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PATA to hold tourism mart in Nepal

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The Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA) is organising its Adventure Travel and Responsible Tourism Conference and Mart (AT&RTCM) in Pokhara, western city of Nepal on February 7-11.

Under the theme 'Social Give Back: Doing Well by Doing Good', the four-day event brings together people involved in adventure travel and responsible tourism to discuss new opportunities for promoting environmental protection and social sustainability within the industry.

Delegates will be able to attend interactive breakout sessions on 'baby boomers, indigenous tourism and youth travel, according to the organisers.

At the AT&RTC Youth Travel session, a panel of leading professionals will explore youth market travel trends and how to create sustainable programmes of excellence to meet the growing demand for new diverse youth travel experiences.

"Youth travel makes a unique contribution to our shared objective of promoting sustainability and responsible travel as they travel to explore, engage, and learn," David Jones, former director general, WYSE Travel Confederation, said, adding that they 'travel with purpose' and a respect for the cultures and environments they visit.

"Young travellers are the best ambassadors for tourism destinations and set the travel trends that will define the future shape of our industry," he added. "Aware, socially concerned and linked to vast social networks, they seek sustainable travel experiences and are early adopters of responsible travel habits."

"Sustainability in tourism and sustainability of its product is crucial. It can be achieved through community-based tourism, which is one of the best available alternatives for sustainable tourism development," Dr Siddhartha Bajra Bajracharya, executive officer, National Trust for Nature Conservation and speaker from the interactive breakout session on indigenous tourism, said. "Delegates must visit some key destinations to see community-based tourism, for instance, Ghandruk in the Annapurna Conservation Area."

"Nowadays, tourism development is important economically to all countries in the world, and the developing countries in particular," said Dr Zhang Guangrui, director and professor, Tourism Research Centre, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, who will participate in the 'baby boomers' session.

"However, to keep tourism development sustainable is more important and crucial for the long run," he said.

The event is hosted by Nepal Tourism Board (NTB) with support from the PATA Nepal Chapter and endorsed by Adventure Travel Trade Association (ATTA), the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and Sustainable Travel International.



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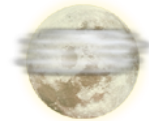
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