



MEDIA RELEASE

MALAYSIAN DELEGATES MAKE CONTACTS AND EXPLORE BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES AT ATF TRAVEX 2012

Tourism Malaysia made more than 120 appointments with international buyers at the ASEAN Tourism Forum Travel Exchange (ATF TRAVEX) 2012 in Manado, Indonesia, recently.

Acting Director-General of Tourism Malaysia, YBhg. Dato' Haji Azizan Noordin, said the tourism representatives from among buyers representing 51 countries wanted to expand tour packages selling Malaysia to the world.

He said members of the international media also came to the Tourism Malaysia booth to obtain information on new products and events in Malaysia to promote them in their home countries.

He said buyers were generally interested in updates of new tourism products, services and events.

"We want them to promote and sell more tour packages on Malaysia's new tourism products and create more creative packages in conjunction with our events," he said.

Dato' Haji Azizan said an investor representing a foreign hotel chain had also dropped by the Tourism Malaysia booth to get advice on the possibility of establishing a hotel in Malaysia.

The ATF TRAVEX 2012 was an effective platform for members of the Malaysian delegation to raise awareness among international delegates and media on the many new and exciting tourism products, services and events in the country.

The TRAVEX, an important component of ATF, is the longest-running annual ASEAN leisure travel trade event, showcasing the largest contingent of ASEAN sellers. The key component of the 3-day event was the travel trade-only exhibition and business meetings. It serves as a dedicated platform for travel and tourism suppliers in ASEAN to explore business opportunities with international buyers and vice versa.

Led by the Minister of Tourism, YB Dato' Sri Dr. Ng Yen Yen, the Malaysian delegation, comprising 54 sellers from hotels and resorts, tour agencies and state tourism boards

(Sabah Tourism Board, Penang Global Tourism and the Langkawi Development Authority) wooed international buyers at the ATF TRAVEX, which took place at the Golden Kawanua Exhibition Hall, from 13 to 15 January 2012.

This year, delegates at ATF TRAVEX included 920 exhibitors with 438 booths, representing 390 companies & properties from 10 ASEAN countries. There were 390 international buyers representing 51 countries, as well as a total of 103 media from 36 countries.

Dato' Haji Azizan said ATF TRAVEX offered an excellent platform to make contacts and explore business opportunities with sellers getting to strengthen business relationships with existing accounts, seek prospective clients, create product awareness and drive business volume.

For buyers, it is an excellent platform to meet with ASEAN suppliers and source new products.

He said among the events that Malaysia will focus on this year are the Malaysia International Shoe Festival (6-8 April), the Malaysia Tourism Floral Parade 2012: Magic of the Night (30 June - 08 July), the PATA Annual Conference (19-22 April), and the Malaysia International Tourism Exchange (MITE) (31 May - 3 June).

Organised by PATA, and hosted by Tourism Malaysia, the 2012 PATA Annual Conference, which is scheduled to be held at the Royale Chulan Kuala Lumpur, will address the theme "Building the Business Beyond Profits".

"The conference will feature some of Asia's more conscientious entrepreneurs sharing their successful social entrepreneurship business models and principles."

It is hoped that the conference will deliver a tangible business-focused forum with strong advocacy on corporate social responsibility to support a sustainable mission.

MITE 2012 is another important event heavily promoted by the Ministry of Tourism Malaysia this year. The event, scheduled to take place at the Malaysia Agro-Exposition Park Serdang, is targeted to attract 1,500 exhibitors and 600,000 visitors internationally and from the ASEAN region. It will be one of the largest gathering of tourism related industries and the biggest tourism consumer and trade show in the region.

The event will provide a wide spectrum of marketing tourism services and build up a good network of business contacts for the trade. It also offers an excellent opportunity to tourism industry players to showcase their tourism potential and market products.

The Malaysia Tourism Floral Parade 2012: Magic of the Night is a unique tourism product to showcase tourism attractions of various ASEAN countries. It is held in

conjunction with the National Floral Festival in Putrajaya, showcasing spectacular display of lighted flotillas for nine nights.

The event is an effort to promote intra-ASEAN tourism. YB Dato' Sri Dr. Ng supported the 'ASEAN for ASEAN' initiative and emphasised on the importance of ASEAN countries working together to jointly promote each other as attractive tourist destinations.

OTHER EFFORTS TO PROMOTE MALAYSIA AT ATF 2012:

Besides TRAVEX, the ASEAN Tourism Forum 2012 also offered Malaysian delegation various effective avenues to promote the country's new tourism products, services and events to international delegates and media.

As usual, ATF combines business appointments, an education component and numerous social functions for delegates, besides the Ministerial activities for ASEAN Tourism Ministers and various meetings for NTOs.

During the Meeting of the ASEAN Tourism Ministers on 11 January, Malaysia's Tourism Minister delivered a presentation on the Malaysia Tourism Floral Parade 2012: Magic of the Night and MITE 2012, after which an invitation was extended to her ASEAN counterparts to participate in both events.

"Such cooperation will see the forging of stronger ties among ASEAN countries in an effort to build a worldwide recognition of ASEAN as a tourism destination," YB Dato' Sri Dr. Ng explained.

In Manado, the Tourism Minister paid a courtesy call on Indonesia's Minister of Tourism and Creative Economy, H.E. Dr. Mari Elka Pangestu. She also met with the Governor of North Sulawesi, Indonesia, Dr. S.H. Sarundajang, to explore the possibility of forging closer tourism cooperation between North Sulawesi and Malaysia.

Malaysia's participation in ATF 2012 has received extensive news coverage, both in Malaysia and Manado. Through interviews with YB Dato' Sri Dr. Ng, the Malaysian press (BERNAMA, Utusan Malaysia and TV3) reported on various issues and updates.

The Indonesian press has also given Malaysia's Tourism Minister favourable coverage. Besides that, an interview with ASEAN TV, a free-to-air TV channel from Thailand and also a media partner for ATF 2012, has also been conducted.

Tourism Malaysia continued its promotional efforts in Manado by hosting a business luncheon for buyers and media on 14 January at the Grand Kawanua Convention Centre, Novotel Manado Golf Resort.

It received overwhelming response with over 500 delegates, anticipating the presentation by Malaysia's Tourism Minister, entitled "A Million Experiences to Share". Among others, she highlighted the performance of Malaysia's tourism industry, its latest developments, new tourism products and services, as well as significant events in 2012.

For its outstanding hospitality service, Tourism Malaysia received a Certificate of Appreciation from the Minister of Tourism and Creative Economy, Indonesia. It was one of the seven recipients of the certificate as a token of appreciation to organisations that had hosted a luncheon or dinner during ATF 2012.

Another presentation was delivered by the Acting Director General of Tourism Malaysia at the NTO Media Briefing on 15 January at the Function Room of the Golden Kawanua Exhibition Hall. The 45-minute briefing enjoyed favourable attendance as well with some 55 international media members.

He highlighted Tourism Malaysia's strategic direction in 2012 and new tourism products such as the Johor Premium Outlets, Legoland, Pinewood Iskandar Malaysia Studios, KL Citywalk, duty-free shopping, and MITE 2012.

In brief, Malaysia's participation in the ASEAN Tourism Forum 2012 in Manado, Indonesia, has been fruitful as it has opened up various opportunities with local travel agents. It is a new market that will be looked into.

Malaysia seeks to promote education tourism, leisure, medical tourism, and business tourism in Manado and Makassar. Looking at the geographical location of these markets, there's a potential for expansion and to get more support from the local agents.

The 2013 ASEAN Tourism Forum will be convened in Vientiane, Lao PDR from 17 - 24 January, with the theme "ASEAN: Hand in Hand, Conquering our Future".

Malaysia has been confirmed as the host of ATF 2014.

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/>

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