

**Malaysia to woo more Sri Lanka visitors**  
**Malaysiakini.com**  
**Feb 26, 2007**

Malaysia plans to attract a third more visitors from Sri Lanka this year as part of their nationwide events to celebrate 50 years of independence, said Tourism Minister Tengku Adnan today.

"Our government aims to attract 20.1 million tourists this year, earning us US\$10.8 billion, as part of our 50th anniversary celebrations," Malaysia's Tourism Minister Tengku Adnan told reporters in Sri Lanka.

He said Malaysia hoped that 27,000 of those visitors will be from Sri Lanka.

The minister said 20,200 Sri Lankans toured Malaysia last year.

The number of Malaysians visiting Sri Lanka fell 16.1 percent to 11,578 last year, amidst travel advisories from Western countries asking their citizens to stay away from the island due to escalating Tamil separatist violence.

Fighting between troops and Tamil Tiger rebels has led to a sharp decline in bookings during the winter season last year, which is the peak time for the leisure industry here.

Sri Lanka has lowered its forecast for tourism arrivals by 20 percent to 543,877 this year.

Sri Lanka's 26-billion dollar economy earned 380.3 million dollars from tourism between January and October last year, retaining its place as one of the main foreign currency earners behind clothing, remittances and tea.

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Source : <http://www.malaysiakini.com/news/63787>