

**6th India Heritage Tourism Conclave-‘Sustaining
Heritage Tourism of Khajuraho’
16th – 17th March, 2017 – Khajuraho, Madhya Pradesh**

RECOMMENDATION REPORT

PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industry organized the **6th India Heritage Tourism Conclave series with a focus on “Sustaining Heritage Tourism of Khajuraho” on March 16th-17th, 2017** at Khajuraho, Madhya Pradesh. The conclave aimed at generating awareness about promoting Heritage Tourism in our country with a focus on the **mystical land of Khajuraho** and putting it on the Global map as a prominent heritage tourism destination. It also highlighted the importance of the heritage city (Khajuraho) which has the largest group of medieval Hindu and Jain temples in India which are considered the “high point” of Indian architectural genius during the medieval times.

This Heritage Conclave helped to create a strong platform to exchange best practices and experiences, discuss challenges and opportunities, future perspectives and changes in the Heritage Tourism sector. It offered an excellent opportunity to explore new ways to actively penetrate in and attract more tourists from the new emerging markets as well as discuss actions aimed to promote heritage tourism in India.

This was PHD Chamber’s 6th Edition of the series of Heritage Tourism Conclaves. The earlier editions were held in other heritage destinations like New Delhi, Jaipur, Shimla, Ranchi and Patna. This time, the Tourism committee comprising of Mr. Mukesh Gupta, Mr. Rajan Sehgal, Mr. Yogesh Srivastav, Dr. GG Saxena chose the heritage city of Khajuraho known for its architectural splendour, for the conclave.

Shri Faggan Singh Kulaste, Hon’ble Minister of State for Health and Family Welfare, Government of India inaugurated the conclave on the 16th of March 2017 at Khajuraho, Madhya Pradesh. He also released a Knowledge report on the occasion highlighting a roadmap to further heritage tourism in this beautiful city.

Those who graced the occasion were **Smt. Kavita Singh (Rani Sahiba)**, Mayor of Khajuraho, **Mr. Brijendra Singh Rathore**, Ex-MLA, Prithvipur/ Newari, **Ms Daniela Maria**, Head, Culture Department, Embassy of Romania to New Delhi, **H.E. Mr Igor Polikha**, Ambassador, Embassy of Ukraine to New Delhi, **Mr. Narayan Singh Bhayal**, Convenor, INTACH, Khajuraho, **Mr. G G Saxena**, IAS (Retd), Former MD, Delhi Tourism Development Corporation, **Mr. A B Shukla**, IAS (Retd), Member, National Monuments Authority, **Mr. Vikram Singh**, MLA, Rajnagar, **Mr. Shankar Pratap Singh**, **Mr. Manvendra Singh**, MLA, **Mr. Arun Pateria**, CMO, Khajuraho, **Mr. Ramesh Bhandari**, District Magistrate, Chattarpur, **Shri. Pushpendra Singh (Guddu Raja)**, President, Chatarpur District, Madhya Pradesh, **Ms. Archana Singh**, Mayor, Chhatarpur District, Madhya Pradesh, **Mr. Govind Singh**, **Mr. Bahadur Singh**,

Prominent Educationist, **Mr. Surya Pratap Singh**, Darshana NGO, **Mr. Brijendra Singh** (Mama ji), Khajuraho, **Mr. Ambuj Saxena**, BnB Nation, **Mr. Manoj Kumar**, Delhi Tourism , **Ms. Yana** and **Ms. Elina**, INTACH, **Mr. Rajan Sehgal**, Co Chairman, Tourism Committee, PHD Chamber, **Mr. Raja Bundela**, Honorary Member, Media and Entertainment Committee, PHD Chamber, **Mr. Anuj Gupta**, Honorary Member, Tourism Committee, PHD Chamber and **Mr. Yogesh Srivastav**, **Director**, PHD Chamber.

Mr. Rajan Sehgal, Co Chairman, Tourism Committee, PHD Chamber, in his welcome address highlighted the need of improvement in the connectivity infrastructure such as better rail and air connectivity which shall further aid in promoting tourism to the city.

Smt. Kavita Singh (Rani Sahiba), Mayor, Khajuraho emphasized on the promotion of heritage of places like Dobhal, Orrcha, Bhimkund and Basmati which have remained unexplored, and said that the beauty of these places is mesmerizing.

The Hon'ble Ambassadors also expressed their profound happiness at attending the programme in such a spectacular city. **H.E. Mr Igor Polikha**, Ambassador, Embassy of Ukraine to New Delhi, aptly addressed the gathering in Hindi, while sharing how he was impressed by the cleanliness of Khajuraho and how the city has totally enchanted all. He said that there are more than 30,000 tourists who visit India from Ukraine. He requested the tour and travel operator industry to promote places like Khajuraho for the world to know and for people from all over the world to come and visit.

Ms Daniela Maria, Head, Culture Department, Embassy of Romania to New Delhi, gave her views on Heritage tourism in India. She spoke of the beauty of Khajuraho and how much she enjoyed visiting this place. She also shared the essence of Romania which is a dynamic country rich in history, arts and scenic beauty. Her speech was met with a thunderous applause.

Dr G G Saxena, Honorary member of Tourism committee, PHDCCI, and mentor of BnB Nation left everyone spellbound by putting forward tourism statistics and urging all stakeholders to join hands and preserve Indian heritage.

Mr. Ambuj Saxena, Co-Founder, BnB Nation gave a presentation on how to encourage the inflow of tourists to Khajuraho by using social media. His ideas would definitely help preserve, celebrate, share and educate communities about our heritage sites and in turn increase heritage tourism. It is a unique way for the tourists to come and visit and share their experiences on social media.

Mr. A B Shukla, Member National Monuments Authority (NMA) presented his thoughts precisely on what steps are being taken to preserve national monuments by NMA and to encourage Heritage tourism in India. His speech was an eye-opener for everyone in the audience.

Mr. Brijendra Singh Rathore, Ex-MLA, Prithvipur/ Newari in his address expressed his gratitude to Mr. Raja Bundela, Mr. Brijendra Singh and Mr. Narayan Singh Bhayal for their contribution to promote Khajuraho. He also emphasized that it is the responsibility of the Central and the State government to jointly promote the heritage tourism of Khajuraho. He also seconded the need for better air and rail connectivity as shared by the other speakers.

Mr. Arun Pateria, CMO, Khajuraho, in his address promised to take immediate action on all the suggestions and recommendations made by the eminent speakers in promoting the heritage tourism of Khajuraho.

Mr. Raja Bundela, Honorary Member, Media and Entertainment Committee, PHD Chamber, in his address expressed his gratitude to all the distinguished speakers and guests present for the conclave. He stressed on forming a local committee in Khajuraho which would have local participation and will work closely on the problems faced by the tourists. He also said that there is a need for improving the tour packages for the tourists who visit Khajuraho. He also proposed to organize a theatre festival in Panna, Madhya Pradesh in the month of July/August 2017.

The participants were also enthralled by a stunning performance rendered by the local artists and musicians. An array of traditional songs were performed by them giving the flavour of the local heritage and customs of Khajuraho. The Conclave was attended by prominent dignitaries from Government of India, Government of Madhya Pradesh and state tourism boards like Delhi Tourism & J&K Tourism.

The evening ended with a **Heritage walk around the Khajuraho Western Group of Temples**. The sculptures in Khajuraho temples represent the cult images of Parivara, devatas, apsaras, sura-sundaris, secular and animal representations.

The Conclave was supported by **Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, Airline Partner-AIR INDIA, Delhi Tourism, J & K Tourism, Power Finance Corporation Ltd, Graphisads, Sadhna TV, Radisson Hotels, Synergy Partner-BnB Nation, Radio Partner-94.3 MY FM, and Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary Diplomatist Magazine**, in its endeavour.

Following were the takeaways from the 6th Heritage Tourism Conclave for Sustaining Heritage Tourism in Khajuraho:

- The authorities and political party members volunteered to alleviate the connectivity infrastructure such as better rail and air connectivity which shall further aid in promoting tourism to the city.

- To initiate a Deluxe train from the metropolitan cities of India to Khajuraho was suggested so that foreign tourists do not have to travel and face the inconvenience in the local trains as well. This would also lead to an increase in foreign exchange.
- It was suggested to set up an organization which would house various Heritage tourism agencies that would work towards the preservation of Khajuraho's western group of temples, instead of a single umbrella organization.
- It was also suggested that trains be operated from Agra, Allahabad and Mumbai and other places from where tourists frequent Khajuraho.

The Eminent Panellists who shared their views on the topic were:

- **Smt. Kavita Singh (Rani Sahiba)**, Mayor, Khajuraho
- **Mr. Brijendra Singh Rathore**, Ex-MLA, Prithvipur/ Newari
- **Ms Daniela Maria**, Head, Culture Department, Embassy of Romania to New Delhi
- **H.E. Mr Igor Polikha**, Ambassador, Embassy of Ukraine to New Delhi
- **Mr. Narayan Singh Bhayal**, Convenor, INTACH, Khajuraho
- **Mr. G G Saxena**, IAS (Retd), Former MD, Delhi Tourism Development Corporation
- **Mr. A B Shukla**, IAS (Retd), Member, National Monuments Authority
- **Mr. Vikram Singh**, MLA, Rajnagar,
- **Mr. Shankar Pratap Singh**
- **Mr. Manvendra Singh**, MLA
- **Mr. Arun Pateria**, CMO, Khajuraho
- **Mr. Ramesh Bhandari**, District Magistrate, Chattarpur
- **Shri. Pushpendra Singh (Guddu Raja)**, President, Chatarpur District, Madhya Pradesh
- **Ms. Archana Singh**, Mayor, Chhatarpur District, Madhya Pradesh
- **Mr. Govind Singh**
- **Mr. Bahadur Singh**, Prominent Educationist
- **Mr. Surya Pratap Singh**, Darshana NGO
- **Mr. Brijendra Singh (Mama ji)**, Khajuraho
- **Mr. Ambuj Saxena**, Co-Founder, BnB Nation
- **Mr. Manoj Kumar**, Delhi Tourism
- **Ms. Yana and Ms. Elina**, INTACH
- **Mr. Rajan Sehgal**, Co Chairman, Tourism Committee, PHD Chamber
- **Mr. Raja Bundela**, Honorary Member, Media and Entertainment Committee, PHD Chamber

Mr. Yogesh Srivastav, Director, PHD Chamber in his concluding remarks thanked the dignitaries present at the conclave while reiterating PHD's support in this endeavour. This conclave is an important endeavour to contribute towards the promotion and preservation of the rich cultural heritage of Khajuraho.
