

Dubai increases in popularity

Modern convention facilities have much to offer regional groups. *Kate Nicholson* reports

Nobody in the meeting and incentive industries is in any doubt that Dubai was one of the hottest destinations this year. Similarly, there is very little doubt that Dubai will continue to impress next year.

The Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing (DTCM) reported "a significant increase in the number of international exhibitions and meetings taking place in the emirate, in addition to its most promising cruising tourism sector."

Dubai Convention Bureau (DCB) confirmed 12 major international conferences up to July, 50 per cent more than last year, with a total value to the economy estimated at US\$200 million.

That success is reflected in the 2008 Industry Survey results. Dubai ranked among our readers' top ten favourite cities for conferences, meetings and incentives and DCB scooped sixth place in the Best National Tourist Office or Convention Bureau award.



Dubai has become one of the world's hottest business events destinations

FUTURE FORECAST

Dubai will host several large international meetings in 2008 including the World Travel and Tourism Council, the World Association of Cooks Societies and MPI's Gulf Meetings & Events Conference.

To accommodate these events, Awadh

Seghayer Al Ketbi, director of DCB says:

"Dubai is continuously investing in expanding both the public and private sector infrastructure to meet and surpass the growing needs of the global community.

"Dubai International Airport is set to handle 60 million passengers by 2010." ■



Hyderabad International Convention Centre will host PATA Travel Mart in 2008

True colours of India

Developments in the meetings and incentive sectors may drive a change in perceptions. *Kate Nicholson* reports

Along with China, India is routinely in the spotlight as one of the world's most vigorous economies, with its cities enjoying unprecedented growth and new-found wealth.

New Delhi, Hyderabad and Mumbai

are riding the crest of this economic wave, and in turn they are drawing in the CEI market.

New Delhi continues to be dominated by inter-governmental meetings and national fairs attended primarily by public servants,

politicians and industrialists.

The Mumbai meetings scene, by contrast, is dominated by the banking, pharmaceutical and telecommunications sectors.

However, infrastructure continues to be a major issue for meetings and incentives for this city, with an inadequately equipped airport, poor traffic-control systems and high pollution levels.

Hyderabad, by virtue of the Hyderabad International Convention Centre (HICC), has been able to attract several national and international events to the city.

Philip Logan, general manager of HICC, says: "The number of events in 2007 has gone up by 45 per cent year on year and the trend for next year suggests similar growth.

"Hyderabad has been captured a significant share of the international MICE space in a span of less than two years and today is the convention capital of the country."

FUTURE FORECAST

While Delhi gears up to host the Commonwealth Games in 2010, the rest of India is benefiting. Country-wide the number of hotel rooms is increasing and investment is flowing into infrastructure to ensure the destination can cope with the influx of visitors. ■