

Malaysia's Tourism Sector Must Be Developed To Face Competition, Says Muhyiddin
Bernama
July 06, 2012
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NUSA DUA (BALI), July 6 (Bernama) -- Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin said the development of Malaysia's tourism sector must be intensified to face strong competition from countries in the region.

The Malaysian Deputy Prime Minister said Malaysia's success in achieving the ninth position in the world in terms of foreign tourist arrivals last year must be accompanied by hard work to raise its achievements in the years to come.

This was because the other countries were also focusing on the development of the sector as one of the major contributors to their national economy.

"The tourism sector has a significant impact on the economy and living standards of the people. In this context, Malaysia cannot be an exception (in raising competition)," he told the Malaysian media here.

Muhyiddin, who is on a six-day visit to Indonesia, had earlier attended a briefing on tourism by the Bali Tourism Board, given by its director, Ida Bagus Kade Subhiksu.

The Malaysian tourism sector is now the seventh biggest contributor to the national economy and last year, 24 million tourists had visited Malaysia and had spent a total of RM58.3 billion.

Muhyiddin said the development of the Malaysian tourism sector must be based on the National Key Economic Area (NKEA), which targeted an increase in the duration of stay and total expenditure by the tourists.

The focus is on 13 initial projects which had been outlined under the National Tourism Transformation Plan which included affordable luxury, family fun, nature adventure, business tourism and the organising of international events such as sports.

Under the Economic Transformation Plan, the Malaysian tourism industry is expected to contribute RM103.6 billion to gross national revenue with a target of 36 million tourists in the year 2020.

The Deputy Prime Minister said Malaysia could emulate the progress achieved by other countries in the tourism sector such as the development by the Bali Tourism Board.

Based on the data up to May this year, Bali had received 70,000 tourists from Malaysia out of the total of 1.3 million tourists for the period.

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