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🕒 Thursday, Oct 31 2019



KUALA LUMPUR, Oct 31 -- The country's healthcare and medical sector is expected to attract two million medical tourists next year, propped up by the Malaysia Year of Healthcare Travel 2020 (MyHT2020) campaign launched by the Malaysia Healthcare Travel Council (MHTC).

Deputy Finance Minister Datuk Amiruddin Hamzah said the campaign, run in conjunction with the Visit Malaysia 2020 campaign, would be promoting the importance of physical and mental well-being by inviting everyone to seek health and wellness treatment while enjoying Malaysia's tourism attractions.

"We hope with this campaign, we will gain momentum and secure more travellers. We are expecting two million healthcare travellers, bringing in revenue receipts of RM2 billion and contributing RM8 billion to the gross domestic product (GDP)," he told reporters after launching the MyHT2020



here today.

Also present was MHTC chief executive officer Sherene Azli.

Amiruddin said the forecast number represented a significant increase from last year's 1.2 million healthcare travellers, who generated RM1.5 billion revenue receipts and contributed RM6.4 billion to the GDP.

"In terms of revenue, Malaysia healthcare tourism's compound annual growth rate has been an encouraging 17 per cent from 2015 to 2018," he said.

Amiruddin said healthcare travel made up some 7.6 per cent of total tourism revenues and was expected to grow strongly going forward.

Amiruddin said MyHT2020 would also be playing the role of a catalyst to turn Malaysia into a high-income earning nation.

"MyHT2020 will be a stepping stone towards creating larger demand for healthcare in Malaysia, hence creating a bigger need for healthcare professionals," he said.

Meanwhile, Sherene described Malaysia as a "healthcare marvel" as it offered a "truly unique" patient experience through the combination of award-winning healthcare services coupled with the country's long-standing reputation as a preferred holiday travel destination.

She said over the years, the country's healthcare offerings had been presented as a comprehensive package with all the right ingredients for healthcare travellers -- world-class quality, easy accessibility, and competitive affordability.

"Malaysian healthcare, once known as the 'Hidden Jewel of Asia', has been internationally recognised (with Malaysia named) as the Destination of the Year for healthcare travel by UK-based International Medical Travel Journal and the Best Country in the World for Healthcare by US-based International Living," she said.

In conjunction with the event, MHTC also signed a memorandum of understanding with Malaysia Airlines Bhd to strengthen the healthcare travel industry service offerings.

MHTC, an agency under the purview of the Finance Ministry, was established in 2009 to facilitate and grow the country's healthcare travel industry.

In his 2020 Budget speech to Parliament recently, Finance Minister Lim Guan Eng said that the government would allocate RM25 million to MHTC to strengthen Malaysia's position as the preferred destination for health tourism in ASEAN for oncology, cardiology and fertility treatment.

-- BERNAMA



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