



PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Inaugural Charter Flight Chengdu-Penang Eyeing 6,000 China's tourists for the first six-month

Penang, 1 October 2014: A total of 150 Chinese tourists from Chengdu, China arrived in Penang Bayan Lepas International Airport on a charter flight at the wee hours in the morning, to begin their 7 days 5 nights' tour in Penang and Langkawi. They will indulge in Malaysia best's experience by visiting places of interest as well as savour's their taste bud with Malaysian local delicacies.

The Chengdu-Penang charter flights service, is a result from Malaysia participation in the 9th Conference on ASEAN-China People to People Friendship in Chengdu last month. 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.

Tourism Malaysia supported this programme by providing support in terms of promotions in China. The charter flight operations, is jointly organised by YC Travel & Tour Sdn. Bhd., Chengdu Autumn Private Limited and China Eastern Airlines. This charter flight will operate six weekly flights with an expected capacity of 154 passengers per flight. This consortium plans to bring 39 charter flights with total capacity of 6,000 passengers from 1 October till 31 March 2015.

The Deputy Director General of Tourism Malaysia (Promotion) Y.bhg, Dato' Haji Azizan Noordin was present during the welcome reception held at the airport to receive the first batch of arrival. Among other attendees that were presence during this reception are the Director of International Promotion, North and East Asia Division of Tourism Malaysia, En. Nor Aznan Sulaiman, State Director of Tourism Malaysia Penang, En. Harun Pilus and Group Managing Director of YC Travel & Tours Group Mr. Choong Hin Heong.

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. China is among Malaysia's top tourist markets, contributing 1.8 million arrivals to the country last year with total receipts of 5.5 million.

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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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