



## MEDIA RELEASE

### MALAYSIA'S TOURISM OUTLOOK

Malaysia's tourism sector posted 22.4 million arrivals up until November last year, an increase of 4.4% over the same period in 2009.

Leading tourist generating markets were Singapore (11,967,394), Indonesia (2,240,778), Thailand (1,342,399), China (including Hong Kong and Macau) (1,026,276), Brunei (995,014), India (635,190), Australia (532,100), the Philippines (446,415), the United Kingdom (401,059) and Japan (383,091).

In terms of growth, the top five markets were India (20.9%), South Korea (17.5%), United Arab Emirates (15.4%), Iran (14.6%), and Saudi Arabia and Turkey (13%).

With the anticipated surge in year-end travel by those escaping the cold winter season – several charter flights commenced operations since December from medium and long-haul markets – Malaysia looks set to achieve its target of 24 million tourist arrivals for 2010.

The expectations are high since Malaysia, recognized as one of the world's leading tourism destination, made it into the 2009 top ten countries with the highest international tourist arrivals. Malaysia was also in the top 15 countries in terms of global tourism receipts.

This year, the target for tourist arrivals has been set at 25 million. Efforts will be focused on attracting high yield tourists from selected medium and long haul destinations while maintaining growth for arrivals from ASEAN member countries.

Tourism has been identified as one of the key industries that will contribute to the achievement of the Malaysian government's economic transformation programme to become a high income nation. Income from tourism activities is expected to grow from RM36.9 billion in 2009 in GNI to RM103.6 billion in GNI by 2020.

Malaysia will be positioned as a choice destination for affordable luxury, nature adventure, family fun, event, entertainment, spa and sports and business tourism.

Towards this end, the government has pushed for tax exemptions on a wider variety of goods to position Malaysia as a Duty Free Shopping Destination – tax on about 400 imported goods valued at over RM200 have been waived since 1<sup>st</sup> January 2011.

In addition, the government is encouraging private sector participation in realizing the many tourism projects under the economic transformation plan, including the organising of more international events, the establishment of dedicated entertainment zones, the building of more hotels, and the development of the spa and wellness industry.

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