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New mall adds 75,000sq m of space in Kota Kinabalu



Retail boost: An artist's impression of the Imago Mall in Kota Kinabalu.



Long known as the gateway to some of Sabah's natural attractions including Mount Kinabalu and the Tunku Abdul Rahman Marine Park, the city is further establishing itself as a shopping destination with the opening of another mall here.

With just the Klang Valley and Penang ahead of it in terms of retail market, Kota Kinabalu's prominence for "retail therapy" is set to grow further when Imago Mall opened its doors on Saturday.

The mall located along Kota Kinabalu's Coastal Highway has more than 300 outlets sprawled over more than 75,000sq m of retail space, making it one of the largest shopping centres in Kota Kinabalu.

Chief Minister Datuk Seri Musa Aman said the opening of mall augured well for Kota Kinabalu's retail environment, which is described as being strong due to increasing household income combined with the city's booming tourism sector.

"Sabah is facing rapid economic development with growth of 4.5% to 5% expected this year, setting the stage for Kota Kinabalu as an economic powerhouse and this is seen particularly within the retail market," Musa said in a speech read out by Deputy Chief Minister Datuk Raymond Tan.

He said Kota Kinabalu had been experiencing significant growth in retail malls, housing and commercial projects in areas such as Tuaran Road, Menggatal and Penampang since 2013.

Due to their proximity to the city centre, Likas, Penampang, Putatan and beyond, strategically located shopping centres such as Imago are expected to cater to a resident population of about 400,000 within a 15-minute drive.

"The catchment area has an annual retail spending potential of RM1.38bil because of its location, which draws tourists and business travellers from the surrounding luxury hotels and resorts," Musa noted.

"Tourism receipts alone are expected to hit RM7.3 bil from a target of 3.3 million tourist arrivals this year," he added.