



tourism infocus

Spring 2008

Campaign on Burma

Stop operators going

Kenya

Locals cry out for tourism

Dilemma

Ethical excursions

At least 500,000 people, particularly those from ethnic minority groups were estimated to be internally displaced in the country's eastern states, fleeing attacks by the Burmese Army. The army is reported to target villages and forcibly move people to relocation sites.



Burma Campaign

Burma: A different point of view

I read your campaign pages on Burma and don't understand why you are trying to stop tourism to Burma. Although you argue that the government is getting richer from tourism revenue and that the Burmese people receive little benefit, perhaps they are happy connecting with people from other parts of the world. With the political system in Burma as it is and the "strict censoring of information, repression of individual rights and suppression of ethnic minority groups", don't you think that tourists can give local people information, support and ideas from other parts of the world on how to fight for their rights?

I know many visitors to Burma who gave so much to the locals they met, including money or gifts. I am disappointed that Tourism Concern is fighting against tourism there.

Petra Klicova

Tourism Concern's Response

Tourism Concern recognizes that this is not a simple issue. By going, it is virtually impossible for an international tourist not to contribute financially to the abusive regime through unavoidable outlays, and many hotels and businesses are

owned by or pay money to the regime.

We believe human rights abuses directly linked to tourism and the vast revenues generated for the regime cannot justify the minimal benefits that tourism provides to some Burmese people. Most people live in rural areas and gain nothing from tourism.

Burmese people are not free to discuss politics with foreigners and can face punishment or imprisonment if caught. In a BBC interview in December 2002, Aung San Suu Kyi, the democratically elected leader of Burma said: "I have to say that the people of Burma, in general, do not depend on tourists and foreign visitors to bring them information. If they are really intent on getting information about what is going on... then they listen to foreign radio programmes such as the BBC and the Democratic Voice of Burma.

"Burmese people know their own problems better than anyone else. They know what they want – they want democracy – and many have died for it. To suggest that there's anything new that tourists can teach the people of Burma about their own situation is not simply patronising – it's also racist."

DILEMMAS FOR POST-CONFLICT COUNTRIES

The article in the last issue about visiting Rwanda was poignant. I've worked in a number of post-conflict countries including Croatia, Georgia, Iran, Laos, Lebanon and Nepal and am always struck by how accessible people are.

In one country I met representatives of every political and religious faction and was particularly impressed by the military commander who prayed that his children would have ambitions to become tourist guides rather than taking up arms against their neighbours. The challenge in many rural destinations away from established tourism gateways is to create opportunities ensuring that young people have employment in their own villages.

One of the greatest problems for post-conflict destinations is the need for accessible information. There are ethical dilemmas about visiting so-called 'dark tourism attractions', but – as long as tourism is welcomed by the host community – there is no dilemma.

Benjamin Carey
(benjamin@dunira.com) is managing director of Dunira Strategy and a former trustee of Tourism Concern.

Front cover pictures, clockwise: Shwe Dagon Temple in Yangon. Despite the breathtaking tourist sites in Burma, levels of poverty and malnutrition are rising. Since October 2007, Burma has been in the forefront of the news and even the latest Rambo film is set there highlighting the plight of the Burmese people and the oppressive military regime. (Zoe Bowthorpe). It may seem like a minefield trying to find a holiday excursion which benefits the locals, but on page 10 Peter Richards gives us some helpful hints. (CBT-I). The Paduang women or the 'long necks' are refugees from Burma and are being forced to stay in northern Thailand despite some wanting to leave. Many think this is because of their value as tourist commodities. (Martin Kaypoe). Despite the ethnic clashes in Kenya after the elections, some tourists are starting to return now that the Foreign Office has raised its advice against going there. These tourists are passing through the Tsavo West National Park on their way to Nairobi. (Chris Gray).

editorial

EVEN AFTER WORKING FOR TOURISM

Concern for several years, I can still be surprised by the immense size and power of this industry, the economic and global capacity it holds and its potential for doing good. What a very great pity then, that in the underbelly of this industry, past the picture-perfect postcards and global marketing campaigns, tourism is intertwined with many of the issues needing to be tackled in today's society: human rights and poverty; climate change and the environment; and poor working conditions, to mention just a few.

That the potential of tourism isn't realised as much as it should be becomes very clear in this issue of *In Focus* which highlights how host communities are being taken advantage of with little benefit going directly to them. This is the case with the Burmese Padaung 'long-necked' women, whose plight is highlighted on page 6. Exploited for tourism, they are now being told by the Thai government that they can't leave their refugee villages.

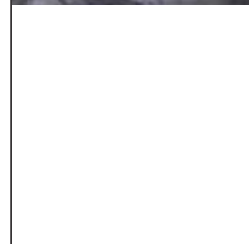
And all is not well in Kerala, south India. On page 7, the not-for-profit organisation Kabani expresses its concerns about the impacts of tourism on the local environment and on people's livelihoods. With the tourist board promoting Kerala as a responsible tourism destination at an international conference held by them to strengthen this position, you would be forgiven if you thought that the community was integrated into its tourism developments. However, this may not be the case as Angela Kalisch, who knows the state well, explains: "There are problems with corruption, lack of expertise, co-ordination and competence... This is not a problem solely in Kerala but across India: local people without land and capital (of which there are many in Kerala) have little power and influence."

Tourism Concern has always worked hard to highlight exploitative practices in tourism, but we also work to find solutions and to make change happen. That is why we continue to need your help.

On pages 4 and 5, we are asking you to take action. Help stop tour operators going to Burma, a country where human rights abuses remain firmly in the spotlight and where many people are now living in abject poverty, despite tourism numbers increasing during the military dictatorship. Even when the abuses are well documented and with our high-profile campaign on Burma, tour operators are still insisting on offering tours there. It's clear that without you, the public, our message may be ignored. As consumers you have the final say. If, as tourists, you make it clear that you know tourism can support human rights abuses and thus choose not to go to a destination, then operators will think twice before they offer holidays there. Please do not underestimate your power: your voice. Please join our campaigns.

Best wishes,

Kelly Haynes
Editor



Contents

- 4 lead campaign**
Burma campaign gathers pace
- 6 focus on...**
Padaung refugees trapped by tourism; Image versus reality in Kerala
- 8 local voices**
Kenya tourism industry in tatters
- 10 travel dilemmas**
Choosing a community tour
- 11 supporters' area**
book review

Tourism In Focus
Editor: Kelly Haynes
Managing editor: Tricia Barnett
Sub-editors: Ann Noon, Paul Smith
Design: Andrew Carton-Kelly
Print management: Lithosphere

Tourism Concern staff
Director: Tricia Barnett
Finance Officer: Alan Nguyen
Information: Siobhan Adeusi
Projects: Guyonne James
Fundraiser: Gillian Cooper
Campaigns: Rachel Noble

Burma campaign gathers pace

Tourism Concern continues to campaign for a tourism boycott of Burma, urging tour operators, guidebook publishers and tourists to stay away until democracy is restored.

As the campaign gains momentum, we're urging you to get involved...

The violent crackdown on peaceful pro-democracy demonstrations in Burma last year highlighted the desperate plight of the Burmese people at the hands of a brutal military regime. In painful irony, such gross human rights abuses are being committed by the same illegal government which is actively promoting Burma to international tourists as the 'land of golden smiles'.

But Burma's tourism industry is directly linked to mass human rights abuses. 'Beautification' schemes for tourist attractions, such as in Pagan, have forced over a million people from their homes to make way for tourism developments. Only recently, in a country where thousands depend upon soup kitchens, 650 acres of rice paddy were converted into a golf course. The use of forced labour, including children, to develop tourism infrastructure and attract foreign investment has been well-documented.

The promotion of tourism by the military junta is a deliberate strategy to generate foreign currency to support their regime. However, the Burma tourism issue isn't black and white. Several tour operators argue that a boycott is wrong and only serves to isolate the Burmese people further. Tourism Concern believes that the direct links between mass human rights abuses and tourism, and the significant revenue that the industry generates, cannot justify the minimal benefits it provides to the Burmese people.

We call for a boycott of tourism to Burma until the situation improves. The boycott was first called for in 1995 by Burma's democratically elected leader, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, who has been under house arrest for over 12 years. It's part of a broader strategy of economic sanctions and diplomatic efforts by the international community to exert pressure on the illegal military regime.

Tourism Concern has orchestrated a letter-writing campaign calling on the 15 UK tour operators travelling to Burma to withdraw and has also contacted MPs with operators based in their constituencies, asking them to participate in our campaign. We want you to join us.

We've launched an online petition along with New Internationalist, the TUC and Burma Campaign UK demanding that BBC Worldwide, the new majority shareholder of Lonely Planet, which publishes a guidebook on Burma, stops promoting travel to Burma. Withdrawing the Lonely Planet Burma guide will send a clear message of condemnation to the regime. We want you to sign the petition pledging to boycott Lonely Planet until this happens. Without your voice, nothing will change.

Take Action Now

Please show your solidarity with the people of Burma by taking part in our simple campaign actions today.

1. Sign the online petition against BBC Worldwide at www.thepetitionsite.com/1/Burma-Campaign-Action
2. Write to at least one of the tour operators still visiting Burma and ask them to stop until democracy has been restored.
For further information and sample letters, visit the 'Campaign With Us' section of Tourism Concern's website.
3. Contact Tourism Concern and let us know you've joined the campaign at: campaigns@tourismconcern.org.uk

Burma Campaign

Faith Doherty, a veteran campaigner on Burma human rights issues, reflects on the situation...

I went to Burma 13 years ago and brought out images of chain gangs being used to re-build the moat around Mandalay Palace for the military regime's tourism campaign. What I couldn't show were the families forced from their homes to clean up that moat.

Violence continues, ensuring that a climate of fear keeps ordinary people in their place. I am horrified that Lonely Planet, now owned by BBC Worldwide, continues to justify selling Burma.

I was present when visitors met with Aung San Suu Kyi to discuss the tourism boycott. For the BBC and Lonely Planet to use the fact that Suu Kyi is under house arrest and therefore cannot engage in this debate with the outside world is disgusting. To insinuate that the appeal for a boycott is old and irrelevant is the same argument that the military regime controlling Burma used to legitimise its illegal takeover after the 1990 election, which the National League for Democracy (NLD) won.

Last summer the world witnessed an incredible outpouring of need from the Burmese people. In response to an increase in the price of commodities, Burmese monks took to the streets. Many in once flourishing cities are now starving, and survive through soup kitchens and charities. We all saw the violent response from the regime and arrests continue today. The response from the West was to impose economic sanctions against companies investing in the regime. But Lonely Planet continues to trade and make money out of the suffering of the Burmese people.

I know of some tourists who visited Burma recently and were miserable because of the poverty. Many years ago this was hidden. You may have been charmed by the old beautiful buildings in Rangoon and fascinated by the pagodas in Pagan but it's all gone now. Rangoon is crumbling and Mandalay is sold to China. Money from tourism has gone down the tubes, and has done little for the people. We have had years of proof that tourism in Burma only benefits the Generals living in their palaces.



A Burmese mother holds her sick child, aged 18 months, who has subsequently died from malnutrition and measles. With this abject poverty, can it really be said that tourism is benefiting local people?

Some of my Burmese friends have lived in exile for over 20 years, away from their families and their roots. They want their country back. Imagine reading how your country is now considered one of the worst places to live and how your government is one of the worst human rights abusers on earth! How could anyone want to visit a country to which those in exile are unable to return. BBC Worldwide, shame on you.

Visit our website to see Faith's article in full and to join our campaign: www.tourismconcern.org.uk

Padaung refugees trapped by tourism

THE BURMESE PADAUNG OR 'KAYAN' REFUGEES OF NORTHERN THAILAND ARE BEING denied full rights as citizens, blocked from resettling overseas and locked into a dependency on tourism for nearly 20 years. Famous for the brass rings worn round their necks, the Padaung women and girls, often nicknamed 'long-necks', are a popular tourist attraction. Now calls are growing from the Padaung and the UNHCR for the Thai authorities to grant basic rights and opportunities to allow them to move beyond the tourist trap.

Up to 150 visitors are taken by tour companies to one of three Padaung villages every day during high season. However, little of the money that this generates ends up with the Padaung. Without Thai citizenship, most are forbidden to work and largely confined to the villages, making them completely reliant on tourism for any income.

"Tourists pay an entrance fee of 250 baht (about £4)", explains Mu Paw, a local Kayan woman from one of the villages. "About 1,500 baht (£24) is paid to the women wearing the neck rings per month during the high season. When numbers drop during the rainy season, the fee is reduced and villagers depend on food aid. The money is controlled by a local Thai official who works with the village authority. The Kayan people don't know how much the local authority and Thai village chief earn from tourists or the tour companies."

Women without neck rings and Padaung men receive nothing from the visits so try to make money by selling handicrafts and textiles.

The lucrative role of Padaung women in tourism has been highlighted by the Thai government's recent refusal to grant exit visas to a group of 20 Kayan to allow them to move overseas under a UNHCR resettlement scheme. The Thai authorities argue that the Padaung don't meet the criteria for refugee status. This has led to criticism from the UNHCR, which in a recent press report, has dubbed the Padaung villages 'human zoos', as previously reported by Tourism Concern.

According to Mu Paw, when the Padaung came to Thailand to escape persecution in Burma, the Thai authorities deliberately separated them from the other refugees. "They don't want the Kayan to leave Thailand because of the money they bring in from tourism. The government told the world that the Kayan are free and happy, but this is not the reality."

Mu Paw says that the Padaung don't want tourists to stop coming but villagers should be allowed to control tourism so that they can benefit.



Martin Kaypoe

The oldest women in Huay Pu Keng village. This is one of the Padaung villages in northern Thailand and is the closest to the Burma-Thai border. Tourists visit by boat and have to pay to enter the village but little goes to the Kayan women.

"The Padaung want to have the choice to leave Thailand or continue to reside as citizens without discrimination. Currently they have very limited education and employment opportunities. There is increasing concern over the future of our children. The Padaung have been living in the villages like birds in a cage."

Tourism Concern is continuing to monitor the situation with the Padaung. A longer version of this article is available on our website.

Image versus Reality in Kerala

March 2008 saw global representatives from industry, academia and NGOs converge on Kerala in southern India, for the Second International Conference on Responsible Tourism. Kerala's Department of Tourism promotes the state as a leading example of responsible tourism. In reality, however, many tourism developments in Kerala are neither socially responsible nor environmentally friendly. **Sumesh Mangalassery** of local NGO Kabani discusses the fracture between tourism policy and practice.

WITH THE CONFERENCE TAKING PLACE, IT'S IRONIC THAT local media are reporting a proposed artificial reef for Kovalam beach to be built by the Kerala Tourism Department using Tsunami Rehabilitation Programme aid. The reef will limit the livelihoods of fishermen and violate tsunami aid instructions. Fishing communities are demanding a careful assessment of the consequent potential sea erosion which would affect them. "This is a clear cut case of tsunami funds being used for the benefit of the tourism lobby. Shore fishing will be curtailed, areas will only be used for 'sport fishing' by tourists and at least 500 people will lose their livelihoods," said T Peter, President of the Kerala Swatantra Matsya Thozhilali Federation.

The conference, organised by Kerala Tourism and the International Centre for Responsible Tourism, promises to help the tourism industry and its stakeholders debate developments. The £63 minimum registration fee is, however, way beyond the reach of many local stakeholders.

Mararikulam is an emerging beach destination that conference organisers describe as being 'kick-started

by one local entrepreneur'. This has caused a real estate boom meaning many fishermen have sold their lands. Tenson, a local fisherman, owned a property close to the beach and sold his land to brokers after 38 people came to his house to convince him to sell. "They made me agree to sell the land and gave me an advance on the spot. I wanted to return it and get out of the agreement but I couldn't," he stated.

It's important to see the contradictions in the present tourism policies, which won't be addressed at the Conference. The Kerala Tourism Act 2005 directed power to the state level committee rather than the Local Self Governments, thus cutting local decision-making. Neither the conference nor the responsible tourism initiative address the serious problems and it is merely hype to portray Kerala as a responsible destination in the international market.

As they aren't addressing the concerns of Kerala's civil society, this should be renamed the 'International Irresponsible Tourism Conference'. It only aims to improve business for the tour operators and hotels involved.

Kabani



In Mararikulam, tourism has caused a real estate boom, which has resulted in fisher people moving away from the coast. They find themselves alienated in their new environments unable to benefit financially due to the demand for property inland, and the consequent increasing prices.

Tourism Concern fights exploitation. This is because we recognise that our holidays are other people's homes. Our holidays should be as good for the people in the destinations we are visiting as they are for ourselves.

We frequently get harassed by locals without realising that it's often because they're not getting any real benefits from our holidays. On the contrary, those living in popular tourist destinations often suffer when precious resources, such as water, are diverted from agriculture into hotel swimming pools. People even get thrown out of their homes for new developments.

Tourism generates huge wealth and can be a force for good for millions living at destinations, but they receive little, with most of our money never reaching them.

Please join us to fight exploitation.

Your actions make changes happen!

"Kerala offers enormous potential for sustainable tourism, based on people's empowerment and participation. However, there is a stark difference between policy and implementation. On the one hand, the Kerala government wants to promote an image of sustainability. On the other, it lacks the political and economic infrastructure to develop a truly democratic, transparent and socially equitable system of tourism. If local communities are to benefit, a more self-critical approach would need to be adopted, open to learning from grassroots experience."

Angela Kalisch,
University of Gloucestershire

Kenya tourism industry in tatters

Chris Gray



Lwambi Madzungu Mwangeki with his wife and children. Lwambi was laid off from Lawford's Beach Club in Malindi in January because of the drop in tourists due to the ethnic violence in Kenya. He said last month: "It is rough in some parts of Kenya, but at the coast and in Malindi there is peace. I advise tourists to come back."

The beginning of 2008 saw Kenya erupt into ethnic violence and the tourism industry dive-bomb. But what are the impacts on local communities and are they ready to welcome back tourists?

Samuel W. Munyi, Chairman-
Founder of Kenya Tourism
Concern reports...

The tourism industry in Kenya is now under heavy threat and even on the verge of collapse despite receiving over one million arrivals in 2007 for the first time ever. This is because of the hotly contested General Election held on December 27 between the Government's ruling Party of National Unity (PNU) and the Orange Democratic Movement (ODM).

The elections had the highest and most peaceful turnout in Kenyan history. However, when the results were announced in favour of the PNU, unexpected political unrest erupted between several ethnic groups. Supporters of the opposition held illegal demonstrations, destroyed property and torched houses of government supporters brutally killing over 1,000 people, including innocent children and internally displacing over 300,000, now living in camps.

Beach tourism was more heavily affected than wildlife tourism and thousands of overseas bookings and charter flights were cancelled. This was mainly as a result of travel advisories issued by foreign countries, including Britain, the USA and European countries advising tourists not to go to Kenya. With no in-coming tourists, beach hotels and lodges in game reserves have closed and over 30,000 workers have been laid off indefinitely. Thousands of small-scale traders and service providers, such as entertainers, also lost their livelihoods and with no other source of income, these locals cannot afford to provide food and medical care for their families.

Despite the violence in Kenya, foreign tourists are safe and no tourist or traveller has been reported as injured or hurt. Violence has been more localised and based in areas of political opposition with most parts of Kenya not being affected at all. Foreign reporters based in Kenya played a big role in reporting misleading, misinformed and biased information helping to ensure tourists stayed away and ruining the thriving tourism industry. Regrettably, it is feared that tourism will decline by about 90 per cent this year and the situation isn't expected to improve until October. Kenyans involved in the tourism industry will continue to suffer.

We must monitor the situation in the tourism areas, especially in those most heavily devastated on the coast. We need to lobby and inform the world about the continued safety and security of foreign tourists to ensure that tourism gets back to the record levels of 2007.

Kenya Tourism Concern (KTC) is an indigenous NGO registered in 1994, advocating and promoting the tourism industry in Kenya. We fight against the negative impacts of tourism, be they socio-economic, political, environmental or cultural. Kenya Tourism Concern played an effective advocacy role in salvaging the tourism industry during ethnic violence in 1997.

Chris Gray

Tourists visiting Lake Nakuru after the ethnic clashes. They were going to cancel their trip until a travel agent gave them a copy of the Travel Trade Gazette and their reports on Kenya encouraging people that they would be safe.



Kenyans desperate for return of tourists

Every Kenyan I met in the resorts, national parks and Nairobi was desperate to get tourists back and to counter the impression that the whole country was descending into violence. There had been no violence along the coast, but reports of atrocities and unrest in the west of the country and Nairobi had scared virtually all tourists away.

It left communities that are entirely dependent on tourism with 75 per cent of their workforce suddenly out of jobs. Kenyans were shocked by the sudden explosion of violence, but almost equally shocked at the speed with which their tourism industry collapsed. Some feared that the collapse of tourism could itself lead to trouble in communities which had remained peaceful. One who had just lost his job told me: “When people have no work they get hungry, then they start to steal and rob”.

Others predicted that crowds would come out to cheer the first tourist buses that returned to the resorts. Sadly, this may not be for months as the big UK tour operators won't run charter flights until at least July because they say demand in Britain has evaporated.

UK Foreign Office advice against non-essential travel now refers only to slum areas of Nairobi so there's no reason not to go to

tourist areas. But demand in Britain won't pick up until the media reflect the improved situation, or the tourism industry starts to promote Kenya again. For now, the media see no story and the industry sees too much commercial risk.

True, if political negotiations between the parties break down, Kenya could flare up again, but for now they appear to be heading in the right direction. In the meantime, it would be totally misguided to avoid the country to give people “time to grieve”. The Kenyans I met were too busy worrying about how they would support their children now they had lost their jobs.

The best thing is to take advantage of good rates being offered on scheduled flights to book a holiday in Kenya, spend some money in local shops and restaurants, donate to and have a look at any community projects and enjoy being welcomed with open arms.

Chris Gray is the deputy news editor for weekly travel industry newspaper Travel Trade Gazette. He was the first UK trade journalist to visit Kenya when the blanket ban on all but essential travel was lifted by the government in February.



At First Choice we're very much aware we need to better understand and improve the impact of our excursions. Over the past couple of years we've been working with stakeholders to develop and test guidelines to mark the contribution of our excursions to the local economy and the impact on the environment. Our overseas teams have welcomed the challenge of strengthening the benefits of their existing excursion programmes and have been working with communities to develop brand new excursions that bring particular benefit to local people. We're finding these latter excursions are often those that return the highest customer satisfaction ratings."

Jane Ashton, Head of CSR, First Choice

Choosing a Community Tour

With thousands of us going on holiday every year, many of us will embark on cultural excursions to visit host communities or environments. But how do we ensure that these tours are as good for the communities as they are for us and that they aren't merely exploiting the locals as tourism commodities?

Peter Richards from Thailand Community based Tourism Institute (CBT-I) gives us some suggestions....

VISITING A LOCAL VILLAGE CAN POSE A REAL DILEMMA. HOW DO WE KNOW THAT THE LOCAL PEOPLE ARE really happy to welcome us? Will we receive good information about local cultural norms so that we won't inadvertently offend? What do we do if we feel we just can't eat the delicious bugs that have been graciously fried up to feed us?

With expertise and information, good tour operators can guide us through this moral maze, helping to facilitate a living, learning experience which will stay with us for life. They will be able to recommend community-based tourism and tourism initiatives, which have been developed in close cooperation with local people, and designed in a way which creates tangible benefits for your hosts and the environment.

However, when choosing a tour operator, it's often difficult to tell the wood from the trees. Many tour operators regard tourists as cash cows, and villages as their personal pastures... They make their profits by imposing on local people, paying them next to nothing for their hospitality, and sometimes even putting serious pressure on natural resources which they rely on. Below are some tips to help choose a good operator:

- Look at the way a tour operator presents itself. Read the tour operator's promotional materials and look at the website to check if there is any mention of responsible tourism, cultural and environmental sensitivity.
- Don't buy the cheapest tour you can find. The cheapest tours usually pay the lowest wages to staff and community members. Responsible village tours require detailed coordination and local consultation, which cost money.
- Ask how community members have been actively involved in the development of the tour, and what their roles are. Ask if the tour operator approached community members to ask their permission to run the tour. Good companies work with several families or with a community group rather than independently in the village. Good tour operators include local community members actively in programme design. They work with local guides so that local people are empowered to define their own communities to guests.
- Ask what information is provided about the local community, culture and environment. Information is another sign of a good tour operator. Guests should be provided with a 'Code of Conduct', explaining 'Dos and Don'ts', according to local customs. Good tour operators will provide guests with printed information. If tour operators can't give information about local culture and customs, then they are just milking the cash cow – walk away!
- Ask how often the company visits the village. If the company sends overnight trips to the same small villages every day, then it is likely that these villages will have been completely saturated by tourists. Search for companies which plan with local communities to control visitor numbers, e.g. rotating homestays, or even rotating communities, to reduce the impact of their tours.
- Ask what contribution the tour company makes to life in the community. Good tour companies direct a proportion of their profits towards local community funds or local projects. They show active support for local schools and temples, conservation and community work, etc. Ask how they help.

Good tour operators will answer these questions with a smile and appreciate that you are a thoughtful visitor... so don't be afraid to ask.

Destinations 2008

This year's Destinations holiday and travel show gave me an opportunity to do two things that I really enjoy: organising our stand there and meeting members and supporters. This year we decided to concentrate on selling *The Ethical Travel Guide* and highlighting some of our current campaigns. Our photographic exhibition used a selection of images from *The Guide* that clearly told the stories of our human rights campaigns.

Meeting the members who volunteered to work on the stand was great as most have interesting travel stories to tell and can really explain Tourism Concern's work from a personal point of view. It's also useful to discover why they joined up and get their input. These volunteers are crucial in helping us to spread the word and I'm already looking forward to organising next year's Destinations!

Lee Viesnik

**If you would like to volunteer for Tourism Concern
at our events and exhibitions, contact info@tourismconcern.org.uk**



We're on Facebook!

Over the last few months, Tourism Concern member Gill Willows and volunteer Hiroyoshi Watanabe have been working on establishing a Groups profile for Tourism Concern on Facebook.

Social networking sites such as Facebook and MySpace have previously been seen as tools for the teenage and twenty-something generations but they have now become the "growth economies" of the internet.

For Tourism Concern, Facebook and

other social networking sites offer a great opportunity to connect with our online supporters and to reach new potential supporters. Sites such as these are also becoming important vehicles for raising funds for campaigns.

Join as a Member on our Facebook page if this is your kind of thing, and most importantly, help to spread our message by inviting your friends to join. You can use the site to keep up-to-date with our campaigns and upcoming events.

What's On...

- The 2nd International Conference on Sustainable Tourism in Fortaleza, Brasil, 12 to 15 May, on community-based tourism and fair trade in tourism <http://english.sits2008.org.br/oktiva.net/2003>
- 2008 Ecotourism Spotlight Award for Government websites that spotlight ecotourism and responsible travel. Nominations are accepted from 15 February to 1 July. www.planeta.com/planeta/08/0802spotlightaward.html

The Shock Doctrine

The Rise of Disaster Capitalism

Naomi Klein

Allen Lane £25.00

ISBN: 97807 13998993



The best-selling author of *No Logo* has done it again and produced a second best seller with her impressive work *The Shock Doctrine*. I could hardly put it down because of her fascinating insights into the world's struggling economies. Naomi Klein not only has wide and detailed knowledge, but also a sense of humour and fighting spirit.

She applies the latter when speaking of Milton Friedman, the Nobel prize-winning economist, who believed that any sick economy could be healed by the application of pure capitalism. Friedman's theories were tried out in Chile after the overthrow of President Allende's legitimate government by the coup led by Pinochet who fell easy prey to intellectual manipulation. The result was a totally altered economy which favoured the well-to-do and in which the poor too often remained poor and in which people of an opposing view too often 'disappeared'.

Friedman may have held that wealth should be shared with the poor but this happens rarely in reality. One feels that, although a brilliant economist, he somehow lacked the insight and clarity of vision which are shown by Klein in her treatment of the 'shock doctrine' and how it has been applied in, for example, Latin America, Iraq, and areas stricken by the tsunami.

Marion Laudi

Visit the new-look Tourism Concern Website!

Our website has been updated so that it's now really simple to use.

It has plenty of information on new and ongoing campaigns and easy steps for you to take action.

The home page also features a news and events reel bringing you up-to-date with the latest campaign and tourism news.

Become a member of Tourism Concern online.

It's never been so easy!



www.tourismconcern.org.uk

I would like to support TourismConcern

giftaid it

I would like:

- to become a Tourism Concern supporter with a **donation** of £ _____
£24 or over (waged) or £15 (unwaged) entitles me to become a voting member of Tourism Concern.
- to give a year's gift membership
- to pay by standing order – please send details
- I enclose a cheque/postal order made payable to **Tourism Concern**.
- Please debit my: Visa MasterCard

Card No _____

Expiry date _____

Card holder's name _____

Signature _____

- Tick here if you do not want to receive our quarterly Tourism in Focus

Gift Aid makes your donation worth more.

For every £1.00 you give, we can claim 28p from the Inland Revenue.

I am a UK taxpayer – please claim Gift Aid on my donation and any I may make in the future until I notify you otherwise.

Signature _____

Date _____

Gift membership for:

Name _____

Address _____

Post code _____

Telephone _____

E-mail _____

Your name _____

How did you hear about Tourism Concern?

Return to Tourism Concern, FREEPOST LON 18202, London N7 8BR or visit www.tourismconcern.org.uk or phone 020 7133 3330
No stamp needed but using one will save Tourism Concern money. Tourism Concern is a registered charity: No 1064020