

MEXICO: TOURISM NUMBERS DROPPED



Tourism industry in Mexico is harshly affected by the current economic environment. The country welcomed 700,000 fewer tourists in the first six months of 2009 than last year.

Mexico's economy is currently suffering because of multiple reasons. The biggest two are the global economic crisis and of course the outbreak of the swine flu. According to the INEGI (National Institute of Statistics and Geography), the **Mexican Gross Domestic Product dropped by 10.3 per cent between April and June** when compared to the same period last year. In the first quarter the country's GDP dropped 8.2 per cent.

The decline is mostly caused by the poor performances of industries and services that are tied to demand from the U.S. The recovery of Mexican economy therefore depends on the recovery of U.S. economy.

The Mexican tourism industry has been also affected by both the crisis and the swine flu. Due to the situation, fewer Americans visited Mexico. Last year, 3.35 million Americans traveled to the country between January and June. This year, however, **the number of arrivals dropped to 2.85 million** during the same period. During the first six months of this year a total of 4.61 million foreign tourists visited the country but in 2008 there were 5.24 million foreigners coming to Mexico during the same period.

In 2008, some 22.6 million foreign tourists visited Mexico, 80 per cent of them were from the U.S. and Canada. The tourism generated revenue was \$13.29 billion. During the first half of 2009, tourism industry generated only \$6 billion, which is a 17 per cent decline when compared with the same period the year before. Also in the first half of this year only 62 per cent of all tourists were Americans. The other most important source markets, after the U.S., were Canada, the UK, France and Spain respectively. Officials expect this year's income from tourism to be down 30 per cent when compared to 2008 numbers.

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