



Raini Hamdi and Karen Yue, New Delhi, September 9, 2011

Asian countries in hot pursuit of lucrative India outbound market

INDONESIA and China are among countries that are stepping up marketing efforts to woo Indian travelers, citing an increase in roadshows, relevant trade mart participation and fam trips.

Indonesia is eyeing 160,000 visitors from India, an increase of 10-15 per cent over 2010.

Ministry of Culture and Tourism director general of marketing Sapta Nirwandar said more sales missions, fam trips for media and tour operators, and promotional campaigns were being rolled out this year. Indonesia has also attended five travel marts in India this year, up from one previously.

He explained that cultural and religious similarities between the two countries, along with Indonesia's value-for-money hotels, gave it an edge over its regional neighbours. Bali, he added, was gaining popularity with Indians for weddings.

Several Chinese destinations also told the *Daily* that they were starting to eye the Indian outbound market seriously, encouraged by a rise in interest and the need to diversify source markets.

Henan Tourism Group deputy general manager, Lion Liang, said: "We received 6,000 Indians in 2010...of which 80 per cent were MICE. Since the Indian MICE segment is already performing well, we want to grow the leisure segment, which we have found to contribute better margins."