



MEDIA RELEASE

INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION A BOOST TO MALAYSIA'S TOURISM EFFORTS

KUALA LUMPUR, 20 NOVEMBER 2012: The recent shower of accolades on Malaysia by various independent organisations speaks volumes for Malaysia's thriving tourism industry.

Just last month, Kuala Lumpur hit the headlines for being ranked the second best shopping city in Asia Pacific by Globe Shopper Index, cementing the capital city's position as a shopping paradise. The report stated that Kuala Lumpur's specific strength was its ability to combine low prices with a good range of products in a large number of stores. It also took note of the Government's mammoth investments in developing KLCC and Bukit Bintang as a premier shopping precinct in Malaysia.

The good news comes in the wake of several upgrades to Malaysia's shopping scene – the abolishment of import duties on more than 300 items, the opening of the first Premium Outlet stores in Johor, and the improved pedestrian connectivity within the main shopping precinct of Kuala Lumpur City Centre-Bukit Bintang.

In the same month, Malaysia was ranked 10th friendliest country in an article published by Forbes Online. The survey was based on a range of questions across four categories: the ability to befriend locals, success in learning local languages, capacity for integrating into the community, and ease of fitting into the new culture, asked among 5,339 expatriates from 97 countries.

A third recognition that went to Malaysia in October was the country's ranking as the 12th most competitive economy in the world for doing business. The report, released by the World Bank, placed Malaysia ahead of economies like Sweden, Taiwan, Germany, Japan and Switzerland. It affirms Malaysia's competitiveness as an economy, and reflects the successful implementation by the Government to improve the business environment and make it conducive for sustained economic growth.

In a separate report, also in October, Malaysia emerged 8th out of the 18 Asia Pacific countries surveyed for level of service sophistication, which was scored based on four key parameters – a survey of executives and market experts, score of the country's innovation levels, its business sophistication and technological readiness as measured by the World Economic Forum.

Other important recognitions this year include a study by DinarStandard which revealed Malaysia as one of the top tourist destinations for Muslim tourists, along with Turkey and the United Arab Emirates.

These recognitions have reaffirmed the Ministry of Tourism and Tourism Malaysia's efforts to promote Malaysia as a premier holiday destination filled with diverse tourist attractions and exciting events. Last year, Malaysia received 24.7 million tourists and RM58.3 billion in receipts, putting Malaysia as the ninth most-visited country in the world for the third consecutive year since 2009, according to the World Tourism Organisation.

Under the Malaysia Transformation Tourism Plan, tourism is expected to achieve 36 million tourist arrivals and RM168 billion receipts by the year 2020.

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