



Wishes and resolutions..

By ANNA VIVIENNE

THE year 2007 is coming to an end. It was Visit Malaysia Year and the 50th anniversary of Malaysia's independence. It was a year of exciting events. Besides the usual tourism attractions in the tourism calendar of events, there were other exciting happenings; the completion of the terminal 2 airport, for instance, and the launching of so many tourism related establishments and activities.

Now we will focus on the coming year 2008. Most of us may not know what is in store for us but our wishes and resolutions are there as guidelines if not our targets.

Here are what some personalities in the tourism industry have to say:

Awad Bajera, the Admin and Operations Manager of Monsopiad Cultural Village shares that 2007 was a great year for the business.

"We are well pleased with what we have achieved so far. However, in 2008 we will continue to upgrade our facilities and offer our guests more interesting activities to enjoy within our cultural village."

"In fact, we will be establishing 16 rooms within the village as accommodations for those who wish to stay over with us. We are very serious about our venture and we are sure that we will do well next year. My resolution is to ensure that all goes well and we meet our guests' needs."

Monsopiad Cultural Village is located in Kg Kuai Kandazon Putatan. This village shows the people's traditional way of life based on a warrior called Monsopiad who probably lived in the 1800's.

George Chong Director of Hamin Lodge, Kota Kinabalu is very happy with his establishment's achievement in 2007 and believes that the year has been great to his venture.

"We have many reservations for next year and that is why I believe that 2008 will be another great year for us."

"This is mainly due to the diversity of our culture and nature; these are two assets that contribute tremendously to our tourism industry. I am therefore hopeful that next year will bring in more tourists into the state which will benefit the tourism-related entrepreneurs such as ourselves," he says.

Hamin Lodge is a boutique hotel situated at Sedco Complex in Kota Kinabalu.

Catherine Kingan, the manager of Aloris Masker beauty product based in Keningau, shares that 2007 was a hectic year but very lucrative for her.

"I went to almost all the main districts in Sabah to promote my product. The response have been tremendous and I am quite happy with the revenue I garnered."

However, Catherine is unhappy with some individuals who have copied her product. Her product, a range of beauty care innovations is made from traditional ingredients and therefore relatively easy



to copy.

"I do hope these individuals will stop copying my product," Catherine says adding that her main resolution for 2008 is to get her product patented.

"I also hope that my product will be able to reach all my consumers including tourists. I believe that tourists will be interested in this product as it is local and traditional; not available anywhere else in the world," she shares.

Felix Joikon, hotel manager of Megah D'Aru in Tanjung Aru Kota Kinabalu shares that the year 2007 was rather challenging, as it was their first year of operations.

"However, it has been fruitful as well," he says adding that he is very grateful to the support shown by his friends in the industry as well as the corporate and government sector.

"We look forward to 2008 and to a closer relationship with other players in the industry. I also wish to thank the various Travel Agencies, Sabah Tourism Board and Malaysia Tourism for their tremendous support and hope to have more of the same next year," he says.

"We promise that we will do our utmost best especially our services where our guests are concerned. We hope that any shortcomings will be taken to our notice so that we can rectify the problem immediately," he says.

Zahara Ismail the Director of Sales of Beverly Hotel says that 2007 was a good year in term of hotel revenue.

"I am quite happy with our achievement but I am looking forward to more aggressive promotions for our hotel," she says, adding that she is looking at 2008 with new hopes and new beginnings.

Fauziah Ghani the proprietor of Lembah Impian Country Homes located at Kg Kandazon Putatan, says, she is satisfied with the home's achievement in 2007.

"We have reached four star rating which is great and we are already known to many people. So I think we did really well this year."

"In 2008 we hope to do more and ensure that we reach the highest standard for overseas market. We want this establishment to be a land mark, to be known to all Malaysian as such," she says, adding that Sabah has a lot to offer in terms of natural and cultural diversity thus the anticipation of increased

domestic and international tourists.

Going by the comments, the tourism sector is set for a tremendous boost next year as the players seems bent on upgrading and promoting their facilities. With such resolutions, the tourism sector can go no way but up. The Minister of Tourism, Culture and Environment Datuk Masidi Manjun has stated that 1.9 million tourists has visited Sabah from January to October this year, and 45 percent of them were repeat visitors. So I believe the tourism sector is really in for a real boost next year.

Meanwhile, achievements are not confined to the tourism sector only. In the rural and suburban development sector, achievements have also been reached and the people satisfied.

In Papar, Member of Parliament Rosnah Abdul Rashid Shirlin says she is very happy with her achievement for her constituents in 2007.

"We have carried out various development projects for the people such as roads and drainage. We have also resolved the prevalent water problem here and next year somewhere in June, it (water problem) should be a thing of the past."

For 2008, two major projects will be carried out in Papar, for the people's benefit, she says. The projects concerned are two schools; SM Majakir in Pengalat and SM Beringgis in Beringgis.

Her wish for 2008 includes a desire to surpass her past efforts to struggle for her constituents needs.

Rosnah is a keen advocate of the homestay programmes in her constituency and has called on the people there many times to embark on this venture which can ensure more revenue for them.

Anyway, with 2007 coming to an end, and 2008 just outside the door, the interviewees wish all their friends, families and business partners a prosperous year ahead.

Happy New Year!