

Korea Chooses Malaysia for Pilot Project Of ASEAN Homestay Programme
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SEPANG, Dec 30 (Bernama) -- Malaysia has become the first country selected by the ASEAN-Korea Centre (AKC) for a pilot project, ASEAN Homestay Programme.

This follows the country's progress in the homestay industry, as compared to the other developing countries.

AKC Secretary-General Kim Young-sun said the selection was also due to the Malaysia Standard Homestay Malaysia having been adopted in 2014, by all ASEAN countries as the ASEAN Homestay Standard.

"I can say that Malaysia is a good example as a success story of the homestay industry in this region...so, that's why we are here today," he told the media after the official launch of the ASEAN Homestay Programme, 'Youth Fostering Sustainable Tourism Development' here Wednesday.

The eight-day ASEAN Homestay Programme beginning Dec 28, is jointly organised by AKC and the tourism and culture ministry in Selangor.

While staying with foster families in rural parts of Malaysia, 21 Korean university students will participate in various activities, including experiencing local cultures, traditional lifestyles and volunteer activities in Banghuris Homestay and Sungai Sireh Homestay.

The programme is designed to provide a stage for Korean students majoring in tourism or Asian studies to accumulate understanding on 'Community-based Tourism' through hands-on experience related to local culture, environment conservation and sustainable tourism policy development for the first time since the establishment of the AKC in 2009.

Meanwhile, Tourism and Culture Deputy Minister Datuk Mas Ermieyati Samsudin said between January and September this year, homestay segment contributed an increase in revenue of 10.8 per cent to RM19.87 million as compared to the same period last year.

"Homestay segment also currently contributed one per cent to the overall of tourism revenue in the country," she said.

Mas Ermieyati said Korea was among the countries with potential for the local tourism industry and as such, homestay operators should intensify efforts to promote their homestays.

"The industry can help rural people, especially, to earn additional income, including for their businesses like handicraft and traditional food and beverage products," she added.

In addition, she said the homestay segment had big potential in providing job opportunities to young people in the rural areas, thus reducing the rate of migration of rural residents to the capital.

As of September this year, the total number of homestays in the country amounted to 181 programmes, 3,653 houses and 5,056 rooms provided to international tourists.

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