

Malaysia looks to Singapore as benchmark in business tourism

GENTING HIGHLANDS: Malaysia is looking at Singapore as a benchmark to bring in more business tourism, which includes the meetings, incentives, conventions and exhibitions or MICE segment, into the country, with a target of 10pc-15pc of overall tourism receipts by 2020.



Currently, MICE alone contributes about 8pc to total tourism receipts.

Deputy Minister of Tourism, Arts and Culture Muhammad Bakhtiar Wan Chik (pic) said business tourists bring in three times more revenue than leisure tourists.

"Singapore has 40pc of their tourism receipts from business tourists so we might want to benchmark Singapore in terms of tourism receipts when it comes to business tourists. We might not be like Singapore, but we should target about 10pc-15pc (business tourism) by 2020," he told a press conference after opening the Malaysia Business Events Week (MBEW) yesterday.

at a few, those in Kazakhstan, Almaty ... If it doesn't bring any tourists from that area or region, we might close it so that we can save more on operating costs."

Each tourism office employs two expats. With 37 offices, it has 74 expats.

"We're running at RM67 million to RM70 million a year just to operate these offices," Muhammad Bakhtiar explained.

Meanwhile, the Malaysia Convention & Exhibition Bureau (MyCEB) has secured over 300 events, with around 451,000 delegates and RM3.5 billion in estimated economic impact from 2018-2028.

MyCEB CEO Datuk Zulkefli Sharif said topping the list are conventions (47.69pc), followed by incentives (45.66pc) and trade exhibitions (6.65pc).

He said business events are catalysts for socio-economic growth.

The impact from hosting international business events not only stretches beyond direct spending and job creation, but also amplifies the benefits beyond tourism. The legacy impact will help power Malaysia's continued development as a knowledge and creative society.