

# TAIWAN LACKS MAINLAND TOURISTS DUE TO RECENT DECISION



Taiwan authorities have announced that no mainland tourist groups will visit Taiwan this year. However, this statement has not been well received by tourism industry operators on the island, who express dissatisfaction with the government's decision.

Due to this decision, they argue that the government's goal of having "one million mainland tourists to Taiwan within the year" will be delayed. It was based on political calculations and ignored people's livelihoods.

Gao Mingfu, chairman of the Pinglin District Business District Development Association of New Taipei City, expressed disappointment with this decision. **Millions of mainland tourists come to Taiwan every year, bringing substantial business opportunities.** Due to the lack of mainland tourists, many small shops have closed. Hotels and B&Bs have low customer flow and can only maintain operations by imposing high prices during the holidays. As a result, the occupancy rate has dropped sharply, and small and medium-sized businesses have been deeply affected.

According to statistics, tourist hotels on the island had a lower occupancy rate of 59.06% from January to July this year, compared to 66.69% in the same period in 2019. Industry officials have stated that the low occupancy rate is mainly due to the slow recovery of inbound tourists and the lack of mainland tourists.

Xiao Boren, the Taiwan Travel Business Association chairman, stated that mainland tourists provided the highest output value to Taiwan from 2008 to 2016. However, after the COVID-19 pandemic, Taiwan opened up to tourists from other regions, but the overall output value is "barely a fraction of that brought by mainland tourists."

Local media in Taiwan report that **tourism industry business operators have lost hope of cross-strait tourism returning soon.** The industry has been repeatedly hit by "tsunamis" since the pandemic's start, and Taiwan's authorities have not provided any positive news or updates to support the industry's recovery.

Experts hope group tours will resume and relevant sightseeing and tourism exchanges will gradually resume in a healthy and orderly manner. However, given the current situation, this is almost impossible.

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