



MEDIA RELEASE

VISIT ASEAN PASS TO PROMOTE ASEAN TOURISM

KUALA LUMPUR, MALAYSIA (March 28, 2006)

In support of the ASEAN government leaders' recognition of tourism as one of the priority sectors for integration of the region, the ASEAN Tourism Association (ASEANTA) recently launched the Visit ASEAN Pass (VAP) at the ASEAN Tourism Forum 2006, in Davao City, Philippines in January this year. As a follow-up, a briefing was held at the ITB Berlin, Germany on 9th March 2006 to update tourism professionals and members of the media of the progress of VAP development.

Under the integration process, tourism marketing is emphasized as a tool for integration and the private sector is encouraged to actively engage in joint promotion and marketing of ASEAN tourism activities particularly via Visit ASEAN Campaign, a joint tourism promotion effort of ASEAN member countries.

Preliminary statistics indicated that international tourist arrivals in ASEAN reached more than 44 million by the end of 2005, reflecting an increase of more than 4.7 per cent compared to 2004.

ASEANTA has, over the years, played an important role in promoting and developing ASEAN tourism products. Following the implementation of the ASEAN Hip-Hop Pass in 2004, ASEANTA sought to improve the distribution of travel and tourism products and services.

The VAP is made available for sale through all travel agents as well as ASEAN airlines' worldwide offices namely Royal Brunei Airlines, Garuda Indonesia, Malaysia Airlines, Myanmar Airways, Philippine Airlines, Singapore Airlines, Silk Air, Thai Airways International and Vietnam Airlines.

To further enhance the VAP, ASEANTA has developed a booking engine, which will be accessible at www.visitASEAN.travel, in cooperation with ZTS Information Systems of Germany to simplify the reservation process.

VAP will be a Business-to-Business (B2B) model between the regional tourism service providers and travel agents regionally and worldwide. Only registered members of the various ASEANTA's members are allowed to participate exclusively as sellers. This portal is powered by ZTS' engine, e-PriNz, and is expected to go fully 'live' in May 2006.

With the VAP in place, intra ASEAN travel and traveling around ASEAN will become simpler. The promotion of Visit ASEAN Pass and the website will be supported by the ASEAN NTOs through links of the Visit ASEAN portal in their official websites.

For further information, please kindly contact VAP@visitasean.travel

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About ASEANTA:

The ASEAN Tourism Association (ASEANTA) was formed in 1981 as the "umbrella" organisation of national airlines and the national travel agency and hotel associations of the **10 ASEAN countries** (Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam).

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