



Tourism Scan

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CONTENTS

- ◆ **Cambodia tourism workers rights in jeopardy**
- ◆ **Tourism Boom in Macau – Boon or Bane**
- ◆ **Political instability cripples Nepal Tourism**
- ◆ **Paedophiles run for cover**
- ◆ **Reliving prison history**
- ◆ **Sex Tourism increase HIV/AIDS risk in Zambia**
- ◆ **Local tourists play integral part in tourism income generation**
- ◆ **Singapore urged to ratify Stockholm Declaration**
- ◆ **Asia's highways enhance channels for intra-regional tourism**
- ◆ **About sensitising tourists**
- ◆ **Tex-Mex border closing affects tourism communities – Post 9/11**
- ◆ **Prostitution- Fall out of tourism promotion in Agra**
- ◆ **International slavery and emancipation Conference**
- ◆ **Radisson initiative on community and environment**

“The Ecumenical Coalition on Tourism is a Hong Kong based coalition of Regional Ecumenical Organisations and over seventy secular and faith-based groups. It seeks to unite people around collective efforts that negate the undesirable effects of modern tourism and, in its place, institute socially responsible and ethically oriented tourism. It believes that tourism must be based on justice and sustainability for host communities and that, therefore, tourism planning and practice must be democratised. ECOT advocates respect for the protection and dignity of the human rights of women, children, indigenous peoples and workers in the tourist trade. It opposes tourism projects that create environmental devastation.”

***TOURISM SCAN** continues. This is our second edition. Our readers have brought forward helpful comments and suggestions on our first issue. We have sought to incorporate them to a large extent in this edition. Tourism Scan will continue to be on bi-monthly basis. We ask you to keep writing in. The interaction will ensure we can be useful and relevant.*

While working on this issue, we have come across a wide ranging set of tourism trends, counter trends and innovations in the patterns of responses. For example, the Cambodian hotel workers struggle focuses on the denial of rights of workers in the hotel sector. This reminds us of many of the experiences of the contract workers and employees on how the hotel industry in their attempt to make big profits, often punish those working at the lower rung of the ladder. The workers often end up paying heavily in their fight to claim their basic rights.

The news agency Tehelka based in India unearthed the paedophile racket in Goa, India which set the paedophiles to go into hiding. For many years NGOs have been urging the government to take necessary action but were ignored. The government, local bodies, religious and educational institutions have, after years of slumber, suddenly woken up to take immediate action to save the lives of the innocent children in the state. Goa is not the only tourist destination, but Agra in India which hosts the world famous Taj Mahal, is no exception. Prostitution seems to thrive in residential as well as tourist complexes. Domestic tourists are the culprits here.

The international campaign on Maldives launched by our network partners, Tourism Concern, UK highlights the inequalities of recent tourism wealth and on-going poverty amongst the majority of the 300,000 islanders. Maldives derives the bulk of its national wealth from tourism. The call of the international community to boycott has a salutary effect which underpins the fact that creative international campaign can bring pressure for change.

In a development that strikes us as having the potential to bring on board big business on issues of ethical tourism, the Radisson SAS chain of hotels has launched an awareness campaign among hotel staff and guests on environmental and social issues.

Two months ago, we reported on the issue of space tourism. We thought it was one of those bizarre ideas. Robert Branson, Virgin Group has promised the world that three years from now, one can travel to space for a cost of 200,000 pounds. In our last issue, we left it without a comment but this time, we must condemn such ridiculous ideas. More than one billion people live under extreme poverty conditions. More than half of the world goes without a meal a day and more number suffer without access to safe drinking water. Strange programmes such as space tourism are definitely socially unsustainable forms of tourism and must be vehemently opposed by concerned citizens. Promoting this would only lead to widening of the existing divide between the rich and the poor.

Some of the issues we have identified will provoke anger and resentment. Yet, it is a fact that commercial tourism is, by and large, insensitive to the social environment within which it operates. For certain, it will take time before we can affirm that another tourism is possible. To reverse ongoing trends will require persistence struggle.

Shirley Susan

Editor

1st October 2004

Cambodia tourism workers rights in jeopardy

eTurboNews reports that strikes over service charges in December 2003 rendered two hundred people from six five star hotels jobless. The loss of jobs has cut at the very root of their livelihood. The arbitration board dealing with the dispute has issued a nonbinding order saying the dismissed workers should be rehired and that Cambodians must have the right to strike.

Unions are relatively new in Cambodia and cover only a handful of industries. An inspection director for the Department of Labour, Huot Chanthy said, although Cambodian law mandates that service charges be paid to employees, it does not stipulate the form. Patrick Dalban-Moreynas of the Geneva-based International Union of Food, Agricultural, Hotel, Restaurant, Catering, Tobacco and Allied Workers Associations said that on a worldwide basis, 90-100 per cent of service charge money goes directly to employees, with some used to offset administrative or other costs. The dispute with Raffles Hotel "has to do with fundamental rights." Raffles has taken the hard line only because they want to get rid of the federation and do away with trade unions.

Tourism is an important contributor to the Cambodian economy. Workers are the backbone of the tourism industry. They have the right to just working conditions that include dignity, fair remuneration, secure and decent working conditions. Trade unions are a basic right and are the only channel through which the workers can claim their legitimate rights. Also people who travel must be provided information and motivation to ask whether the goods and services on offer are produced under conditions where basic labour rights are respected.

Source: eTurboNews, 17/08/2004

Tourism boom in Macau – Boon or Bane

In a report filed in the South China Morning Post, tourism and gaming are Macau's main breadwinners. Macau, a Special Administrative Region of China, with a population of just 451,000 residents, received a mind-blowing 7.7 million visitor arrivals in the first half of the year. This is a 52 per cent rise compared to year 2003, and slightly more than for the whole of 1999. In June, Macau had to cope with an average of 43,358 arrivals a day and most of the tourists were from the mainland, Hong Kong and Taiwan. In the past three years, the land reclaimed by sea has risen to 7.4 per cent, while the number of residents grew 3.9 per cent. Past experiences have shown that land reclamation usually is at the cost of the environment. While there is a loss of habitat, the further development of the area leads to more waste and pollution thereby leading to extra environmental problems.

In the case of Macau while businesses are booming, this influx of masses has created immense pressure on this small city-state. Acute dearth of taxis, overflowing restaurants, as well as rubbish bins overflowing by mid-afternoon has become the order of the day. Apart from environmental concerns, social problems such as the growing number of women in prostitution from Eastern Europe pose a threat to law and order situation. Incidents of HIV/AIDS, although camouflaged, are steeply rising. The most pressing challenge for Macau is to avoid socially unsustainable tourism development that would ultimately alienate both locals and visitors.

Source: SCMP, 4/8/2004

Political instability cripples Nepal tourism

A Maoist blockade in July effectively closed all roads linking the hill-ringed city with the rest of Nepal disrupting tourism activities badly and shutting down multinational companies. Grenades were thrown at Soaltee Crown Plaza a five star hotel in which Indian Oberoi Group has 61 percent stake. The fate of Nepal's real economic lifeline - Western tourists - is uncertain. There were reports of packed flights leaving the kingdom's airport and half-empty jets arriving. The ambassadors and charge d' affaires of five countries including India, France, Germany, Britain and the USA have written to Prime Minister Mr. Sher Bahadur Deuba and have urged him to resolve the impasse through talks.

The Hindu kingdom, home to Mount Everest and a host of other picturesque peaks, is one of the world's poorest countries. Most rural Nepalese live on 60 cents a day, with feudal upper classes holding most of the land and private industry. Nepal is being pulled by three forces. The first is ruling of the kingdom by King Gyanendra, a constitutional monarch who seized executive powers in 2002 and controls the army. The second is the Maoists, who have slim support but strong influence in more than half the impoverished countryside. The third is the political parties, which have public support but are dogged by infighting and corruption.

Excessive dependence on tourism has its own risks. The Tourism industry must create safety nets to handle emergencies so that workers are able to tide over the crippling effects of any attack on tourism revenues. Within all of this struggle, there is also a need for the tourism industry to rise up and give impetus for resolving the fundamental questions of injustice and equality in Nepal.

Source: e TurboNews 18/08/2004

Paedophiles run for cover

Efforts of Indian News Agency Tehelka in bringing out reports and screening of the film – ‘The nexus of silence on Goa’, has confirmed paedophile activities going on in the state for the last two decades. The demand for sex with children involves a nexus between pimps, hotels, tour operators, guides, taxi drivers, police, and politicians. Economically vulnerable groups in the tourist areas are often helpless actors.

There is tacit approval of the government and the law enforcing authorities on this. While the reports have put immense pressure on Goa Police and Government to wake up from their slumber and to initiate a crackdown on the paedophile activities in the state, it has also set free known paedophiles by letting them to go into hiding. Local bodies, church and the colleges have initiated awareness campaigns. Manohar Parrikar, Chief Minister is blamed for his lackadaisical attitude and his statements on no organized and widespread paedophilia in the state. He has said that the Tehelka sting was carried out at the behest of pederasts and to drive tourist traffic from Goa. He also said that the issue was not grave in the state. The greed for the tourism dollar has even lead to the willingness to surrender integrity.

With not much of a choice, the Goa Government has asked the Central Government to put in place a system whereby police authorities can track the arrival of a suspected paedophile in India. At the state level, the Chief Minister has instructed the Directorate of Women and Child Welfare to compile a comprehensive list of orphanages and shelter which implied that the Government did not have these records until now. Finally the Chief Minister admitted that the police force in Goa needed to be sensitized to deal with child abuse while urging local communities to be sensitive to paedophilia cases and report instances of child abuse to the police. He also has said that the Ric Wood report on Paedophilia in Goa which was withheld by the Goa Government will be released.

The Archdiocese of Goa has decided to screen the film in all its 156 parishes throughout Goa. Father Valentino Vax, Director of Caritas has chalked out a plan of action that involve energizing the social action groups by screening the film followed by discussion on issue of tourism related paedophilia. One wonders whether the church was in slumber all these days. Did it require a wake up call such as this for the church to be woken up to these realities while it has been happening through all these years? As the main tourist season is to begin next month, the community initiatives are to mobilise the local people to help local authorities to crack down on child abuse in Goa. The lesson from this is not that merely that Goa should act. It is that concerted global action from all kinds of forces- political, law enforcing mechanisms, tourism industry and religious leaders- can eliminate this cruel practice. When paedophiles find one door closed, they know that there are green pastures to which they can go. Society must want to see paedophiles enter and stay inside doors of prison walls rather than be abusers in the homes of vulnerable children.

Source: <http://www.tehelka.com>, 21/08/2004

Reliving prison history

Thousands of women suffered torture and repression behind the walls of Hoheneck castle, a medieval fort perched on a hill above the town of Stollberg in Saxony. The fort was used as a jail for political dissidents from 1950 until 1989. The German Company Artemis GmbH which purchased the five-hectare estate in 2003, is advertising the chance to spend a night like a prisoner, eating sloppy food and being deprived of sleep in a tiny cell for the price of 100 euros. The project Director Michael Heinz said, "We are offering people the chance to re-live the past first hand instead of just reading about it in dry history books".

Mr. Karl Hafen from the International Society for Human Rights in Frankfurt said that he received thousands of telephone calls from furious former captives.

Former political prisoners have voiced outrage at the German company's scheme to sell tourists an authentic jail experience in what was former Communist East Germany's biggest women's prison. Hafen said "It's simply unacceptable to turn a prison into a holiday resort," Margot Jann from a support group for former Hoheneck prisoners said, "The women who spent years incarcerated at Hoheneck feel absolutely insulted by Artemis's complete lack of respect." "It's clear to us that this project is just a cheap attempt to make money." The society has asked Saxony's state premier George Milbradt to block Artemis's plan but has got no response yet.

Source: e TurboNews, 13/08/2004

Sex tourism increase HIV/AIDS risk in Zambia

Reports from the Zambia's Central Statistics Office showed that sex tourism in the town of Livingstone, a southern border of Zambia has risen from 16 percent in 2001 to disturbing 42 percent in 2004. This demand for sex tourism has doubled. Consequently, the area has also seen a rise in HIV/AIDS cases, from 17 percent in 2000 to 30 percent in 2004.

On the one hand Southern African Development Community is projecting that tourism's contribution to Zambia's economy is estimated as US\$932 million by the year of 2010. On the other Zambians expressed concerns over the alarming rate of sex tourism which has grown in the past few years. "It wouldn't be good for tourists to go back to their countries with the AIDS virus," senior chief Mukuni of the Toka-Leya people in Livingstone told News 24. "They should be able to go home and speak well of Zambia, not say 'got AIDS from Zambia'." The surge in Zambia tourism is said to the result of tourists' waning of interest in traveling to violence-stricken Zimbabwe.

This is a typical example of how a tourist will abandon the country they love to visit when it does not suit them. It is purely for hedonistic reasons. The local communities especially women and children often pay the price. In countries like Zambia there arises an immediate need to look at other policies for development where tourism will not be seen as the only means to generate national income.

Source: e TurboNews, 13/08/2004

Local tourists play integral part in tourism income generation

Most of Dar es Salaam city's Mbagala Primary School students are afflicted by mental disabilities In order to stimulate their senses through wildlife viewing, the Tanzania Tourist Board (TTB) sponsored a learning trip at the 55,000 sq.km Selous Game Reserve management. The purpose was to stimulate their senses through wildlife viewing. With the aim of developing cultural and local tourism, the Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism wants to attract local communities' school children to visit wildlife parks and other tourist sites in efforts to develop cultural and local tourism in Tanzania and stimulate conservation among the people. In a three day visit, the children have had experiences that have helped them change their sensations and behaviour. They now speak to their teachers and parents about wildlife through signs and facial expressions.

The TTB now sees the gain in attracting local people to do tourism within their own country. Until now local people have never had the joy of experiencing their own hills and natural habits. This is a forward looking and visionary step by the

Tanzania Tourist Board to break away from the tradition to campaign for foreign tourists attracting them to visit Tanzania prominent wildlife parks and other places of tourist interest, while neglecting the locals. Cultural programmes are coordinated by the Tanzania Tourist Board, Tourism Division, Wildlife Department, Tanzania Natural Parks (TANAPA) and Ngorongoro Conservation Area Authority (NCAA) which are custodians of nature and conservation and protection. Travel wire reports that “Special visits for handicapped children groups to protected areas will be part of cultural and community tourism development programs in Tanzania to create local tourists”. In what is clearly a promising trend in Tanzanian tourism for the future the three central factors in Tanzanian tourism Board, Tourism Division, Wildlife Department are taking the responsibility of being custodian of nature conservation and protection, tourism policy formulation, marketing and promotion very seriously. Cultural tourism is the pathway of these initiatives.

Source: <http://www.travelwirenews.com>, 23/08/04

Singapore urged to ratify Stockholm Declaration

United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) reports that four million women and children around the world are trafficked annually for sexual purposes and one third of the \$7 –billion human trafficking trade takes place here in South East Asia. The 1996 Stockholm Declaration and Agenda for Action has been ratified by a total of 119 countries.

At a forum joined organized by Aware and the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), the issue of why Singapore stands as one of only two countries that is yet to sign an international protocol pledging a commitment to reduce child prostitution was brought up. The other country is Timor Leste. Ms Amalee Mc Coy from the East Asia and Pacific regional officer for International organization Ecpat (End Child Prostitution, Child Pornography and Trafficking of Children for Sexual Purposes), identified trafficking routes (from the Indonesia, Philippines, Thailand and Cambodia) are known to include Singapore as a transit and destination point. She said “Singaporeans are child-sex tourists most notably in Batam.” The protocol called states to have in place national action plans by the year 2000 to reduce the number of vulnerable children. Signatories are to commit to pursuing a host of social, legal and policy measures against the commercial exploitation of children, which include prosecuting citizens who commit such offenses in another country.

Source: <http://www.todayonline.com>, 3/08/2004

Canada combats first child sex tourism case

Agence France-Presse reports that Donald Bakker who was arrested nine months ago is expected to appear in court in Vancouver in September charged with 28 counts of sexual assault involving women and prepubescent Southeast Asian girls and making child pornography. Prosecution spokesman Geoff Gaul said that the case is unique because the alleged sexual offenses against children were committed outside of Canada. He said that this is the first time that this section (of the Criminal Code) has been used, so there may not be any precedent when arguments are made.

About 120 governments which met at the first World Congress against the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children in Stockholm in 1996 agreed that each should enact their own legislation against child sex tourism. Canada agreed to the recommendations in the following year. Rosalind Prober said "Wherever there is poverty and a nice beach, you're going to find child sex tourism because the demand is so huge and identified. Cambodia, Vietnam, Honduras and several other Latin American countries are current destination spots. Canada is among the other western countries such as the United States, Australia and Germany which have duplicated campaigns against sex tourism.

Source: <http://www.ecpat.net>, 6/08/2004

Campaigners urge reform for Maldives

Calls for a tourism boycott of the Indian Ocean paradise of The Maldives followed a crack-down on political dissent by opponents of the ruling President Gayoom. An international campaign has been launched to highlight the inequalities of recent tourism wealth and on-going poverty amongst the majority of the 300,000 islanders. The situation in the Maldives is to be discussed at a meeting of tour operators trading with resorts and luxury hotel owners on the islands. It will also be raised in the European Parliament where there is to be a call for trade sanctions.

Maldivian President Maumoon Abdul Gayoom declared the country under state of emergency in the wake of demonstrations demanding the release of political prisoners. The president also ordered the suspension of all Internet connections to the tightly controlled island alarming various international organizations including Reporters Without Borders and The British-based human rights group Friends of Maldives.

Reporters Without Borders expressed outrage on Friday at the Maldivian president Maumoon Abdul Gayoom's action in cutting the entire country off from the Internet. "This grave and irresponsible step is unprecedented anywhere in the world and President Gayoom has embarked on a spiral of repression that is extremely worrying," Reporters Without Borders said. Reporters Without Borders is calling for the release three journalists whom it claimed to "have vanished since the protests." It is urging the international community "to urgently press for a halt to the crackdown." The Maldives government said Sunday it had arrested a total of 185 people, including parliament members. Shockingly the Tourism Minister Ibrahim Zaki was among those arrested.

Source: e Turbo News, 13/08/2004

Rampant greed in tourism

Greed is so rampant in tourism that even the dead may turn in their graves. For instance, it was recently reported that Cambodian tourism promoters are going ahead to cash in on the grave site of infamous Khmer Rouge leader Pol Pot by turning it into a tourist resort, including a hotel, casino and duty-free shopping center. Considering that about 1.7 million Cambodians died of starvation, disease, overwork and execution under Pol Pot's rule from 1975 to 1979, one can only react to such news with disbelief and consternation.

Meanwhile, on the other side of the globe, in Bolivia, another dead political figure has been picked as a "tourism goose" to be squeezed for golden eggs. According to the BBC-News report presented in today's Clearinghouse, Bolivian officials are getting ready for the opening ceremony of a Che Guevara Trail on 8 October. This project, which includes the construction of tourist accommodation and roads as well as other infrastructure improvements, is aimed to lure visitors to the area where the legendary Ernesto "Che" Guevara was captured and executed

by reactionary military forces on 9 October 1967. It appears to be an odd fate for the legendary revolutionary who had come to Bolivia to empower the rural poor to improve their lives and paid with his own life. After 37 years, the living conditions for the rural population have not much improved. But tourism consultants and managers are moving in to “save” the communities in need. And because it is nowadays so easy to sell tourism-for-profit activities as altruistic “poverty reduction” projects, it is not surprising that the “Che tourism” venture is run by an NGO - the local branch of the UK-based international relief agency CARE - and partly funded by British ODA.

Source: <http://www.news.bbc.co.uk>, 30/08/2004

Asia's highways enhance channels for intra-regional tourism

While the Asia-Pacific travel & tourism industry is preoccupied with the impact of aviation and low-cost airlines, the have a far more significant long-term impact on promoting intra-regional travel. The Manila-based Asian Development Bank has provided 27 loans totaling \$4.8 billion to help finance 3,555 kilometers of highway development and road network improvement. ADB has also provided 21 advisory technical assistance (TA) grants totaling \$12.9 million to support the development of road infrastructure by addressing policy and institutional issues. One of the most recent technical assistance grants was approved for Afghanistan. Roads are the principal means of transport for domestic and international traffic in Afghanistan. However, much of the country's road infrastructure has been damaged in more than two decades of conflict. Wrecked bridges and tunnels cause bottlenecks to the movement of people and goods, increasing significantly travel time and vehicle operating costs." Improving transport linkages within Afghanistan and with neighboring countries will promote economic development and reduce poverty by improving access to markets and services," says Hiroaki Yamaguchi, an ADB Transport Specialist.

Source: Travel Impact Newswire, 12/08/2004

About sensitising tourists

A booklet on Dos-and-Don'ts for foreigners is to be launched by the Government of Thailand next year. The government was provoked into taking this action following circulation of an offensive poster advertising a United States film that featured its director sitting on the head of a Buddha image.

Cultural tips are being compiled in book form. “We believe such a booklet will help reduce cultural conflicts between foreigners and their Thai hosts,” said a Thai Minister in charge of cultural affairs. He added” They can be aware of what we do and don't do here.” Tourism has the potential to effect cultural change. Tourists have the tendency to disrespect local traditions, cultures and communities. This is largely born out of ignorance as also stereotyping and racial generalizations of the people they visit. This is probably why the western tourist is still viewed as imperialistic and colonial in outlook. Host governments turn a blind eye to all this because of their desperation for foreign investments. Minimum standards and a code of conduct for tourists must be enforced in tourist destinations. Mechanisms that guarantee this must be urgently installed.

Source: e TurboNews, 13/09/2004

Tex-Mex border closing affects tourism communities – Post 9/11

9/11 has dramatically affected and changed many things around the world. The power of the state has increased and borders have been tightened in the name of national security. One such change involves the closing of the informal border crossings into Mexico at Santa Elena, San Vicente and Boquillas. The border crossings allowed passage from about a hundred to a thousand people through the Tex-Mex pass, visiting the quaint Mexican town of Boquillas for the international and indigenous culture it offers. Surveys have shown that majority of the visitors were from the United States. American tourists would go to the bars there, visit the hot springs, and listen to music by a performer from St. Angelo. But post 9-11, the national park in Mexico is hardly visited and tourists to both Big Bend, a bustling tourism destination in Texas and Terlingua have reduced to a trickle. This has affected not only the park but the community in Big Bend down to Terlingua and Study Butte where all the river guides and the support system for the tourism industry lived. The residents and merchants are unhappy that the tourists no longer throng Big Bend as they could not cross over to Boquillas.

Source: e Turbo news, 7/09/2004

Prostitution – Fall out of tourism promotion in Agra

Prostitution has made deep inroads into the Taj Mahal city - Agra, one of India's biggest tourist hubs. New centres of prostitution now thrive in residential areas and tourist complexes.

Police have unearthed several rackets in the proximity of the tourist centres. Most of the tourists are domestic travelers who come for sheer fun and entertainment. Small and big hotels provide hideaway spaces while emporiums and small shops function as the go- between. Low income group families provide the supply of girls. Shockingly very young girls are recruited and compelled to take hormone injections that accelerate physical growth.

Surendra Sharma, founder president of the Hotel and Restaurant Association points to how "tourism brings dollars.... but in many a country it has also opened the gates for cultural devaluation." "The city of the Taj, which till now had remained virtually insulated from tourism-related pollution, is beginning to feel the impact of changing perceptions and lifestyles, falling prey to demands from tourists for forbidden pleasures."

Prostitution in tourist centres is often a nexus involving the tourism industry, law enforcement officers, go-betweens include families. Civil society groups, faith based organizations and NGOs should combine to set up independent tourism monitoring mechanisms. The government should in turn act on their reports and take punitive measures against those who violate values of dignity. As a preemptive measure government should pursue an aggressive economic advancement plan in low-income communities where women tend to draw.

Source: <http://newindpress.com>, 18/0920/04

International slavery and emancipation Conference

The Turks and Caicos National Museum has begun final preparations for an international conference on slavery and emancipation. The conference entitled "Slavery and Emancipation: The Birth of the Caribbean", set to take place at Brayton Hall from October 25th to 28th in Providenciales, marks the United Nations "International Year to Commemorate the Struggle against Slavery and its Abolition."

Director of the Turks and Caicos National Museum and President of the Museums Association of the Caribbean explains “The conference will mark this important year of commemoration by bringing speakers, scholars, researchers and interested individuals from the Caribbean, US, Canada and Europe to share the latest research, the challenges of slave heritage presentation and major historical finds on the subject.” The conference will include presentations about Trouvadore, a slave ship that wrecked off the Turks and Caicos Islands in 1841. The Trouvadore story remained lost for generations until very recently. He continues “In spite of the economic growth and the increase in Caribbean tourism, the African roots of the region still remain largely undiscovered and are not discussed. This conference will bring together some exciting speakers for the first time. I hope the presentations will shine new light on the subject and will raise awareness of this significant part of world history.”

The conference includes three themed days “Slave History of the Bahamian Archipelago”; “Presentation of Slave History” and “Recent Caribbean Research”. Evening events will include a welcome reception and a special show with performances highlighting the links between African and Caribbean cultures in the Turks and Caicos Islands. Delegates are also being invited to enjoy post conference tours to see plantation sites, heritage trails and other historical points of interest in the Turks and Caicos Islands.

Source: <http://www.travelwirenews.com>, 27/09/2004

Radisson initiative on community and environment

The introduction of Hotel Environment Action Month (HEAM Scheme) in 2003 has proved successful for Radisson SAS Hotels across the Middle East. 700 hotels took part from around the world. The annual HEAM initiative is seen as part of its long-term commitment to corporate social responsibility is organised and co-ordinated by the International Tourism Partnership. One of the schemes that Rezidor SAS is supporting is the United Nations 'Clean Up The World Campaign', where teams of hotel staff have volunteered to remove litter from beaches in their region.

The programme aims to build awareness among hotel staff, guests and local communities of the environmental and social issues that face different regions around the world. To achieve this, HEAM encourages hotels to become involved in activities that not only communicate the need for responsible tourism, but also demonstrate the practical and innovative action already being taken by hotels worldwide.

Their initiatives also include special training and awareness campaigns for staff on aspects such as conservation of water and electricity and competitions to select the most environmentally friendly departments within the hotels and resorts. Guests are also invited to participate in the activities.

Rezidor SAS is ensuring that all aspects of its “Responsible Business” programme are being addressed. This includes charity and humanitarian work.

Ghosoun Al-Qadi, Regional HR & Training Manager said *“Everyone in the hospitality industry should be making an effort to reduce waste, improve efficiency and recycle or reuse wherever possible. We all have a responsibility to the community around us and the environment in general, and the more awareness we can raise regarding these issues, the better the response will be throughout the industry.”*

Source: <http://www.traveldailynews.com>, 2/09/2004

Acknowledgements

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