



LEAD STORY

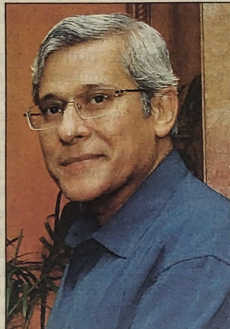
WTTCII proposes development of Integrated Tourism Destinations

Tourism fraternity aims for convergence in 2011

SANJEEV BHAR - New Delhi

On the lines of special economic zones, World Travel & Tourism Council India Initiative (WTTCII) has proposed to the government to develop Integrated Tourism Destinations (ITDs). Arjun Sharma, outgoing chairperson of WTTCII outlined a number of points to make it function whereby the concept would be empowered by a CEO to undertake integration of tourism development and also coordinate with all concerned parties. "It is important that such a step would augur further development in building tourism infrastructure in a structured manner. Also, a lot of support will be needed for promotion and awareness about tourism," he said.

In December, 2010 WTTCII held an interactive session on travel and tourism in India with the theme - 'Economic Imperative of Tourism' in the city. The council proposed numerous steps for tourism promotion in India. These include a detailed report on the need for further promotion of Incredible India campaign, setting up of Global Travel Mart India (GTMI), creating tourism friendly sites and



R H Khwaja



Arjun Sharma



David Scowsill

seamless travel, and abolishing discriminatory pricing policies across various tourism segments. WTTCII also emphasised on the need for skill development and uniform taxation which is rationalised and at par with global competitiveness. It has also been demanded that a steering committee on tourism should be set up headed by private secretary to PM and/or including the tourism ministry in the PM's Council for skill development and industry in addition to creation of Confederation of Indian Travel & Tourism Industry (CIITI).

Amongst the BRIC nations, India is being seen as a strong player with scope

to turnaround the dynamics of the travel industry due to its enormous domestic demand. But that the potential has not yet been realised by India, believes WTTC. Sharma said, "Tourism and travel is roughly US \$ 5.3 trillion industry worldwide and India commands an income which is 5.9 per cent of its GDP providing direct and indirect employment to 49.8 million as per 2009. If world reports suggest that India need to create 120 million jobs by 2020 if it is to continue its present prolific progress, then tourism can itself offer 37 million jobs to take India's success story in the right direction." Deliberations during the sem-

inar outlined the need for convergence of various facets that impact tourism in India. R H Khwaja, secretary, Ministry of Tourism said, "Our ministry is talking to all concerned segments and is coordinating in a time bound manner consistently for roads, shipping, railways, urban development and so on. There is a need for convergence to take tourism in the right direction." Also, commenting on the present scenario, Dr Kaushik Basu, chief economic advisor, Ministry of Finance, Government of India said, "This is a critical time as we head towards the Budget period, we don't have an excuse for not doing well

because everything that tourism sector flourishes on is present in the country. It is just that we need to use intelligence and professionalism to tap its potential." He highlighted the need to even tap the undergraduate education segment that will give boost to tourism. "Tourism should be included in the national agenda as it can bring social equality and offer inclusive growth in addition to capacity building and attracting investments," he added. He however avoided making any direct comment on whether tourism will be given any direct benefit in the Annual Budget of 2011-12.

On India's tourism scenario, David Scowsill, president and CEO of WTTC said, "There has to be a common approach with combination of global, regional and country by country approach." Marcio Favilla L de Paula, executive director of WTO commented that all are looking at the same issue, seeing same thing and identifying same cause. "With our common vision all organisations working towards tourism development can realise the big dream of taking tourism to the next level that is possible through diligent convergence," he added. ■

NEWSTRACK

Big business expected at HospitalityWorld Mumbai 2011

EH STAFF - Mumbai

HospitalityWorld 2011, India's leading hospitality trade show, is all geared up for its next edition to be held in Mumbai from January 26-29, 2011 at the MMRDA Grounds, Bandra Kurla Complex. A new attraction this year is the Hospitality Purchase Managers Forum which will conduct a comprehensive workshop. This edition of HospitalityWorld 2011 will also witness new products, technolo-

gies and companies from across various segments such as kitchen equipments, F&B and housekeeping. Some of the special attractions include The Great Indian Culinary Challenge (a



contest of skill, finesse and presentation from the region's most talented

chefs), Franchisee World (a platform to expand operations and gain market share through franchising), Live Bakery (a live bakery which will focus on the hotel's baking/bakery needs), F&B World, (opportunity to meet a diversified audience which includes business owners, executive chefs, GMs, F&B managers, purchase managers and consultants) and Spa & Wellness World (a theme pavilion covering the best brands in the spa and wellness industry). ■