

Amsterdammers file legal claim over city tourism

- A Monitor Desk Report

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Dhaka: Amsterdam residents have filed a legal complaint against the city council, accusing it of failing to manage the impacts of overtourism.

The group, part of a citizens' initiative called Amsterdam Has a Choice, raised €50,000 to fund the lawsuit, supported by 12 other resident organizations.

They argue that existing tourism policies are ineffective and prioritize visitors over residents.

The lawsuit comes amid mounting frustration over crowding, rising rental prices, and a perceived decline in quality of life across central neighborhoods.

In 2021, Amsterdam introduced a bylaw capping annual overnight tourist stays at 20 million. Yet in 2024, the number reached 22.9 million, with higher figures expected in 2025.

Residents say measures like party boat bans, cannabis restrictions in the Red Light District, and Europe's highest tourist tax at 12.5% have not solved the root issue: excessive visitor numbers.

The plaintiffs are calling for stricter caps and higher tourist taxes to discourage mass tourism and protect livability. Their demands reflect a broader movement seen across cities like Venice and Barcelona, where residents are pushing back against unsustainable tourism.

While Amsterdam remains a top global destination, the lawsuit raises questions about the city's future: should it serve as a home for locals or a backdrop for global tourism?

The outcome could set a precedent for other European cities grappling with the same challenges.

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