

**More Visa Centres Will Boost Tourist Arrivals From India, Says Tourism Malaysia  
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By Saraswathi Muniappan**

NEW DELHI, Jan 18 (Bernama) -- Tourism Malaysia is optimistic that opening up more visa centres in India will boost Indian tourist arrivals in Malaysia, its Director for International Marketing Division (South Asia/West Asia/Africa), Zulkifly Md Said said.

The move would enable Tourism Malaysia to woo more tourists, especially from second and third tier cities, which are not reachable by current centres, he said.

"We welcome any expansion of visa facilitation services in India from what they have now, particularly in areas where they have a good number of visa applicants," he told Bernama today.

Zulkifly, who is here for the South Asia Tour and Travel Exchange Exhibition, was asked to comment on plans by the government to open more visa centres in India.

During his visit to New Delhi last month, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak announced that Malaysia was looking into increasing the number of visa issuance centres in India to attract more tourists.

Currently, there are five centres, namely New Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai, Calcutta and Hyderabad.

Asked whether Tourism Malaysia has any specific preferences, Zulkifly said: "We are looking at the southern cities, particularly where our airlines are flying such as Trichy and Cochin."

He said India was an attractive market with myriad of travel needs.

There are good demand for luxury travels, weddings and golf tourism, among others, he said.

Tourism Malaysia aims to attract 780,000 Indians to visit the country in 2013/2014, up from 700,000 visitors expected as of fiscal year ending March 2013.

As of September 2012, a total of 514,926 Indians visited Malaysia, while in 2011, the figure was 501,828.

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