Serena Hotels celebrated World Tourism Day 2024 with a significant panel discussion titled *“Community-Centric Tourism: Promoting Indigenous Culture for Sustainable Economic Empowerment”* at Hunza Serena Hotel. The event brought together experts, government officials, and industry leaders to explore how community-centric tourism can preserve cultural heritage and foster sustainable economic empowerment in Gilgit-Baltistan.

The discussion highlighted the potential of local traditions and crafts as drivers of tourism, helping to preserve indigenous culture while creating economic opportunities for local communities. Panelists such as Lal Bano, Manager of Karighar, shared how community-focused initiatives are empowering local artisans, particularly women, by providing platforms for their crafts and promoting traditional skills.

Zameer Abbas, Secretary of Tourism, Sports & Culture, Gilgit-Baltistan, emphasized the government's role in supporting sustainable tourism, outlining initiatives that encourage cultural preservation while boosting tourism opportunities. He stressed the importance of public-private partnerships to ensure long-term benefits for local communities.

The event also focused on the challenges of promoting sustainable tourism in mountain regions, with Raja Ali Anwar Khan, General Secretary of the Gilgit Baltistan Association of Tour Operators, offering insights into responsible tourism practices that protect the environment and benefit local populations economically.

Prof. Dr. Attaullah Shah, Vice Chancellor of Karakoram International University, added academic perspectives, emphasizing the role of education in promoting sustainable tourism models that balance environmental, cultural, and economic goals. His input underscored the need for a well-rounded approach to tourism development in the region.

The panel discussion concluded with several key takeaways, including the need to preserve indigenous culture as a core component of tourism and strategies to empower local communities through tourism-related opportunities. Recommendations were made for stronger collaborations between government, the private sector, and local communities to support sustainable tourism practices in Gilgit-Baltistan.

Serena Hotels, its commitment to responsible tourism and community empowerment. He highlighted the company's ongoing efforts to preserve the cultural heritage of the regions in which they operate while ensuring tourism serves as a tool for sustainable economic growth.

The event marked another milestone in Serena Hotels’ mission to foster sustainable tourism, helping to ensure that the cultural richness of Gilgit-Baltistan continues to be a source of empowerment for its communities.