there is always a large number of travellers “ferrying” between Desaru and Singapore, and those numbers swell during long weekends and public holidays.

“Having a ferry service will help attract not only Singaporean tourists but also foreign travellers from Singapore,” he said.

On Thursday, Malaysia and Singapore said they are looking at the possibility of having a second ferry service between Johor and the island republic.

The matter was among several issues discussed during the Malaysia-Singapore Joint Ministerial Committee for Iskandar Malaysia (JMCIM) held in Iskandar Puteri.

Minister in the Prime Minister’s Department (Economy) Datuk Seri Mustapa Mohamed co-chaired the meeting with Singapore National Development Minister Desmond Lee.

In a joint statement, Malaysia and Singapore agreed to focus on enhancing investments and innovation to drive economic recovery post-pandemic.