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Tourism Newsletter

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Message from the Chairman



As the Chairman of the Asia Council on Tourism I am very happy to comment on the current trends in the tourism industry.

The tourism industry continues to grow and has grown even faster than the global economy in the year 2013, with around a 4% rise in international trips. China and Russia are the two countries that have achieved the highest success, with significantly high growth rates on outbound travel. These two countries have therefore become two new important emerging markets globally.

Asia and Europe continues to perform well as tourist destinations. With gradual improvement of the world economy the forecast for the year 2014 is very encouraging, with a 4-5% increase in forecast for outbound travel. After few years of a negative economic outlook, now there is new hope as the economies have started to grow again. The prospects for the next few years appear much better. With the improvement of world economies, naturally the travel and tourism sector will reap its benefits. We are quite confident that this upward trend tourism will continue for the next few years as per the UNWTO reports.

The strong growth of international travel in the emerging economies around the world is the main element for regional travel trends in the year 2013. Regions such as Asia and the Middle East are growing strongly. Travel trends are also driven by the growth of travelers who are traveling for the first time from the new middle class in countries such as China and Brazil. One third of the world population is already traveling, while the other two thirds do not yet.

Regarding the tourism industry in Sri Lanka, we are happy that we have also had a steady growth of tourism over the last 5 years. We are confident that we will be able to meet up with the expected 2.5 million tourists to the country by the year 2016. We are also optimistic about the fact that all the main international chains have started constructing hotels in Sri Lanka. Our room capacity will thus increase almost by 100%, in order to cater to the expected number of tourist arrivals by the year 2016. Sri Lanka, which is a country which could also boast of its compactness, authenticity and diversity, is thus strategically placed in the current Asian tourism scene.

It is encouraging to note that for the last 4 years Asia-pacific region has grown by 1% on a year on year basis, reaching 6% in year 2011, and ending up year 2013 in 8%. The forecast for year 2014 is at 9%. So with such a good forecast and solid growth we all can be happy to be involved in this industry, particularly with Asia dominating the worlds travel hotspots in the year 2014.

Anura Samarawickrema Lokuhetty
Chairman, Asian Council on Tourism

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Tourists from Asia-Pacific to become world's top spenders—report

The Asia-Pacific will overtake Europe as the region whose tourists spend the most money overseas within 10 years, a report said on April 2, driven by an explosion in the number of Chinese travelers.

Spending by tourists from the Asia-Pacific will reach nearly \$753 billion by 2023, increasing the region's share of global spend to 40 percent from 25 percent in 2012, according to a report commissioned by travel technology firm Amadeus.

Travelers from Europe will account for 34 percent of global outbound spend by the same year, down from 45 percent in 2012, said the report.

"The findings underscore what most of us already intuitively know—that we have now truly arrived in the Asian century," Amadeus Asia Pacific President Angel Gallego said in a statement.

"No matter where we look, Asian travelers have and will continue to change the landscape of travel, and business must adapt to them or risk falling behind."

In January the state-run China Daily said Chinese travelers spent \$102 billion overseas in 2012, making them the world's biggest spenders ahead of German and US tourists.

They are almost certain to have surpassed that record last year, added the report.

Visitor flows from Asia over the next decade is forecast to grow at an annual average rate of 15 percent — nearly double the preceding 10-year period and faster than any other region, said the report written for Amadeus by forecasting firm Oxford Economics.

Driving this expansion is the explosive growth in the number of travelers from China, the report said.

Set to surpass US

The Asian economic powerhouse is set to surpass the United States this

year as the world's largest source of outbound travelers and is poised to become the biggest domestic travel market globally by 2017, it said.

China's share of global outbound travel is projected to reach 20 percent by 2023—up from just one percent in 2005.

China's economy has boomed over the past decade, expanding the ranks of its middle-class who are hungry for foreign travel after the country's decades of isolation in the last century.

European Union and Asian countries have moved to ease visa application procedures for Chinese tourists in recent years, keen to cash in

on their big-spending habits.

The report also predicted that global travel would expand 5.4 percent per year in the next decade, faster than the projected growth of 3.4 percent for world gross domestic product in the same period.

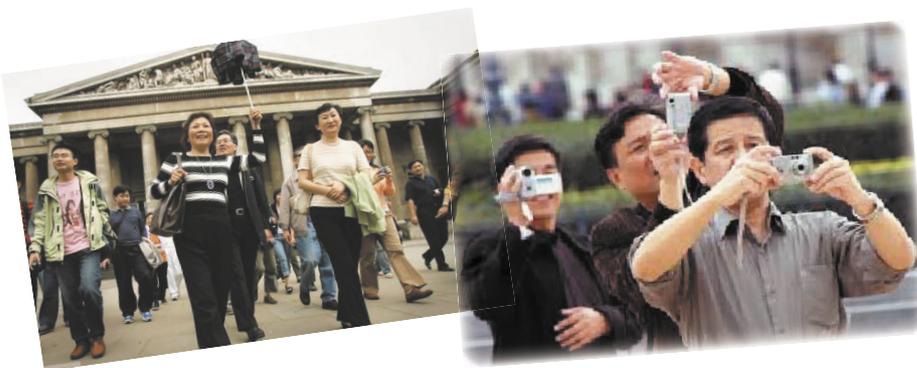
Business travel, which was hit by the global financial crisis that started in late 2008, is also expected to bounce back.

Asia will account for 55 percent of global business travel growth during the forecast period, the report said.

Source: Agence France-Presse, April 3, 2014



A group of Chinese tourists pose for pictures in front of the monument of Philippine national hero Jose Rizal at a Manila park. The Asia-Pacific will overtake Europe as the region whose tourists spend the most money overseas within 10 years, a report said Wednesday, driven by an explosion in the number of Chinese travelers. AFP FILE PHOTO



Young, rich Asians set the pace of int'l tourism

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

Asian millennial travelers, or young professionals aged 18 to 36, are setting the pace of global tourism with their rising income and their propensity to travel to different destinations across the globe.

Speakers at Travel Rave 2013 in Singapore projected that by 2020, half of the global tourism spending will come from the estimated one billion millennial travelers in the region.

This year's most influential travel and trade festival in Asia, dubbed "Trade Show for the Asian Travel Market," was attended by tourism industry players from 73 countries.

It was reported at the trade show organized by Messe Berlin and the Singapore Tourism Board (STB) that the Asia-Pacific region had become the largest travel market in the world.

"Backed by the emergence of economic powerhouses, especially China, India and Southeast Asia, the region has confirmed itself as one of the driving forces in world travel and has set another all-time high record. The Asia-Pacific travel market ousted Europe to become the world's biggest regional travel market in 2012, earning gross bookings of \$326.2 billion and the impressive figure is expected to grow another 8 percent in 2013," ITB (Internationale Tourismus-Borse) Asia said in a report released during the five-day mega-travel show that wrapped up on October 25, 2013.

The income, in tourism bookings,

is expected to reach \$362.2 billion at the end of the year, according to travel industry research group PhoCusWright.

Industry players—from hotels to airlines to government and private sector tourism groups—discussed the trends, challenges and opportunities facing the travel market in Asia at the show held at Suntec Exhibition and Convention Center here.

Chew Choon Seng, chair of the Singapore Tourism Board, reported that the Asia-Pacific region recorded a 7-percent increase in international arrivals in 2012, the highest growth in the world.

Moreover, Seng said the World Travel and Tourism Council projects Asia's travel and tourism sector to grow by 6 percent over the coming decade, also the fastest in the world.

"Collectively, Asia has much to offer both as destination and origin of travel," Seng said in a speech at TravelRave Leaders Gala held at Singapore's newest iconic attraction, Gardens by the Bay.

The gala was attended by industry leaders, including Maan Hontiveros, CEO of Air Asia Philippines.

"There will be more travelers, flights, jobs and more consumer needs to address. But given the diversity of Asia, businesses need to be equipped with a deeper understanding of the region's multifaceted environment," Seng said.



Changing demands

Seng called on industry leaders to prepare for changes arising from the changing demographics and demands of consumers.

STB shared the results of original research findings and key insights from the Travel Leaders Summit with the industry leaders. Singapore aims to be a key regional destination for leisure and business.

A buzzword in the conference was the Asian millennial travelers and how to attract them to the various Asian destinations. The Philippines was among the 818 exhibitors from different countries at the ITB Asia trade show.

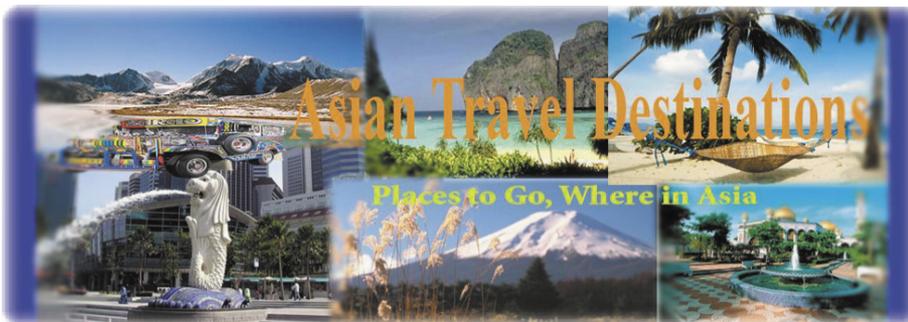
Jeannie Lim, executive director at the STB, said that because of the tremendous growth of Asian economies compared to the rest of the world, Asian tourism is expected to grow by 5-6 percent, outpacing the global average of 3-4 percent growth. By 2015, Lim said, Asia-Pacific will account for half of the global gross domestic product.

She said two out of five travelers in the next few years will be Asian.

Rajiv Biswas, a chief economist and author of "Future Asia: The New Gold Rush in the East," said a key driver of tourism was the very rapid increase in consumer spending by the Asian middle-class consumers.

Estimated at 500 million in 2010, the Asian middle class is expected to

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Young, rich Asians

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rise to 3 billion households in 2020, Biswas said.

Biswas said the tremendous growth of Asian travel was also propelled by the tourism infrastructure in different countries in the region and the rapid growth of budget airlines. In Southeast Asia alone, Biswas reported that the 70 million tourist arrivals in 2010 will triple by 2030.

The millennials were described in a presentation by Andrew Grant, director of McKinsey & Company, as being more independent than the older generations on account of their rising income, more flexible to do different things in terms of career and travel, have thirst for information in an Internet age and are not loyal to brands as long as they get what they are looking for in terms of travel experiences.

Chinese millennials, for instance, are said to be prepared to spend up to two months salary in travel, while the Singaporean tourists are said to be the most demanding.

Filipinos love to travel as a family or as a group, according to Charles Leong, marketing director for Singapore and Indonesia of the Philippine Department of Tourism.

Generation Y

Rob Davidson, senior lecturer at the Center for Events Management at the University of Greenwich, presented a study of what the millennials or the Generation Y are all about at one of the events in the ITB Asia, the Union of International Associations

Roundtable.

He said the “Gen Y,” those born between 1977 and 1995, will account for about 75 percent of the global workforce by 2025.

These young professionals, Davidson said, are global citizens who are socially and environmentally conscious, who value education (were educated in more than one country) and are extremely mobile.

They are constantly seeking work-life balance and can blur the lines between socializing and work, and want the flexibility to do what they want.

But one thing in common among travelers, according to Banyan Tree executive chair Ho Kwon Peng, was a “yearning for the romance of travel”—experiencing the beauty of the physical world around them and getting a taste of different cultures.

The ITB Asia show attracted 8,000 delegates eager to know the latest trends and insights.

“The show has evolved tremendously from when it first made its debut in 2008 and has now gained an even greater international dimension. Now that the Asia-Pacific region has taken the crown as the world’s largest travel market, it becomes even more critical for us to maintain our position as an effective platform to network and gain insights about the region’s travel market. Our partners rely on us to gain an up-to-the-minute overview of the Asian travel industry’s value chain to stay at the forefront of trends and developments,” said Christian Göke, CEO Messe Berlin, organizer of ITB Asia.

The Philippines’ booth stood prominently in the exhibition hall at Suntec, with blown-up posters of Coron in Palawan province, the Banaue Rice Terraces and even Bohol’s Chocolate Hills partially damaged by the recent quake.

Tess Mauricio, head of the Department of Tourism’s Asia-Pacific and Oceania marketing, said the TravelRave event boosted the Philippines’ presence in regional and even global tourism.

“We have a bright outlook despite the tragedy in Bohol. So far, we’ve met some agents from Europe who have not yet included us in their destinations and who are interested,” Mauricio said.

She said Korea, the United States, China and Australia continue to be the country’s biggest sources of tourist arrivals, with Singapore ranking in the top 10.

Singaporeans, as well as other tourists, still love Boracay as their favorite destination, she said.

Charles Leong, DOT marketing director for Singapore and Indonesia, said the new branding (“It’s more fun in the Philippines”) has helped put the country back on the tourism map.

“Awareness of the Philippines probably jumped 80 percent,” Leong said, adding that Boracay and Palawan top the inquiries.

“The downside is that tourists are still worried about security,” Leong added.

Dried mangoes were given as treats at the Philippine booth.

Source: *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, October 26, 2013



THASL Tourism Awareness Programme sees a big demand from students

The 5th in the series of awareness programmes on the Tourism and Hospitality Industry organized by The Hotels Association of Sri Lanka (THASL) in association with Colombo City Tourist Hotels Association and The Institute of Tourism and Hotel Management (ITHM) was held recently with the participation of nearly 200 students.

The event was held at the Taj Samudra Hotel, Colombo on the 11th of March, 2014.

Advanced Level students from several leading Colombo schools and their teachers took part in the event. The event gave the students a complete overview and understanding of the hospitality industry, with a view to attract the youngsters to choose a career in the hotel industry.

Mr. Rohit Khosla, Director Of Operations - Tal Hotels & Resorts Ltd. & Taj Safaris Ltd, Area Director (Sri Lanka) & General Manager of Taj Samudra, Mr. Jayantissa Kehelpannala, President, THASL, Mr. Anura Lokuhetty, Immediate Past President, THASL and Ms. Amal Goonetilake, Regional Director- Sales (Sri Lanka & Maldives) Taj Hotel, attended the event to educate the students.

Mr. Srilal Miththapala, Past President, THASL conducted the main training session.

Following the presentations, the students also got the opportunity to visit the respective departments of the hotels thus giving the participants an understanding of the practical systems and operations of a hotel.

The logistics for the programme was handled by Mr. Lalinda Ariyaratne of Institute of Tourism and Hotel Management.

The Students were also given the chance of raising questions from Srilal Miththapala and the department heads of the Taj Samudra Hotel.

The ongoing program is expected to reach into areas such as Jaffna and

several other outstation areas in the future.

About The Ceylon Chamber of Commerce:

The Ceylon Chamber of Commerce is an effective spokesman of the Sri Lankan business sector. Founded in 1839, the institution has been the focal point for business contacts both locally and during the past 175 years. It has many specialized committees, affiliated associations and 21 bilateral business councils promoting international business. Its members serve on various institutions and committees set up by the Government and the private sector.

Source: Ceylon Chamber of Commerce Media Release, March 12, 2014



Sri Lanka's 2nd Tourism Awareness Programme a tremendous success

The Hotels Association of Sri Lanka (THASL) conducted the 2nd Tourism Awareness Programme for A/L Students in Kalutara Region on 6 February 2014 at Royal Palms Beach Hotel, Kalutara and it was even more of a success than the inaugural one held in Negombo a few weeks back. Over 130 A/L students from 13 schools in the Kalutara, Panadura and Wadduwa areas participated along with 15 teachers in charge.

Mr. Anura Lokuhetty, Immediate Past President of THASL started off the proceedings giving a very inspiring opening speech, drawing on his hands-on experience in the industry where he started off in the industry as an inexperienced school boy, and rose to the top. The students were able to relate with him well. He outlined the prospects in the industry as well as the acute manpower shortage that the industry will face in the future.

Mr. Srilal Miththapala, Past President of THASL gave an overview of the industry, and hotel operations. He also touched on the peripheral opportunities and career paths available for those who join the hotel industry. He stressed that there are no short cuts in this industry and that one must be prepared to work hard and persevere, but that at the end the rewards are good. He also outlined some of the basic pre-requisite attributes that one should have



Mr. Anura Lokuhetty addressing the students at the programme

in working in the hotel industry.

Mr. Ravi Kurukulasooriya, General Manager of Royal Palms Beach Hotel then gave a more detailed analysis of the different departments of the hotels, and outlined the structure and career paths possible. He also touched on the possible remuneration levels one could expect in the hotel industry, along with the perks.

The students were then given some snacks with coffee/tea, and divided into groups and taken on a tour of the hotel. This was the highlight of the sessions where the students could see for themselves how the different departments of a large hotel operates

and coordinates all activities.

Most of the school teachers who attended the session praised our effort and even some of the principals also called after the event to thank us for the initiative. Some of the students expressed their intention to do the final research paper of their A/L exam on tourism.

Source: Ceylon Chamber of Commerce Media Release, February 7, 2014 ❁



Students from 13 different schools at the event



Tourism professor and sustainability experts call on Asia's hospitality industry to act fast before water crisis leads to conflict

In the lead up to UN World Water Day on 22 March, a prominent research consortium supported by the EarthCheck Research Institute (ERI), together with Ecolab (ECL) and Griffith University, has released its second white paper on water, calling on the tourism industry – a heavy user of water - to act fast.

The paper titled, “From Challenges to Solutions: Providing the Business Case.” shows that water and its combined effect with energy use could become the most contested resource of the future.

Addressing more than 50 tourism industry professionals at a distinguished lecture at Eaton Hong Kong, Dr Susanne Becken a Professor of Sustainability from Australia's Griffith University said the tourism industry is at risk.

“Tourism in the Asia Pacific region is growing at five percent per annum. At the same time, more than 75% of the countries are experiencing water stress at least at some critical period throughout the year,” Dr Becken said.

“The quality of the available water supply is diminishing, while the demands on volume and the costs to use are increasing.

“Layer into this the inequity of water use by large hotels where the consumption of water by guests can outpace that of the local population by up to eight times, and the potential for conflict becomes a significant new business risk.”

Contributor to the white paper and co-presenter, EarthCheck CEO Mr Stewart Moore believes water is currently undervalued relative to its true environmental cost, although the situation is changing.

“There's a nexus between energy and water – water forms part of the production process, and energy is

required to produce water. The two are inextricably linked and this puts strains on both resources,” said Mr Moore.

“We've all become accustomed to carbon footprinting. Next, it will be about water footprinting. That completely changes our thinking and makes us realize that hotel and tourism businesses need to have dedicated water management plans; plans which are actually implemented.”

EarthCheck Research Institute (ERI) Chairman, Professor David Simmons (from New Zealand's Lincoln University) said the tourism industry has to make swift changes to meet the new risks, including introducing responsible design and operational practices before hotel developments are approved.

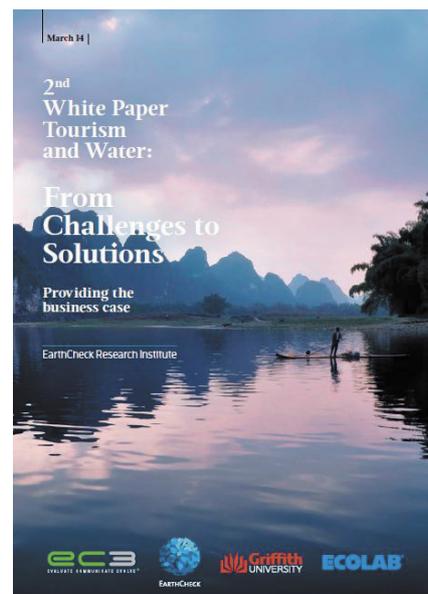
“Developers have to look beyond the box that they are building and see if it fits in with the existing environment,” said Professor Simmons.

“If we destabilize destinations by developing a ‘giant box’ in the middle of a village – one that soaks up precious resources for the rare few - then we are bound to face issues.”

EarthCheck has developed the world's most comprehensive database on the operational performance of hotels reaching back some 15 years. This allows the organisation to benchmark and baseline facilities around the globe.

In December last year, the EarthCheck Research Institute added to the stockpile of data when it surveyed 181 hotels globally and found that water consumption varied considerably, ranging from around 200 litres per day in Europe to more than 900 litres in the Philippines, Malaysia and China. The survey highlighted that hotels deploy different initiatives to minimize water usage.

“With this data we can help facilities understand how much water



they are using, understand their footprint, and provide benchmarks, monitoring tools and practical insights to guide them toward improved operational performance,” said Mr Moore.

“Major changes are required that involve leaps in the way we use water and how we deploy technology.”

Dr. Susanne Becken, professor of Sustainable Tourism at Griffith University, together with Dr. Raj Rajan, vice president of Global Sustainability for Ecolab, will present the findings of the white paper at a special World Water Day Distinguished Lecture at Eaton Hong Kong on March 20 at 09:15 am.

The presentation is based on the findings of the White Paper as prepared by: Dr. Susanne Becken, Professor of Sustainable Tourism, Griffith University, Dr. Raj Rajan, RD&E Vice President, Global Sustainability Technical Leader, Ecolab, Stewart Moore, CEO, EarthCheck / EC3 Global, Melinda Watt, Chief Scientist, EarthCheck, Dr. Char-Lee McLennan, Research Fellow, Griffith University, and Nicole Garofano, Research Assistant, EC3 Global.

Source: EarthCheck, March 20, 2014



Philippines ranked 4th among top tippers in APAC

The Philippines was ranked fourth among the top tippers in Asia, according to the research conducted by MasterCard.

The survey revealed that Thai consumers have proven to be the most generous when it comes to tipping, overtaking Bangladesh and claiming the top spot.

The research was based on a survey conducted between October and November 2013 with 7932 respondents aged 18 – 64 in 14 Asia-Pacific countries.

The survey findings are part of MasterCard’s suite of research into Consumer Purchasing Priorities in the Asia-Pacific region.

On average, across the region, 4 in 10 consumers are accustomed to leaving a tip behind after a good meal in a restaurant, while in Thailand tipping is common among 8 in 10 consumers.

Thailand (84%) edged out last year’s leaders – Bangladesh – to take pride of place as the nation of top tippers.

People in Bangladesh appeared more frugal this year with 80% saying they generally tipped compared with a high 88% at the same time last year.

Tipping appeared least common in Japan where a mere 4% of respondents said they were accustomed to leaving a tip behind.

South Korea, Taiwan and New Zealand joined Japan in propping up the table with 10% of South Koreans, and 12% of Taiwanese and New Zealanders each claiming they tip regularly.

Across the region, men (43%) appeared more inclined to leave behind a gratuity for service compared to women (36%).

Older consumers above the age of 45 were generally quicker to reach for their wallets with 42% of people leaving tips behind. This was compared with 37% of people between the ages of 18 and 29.

“Tipping in Asia can be confusing because the region holds diverse views towards the practice. Cultural nuances

Country	Overall (%)
Asia Pacific	40%
Thailand	84%
Bangladesh	80%
India	78%
Philippines	73%
Hong Kong	56%
Australia	46%
Myanmar	42%
Indonesia	33%
Malaysia	31%
Singapore	20%
Vietnam	20%
China	15%
New Zealand	12%
Taiwan	12%
South Korea	10%
Japan	4%

can make tipping a rule of thumb in some Asian markets, while in others it can be discouraged or even considered rude.

“Of all the travel research MasterCard puts out, this survey of local residents gives us good insight into accepted practices, which helps keep tourists and foreigners in the know,” said Georgette Tan, group head, Communications, Asia/Pacific, Middle East and Africa, MasterCard.

Source: Manila Bulletin, April 20, 2014

Lanith Lands WTTC’s Global Tourism Award

Lanith (Lao National Institute of Tourism and Hospitality) captured the prestigious World Travel & Tourism Council’s (WTTC) Tourism for Tomorrow’s People Award 2014, for demonstrating excellence in the development of capacity building, training, and education to build a skilled tourism workforce for the future.

Lanith topped a field of international entrants, including co-finalists SA College for Tourism - Tracker Academy, South Africa and Central College Nottingham/The Institute of Travel & Tourism of The Gambia (ITTOG), to bring home the award recognising sustainable tourism best practices in worldwide businesses and destinations.

“This award shows that Laos is

on a solid, sustainable path towards building a strong travel and tourism industry through people, who deliver an international level of service quality,” said Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES) Director General Mr. Nouphan Outsa, who thanked Luxembourg Development for funding the establishment of Lanith.

“This prestigious WTTC award reflects Lanith’s core team’s determination and effort in transforming Laos into a first-class destination capable of performing on the global stage,” said Lanith Chief Technical Advisor Peter Semone, who along with Technical Expert, Education, Maeve O’Brien, accepted the award on Lanith’s behalf at WTTC’s 14th Global Summit in Hainan, China, on 24 April.

Lanith underwent a rigorous

vetting process carried out by a panel of some 20 independent expert judges from around the world, and included an independent Lanith site evaluation.

To win, Lanith demonstrated a broad commitment to the “Tourism for Tomorrow” principles in its programmes. Lanith showed how the curricula for its Passport to Success skills training regimen and two-year Lanith Diploma education coursework are largely based on industry needs, as seen in the project’s initial research, with interviews of hoteliers and tour operators, through implementing the two capacity-building streams.

Lanith showed how its Passport to Success menu of two-to-four day training modules, delivered in an awards-based format, and intensive Go

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Lanith Lands

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for Gold course, effectively address industry needs, as seen through the participation of more than 1,000 hospitality business staff seeking a path to progress.

Likewise, Lanith Diploma coursework encompasses a substantial amount of hands-on training alongside lectures, with internships at Lao businesses playing a significant role in the education of career-minded students.

Lanith promotes the benefits of a career in travel and tourism through a variety of channels including its popular Facebook page, participation at job fairs, visits to secondary schools, scholarships, and through the media. The core teaching team receives an education abroad and is empowered to implement Lanith's programmes.

Lanith also stands as a leader in Laos' tourism industry by promoting best practices and communication among all stakeholders. UNIDO has established Lanith as the operating body for the Luang Prabang Safe and Green Tourism Scheme for best practices, and



Lanith volunteered to take the lead role in certifying businesses which meet the Global Sustainable Tourism Council's global guidelines.

Lanith Quarterly Symposia invite international experts to address Laos' travel issues and engage a local audience of hoteliers, restaurant owners, tour operators, NGOs, donors, and public-sector officials. Lanith communicates its actions via the media including the Vientiane Times, well-established regional publications, and global social media discussion groups.

The WTTC Tourism for Tomorrow's People Award 2014

follows the Pacific Asia Travel Association 2012 Grand Award for Education presented to Lanith for its Passport to Success skills training programme.

The WTTC is the forum for business leaders in the travel and tourism industry, with chief executives of some 100 of the world's leading travel and tourism companies as its members. WTTC has a unique mandate and overview on all matters related to the travel and tourism industry.

Source: Pacific Asia Travel Association, April 28, 2014

TCEB joins hands with TAT and VISA to launch "Spice Up Your Business Agenda" 2014

TCEB joins hands with TAT and VISA to launch "Spice Up Your Business Agenda" 2014 online campaign to lure MICE travelers

Thailand Convention and Exhibition Bureau (TCEB) in collaboration with the Tourism Authority of Thailand and Visa International Asia Pacific LLC have jointly introduced the latest online marketing campaign "Spice Up Your Business Agenda" giving special privileges and discounts of products and services for MICE travelers who participate trade exhibitions in Thailand throughout the year 2014.

TCEB's Director Mr Nopparat Methavikulchai says that "TCEB has initiated online marketing campaign for 2014 to strengthen image and raise

awareness of Thailand as the highly potential destination to organize meetings, incentives, conventions and exhibitions (MICE), both for domestic and international markets. We will focus on encouraging our target markets to get involved in social media campaigns, as well as boost up their demand to organize MICE events in Thailand.

The "Spice Up Your Business Agenda" is one of the seven online campaigns that TCEB has jointly developed with its business partners.

"Through this campaign, we will offer special privileges and discounts of products and services such as golf, spa, shopping outlets, dining venues, and airport transfers which will be given specially for trade exhibitors and

MICE travelers coming to Thailand throughout 2014. The campaign aims to create demand for spending and extending the length of stay of business travelers coming to Thailand. The campaign also aims to create good impression and deliver impressive experience of business travels in Thailand," says Mr Nopparat.

Wilaiwan Thawichsri, TAT's deputy governor for Tourism Products and Services, adds that "MICE travelers usually have high spending power and are long-stay travelers, so they are an important segment that helps generate revenue to Thailand's tourism industry. This is such a great opportunity so TAT will strongly support the 'Spice up your business agenda' project as it in line with the TAT's policies and strategies. TAT will help promote this campaign

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TCEB joins hands

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through all of TAT's oversea offices, both online and offline channels, as to raise awareness of Thailand among international MICE travelers. Particularly, the Chinese media partners will be important channel to reach the target groups from China. This is also corresponding to the strategies of TCEB which put emphasis on Chinese market. TAT is confident that 'Spice Up Your Business Agenda' project will help spice up and broaden travel experience for MICE travelers in Thailand, rather than simply joining trade fairs or exhibitions."

Somboon Krobteeranon, Visa Country Manager, Thailand said: "This is a great opportunity to connect Thailand's global business exhibitions with Visa's global reach through our more than two billion cardholders. The collaboration is a welcome addition to extensive privileges Visa cardholders worldwide already enjoy on a daily

basis. Particularly it offers great values for MICE travellers to Thailand. So they stay longer and enjoy the unique products and services the country has to offer. As the global payments leader, Visa is committed to promoting Thailand as a premier business destination to encourage visitation and drive economic growth."

TCEB's Director Mr Nopparat adds that "TCEB is confident that the 'Spice Up Your Business Agenda' campaign will help enhance a business trip, restore the tourism image, and create confidence in MICE travelers who come to Thailand for trade fairs and exhibitions. We hope this campaign will also help increase the number of MICE business travelers to Thailand."

This year, TCEB expects to draw 987,000 MICE travelers and generate revenue of 96,900 million baht to the country. Meanwhile, it hopes to help strengthen the MICE businesses and establish the country's reputation as one of the leading MICE destinations in the world.



Trade fair exhibitors and MICE travelers can now register and download the 'Privilege Coupon' from the website www.spiceupyourbusinessagenda.com. The content is currently available to download in English and Chinese.

TCEB has prepared gift vouchers from partner hotels and spas as special rewards for those who download 'Privilege Coupon' from the website. Apart from online channels, TCEB has also prepared 'Spice up Privilege Coupon' for those who register on site as well.

Source: Pacific Asia Travel Association, April 23, 2014



Malaysia bagged The Best Green Destination (World) 2013 award, Langkawi picked up the Best Honeymoon Destination Runners up award and Kuala Lumpur International Airport (KLIA) was announced the Best Airport (World) Runners up at the Travel + Leisure India's Best Awards 2013 recently. Hosted by the world's leading travel and lifestyle magazine, this is Malaysia's second consecutive win in the Best Green destination. The magazine had conducted a nation wide poll amongst its readers to choose the final winners.

Speaking of the win, Mr Manoharan Periasamy, Director, Tourism Malaysia said, "We are honoured to have been conferred this recognition. Natural beauty and

rainforests are synonymous with Malaysia and to be recognized for this motivates us to intensify our efforts to position Malaysia as a leading eco-tourism destination to our guests."

About Langkawi Mr Periasamy said, "Langkawi is one of the most popular destinations among Indians. Over the past few years, we have seen that it's becoming a favourite among wedding planners and honeymooners too." Along with easy accessibility, Langkawi offers you a stunning location making it a dream wedding destination, he added. Langkawi Island which is located in the northern part of the Peninsular Malaysia has also been recognised by UNESCO as a Geopark, a title given to outstanding geological landscapes in the world. The island is the only Geopark in the Southeast Asia and one of 50 around the world.

The Travel + Leisure awards is a

significant achievement for Malaysia, a country that prides itself for its natural attractions and diverse offerings. Towering skyscrapers look down upon wooden houses built on stilts while five-star hotels sit just metres away from ancient reefs. Rugged mountains reach dramatically for the sky while their rainforest-clad slopes sweep down to floodplains teeming with forest life. Wildlife reserves, national parks, serene islands, picturesque views, exhilarating adventure, shopping in world-class malls or cooling your feet in the serene islands, Malaysia has something for everyone.

So whether it is an adventure holiday you seek or a romantic one, Malaysia is where you should head. The readers of Travel + Leisure will vouch for this.

Source: Pacific Asia Travel Association, April 4, 2014



UNWTO Silk Road Task Force to meet at Routes Silk Road

The World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) will be holding its Silk Road Task Force meeting during this year's Routes Silk Road event which will take place in Tbilisi, Georgia on 6-8 July.

This announcement comes soon after an agreement was reached at ITB in Berlin between Routes (part of UBM live) and UNWTO to work together in advancing matters related to air connectivity and travel facilitation.

"UNWTO's joint research with WTTC clearly demonstrates the impact that visa facilitation can have on economic growth and job creation. Routes Silk Road 2014 is an excellent initiative that will surely help address the travel facilitation challenges along this tourism route and we are thus very happy to hold the UNWTO Silk Road Task Force meeting alongside Routes. Moreover, with its forward-thinking approach to visas and its open skies policy, Georgia is an ideal destination to host such an event, and I must congratulate Georgia for winning the bid. UNWTO looks forward to working together with Routes and Georgia to make this edition the best yet", said Taleb Rifai, UNWTO Secretary-General.

"Following the announcement of our partnership we are thrilled that UNWTO has decided to hold its Silk Road Task Force meeting at our event in July," said Katie Bland, Director Routes, UBM Live continuing: "Routes Silk Road will be held in Georgia which is a gateway connecting several important economic regions including Europe, the New Independent States (NIS) and Central Asia and as such it is the ideal location for Routes Silk Road and the UNWTO Silk Road Task Force. Holding this important meeting alongside our own event will further strengthen our partnership and we are excited about the opportunities this provides Routes."

The UNWTO Silk Road Task Force meeting brings together key



representatives from Silk Road destinations, United Nations agencies, the private sector and associations to discuss and plan priorities for tourism development along this ancient route. The meeting aims to raise the profile of tourism along the Silk Road and drive sustainable and responsible tourism development by enhancing cooperation between the countries along the Silk Road.

Routes Silk Road, which will be hosted by United Airports of Georgia (UAG) under the auspices of the Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development, is the route development forum that connects CIS, Central and Eastern Europe, Middle East and Asia.

~About Routes~

Routes organises world-renowned airline and airport networking events through its regional and global Route Development Forums. Each year, there is one global event and one regional



event in Asia, Africa, Europe, the Americas and CIS respectively. www.routesonline.com

Routes was founded in 1995 as part of the Manchester UK-based ASM Ltd., a consultancy specialising in the field of route development for airports. www.asm-global.com. Routes and ASM are part of the UBM Live division of UBM plc.

UBM Live connects people and creates opportunities for companies across five continents to develop new business, meet customers, launch new products, promote their brands and expand their markets. Through premiere brands such as MD&M, CPhI, IFSEC, TFM&A, Cruise Shipping Miami, the Concrete Show, the Routes portfolio of events, Airport Cities and many others, UBM Live exhibitions, conferences, awards programs, publications, websites and training and certification programs are an integral part of the marketing plans of companies across more than 20 industry sectors.

Source: Pacific Asia Travel Association, April 1, 2014

Tourism New Zealand Endorses Tourism 2025

Tourism New Zealand says the industry has turned a corner with the release of ‘Tourism 2025 - Growing Value Together/Whakatipu Uara Ngatahi’ and its aspirational goal to reach \$41b value by 2025.

Chief Executive Kevin Bowler says Tourism 2025 has bought the industry together and has forged a shared vision for where we want to get to and how with a collective focus, we can get there.

“Tourism New Zealand has agreed to align its business plan with the overall direction set out in Tourism 2025,” he says.

“It is appropriate that this is a framework for alignment, rather than just a list of operational tactics, as there aren’t many silver bullets when it comes to achieving the growth we’re aspiring to achieve.

“Instead, this framework is about

helping the whole industry to all move in the same direction, targeting the areas with investment in time, energy and money that will deliver the greatest economic returns for the industry and of course the country.”

Kevin says that Tourism New Zealand’s work under its current three-year marketing strategy fits closely with the 2025 framework and the organisation is using its additional funding provided by the Government to drive actions across Tourism 2025’s five central themes.

“The Tourism 2025 theme ‘targeting for value’ is perfectly aligned with Tourism New Zealand’s objective to increase the value of international visitors to New Zealand,” he says.

“To help achieve this, we have increased our investment in international business events, premium visitor segments, and special interest



travel sectors recognising these visitors typically spend more than the average holiday visitor.

“We are working closely with airlines and airports to encourage growth in airline services to ‘grow sustainable air connectivity’, and have a number of joint venture partnerships in place, most significantly a \$20 million per annum joint marketing agreement with Air New Zealand.

“Our involvement with the i-SITE network, Qualmark and the China market through the ADS and PKP programmes are our key contributions to the Tourism 2025 theme “drive value through outstanding visitor experience”

“By identifying and attracting visitor segments that visit New Zealand in the shoulder and off seasons, particularly through our new focus on emerging markets like India and Indonesia, we are assisting the industry improve its performance under the theme “productivity for profit”.

“Finally, Tourism New Zealand has an entire team dedicated to providing research analysis and “insight” that is distributed to the industry on the tourismnewzealand.com website.” Tourism New Zealand was a key contributor in the development of Tourism 2025 and supports the ambitious goal of raising the combined value of international and domestic tourism to \$41 billion by 2025.

For more information on Tourism 2025, including extensive background insights go to: www.tourism2025.org.nz

Source: Pacific Asia Travel Association, March 24, 2014

Taiwan and Japan engage in culinary diplomacy

The International Affairs Division, Taiwan Tourism Bureau and their counterparts from Japan’s Kagawa Prefectural Government recently held a press conference to bolster relations between Taiwan and Japan through an exchange of their respective culinary arts.

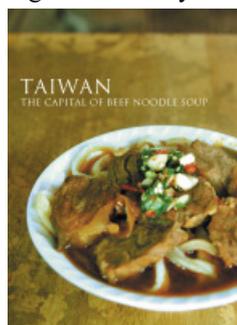
At the event a Taiwanese chef specializing in local beef noodles and a Japanese chef renowned for his skills in hand-making udon noodles joined forces to unveil a juxtaposition of two regional culinary arts. The result was a bowl of Taiwanese beef-based broth adorned with Japan’s

world famous Sanuki udon noodles.

The event also marked the one-year anniversary of the establishment of direct flights from Taipei to Kagawa Prefecture’s Takamatsu Airport. Since 2013 the number of visitors has risen markedly, with airline companies electing to increase the volume of direct flights from two to four weekly.

Since the establishment of direct flights from Taipei to Kagawa, the Taiwanese and Japanese tourism bureaus were delighted to announce that visitors to both destinations saw tremendous growth, with Taiwanese visitors representing 52 percent and Japanese visitors representing 48 percent of the route’s traffic.

Source: China Post, April 10, 2014



International travel communities express confidence and support for PH tourism

By Jacky Lynne A. Oiga

As stories demonstrating the undying human spirit of the Filipinos continue to touch the hearts of nations all over the world, the international travel community is optimistic that the Philippine tourism industry will bounce back after the onslaught of Super Typhoon Yolanda (international name: Haiyan).

In a statement posted on their website, United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) Secretary-General Taleb Rifai said he is confident that despite this tragic occurrence, the tourism sector in the Philippines will continue to strive and make a key contribution to the development of the country.

UNWTO also expressed readiness to support the Philippines in any tourism-related recovery program for the affected areas and called for support by contributing to the ongoing relief efforts of the various United Nations (UN) agencies operating on the ground.

On the other hand, PATA — a membership association committed to promote the responsible development of travel and tourism in the Asia Pacific region — has been in contact with local and national tourism officials in the Philippines to offer moral support and

practical help.

The association has set up an online appeal to raise funds for the Philippines and earmarked US\$10,000 for the Philippine disaster relief fund.

PATA CEO Martin J. Craigs said tourists booked to visit the Philippines should contact their travel agents and pay attention to government travel advisories, but continue wherever possible with plans to visit the country.

“The best way to help is to donate and keep traveling to boost the Philippine visitor economy,” Craigs said.

PATA has also briefed the Asian Wall Street Journal on the need to maintain business confidence in the Philippine tourism sector and its essential role in economic development.

Meanwhile, donations from United Airlines employees and customers have topped more than \$850,000 for AmeriCares, American Red Cross and Operation USA to aid in



Keeping the faith: An old lady says a silent prayer for her beloved city. (Photos by Linus Escandor)

the organizations’ relief efforts in the country.

In a personal letter addressed to Tourism Secretary Ramon R. Jimenez Jr., David Scowsill, President & CEO of the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC), expressed his “deepest sympathies for the extraordinary human losses in the Philippines as a result of Typhoon Haiyan.”

Jimenez, in turn, expressed the Department of Tourism’s (DOT) sincere appreciation to the outpouring of messages and support from partners in the international travel community.

“With the assistance from UNWTO, PATA, and WTTC, we have shown that the tourism industry is not only an engine of economic growth and development, but also a compassionate and supportive community,” Jimenez said.

The tourism chief added that the support of these organizations is proof that travel and tourism have transformed the world into one community, ready to stand by each other not only in times of festivities, but more importantly during times of great difficulty and challenges.

Source: *Manila Bulletin*, November 24, 2013



Relief goods continue to arrive for Yolanda victims.

Philippine Gov't may allow foreign companies to undertake big infra projects



Singson

The Philippine government plans to allow overseas companies to build infrastructure worth at least \$1 billion as the nation doubles spending on roads, ports and bridges to bolster its tourism and farm sectors, Public Works Secretary Rogelio Singson said.

Licenses can be issued to foreign contractors that will pledge investments, with estimates placing the requirement at as much as \$1 billion in the form of equity and equipment, Singson said in an interview in Manila yesterday. Currently, foreign builders apply for a special permit per project.

"We have a bigger pie for everyone," Singson said. "I need more contractors. Opening it up to foreign players, provided the field is even, will increase competition, improve efficiency and result in better prices for government." Foreign companies can augment the capacity of a handful of local contractors able to take on big projects, he said.

The Philippines, lagging neighbors from Malaysia to Thailand in infrastructure spending, is targeting P404 billion (\$9.2 billion) worth of projects this year, or twice the amount

it spent in 2011, helped by higher tax revenue and savings on public works due to reduced corruption, Singson said. By 2016, spending on infrastructure should double to P824 billion, or 5 percent of gross domestic product.

Since the start of President Benigno Aquino's term in 2010 to March this year, the Department of Public Works and Highways has accumulated about 26 billion pesos in savings after curbing corruption, Singson said. The department hadn't logged any savings before Singson took over, according to him.

Savings may rise a further P10 billion in the next two years, he said. That'll help the government fund 2,000

kilometers of farm-to-market roads estimated to cost about P2 billion, Singson said.

The public works department has completed about 67 percent of a P54 billion program to build 2,000 kilometers of roads to beaches, mountains and other areas earmarked for tourism, Singson said.

Philippine tourism will account for 10 percent of GDP by 2016 from 7 percent now, Tourism Secretary Ramon Jimenez said in a separate interview on May 20, 2014.

Annual revenue from tourism has increased to about \$4.7 billion from less than \$3 billion before Aquino's term, Jimenez said. "It has ballooned into a serious industry," he said.

Source: Bloomberg, May 21, 2014 ✿

About CACCI Asian Council on Tourism

Asian Council of Tourism is one of the Product Service Councils under the CACCI umbrella. The PSCs have been formed with the primary aim of promoting greater business interaction among CACCI members who are in the same product or service line. There are currently twelve PSCs that are operating within the CACCI umbrella.

The PSCs meet at least once a year, usually in conjunction with the Annual CACCI Conference held in various member countries. Occasionally, officers and key members of the PSCs conduct teleconferences to discuss their activities for the year.

CACCI held its first breakout

session on Tourism during the 60th CACCI Council Meeting held on 18-19 May 2004 in Phnom Penh, Cambodia and formally organized a CACCI Asian Council on Tourism (ACT).

The current Chairman of ACT is Mr. Anura Samarawickrema Lokuhetty from Sri Lanka. He is concurrently Deputy Chairman and Chief Executive of Serene Pavilions, and Immediate Past President of Tourist Hotels Association of Sri Lanka, the apex body representing all hotels in Sri Lanka.

For more information on the PSCs, please visit the CACCI website at www.cacci.org.tw and go to the "Product and Service Councils" page.

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