



Chairman, SriLanka Airlines Nishantha Wickramasinghe, lighting the oil lamp on the opening day



Maktoum bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Deputy Ruler of Dubai (centre), cuts the ribbon to mark the opening of the Arabian Travel Market 2013 in the presence of Ahmed bin Saeed Al Maktoum, President, CEO and Chairman, Department of Civil Aviation, the Emirates Group and Dubai World (Left) and Helal Saeed Almarri, Director General, DTC Mand CEO DWTC (right)



Deputy Minister Hisbullah and other invitees at the opening ceremony

GREENPARADISE

DICKWELLA  
RESORT & SPA

**Shirajiv Sirimane  
in UAE**



# Grand opening for ARABIAN TRAVEL MARKET 2013



Visitors of the Sri Lankan and Sri Lanka Tourism Tea kiosk



Creator of the Sri Lanka stand, Deputy Director Sri Lanka Tourism, G. Malawiarchchi



Some of the highlights at the opening.  
Pictures by Shirajiv Sirimane



**T**he 20th edition of the Arabian travel market, the largest Asian travel exhibition, began on Monday with a record participation. This year's sell-out anniversary edition, presently taking place at the Dubai International Convention and Exhibition Centre, welcomed over 3,000 exhibitors from 87 countries with an exhibition floor space covering more than 22,000 square metres. The Sri Lankan stand this year, depicts an elephant family, wild life, nature and adventure was one of the biggest stands at the event and had gained high praise. The stand also covered a section to SriLankan Airlines and the tea kiosk was a busy place too. Meanwhile, according to a Hospitality

Industry Report, the UAE's hospitality market is likely to reach US\$ 7.5 billion by 2016, up from US\$ 4.5 billion a (67% increase) in 2011 . "The UAE's tourism map is now incredibly diverse. The Northern Emirates of Sharjah and Ras Al Khaimah is building on their own cultural foundations presenting a series of unique individual products, together with Dubai and Abu Dhabi, positioning the country as a cohesive hospitality hub, with varied appeal," said Mark Walsh, Portfolio Director, Reed Travel Exhibitions. A recent Dubai Chamber study, supported by statistics published by the Business Monitor International, puts UAE tourism sector growth at a 6.5% per annum between 2011-2021, with visitors from the Middle East, Europe and Asia Pacific the

key source markets. Employment and growth prospects for the sector are also buoyant, with a forecast annual real growth rate of around 4.1%. Tourism and Investment Office of Peru in Dubai would be present for the first time at the ATM with a National Pavilion. Peru's Ministry of Foreign Trade and Tourism has said that they expect a nine to ten percent increase in visitor arrivals in 2013. The Middle East is one of the fastest growing regions in terms of tourism with outbound travel quadrupling for the past 20 years. The World Tourism Organization estimates that an additional two million Arabs would travel abroad within the next twenty years, taking its total of outbound tourists to 37 million, spending an estimated \$20 billion and accounting for 2.2% of global outbound travel, a rise of 0.7%.



Some promotions by other stands. Picture by Shirajiv Sirimane