

3RD INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS EVENTS FORUM 4 – 5 FEBRUARY 2026

Sabah International Convention Centre
KOTA KINABALU, SABAH, MALAYSIA

“Global Collaboration Through Business Events”

This gathering builds regional collaboration, strengthens networks, and demonstrates the region's ability to deliver world class events through a trusted supply chain, innovative ideas, and authentic cultural connections. It welcomes global partners to discover East ASEAN's readiness to connect and shape the future of business events together.

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PROGRAMME

DAY ONE: 4 FEBRUARY 2026 (WEDNESDAY)

8:00 a.m.

Arrival and Registration of Delegates, and Morning Networking

9:00 a.m.

PLENARY SESSION I (60 minutes)

THE GLOBAL GROWTH ENGINE: POWERING TRADE, INVESTMENT AND CONFIDENCE THROUGH BUSINESS EVENTS

Business Events play a critical role in driving national growth by enabling cross-border trade, stimulating investment pipelines and building market confidence. This discussion brings together influential global voices to explore economic opportunities, regional cooperation and resilient business strategies for the future.



Speaker I

**YANG BERBAHAGIA DATUK
DR. M GANDHI**

Founder & Chairman, Bumiati Holdings Sdn Bhd cum President, Malaysian Association of Convention and Exhibition Organisers & Suppliers (MACEOS)

[Malaysia]



Speaker II

**MS MARGARET MA
CONNOLLY**

President and Chief Executive Officer, Informa Markets ASIA

[Hong Kong SAR]



Speaker III

**MR MUBARAK HAMAD
AL SHAMSI**

Director of Abu Dhabi Convention and Exhibition Bureau (ADCEB), Department of Culture and Tourism Abu Dhabi

[United Arab Emirates]



Speaker IV

**MR ASHWIN
GUNASEKERAN**

Chief Executive Officer, Penang Convention & Exhibition Bureau (PCEB)

[Malaysia]



Moderator

MS WAIKIN WONG

Regional Director Asia Pacific, International Congress and Convention Association (ICCA)

[Malaysia]

10:00 a.m.

KEYNOTE SPEECH I (45 minutes)

NEW AGE, NEW MANDATE: LEADING BUSINESS EVENTS WITH RISK, RESILIENCE AND RESPONSIBILITIES (3RS)

The impacts of climate change are reshaping economies, industries and communities. Business Events have the power to accelerate solutions by advancing global collaboration, research exchange and climate innovation. This keynote examines why environmental responsibility is now an economic imperative – and how leadership must evolve to build a resilient future.



Keynote Speaker

MR BERNARD D'ALESSANDRI

General Secretary and Managing Director, Yacht Club De Monaco cum President of the Chambre Monégasque du Yachting

[Monaco]

10:45 a.m.

Arrival of guests for the Official Opening Ceremony of the 3rd International Business Events Forum - “**BE in SABAH 2026**”

11:00 a.m.

OFFICIAL OPENING CEREMONY - BE IN SABAH 2026

Arrival of Guest of Honour Yang Amat Berhormat Datuk Seri Panglima Haji Hajiji Bin Haji Noor, Chief Minister of Sabah

11:05 a.m.

Welcoming Remarks by Yang Berbahagia Datuk Dr. Hajah Rosmawati Haji Lasuki, *JP* - Organising Chairperson of BE in SABAH 2026 cum MACEOS Sabah Chair and Chief Executive Officer, Sabah International Convention Centre (SICC)

PROGRAMME

DAY ONE: 4 FEBRUARY 2026 (WEDNESDAY)

11:10 a.m.

LEADERSHIP VISION (20 minutes)

GLOBAL BUSINESS EVENTS INDUSTRY GROWTH: HOW STRATEGIC CHANGE AND COLLABORATION DRIVE BUSINESS EVENTS

Global market conditions, shifting trade alliances and rising competition are reshaping how growth is achieved. Collaboration is no longer a networking gesture but a commercial strategy that unlocks access to markets, accelerates industry development and drives investment. This keynote explores how the Business Events industry functions as a growth engine—creating deal flow, driving supply-chain activation and fostering economic partnerships that lead to measurable outcomes and sustainable competitive advantage.



Keynote Speaker

DR. SENTHIL GOPINATH

Chief Executive Officer, International Congress and Convention Association (ICCA)

[The Netherlands]

11:30 a.m.

Official Opening Ceremony by Guest of Honour Yang Amat Berhormat Datuk Seri Panglima Haji Hajiji Bin Haji Noor, Chief Minister of Sabah

MOU Signing Ceremony

Memento Presentation

12:30 p.m.

LUNCHEON | Sipadan Hall I, Level 4

1:30 p.m.

PRESENTED IN COLLABORATION WITH (20 minutes)

THROUGH NIKKEI INC.'S LENS: THE STATE OF ASIA'S ECONOMY AND POLITICS

Viewed through Nikkei Inc.'s lens, this editorial briefing explores the state of Asia's economy and politics. It highlights emerging trends, structural shifts and strategic implications for business and policymakers. A concise overview of where Asia stands—and where it may be heading.



Keynote Speaker

MR TOYOAKI FUJIWARA

General Manager of Global Events and Conferences at Nikkei Inc.

[Japan]

1:50 p.m.

PLENARY SESSION II (55 minutes)

SYNERGY UNLOCK: CLAIMING THE AI ADVANTAGE IN THE NEW ERA OF BUSINESS EVENTS

Artificial intelligence is transforming industries, economies and decision-making. But technology alone does not create progress — competitive advantage now lies in how effectively organisations combine human insight with intelligent systems. This session explores how AI is reshaping strategy, bid competitiveness, market analysis, delegate behaviour, event design and productivity across the global Business Events ecosystem. It examines how AI-human collaboration is redefining how destinations grow, how businesses compete and how value is created in the industry.



Speaker I

**YANG BERBAHAGIA
PROFESSOR EMERITUS
DATO' DR. HALIMAH
BADIOZE ZAMAN**

Chairholder / Emeritus Professor,
Institute of Informatics & Computing
in Energy (IICE), Universiti Tenaga
Nasional (UNITEN), Kuala Lumpur

[Malaysia]



Speaker II

MR KAI HATTENDORF

Managing Partner,
jwc GmbH & Former Chief
Executive Officer, UFI

[France]



Speaker III

TS. YUSNO YUNOS, CMP

Chief Event Intelligence
Officer (CEiO)

[Malaysia]



Speaker IV

MS FLORENCE CHUA

Managing Director APAC,
Professional Convention
Management Association (PCMA)

[Singapore]



Moderator

MR MIKE WILLIAMS

Senior Partner and Senior
Consultant, GainingEdge

[Australia]

PROGRAMME

DAY ONE: 4 FEBRUARY 2026 (WEDNESDAY)

2:50 p.m.

KEYNOTE SPEECH II (30 minutes)

STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESS : DESTINATION MANAGEMENT FOR BUSINESS EVENTS.

Business Events are the cornerstone of human connection and innovation, serving as dynamic platforms for shaping industries building relationships, uniting communities and driving transformation. The topic will give insights of what it takes to be a successful BE destination, and how to tap on opportunities for branding, networking and growth.



Keynote Speaker
MR STEEN JAKOBSEN

Chief Executive Officer, GainingEdge
[United Arab Emirates]

3:20 p.m.

STRATEGIC FORUM (45 minutes)

THE BLUE GOLD RUSH: UNLOCKING SABAH'S BLUE ECONOMY INVESTMENT FRONTIER

Beyond traditional sectors, the Blue Economy transforms natural and strategic assets into investable, future-ready opportunities, driving sustainable growth and resilience.

INVEST SABAH

Fast-Tracking Bankable Blue Investments Through Business Events

This session shows how Business Events catalyse Sabah's Blue Economy—linking investors to incentives, market access and bankable projects.



Speaker I
YANG BERBAHAGIA DATUK THOMAS LOGIJIN

Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Industry, Entrepreneurship and Transport Sabah
[Malaysia]

SABAH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND INVESTMENT AUTHORITY (SEDIA)

Activating Sabah's Blue Economy Corridor

Business Events as the gateway to Sabah's Blue Economy Corridor



Speaker II
MR KEVIN GEORGE UKANG

Chief Investment Officer
[Malaysia]

SEKRETARIAT SABAH MAJU JAYA (SSMJ)

From Policy to Impact: Responsible Blue Investment

How Sabah Maju Jaya provides policy certainty and ESG credibility for long-term investment.



Speaker III
YANG BERBAHAGIA DATUK RAMLEE BIN KARIAH

Chief Operating Officer
[Malaysia]

4:05 p.m.

PLENARY SESSION III (55 minutes)

FUTURE BUILDERS: EMPOWERING EMERGING TALENT FOR GLOBAL INDUSTRY TRANSFORMATION

The next generation will shape the future of Business Events—and the world they will inherit demands new competencies, leadership mindsets and global fluency. This session highlights the importance of future talent pipelines, skill mobility and creating leadership opportunities that shape a progressive and resilient industry.



Speaker I
BAPAK HOSEA ANDREAS RUNKAT
Chairman, Indonesia Exhibition Companies Association (IECA)
[Indonesia]



Speaker III
MS CARINA MONTAGUT
Events Department Director, Feria Valencia
[Spain]



Speaker II
MS FIONA HAGAN
General Manager, Shangri-La Rasa Ria Kota Kinabalu
[Malaysia]



Speaker IV
MR JOHN BURKE
General Manager, Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre (KLCC)
[Malaysia]



Moderator
MS YAP LI LING
President, Commonwealth Association of Leadership Malaysia (CALM)
[Malaysia]

PROGRAMME

DAY ONE: 4 FEBRUARY 2026 (WEDNESDAY)

| | |
|-----------|---|
| 5:30 p.m. | SUNSET WALK @SICC & COCKTAIL Promenade, Level 2 |
| 7:00 p.m. | WELCOMING DINNER HOSTED INNOPRISE CORPORATION SDN BHD Sipadan Hall, Level 4 Arrival of Guest of Honour Yang Berhormat Datuk Jasni Bin Daya, Executive Chairman, Innoprise Corporation Sdn Bhd |
| 7:35 p.m. | Welcome Remark by Guest of Honour Yang Berhormat Datuk Jasni Bin Daya, Executive Chairman, Innoprise Corporation Sdn Bhd Memento Presentation Dinner is served Malaysia Truly Asia Showcase |
| 9:30 p.m. | Thank You and Good Night! End of Day One |

PROGRAMME

DAY TWO : 5 FEBRUARY 2026 (THURSDAY)

| | |
|------------|--|
| 8:00 a.m. | Arrival and Registration of Delegates, and Morning Networking |
| 9:00 a.m. | <p>PLENARY SESSION IV (55 minutes)</p> <p>STRATEGY GAP: HOW ASSOCIATIONS LEAD BUSINESS EVENTS INDUSTRY TRANSFORMATION</p> <p>Associations shape industries, influence policy, and set professional standards. As the landscape evolves, leaders must go beyond events to deliver lasting value. This session explores strategies to strengthen relevance, sustainability, and global impact.</p> <div><div><p><i>Speaker I</i> PROFESSOR DATIN DR LYDIA ABDUL LATIF President, Malaysian Society of Association Executives (MSAE) [Malaysia]</p></div><div><p><i>Speaker III</i> MS SARAH FLEMING Founder / Managing Director, SFA Connect [United Kingdom]</p></div><div><p><i>Speaker II</i> MR SUMATE SUDASNA President Emeritus, Thailand Incentive and Convention Association (TICA), 1ST Vice President, Asian Federation of Exhibition and Convention Associations (AFECA), Chief Resilience Officer, CDM – Conference & Destination Management [Thailand]</p></div><div><p><i>Speaker IV</i> PH.D PETER LEE Executive Director, Goyang Convention & Visitors Bureau (Goyang CVB) [South Korea]</p></div><div><p><i>Moderator</i> MR KURT JUSTIN SANTIAGO President & CEO of Hongli Consumer Goods Trading / Vice President of the Political Officers Federation of the Philippines [The Philippines]</p></div></div> |
| 10:00 a.m. | Coffee Break (30 minutes) |

PROGRAMME

DAY TWO : 5 FEBRUARY 2026 (THURSDAY)

10:30 a.m.

PLENARY SESSION V (55 minutes)

LIMITLESS HORIZON: HOW STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS DEFINE THE FUTURE OF BUSINESS EVENTS INDUSTRY

The future of Business Events will not be built by one sector alone — it will be shaped by an ecosystem of leaders who are setting new standards for growth, relevance and global influence. This session brings together some of the industry's most influential voices from strategy, destination development, media, associations, consulting and market expansion. In this rare power panel, industry leaders will share unfiltered insights, lessons earned from experience and forward strategies that are redefining what is possible for Business Events worldwide.



Speaker I

MR MAHIR ABDULKARIM JULFAR

Executive Vice President at
Dubai World Trade Centre
[United Arab Emirates]



Speaker III

DR REZA SOLTANI

President, Institute of Tourism
[Belgium]



Speaker II

MR MARTIN BALMER

Account Director Asia,
Europe & Middle East
Northstar Meetings Group
[United Kingdom]



Speaker IV

DR BONA NAHYUN LEE

Founder and Chief Executive
Officer, BornTiger
[South Korea]



Moderator

MS JANE VONG HOLMES

Senior Manager Asia,
GainingEdge
[Malaysia]

11:30 a.m.

KEYNOTE SPEECH III (60 minutes)

THE INFLUENCE EQUATION: HOW TO DESIGN BUSINESS EVENTS THAT CHANGE POLICY, NOT JUST PEOPLE

Event design has moved beyond logistics—it is now a strategic tool for influence, behaviour change and measurable outcomes. This keynote reveals how global organisations are using structured event design to drive policy change, innovation impact and legacy outcomes that extend far beyond the event.

Join a design conversation that explores failure through a creative lens.



Keynote Speaker

MR RUUD JANSSEN

Co-Founder & Managing Director,
Event Design Collective (EDCO Global)
[Switzerland]

12:00 p.m.

Arrival of invited guests for the Luncheon and Official Closing of BE in SABAH 2026

12:35 p.m.

Presentation by Sabah Convention Bureau

12:40 p.m.

LUNCH SPONSORED BY SABAH CONVENTION BUREAU

2:15 p.m.

Arrival of Guest of Honour Yang Berhormat Datuk Jafry Bin Ariffin, Minister of Tourism, Culture and Environment Sabah cum Patron of BE in SABAH at Sipadan II & III, Level 4

OFFICIAL CLOSING CEREMONY - BE IN SABAH 2026

2:20 p.m.

Closing Remarks By Yang Berbahagia Datuk (Dr) M. Gandhi, President, Malaysian Association of Convention and Exhibition Organisers and Suppliers (MACEOS) and Yang Berbahagia Datuk Dr. Hajah Rosmawati Haji Lasuki, JP, Organising Chairperson of BE in SABAH cum MACEOS Sabah Chair and Chief Executive Officer, Sabah International Convention Centre

2:30 p.m.

Official Closing Ceremony by Guest of Honour Yang Berhormat Datuk Jafry Bin Ariffin, Minister of Tourism, Culture and Environment Sabah cum Patron of BE in SABAH

MOU Signing Ceremony

Graduation Ceremony – Certified Event Designer (CED) Graduates, 2025

Memento Presentation

3:30 p.m.

End of BE in SABAH 2026

See you at the 4th International Business Events Forum – BE in SABAH 2027

pre-forum programme

TUESDAY, 3 FEBRUARY 2026

| | |
|------------------------|--|
| 8:30 - 9:30 a.m. | EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP / STRATEGIC INSIGHTS BREAKFAST CONVERSATION WITH MR STEEN JAKOBSEN, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER OF GAININGEDGE SILAM LOUNGE, LEVEL 2, SICC A closed-door C-suite breakfast focused on global Business Events strategy and market intelligence. <i>By invitation only</i> |
| 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. | BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT / BUSINESS MATCHING BE MATCH (B2B MEETINGS) Sepilok Room, Level 5, SICC Ahead of BE in SABAH 2026, an invitation-only Business Matching Session will bring together selected participants for structured, pre-arranged meetings—maximising networking efficiency and enabling impactful connections prior to the main forum. <i>Please contact Ms Shirley-Ann at +6013 863 0011 for more information.</i> <i>Limited to 100 persons</i> |
| 10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. | CAPACITY BUILDING / TALENT DEVELOPMENT BE YOUTH HUB Manukan Kapalai Room, Level 2, SICC A student engagement platform promoting learning, cultural exchange, and global perspectives in Business Events. <i>Please contact Mr Mawie Effendi at +6012 827 3803 for more information.</i> <i>Limited to 50 persons</i> |
| 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. | INDUSTRY CAPACITY BUILDING / PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT BE BOOTCAMP Kinabalu Room, Level 5, SICC An intensive industry boot camp focused on strengthening bidding strategies, site inspection readiness, and operational excellence. <i>Please contact Secretariat at +6011 1642 6004 for more information.</i> <i>Limited to 50 persons</i> |

These programmes are open exclusively to registered delegates of BE in SABAH 2026.

9 - 11 February 2026 post-forum programme



INDUSTRY CAPACITY BUILDING / PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

EVENT DESIGN TRUSTED ADVISOR PROGRAM

The Event Design Trusted Advisor (CTA) Program is an intensive, fee-based professional development programme designed to elevate Business Events practitioners into strategic advisors. Taking place from 9–11 February 2026 at the Sabah International Convention Centre, the programme is facilitated by Ruud Janssen of Event Design Collective (Switzerland) and Paul Rulkens of Agrippa Consulting International (Netherlands). Participants will journey through CTA mastery foundations, strategic conversations and growth frameworks, and hands-on application via a blueprint lab, followed by six months of cohort-based coaching. With limited seats available, the programme offers an immersive, high-impact learning experience for professionals seeking to design purposeful events and deliver value beyond expectations.

Please contact Ms Donaty Koijin at +6011 5505 7651 for more information.

Limited seats available. Fee-based programme

REGISTRATION FORM

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RM800.00
RM600.00
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RM700.00
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***by 31 December 2025**



HRD Corp claims are applicable to normal registration rates only. Claims may be submitted until 30 January 2026, subject to HRD Corp's prevailing terms and conditions.

Notes

1. The registration fees are inclusive of participation at the conference sessions, all meals and conference collaterals for the Business Events Forum only. Please note that airfare and hotel accommodations are not included
2. Registration fee must be paid in full upon registration. Payment receipt to be submitted upon online registration.
3. No refunds will be given for any cancellations
4. The Organiser reserves the right to reject any registration without being obliged to discuss the reasons for doing so.
5. Any decision made by the Organiser is final, and no correspondence will be entered into.

SUPPORTING AIRLINE PARTNERS

Kota Kinabalu International Airport in Sabah is accessible via direct international flights or through a 2.5-hour connecting flight from Kuala Lumpur, with typical flight durations ranging from 2 to 6 hours.

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HOTEL PARTNERS

For the convenience of out-of-Sabah delegates, BE in SABAH 2026 has partnered with selected hotels in Kota Kinabalu offering preferred rates and easy access to the Sabah International Convention Centre (SICC).



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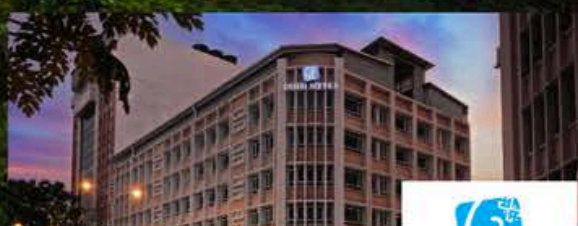
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Here, conversations reflect what the world needs most: balance, resilience, and shared progress.



BE in SABAH: Gateway to East ASEAN – Elevating Business Events in Asia Pacific

Sabah, located on the northern part of Borneo, is one of Southeast Asia’s most distinctive destinations—where nature, culture and commerce converge. Known for its world-renowned biodiversity, including the majestic Mount Kinabalu and the marine treasure of Sipadan Island, Sabah is also emerging as a strategic centre for international connection and economic collaboration.

Building on the growing influence of Asia Pacific in the global events economy, BE in SABAH 2026 returns as a high-level international Business Events forum designed to shape industry dialogue and drive strategic outcomes. Hosted by the Malaysian Association of Convention & Exhibition Organisers & Suppliers (MACEOS) Sabah Chapter in collaboration with the Sabah International Convention Centre (SICC), the forum positions Sabah as a gateway to East ASEAN and a rising voice in the global Business Events network.

With the 2026 theme “Global Collaboration Through Business Events”, this edition expands its focus beyond regional development to economic diplomacy, strategic partnerships and cross-border growth opportunities. The forum will gather global leaders, industry strategists, association executives, investors, and policymakers to strengthen global business connectivity through Business Events.



OBJECTIVES

- Strengthen Asia Pacific’s role in the global Business Events economy
- Advance cross-border industry collaboration and strategic partnerships
- Drive trade, investment and business growth through Business Events
- Develop industry leadership, talent and professional excellence
- Accelerate innovation through technology, AI and data
- Promote sustainable and impact-driven event strategies
- Position Sabah and East ASEAN as strategic Business Events gateways

Who Should Join

BE in SABAH 2026 welcomes Industry Leaders, Event Professionals, NGOs / Associations, Academician, policymakers and future leaders.



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