

Stats Dept: Covid-19 pandemic slashed Malaysia's 2020 tourist arrivals by 83.4 pct, worst drop in history

KUALA LUMPUR (Sept 23): The Covid-19 pandemic resulted in an 83.4 per cent decrease in inbound tourist arrivals to the country in 2020 from the previous year, said the Department of Statistics Malaysia.

Chief statistician Datuk Seri Dr Mohd Uzir Mahidin said that the number of tourists arriving into Malaysia in 2020 was 4.3 million, as compared to the 26.1 million people who visited the country in 2019.

"The world faced an unprecedented health, social and economic emergency as a result of the Covid-19 outbreak. Tourism was among the most affected sectors due to disruptions in demand as a result of travel restrictions and the closure of the international borders by most countries.

"The fall was the worst ever recorded in the country's tourism history, though Malaysia experienced a plummeting of 20.4 per cent in 2003 due to Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS)," he said.

He added that the UNWTO World Tourism Barometer showed that tourist arrivals worldwide also saw a massive drop, at 399 million people in 2020 as compared to 1.47 billion people in 2019, a decrease of 74 per cent.

"The Asean region was also affected by the Covid-19 pandemic. All countries in the region posted negative double-digit growth in the number of tourist arrivals.

"Singapore showed a declining growth of 85.7 per cent followed by Malaysia and Thailand which decreased by 83.4 per cent and 83.2 per cent respectively," he said.

Uzir shared that the Gross Value Added of Tourism Industries (GVATI) in 2020 amounted to RM199.4 billion, contributing 14.1 per cent to GDP, compared to 15.9 per cent the previous year.

He said that this is the first time since the inception of Tourism Satellite Account (TSA) compilation in 2005 that the GVATI experienced a drop of 17.1 per cent.

He said that travel agencies and accommodation services were the biggest losers in terms of growth performance between the tourism sub-sectors, recording negative 66.7 per cent and negative 54.6 per cent growth.

"Retail trade remained as the major contributor to the tourism industry (53.2 per cent).

"This was followed by food and beverage serving services (18.0 per cent) and country-specific tourism services (14.4 per cent)," he said.

On internal tourism consumption, a total of RM52.4 billion was generated in 2020 as compared to 182.1 billion in 2019.

“The disruption in demand caused overall internal tourism consumption in 2020 to decline by 71.2 per cent compared to a growth of 6.8 per cent in the previous year.

“Inbound tourism expenditure was hit hard by recording a plunge of 84.6 per cent while domestic tourism experienced a drop of 58.3 per cent,” he said.

However, Uzir said that domestic tourism showed a significant role in generating tourism performance in Malaysia by contributing 73.8 per cent to the internal tourism consumption.

He said the tourism industry in 2020 marked 3.5 million employed persons and has contributed 23.1 per cent to the total employment in Malaysia, with the employment growth of this industry contracting by 2.9 per cent. — Malay Mail

<https://www.theborneopost.com/2021/09/23/stats-dept-covid-19-pandemic-slashed-malaysias-2020-tourist-arrivals-by-83-4-pct-worst-drop-in-history/>