



PRESS RELEASE

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ASEAN-CHINA PARTNERSHIP VITAL TO BOOST REGIONAL TOURISM

CHENGDU, CHINA, 19 Sept 2014: ASEAN-China tourism is poised to flourish further with attractive tourism products, facilitation of travel, proper education and training of tour guides and managers as well as the utilisation of social media for tourism promotions.

This was the message delivered by the Chairman of Tourism Malaysia Tan Sri Dato' Seri Dr. Ng Yen Yen at the 9th Conference on ASEAN-China People to People Friendship in Chengdu, China, today.

Tan Sri Ng's keynote address on the topic of "Prospects on ASEAN-China Tourism Relations" addressed the importance of enhancing China-ASEAN collaborations and networking to boost regional tourism.

In 2013, China outbound tourists numbered 98 million, with projections it will breach the 100 million mark this year. By 2020, it is estimated that there will be over 200 million Chinese outbound travellers.

In 2013, Chinese tourists spending were about RMB 500 billion, this number is expected to triple to reach RMB 1.4 trillion by 2020. With ASEAN receiving over 10 percent share of all Chinese outbound travellers in 2013, and being within close proximity, few cultural barriers, low cost of travel and with abundance of travel resources on offer, the region is poised to benefit from this growth in China.

China is among Malaysia's top tourist markets, contributing 1.8 million arrivals to the country last year.

During her visit to China, Tan Sri Ng took the opportunity to host a networking lunch for China's top tourism trade members to discuss tourism strategies to boost China arrivals to Malaysia. Among the guests were Mr. Mian Wumian, Deputy Director of Tourism Administration of Sichuan Province, and Mr. He Yudong, Vice Director Chengdu Municipal Tourism Administration.



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Tan Sri Ng also announced that the working visit had successfully initiated charter flight operations between Chengdu and Penang that would begin on 30 September. The charter flight operations, organised by Chengdu Overseas Travel Co. Ltd., will operate six weekly flights via China Eastern Airlines with an expected capacity of 154 passengers per flight.

This initiative is in line with the Government's aim to enhance medium-haul connectivity, which is among the Entry Point Projects (EPP) identified under the Tourism National Key Economic Area expected to rev up Malaysia's tourism industry.

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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 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 is celebrating its fourth **VISIT MALAYSIA YEAR (VMY)** in 2014 with the theme "Celebrating 1Malaysia Truly Asia". The VMY 2014 promotional campaign has started in 2013 with a series of year-long special events and activities leading to VMY 2014. It will contribute to the Government's target to receive 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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