

## **FICCI-MRSS report suggests 5-point agenda to boost MICE tourism**

**NEW DELHI, 19 May 2016:** Of the various forms of tourism that exists in the globe, Meetings Incentives, Conferences Exhibition (MICE) is the one which has shown the maximum potential across the globe. Ever since the inception of the concept in Europe and America almost a century back, the MICE industry has grown from strength to strength and has an indelible impact in developing a destination and its economy. Globally, the MICE segment, with a 54% market share, has overtaken the traditional business trips segment. Conferences/Meetings/Seminars (41%) and trade fairs/exhibitions (29%) are the two largest MICE sub-segments, says a 2014-15 ITB World Travel Trends report.

A FICCI-MRSS report highlights India's relative position in the Inbound MICE map of the world and also focuses on the initiatives taken up by the Central and State Governments across the country to encash the high growth of the MICE segment of the tourism sector.

The report was released at the 'Global MICE Travel Mart'.

The report states that there are a few issues in relation to MICE tourism in India which can be perceived as possible bottlenecks to the industry as a whole:

- Prevalence of high tax structure in India – This is a major contributor for India's destinations to lose out on a global scale while bidding for events.
- Convention Visa - This has been addressed somewhat in the New Tourism Policy. The introduction of e Tourist Visa has kicked off a new regime.
- Availability of Trained Manpower – Needs superior Industry-Academia connect.
- Carrying capacity of a MICE destination – Carefully carried out feasibility study may solve the process.
- Compliance to International Standards – The Physical and peripheral infrastructure needs to comply with the world standards. This can be done by imparting training drawing cues from the leaders.

The FICCI-MRSS report recommends a five-point agenda to boost MICE tourism:

### **Promote concept of sustainable tourism**

To make the dream of the Prime Minister true, that the concept of sustainable tourism be adopted and practised. This will involve all stakeholders right from the community to active participants in the value chain and enable them to proactively serve and interact with the inbound tourists so that they feel more at home in India. This will enable them to return to India on a regular basis.

Maintain co-ordination and align with the Central Agency

MICE Promotion Bureau with industry representation have been set up at National as well as the Destination level. They need to work in close co-ordination and take time bound actions.

### **Create a market intelligence system to track competition**

There needs to be an intelligence system to track the product offerings by the competition states and pass on this information to the states so that they can amend/ modify/ value add their offerings in order to stay competitive amongst MICE tourists.

### **Create experiences, not just tourist spots**

A visitor should go back enriched in knowledge and with a sense of a great experience. To make this happen steps can be taken to make the tour replete with tour guides, activities for the children, culinary tours, interactivity for the tourist with the culture of the place etc. New tourist destinations may be identified and further developed for offering innovative tourism products or experiences.

### **Sell MICE tourism exclusively**

Customized travel experiences, luxury spa sessions, rare animal sanctuaries, religious pilgrimage tours are what the foreign travellers believe in. There is enough opportunity in India to promote medical, wellness and spiritual tourism in the state. MICE destinations should be encouraged as tourism for the purpose of Meetings, Incentives, Conferences and Exhibitions are no longer limited to big cities.

**FICCI-MRSS report: <http://182.18.159.68/ficciadmin/siteadmin/admin/ficcisp.asp>**

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