



MEDIA RELEASE FOR 13th MARCH 2017
TOURISM DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
MINISTRY OF PRIMARY RESOURCES AND TOURISM

TOP KOREAN TRAVEL AGENTS IN BRUNEI DARUSSALAM
SET TO PROMOTE TO THE KOREAN MARKET

1. A group of 17 top travel agents from Korea were in the country for a 4 day 3 Night Familiarization trip to experience the Golf and City Tour packages. Organized by Sinar Tour Sdn Bhd in collaboration with Royal Brunei Airlines, the Empire Hotel and Country Club and supported by Tourism Development Department. A networking reception was held at the Empire Hotel & Country Club, and present to welcome the agents was Yang Berhormat Dato Seri Setia Awang Haji Ali bin Apong, Minister of Primary Resources and Tourism; Yang Mulia Awang Wardi bin Haji Mohammad Ali, Deputy Permanent Secretary Of Primary Resources and Tourism; Yang Mulia Haji Mohammad Zamree bin Haji Junaidi, Director of the Tourism Development Department; Mr Nigel Badminton, General Manager of the Empire Hotel and Country Club as well as Sinar Tour sdn Bhd Executive Management and officers from the Tourism Department.
2. The Minister said in his welcoming remarks that he was pleased to see almost half of the top travel agencies from the Republic of Korea coming to Brunei, taking time to view the country and assisting the Tourism Development Department's efforts to promote Brunei Darussalam to the Korean market. Since Sinar Tour Sdn Bhd started operating the chartered flight from Incheon to Bandar Seri Begawan two (2) months ago, they have conducted aggressive marketing and promotion through their marketing representatives TAMs Inc and has received over 1500 Korean tourists to Brunei Darussalam. This consisted of golfers and those coming on package leisure tours. During the promotion of the home shopping channel in Korea, **another 2000 confirmed bookings between now till August 2017** was obtained. In 2015, Brunei Darussalam received a total of 2871 Korean visitors.
3. During the networking reception, Yang Berhormat Dato Seri Setia Awang Haji Ali bin Apong, Minister of Primary Resources and Tourism agents exchange ideas and first-hand information on the needs and expectation from the Korean travelers. The package tours consist of a City and Water Village tours, Temburong, rounds of Golf at the Empire Golf and Country Club as well as Royal Brunei Golf Club. The Minister of Primary Resources and Tourism also shared with the group the main tourism products promoted by the Ministry which included luxury travel, nature, cultural experience set in a in a clean, healthy and safe environment.

4. The Minister informed in his discussion with the agents, that there is a lot more product offerings that could be added to the itinerary as the demand grows. Brunei also welcomes more MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, Events) groups to the country especially in the areas such as Islamic, Banking, Eco tourism as well as Oil & Gas sectors. The Minister also assured the Koreans that they will get the Ministry's support in achieving their target as well as open opportunities to invest in Brunei Darussalam in building tourism infra-structure and services.
5. The Minister also added that for the tourism industry to thrive, it is important to have strong collaborations between the Government and the Private sector such as this one to realize such initiatives and provide full support.
6. The group was led by Mr Kweon Hee Seok, Senior Vice Chairman of Hana tour, Korea. Hana tour is one of the largest travel company in The Republic of Korea. Amongst those who came were Managing directors of Delta Airlines, CEO of Travel Tree Inc., President of Leaders Travel, Director of Jautour, Managing Director of Whypaymore, Director of Dynamic Tour, Director of New Asia Tour, CEO of CJ Worldis, CEO of Top Tour USA, CEO of Vision Tour and reporter from Golf Times. The group stayed at Empire Hotel and Country Club and had the opportunity to play at the Empire Golf & Country Club which has some of the finest golfing facilities in the region. Its floodlit 18-hole Jack Nicklaus-designed championship golf course has played hosts to heads-of-state and royalty from around the world.
7. Their program also included city tours and visit to Kampong Ayer. This familiarization trip is a follow up to the earlier FAM Trips for the tour guide levels, managers level and the media group. A lot of effort has been made to promote Brunei Darussalam as the new destination for the Korean tourists.
8. Mr. James Park, President of Sinar Tour Sdn Bhd said that he is committed to bringing in Korean tourists to Brunei not only for this year but for the next 5 years and beyond. Mr. James Park is also assisting in bringing Korean investors to add value to the tourism infrastructure to suit Korean tourists and as well as others.