

## APAC tourism set for continued growth: PATA

- A Monitor Desk Report

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Dhaka: The Asia Pacific region witnessed a robust recovery of international visitor arrivals (IVAs) in 2023. Tourism numbers rebounded significantly following the pandemic, with IVAs nearly doubling compared to 2022. As the travel industry moves into 2024, this upward trend continues, highlighting the resilience and adaptability of the region's tourism sector, according to Pacific Asia Travel Association's Annual Tourism Report 2024 released on October 31.

In 2023, international visitor arrivals reached 522 million across 47 Asia Pacific destinations, marking a 94.3 per cent increase from the previous year. This resurgence marks the most substantial recovery for Asia Pacific tourism since the onset of the pandemic, with IVAs nearing pre-2019 levels. Among the top-performing destinations were China, which welcomed over 82 million visitors, accounting for 15.7 per cent of the region's total, and the USA, which saw over 66 million arrivals (12.7pc).

Türkiye has emerged as one of the top tourist destinations, reaching pre-pandemic visitor numbers in 2022. For 2023, international arrivals increased by another 10.4 per cent, thanks to Türkiye's rich cultural appeal, strategic location between Europe and Asia, and continued investments in tourism infrastructure and safety. This growth was also supported by targeted policies such as visa simplifications and digital nomad visas, making Türkiye one of the top recovery markets alongside Thailand and Macao, China.

### **Bright outlook for 2024**

The momentum continued into early 2024, with IVAs rising by 22 per cent year-on-year, reaching nearly 262 million arrivals by mid-year. The majority of growth has been driven by Asia, which accounted for eight of the top 10 destinations by volume, including Hong Kong SAR, Japan, and Thailand. Hong Kong alone saw a 64.2 per cent increase in visitor numbers compared to the same period in 2023.

PATA CEO Noor Ahmad Hamid highlighted, “Tourism in Asia Pacific saw a major recovery in 2023, and this momentum is continuing into 2024. With over 261 million visitors recorded this year, the region is rebounding quickly, led by strong growth in destinations like China and Japan.”

### **Looking ahead: opportunities, challenges**

The report underscores that while growth remains strong, there are still challenges on the horizon. The reemergence of health risks, such as potential new SARS variants, and geopolitical tensions could affect the pace of recovery. However, the industry’s resilience, adaptability, and innovation offer a strong foundation for overcoming these hurdles.

Hamid noted, “We must stay adaptable amid uncertainties. The global travel and tourism sector is stronger when we collaborate, ensuring our recovery is both swift and sustainable. Ultimately, tourism thrives when there is peace and respect for humanity.”

The PATA Annual Tourism Report 2024 highlights the strides made in revitalising the travel sector across Asia Pacific. With continued recovery expected into 2024 and beyond, the region is poised to surpass pre-pandemic levels, ushering in a new era of responsible, resilient and innovative tourism.

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