Sancharaka Udawa: Broadening Horizons For Sri Lanka Tourism



As the Sri Lankan tourism industry experiences an upturn, the Sri Lanka Inbound Tour Operators (SLAITO) in collaboration with Sri Lanka Tourism Promotion Bureau (SLTPB) present ‘Sancharaka Udawa’: Tourism Products Meet Mart, an exhibition, which will be held at the Sri Lanka Exhibition and Convention Centre (SLECC) on June 27 and 28.

By Hansani Bandara

Sancharaka Udawa will provide a platform to all stakeholders of the tourism industry to showcase their products and services while facilitating partnerships

among them. Being the only venture of its kind to be held to promote the tourism industry of the country, Sancharaka Udawa held for the fourth consecutive year will enhance the awareness on products and services related to tourism.

This year's edition of the exhibition which will be held in a much larger scale compared to previous years will consist of around 200 stalls covering a range of spheres of the industry such as, accommodation, adventure tourism, sports tourism, inbound and outbound touring, tourism attractions and much more. SLAITO will have a designated area at the event for service providers of the outbound market to display their products. Accordingly, air travel service providers and other outbound tour operators have also been invited to take part at this year's event. Sancharaka Udawa will be open for travel enthusiasts who can expect insights into product innovations and new service providers in the industry.

"We provide opportunities for all stakeholders in the tourism industry to meet and interact, where they can exchange ideas and showcase their products. There are many new entrants to the industry including boutique hotels and tour operators and they need to be exposed to a wider market scope. That is the reason for organising this exhibition. It is an opportunity for even the small and medium enterprises of the industry to interact. In a simpler sense, if there are service providers who are organising safaris, water sports activities or offering any other service related to tourism, they could participate in Sancharaka Udawa and display their services. They can also form contacts with relevant people to promote their products," said Mahen Kariyawasan, President of SLAITO.

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Kariyawasan believes that Sacharaka Udawa will contribute significantly towards expanding the scope of the local tourism industry. Providing networking opportunities for stakeholders can enable the formation of new enterprises and the exploration of new avenues in the industry.

Concurrent to Sancharaka Udawa, SLAITO will hold a Special General Meeting in order to educate their membership of the progress the association has made in terms of promoting Sri Lanka Tourism in international markets. “We have launched major promotional campaigns targeting Europe and new potential markets such as Russia, China and Korea,” added Kariyawasan. Consequently, advertisement campaigns through branded taxis and buses have been launched in these countries promoting Sri Lanka as a vibrant tourism destination. SLAITO and SLTPB will also promote Sri Lanka tourism at the Korean World Travel Fair in addition to the series of road shows, scheduled covering 10 cities in Russia. The meeting will also educate the membership on how they can contribute towards the growth of the industry and vice versa.

The ultimate aim of SLAITO is to gather all stakeholders to one platform and promote Sri Lanka’s potential as one of the most popular destinations in the world. Kariyawasan thus added, “our objective is to get together with the government and the Tourism Promotion Bureau and make Sri Lanka Tourism our common goal. We can achieve the target of 2.5 million tourist arrivals in 2016 if all stakeholders unite together.”