

# Traditional Performing Arts : Their Role in Tourism

The phenomenal growth of tourism in the past decade has brought economic benefits to most of the developing countries. It has become the main source of foreign exchange so essential to the development projects of this group of countries. However, the same poses a significant problem to the preservation and protection of their cultural heritage.

For this reason, people concerned with the preservation of the traditional performing arts came up with guidelines on how to preserve and protect them. These are contained in the recommendations given by the participants of the Workshop on Technological Development and the Traditional Performing Arts held in

Jakarta. They are as follows:

- 1) Government and private sector should coordinate and cooperate to control activities that will insure the authenticity of cultural presentations.
- 2) Subsidy and support should be given to traditional performing artists.
- 3) Nurture the tourist guides of the future from among the younger generation.
- 4) Disseminate information on the traditional performing arts through books, brochures, video tapes and cassettes. They can be translated into foreign languages provided the translations capture the innate flavour of the original.
- 5) Proper marketing to tourists interested in quality rather than in quantity may also help attain the goals of preservation and protection of the TPAs.
- 6) Insure the authenticity and aesthetic quality of package and "quickie" cultural presentations in hotels so that they retain their originality and uniqueness.

A Philippine participant cited as an example of professionalization of the tourism industry the organization of the Institute of Tourism at the University of the Philippines. It trains managers, entrepreneurs and other staffmembers engaged in the tourism industry. The Indonesians mentioned that in Bali the tour guides are given training as early as their high school days.

These can be adapted by other countries to insure that tourism also contributes to the preservation of their culture.