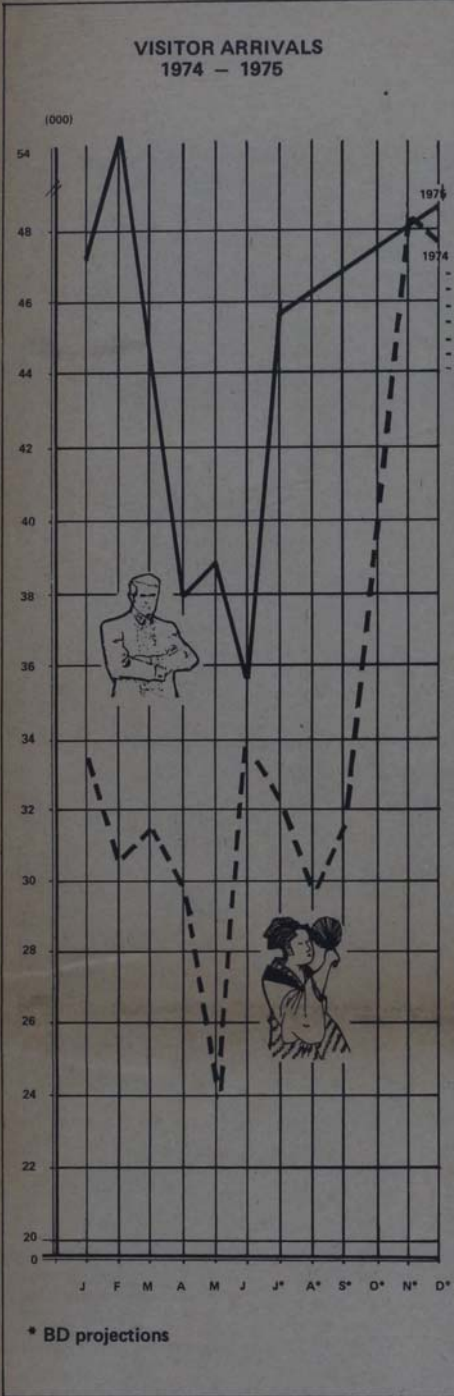


Despite disappointing tourist figures for the first six months an uptrend is projected towards the Yule season



Tourism in the immediate past two years has literally progressed by leaps and bounds — one month's record being surpassed by the next and so on with almost monotonous regularity — that it is a simple task to make projections of its future performance.

The astounding results of the Department of Tourism's Balikbayan and educational travel and tourism campaigns plus advance bookings should permit nothing else but equally favorable projections for the year.

Despite DOT statistics showing declining numbers of visitor arrivals in the first six months of the current year (with the exception of January and May), the optimism remains high.

The first semester total of tourist arrivals in 1975 compares favorably with the first semester of 1974. Also, the June total arrivals, while smallest of the first six months, was more than any monthly total achieved in the comparative 1974 period.

Christmas arrivals
More visitors are expected in the remaining half of 1975. Towards the Christmas season, BD Research projects about 282,000. In 1974, actual visitor arrivals for the same period totalled 258,755. This normally means a greater influx of tourists, particularly homecoming overseas Filipinos, or Balikbayans, starting at about October.

It was the large inflow of visitors during the last quarter of 1974 that was mainly responsible for that year's 69 per cent increase in visitor arrival over the 1973 figures. The trend in the 1974 first half almost duplicates this year's pattern. It was mostly downward also in the first semester of 1974.

Barring any serious setbacks in the world's economies during the remaining months of this year, the last quarter of 1975 should therefore see a recovery similar to that staged during the same period last year.

Added to the approaching Christmas visitor rush is the expected recovery of a considerable portion of the world's economies towards the final quarter of this year. It was this predicted improvement that led Tourism Secretary Jose Aspiras to comment last July that "with the world economy expecting an upturn during the later part of this year, we can only expect a better performance till December." Note should be taken, however, of recent reports of an oil price hike that is rumored to be imposed by the oil producing nations by October.

This notwithstanding, the DOT estimated early this year that for the whole of 1975, 560,000 tourists will visit the country, 40 per cent more than the previous year's actual turnout.

Topnotchers

The Japanese, according to the DOT, will still lead the visitors list, this time contributing some 250,000 tourists. The Americans will move up from third overall in 1974 to second place this year with an estimated 85,000 visitors.

The number of Balikbayans for 1975 will be less than last year, ranging from 66,000 to 70,000, but the figure is good enough for a third place finish. This contrasts sharply with the actual total of 71,523 Balikbayans who visited the country last year when they placed second to Japanese in total arrivals.

Balikbayans also placed second behind the Japanese in this year's first half, but unlike the Japanese whose monthly trend has generally been declining, that of the Balikbayan's was on the upswing. The actual number of returnees for this year's first six months stood at 35,431 over the 1974 total 27,345 visitors.

Although projections on visitor arrivals and receipts for 1975 are considerably larger than last year's, a factor that may throw these estimates out of gear are the Japanese. Japanese who visited the country during the first half of this year, have been continuously declining. In the first semester, for instance, Japanese arrivals numbered 115,353, or 45 per cent of the semester's total arrivals of 258,755. But the trend was erratic, mainly characterized by large decreases against minimal increases.

In June Japanese visitors totalled 10,985, off by 58 per cent from January's

26,132 arrivals and down 17 per cent from the previous month's level. The June figure, incidentally, was the lowest attained during this period. Considering its past downward course, the country may see a lesser number of visiting Japanese during the second half of this year. However, unconfirmed reports from the DOT indicate that the actual number of Japanese who visited the country in July was not much less than in June.

Contrast

In contrast to the Japanese pattern, the number of Balikbayans may increase during the second half along with the totals for the Americans and Australians who placed fourth overall during the 1975 first semester and fifth overall last year.

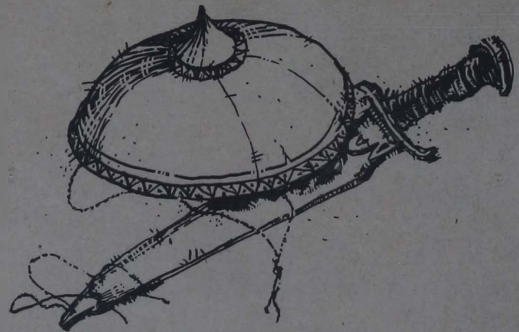
The number of Australians who visited the country so far this year is a great improvement over the equivalent period last year. For this year's first half, 18,388 Australians visited the country most of them through package tours. This figure is 97 per cent more than the comparable 9,057 of last year. This first semester total is also equivalent to 91 per cent of the total number of Australians who visited during the whole of 1974. By yearend 1975, there might be three times more Australian visitors than there were last year.

VISITOR ARRIVALS 1973 to 1975

Year	Total
1973	242,811
January	12,213
February	13,179
March	14,414
April	18,078
May	16,843
June	18,534
July	19,031
August	19,798
September	19,708
October	24,818
November	26,436
December	40,959
1974	410,138
January	33,680
February	30,443
March	31,612
April	29,723
May	23,865
June	33,869
July	32,145
August	29,428
September	31,258
October	38,218
November	48,347
December	47,562
1975	541,161
January	47,091
February	54,516
March	44,571
April	38,021
June	35,576
July*	45,336
August*	48,028
September*	46,722
October*	47,416
November*	48,110
December*	48,784

Source: Dept. of Tourism
* projections

A DAY TO CHERISH



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