

NO NEWS ABOUT NICARAGUAN TOURISM - 9 MONTHS WITHOUT STATISTICS



The Central Bank of Nicaragua (BCN), which generally releases the Nicaraguan tourism statistics in advance, has been falling behind throughout 2019, meaning that the full impact of the economic recession that the tourism industry is experiencing remains unknown.

After reporting a downturn back in 2018, Daniel Ortega's regime keeps the current state of the tourism industry a secret, despite the fact that officers of the Nicaraguan Tourism Institute (INTUR) have been on international tours or promoting tourism campaigns for months.

Carlos Schütze, president of the Association of Travel Agencies and vice president of the National Chamber of Tourism (CANATUR), said he “does not know” **why tourism statistics have not been released so far, which creates greater uncertainty in the industry.**

“We do not know, in this case, what the strategy is and why they did not release them, but it should be published because that [only] creates more uncertainty,” Schütze said.

The vice president of CANATUR said that the country expects about 600,000 tourists and 600 million US dollars in foreign revenues this year.

“There is some [degree of] business and low-budget tourism that has begun to show up, which has increased a bit, and we are no longer in an open conflict, it is calmer [now], and that should favor us,” he added.

In 2018, Nicaraguan tourism revenue was 544.4 million US dollars, lower than the 840.5 million of 2017, which translates in a 35.22% decrease.

According to the 2019-2022 Medium-term Expenditure Framework of the Nicaraguan Tourism Institute, the country expects to generate 588 million US dollars in tourism revenue in 2019.

For his part, Leonardo Torres, president of the Nicaraguan Chamber of Micro, Small and Medium Tourism Enterprises, and a member of the board of directors of the Central Bank, said that these statistics will be published soon.

“We are asking that these numbers are published, we are asking to be given the figures of the tourism satellite account, and any other statistic that is needed; meanwhile, we are working [on] preliminary [figures of] tourism movements, both those who enter through the airport and those who enter by land,” he said.

So far, it is unknown what the average expenditure and stay of tourists have been, the number of travelers that have flown into the country, and from which countries they come from.

The only thing that is known is that in terms of tourism revenue, 113.1 million US dollars were generated in the first quarter of this year, 256.3 million fewer than over the same period of 2018, dropping by 56%.

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