



HIRAN COORAY TAKES OVER THE MANTLE OF PATA CHAIRMAN

Saturday, 24th April: Hiran Cooray, Chairman – Jetwing made history when he was ceremoniously inducted as Chairman of Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA), the first Sri Lankan to be appointed to this position

PATA, the regions most representative tourism body has 900 direct members from the international and regional tourism industry, plus other tourist organisations as well as nearly 8000 local member from 40 world wide PATA country chapters. This includes the US, Europe, the Middle East and Asia Pacific.

Founded in 1951 the mission of PATA is to be a membership association acting as a catalyst for the responsible development of the Asia Pacific travel and tourism industry, in partnership with PATA's private and public sector members. They enhance the sustainable growth, value and quality of travel and tourism to and from and within the region.

Under the new By Laws of PATA, Hiran will also be the first Chairman who will serve a two year term. Being in the industry for a period nearing twenty years from a young age, at 46 years, Hiran becomes the youngest to hold this prestigious position.

Hiran joined the officialdom of PATA first in 1996 when he was elected to the Industry Council followed by a presence in the Executive Board in 1998 with positions of Secretary/Treasurer and Vice-Chairman, prior to Chairmanship. Previously he served as PATA Sri Lankan Chapter Chairman as well.

Hiran said the leadership role in PATA reflected the fact that Sri Lankan could be a force to reckon with in the global tourism arena. 'On behalf of Sri Lanka, I am proud, privileged and honored by the responsibility cast on me' he said.

Largely encouraged by the historic peaceful time in post war Sri Lanka, Hiran will push the theme Peace and Tourism, as well as infuse the dynamism of youth to PATA.

He further stated that 'The Pacific Asia market is driving global tourism in general. Both as an inbound and outbound destination, the Pacific Asia region faces many challenges as well as encounters immense potential. The buoyance of the region as well as a responsive PATA membership will be leveraged to add greater value and further develop the tourism industry.'



MEDIA RELEASE

According to the UN World Tourism Organisation, Pacific Asia is to account for a near 27% stake in global tourism by 2020 in comparison to 16% in 1995. This makes Asia Pacific the fastest growing area in the world. In terms of numbers, the prospects are phenomenal, with an estimated 416 million tourists by 2020 from 85 million in 1995.

Addressing the membership at the meeting, following his appointment Hiran said 'After protracted conflict, the benefits of the peace dividend are being enjoyed by my country Sri Lanka at present, and I would like to see greater peace within the region so that tourism can boost socio-economic growth in our economies. Whilst peace is the key driver to boost tourism, I believe that tourism can be a great catalyst to achieve peace and prosperity as well.

Hiran's induction was held at the two day, 59th Annual Meeting of PATA which was held in Kuching, Sarawak in Malaysia. Hiran succeeded Phornsiri Manoharn of Thailand Tourism Organisation.

About Jetwing Hotels

The story of Jetwing is one of classic entrepreneurship with a family twist. Born 35 years ago with the construction of merely six rooms in Negombo, Jetwing has grown to become a well reputed company in the tourism industry, offering a wide array of choices in both hotels and travel necessities such as destination management services, airlines representation and special interest tours. They now strive to strengthen their overseas brand by introducing the *Jetwing experience* to other parts of the world. Their promise continues to be the same even today, *'To give the best in quality regardless of the category.'*

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