



On the dias (L-R) Madan Prasad Bezbaruah, Representative of the Pacific Area Travel Writers Association (PATWA), R.V. Deshpande, Minister of Tourism, Government of Karnataka



PATWA

Dr. Mahesh Sharma, Minister of State for Tourism, Culture & Civil Aviation addressing the Safari India South Asia Travel Awards event at Ashok Hotel, New Delhi



Dr. Mahesh Sharma, Minister of State for Tourism, Culture & Civil Aviation lighting the lamp at the Safari India South Asia Travel Awards held at Ashok Hotel, New Delhi. From (L-R) Dr. Mahesh Sharma, Prem Ahluwalia, Editor of Safari India, Madan Prasad Bezbaruah, Representative of the Pacific Area Travel Writers Association (PATWA), UNWTO, R.V. Deshpande, Minister of Tourism, Government of Karnataka, Dilip Parulekar, Minister Tourism, Government of Goa, Ashwani Lohani MD & Commissioner, Madhya Pradesh Tourism Department Corporation and Sagar Ahluwalia, Secretary General, Pacific Area Travel Writer Association (PATWA)



...ative (Asia), UNWTO, Dilip Parulekar, Minister Tourism, Government of Goa, Sagar Ahluwalia, Secretary General, Pacific Area Travel Writer Association
 ...ment of Karnataka, Ashwani Lohani MD & Commissioner, Madhya Pradesh Tourism Department Corporation

Glittering Ceremony of Safari India South Asia Travel Awards 2015

PATWA: Future of MICE Tourism



R.V. Deshpande, Minister of Tourism, Government of Karnataka, was conferred the **Best Innovated Tourism Minister** and the **Karnataka- Best Heritage State Awards**



Dilip Parulekar, Minister of Tourism, Government of Goa was conferred the **Best Innovated Tourism Minister** and the **Goa-Best State for Adventure Tourism Awards**



Ashwani Lohani, MD & Commissioner of Madhya Pradesh Tourism Development Corporation was conferred the **Madhya Pradesh- Best State for Pilgrimage Tourism Award**



Ismail A. Hamid Amer, Egyptian Tourism Counsellor, Egypt Tourism was conferred the **Best Overseas Tourism Office Award**



Ashish Verma, Marketing Head, Chattisgarh Tourism Board was conferred the **Best State for Tourism in Marketing Award**



Dipak Haksar, COO, ITC Hotels was conferred the **Best Professional in Hospitality Award**



Sunil Puri, Executive Director, Sartha Global Marketing was conferred the **Best Professional in Marketing Award**



Zubin S Songadwala, General Manager, ITC Maurya was conferred the **Dum Pukht- Best Restaurant for Indian Food Award**



Suresh Kumar, Managing Director, Fortune Park Hotel Ltd. was conferred the **Hall of Fame- Contribution in Hospitality** and the **Fortune Hotel- Best First Class Business Hotel Chain** Awards



Sudha Chandra, General Manager, Ashok Hotel was conferred the **Best MICE Hotel** Award



Roger Wright, General Manager, Hyatt Regency Gurgaon was conferred the **Best Professional in Hospitality** Award



Raj Rana, CEO, South Asia, Carlson Rezidor Hotel Group was conferred the **Best Professional in Hospitality** Award



Sujith Herbert, General Manager, Khyber Himalayan Resort & Spa, Gulmarg was conferred the **Best Professional in Hospitality** Award



Essa Sulaiman Ahmad, Vice President, Emirates Airlines was conferred the **Best Professional in Aviation** Award



Vistara Airlines was conferred the **Best Emerging Domestic Airlines Award**



Saeid Heidari, General Manager, JW Marriott, Mumbai was conferred the **Best Professional in Hospitality Award**



Biswajit Chakraborty, General Manager, Sofital Mumbai BKC, was conferred the **Best Professional in Hospitality Award**



Debashish Bhowmik, Sr. Vice President, Hotel Clarks Shiraz was conferred the **Best Professional in Hospitality Award**



Pronab K. Sarkar, Managing Director, Swagatam Tours Private Limited was conferred the **Best Professional in Travel Award**



Mahipal Rawat, Business Head, Hotels & New Initiatives, Jetfleet Pvt. Ltd. was conferred the **Best Professional in Travel Award**

SAFARI AWARDS



Hanneli Slabber, Country Manager- India, South African Tourism was conferred the **Best Overseas Tourism Office Award**



Kavita Singh, Director of Tourism, Chandigarh was conferred the **Chandigarh- Best Emerging Tourism City Award**



Rajan Sehgal, President, IGTA, Arrivals Air Service Pvt. Ltd. was conferred the **Promoting Golf Tourism in India Award**



Sudhir Sobti, Public Relation Manager, Delhi Tourism was conferred the **Best Public Relation Manager in Public Sector Award**



Subhash Goyal, President, Indian Association of Tour Operators (IATO) was conferred the **Best Professional for Promoting Tourism Worldwide Award**



Pankaj Mittal, Executive Manager- Ashok Convention and Banquets, Ashok Group of Hotel was conferred the **Best Banquet Manager Award**

“Travel advisories issued by different countries in the wake of incidents of rape in India could be driven by ‘some business strategies’ of those competing with India as a tourist destination. There are international agencies working against the interest of India. They push an advisory at their country level as if a plague has happened in the country or some viral disease has spread and people would come with big masks or something”, said Dr. Mahesh Sharma, Minister of State for Tourism, Culture & Civil Aviation, who was the Chief Guest at the Safari India South Asia Travel Awards event held in collaboration with Pacific Area Travel Writer Association (PATWA) at Ashok Hotel, New Delhi.

Recounting his own experience, Mahesh Sharma said that when he went to Johannesburg recently, he was asked not to go out of the hotel after 6pm. He said, he apprehend that it was because of security reasons. “People want to bring down the image of India as the most unsafe country”, he added.

R.V.Deshpande, Minister of Tourism, Government of Karnataka said that he is very delighted and pleased to know that Karnataka State has been nominated for ‘Best Heritage State Award’ by Safari India South Asia Travel Awards 2015. “As the state progresses, Government of Karnataka is determined to boost the tourism industry in the state as well as the whole world. It is an honour to State of Karnataka to organise the prestigious event of the Pacific Area Travel Association Travel Mart (PATA) 2015 in Bengaluru, the silicon valley of India. Karnataka will gain higher prominence on the global map of travel industry through its diverse attractions”, he added.

He further said, “The Karnataka Government has recently launched Karnataka Tourism Policy 2015-20. The policy aims to increase the contribution of tourism sector to the state GDP. The Karnataka Tourism Policy 2015-20, hereby, supports existing Government policies and adopts an integrated approach for developing a sustainable tourism industry in the state, backed by relevant infrastructure, effective institutional mechanisms and enhanced capacities to deliver on these targets. Setting up of tourist Mitra Police, first time in the history of Government of



A view of the Audience

Karnataka, rating of tourism facilities, enactment of tourism trade Facilitation Act, involving corporate in adopting and improving tourist destinations are some such measures. All the steps along with the new tourism policy would place the State of Karnataka at the forefront of tourism in the country.”

“MICE have become an important subject, over recent decades the meetings industries have contributed decisively to tourism’s rapid growth and success. This growing segment is boosting the global economy by creating jobs, generating income and stimulating foreign investments. The meetings industry encourages year around tourism and offers tremendous opportunities for intellectual development and knowledge sharing”, said Sagar Ahluwalia, Secretary General, Pacific Area Travel Writer Association (PATWA).

He further said, “India is focusing on MICE, Medical and Yoga Tourism in a big way. Tourism has taken a big leap after Narendra Modi became the Prime Minister of India. I hope that tourism should be given same

importance and facilities as given to exporter.”

Dr. Mahesh Sharma also facilitated Dilip Parulekar, Minister of Tourism, Government of Goa for ‘Best Innovated Tourism Minister’ and R.V.Deshpande, Minister of Tourism, Government of Karnataka was honoured as ‘Best Innovated Tourism Minister’. Awards were also given to individuals and organisations from the travel industry.

Ashwani Lohani, MD & Commissioner, Madhya Pradesh Tourism Department Corporation, Madan Prasad Bezbaruah, Representative (Asia), UNWTO and Prem Ahluwalia, Editor, Safari India were also present besides a large number of media, travel agents, tour operators, hoteliers and diplomats.

Since 2001, Safari India Travel Awards are being given annually to professionals and organisations in travel and tourism industry, for having a estimable edge in their field of work. These awards are given to recognize the leadership quality in the field of hotel, tourism and travel agents. It also



Stalls of Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh Tourism

recognises the professional work done by the state governments. These recommendations are given by the travel

industry and approved by the Editorial Board of Safari India. The awards were given by Dr.

Mahesh Sharma Minister of State for Tourism, Culture & Civil Aviation.