

10MP: Tourism to hit world top 10 in revenue
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For the first time ever, the tourism industry has been included in the country's Five-Year Plan as a major economic player, said Tourism Minister Ng Yen Yen.

NONENg (right) said this was because the government had now realised the importance of the tourism industry to the country's economic development.

"Previously, the tourism industry was ranked only as a minor player in Malaysia's economic development," she said after meeting with the chairman of China National Tourism Administration, Shao Qiwei, here, today.

According to the 10th Malaysia Plan report, Malaysia targets to improve its position to be among the top 10 countries, in terms of global tourism receipts in 2015.

Ng said the tourism industry contributed nine per cent to the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) last year by generating RM1 billion in revenue per week.

"With the implementation of the liberalisation policy by the government, the industry can achieve greater development for many tourism-related industries," said Ng who is on a four-day working trip to Guangzhou and Zhengzhou in China.

She said as the Chinese government had also included the tourism industry as an economic pillar, she believed that China as a major partner for Malaysia in this sector, could bring further development to the industry.

China major partner

She also suggested that China and Malaysia set up a task force to study the possibility of collaborating in providing tourism services through mobile phones.

Meanwhile, Shao said the Chinese government would continue to encourage people in the country to travel abroad.

"However, we should not only focus on two-way traffic in tourist arrivals but to also look at the bigger picture," he said, adding that tourism had turned into a modern service industry which also brought development to many other sectors.

Shao said the China-Asean Free Trade Agreement (FTA) also helped to promote tourism with Asean countries.

sabah tourism poster turtles
Later, when delivering her keynote address at the International Mayors Forum on Tourism (IMFT) in Henan, Ng said Kuala Lumpur was a significant example of a tourism city with its modern infrastructure and variety of entertainment.

"We believe that tourism does not discourage environmental protection. In fact, tourism helps to protect eco-balance in the city," she added.

The First IMFT was held in Zhengzhou, Henan Province in April 2008.

The second IMFT, with the theme, "Tourism for Better City Life", has attracted the

participation of more than 50 cities.

Ng, who represented Malaysia, was the only representative invited to give a keynote address at the event.

- Bernama

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