

2M VISITORS WELCOMED IN PHILIPPINES



During the first half of this year, more than 2 million tourists visited the Philippines. This was reported by the presidential palace that used figures from the Department of Tourism.

Abigail Valte, the deputy presidential spokesperson, in a recent interview said that it was very good news to have 2.14 million foreign tourist visiting Philippines between January and June 2012. **By this year's end, the Philippines local tourism industry targets to receive 4.6 million tourists.** 3.92 million tourists visited the country in 2011 and the Department of Tourism announced a plan to increase the annual tourist arrivals to 10 million by 2016.'

The government of Philippines has been working tirelessly to improve its image as the best destination for travelers. In January, it launched the "It's More Fun in the Philippines" tourist campaign and released two commercials that were aired over international cable channels.

Ms. Valte also said that in addition to increasing the number of inbound tourists the country was sustaining a good number of visitors from its leading markets. **She also pointed out that most travelers to the Philippines came from China, South Korea, USA, and Taiwan.**

Based on the National Statistical Office (NSO) Survey of Tourism Establishments in the Philippines (STEP) carried out in 2009, Philippines had 21,837 establishments that were engaged in tourism and earned the total revenue of 12.59 billion USD. According to Ms. Valte tourism is vital for the country's economy as every tourist arrival meant livelihood not only to Filipinos in resorts and hotels, but also to those in other industries.

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