

Nepal Tourism Board

E-Newsletter

February 18, 2005

NTB on a confidence-building blitz in the Regional markets

NTB in co-ordination with the Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation, the Royal Nepalese Embassy, Thailand and Royal Nepal Airlines organized a Press Conference on the 16th Of February 2005 in Bangkok., Thailand which was followed by a Tour Operators' Meet. This is the first leg of the "South East Asia Roadshow" covering Thailand, Singapore and Malaysia.

The Press Conference and the Tour Operators' Meet were organized to inform the Thai media and travel trade professionals about the improved safety and security situation of Nepal. The speakers at the forum urged the audience to promote Nepal as a "safe, secure and Must See" destination for all Buddhists as the birth place of Lord Buddha through the media and travel trade industry .

Addressing the Press Conference and the Tour Operator's Meet, Mr. Sharada Prasad Trital, Joint-Secretary, MoCTCA and Mr. Yadav Khanal, Charge d' Affaires, Royal Nepalese Embassy, Thailand emphasized on the high-priority placed by His Majesty's Government towards the tourism industry because of its significant contribution to the national economy and a major provider of employment.

Similarly, Ms. Nandini Lahe-Thapa-Director Tourism Marketing & Promotion, Nepal Tourism Board highlighted the importance of the Thai market in Nepal and stressed on the potentiality and importance of Nepal as the most appropriate destination for the pilgrimage tourism in Thailand. She also highlighted on the product variance of these two countries and emphasized that there should be efforts in combining and marketing the products jointly in the future. A much appreciated destination presentation on Nepal was also made for both the audiences at the function.

Phuket Air to commence flights to Kathmandu from March 9

Phuket Air will operate three flights a week connecting Bangkok, Kathmandu, and Dubai commencing from March 9, 2005. It was announced in a press conference held at Kathmandu on February 16, 2005. Speaking at the function, Thai ambassador to Nepal, Phenchome Incharoensak said since Nepal and Thailand share a special bond of friendship for long, the start of PA's flight here would increase the number of tourists visiting both the countries. She said that the flight would open doors in various areas of cooperation between South East Asia and South Asia. The flights, three days a week, will increase activities in the areas of education, tourism, medicine, trade and business, adding to our existing relationship for the betterment of our economies, she said.

Speaking at the same function, Tek Bahadur Dangi, chief executive officer of Nepal Tourism Board (NTB), said that at a time when the demand for airlines is increasing, PA's arrival would boost tourist movement, which will support both the countries in reviving their tourism industry. Nepal and Thailand have many commonalities, which will further give a boost to our efforts in strengthening regional tourism, said Dangi.

Tourist arrivals from Thailand to Nepal has increased to 10,000 this year from an earlier 4000, which is a substantial increment, he said. He commented that the Nepal government has given a high priority to regional tourism development.

Khun Kanin Phuvastien, senior vice-president of Phuket Airlines Co Ltd, at the same function said that PA's flight between Kathmandu-Bangkok and Dubai is a major step forward in tourism cooperation between the countries of Thailand and Nepal.

PA is a leading private Thai airline that is successfully expanding its reach to international destinations and Kathmandu is the fifth international destination which fulfils our goal of becoming a leading Asian airline, he said.

Gurans Travel and Tours is the GSA of PA for Nepal.

Indian Airlines introduces "Through Fares"

Indian Airlines has announced "Through Fares" between Nepal and India for its passengers and tourists, which shall be valid for travel commencing from February 16, 2005 till September 30, 2005, states a press release issued by Indian Airlines here in Kathmandu on February 13, 2005.

"The scheme will promote tourism on Indo-Nepal sector", it says. The fares are applicable for travel between Kathmandu and selected Indian cities like Mumbai, Bangalore, Ahmedabad, Chennai, Lucknow, Chandigarh, Hyderabad, Jipur, Pune, Jammu etc in total twenty cities of India to and from Delhi and Kolkata with stop over facility. Furthermore it says that "Through Fares" for travel to Cochin, Goa and Coimbarore from Kathmandu through Delhi is also introduced. According to Indian Airlines, the fares are substantially cheaper than the sector fares and are available for only residents Nepal, India and Bhutan.

Nepalese Tourism Promotion at Bangalore

Nepal Tourism Board in co-ordination with Royal Nepal Airlines Corporation participated in 40th Travel & Tourism Fair and Outbound Travel Mart (TTF-OTM) held in Bangalore from 11-13 February 2005.

The fair being India's biggest and oldest travel trade show, was able to attract the prominent travel tour operators, media and the prospective travellers during the three days.

Nepal stand beautifully decorated with various tourism products of Nepal attracted almost eight thousand travel trade, media and public visitors. The Nepalese private travel trade participants had the opportunities to interact with their Bangalore based trade counterparts, establish new business network and renew their old business relationship. Some of them also made on the spot bookings cashing on the opportunity to woo the south Indian travellers.

The awareness of Nepal as a beautiful destination was immense among the affluent population of Bangalore. The participation in the fair was a big success in terms of restoring the destination image of Nepal and regaining the confidence of south Indian travellers to travel to Nepal by wiping out all their doubt and safety concerns towards Nepal.

During the fair, Nepal Tourism Board was represented by Mr. Sumit Baral, Asst. Manager and Mr. Gobinda Raj Oli, Officer. The private Nepalese travel trade companies participating in the fair were: Heritage Tours & Travels, Sunny Travel Services, Explore Nepal Richa Tours and Travels, Satyam Tours & Travels, Samrat Tours and Travels, Cosmic Air and Hotel Maharaja Palace.

Intensive First Aid Course to Trekking Guides

A 3-day Intensive First Aid Course was conducted at Bhrikuti by Kathmandu Environment Education Program (KEEP) in association with NTB for trekking professionals from Feb. 5 to Feb. 7, 2005. The objective of the course was to provide tourism professionals with practical skills by providing comprehensive information on first aid and mountain safety. It aimed toward increasing awareness on the emergency situations that could occur while trekking and how to handle such situations. The course also included lessons on first aid treatment and precautionary measures of common ailments and injuries. There were a total of 20 trekking guides who participated in the training. Such courses are important to ensure safety and quality service tourists who visit rural Nepal, and is another step toward sustainable tourism development of Nepal.

Computerized Flight Information system introduced at TIA

Tribhuvan International Airport(TIA) office has announced to provide International Flight Information service of Tribhuvan International Airport through computerized system on general telephone to public The Telephone Number is 977-1-4475555

When you dial this number, you will get the welcome message. After this message the system will request you to dial the required number from the telephone keypad to get information directly. The information will broadcast according to airlines arrivals and departures.

System to get the information on the basis of computer instruction:

Please dial the required number to receive the information.

When dialed 3- Information in Nepali will be received.

When dialed 4- Information in English will be received

Instruction after pressing 3 or 4:

When dialed 1- International Arrival Information will be received.

When dialed 2- International Departure Information will be received.

Instruction after pressing 1 or 2:

When dialed 1- Flight information about Royal Nepal Airlines will be received.

When dialed 2- Flight information about Cosmic Air will be received.

When dialed 3- Flight information about Indian Airlines will be received.

When dialed 4- Flight information about Jet Airways or Sahara Air Airlines will be received.

When dialed 5- Flight information about Qatar Airways will be received.

When dialed 6- Flight information about Thai Airways will be received.

When dialed 7- Flight information about Pakistan Airlines or Biman Bangladesh will be received.

When dialed 8- Flight information about Austrian Air or Air China or Druk Air will be received.

When dialed 9- Flight information about Gulf Air or Martin Air will be received.

You will receive information according to your dialed number between 1 and 9.

MOU signed between TRPAP and AEPC

A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed between Tourism for Rural Poverty Alleviation Programme (TRPAP) and Alternative Energy Promotion Center (AEPC) today, on 16 February, 2005 (5 Falgun 2061) at the Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation (MoCTCA). The MoU was signed in order to facilitate TRPAP's pro-environment initiatives through Renewable Energy (RE) programme.

Mr. Shanker Prasad Koirala, Joint Secretary and also the National Programme Director (NPD) of TRPAP and Dr. Madan Bahadur Basnyat, Executive Director of AEPC signed the MoU on behalf of their respective organizations in the presence of Mr. Rabi Jung Pandey National Programme Manager of TRPAP; Mr. Devendra Prasad Adhikari from AEPC/ESAP; Mr. Subash Nirola Director of NTB; Mr. Aditya Baral Manager of NTB and Mr. Hari Krishna Uprety Environment Specialist of TRPAP.

Tourism for Rural Poverty Alleviation Programme is a joint undertaking of His Majesty's Government of Nepal implemented by Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation (MoCTCA), jointly funded by UNDP, DFID and SNV Nepal. The programme works in six rural districts of Nepal to alleviate poverty with the means of tourism.

Feature of the Week

Lumbini coming up as a Rural Tourism Model

By Upendra Karki

Tourism definitely plays an effective role in the reduction of poverty, promotion of economy and social development of the country. Tourism implies all those activities enroute the tourist destinations, which offers alternative opportunities of income to local residents, thereby contributing in the rural development and empowerment of the community members.

However, the role of tourism in rural development and poverty reduction has not been as satisfactory as revealed by the expectations to date. Though the entrepreneurs and residents of some urban areas like Kathmandu, Pokhara and Chitwan have taken advantage of tourism, the rural residents and local community at the vicinity of tourist destinations have not been able to benefit from it to match the expectations.

Of the many districts where Tourism for Rural Poverty Alleviation Program (TRPAP) has been working in Nepal, with the objective of reducing poverty through tourism, Rupandehi is one. Lumbini, which was included in the inventory of the world heritage in 1997, is in this district. Lumbini has been the sacred pilgrimage shrine for more than 400 million Buddhists of the world and a land of ancient civilization.

Thousands of tourists visit the peaceful and engaging spot of Lumbini every year. But most of them visit for a very short duration and return without having visited places that around the main markets. For this reason, the local communities have not been able to benefit from tourism in Lumbini area.

Keeping in consideration this very fact, different programmes have been launched by TRPAP in the area in order to prolong the stay of tourists visiting Lumbini and help contribute in poverty alleviation.

Introduced in 7 VDCs, peripheral to Lumbini since January 2002, TRPAP has been running different activities like rural trekking, distribution and sale of locally produced handicrafts, visit

of watershed areas for birds watching, nature trek and Lumbini Buddhist circuit visit in assistance with the District Development Committee and Lumbini Development Trust.

Likewise, it is realized that due to the programs run by TRPAP on social mobilization, capacity building of the rural communities, environment conservation and development of physical infra-structures and Gender and social awareness campaigns, the area has started to improve in social and economic condition.

Tharu people of Khudabagar VDC-2, Sonbarshi, having 50 households, have taken to commercial fish keeping in financial and technical assistance of TRPAP. Pragati Fish Farming Group has been formed for the same purpose. Similarly, farmers of Ekala VDC, Sugadhiya have started commercial fish farming through the loan assistance from TRPAP.

The farmers of Khudabagar VDC, Lakadigadh have started commercial banana cultivation after being organized in a group. TRPAP has provided a pumping set free of cost to the group. Around 16 members of the group have grown banana in 30 Kattha land, according to the group chairperson Shesh Ram Yadav. TRPAP also took these farmers on a field visit to different parts including Shivabasti of Nawalparasi district, a famous spot for banana cultivation, where they learnt on how the stems of banana trees can be utilized in producing thread, after the fruit is plucked out. This has led them to the activity of extra income.

The programme has been providing training on producing different sorts of handicrafts, as there is a good market for them. This has benefited the members of poor and downtrodden families.

TRPAP has been running different empowerment schemes for women and has emphasized on their participation in tourism activities. The programme has given training to local women on knitting, making baskets and decoration items out of bamboo and rattan, tailoring and the like. Vishala Devi Yadav and Pushpa Mishra of Ekala VDC have started earning by selling the baskets, bags and other such decorative items.

Laxmi Aryal of Tilaurakot has started a grocery in the assistance of TRPAP. She says she earns up to Rs 150 per day from the shop. An intermediate in Education, Aryal has received the training of tour guide too in assistance of TRPAP.

A road has been constructed in Madhuvani VDC, through which tourists can easily reach to Hathewa Lake for birds-viewing. TRPAP provided Rs 0.45 million and the locals volunteered labour worth Rs 50,000 for its construction. Besides, the road has benefited more than 2,000 local people, says Gokul Tharu of the road Construction Users Committee.

TRPAP has encouraged and given awareness to the hotel and restaurant entrepreneurs and rickshaw drivers on hospitality and capacity building to offer quality services to the tourists. Notice boards have been set up at different places for providing information related to tourist activities.

Introduced since September 2001 by His Majesty's Government, TRPAP has been launched in six districts with technical support from UNDP, DFID and SNV Nepal. They are Taplejung, Solukhumbu, Rasuwa, Chitwan, Rupandehi and Dolpa. The program is targeted at benefiting about 0.16 million people of 48 different VDCs.

RT Feature Service/TRPAP-18

Upcoming Events

Kandahar

A film by Mohsen Makhmalbaf from Iran/ Afganistan

Date: February 20, 2005

Time: 5.30 PM

Venue: Nepal Tourism Board, Bhrikuti Mandap

Modern Times on Mount Everest

Film show

Date: February 22, 2005

Time: 7 PM

Venue: Lazimpat Gallery Café, Lazimpat

Carnival Parade

Date: February 22, 2005

Time: 10-11 AM

Venue: Basantapur, Kathmandu

Organizer: French School of Kathmandu

Ceremony and Stillness

Photographs by Frances Klatzel

Date: Till March 5, 2005

Venue: Siddhartha Art Gallery, Baber Mahal Revisited

Tel: 4411122

Sama Theatre Festival

Date: Till March 13, 2005

Venue: Gurukul, Maitidebi

Tel: 4466956

A Connection with you

Paintings by Oath group

Date: Till February 19, 2005

Venue: Gallery Nine, Lazimpat

Tel: 4428694

Reflections from Tibet

Black and white photographs by Kevin Bubrisk

Venue: Indigo Gallery, Naxal

Tel: 4413580

Recollection

Paintings by Sarita Dangol

Date: February 21, 2005

Time: 4.30 PM

Venue: Buddha Gallery

Tel: 4441689

Nature and Wildlife

Photography exhibition

Date: Till February 28, 2005

Venue: WCN, Sanepa

Tel: 5524202

www.wcn.org.np

Odds and Ends

Etchings by Beverley Thopson
Date: Till March 4, 2005
Venue: Park Gallery, Lazimpat
Tel: 4419353

Kathmandu & Kali Gandaki
Exhibition of photographs by Anagarika Sugata
Date: Till March 18, 2005
Venue: GAA, Thamel
Proceeds go to Chaira Gumba Restoration Fund
Tel: 4414785
gaa@gaa.org.np

Magic Pencil
Artworks by Britain's best children illustrators
Date: February 21- March 6, 2005
Venue: British Council, Lainchor
Tel: 4410798

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