

# RÍO CARNIVAL TO ATTRACT 1 MILLION TOURISTS



Some 5 million people are expected to celebrate this year's Río carnival with 505 processions and 650 scheduled parades. 11 ships will dock at the port of Río on February 7, Carnival Sunday, which is a record number for that date.

Between February 6 and 9, Río de Janeiro should receive about **1 million inbound tourists who will contribute about US\$740 million to the economy of the city**, according to the city's Tourism Secretary, Antonio Pedro Figueira de Mello. He announced these estimates during the presentation of the operational plan for the annual street carnival.

Brazil is currently in the midst of its worst recession in two decades and any boost to the economy is welcome. According to the secretary, about 5 million visitors should come to enjoy the Río carnival in 505 processions and 650 scheduled parades.

"These are huge numbers. It's a sign of a strong carnival, injecting funds into the economy at a difficult time in Brazil."

The Hotel Association of Río de Janeiro estimates that 85% of the rooms will be occupied, a percentage similar to 2015 (84%). **This year, the city has 15,000 more beds available than last year.**

The Municipal Health Department will provide two first-aid centres in Copacabana, one in Ipanema and two in the downtown area of the city, with health professionals and beds to treat the visitors. Last year, 765 people were treated with medical problems.

This year however Brazilian health experts warned that the carnival might worsen the spread of the Zika virus, which is a mosquito-borne disease. Visitors are probably not likely to wear protective clothing on the carnival street parties, which will make them vulnerable to insect bites. Pregnant women are currently advised not to travel to the virus-hit regions.

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