



Indo-US Promotion of Travel and Tourism II

Prospect East-Expanding Perspectives

The Indo American Chamber of Commerce (IACC), an apex bi-lateral Chamber of Commerce along with Travel Agents Federation of India (TAFI) engaged in promotion of trade and commerce between US and India organised a seminar on **Indo-US Promotion of Travel & Tourism – Prospect East – Expanding Perspectives** for the second successive year on **Thursday, 20th September 2018 at Hyatt**, Kolkata. The aim of this initiative was to give a major boost to the In-bound & Outbound tourism between India & USA with a spotlight on North-Bengal & North East as a choice of favoured destination.

The conference was inaugurated by Hon’ble Patricia Hoffman, Consul General, Consulate General of USA.

Of the Government of West Bengal, The Ministry of Tourism’s initiative created a robust, reinvigorated tourist infrastructure in the state changing the face of Bengal’s tourism scenario under the able leadership of the Hon’ble Chief Minister Smt. Mamata Bandyopadhyay.

The program dealt with North Bengal, a highly potential place for tourism and a destination to reckon. Starting from the terai region of Dooars adjoining the forest of Jaldapara and Gorumara, the two distinct national parks, onto the hills of Darjeeling encompassed with acres of tea gardens, the landscape is a unique motley peppered with salubrious weather for any tourist.

As per the statistics released by the Ministry of Tourism, India, West Bengal had the 5th highest foreign tourist arrivals in the country with a total 1.49 million visitors. The West Bengal Tourism Policy 2016 estimated 10,000 branded hotel accommodation rooms to be available in the State by 2020. The Pakyong Airport in Sikkim that has recently become operational has unleashed a great deal of potential that remains to be harnessed by the aviation and hospitality industry. Also, the inception of direct flights between Durgapur and Delhi had experienced considerable traffic in the short span of time since it began.

In line with that commendable initiative, the IACC had reputed speakers to enlighten the gathering on different facets of Tourism as an Industry viz, experiential, heritage & adventure tourism amongst others.

With support of US Consulate in Kolkata, the seminar also had elaborate sessions on US Visa, Visit USA schemes, and Airline connectivity in the travel sector. Senior officers from the consulate of USA participated like the previous year. The seminar also witnessed a large congregation of industry stalwarts, corporate leaders, Governments bureaucrats, Members of different CoC, and HNI population from Kolkata and other cities.

The conference covered informative sessions on Inbound Tourism, Outbound Tourism, US Visa: Regulations & Processing along with the inaugural session focused on Capacity Building in the Hospitality Sector.

A brief walk through the conference



Lamp Lighting Ceremony

L to R: **Vasant Subramanyan**, National President, IACC, **Prabir Dasgupta**, Regional President, IACC - EIC, **Patti Hoffman**, US Consul General Kolkata, **Dr. Suborno Bose**, Chief Mentor, Indismart Global Ltd., **Mayukh Ray**, President - Sales and Marketing, Ambuja Neotia Group, **Anil Punjabi**, MD, AR-ES Travels Pvt. Ltd., **Jonathan Ward**, US Commercial Affairs Officer, **Sanjay Misra**, GM, Air India



Session I - Inbound Tourism

Husna-tara Prakash addresses the audience.

L to R: **Husna-tara Prakash**, Director, Glenburn Tea Estate & Boutique Hotel, **Sayantani Ray Choudhury**, GM, Communications, TourEast, **Ajay Rawla**, Founder & CEO, The Rajbari Bawali, **Brigit Holm**, General Manager, Hyatt Regency Kolkata, **Vijay Shankar Dwivedi**, Group Brand & Corporate Communication Head, Ambuja Neotia Group, **Sangita S Mani**, Dy Head Naturalist, Taj Safaris, **Adarsh Tulshan**, Manadng Director, Celica Automobiles, Jeep Kolkata.



Media Interaction

L to R: **Anil Punjabi**, MD, AR-ES Travels Pvt. Ltd., **Jonathan Ward**, US Commercial Affairs Officer, **Mayukh Ray**, President - Sales and Marketing, Ambuja Neotia Group, **Dr. Suborno Bose**, Chief Mentor, Indismart Global Ltd.



Session II - Outbound Tourism

Jonathan Ward, US Commercial Affairs Officer, addressing the audience.



Exhibition Area



Mr Anil Vaswani, Vice President, IACC, conducts an interactive quiz session.



Session III - US Visa: Regulations & Processing
 Ms **Heather Loresch**, Vice Consul, US Consulate, addressing the audience.



L to R: **Rita Bhimani**, emcee for the event, **Heena Gorsia**, Past President, IACC, **Rajlakhsmi Shyam**, IACC member, **Heather Loresch**, Vice Consul, US Consulate, **Prabir Dasgupta**, Regional President, IACC - EIC, **Jonathan Ward**, US Commercial Affairs Officer, **Anil Punjabi**, MD, AR-ES Travels Pvt. Ltd., **Anindya Dey**, IACC member, **Anil Vaswani**, Vice President, **Rachna Agarwal**, Executive Secretary, IACC – EIC.