



PRESS RELEASE

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MALAYSIA YEAR OF FESTIVALS 2015 LAUNCHED AT ATF 2015

Putrajaya, 3 Feb 2015 – The Malaysia Year of Festivals 2015 (MyFest) was launched successfully at the ASEAN Tourism Forum (ATF) in Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar, on 28 Jan by Deputy Chairman of Tourism Malaysia, YB Dato’ Sri Maznah Mazlan. More than 450 ATF delegates comprising international buyers and media interested in promoting Malaysia as a top holiday destination were in attendance at the Malaysia Gala Dinner for the launch. Also present to lend his support to Malaysia was the Minister of Hotels and Tourism, Republic of the Union of Myanmar, His Excellency U Htay Aung. It was the first official launch of MyFest at an international tourism platform this year.

Earlier that morning, Tourism Malaysia’s Director General, Dato’ Mirza Mohammad Taiyab, had addressed international journalists at a special press conference on Malaysia Year of Festivals 2015 where he said, “Malaysia’s cultural diversity has always been a strong tourist draw and naturally, we are capitalizing on our culture and tourism assets to promote Malaysia Year of Festivals this year.”

Some 70 members of the international media attended the briefing session held to provide information on Malaysia’s tourism promotions this year. Dato’ Mirza highlighted the Malaysia Open House tradition and national-level celebrations, along with the year’s calendar of events comprising culture, sports, food, lifestyle, music and dance and nature-based events. He also gave special mention to new events this year, i.e. Iftar@KL, Malaysia International Mask Festival, Orang Asli & International Aborigines Art Festival, Royal Floria Putrajaya and E-Street Festival Putrajaya.

He said, “This year, the focus will be on Malaysia with the country taking up the chairmanship of ASEAN, and leading discussions in many areas, including tourism.”

He added that the ASEAN Go Travel television channel, which was announced during the ASEAN Ministers’ press conference on 26 January, was a good platform for ASEAN member states to reach out to international tourists and promote the region’s beautiful and amazing attractions and destinations through interesting travel programmes. The travel channel will broadcast ASEAN destinations through travel programmes that reach out to a regional and broader audience in stages.

Dato’ Mirza concluded his media briefing with updates on new tourist attractions in Malaysia such



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as Mitsui Outlet Park, China-Malaysia Friendship Garden in Putrajaya, and MUD – Our Story of Kuala Lumpur musical.

During the opening ceremony of the ATF held at the Myanmar International Convention Center, on 26 January, Malaysia was awarded the Best ASEAN Marketing and Promotional Campaign. The Secretary General of the Ministry of Tourism and Culture Malaysia, YBhg. Datuk Dr. Ong Hong Peng received the award from the Minister of Hotels and Tourism, Republic of the Union of Myanmar, His Excellency U Htay Aung.

BACKGROUND

ATF comprises the ASEAN Tourism Ministers' Meeting, ASEAN Tourism Ministers and Dialogue Partners Meetings, TRAVEX (Travel Exchange) and ASEAN Tourism Conference. The ASEAN Tourism Ministers' Meeting is preceded by the official level meetings of the ASEAN National Tourism Organizations.

Each year, the hosting of ATF is rotated among the member states: Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam. This year, ATF was held in Myanmar for the first time since its inauguration in 1981, from 22 to 29 January 2015 in Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar.

The theme 'ASEAN – Tourism towards Peace, Prosperity and Partnership' is in line with the theme of Myanmar's ASEAN Chairmanship in 2014, based on the three pillars of building the ASEAN Community – peace, prosperity and unity.

ATF is a cooperative regional effort to promote the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) region as a single tourism destination where Asian hospitality and cultural diversity are at its best.

ENDS

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 2013, Malaysia registered 25.7 million tourist arrivals and RM65.4 billion in receipts, making tourism its second largest foreign exchange earner and the sixth highest contributor to its Gross National Income (GNI).

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 this year



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with the theme “Endless Celebrations” emphasizing 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).

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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CAPTIONS:

Dinner.jpg: Dato' Sri Maznah Mazlan - Deputy Chairman of Tourism Malaysia receives the honorable visit of H.E. U Htay Aung (Middle front row) - Union Minister of Hotels and Tourism, Ministry of Hotels and Tourism of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and Dr. Tin Shwe (Right) - Deputy Minister for Hotels and Tourism of Myanmar at the Malaysia Gala Dinner to launch Malaysia Year of Festivals 2015.

Dinner 2.jpg: Dato' Sri Maznah Mazlan - Deputy Chairman of Tourism Malaysia beats the drum to launch MyFest 2015 tourism campaign accompanied by Dato' Mirza Mohammad Taiyab (Left) - Director General of Tourism Malaysia, H.E. Dato' Dr. Ahmad Faisal Muhammad (Right) - Ambassador of Malaysia to Myanmar, and Mr. Syed Yahya Syed Othman (Second Right) - Director of International Promotion (Southeast Asia) Tourism Malaysia.

Media 1.jpg: Dato' Mirza Mohammad Taiyab (centre) presented Tourism Malaysia campaign MyFest 2015 to all members of media during the press conference at ATF 2015 on January 28, 2015.



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