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## Melaka Chosen as Launchpad for Visit Malaysia 2026, Boosting Tourism and Investment

Melaka will host the launch of Visit Malaysia 2026 (VM2026), announced Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim. The state was chosen for its complete infrastructure, rich cultural heritage, and diverse gastronomy. Anwar praised Melaka's efficient governance and appeal to international investors, particularly from China and Germany, calling it a strategic and meaningful choice.

The Prime Minister emphasized that Melaka's reputation abroad stems from its clarity in leadership and fast-tracked development processes. This positions the state as a key player in attracting investments and promoting national growth. The event is expected to boost tourism, benefiting both the local economy and the people.

Melaka Chief Minister Ab Rauf expressed pride in the recognition. With over 800 tourism products lined up and successful initiatives like Visit Melaka Year 2024, the state is prepared to maintain its status as a top destination. Major upcoming events will further elevate Melaka's role on the regional and global stage.



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## Sarawak's Tourism Revenue Hits Record RM1 Billion Monthly in Early 2025

Sarawak's tourism sector achieved a historic milestone in early 2025, recording over RM1 billion in monthly revenue. Between January and February, the state welcomed 810,345 visitors, with February alone accounting for 409,814 arrivals. This unprecedented growth underscores Sarawak's rising appeal as a premier travel destination.

Minister of Tourism, Creative Industry, and Performing Arts, Dato Sri Abdul Karim Rahman Hamzah, highlighted this achievement as a clear indicator of the state's growing popularity. He emphasized the need for the private sector to invest in hotel development to accommodate the increasing number of tourists, projecting continued growth over the next five to ten years.

With a target of 5 million visitors and RM12.73 billion in tourism revenue for 2025, Sarawak is poised to make significant contributions to Visit Malaysia Year 2026. The state's proactive strategies and robust tourism performance set a promising trajectory for achieving these ambitious goals.



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## Malaysia Showcases World-Class Dive Sites at ADEX 2025 to Boost Marine Tourism

Tourism Malaysia joined Asia Dive Expo (ADEX) Ocean Festival 2025 in Singapore as the official dive destination partner. The event attracted thousands of dive enthusiasts with exhibitions, conservation workshops, and dive holiday promotions. Malaysia used the platform to spotlight its premier underwater destinations, including Sipadan, Mabul, Tioman, and Terengganu's islands.

Tourism Malaysia's Director General, Datuk Manoharan Periasamy, emphasized the importance of this opportunity to showcase Malaysia's vibrant marine life and commitment to ocean conservation. The participation aligns with Visit Malaysia 2026 goals, reinforcing the country's appeal to international divers and its push for sustainable tourism.

At ADEX, Tourism Malaysia hosted a dedicated booth featuring six dive operators. The engagement aimed to draw attention to Malaysia's pristine coral reefs and world-class dive experiences while promoting eco-conscious travel. With strong momentum, Malaysia is set to become a leading marine tourism destination in the region.



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## Sabah Calls for More Rural Tourism Investment Ahead of Visit Malaysia Year 2026

Sabah is pushing for more investment in rural tourism, praised for its cultural richness and natural charm. Datuk Joniston Bangkuai highlighted the need to improve accommodation standards to support tourism growth, especially with Visit Malaysia Year 2026 on the horizon. Sabah now has over 680 hotels and 26,000 rooms, but more quality and efficient service are needed.

The launch of the first Ramada by Wyndham Hotel in Kota Kinabalu marks a step forward. Set to open in 2029 within the 88 Avenue mixed development, the project will create jobs and boost investor confidence. The hotel will offer modern hospitality and support Sabah's rising profile in tourism and business.

The collaboration between Wyndham Hotels and Capitol Hospitality Group aims to deliver world-class service. Designed by an award-winning firm, the hotel will attract both corporate and leisure travellers, strengthening Kota Kinabalu's reputation as a global tourism and investment hub.



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## Malaysia Aviation Group Orders 30 New Boeing Jets to Modernize Fleet

Malaysia Aviation Group has secured a firm order for 18 Boeing 737-8s and 12 737-10 jets, with options for 30 more, to modernize Malaysia Airlines' fleet. This move is aimed at enhancing fuel efficiency and meeting the increasing travel demand in Southeast Asia, one of the fastest-growing aviation markets.

Passenger air traffic in the region is expected to triple over the next 20 years, with Boeing forecasting the delivery of over 4,700 new aircraft by 2043, 80% of which will be single-aisle jets. Malaysia Airlines' fleet, currently including more than 50 Boeing 737s, will benefit from the operational commonality of these new aircraft, which will reduce fuel consumption and emissions by 20%.

Izham Ismail, the group's managing director, emphasized that this investment will improve operational efficiency, increase seating capacity, and enhance the passenger experience with cutting-edge technology. Boeing's long-standing partnership with Malaysia strengthens its ties with the country's aerospace industry.



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## FitsAir Launches Direct Colombo-Kuala Lumpur Flights to Boost Tourism and Connectivity

FitsAir is launching direct flights between Colombo, Sri Lanka, and Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, starting April 4, 2025. This new route will operate four times a week—Monday, Wednesday, Friday, and Sunday—offering an affordable and reliable travel option for passengers, promoting closer tourism and economic ties between the two nations.

Tourism Malaysia has warmly welcomed this move, anticipating increased accessibility for travelers exploring Malaysia's cultural and natural attractions, such as Kuala Lumpur's Petronas Twin Towers, Langkawi's islands, and Penang's historical sites. The new service strengthens the air travel market, already served by 30 weekly direct flights.

In 2024, Malaysia saw a 4.2% increase in Sri Lankan tourist arrivals, totaling 61,766. FitsAir's new service adds more options for travelers, helping to diversify the market and enhance bilateral tourism growth between Sri Lanka and Malaysia.



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