

**The 12<sup>th</sup> MEETING OF ASEAN-INDIA TOURISM MINISTERS**  
**20 January 2025, Johor, Malaysia**

**JOINT MEDIA STATEMENT**

1. The 12<sup>th</sup> Meeting of ASEAN - India Tourism Ministers (M-ATM Plus India) was held on 20 January 2025, in conjunction with the 28<sup>th</sup> Meeting of ASEAN Tourism Ministers (M-ATM) in Johor, Malaysia. H.E. Dato Sri Tiong King Sing, Minister of Tourism, Arts, and Culture of Malaysia, chaired the meeting, with H.E. Shri Gajendra Singh Shekhawat, Honorable Union Minister of Tourism & Culture from India serving as Co-Chair. The 12<sup>th</sup> M-ATM Plus India preceded the 33<sup>rd</sup> ASEAN-India Tourism Working Group Meeting, which took place on 17 January 2025.

2. The Meeting reaffirmed the growing importance of the ASEAN-India tourism partnership in fostering mutual understanding, enhancing connectivity, and promoting people-to-people exchanges. The Meeting noted robust post-pandemic recovery trends, with Southeast Asia remaining a significant source market for Indian inbound tourism and India contributing an increasing number of tourists to ASEAN Member States. India received 754,230<sup>1</sup> visitors from the ASEAN Member States in 2023 and 662,605<sup>2</sup> visitors from January to October in 2024 based on the provisional figure, reflecting a renewed interest in cross-cultural exchanges and economic collaboration. Simultaneously, 4,291,507<sup>3</sup> Indians travelled to ASEAN countries in 2023 and in 4,273,181<sup>4</sup> visitors up to Q3 in 2024 based on the provisional figure.

3. The Meeting welcomed the Declaration of 2025 as the ASEAN-India Year of Tourism, presenting an opportunity to further strengthen cultural exchanges, connectivity, and collaboration. The Meeting also expressed appreciation to India for its support of USD 5 million from ASEAN-India Fund towards joint activities under the ASEAN-India Tourism Work Plan (2023-2027), as announced during the 21<sup>st</sup> ASEAN-India Summit. The Meeting agreed to leverage this milestone year to showcase shared heritage, diverse traditions, and dynamic tourism opportunities across ASEAN and India, aiming to boost two-way tourist arrivals and deepen cultural ties.

4. The Meeting reviewed the progress of ASEAN-India Tourism Cooperation based on the ASEAN-India Tourism Work Plan 2023-2027 and noted updates in the following key areas:

- Sharing best practices for the development of responsible and sustainable tourism;
- Sharing resources and facilities to provide mutual assistance in tourism education and training for quality tourism development;
- Establishing and updating ASEAN-India Crisis Communication Contact Points and a list of focal points for investment and economic data; and

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Bureau of Immigration of India

<sup>2</sup> Source: Bureau of Immigration of India

<sup>3</sup> ASEAN Secretariat, ASEANStats Database

<sup>4</sup> ASEAN Secretariat, ASEANStats Database

- Exchanging information related to statistics, development strategies, investment opportunities, and economic data.

5. Recognising the potential for cruise tourism, the Meeting highlighted it as a priority in the ASEAN-India collaboration agenda. In this context, the Meeting expressed appreciation to Indonesia for successfully organising the ASEAN-India Cruise Dialogue held on 29 - 30 October 2024 in Aceh, Indonesia. This event served as a platform for relevant stakeholders to discuss opportunities of connecting ASEAN and India through potential cruise routes. The Meeting further encouraged ASEAN National Tourism Organisations (NTOs) and India to sustain the progress in cruise tourism development by fostering mutual cooperation with the private sector and mobilising funding support from the ASEAN-India Fund to facilitate future initiatives related to cruise tourism.

6. The Meeting reiterated the importance of enhancing connectivity between ASEAN and India, with a focus on air, maritime, and land transport. Strengthening regional connectivity was deemed critical for seamless cross-border travel, facilitating visitor mobility, and supporting tourism growth.

7. Sustainable tourism remained a priority focus. The Meeting acknowledged the Action Roadmap for Sustainable Tourism Development in ASEAN as a guiding framework for fostering sustainability in the region. The Meeting tasked ASEAN National Tourism Organisations (NTOs) and India to explore joint projects aimed at promoting activities that advance sustainable tourism, cultural heritage preservation, and community-based tourism, while aligning efforts with India's Goa Roadmap for Tourism.

8. To strengthen people-to-people ties, the Meeting called for enhanced capacity-building initiatives under the ASEAN-India Tourism Work Plan 2023-2027. The Meeting encouraged the development of tailored programmes for ASEAN tour operators to deepen their understanding of Indian culture and the preferences of Indian travellers. These initiatives aim to create innovative, culturally sensitive tourism products that enhance visitor satisfaction and drive recovery in the tourism sector.

9. The Meeting concluded with a commitment to expedite tourism recovery in ASEAN and India by leveraging the 2025 ASEAN-India Year of Tourism and focusing on shared objectives, such as sustainability, connectivity, and cultural collaboration.

10. The Meeting noted that the 13<sup>th</sup> Meeting of ASEAN-India Tourism Ministers will be held in the Philippines in 2026.

11. The Meeting expressed its sincere appreciation and gratitude to Malaysia for hosting the 12<sup>th</sup> Meeting of ASEAN-India Tourism Ministers, as well as for its warm hospitality and excellent arrangements made for the event.

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