

REPORT ON CELEBRATION OF EBSB UNDER AZADI KA AMRIT MAHOTSAV RC KOLKATA

RC Kolkata in collaboration with pairing states RC Siliguri, RC Portblair and RC Cochin organized a one day webinar dated 13.03.2022 on the occasion of celebration of EBSB under Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav. The Topic of the webinar was "Historical Tourism - Its impact on Nation Building.

The programme was live telecast through RC website, Facebook live and Youtube live channel.

RC Kolkata Academic and Non academic staff members, Coordinators, Academic Counsellors and IGNOU learners were invited to be a part of this panel discussion.

Understanding that the topic was vast, few related themes were identified but not limited to for the panel discussion to be more focussed and meaningful.

1. Documentation and Identification of Historical sites of interest.
2. Infrastructure building and revival of case studys of historical significance.
3. Identifying unique historical artefacts, stories that could be brought under a single window display as in Museum.
4. Identifying unique histories, biographies and events that are local and region specific, little and great traditions, folk and urban but has the potential to evolve into global historical legacy, invaluable for youth to inculcate into their common historical legacy.
5. Effective training strategies for Professional Guides, curators and academics as professional experts in History.
6. Means and strategies to creating Institutional network that could highlight the need based approach of tourists with historical interests.

The programme began with the welcome address delivered by Dr. Shiva Kumar GN, Regional Director, and Regional Centre, Kolkata. While his address he informed the significance of EBSB ad also underlined the important objective of EBSB week. He welcomed all the eminent panelists and the participating Regional centres of Cochin, Portblair , Siliguri and Lakshwadeep. He elaborated on academic collaboration between the Regional centres to jointly organize the panel discussion on the theme of "Historical Tourism; Its impact on Nation Building. He very eloquently brought out the significance of organizing such webinars to academically energize the Regional Centres through the opportunity given by the occasion of Bharat ka Amrit Mahotsav.

Dr. Suram Raja Rao, Sr. Regional Director Regional Centre, Port Blair gave the Opening Remarks. He focussed on the significance of connecting the different regions of India through tourism, inviting all to Andaman and nicobar Island he emphasized the invaluable historical resources available in Indias diverse region which the tourism industry could leverage for economic development.

Dr. J S Dorothy, Sr. Regional Director Regional Centre, Cochin delivered a very informative and insightful comparison between Kolkata, North Bengal, Lakshwadeep and Andaman Islands to justify the rationale of why these regions were brought together as one holistic entity. She presented a lecture on the Similarity in Culture in Kolkata, Lakshadweep, Andaman and Siliguri and its impact on Tourism.

Dr Sujata Dutta Hazarika Deputy Director, Regional Centre, Kolkata presented the overview of the Panel Discussion, to delineate its focus and expected outcome. She emphasized that Indian history is an invaluable resource for the global legacy of historical insights.

No other country in this world can claim a freedom struggle that expressed a humanity, that transcended values of individual freedom and self realization to the extent that Indian Freedom struggle revealed to the world. She emphasized that it is this commitment to celebrating Indian history, which motivated the Regional Centres to conceptualize this programme with an aim to integrate historical reflection, historical wisdom and knowledge of history with concrete strategies for nation building , in this case Tourism as a instrument for sustainable development for economic growth and well being of local communities is highlighted . Tourism as a development paradigm for economic growth has the potential to convert this intangible emotional value into tangible profit centric enterprise to improve real life, economic standard and living conditions, generating well being and luxury.

She motivated the panel to emphasize a tourist-centric institutional framework based on identifying unique historical interests, infrastructural support, experiential quality enhancement, connectivity etc. and collate the diverse aspects to make Tourism as an important means of local sustainable development.

1. Prof. Rupendra Kumar Chattopadhyay, “Vivekananda Chair” Prof. Social Science, emphasized on the need to unearth and connect sites of historical relevance from different regions of Bengal , Bihar , orissa interms of ancient , medieval and modern periods . Also, significance of historical events such as spiritualism, Bhakti period, Buddhism, Sanyasi revolution, Freedom struggle, Bengal enlightenment could be demarcated to express classified histories with tourristic values.

2. Dr. Soumyendra Nath Nag, Retired Professor, North Bengal University emphasized the need to include local folk histories of tribal belts in North Bengal. This is a means to revive their self esteem and bring out their contribution to Indias nation building. He spoke of the significance of promoting Unity in diversity and inclusiveness to develop Tourism in North Bengal.

3. Dr. P Abdul Salam, Assistant Professor Dept. of BBA Tourism, JNRM, Port Blair gave an informative, historical data analysis of actual historical events in Andaman Islands and their significance for Indian Nation building. The presentation was invaluable interms of documenting historical data that could be utilized for development of local tourism and national tourism in a very significal way.

4. Mr. Siva MS, Dist Youth Officer, Nehru Yuva Kendra, Lakshadweep also gave a very detailed informative data based presentation on Lakshwadeep. His presentation of concrete

physical data along with its historical location in the overall discourse of Indian nation will be invaluable for policy planning with an emphasis on Tourism.

Vote of Thanks after the Panel discussion was delivered by Dr. Pravin Pralayankar, Regional Director (I/c) Regional Centre Siliguri. The programme ended with National Anthem.