

**SEVENTH MEETING OF ASEAN-INDIA TOURISM MINISTERS**  
**18 January 2019, Ha Long City, Viet Nam**

**JOINT MEDIA STATEMENT**

1. The Seventh Meeting of ASEAN and India Tourism Ministers was held on 18 January 2019 in Ha Long City, Viet Nam in conjunction with the ASEAN Tourism Forum 2019. The Meeting was co-chaired by H.E. Mr. Nguyen Ngoc Thien, Minister of Culture, Sports and Tourism of Viet Nam, and H.E. Mr. Alphons Joseph Kannanthanam, Minister of State for Tourism (Independent Charge) of India.
2. The Ministers were pleased to note the strengthened tourism performance of ASEAN and India in 2018. The preliminary number shows there were 139.5 million tourist arrivals to ASEAN and India in 2018, an increase of 7.4 per cent as compared to the previous year.
3. The Ministers welcomed the decisions of the ASEAN-India Informal Breakfast Summit held on 15 November 2018 in Singapore. As a follow up to the Summit, the Ministers launched the ASEAN-India Tourism Cooperation Year 2019, and looked forward to enhancing cooperation with a view to increasing two-way tourist visits and promoting greater people-to-people exchanges between ASEAN and India. The Ministers agreed to focus on key activities such as ASEAN Tourism Forum 2019, SATTE 2019, ASEAN NTOs Meeting in Cambodia in 2019, the activities to be undertaken by the ASEAN Promotional Chapter for Tourism (APCT) in Mumbai in 2019, as well as a request of India to help promote ASEAN Tourism through India national TV stations. The Ministers also took into consideration Viet Nam's invitation to participate in annual international travel marts organised in Viet Nam such as Ho Chi Minh City's International Travel Expo (ITE) and Vietnam International Travel Mart (VITM).
4. The Ministers agreed to further enhance ASEAN-India cooperation in tourism under the framework of the 2012 Memorandum of Understanding between ASEAN and India on Strengthening Tourism Cooperation with intensified efforts and activities. The Ministers were pleased to note the progress made in the implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding organised through the following activities in 2018:
  - (i) Sharing best practices for the development of responsible and/or sustainable tourism, particularly in sharing information in the development of the ASEAN Sustainable Tourism Assessment Tools (ASITAT);
  - (ii) Sharing resources and facilities to provide mutual assistance in tourism education and training for quality tourism development, including the development of the Concept Paper on the ASEAN-India Tourism Training Program, as well as the invitation from India for ASEAN countries to depute their tourism professionals to join short courses, workshops or seminars in India;
  - (iii) Crisis communications to protect the reputation and credibility of the relevant tourism organisations and/or tourist destination, particularly through the establishment of the ASEAN-India Crisis Communications Team;

- (iv) Exchange information pertaining to statistics and development strategies, investment opportunities and economic data, including the 5<sup>th</sup> India-CLMV Business Conclave held in May 2018 as a platform for cooperation with all tourism related cross sectors such as MSMEs, manufacturing, and information; and
- (v) International Buddhist Conclave held on 22-25 August 2018, and the development of the Buddhist Tourism Story Book and website of Buddhist Tourism in ASEAN and South Asia.

5. The Ministers expressed their sincere appreciation to the Government and People of Viet Nam for the warm hospitality and excellent arrangements made for the Meetings.

### **LIST OF MINISTERS**

The Meeting was attended by:

- (i) H.E. Dato Ali Apong, Minister of Primary Resources and Tourism, Brunei Darussalam;
- (ii) H.E. Dr. Thong Khon, Minister of Tourism, Cambodia;
- (iii) H.E. Mr. Alphons Joseph Kannanthanam, Minister of State for Tourism (Independent Charge), Ministry of Tourism, Government of India;
- (iv) H.E. Dr. Arief Yahya, Minister of Tourism, Indonesia;
- (v) H.E. Prof. Dr. Bosengkham Vongdara, Minister of Information, Culture and Tourism, Lao PDR;
- (vi) H.E. Datuk Mohamaddin Ketapi, Minister of Tourism, Arts and Culture, Malaysia;
- (vii) H.E. U Ohn Maung, Union Minister for Hotels and Tourism, Myanmar;
- (viii) H.E. Ms. Bernadette Romulo-Puyat, Secretary of Tourism, Philippines;
- (ix) Mr. Keith Tan, Chief Executive, Singapore Tourism Board, representing H.E. Chan Chun Sing, Minister for Trade and Industry, Singapore;
- (x) H.E. Mr. Weerasak Kowsurat, Minister for Tourism and Sports, Thailand;
- (xi) H.E. Mr. Nguyen Ngoc Thien, Minister of Culture, Sports and Tourism of Viet Nam; and
- (xii) H.E. Dr. Aladdin D. Rillo, Deputy Secretary-General of ASEAN for ASEAN Economic Community.

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