



CACCI

Tourism Newsletter

Volume 17

December 2016

Message from the Chairman



New Year Greetings to all our members ...!!!

Tourism has become a powerful and a transformative force making a genuine difference in the lives of millions of people. As per the UNWTO's statistics, more than one billion international tourists now travel the world each year. Tourism is one of the largest leading employment sectors which provides livelihood for millions worldwide. It has been identified as the best solution to alleviate poverty and to drive inclusive employment.

Tourism sector is considered an increasingly important source of employment helping many other related sectors such as the construction industry and agriculture. It helps primarily unskilled labour and migrants from poor rural areas, particularly people who prefer to work part-time and notably women. Tourism sector is relatively labour and capital intensive generating a larger and a more rapid increase in employment than equal investment in other economic activities. Furthermore, given that the tourism sector provides a considerable amount of jobs for women it could contribute significantly to empower women and to alleviate poverty.

However uncontrolled tourism activities could lead to severe disruption of wildlife habitats and increased pressure on endangered species. As an example, disruption of wildlife behaviour is often caused by tourist vehicles in national parks.

Similarly, tourism can lead to the indiscriminate clearing of native vegetation for the development of new facilities, increased demand for fuel wood and even forest fires. Ecologically fragile areas, such as rain forests, wetlands and mangroves are also threatened by uncontrolled and un-regularized tourism developments causing a negative impact on Sustainable Tourism Development principals.

Countries and regions whose economies are driven by the tourism industry have become increasingly concerned about the environmental as well as the socio-cultural problems associated with unsustainable tourism. As a result, there is now an increasing demand to promote sustainable tourism development to minimize its environmental impact, thereby maximizing the socio-economic overall benefits at tourist destinations.

Having considered the importance of tourism and its multiplier effects on several economies of developed and developing countries, the UN has identified 2017 to be designated as the 'International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development'. I consider this an important and timely step taken by the UN. Especially in developing countries this initiative would safeguard the main attractions that attract the tourists such as culture, nature, heritage and many other natural surroundings. Governments of those countries must use the initiative taken by the UN and control such haphazard development.

As an initial step, the UN has identified to develop five key areas: (1) Inclusive and sustainable economic growth; (2) Social inclusiveness, employment and poverty reduction; (3) Resource efficiency, environmental protection and climate change; (4) Cultural values, diversity and heritage; and (5) Mutual understanding, peace and security.

We are confident that the initiative taken by the UN will become a success if all stakeholders in the travel and tourism industry understand and pledge to upkeep the sustainability of the tourism industry.

"Sustainability requires maintaining life-supporting natural capital in order for our socioeconomic goals to be met" - Warren Flint

Anura Lokuhetty FCHSGA, FIH, MIMgt, DIP(BM)
Chairman, Asian Council on Tourism
Confederation of Asia-Pacific Chambers of Commerce and Industry

CACCI Organizes the 30th Conference and Celebrates 50th Anniversary in Taipei



H. E. Tsai Ing-Wen, President of the Republic of China (Taiwan), delivers her Special Speech at the Opening Ceremony of the 30th CACCI Conference. CACCI President Mr. Jemal Inaishvili emphasizes the importance of Asia in his Opening Statement.



(Left to right) CNAIC Chairman Mr. Por-Fong Lin, CACCI President Mr. Jemal Inaishvili, President Ms. Tsai Ing-Wen, ANA CEO Mr. Osamu Shinobe and CIECA Chairman Mr. C. Y. Wang pose for a group photo.

The Confederation successfully held its 30th CACCI Conference in Taipei, Taiwan on November 23-25, 2016, with the participation of some 450 delegates composed largely of businessmen and chamber of commerce representatives from 22 Asia-Pacific countries, led by CACCI President Mr. Jemal Inaishvili from the Georgia.

Co-hosted by the Chinese International Economic Cooperation

Association (CIECA) and the Chinese National Association of Industry and Commerce (CNAIC), with CTBC Bank as major sponsor, this year's Conference focused on the theme "The Rise of Asia: Taking a Bigger Role in the Global Economy." It was designed to provide CACCI members and invited experts the venue to exchange views on measures that the business sector and governments in the region

can undertake to take full advantage of the opportunities offered not just by markets in the Asia-Pacific region but also by countries in other parts of the world.

The Opening Ceremony featured **H. E. Tsai Ing-Wen**, President of the Republic of China (Taiwan) as Special Guest of Honor and Speaker. Invited as Special Guest during the Welcome Dinner on November 23 was **H. E. Mr. Lin Chuan**, Premier of the Republic of China (Taiwan). **Dr. Tain-Jy Chen**, Minister, National Development Council, Republic of China (Taiwan), was the speaker at the lunch hosted by CNAIC on November 24. **H. E. Mr. Javier Ching-shan Hou**, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Foreign Affairs Republic of China (Taiwan), was the Special Guest of Honor during the Gala Dinner on November 24.

The Taipei Conference also marked the **50th Anniversary of the Confederation**. Special activities were lined up to help commemorate this important milestone of the Confederation. One such activity was the CACCI Summit Meeting, which gathered together the presidents, chairmen and CEOs of all CACCI Primary Members primarily to: (a)

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CACCI delegates listen to presentations made by Plenary Session Speakers.



Foreign and local delegates network with each other during the coffee break of the 30th CACCI Conference.

CACCI Organizes

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review the accomplishments of the Confederation over the 50 years since its founding; (b) re-visit its vision and mission as well as its goals and objectives in light of the current conditions and recent developments in the regional and global market environment; and (c) prepare a road-map of its future direction.

As part of the commemoration of its 50th Anniversary, CACCI presented the Illustrious Distinguished Service Award to all members who had served as CACCI President. The Award was in recognition of their important contribution to the Confederation, their unwavering commitment to the CACCI objective of bringing businessmen in Asia together, and their continuing efforts to help promote regional cooperation and to further advance the interest of the region's business community.

The CACCI Council, which is the organization's governing body, elected the office bearers for the term 2017-2018. Mr. Jemal Inaishvili, Member of the Council of the Georgian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, was re-elected CACCI President for a second term, and seven other members were elected as Vice Presidents.

CACCI announced the winners of the 7th Local Chamber Awards, the 6th Asia-Pacific Young Entrepreneur



CACCI presents the Illustrious Distinguished Service Award to all members who had served as CACCI President.

Award, the 1st Asia-Pacific Woman Entrepreneur Award, and the 2nd Hydropower and Clean Energy Excellence Award during the Gala Dinner of the Conference held on November 24, 2016. The winners received their awards from newly elected CACCI President Mr. Jemal Inaishvili and the chairmen of the respective Board of Judges of the Awards.

CACCI endorsed a policy paper entitled "Promoting Economic Empowerment of Women." In order to fight against slowing global economic growth, CACCI called on the business community to be proactive in improving productivity, and said that the economic empowerment of

women is one key way through which this can be achieved. This increases participation in the workforce to support aging populations, generates innovation and better-decision making through diversity and provides incentives to continue learning and contributing to society.

CACCI signed a Partnership Agreement with the Sydney Business Chamber (SBC) and the ICC World Chambers Federation (ICC-WCF) covering their collaboration in the holding of the 31st CACCI Conference next year within the framework of the ICC WCF's 10th World Chambers Congress to be co-organized by SBC on September 19-21, 2017 in Sydney, Australia.



CACCI Delegates Exchange Views on Latest Developments in Tourism at the Special Session of the 30th CACCI Conference



Mr. Anura Lokuhetty, Chairman of CACCI's Asian Council on Tourism, delivers his welcome statement to open the Special Session on Tourism.



Mr. Lokuhetty analyzes the latest trends of the global tourism market during his presentation.



Mr. Eric Lin indicates the strength and challenges facing Taiwan while promoting its tourism in other countries.



Ms. Aileen Clemente demonstrates how her company has expanded their business and implemented the CSR projects to the community in her report.

During the 30th CACCI Conference held in Taipei, the Special Session on Tourism was organized under the chairmanship of Mr. Anura Lokuhetty from Sri Lanka, with two invited speakers from Taiwan and the Philippines, respectively.

Following his welcome statement and the introduction of invited speakers of the Session, Mr. Lokuhetty made a presentation titled “Tourism Open Gates to Spring of Opportunities.” Mr. Lokuhetty shared with the audience the tourism industry’s current world status highlighting the international tourism growth, its contribution to the world

GDP, as well as the trends in the world. In addition, Mr. Lokuhetty explained with statistics how the tourism has improved over the years together with the forecast of the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) for the next 20 years.

While reviewing the growth in Asia Pacific region and the future growth pattern for the Asia Pacific, Mr. Lokuhetty and the participants discussed how tourism had helped to improve several countries’ economic growth. Furthermore, Mr. Lokuhetty presented as a case study how Sri Lanka’s tourism growth within last

7 years and Sri Lanka as a tourism product, along with a four-minute video highlighting the country’s natural beauty, rich culture, adventure and the advantages for the traveler when visiting Sri Lanka due to its compactness authenticity and the diversity.

The first invited speaker of this Session was Mr. Eric Lin from the Tourism Bureau of Taiwan who made a presentation on “The Next Big Opportunity for Taiwan Tourism.” In his report, Mr. Lin emphasized that to promote Taiwan in the international

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CACCI Delegates

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tourism arena, the Taiwan Tourism Bureau plans to develop “multiple sources of inbound tourism on a global scale.” This means that it will continue to invest in Taiwan’s current main tourism markets, while at the same time, it will also actively develop high-potential markets within ASEAN countries, including Muslim travelers.

Featuring the theme of “Promoting Development and Growth of Tourism in the Philippines,” second speaker Ms. Aileen Clemente from the Philippines analyzed the latest development of the

tourism industry in the Philippines, ASEAN region and the world. Despite the challenges domestically, Ms. Clemente took her own company’s projects as an example to show how the Philippines has implemented its national tourism development plan. Among all the events, Ms. Clemente introduced to the audience her company’s “Lost Pieces of History Advocacy,” beginning with the Palawan Liberation: A Salute to Valor.

During the Q & A Session, Mr. Lokuhetty, altogether with Mr. Lin and Ms. Clemente, conducted interesting and lively discussions on the challenges



Mr. Obaidur Rahman, on behalf of CACCI, presents tokens of appreciation to Session Chairman and invited speakers.

and opportunities of the tourism market with all delegates. ❀

Laos places great importance on ecotourism

Vientiane Times/Asia News Network

The Lao government has attached great importance on ecotourism development as a way to protect the country’s natural and cultural resources while bringing economic benefits to local communities.

Laos is entrusted to host the Asean Ecotourism Forum in Pakxe, Champassak province from June 22 to 25 to discuss regional cooperation regarding sustainable tourism development.

Held under the theme: “Asean Without Borders: A Roadmap for Strategic Development of Ecotourism Clusters and Tourism Corridors,” the forum will discuss and adopt a Pakxe declaration aiming to align the region’s ecotourism destinations.

The declaration will call for an Asean coordinated roadmap for both public and private sectors to pool resources and unlock economic opportunities along designated tourism corridors.

Over 300 delegates from Asean nations are expected to attend the forum where a tourism trade fair featuring 200 booths scheduled to take place during the event. Apart from Asean nations, China, Japan and South Korea will also be exhibiting at the tourism fair.

Quoting a 2015 World Travel

and Tourism Council (WTTC) report, Xinhua said the forum was initiated as ecotourism operators sought to increase their share of leisure travel spending in Southeast Asia which generated a total of US\$158 billion in 2014 and was projected to rise to some US\$285.5 billion by 2025.

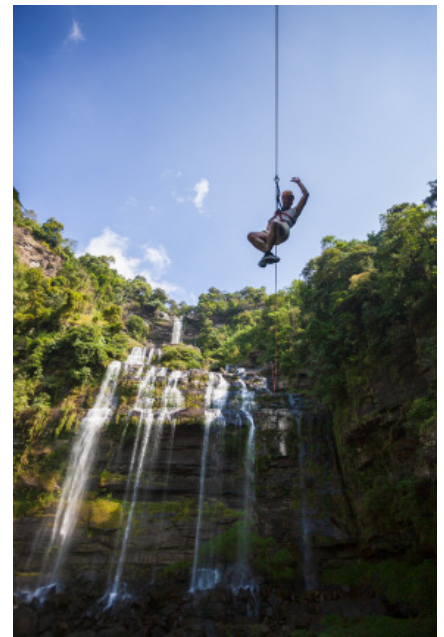
A tourism official in charge of the event Somxay Sitpaseuth told Vientiane Times on June 20, 2016 that “We are now ready to host the forum which should contribute to enhancing tourism cooperation in the region.”

Ecotourism aims to assist environmental protection, the sustainable use of natural and cultural resources and the delivery of measurable socio-economic benefits to local communities.

Ecotourism activities in Laos include trekking through conservation areas and communities to experience nature and the culture of local people.

Activities also include ziplining, homestays and others that contribute to raising awareness for communities to protect the natural and cultural heritage.

Laos has a population of 6.5 million people but the country is full of unspoiled, diverse ethnic lifestyles and traditions and perhaps the most extensive network of ecosystems on the



Indochina Peninsula.

In place to protect and conserve these irreplaceable resources is a network of 20 National Protected Areas, often cited as one of the best designed Protected Area Systems in the world.

In 2015, the number of foreign visitors to Laos reached 4.6 million, representing an annual increase of 13 percent, compared to the previous year.

Source: Inquirer, June 21, 2016 ❀

East Asian markets fuel Philippine tourism arrivals

By Bernie Magkilat

Tourist arrivals in the January-April period of 2016 grew a strong 14.25 percent to 2.073 million of which 49.20 percent came from neighboring East Asian countries, the Department of Tourism (DOT) in the Philippines said.

By regional grouping, the East Asian region is the biggest source of arrivals with 1,020,434 tourists, accounting for almost half of the total visitor volume.

Korea continues to supply the biggest arrivals to the country with a total of 481,596 arrivals for January to April 2016. This market accounted for 23.22 percent of the total arrivals. Except for Hong Kong and Macau, all countries from the East Asian markets posted increases, with China showing the biggest growth of 88.86 percent from its arrival of 126,293 in 2015 to 238,523 this year. Another high growth market is Taiwan which posted an increase of 28.94 percent.

The United States of America ranked as the 2nd visitor-generating market with 303,951 visitors, constituting 14.66 percent of the total, and recording a 7.18 percent increase from the figure of 283,577 arrivals during the same period in 2015. China secured the 3rd spot, with 238,523 arrivals or an 11.50 percent share of the total arrivals. Japan followed in the fourth place by contributing 183,620 visitors, comprising 8.85 percent of the



(MB File) Boracay Island, touted as the crown jewel of Philippine tourism. (MB File-Tara Yap)

total inbound traffic.

The 5th major market was Australia with 88,496 arrivals, comprising 4.27 percent of the total.

Rounding up the top ten visitor markets are Taiwan (3.46 percent share of total figures) with 71,656 arrivals, Canada (3.29 percent share) with 68,288 arrivals, United Kingdom (3.04 percent share of total) with 63,039 arrivals, Singapore (2.94 percent share) with 61,033 arrivals, and Malaysia (2.35 percent share) with 48,835

arrivals.

Countries which posted substantial growth in inbound traffic to the Philippines from January to April 2016 include France with 23,980 tourists (growth of +24.02 percent), Germany with 35,639 arrivals (+20.87 percent), Sweden with 11,588 arrivals (+20.16 percent), and India with 29,578 arrivals (growth of +22.15 percent).

D O T s p o k e s p e r s o n , Undersecretary Benito Bengzon, Jr, "these encouraging tourism figures can be attributed to the DOT's aggressive marketing activities, international events held in the country, and the foreign markets' increasing awareness of the product offerings of the different Philippine destinations."

Bengzon reported that DOT's estimated tourism receipts for January to April 2016 is Php 86.66 Billion, an increase of 12.34 percent over the 2015 receipts for the same period.

Source: Manila Bulletin, June 3, 2016



Attracting tourists a key part of Taiwan's 'new southbound policy'

By Chen Yu-fu

Attracting tourists from Southeast Asian nations is a key part of Taiwan President Tsai Ying-wen's "new southbound policy," according to official government budget figures.

Of the NT\$4.5 billion (US\$142 million) which the Executive Yuan has budgeted for the policy, the Ministry of Transportation and Communications — which includes the national Tourism Bureau — is to receive NT\$200 million, while the Ministry of Culture is to get NT\$100 million.

The funds are to be spent on making it more convenient for tourists to visit, as well as promoting tourism and Taiwanese culture.

Although the number of foreign tourists climbed almost 9 percent during the first half of this year according to Tourism Bureau statistics, the growth has been dampened since May by a decrease in the number of Chinese tourists.

The number of visitors from China, who comprise more than a third of foreign tourists, was down more than 15 percent in July when compared with last year, the latest month of statistics available on the Tourism Bureau's Web site.

As part of efforts to encourage tourism from Southeast Asia, visa-free entry was expanded last month to include citizens of Thailand and Brunei.

This month, citizens of India, Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Indonesia,



Vietnam and the Philippines have also been granted conditional visa-free entry, if they can demonstrate that they have previously been issued a visa by the US, EU, Japan or South Korea.

Chinese Nationalist Party (KMT) Legislator Lin Li-chan, an immigrant from Cambodia, said that while Southeast Asian nations suffer from substantial income inequality, there are businesspeople and white-collar workers with disposable income who

wish to travel overseas.

The conditional opening of visa-free entry could help attract wealthier people, Lin said, adding that there is substantial potential for development in a number of business sectors, including plastic surgery and luxury goods.

"Taiwan's large amusement parks are also a major draw," she said, as Cambodia and Laos do not have attractions like the Lefoo Water Park and Janfusun Fancyworld.

Democratic Progressive Party Legislator Hsu Chih-chieh said there is potential to develop boat tours around the nation similar to those available in Japan.

Hsu also urged the government to provide incentives for cruise ships to dock at the nation's harbors.

Additional reporting by Abraham Gerber

Source: Taipei Times, September 17, 2016



Taiwan Cabinet approves NT\$30 billion in loans for tourism sector

By Tai Ya-chen and Frances Huang

The Executive Yuan of Taiwan has approved a plan to extend NT\$30 billion (US\$955 million) in loans to the local tourism sector which has felt the pinch of the precipitous fall in the number of Chinese visitors in recent months.

The Cabinet said that the NT\$30 billion in loans is aimed at helping the domestic tourism business upgrade its hardware and software in a bid to improve the quality of the industry and eventually attract more visitors to Taiwan.

Since the pro-independence Democratic Progressive Party government took office in May, there has been a 30-percent decline year-on-year in the number of Chinese tourists taking part in group tours to Taiwan amid cooling cross-Taiwan Strait ties.

Chinese visitor number was down 15.03 percent year-on-year in July, after falling about 12 percent in May and June.

According to the Hotel Association of the Republic of China (Taiwan), the hotel occupancy rate has dropped by 50 percent recently, with those in central, southern and eastern Taiwan the hardest-hit in the wake of the drop in Chinese tourists.

In addition, the National Joint Association of Buses for Tourists of the Republic of China (Taiwan) said that



around 80 percent of a total of 16,000 tourist buses in the country are currently idle due to the lack of Chinese tourists.

The plunge has caused an outcry from the local tourism industry and the businesses have urged the government to provide financial support to help them survive the steep decline.

The local tourism industry has even planned to stage a demonstration on Sept. 12 to ask for better business opportunities at a time of difficulty resulting from a sharp fall in Chinese visitors.

The Executive Yuan said that the NT\$30 billion in loans will be used to help local tourism operators upgrade and allow them to provide tourists with

a better tour environment. The Cabinet stressed that the loans will not simply be used as financial relief.

To take on the impact from the drop in Chinese visitors, the Executive Yuan said that it will encourage more local people to tour the island to make up the shortfall, while the government will continue to make efforts to diversify the sources of foreign visitors to Taiwan.

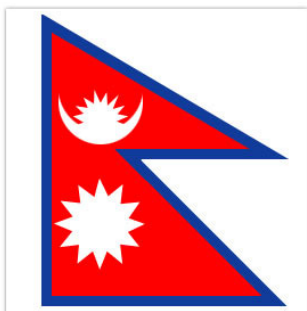
The Executive Yuan said that it will help the local tourism industry come up with innovative tour packages which are expected to provide an insightful look at Taiwan, including the country's unique cultures, to lure more foreign tourists to Taiwan.

The government data showed that Taiwan recorded 10.44 million foreign tourist arrivals in 2015, more than 4.18 million of which came from China.

Source: Central News Agency (CNA), September 9, 2016



Nepal gov't introduces new rules to promote its adventure tourism



The Kathmandu Post/Asia News Network

The Nepalese government has enforced the Recreational Aviation Regulation 2016 amending the Aviation Sports Regulation 2012 in a bid to promote adventure tourism — touted as one of the fastest growing sectors.

The Nepali government has enforced the Recreational Aviation Regulation 2016 amending the Aviation Sports Regulation 2012 in a bid to promote adventure tourism — touted as one of the fastest growing sectors.

The new regulation came into effect from July 16, 2016.

Leisure aviation activities like paragliding, hang gliding or micro-light and ultra-light flights have become one of the most popular adventure sports among visitors to Nepal. As of now, only Pokhara has been the hotspot for leisure aviation and the government plans to diversify such activities in other areas too.

Buddhi Sagar Lamichhane, joint-secretary at the tourism ministry, said the new regulation aims at making the activities more popular and enabling firms involved in the business to operate more efficiently and transparently.

He said the regulation has simplified procedures for foreign amateur flyers in Nepal. Likewise, special permission can be issued to conduct any of these activities in any special occasion under the new rule.

A code of conduct has been imposed for pilots and operators. also, the companies should make public the fare of all such activities. “Amid growing concern that the



This undated photo shows adventure tourism in Nepal. (The Kathmandu Post/Asia News Network)

companies have been charging fares in a haphazard manner, we have enforced the provision of making fares public,” said Lamichhane.

The Civil Aviation Authority of Nepal charges 150,000 Nepalese rupees (US\$1,397) for an air operator certificate and 50,000 rupees as flight permission fee per flier, which is valid for 15 days.

In a bid to encourage such activities outside Pokhara, the companies will be offered a 50 percent discount on license renewal fees, pilot registration fees and charge levied on equipment.

As the number of leisure aviation, particularly paragliding, has reached a saturation point, making the airspace in Pokhara congested and unsafe, the Tourism Ministry in September 2014 had stopped issuing new operating permits.

New permits have been restricted in Sarangkot, Toripani and Mandredhunga, covered by the air traffic service route of Pokhara airport

and its control zone within a 10 nautical mile radius.

Currently, there are more than 65 paragliding companies across the country — more than 95 percent operating in Pokhara. A few companies have been permitted to operate in Bandipur, Bhedetar, Surkhet, Syangja and Palpa.

The ministry statistics show the number of paragliding flyers in Pokhara jumped significantly to 8,999 in 2015. Of them, 5,692 were foreigners. The figure was at 6,548 in 2013.

Aerial sports began in Nepal in 1996 with Sunrise Balloon and Avia Club offering hot air ballooning and ultra light flying, respectively. Paragliding started to take off in 2007.

Popular season for this adventure sport is September-November. However, operators say paragliding is becoming popular as an all-season activity among the visitors.

Source: China Post, July 25, 2016



Japan doubles overseas tourist target for 2020

By Shusuke Murai



The government said it plans to double the amount of foreign visitors to Japan and also raise the amount tourists spend to ¥8 trillion by 2020 — more than double last year's record ¥3.48 trillion. | REUTERS

With the goal of drawing 20 million inbound tourists annually by 2020 within reach four years ahead of schedule, the government announced on March 30, 2016 it will double the target to 40 million.

The ambitious move came after the Japan National Tourism Organization announced in January that a record 19.73 million foreign tourists visited the country in 2015, up 47.3 percent from the previous year.

Also under the new goal, which was set at a meeting of a special panel chaired by Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, the government said it will target ¥8 trillion in spending by overseas visitors by 2020 — more than double last year's record ¥3.48 trillion.

After the Olympics, the government's aim is to attract 60 million foreign visitors a year by 2030 with the hope they will spend ¥15 trillion annually by that year.

“Tourism is an important pillar of our country's growth strategy, and a trump card for regional revitalization.

It is also an engine to boost growth to achieve the ¥600 trillion GDP goal,” Abe said as he closed the panel meeting. “To establish a tourism-based country, I'm determined to take any political measures in advance to be fully prepared.”

The new goal is “highly feasible” with the right political will and a continuous effort, tourism minister Keiichi Ishii said.

To that end, the government established 10 objectives designed to revamp the country's tourism industry. Those include opening state guest houses in Kyoto and Akasaka to the public, remodeling national parks by 2020 to provide a more “interactive” experience and strategically enhancing the landscape of major sightseeing spots.

The plans also include increasing promotional efforts to attract more tourists from Europe, the United States and Australia, as well as wealthy tourists from other nations.

Another key is to ease regulations

such as the ban on minpaku private accommodations and to revamp the immigration process at airports through the introduction of advanced technology, according to the panel.

“I believe we could successfully establish a new vision of tourism that matches the new era,” Ishii told reporters after the meeting. “I'm determined to make every effort to implement these plans.”

In addition, the new goal aims to attract 24 million “repeat” overseas visitors by 2020 — about double the figure in 2015 — and 36 million by 2030. The hope is to attract 70 million foreign guests a year to stay in regional areas by 2020 as well — about 3 times more than in 2015 — and 130 million by 2030.

The panel's plan will also try to boost spending by domestic Japanese tourists to ¥21 trillion by 2020, a 5 percent increase above the average over the past five years, and to ¥22 trillion by 2030. The panel hopes to reach that goal by establishing a system that makes it easier for families to take vacations, thus creating a more constant demand for tourist-linked businesses.

After the record number of visitors in 2015, the upward trend shows no signs of slowing. According to JNTO's data, about 3.74 million people have already visited Japan during the first two month of this year, up 43.7 percent from the same period last year.

The surge in the number of foreign tourists and the phenomenon known as bakugai, “explosive” shopping sprees by Chinese tourists, is a positive sign for the slumping economy.

Of the record spending seen by overseas tourists in 2015, 40.8 percent was credited to Chinese visitors, according to JNTO.

Source: Japan Times, March 30, 2016



Colombo is fourth fastest-growing destination city in the world

Colombo is the fourth Fastest-Growing Destination City in the world according to the annual Mastercard Global Destinations Cities Index released in the week of September 19, 2016.

According to the Index Sri Lanka's commercial hub has shown a growth of 19.57% over the last seven years.

The Japanese city of Osaka has shown the strongest growth in international visitors (24.15%) while China's Chengdu and the capital of the United Arab Emirates Abu Dhabi have been ranked 2nd and 3rd respectively.

Japanese capital Tokyo came just behind Colombo with a visitor arrival

growth of 18.48%.

Overall, Thailand's capital Bangkok was the top-ranked destination city by international overnight visitor arrivals whilst Dubai was the fourth. London was placed second followed by Paris.

Osaka was followed by Chengdu in China.

Neither Chengdu nor Colombo are in the regional top 10. MasterCard said Colombo has been experiencing a strong recovery in attracting international visitors after the ending of its civil war in 2009.

International visitor arrivals to Colombo steadily increased from 2009-2016 with a 19.6% compound annual rate of growth (CGAR) and in 2016 overnight visitor arrivals to the city are expected to reach 1.13 million. The visitors are expected to spend at least US\$ 1 billion in the city.

In terms of

expenses, visitors to Colombo spend 45% for accommodation and nearly 24% for food and beverages while nearly 18% spent on shopping.

The Mastercard Index of Global Destination Cities ranks cities in terms of the number of their total international overnight visitor arrivals and the cross-border spending by these same visitors in the destination cities, and gives visitor and passenger growth forecasts for 2016.

The Index provides more than a ranking of the 132 most visited cities around the world. It projects visitor volume and spend estimates for the 2016 calendar year, while delivering a deeper understanding of how people travel and spend around the world.

Thailand's capital Bangkok is the top-ranked destination city by international overnight visitor arrivals. According to the study, Bangkok is projected to receive 21.47 million international overnight visitors in 2016 ahead of London and Paris which have been placed 2nd and 3rd respectively.

Source: The Daily FT, 26 September, 2016



2016 rank	Destination City	Country	Overnight International Visitors (millions)						2016 Visitor Spend (USD billions)
			2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	% Δ 2015 & 2016	
1	Bangkok	Thailand	15.82	17.47	17.03	19.59	21.47	9.6%	\$14.8
4	Dubai	UAE	10.95	12.19	13.21	14.20	15.27	7.5%	\$31.3
*	Colombo	Sri Lanka	0.69	0.72	0.87	1.02	1.13	19.6%	\$1.0

2016 rank	Destination City	Country	Overnight International Visitor Spend (USD billions)						2016 Visitors (millions)
			2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	% Δ 2015 & 2016	
1	Dubai	UAE	\$22.99	\$26.69	\$27.07	\$28.20	\$31.30	11.0%	15.3
4	Bangkok	Thailand	\$11.12	\$12.39	\$11.73	\$13.50	\$14.84	9.9%	21.5

2016 rank	Destination City	Purpose of Visit		Expenditure Breakdown at Destination						Peak Months for Visiting
		Business	Leisure Plus Other Purposes	Accommodation	Food & Beverage	Shopping	Local Transport	Local Services	Misc.	
1	Bangkok	14.4%	85.6%	26.0%	19.4%	21.7%	9.9%	20.8%	2.2%	April, January
4	Dubai	20.0%	80.0%	27.0%	15.0%	31.0%	9.0%	18.0%	0.0%	December-January
*	Colombo	0.0%	100.0%	45.0%	23.7%	17.7%	6.8%	6.8%	0.0%	November-January

Source: Global Destination Cities Index by Mastercard

* Colombo ranked fourth fastest growing destination city in Asia-Pacific

GraphicsDesk

Japanese Hotel chain trains more female ‘ryokan’ chiefs

By Anna Masui



Women employed by hotel chain Fujita Kanko Inc. attend a lecture in Hakone, Kanagawa Prefecture, in July about the okami who manage ryokan (inns). | FUJITA KANKO INC./VIA KYODO

In view of the increasing number of foreign visitors to Japan, Fujita Kanko Inc., a Tokyo-based hotel chain, is stepping up efforts to train female staff in providing service in the style of okami at Japanese ryokan (inns).

The okami is the chief female manager at ryokan, inns that cater to travelers in a uniquely Japanese style. As many ryokan are family-run, the role of okami is typically taken by the wife of the owner or the most senior female family member.

In April, Fujita Kanko launched a two-year program to train its female personnel in the fine art of caring for travelers as it has evolved over centuries in ryokan, under the

supervision of okami.

Participants gather once a month to learn traditional attending manners based on proper knowledge about washoku (Japanese-style food), culture, history and etiquette, as well as the most suitable way to treat guests in each season and month.

In addition to lectures by experts in those fields, they also engage in practical training in which participants take turns playing the role of either customer or staff.

“As a company operating hotels, we would like to nurture staff who can provide the high-quality care of an okami,” said Hiroyuki Sakurai, a Fujita Kanko official in charge of human

resource development. “We expect that the program will help us improve the quality of our overall service and differentiate ourselves from industry rivals.”

The participants in the program are about 20 female staffers from Fujita Kanko’s hotels or inns, including the Hotel Chinzanso Tokyo, a five-star luxury hotel in Bunkyo Ward; Ito Kowaki-en in Ito, Shizuoka Prefecture; and Taikoen in Osaka.

They were either recommended by their bosses or chosen among applicants to take part in the program.

“Since the program brought together women of all ages from various facilities, it has been a valuable opportunity for me to listen to problems facing new employees and also to review my knowledge about Japanese food and manners,” said participant Hiromi Kaneko, 34, chief manager of a restaurant at the Hotel Chinzanso Tokyo.

Another participant said that she wanted to learn and practice the refined manners of an okami, while another explained she hoped to pass along what she learned through the program to others in the hotel she works.

Fujita Kanko said it plans to introduce a system to assess the knowledge and skills each participant acquired through the program.

Source: Japan Times, August 29, 2016



Taiwan's Tourism Bureau touts beefed up app for smarter tourism

By Chanda JL, Special to The China Post

In an effort to offer tourists a smarter way to travel around Taiwan, the Tourism Bureau rolled out a series of events, as well as a smartphone app, July 14, 2016.

The Tourism Bureau collaborated with Taipei 101 in pushing forward programs such as the AskMe program, Taiwan Fun on the Tropic of Cancer festivities and the Tour Taiwan App, according to the United Daily News.

Tourists can access the exhibitions at the Taipei 101 observatory on the 89th floor, as well as a B1 display area, which will last until Aug. 31, 2016.

The app has reportedly expanded its tourism database to over 64,000 items since 2012, including tourist attractions, culinary selections, transportation and accommodation, making it more convenient to tour Taiwan.

The Tourism Bureau has already planned to boost marketing for the English version of the app, making it more accessible to foreign tourists, the Central News Agency reported.

Author of "Taiwan in the Eyes of a Foreigner", Nick Kembel, who was invited to the event, shared five reasons why he loves Taiwan and his experiences of living here.

"Taiwan attracts people as it is quite safe, has many delicacies, convenient and cheap transportation, the locals are friendly and there are many outdoor sports," said Kembel.

The Tourism Bureau pointed out that consistent with digital era innovations, people can download the



Tour Taiwan

Free App

Category: Travel

Released: 01 May 2012

Version: 1.0.0

Size: 7.4 MB

Languages: English, Chinese

Developer: Tourism Bureau, Republic of China (Taiwan)

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Tour Taiwan App and check out popular landmarks, food, transportation, accommodation and upcoming events.

The Tourism Bureau plans to give out a total of 100 gifts to people who download the app during the time of the exhibition.

Starting from last year, the Tourism Bureau combined traveler friendly services initiated by private industries by inviting hundreds of shop owners to join the Taiwan Ask-Me

program.

On July 23, the Tabalong Arts and Culture group will perform and showcase the culture of the Indigenous people of Taiwan. The Taiwan Moon Lute Folk Music Association will perform on July 30.

A local performing arts group will perform acrobatics and theater on Aug. 6. The last performance will be on Aug. 13 by See-Join Hand Puppet Theater.

Participants that take part in Q&A events at the exhibition will have the chance to win a limited edition OhBear postcard, the mascot of the Tourism Bureau.

Source: China Post, July 15, 2016



Japan's tourism sector evolving but needs more work, cultural heritage expert says

By Shusuke Murai



Chinese tourists pose for a photograph outside the Imperial Palace in Tokyo on April 15, 2016. | BLOOMBERG

Japan's tourism strategies have gone beyond just promoting hospitality and have put the nation on track to achieve global standards, a British-born cultural heritage expert said.

The Japanese tourism industry had been somewhat complacent and self-centered, but it is evolving into a world-class business, David Atkinson, 50, chairman and president of Tokyo-based heritage restoration firm Konishi Decorative Arts and Crafts Co. and a former Goldman Sachs bank analyst, said in an interview with *The Japan Times* in April 2016.

In the wake of increasing overseas visitors, the government in March set a new goal of attracting 40 million visitors by 2020 and 60 million by 2030.

It also set an economic goal — ¥8 trillion in spending by overseas tourists by 2020 and ¥15 trillion by 2030 — for the first time, aiming to develop tourism as a “key industry” to underpin Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's drive to

achieve ¥600 trillion in gross domestic product.

To achieve these goals, the government also revealed measures to bolster tourism, such as boosting restoration of the nation's cultural assets and providing more easy-to-follow multilingual guides to make tourism venues more “exploitable.”

Other measures include updating old restrictions such as those on minpaku (private stay) businesses, reaching out to attract more tourists from Europe, the United States and Australia, and providing funds to revive struggling hot springs resorts.

But “there is no mention about omotenashi (hospitality) any more,” said Atkinson, who sat on a government panel that compiled the tourism measures.

In an interview with *The Japan Times* in December 2014, Atkinson noted that Japanese had long misunderstood omotenashi to mean forcing Japanese hospitality and

behavioral customs on foreign visitors who had different values.

But with practical measures and concrete economic targets set by the government, Atkinson said Japan's business strategies were reaching a level on par with other tourism-focused countries.

“Tourism cannot be driven only by idealism . . . it needs to be viewed as a business that contributes to GDP,” he said.

The change in the level of commitment can be seen in the budget allocation for tourism-related policies, Atkinson said. For fiscal 2016, the government doubled the tourism agency's budget to ¥20 billion — a third more than the ¥14.2 billion requested by the agency — in what Atkinson said was an “extremely exceptional” outlay.

If the strategies are pursued, Japan can easily reach the 40 million visitor goal, as it already has abundant resources to attract tourists, Atkinson said.

“Take Thailand for example. It had some 30 million visitors annually, although most of the country is hot throughout the year . . . and cultural resources are not so rich,” he said. “Japan, on the other hand, is blessed with unique tourism resources in many different cities, and visitors can experience weather ranging from the tropical to the cold of Hokkaido.”

In 2015, Japan welcomed a record 19.73 million foreign visitors — just a few shy of the previous 2020 target of 20 million arrivals.

To raise that number even further, Atkinson said it was crucial to attract more visitors from the United States, Europe and Australia outside of the business visits already generated from those nations.

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Japan's tourism

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Of 19.73 million visitors last year, Chinese accounted for the largest segment, at 4.99 million, followed by 4 million South Koreans, 3.68 million Taiwanese and 1.52 million from Hong Kong, according to Japan National Tourism Organization data.

In the same survey, tourists from China increased the most, more than double their numbers in the previous year. This was followed by a 64.6 percent increase in visitors from Hong Kong and a 49.2 percent rise in Vietnamese.

However, although the number of visitors from the U.S. topped a record 1 million last year, the increase was only 15.9 percent from the previous year. Visitors from the U.K. rose by 17.5 percent and Australians increased by 24.3 percent.

Asked if Japan depended too much on tourists from China, Atkinson said the Chinese tourism boom did not

apply only to Japan but was a global trend.

“Japan had almost 5 million arrivals from China (in 2015), but Thailand had some 7 million visitors (from China). . . . It’s not surprising if visitors from China increased even more,” he said, adding that the high dependency on Chinese tourists would be eased eventually if the number of visitors from other countries increased.

With the growth strategy fixed, the next challenge is to create a viable mass tourism market, Atkinson said.

Some tourism industry people have a conventional mindset and oppose change because they fear a shift in the power balance, Atkinson said.

“Tourism can be a main pillar of Japan’s economic growth that stands on its own merit,” he said.

“It is already a large industry worldwide, and Japan has potential. It just depends on whether Japan can shed its stagnation.”

Source: *Japan Times*, May 4, 2016 ❀



David Atkinson, chairman and president of Konishi Decorative Arts and Crafts Co., is interviewed in Tokyo on April 15, 2016. | Satoko Kawasaki



Singaporeans selling to China via new 'social travel marketplace'

By Melissa Lin, *The Straits Times/ANN*

The idea for the start-up, Wegogo was inspired by the huge potential of the China market.

A team of five Singaporeans has created an online platform for small travel service providers here and worldwide to sell directly to Chinese travelers.

It is led by internet pioneer and serial entrepreneur Wong Toon King, 49; and former chief executive of financial solutions company Melioris Mak Chee Wah, 48.

They unveiled their plans last month for Wegogo, a "social travel marketplace" on social media platform WeChat.

Businesses can go to Wegogo to sign up for a free account, which will create a microsite on WeChat for them. They can then list their company information, products, contacts and promotions on it.

Upon registration, a QR code that links to the microsite will be generated, which they can use for their marketing collateral.

More than 3,000 providers both here and abroad have signed up thus far, including Raintr33 Hotel Singapore.

The platform allows travel operators to tap into the Chinese travel market through WeChat — the most popular messaging app in China — without needing to invest heavily in marketing or IT, said Reene Ho-Phang, 46, Wegogo's strategic adviser.

She is also managing director of travel marketing and representation firm BrandStory. Also in the team are Yue Yew Hoong, 48, and Richard Tan Boon Piew, 48.

Wegogo chairman's, Wong, added: "The Chinese don't have Facebook or Instagram. What we want to do is empower (operators) to have the ability to talk to them socially. The next step is to enable the commerce."

WeChat supports payments and



The team behind Wegogo, front row from left to right, Mr. Tan, Mr. Wong and Mr. Mak; and second row, from left, Mr. Yue and Ms. Ho-Phang pose for a photo in Singapore on Monday, June 27. (Azmi Athni/Singapore Press Holdings)

money transfer. It also has a micro-blogging function where users can post photos and video and share articles.

For a start, the team will highlight operators that offer "authentic local experiences" — for instance, a chilli crab-cooking lesson or home-dining service — through videos focused on people behind the business.

"We have seen a shift in Chinese traveler profiles from sightseeing and only visiting iconic attractions, to engaging in experience-seeking journeys across the world to learn different cultures and to immerse themselves locally," said Mak.

The team has ambitious plans to cater to the needs and wants of this burgeoning group of travelers.

In 2014, the Chinese made 109 million trips abroad, the United Nations World Tourism Organisation estimated. It predicts that this figure will hit 200 million by 2020.

Singapore, too, has been impacted by the growth. It welcomed 2.1 million Chinese visitors last year, up 22 per cent from the year before.

In future, the team hopes to build an artificial intelligence-based system that tracks online activities of Chinese consumers — what they search for, post and buy — to get a picture of what they want when planning trips.

The team will then match the consumers to the relevant travel service providers. Over time, the goal is to allow businesses to tailor products to match these needs.

"It's a big idea and it takes time to evolve," said Wong, who led a group of private investors to back the venture with an angel funding of US\$368,000.

The idea for the start-up was inspired by the huge potential of the China market, said Mak.

Corina Chong, director of Raintr33 Hotel which opened in December 2014, said: "We all acknowledge that China is a huge market that we can't ignore. For a relatively new hotel, we've reached the stage where we want to look at bigger markets like China. Wegogo gives us an avenue to do that."

Source: China Post, June 28, 2016 ✿

ABOUT CACCI

The Confederation of Asia-Pacific Chambers of Commerce and Industry (CACCI) is a regional grouping of apex national chambers of commerce and industry, business associations and business enterprises in Asia and the Western Pacific.

It is a non-governmental organization serving as a forum for promoting the vital role of businessmen in the region, increasing regional business interaction, and enhancing regional economic growth. Since its establishment in 1966, CACCI has grown into a network of national chambers of commerce with a total now of 29 Primary Members from 27 Asian countries and independent

economies. It cuts across national boundaries to link businessmen and promote economic growth throughout the Asia-Pacific region. CACCI is a non-governmental organization (NGO) granted consultative status, Roster category, under the United Nations. It is a member of the Conference on NGOs (CoNGO), an association of NGOs with UN consultative status.

Among the benefits of membership in CACCI are the following:

1. Policy Advocacy - CACCI aims to play a strong policy advocacy role in order to establish a business environment conducive to creating

better opportunities for CACCI members.

2. Wide scope for networking - Participation in the various projects of CACCI will provide members the opportunity to expand their reach in Asia-Pacific by establishing contacts with the business communities of the region.

3. Participation in CACCI Annual Conferences and Training Programs - Members are invited to participate in the annual Conferences and various training programs which CACCI regularly conducts either on its own or in cooperation with other international organizations and member chambers.

4. Interaction in Product and Service Councils - Membership in CACCI allows participation in the activities of the various Product and Service Councils (PSCs) of the organization. PSCs are business groupings organized along product or service lines with a primary objective of promoting business cooperation, personal contacts, and technology transfer.

5. Access to CACCI publications - CACCI publishes the CACCI Profile, its monthly newsletter, and the CACCI Journal of Commerce and Industry, a bi-annual publication which features papers, speeches, and other articles pertaining to issues affecting the regional economy.

For more information, please visit www.cacci.biz

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 Chairman of Red Apple Travel & Holidays Lanka (Pvt) Ltd., and Immediate Past President of The 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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