

PRESS STATEMENT ON WEDNESDAY, 25th JUNE, 2015 BY TAN SRI DATUK SERI PANGLIMA ABD. KADIR BIN SHEIKH FADZIR, FORMER MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE MALAYSIA, AND PRESIDENT OF PARTI IKATAN BANGSA MALAYSIA.

“MILLIONS DOLLARS VISA ISSUING ABUSES IN CHINA AND INDIA...”

1. I am referring to the statement made by the Malaysian Association of Tour and Travel Agents Malaysia (MATTA) today commenting on the decision of the Ministry of Home Affairs to give certain relaxation on Visas for tourists from China.
2. In this context, I wish to congratulate Datuk Sri Nazri, the present Minister of Tourism and Culture, who knows the importance, at present times, of tourists from China. He has been working very hard to persuade the government to issue Visa free travel to them as he feels, on balance, the country stands to gain a lot in comparison to the risk involved.
3. **IN FACT, THE PROBLEM OF VISA FOR CHINESE TOURIST HAS ALWAYS BEEN THE CONVENIENCE AND SPEED OF OBTAINING VISA.** It has never been the visa fee or even the necessity of obtaining the visa. Look at how the USA, UK and Australian governments are managing that.
4. **AGAIN, ABUSES, CRONISM, CORRUPTION AND THE CHANCE OF MAKING HUNDREDS OF MILIONS OF RINGGIT EVERY YEAR BY CERTAIN MALAYSIA PARTIES ARE THE CAUSE OF ALL THESE PROBLEMS.** I have been approached by a lot of people, asking me to intervene and bring this up to **SPRM** to investigate.
5. I think it is too much and it has been going on for too long. Meanwhile, our tourism industry - the hotels, the travel agents, etc. are all missing out from this ‘big boom’ that is being enjoyed by all other countries as a result of these huge free spending Chinese tourists going out of their country – more than 100 million alone last year.
6. The Australian, USA and the British governments have established very easy, fast and cheap ways of issuing Visas to tourists from China, India, Pakistan and other countries for a long time, and it is working very well. Again, the solution is on the

convenience and speed of giving the Visas, which now can be given online instantly once the checklists are cleared.

7. Around 2002, when I was the Tourism and Culture Minister, I formerly suggested that Malaysia implements the same system - that is to appoint various travel agents or government-linked travel companies in China and India and other countries to act as our agents and collect a small administrative fee for their work. **Unfortunately, other people thought that this is a great opportunity to appoint their Malaysian cronies or agents to do this business and make free hundreds of million Ringgit every year.**
8. **So we now have various Malaysia parties processing these Visa Applications, and sometimes the administrative fee collected by these agents are 2-3 times more than the Visa fee itself.** And China and India being so big, they take at least 2 weeks to issue the visas. As a result, if anyone wants to travel in short notice, they just give up because it takes such a long time to get the visa. Here we loose huge numbers of quality travellers to Malaysia.
9. **THIS IS YET ANOTHER CLEAR EXAMPLE ABOUT THE ABUSES OF THE GOVERNMENT AT THE EXPENSE OF THE RAKYAT AND THE COUNTRY. THERE ARE A LOT OF OTHER DETAILS THAT CAN BE TOLD. BUT SUFFICE THAT, SPRM TAKES NOTE THAT THERE ARE PARTIES MAKING HUNDREDS OF MILLION RINGGIT EVERY YEAR AND THE VICTIOM IS THE TOURISM INDUSTRY OF MALAYSIA.**
10. **I call upon SPRM, to immediately visit China and India to start off, and check on what is happening. An advice to SPRM – please meet the right people – the Travel Agents, etc. etc. Not the officers. They will be scared to talk.**

Thank You



(Tan Sri Datuk Panglima Abd. Kadir Bin Sheikh Fadzir)

25th June, 2015.

