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PRESS RELEASE

PHD Chamber organizes 9th International Heritage Tourism Conclave in Gwalior

PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PHDCCI) organized the 9th International Heritage Tourism Conclave with the theme ‘Achieving SDG 11.4: Strengthen efforts to protect and safeguard the world’s cultural and natural heritage’ on 13 March 2020 at Taj Usha Kiran Palace, Gwalior. The programme was supported by the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India.

According to the UNWTO, 1.8 billion people are forecast to travel internationally in 2030 and much of this growth is being fuelled by the increasing desire and interest in discovering new and different cultures. Cultural heritage – both tangible and intangible are resources that need to be protected and carefully managed. It is fundamental that tourism authorities study how best to develop these cultural heritage sites while protecting and preserving them for the long-term.

H.E. Sakir Ozkan Torunlar, Ambassador, Embassy of the Republic of Turkey; H.E. Radu Octavian Dobre, Ambassador, Embassy of Romania in the Republic of India; H.E. Dato Hidayat Abdul Hamid, High Commissioner, High Commission of Malaysia were present at the programme and shared the heritage tourism potential of their respective countries.

PHDCCI and its Knowledge Partner- Nielsen India jointly released a Knowledge Report titled ‘Heritage Tourism in India and SDG 11.4: Stakeholders’ Perspective’. The report gives a holistic view on heritage tourism across the world and in the country. The report provides ample scope and opportunities towards preservation of world’s cultural and natural heritage.

While setting the theme of the Conclave, Rajan Sehgal, Co-Chairman – Tourism Committee, PHDCCI, said, “We need forum like this to brainstorm what steps can be taken to correct the skewed balance of tourist traffic, where bulk of the foreign tourist arrival is limited to a few prominent destinations. Some basic factors that are



immediately apparent are of course, improving connectivity, providing a better overall experience and greater outreach programmes overseas to attract more visitors.”

Panel Discussion on ‘Positioning India as world’s top Heritage Tourism Destination’ had Aman Nath, Founder & Chairman, Neemrana Hotels as the Moderator and witnessed Sonia Meena (IAS), Additional Managing Director, Madhya Pradesh State Tourism Development Corporation Ltd; D. Venkatesan, Regional Director, India Tourism Mumbai; Dr. H B Maheshwari Jaisal, Convenor – Madhya Pradesh State Chapter, Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage (INTACH); and Dr. Alok Sharma, Director, Indian Institute of Tourism and Travel Management (IITTM), Gwalior.

Heritage Tourism in India with 37 UNESCO World Heritage Sites and numerous other natural sites has immense potential that need repeat visits to cover all of them. The challenges are very demanding keeping in mind conservation and environmental protection. ‘Adopt a Heritage Scheme’ by Ministry of Tourism and Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) is one of the best practices to showcase our monuments and drive sustainable growth.

The panelists highlighted that the need of the hour is to have a clear vision and a well-defined execution plan with the goal of sustainable development that provides conservation and growth, clean air, water, energy and heritage at large. Technology, documentation, capacity building and regulation are the way to go for sustainable development of heritage tourism.

A Heritage Walk was also organized during the programme for all the delegates to enjoy the heritage of Gwalior, not only as past, but as a living tradition. The Conclave was attended by over 100 delegates.

Ends.

Media Division

PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industry