New programmes augur well for tourism and hospitality industry

KUCHING: Come January, the Malaysian Centre for Tourism and Hospitality Education (MyCenTHE) will roll out a diploma in tourism and event management.

The new year will also see a diploma in culinary arts.

Both programmes were expected to augur well for the tourism and hospitality industry in line with the national agenda to revolutionise the industry, said MyCenTHE president Associate Professor Dr Wong Kong Yew.

He said the centre’s five clusters in Sarawak and Kuala Lumpur, and soon-to-be-launched in Penang, Sabah and Johor were targeted to hit an average of 2,000 students each by 2015.

"MyCenTHE will also expand its work-based learning programme by partnering with vocational and community institutions to offer up-skilling programmes," he said at the centre’s Independent Management Team (IMT) appreciation cocktail reception here yesterday.

Wong said MyCenTHE had been able to make tourism and hospitality education affordable through attractive financial aid package amounting 60% and 80% of tuition fees offered by all member institutions.

"This goes far in ensuring that students — irrespective of their financial situation — will have a chance to pursue a career in the industry."
Wong said MyCenTHE was launched in August to increase the public profile of Entry Point Project 10 or EPP10.

He thanked the centre’s industrial partners namely Borneo Convention Centre Kuching, Grand Margherita Hotel and Riverside Majestic Hotel for their commitment that led its pilot cluster leader UCSI University signing partnerships with them.

“I must stress that continuous synergy is vital for the IMT to revamp the national tourism and hospitality landscape.”

Since IMT was set up a year ago, it had brought together some of Malaysia’s leading higher learning education institutions, industrial leaders, government agencies and stakeholders with genuine ability to influence industrial policy in areas concerning education and skills training, he said.

“To get things off the ground – UCSI University — as host of MyCenTHE — swiftly revamped its diploma in hotel management to encapsulate the advocated work-based learning concept.”

During the event, UCSI University signed two memorandum of agreements with Pullman Kuching and Sarawak Cultural Village that will pave way for practical training and employment opportunities for its students.