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Tourism chief urges ‘mindset modification’

BANGKOK: The tourism and sports minister has acknowledged Thailand is no longer a ‘tourism giant’, but he plans to attract 2-3 million more Chinese tourists during his four-month term.

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[By Bangkok Post](#)

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“Thailand is not a tourism giant anymore as new competitors are emerging. This situation has forced us to adjust our mindset. We should target markets that truly have growth potential,” said Tourism and Sports Minister Artthakorn Sirilatthayakorn during his first visit to the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) on Thursday (Oct 2).

He presented his working policy called ‘Big Impact, Act Fast’ to TAT executives and is scheduled to meet ministry officials on Saturday, reports the [Bangkok Post](#).

Among the markets shrinking this year, Mr Artthakorn said China still has potential and the government is aiming for 2-3mn more Chinese tourists during his four-month term.

He said the TAT is tasked with promoting Thailand’s strengths, such as Thai food and hospitality, which requires strong collaboration between domestic stakeholders and overseas partners.

Mr Artthakorn said the ministry and the TAT plan to focus on markets with high growth potential, including Japan, China, South Korea, India, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Qatar and Jordan.

Meanwhile, he said Thailand should be able to maintain the flow of inbound markets that already recorded strong performance, including the US, Europe, Scandinavia, Russia and Poland.



To spread tourism revenue, Mr Artthakorn said the government will continue encouraging both local and foreign tourists to visit second-tier cities.

According to the TAT, foreign arrivals this year are projected at 33.4mn, down from 35.5mn recorded last year.

He said he wants the TAT to work ambitiously in the final months to push arrivals past that forecast.

Mr Artthakorn also emphasised upgrading tourism safety measures by promoting use of the Thailand Tourist Police app, as well as utilising artificial intelligence technology to detect suspicious behaviour and prevent crime.

He said the ministry will cooperate with relevant stakeholders to welcome visitors during the 33rd SEA Games in the fourth quarter, as the event could help reassure the international community about safety in Thailand if it runs smoothly.



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