



PRESS RELEASE

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MALAYSIA HOMESTAY PROGRAMME LAUDED AS PRIME EXAMPLE OF COLLABORATIVE TOURISM INITIATIVE

MACAU, 17 October 2017: Malaysia's Homestay Programme was among the tourism highlights discussed during the Global Tourism Economy Forum 2017 in Macau on 16 October 2017, attracting positive comments from all delegates.

Speaking as a panel member of the forum's "Face To Face, Ministers and Private Sector CEOs" session entitled "Embracing Regional Collaboration for Collective Growth," Dato' Dr. Siew Ka Wei, Chairman of Tourism Malaysia, shared about the success story of the Malaysia Homestay Programme and how it was considered a successful collaboration of government, local community and tourism industry players.

According to Dato' Dr. Siew, "One of the most successful public-private partnership initiatives we have in Malaysia is the Malaysia Homestay Programme. It was formed in 1995 and still exists today as a prime example of how Government and the community or private sector can work together long-term towards a better economic and social future for all. In fact, the programme was so successful that in 2012, it was awarded the UNWTO Ulysses Award for Innovation in Public Policy and Governance."

Dato' Dr. Siew said, "The programme emphasizes the utilisation of available resources of the village, the conservation and maintenance of socio-cultural and artistic customs of the village and also highlights the uniqueness of the Malaysian village life."

The Malaysia Homestay Programme was an initiative set up to enable families living in the outskirts of town and in traditional villages to take part and benefit from the economic activities of tourism.

The programme was carried out in collaboration with the Ministry of Rural and Regional Development, respective state governments and the Association of Homestay Malaysia. The villages that participated in the programme were carefully selected and required to comply with the strict guidelines set by the Malaysian Ministry of Tourism and Culture. Training was provided and standards were set for the villages involved to prepare themselves to receive their first tourists in their homes.

MALAYSIA TOURISM PROMOTION BOARD

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Dato' Dr. Siew added, "The programme, in many ways, has helped turn the tourism industry into a major and viable sector and also contributed to the socio-economic development of the local people and the country. It is one of Malaysia's prime examples of sustainable tourism at its best."

He continued, "For the villagers, the homestay programme provided a supplementary source of income to its hosts and inexpensive alternative accommodation to tourists. In addition to hospitality services training, they were also groomed for entrepreneurial opportunities. Homestay operators were trained with specific skills such as reflexology while efforts to encourage entrepreneurship through the production and sale of local products and handicrafts served to add value to the homestay experience for tourists."

To date, there are a total of 201 homestay clusters or villages that are spread out all over the country, in every state.

Background info on GTEF 2017:

The Global Tourism Economy Forum (GTEF) is a leading international exchange platform designed to promote sustainable development of the global tourism industry with a focus on China. Established in 2012 and located in Macao, the southern gateway of China, GTEF takes advantage of Macao's proximity to China, its strategic position in Asia, and its forerunner position in the region's burgeoning tourism economy to connect governments and industry players from Mainland China and around the world to bring about extensive and rewarding opportunities for tourism promotion, investment and cooperation.

A multi-purpose platform, GTEF not only brings together international government and industry leaders, experts, scholars and related industry partners to engage in discussions and debates about opportunities and challenges in the global tourism economy; it also provides the perfect environment for stakeholders in the tourism and related industries to explore the real opportunities that underlie China's international and regional integration policies, to network and to engage in business-matching and privately-scheduled meetings that are conducive to business leads and new partnerships.

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MALAYSIA TOURISM PROMOTION BOARD OR TOURISM MALAYSIA is an agency under the Ministry of Tourism & Culture, Malaysia. It focuses on the specific task of promoting Malaysia as a preferred tourism destination. Since its inception, it has emerged as a major player in the international tourism scene. In 2016, Malaysia registered 26.8 million tourist arrivals and RM82.1 billion in receipts, placing it among the major tourism destinations of the world.

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