



## MEDIA RELEASE

# MALAYSIA AT ARABIAN TRAVEL MART 2008



A 135-member Malaysian delegation (from 86 organisations) will be participating at the Arabian Travel Mart (ATM) in Dubai, United Arab Emirates from 5<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> May 2008. This year marks Malaysia's 15<sup>th</sup> year of participation at the ATM, the largest trade and consumer travel show in the Gulf region.

The Malaysian delegation to Dubai is led by Dato` Mirza Mohammad Taiyab, Director General, Tourism Malaysia while the Sales Mission Road Show to Oman and Kuwait will be led by Tuan Haji Azizan Noordin, Tourism Malaysia's International Promotions Director (South / West Asia and Oceania).

Other members from the Malaysian delegation include representatives from both the government and private sector. The delegation breakdown consists of 54 hotels, 24 travel & tour operators, 4 State Governments, Malaysia Airlines, Malaysia Airport Berhad, Malaysian Travel Bureau Sdn Bhd and Menara KL (KL Tower).

A media conference on the tourism development in Malaysia will be held on 5<sup>th</sup> April 2007 at the Raffles Hotel, Dubai at 11am.

Part of the delegation will embark on a post ATM road show to other countries in the Gulf, namely to Oman and Kuwait from 10<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> May 2008 to promote Malaysia. During the mission, the delegation will hold meetings with the local travel trade players in the respective cities.

## **BACKGROUND**

1. Malaysia recorded 20.97 million visitors last year with a 19.5 per cent growth compared to the previous year (2006).
2. Last year, the West Asian market registered 245,302 visitors with a growth of 31.3 percent compared to 2006.

**Table 1**

<b>COUNTRY</b>	<b>Tourist arrivals 2007</b>	<b>Tourist arrivals 2006</b>	<b>Growth in %</b>
West Asia	245,302	186,821	31.3

*(Source: Immigration Dept & Research Division, Tourism Malaysia).*

3. The promotion in West Asia is based on travel packages coupled with the high standard quality services and products. Key segments promoted in West Asia market includes leisure holidays such as beaches and islands, shopping, dining, eco-tourism and MICE packages. The special interest promotions are; education tourism, medical & health tourism, honeymoon, spa and Malaysia My Second Home.
4. In the context of medical and health tourism, Malaysia is among the popular destinations for health tourists from West Asia. It is fast emerging as a value-for-money destination with world-class health and state-of-the-art medical facilities as Malaysia has over 200 international standard hospital and clinics.
5. Similarly, the good exchange rate has attributed to the growth in education tourism, thus making Malaysia a centre of research and educational excellence. Twinning programs with foreign universities have made it affordable for students from West Asia to pursue their tertiary education in Malaysia.
6. Last year, Malaysia received an award for being the 'No. 1 holiday destination for U.A.E. residents' by Asfaar magazine, a prominent travel magazine in the U.A.E.

For more information on Malaysia and the Visit Malaysia Year holiday packages, visitors are welcome to visit the Malaysian pavilion and Tourism Malaysia's booth (AS740) or surf: [www.tourism.gov.my](http://www.tourism.gov.my) or [www.virtualmalaysia.com.my](http://www.virtualmalaysia.com.my)

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