

ADVANCING CRUISE TOURISM IN ASEAN

1. To boost ASEAN's tourism competitiveness, member states agreed to closer collaboration and efforts to advance cruise tourism in the region, at the recent ASEAN Tourism Ministers' Meeting (ATM-M) in Manado, Indonesia. To this end, ASEAN will look at a series of Workshops, co-organised with the industry, to share best practices and strengthen collaboration in port infrastructure development, development of regional itineraries and joint marketing.

2. ***"This is a positive development for ASEAN Tourism as we work towards a strong regional cruise tourism industry. There is good growth potential in regional cruise tourism, given our year-round tropical climate, multi-cultural appeal and air-sea connectivity. Singapore will work closely with the member states and the industry to organise these Workshops in the coming months. Collectively we can bring out the region's strong diversity and promote greater tourism flows within ASEAN."*** said Mr Iswaran, Minister in the Prime Minister's Office and Second Minister for Home Affairs and Trade & Industry.

3. The meetings noted that a key enabler in advancing cruise tourism in ASEAN is to develop adequate port infrastructure in the region to accommodate more cruise ships. ASEAN countries can also work together to develop regional cruise itineraries and share experience in enhancing shore-side attractions and amenities at the various destinations.

4. The opening of Singapore's International Cruise Terminal (ICT) this year will support ASEAN's goal to be an exciting cruise region. The ICT will double berth capacity and allow Singapore to cater to the world's largest ships. The growth of regional itineraries will allow Singapore to bump up our cruise passenger throughput, which has already seen an annual compounded growth rate of 4.3 per cent from 2006 to 2010 and surpassed the 1 million mark. The world cruise industry is one of the fastest growing and most resilient segments of the travel and

leisure industry. The worldwide cruise market achieved a year-on-year growth of 9.5 per cent to hit US\$29 billion as of 2011.

5. Speaking in support of ASEAN's direction, Mr Michael Bayley, Executive Vice President, International of Royal Caribbean Cruises Ltd, said "***The ASEAN region enjoys many innate favourable factors for cruise development such as the huge population base and growing affluence that will drive demand for travel. Together with the more active developments in the cruise infrastructure here recently, ASEAN's cruise industry is now poised to grow beyond its infancy stage and in the long run, to make the region the next exotic cruise paradise of the East. Also, in view of the vast economic benefits that cruising can bring to the region in terms of tourist arrivals, job creation and infrastructure development, it is all the more essential for ASEAN governments and the industry to work closely on growing and promoting the cruise sector.***"

Ministry of Trade and Industry
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