

Yen Yen's travel bills hit RM3.25mil
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Tourism Minister Ng Yen Yen has spent RM3.25 million on overseas trips since she was appointed last year.

NONE In a written reply to Pandan BN parliamentarian Ong Tee Keat (left), the ministry said it had spent RM1.67 million on Ng's official overseas trips last year, and RM1.58 million between January and October this year.

"Since the appointment, the tourism minister has been on 16 visits overseas. These visits include 26 countries and 61 cities up to October 2010," stated the written reply.

The reply said that the ministry's promotional activities abroad has helped to expand the country's tourism industry.

"According to a report by the United Nations' World Tourism Organisation the number of tourists travelling last year recorded a decrease of 4.2 percent while the world tourism industry also suffered a decline of 5.7 percent in revenue.

"Due to the declining trend in the tourism industry and to attract tourists to come to Malaysia, we needed to aggressively promote our country," it further read.

NONE Moreover, Ng's (right) travels elevated Malaysia's standing in the "most popularly visited countries" in 2009 from its previous 11th spot to ninth placing.

"This is a big achievement as we were placed 11th in 2008 and only two Asian countries made it into the list, which are Malaysia and China," said the reply.

"As a result of these efforts, the number of tourists to Malaysia has increased 5.2 percent to 16.18 million people from January to August this year, compared to the same period in 2009 where there were only 15.38 million.

"In fact, in 2009, the total number of tourists also increased 7.2 percent to 23.65 million people compared to 2008 where there were only 22.05 million visitors," stated the ministry.

Spelling boo-boos in tourism brochures

Meanwhile, two DAP MPs said that they shocked at the tourism ministry for distributing promotional brochures full of spelling and grammatical errors at the Malaysia Pavilion of the Shanghai World Expo 2010.

Rasah MP Anthony Loke and Seputeh MP Teresa Kok, disappointed at the ministry's lackadaisical attitude, urged the ministry to look into the matter or recall the brochures and correct the mistakes.

NONE "The exhibition in Shangai was attended by tourists from various countries and each visitor who came to visit Malaysia's booth at the exhibition was given this brochure," said Loke.

"How can these brochures intended for international tourists have such glaring mistakes,

when the purpose of the brochures is to promote our country. It gives our country a bad image, even more so for the tourism ministry," Loke said at a press conference at the parliament lobby.

There were 12 spelling errors highlighted by the MPs of simple words such as 'city' which was spelled 'ctry', 'multicultural' which was spelled as 'nulticultural' and 'invite' which was spelled as 'incite'.

Other spelling errors in the brochure include the word 'development' which was spelled as 'decelopment' and 'visitors' which was wrongly spelled as 'visitious'.

Loke said in disbelief that he was shocked that the Tourism Ministry had authorised the brochures without having an official proof-read them before printing.

NONE"This is embarrassing, even 'beautiful' is spelled as 'beautuful', while a sentence describing the golf courses in Malaysia invites golfers to tee off at exotic 'locationgs' instead of 'locations'," added Loke.

This is not the first time the Shanghai World Expo, which is held from May until Oct 31, made headlines for the wrong reasons.

It was reported previously that the roof in the pavilion was leaking during the expo. The ministry has since said in a reply early this month said it had instructed its contractor to take remedial measures.

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