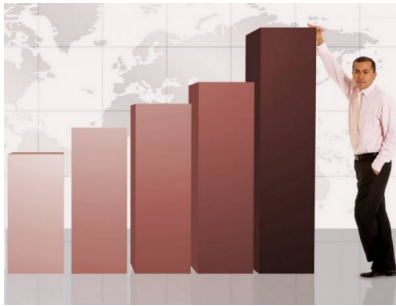


BRUNEI TOURISM: GREAT ACHIEVEMENTS



The tourism of Brunei, a state located on the north coast of Borneo, in Southeast Asia, achieves impressive progress. The number of visitors coming here by air has reached 178,540 last year, which is a 12.9 % increase compared with the year before. The growth has definitely exceeded the country's targeted 7 % increase and it also exceeds the regional as well as the world's pace of growth in the industry.

Tourism has generated USD93 million in direct tourism revenue. This makes the tourism industry an important earner and employer for the country. Besides the growing number of travelers coming by air, the cruise tourism also increases. The number of ships that have stopped at Brunei has grown from 4 in 2006 to 24 in 2007. It is expected that this year the number will reach 30. Brunei's officials are very optimistic about the future of their tourism industry.

Tourism was also discussed on the 5th Tourism Ministerial Meeting of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) that took place in Peru's capital city Lima at the beginning of April 2008. The delegates talked about how to increase mobility of visitors as well as about the importance of the industry for economic and social development. Transportation and air connectivity were also among the discussed topics. Brunei has highlighted its plans for environment protection. It will not only protect rainforest habitats but the plan is also to develop indigenous communities through ecotourism and other sustainable economic activities. According to Brunei's representatives, the tourism industry has not only a great earning and employing power, but it also helps to attract foreign direct investments. Another positive is that the industry gives people of Brunei the possibility to become entrepreneurs.

Brunei wants to be the host to the 33rd meeting of the APEC Tourism Working Group from 1st to 2nd December 2008, during which progress on issues discussed in Lima will be reported.

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