



## **Malaysia's 2020 domestic tourism spending plunges for first time in 13 years — DOSM**

KUALA LUMPUR (June 30): Malaysia's domestic tourism spending plunged 60.8% in 2020 to RM40.4 billion from RM103.2 billion a year earlier as domestic visitor arrivals decreased due to Covid-19-driven movement restrictions in the country to curb the spread of the pandemic, according to the Department of Statistics Malaysia (DOSM).

In a statement today, DOSM chief statistician Datuk Seri Dr Mohd Uzir Mahidin said the 2020 domestic tourism spending figure was the first drop since 2008 when DOSM started to compile its domestic tourism survey statistics.

"The implementation of movement restrictions due to the Covid-19 pandemic had affected domestic tourism activities in Malaysia in 2020. Overall, domestic visitor arrivals decreased by 44.9% to record 131.7 million visitors as compared to 239.1 million visitors in 2019, resulting in a decline of 60.8% in the total expenditure to register RM40.4 billion as compared to RM103.2 billion in the previous year.

"Selangor was the most visited state by domestic visitors in 2020 (at) 19.7 million visitors, followed by Perak (13.2 million), Kuala Lumpur (12.4 million), Sabah (10.3 million) and Kedah (10.1 million)," Mohd Uzir said.

Meanwhile, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and UN World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) said in a joint statement today that the crash in international tourism due to the Covid-19 pandemic could cause a combined loss of more than US\$4 trillion (about RM16.61 trillion) to the global gross domestic product for 2020 and 2021 due to the pandemic's direct impact on tourism and its ripple effect on other sectors closely linked to it.

UNCTAD and UNWTO's joint statement today was issued in conjunction with a report published by UNCTAD in collaboration with UNWTO.

In the joint statement, UNCTAD and UNWTO said the report titled "Covid-19 and Tourism — An Update", indicated that international tourism and its closely-linked sectors suffered an estimated loss of US\$2.4 trillion in 2020 due to the direct and indirect impact of a steep drop in international tourist arrivals.

The statement said although a rebound in international tourism is expected in the second half of 2021, the report still shows a loss of between US\$1.7 trillion and US\$2.4 trillion in 2021, compared with 2019 levels.

"A similar loss may occur this year (2021), the report warns, noting that the tourism sector's recovery will largely depend on the uptake of Covid-19 vaccines globally. With Covid-19 vaccinations being more pronounced in some countries than others, the report says, tourism losses are reduced in most developed countries but worsened in developing countries.

"The tourism sector is expected to recover faster in countries with high vaccination rates, such as France, Germany, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and the United States, the report says.

"But experts don't expect a return to pre-Covid-19 international tourist arrival levels until 2023 or later, according to UNWTO. The main barriers are travel restrictions, slow containment of the virus, low traveller confidence and a poor economic environment," the statement said.

Citing UNWTO, the statement said international tourist arrivals declined by about one billion or 73% between January and December 2020 from a year earlier.

For the first quarter of 2021, the UNWTO World Tourism Barometer points to a decline of 88%, according to the statement.

"Developing countries have borne the biggest brunt of the pandemic's impact on tourism. They suffered the largest reductions in tourist arrivals in 2020, estimated at between 60% and 80%.

"The most-affected regions are North-East Asia, South-East Asia, Oceania, North Africa and South Asia, while the least-affected ones are North America, Western Europe and the Caribbean," the statement said.

<https://www.edgeprop.my/content/1870765/malaysia%E2%80%99s-2020-domestic-tourism-spending-plunges-first-time-13-years-%E2%80%94-dosm>