

## Tourism transport dual-licensing system in Malaysia nears final approval

- A Monitor Desk Report

Date: 15 February, 2026



**Dhaka: Malaysia's long-debated dual-licensing framework for tourism transport is nearing final approval as the Tourism, Arts and Culture Ministry (MOTAC) and the Transport Ministry (MOT) move to resolve overlapping jurisdiction and enforcement issues.**

The country's Tourism, Arts, and Culture Minister Tiong King Sing said discussions between MOTAC and MOT are now in their final stages, with both sides working to define clearer licensing boundaries and enforcement powers. The reform is aimed at ensuring uniform standards and preventing disputes caused by differing interpretations of existing rules.

Currently, tourism transport operators must comply with two separate licensing frameworks. Vehicle permits are issued by the Land Public Transport Agency (APAD) under MOT, while tourism company licenses

fall under MOTAC. The overlapping frameworks have long created operational confusion within the sector.

Tiong said the next step is to establish clear lines of authority to streamline enforcement and reduce ambiguity. He noted that the move reflects the government's commitment to strengthening Malaysia's tourism ecosystem ahead of Visit Malaysia Year 2026.

Under the Tourism Industry Act 1992, all tourism vehicles carrying passengers for sightseeing purposes must be accompanied by licensed tour guides. Tiong emphasized that drivers and tour guides have distinct responsibilities, warning that allowing drivers to perform both roles could compromise safety and service quality.

He cited recent road accidents involving foreign tourists as a reminder that proper task allocation and compliance with regulations are critical to safeguarding visitor safety and protecting the country's reputation. Such incidents, he said, could negatively affect tourism growth.

According to existing 2009 administrative guidelines, drivers providing point-to-point transport services for seven passengers or fewer are exempt from engaging licensed tour guides, regardless of whether they serve local or foreign travelers. However, the exemption does not apply to sightseeing tours, commentary services, or attraction stops.

For vehicles carrying more than seven passengers, operators must seek approval through the Tourism Licensing and Enforcement System (TOURLIST) before any exemption is granted. Tiong stressed that violations, misuse of exemptions, or renting out licenses to drivers or vehicle operators could result in fines, prosecution, or suspension of licenses.

**V**