

Sabah to implement RTSA to collect data on visitors

KOTA KINABALU: Sabah will implement the Regional Tourism Satellite Account (RTSA) to collect data on visitors.

The data collection exercise will run from July to December, and will be carried out at points of entry by air and land.

For air points of entry, it will involve Kota Kinabalu International Airport (KKIA), Tawau Airport and Sandakan Airport. For the land point of entry, it will be done at the Merapok Immigration Quarantine Security checkpoint.

State Tourism, Culture and Environment Minister Datuk Jafry Ariffin said RTSA was implemented in collaboration between his ministry through the Sabah Tourism Board and the Statistics Department.

"The information and data obtained from the survey will enable the state to have a better understanding of the tourism sector.

"It will be used as a reference for planning and developing the tourism sector and also as a guide to formulate tourism and economic policies for the state," said Jafry during the launch of the implementation of RTSA at KKIA.

He said RTSA was a statistical method to measure the development of the tourism industry and its contribution to the gross domestic product.

It is based on the United Nations' System of National Accounts, which is used by more than 70 countries, he said.

"I also believe the information obtained from RTSA can be used as a reference for stakeholders and business investors who intend to explore business opportunities in the tourism sector in Sabah."

RTSA will also obtain information on inbound, domestic and outbound tourism expenditure and employment.

"The preliminary statistics report is expected to be ready by early 2023," said Jafry.

He said his ministry will set up a steering and technical committee to serve as an advisory body and project coordinator.

The committee would be under the Sabah Tourism Board and they would monitor the progress of the survey and the RTSA report prepared by the Statistics Department.

Meanwhile, **chief statistician Datuk Seri Dr Mohd Uzir Mahidin said** the survey could help track the contribution of each tourism activity and was important for drawing up policies related to tourism.

RTSA is part of the United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) programme, where it is used to measure and monitor tourism performance, he said, in his speech delivered by the department's National Accounts Statistics Division senior director Norhayati Jantan.

The data compilation as based on the guidelines and manual of the International Recommendations for Tourism Statistics 2008 and Regional Tourism Satellite Account by UNWTO.

Present were the ministry's permanent secretary Datuk Mohd Yusrie Abdullah, state Tourism Board chief executive officer Noredah Othman, Malaysia Airports Bhd senior manager Sunif Naiman and state Immigration Department director Sitti Saleha Habib Yussof.

<https://www.nst.com.my/news/nation/2022/07/816647/sabah-implement-rtsa-collect-data-visitors>