

THAILAND ALLOCATES OVER 16 MILLION DOLLARS TO TOURISM PROMOTION



Thailand is set to dedicate 600 million baht, equivalent to US\$16.5 million, towards promoting its tourism industry during the peak season. The Minister of Tourism and Sports, Sudawan Wangsuphajakjokol, has announced that the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) will receive this budget for their promotions.

The tourism promotion will run from the fourth quarter of 2023 until the first quarter of 2024. The major projects the budget will cover include "Amazing Thailand Passport Privileges," which requires 150 million baht to promote Thailand as a preferred shopping destination. **Another 150 million baht will be allocated to marketing campaigns on all international markets.**

The Thailand Festival Experience project, which promotes major festivals in five regions, will receive around 200 million baht. The rest of the budget will go to the "The Link-Local to Global" campaign, which encourages inter-regional travel.

According to Sudawan, these projects can be associated with several significant festivals during the peak season, such as the Festival of Lights, Loy Krathong (in November), the New Year's countdown, and the Chinese New Year. The project could extend to the Songkran Thai New Year holiday in April next year. Sudawan mentioned that the proposal has already been submitted to the government secretariat but is yet to receive approval.

Regarding the digital wallet program, the Ministry has discussed allocating some aid for tourism promotion. **For example, users could spend 3,000 baht to travel to a second-tier city.**

Sudawan mentioned that the Ministry is in talks with other ministries and relevant organizations to explore the possibility of expanding the visa-free regime, which is currently applicable to Chinese and Kazakh travelers, to other countries. The minister also added that the government could consider extending the duration of stay for specific markets from the current 30-day limit to 45-90 days, especially for Russians and Europeans, who are already eligible for visa-free visits.

Discussions include creating joint tourism promotion with airlines and extending entertainment venue hours in Chiang Mai, Bangkok, and Phuket.

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