



PRESS RELEASE

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## TOURISM & CULTURE MINISTER LEADS DELEGATION TO PROMOTE MYFEST IN CENTRAL ASIA

**ALMATY, 22 APRIL 2015:** The Minister of Tourism and Culture Malaysia Dato' Seri Mohamed Nazri Abdul Aziz is leading a weeklong sales mission to Almaty, Kazakhstan and Tashkent, Uzbekistan, beginning 21 April. The visit is also in conjunction with the country's participation in the Kazakhstan International Travel Fair (KITF) 2015, which is a leading travel and tourism trade exhibition in Central Asia.

The sales mission and the participation in KITF are in line with Tourism Malaysia's continuous efforts to raise awareness on the celebration of the Malaysia Year of Festivals (MyFest) 2015. Besides that, it also aims to promote the country as a top-of-mind holiday destination for travellers from Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, and other countries in the Central Asian region.

The Tourism and Culture Minister is leading a Malaysian delegation comprising 25 industry players from 20 organisations to participate in the 15<sup>th</sup> edition of KITF, which will be held from 22 to 24 April. They include the Langkawi Development Authority (LADA), Putrajaya Corporation and the Malaysia Healthcare Travel Council (MHTC), as well as tour operators and hotel.

This year marks Malaysia's 14<sup>th</sup> year of participation in KITF, which is a testament of its commitment to make the country a premier destination for travellers from the Central Asian market.

"Our participation in the 15<sup>th</sup> edition of KITF this year is extra special. We are honoured and proud to be made the Partner Country, which I understand is the second time being offered to a country," said Dato' Seri Mohamed Nazri in his speech during the opening ceremony of KITF today.

"Malaysia is pleased to be given this golden opportunity, which is timely to promote the Malaysia Year of Festivals 2015 or MyFest to the Central Asian market," the Tourism and Culture Minister added.

As Partner Country, Malaysia will be in the spotlight of KITF 2015. It allows the country's fascinating tourism offerings and world-class hospitality services to be promoted extensively. Besides highlighting MyFest, Tourism Malaysia will be taking the full advantage of this excellent platform to reach out to industry players and members of the media in the region.



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During the opening ceremony, Dato' Seri Mohamed Nazri also announced the opening of Tourism Malaysia's office in Almaty, which he officially launched at a separate function today.

Besides that, Dato' Seri Mohamed Nazri also launched the Malaysia Pavilion at KITF and attended the KITF Gala Reception Evening today at the InterContinental Almaty Hotel, where a cultural troupe from Malaysia performed a welcome dance to showcase the multicultural dances of the country.

In Kazakhstan, the Tourism and Culture Minister also addressed the media at a press conference after the official opening ceremony of KITF to update them on the latest tourist attractions and tourism developments in Malaysia. Another press conference was held today after the launching ceremony of Tourism Malaysia Almaty Office.

On 21 April, Tourism Malaysia hosted a 'Malaysia Evening with Travel Trade & Media' to show its appreciation to the tourism fraternity in Almaty and also members of the media. A similar dinner will be hosted in Tashkent on 24 April.

The Tourism and Culture Minister also launched MyFest 2015 outdoor campaign at the Almaty Metropolitan Abay station and Auezov Theatre station. There are 58 double-sided escalator light boxes at Abay station and 33 more at Auezov Theatre station. The campaign also includes three train wraps, showcasing creatives on islands and beaches, as well as culture and nature. The outdoor campaign is from April to July 2015.

In 2014, Malaysia welcomed a total of 18,072 tourists from Kazakhstan, which was a drop of 8.9% compared to 2013.

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For more media releases, media info and media features on Malaysia's tourism industry, kindly visit the Media Centre of Tourism Malaysia's website at <http://www.tourismmalaysia.gov.my/>

**MALAYSIA TOURISM PROMOTION BOARD OR TOURISM MALAYSIA** is an agency under the Ministry of Tourism & Culture, Malaysia. Tourism Malaysia focuses on the specific task of promoting Malaysia at all levels. Since its inception, Tourism Malaysia has grown by leaps and bounds and it has emerged as a major player in the international tourism scene. In 2014, Malaysia registered 27.4 million tourist arrivals and RM72 billion in receipts, making tourism its second largest foreign exchange earner.

Malaysia celebrated its fourth **VISIT MALAYSIA YEAR (VMY)** in 2014 with the theme "Celebrating 1Malaysia Truly Asia". The promotion of the country continues with the **MALAYSIA YEAR OF FESTIVALS (MyFEST)** campaign in 2015 with the theme "Endless Celebrations" emphasising the various festivals celebrated by its multicultural society. Both campaigns are key drivers towards achieving the country's target of 36 million tourist arrivals and RM168 billion in receipts by 2020, as outlined in the Tourism NKEA (National Key Economic Area).



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Through the Tourism NKEA, collaborative efforts between the Ministry of Tourism and Culture, other Government agencies and the private sector have been enhanced to help secure Malaysia's position as a leading tourist destination. The targets set under the Tourism NKEA will be achieved through the implementation of twelve Entry Point Projects (EPPs) clustered under five themes: Affordable Luxury; Nature Adventure; Family Fun; Events, Entertainment, Spa and Sports; and Business Tourism.

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