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THE upcoming Malaysian Grand Prix 2023 edition from Nov 10 to 12 may welcome 11,000 Indonesian spectators, compared to only 6,000 last year, said Sepang International Circuit (SIC) chief executive officer Azhan Shafriman Hanif.

SIC is committed to delivering the highest quality for the race and will ensure those coming to the circuit will witness jam-packed action on the track.

"I'm grateful for the support from Indonesian fans during this time because they are the biggest international audience for the Malaysian Grand Prix, and we are truly grateful for that," he said.

Speaking at the media briefing in Sepang recently as part of a promotional tour, Azhan Shafriman said the event promises to be more exciting, including the introduction of the new MotoGP format, sprint race, riders parade, and hero walk.

A notable highlight of the event is the professional debut of Malaysian rider Syarifuddin Azman, known as Damok, from MT Helmets-MSI, who will be competing in Moto3.

Special off-track activities will begin with pre-events during race week in line with this year's theme #KasiGegar, or "gaspol" in Indonesian.

Activities include the Public Pit Lane Walk and MotoGP Rider's Autograph Session on Nov 10, offering fans the opportunity to get up close and personal with their favourite riders.

Meanwhile, Tourism Malaysia Jakarta director Junus Suhid said Indonesia will always be an essential market for the tourism sector in Malaysia.

"In 2022, Malaysia recorded the arrival of 1.481 million tourists from Indonesia, making it the second-highest (in) number after Singapore.

"This position seems consistent with the arrival of 704,147 Indonesian foreign tourists recorded in the January-March period this year," he said.



The Sepang International Circuit is set to host the Malaysian Grand Prix 2023 in November. — Filepic

# An ideal number

Malaysia ready to welcome 11,000 Indonesian fans to Grand Prix 2023.

## Dino-myte!

Meanwhile, Perak is set to have its first dinosaur park at Gunung Lang Recreation Park, and it is expected to be operational in August next year.

Ipoh Mayor Datuk Rumaizi Baharin said the park, which is a new tourism product in conjunction with Visit Perak Year 2024, would have more than 30 static and animatronic prehistoric animals.

"The project is a collaboration between Ipoh City Council (MBI) and Pebec Berhad. We have two phases of construction. Phase

one involves a construction period of six to eight months to build animatronic prehistoric animals, as well as a learning centre that can accommodate 100 students at a time.

"Phase two will start within a year of the opening of phase one, but it depends on the response. We plan to build a 3D/4D cinema and a water playground," he said at a press conference in Ipoh recently.

With the setting up of the park, Rumaizi said Perak would be the seventh state to have such a theme park in the country.

He added that the dinosaur park will be built on a 2.4ha of land at the Kinta Valley Geopark.

"About 20,000 to 30,000 people visited Gunung Lang per month, and during school holidays it can be up to 40,000 visitors. When the dinosaur park is completed, it will definitely be a new tourist attraction in the district and Perak in particular," he said.

## Pink lotus in your area

Tasik Chini's iconic pink lotus (*Nelumbo nucifera*) has returned to the lake in Pahang, thanks to the conservation and rehabilitation done by the East Coast Economic Region Development Council (ECERDC).

ECERDC chief executive officer Datuk Baidzawi Che Mat said the lotus, a native of Tasik Chini, has decreased in population over time, as a result of frequent floods and dry seasons.

The efforts to conserve the lotus population and the biosphere at Tasik Chini were done with the collaboration of the

Forestry Research Institute of Malaysia (FRIM) and the Tasik Chini Research Centre, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (PPTC-UKM) Tasik Chini, he said.

"The rehabilitation efforts to maintain the sustainability of the lotus population in Tasik Chini have proven successful by utilising floating lotus cultivation, or the 'flotilla' method.

"The flotilla method involves lotus seeds being planted on land before they are transferred to the flotilla and later released to their natural habitat," he said in a statement, adding that the method has also won several accolades.

These include the Gold Award for International Innovation Award at the Malaysia Technology Expo 2023 and the Silver Award at the International Invention, Innovation and Technology Exhibition.

"Apart from conservation efforts, training for stakeholders and the local communities on the new lotus planting method, conservation and maintenance were also conducted to ensure the project's sustainability in the long run," he said.

He also noted that on Aug 1, ECERDC handed over the Sustainable Lotus Conservation Project in Tasik Chini to PPTC-UKM to be managed and maintained as part of their ecotourism and conservation efforts.

He also said that ECERDC is committed to developing ecotourism in the East Coast Economic Region in a sustainable manner, citing its other projects such as the upgrading of the solar hybrid system in Pulau Kapas (Terengganu), Kampungstay at Teluk Buih in Air Papan, Mersing (Johor) and the PETA Rainforest Discovery Centre in Taman Negara Endau-Rompin (Johor). — Bernama