

HOTELS & RESTAURANTS INDIA

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APRIL 2018

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A MONTHLY ON HOSPITALITY TRADE
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Garish Oberoi
President, FHRAI

Dear fellow members,

In the last month, efforts of the Federation of Hotel and Restaurant Associations of India have reaped positive results.

PACKAGED GOODS ABOVE MRP

The Supreme Court has allowed hotels and restaurants to sell bottled water and other packaged products at a price above the MRP, saying that they also render a service and cannot be governed by the Legal Metrology Act. In a judgement passed recently on a special leave petition filed by FHRAI against the Union of India, the apex court stated that when hotels and restaurants sell food and drinks, they also render a service, making it a composite transaction with composite billing, and MRP rates cannot be insisted upon for such entities.

FHRAI's main concern was that the Controller of Weights and Measures was seeking to proceed against hotels and restaurants of the appellant association for charging a price higher than the printed MRP for supply of packaged water bottles during services provided to their customers while in the hotels and restaurants. FHRAI filed a writ petition in the Delhi High Court, challenging notices issued to them. The appellants pleaded in the writ petition that the transaction consisting predominantly of a service, and not of a sale of drinking water, consisted of a composite charge which included incidental charges for food, drinks, etc.

SPINNER FOR EMPLOYMENT

India will add around 10 million jobs in the travel and tourism sector by 2028, according to the latest report by World Travel & Tourism

Council (WTTC). WTTC forecasts that the total number of jobs related to tourism will increase from 42.9 million in 2018 to 52.3 million in 2028. India is currently the seventh largest travel and tourism economy in the world. Overall, the total contribution of the sector to the economy was ₹15.2 trillion (\$234 billion) in 2017, or 9.4 per cent of the economy once its direct, indirect, and induced benefits are taken into account.

Gloria Guevara, President & CEO, WTTC, said, "Travel and tourism create jobs, drive economic growth, and help build better societies. This is particularly clear in India which is forecast to be one of the fastest-growing tourism economies in the world over the next decade, adding 10 million jobs and millions of dollars to the economy by 2028."

"Looking to the future, India can strategically lead travel facilitation within the SAARC region by introducing a standard technological solution, modern technology, and biometrics. This will enhance the travel and tourism economies in the region. The Indian aviation market is expanding with rapid advancement in connectivity within India. Indian airlines have booked 900-plus new aircraft to add capacity and expand operations over the next couple of years," Guevara shared.

The need of the hour is to ensure that there is enough skilled manpower to fulfil the needs of the growing hospitality industry.

With warm regards,
Garish Oberoi
President, FHRAI

“Efforts of FHRAI have reaped positive results. The Supreme Court has allowed hotels and restaurants to sell bottled water and other packaged products at a price above the MRP”

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FOOD, FOOTFALLS & FAVOURITES

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Cover Design

Raashi Ajmani Girdhar



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Surendra Kumar Jaiswal
Hony. Secretary
FHRAI



The association is putting all efforts to draft a technically sound representation to get exemption from requirement of prior EC on same conditions as granted to housing projects



Dear fellow members,

I would like to inform you that HRANI in association with Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) recently organised a Conclave on Synergizing Food Safety Standards and Regulation in Hospitality Industry at The Imperial, New Delhi. The event was inaugurated by Chief Guest **Shri Pawan Agarwal**, CEO, FSSAI.

I feel elated in sharing with you that he, in his address, appreciated and commended the efforts and support of HRANI. During the event, HRANI was also awarded for the outstanding contribution in organising Food Safety Training and Certification (FOSTAC) programmes in various cities of northern India. You will find a detailed coverage on the same in this edition.

Through this conclave, we also requested him to look at industry concerns such as making the FSSAI licence lifetime, recommendation for penalty reduction, recognising our labs as FSSAI notified for our industry, self-audit to be accepted by enforcement and most importantly, our representation in National Advisory Committee.

It is heartening to note that with the efforts of the FHRAI team, the industry got a relief from the Hon'ble Supreme Court in the matter of MRP. The Hon'ble court, through its judgement, has allowed hotels and restaurants to sell bottled water and other packaged products at a cost above the Maximum Retail Price (MRP).

Friends, while pitching for reduction in quantum of GST for hotels, infrastructure status to hotels, single-window clearance to simplify hotel licensing, environmental concerns remain a challenge which will now be on the main agenda of our team.

The hospitality sector has been putting best efforts to successfully integrate eco-friendly practices into operations and is finding ways to maintain a focus on careful stewardship of the resources, as well as attention on the people who use and work in the industry. However, after making so many efforts such as zero discharge, waste water treatment through recycle and reuse, rainwater harvesting and several other measures, the sector is being penalised with handsome amounts of sewerage charge, fee towards

consent to establish and operate fines, and penalties. The sector is facing undue hurdles in smooth functioning by their categorisation under Red, Orange, and Green category by the Central Pollution Control Board, although most of the hotels are connected to the municipal sewerage system and considered a commercial activity permitted in most use zones in any city of the country as per their respective city master plan.

A detailed representation by FHRAI to review the following issues will be sent to Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) & Ministry of Environment and Forest (MoEF).

- **Categorisation of hotels and restaurants:** Through our representation and on sound technical basis, it has been submitted that none of the hotels should be categorised under Red category and most medium hotels discharging less than 10 kld of waste water (non-domestic nature only) need to be categorised under Green category while all guest houses that do not have kitchen and laundry facility need to be placed in White category that does not require any periodical consent from State Pollution Control Boards (SPCB).
- **Environmental Clearance (EC):** All building projects, including hotels of more than 20,000 sqm built-up area, are required to obtain prior EC by complying with requirement of EIA notification of year 2006 under EP Act 1986. Certain exemptions are given to housing projects so that these do not need any EC.

The association is putting all efforts to draft a technically-sound representation to get exemption from requirement of prior EC on same conditions as granted to housing projects. FHRAI has always adopted a forward-looking approach in its strategy to counter impediments facing our sector and continuing the same, we are open to any suggestions or problems from our members which can be taken up by this prestigious forum.

With kind regards,
Surendra Kumar Jaiswal
Honorary Secretary, FHRAI

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Jugesh Arora | President - South India Chef Association

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Snapshots from **EC MEETING**

The Federation of Hotel and Restaurant Associations of India held its recent Executive Committee Meeting on March 20, 2018, at The Leela, Mumbai. Here are some glimpses from the same...







INCREASE IN TOURIST ARRIVALS TO KERALA IN 2017

Tourist arrivals to Kerala have registered a significant growth of 10.93 per cent during 2017, compared to figures of the year before that. According to statistics compiled by Kerala Tourism, Kerala saw as many as 15.54 lakh tourists, including domestic and foreign travellers, during the year. An increase of 15 lakh new domestic tourists was recorded this year, with footfalls going up to 14,673,520 in 2017 as against 13,172,535 in 2016. As

per the report, it was found that foreign tourists preferred travelling to Thiruvananthapuram and Ernakulam districts, while also opting for destinations like Alappuzha, Munnar, and Wayanad. In terms of specific locations, both foreign and domestic tourists were found to have preferred Kochi as a prime destination. Beach destinations like Varkala and Poovar also showed significant growth. According to **Kadakampally Surendran**, Minister for Tourism,

Cooperation and Devaswoms, the statistics show encouraging trends in terms of increasing footfalls both in the international as well as domestic segments. **Rani George** (IAS), Secretary, Department of Tourism, said, "The trend in tourist arrivals over the past five years has shown a marked change in the pattern of tourist visits to different destinations. It is exciting to see that more destinations in Kerala are gaining in prominence in travellers' minds."

IN MEMORIAM: SUBIR BHOWMICK



We are deeply saddened with the demise of **Subir Bhowmick**, former Executive Committee member, FHRAI, who passed away on March 22, 2018. A doyen of the hospitality industry and an alumnus of IHM Pusa, he started his career with the Taj group of hotels

in 1967. There he had a long stint at the Indian Hotels Company, serving in various capacities in many parts of India. He retired in April 2003 as Chief Operating Officer, Luxury Hotels. After retirement, he shifted to Hyderabad and joined as Director (Planning), GVK Hotels & Resorts – Taj Krishna, Hyderabad, and worked as a consultant in other companies as well.

He served FHRAI as an Executive Committee member for three years (2013-16), and was the Vice President of SIHRA for two, providing useful suggestions for the growth of the hospitality industry and also on matters of training of the staff. The FHRAI fraternity will miss him deeply and his contributions will long be remembered. We convey our heartfelt condolences to his family and pray that his soul may rest in peace.

IN MEMORIAM: AMITABH DEVENDRA



We are extremely saddened with the demise of **Amitabh Devendra**, immediate former Secretary General, FHRAI, who passed away on March 25, 2018. He was the Secretary General of FHRAI from May 1, 2015 to September 23, 2017. He played

an active role in making the last FHRAI annual convention held in Bengaluru a success. A student of Doon School and St. Stephens College, he had nearly four decades of rich experience in the hotel industry spanning renowned hotel chains around the world. He was a Certified Hotel Administrator (CHA) from the American Hotel and Motel Association. He had done his hotel management programme from The Oberoi School, Delhi, and the general manager's programme from Cornell University, USA. Author of 'Hotel Law' and 'Soft Skills for Hospitality' published by Oxford University, he was also a guest speaker for International Hotel Development and Management, India programme at The School of Hospitality Business at Michigan State University, USA. The FHRAI fraternity will miss him and we convey our heartfelt condolences to his family. May his soul rest in peace.

CONFERENCE VISA TO GO ONLINE

Most efforts by India Convention Promotion Bureau (ICPB), the Ministry of Home Affairs will soon launch an online module for submission of application by organisers of international conferences. The clearance will be generated through the online system, a copy of which will also be endorsed to all Indian Missions/ Posts. Commenting on the same, **Chander Mansharamani**, Vice Chairman, ICPB, said, "We have been persistently following up with the MOT on the need for grant of conference visa. We are sure this will help us bring more international conferences to India."

The revised instructions have been issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs vide circular number 25022/8/2018-FCC dated February 28, relating to the grant of conference visa to



Chander Mansharamani
Vice Chairman
ICPB

“
We are sure this will help us
bring more international
conferences to India
”

foreign nationals coming to India to attend international conferences, seminars, or workshops. It states that as per para 13.5 of Chapter 13 of the new Visa Manual, prior clearance of the Ministry of Home Affairs for holding an event (conference, seminar, or workshop) is required only if the event falls within the following parameters as mentioned in para 13.3:

- (a) If there are participants from Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iraq, Sudan, foreigners of Pakistani origin and stateless persons; and
- (b) If the participants of the conference/seminar/workshop are required to visit 'Restricted' or 'Protected' areas in India, or areas affected by terrorism, militancy, extremism, etc., viz. Jammu & Kashmir and the Northeast states (other than the states of Manipur, Mizoram, and Nagaland).



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Revenue management is a proven technique that helps service industries to maximize revenue. Coined as the "number one emerging business strategy" by the Wall Street Journal, revenue management is the art and science of price driven profit maximization. This programme on Revenue Management and Dynamic Pricing, perhaps the only programme of this topic in India, is being offered every year from 2004.

TARGET AUDIENCE

The participants of this programme are expected to be senior level executives who are responsible for maximization of revenue. These persons will be either from the commercial sector, information technology sector or marketing sector. Persons who are engaged in developing pricing systems in hotels, airlines, car rentals, restaurants, internet service providers, movie theatres, casino broadcasters, healthcare, trucking, transportation service providers, energy, petroleum, sports complex and cricket associations, cruise liners, and manufacturing would find this programme extremely relevant and useful. In addition, this will be an interesting area for consultants to work on.

OBJECTIVES

This programme aims to:

- Provide an insight into concepts of revenue management.
- Provide an understanding of how revenue management systems improve revenue.
- Acquaint the participants with various tools and techniques used in revenue management.
- Discuss the practice of revenue management in various industries.
- Discuss the technical and organizational challenges for implementing revenue management systems.

CONTENT

- The business process of revenue management
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Charting the **POTENTIAL OF HOSPITALITY**

At the recently-concluded edition of AAHAR in New Delhi, **Suresh Prabhakar Prabhu**, Minister of Commerce & Industry and Civil Aviation, Government of India, spoke about a comprehensive plan of investment in the hospitality industry that will help it attain exponential levels of business and growth.

Anupriya Bishnoi

AAHAR, the international food and hospitality fair, was held from March 13-17 at Pragati Maidan, New Delhi. Organised by India Trade Promotion Organisation (ITPO), AAHAR is one of Asia's best-known brands in food and hospitality shows. The exposition was inaugurated by **Suresh Prabhakar Prabhu**, Minister of Commerce & Industry and Civil Aviation, Government of India. He said, "Food is a very important part of Indian culture and has been a great attraction for the people who visit our country. Every state in our country has a different cuisine. If you ask anyone in India about how many kinds of food we cook, I don't think anyone will be able to answer that. Over a period of time, we have started processing food; this is a great change that has happened over the last few years. India is the largest producer of milk and the second largest producer of fruits and vegetables. Therefore, all this food which is produced is creating a value chain, supply chain, thus adding to the real economic opportunities. This is just the beginning. I don't think we have even touched the surface of the opportunities that lie in our country and therefore, I am happy that is exactly what has been showcased at AAHAR."

Talking further about the development, he said, "Under the new policy, it will be made sure that farmers are not just circulating their products within the country but that their products are being exported as well. To do that, we have already tied up with few countries and they are really interested and have shown huge support. We are going to provide air support to this activity. I am very happy to say that we have decided that wherever there is a possibility of agricultural produce being exported, it will be supported with an airlift facility. Such potential spots will be identified and based on that, civil aviation will provide aerial support so that our products can further be exported quickly. Within the country, there is a huge potential of movement of cargo by air, which is not yet fully exploited. This again is going to be a thrust area for us and we have already started working on it."

AAHAR is as much a key event for food players as it is for hospitality participants. Reiterating the significance of AAHAR for the hospitality market and its many nuances, Prabhu said, "The hospitality industry is an inbuilt part of our ancient tradition. We want more and more tourists to come to India and enjoy Indian hospitality. I am very happy to say that only two weeks ago our cabinet approved a proposal from my ministry to put almost a billion dollars (₹5,000 crore) for 12 champion sectors of India's service industry, and for each sector we are preparing a comprehensive plan. One of these sectors is hospitality. Whatever gaps exist that jeopardise the growth of this sector, like infrastructure, will be addressed with this move. I am very happy to say that our Indian hospitality industry has responded to this extremely positively."

The hospitality industry's potential in our country has not been used at all. We are capable enough to attract millions of tourists to India. "Domestic tourism is growing very fast. There has been an increase of 17-20 per cent in our aviation market in the last three years, the highest in the world. With the number of airports planned for the next few years, the air connectivity will rise rapidly. We are providing connectivity to Tier-II cities as well. The cost of airfare is kept at less than \$40. The hospitality industry will rise rapidly with this support that we are providing to our champion sectors. We are also in the process of identifying high potential tourism spots and I am working with my colleagues in the tourism ministry to ensure that those spots will get complete facilities. We are working on a number of new packages and hence, the hospitality sector will get a huge boost," concluded Prabhu.

“

The cabinet has approved a proposal to put almost ₹5,000 crore for 12 champion sectors

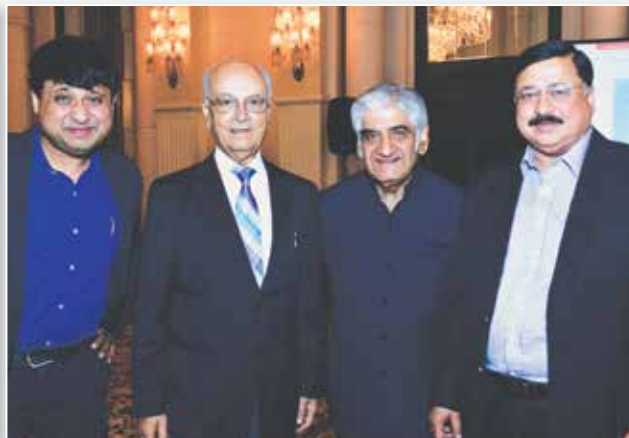
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VIVEK NAIR felicitates Minister of Civil Aviation

Vivek Nair, Chairman and Managing Director, The Leela Palaces, Hotels and Resorts, felicitated **Suresh Prabhakar Prabhu**, Minister of Commerce & Industry and Civil Aviation, Government of India, in a special ceremony.

The felicitation ceremony, organised at The Leela Palace New Delhi, saw in attendance the who's who of the hospitality and tourism industry. Speaking at the occasion, Nair said, "Civil aviation and tourism have to go hand in hand and only then can the industry grow. Now we have a new minister who is known for his

dynamism, and we invite him to boost the synergies between the two sectors." Addressing the audience, Prabhu said, "Today it is a trillion-dollar economy knocking at our doors. We have to understand that one has to create concrete plans based upon the larger impact it will have on the common people."





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(L-R) Renu Thapliyal, Secretary General, HRANI; Sanjay Sood, President, HRANI; Pawan Agarwal, CEO, FSSAI; Rajindera Kumar, Chairman, HRANI Conclave and Surendra Kumar Jaiswal, Hony. Secretary, HRANI

FSSAI AWARDS HRANI FOR FOSTAC

Hotel and Restaurant Association of Northern India was awarded for Food Safety Training and Certification (FOSTAC) by Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI). The award was presented by **Pawan Agarwal**, CEO, FSSAI, at the Conclave on Synergizing Food Safety Standards and Regulation in Hospitality Industry at The Imperial, New Delhi.

Speaking at the conclave, Agarwal said, "We have come a long way since last year in building trust with the food business. We are emphasising on trainings under FOSTAC, and HRANI has been very supportive. HRANI has conducted 21 trainings in advanced catering in the northern region. Comprising all sectors, about 18,000 people have been trained through 850 training sessions till now, without trainings being mandatory. Focus remains on preventive safety."

Agarwal also emphasised on the role of the catering sector in facilitating health of citizens by ensuring safe food to consumers. He highlighted the reforms by FSSAI for ease of doing business in the catering sector. Also, modifications have been made in Schedule-4 of FSS Regulations (Licensing and Registration of



(L-R) Surendra Kumar Jaiswal, Hony. Secretary, HRANI; Sanjay Sood, President, HRANI; Pawan Agarwal, CEO, FSSAI; Rajindera Kumar, Chairman, HRANI Conclave

“
HRANI has conducted 21 trainings in advanced catering in the northern region. Focus remains on preventive safety”

Food Businesses) 2011, where a separate section has been made for catering. Under Schedule-4, FSSAI has laid the good hygiene and manufacturing requirements for food business. Earlier, a common Part-II of Schedule-4 was applicable for all food business applying for FSSAI

licence, creating a lot of confusion in the catering sector.

"In a few months, we will be launching a new generation of IT platform, Food Safety Compliance System (FSCS), which will provide a history sheet of food permissions and their compliance. We are also trying to establish clean street-food hubs by specially demarcating areas for street food. The state of Goa has been most proactive in the same. We will also be coming up with hygiene ratings for rating food business; initially, the same would be voluntary," said Agarwal when talking about upcoming projects.

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Hotel & Restaurant Association of Punjab being felicitated by FSSAI for FOSTAC



(L-R) Sanjay Verghese, Director Materials & Food Safety, The Imperial, New Delhi; Vijay Wanchoo, GM, The Imperial, New Delhi; Surendra K Jaiswal, Hony. Secy., HRANI; Pawan Agarwal, CEO, FSSAI and Sanjay Sood, President, HRANI

HRANI

Rajindera Kumar, Chairman of the Conclave, in his welcome address stated, "This conclave with FSSAI on Synergizing Food Safety Standards and Regulation in Hospitality Industry marks another important step by providing a forum for dialogue among FSSAI and stakeholders to connect and collaborate for mutual prosperity."

Applauding Agarwal's efforts in addressing concerns of hoteliers, **Sanjay Sood**, President, HRANI,

said, "We are indebted to the CEO for his deep understanding of our genuine concerns. He is very approachable and very open to solutions. However, there are a few concerns of our industry that include making licences last a lifetime, penalty reduction, recognising labs as notified by FSSAI, self-audit to be accepted by enforcement, and representation in the national advisory committee. HRANI is privileged to serve as a vibrant interface between FSSAI and the

industry, and we assure FSSAI of our full co-operation to ensure safe and nutritious food for the nation."

Surendra Kumar Jaiswal, Hony. Secretary, HRANI, in his address said, "The industry is indeed receptive of new draft regulations of FSSAI which will provide for recognising laboratories of associations and food business for testing food samples for surveillance purposes."

While thanking the CEO, Jaiswal submitted that hotels and restaurants purchase and procure the packed raw material with proper bills from suppliers and prepare food for guests which leads to no direct involvement of food handlers in terms of quality. Therefore, in case of sampling, the onus of the product should be on the manufacturing company and not the Food Business Operator.

Post the inauguration, plenary sessions were held on 'Simplification of Food Safety Regulations for Ease of Doing Business' and 'Save Food, Share Food, Share Joy' initiative. Following the panel discussion, a presentation on 'Responsible Place to Eat' was done by FSSAI officials. An award ceremony also took place to felicitate HRANI member units for the enthusiastic implementation of Food Safety Training and Certification (FOSTAC). The event was well-attended, with much networking and activity during the Q&A sessions. About 150 members were present for the same. The conclave was supported through sponsorships by Haldiram's and Godrej as Gold Partners, The Imperial as Venue Partner, and IDS as Technology Partner.

SIHRA HOLDS EC MEETING IN COLOMBO, SRI LANKA



The Executive Committee of SIHRA held its EC meeting in Colombo, Sri Lanka, from March 8-10, 2018, to boost tourism in South India. The country is considered the foremost in Southeast Asia for promotion of tourism and paving way for

new projects, especially in South India, that will increase tourism growth with higher occupancy and revenue. The meeting took place at Hotel Cinnamon in Colombo and was followed by sightseeing at Bendota. It saw meaningful deliberations on the growth of

hotels and also took up the request of the Secretary General of FHRAI writing to Colombo hoteliers on initiating agreements with the association like those of Bhutan and Nepal. This visit was enjoyed by all members of the association and their families as well.

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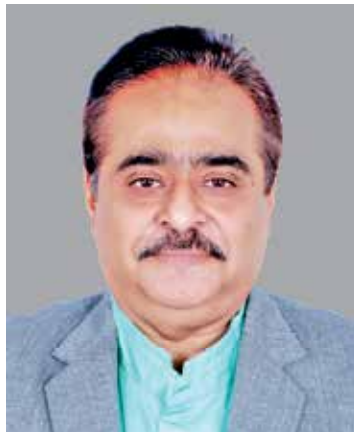
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HRAWI REQUESTS MORE TIME TO IMPLEMENT PLASTIC-FREE REGIME

Post the government's decision to implement the ban on plastic effective March 23, 2018, the hotel and restaurant industry in Maharashtra has once again come under duress to comply with a ban that has come into immediate effect. With the need to do away with all kinds of plastic utilities which have been in use for over two decades, hotels and restaurants are in a fix over identifying and adopting a suitable replacement. HRAWI, while appreciating the state government's intention to save the environment from the perils of plastic waste, has pointed out certain practical considerations that may have escaped the attention of the state authorities before introducing the ban. In a letter to the Additional Chief Secretary, Environment, Government of Maharashtra, the association has highlighted the immediate repercussions to the industry and has requested that the government reconsider extending the timelines.

"We are in favour of giving up the use of plastic and welcome the government's decision. However, a ban on it with immediate effect has consequences which we are not in a position to deal with at this moment. There is a large stock



Dilip Datwani
President
HRAWI

“There is a large inventory of plastic items. We are requesting the government to grant us a suitable transition time”

of inventory of plastic items which is of high value. With the avenues for disposal or even transport of plastic being limited, the industry is faced with a massive write-off. We are requesting the government to grant us a suitable transition time of about 60-90 days to move to

a plastic-free regime," says **Dilip Datwani**, President, HRAWI.

The association has also raised the issue of chain establishments that operate in multiple states. "There are establishments that have operations and depots or distribution centres not only in Maharashtra but in other states as well. As a result, plastic items used by these restaurant entities may move across many state boundaries. It will not be correct, appropriate, or even practical to enforce the ban on plastic items not intended for use in Maharashtra. Hence, we request that a suitable clarification be made for such exceptions and that the ban not apply to such cases," he adds.

Simultaneously, the association, in a bid to find out the best-possible options to replace plastic for the many applications it is used in, has invited its members for sharing suggestions. "Since we too wish to expedite the process of migrating from plastic to environment-friendly alternatives, we have invited our members to send in suggestions for best possible options. Curbing the use of plastic is a big step towards saving the environment and we will work with the government on this," concludes Datwani.

SELLING SERVICES, NOT JUST PACKAGED WATER

The Supreme Court has given a judgement that allows hotels and restaurants to sell bottled water and other packaged products at a price above the MRP.

"The judgement has come as a relief for the hotel industry. Hotels do not just sell packaged drinking

water, aerated drinks, or any such packaged commodity, but they serve it. As was contested by us, the bench observed that hotels and restaurants, besides selling F&B, also render a service. We are glad that the Supreme Court has acknowledged the point and come out with a just decision,"

says **Dilip Datwani**, President of HRAWI.

The government had said that hotels and restaurants not be allowed to sell packaged water or pre-packaged products above the MRP, as this was an alleged breach under the Legal Metrology Act.

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EAST INDIA ON RADAR OF HOSPITALITY MAJORS

Hospitality majors, both domestic and international, are looking to expand their network in the eastern and north-eastern states of India due to demand for quality hotel rooms from this region. This is encouraged by Prime Minister **Narendra Modi's** buzzword for development of states in the East and Northeast.

"Many leading hospitality chains along with their Indian partners are gearing up for hospitality projects as most state governments in the region are laying out the red carpet for investors to set up hotels," says **Sudesh Poddar**, President, HRAEI. Novotel, the internationally-acclaimed hotel brand from AccorHotels, is all set to make its debut in the capital city of Guwahati with the opening of Novotel Guwahati GS Road. The Assam-based SM JDB Estate will be responsible for the development and realisation of the project.

In the meantime, Odisha has invited bids for development of 10 hotels in Bhubaneswar through an online auction. Of the 10 hotels, six would be in the star category (three-star and above) and the remaining four would be in the budget category.

Keeping in mind the growing demand from tourists and sports lovers, the government is creating a land bank of 1000 acres to attract more investment in tourism. The offset price of the plots has been fixed at Industrial Policy Resolution (IPR) rates. "This step will surely attract reputed national and international hotel players to participate in the auction," says Poddar. If all goes well, Radisson Hotel Group will also foray into Odisha.

Indian Hotels Company (IHCL) also has plans to expand in under-served markets like the Northeast, with



Sudesh Poddar
President
HRAEI



Pranav Singh
Hony. Secretary
HRAEI

“Most state governments in the region are laying out the red carpet for investors to set up hotels. This step will surely attract reputed national and international hotel players”

upscale, mid-scale and budget hotel brands. "These locations have always been on the radar of global tourists. With a development agenda that has a clear focus from both central

“With a development agenda that has a clear focus from both central and state governments, large corporates are eyeing business opportunities in these states”

and state governments, large corporates are eyeing business opportunities in these states," adds **Pranav Singh**, Hony. Secretary, HRAEI.

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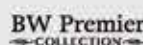


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Sébastien Bazin, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, AccorHotels, says, "The entry of new shareholders and the deconsolidation of AccorInvest will provide AccorHotels with substantial leeway to enhance its dynamic growth and innovation strategy and create value for shareholders. For its part, AccorInvest will take advantage of its new powerful shareholders' support, as well as a strengthened financial structure to execute its roadmap and continue to reinforce its portfolio of assets."



EXPANSION

SOUTH AND NORTHEAST FOR WELCOMHERITAGE



Keeping its focus on growth and bringing the best of hospitality to customers, WelcomHeritage Hotels plans to expand its horizons towards South and Northeast India. The brand already has hotels in Sikkim and Tamil Nadu, and is looking for new properties to strengthen the presence in these regions of the country which have unique heritage, culture, and attractions. Talking about the expansion plan, **Sunil Gupta**, Chief Executive Officer, WelcomHeritage, says, "WelcomHeritage is known for its heritage properties and by further expanding to these regions we will be bringing the values and rich hospitality of these regions on a global platform. We have already identified properties and are in discussion with owners."

The next property, to be flagged immediately, will be WelcomHeritage Ashdale in Nainital, which is an old manor from the British era, owned by the royalty of Sahaspur. Thereafter, WelcomHeritage will be flagging two nature resorts, one in Tadoba (Maharashtra) and the other in Coorg (Karnataka). Both these properties are in the advance stages of the project and will be launched within this financial year.



GROWTH

JUKASO JOURNEYS ADDS FIVE PROPERTIES TO PORTFOLIO

Jukaso Journeys has acquired five properties over the last three months, adding to the growth of the group in Tier-II cities. The recently-acquired properties are Jukaso Sai Palace Udaipur, Jukaso Jim Corbett, Jukaso Seven Heaven Bhimtal, Jukaso Mrikula Cottage Manali, and Jukaso Palace Dharamshala. Jukaso Journeys is planning to expand and hence aims to open 15 properties by the end of 2018. The properties will offer extensive facilities for guests, with well-appointed rooms and international service standards, as well as an all-day dining restaurant and lounge. With the mission of providing

holiday experiences beyond the ordinary for the emerging Indian traveller, all properties of Jukaso Journeys provide state-of-the-art facilities to guests.

Yajush Khanna, Chief Executive Officer, Jukaso Journeys, says, "We are excited about expanding our footprint in India with the signing of more properties. It is a great opportunity to enter new markets as we are trying to cover and mark our presence in major tourist destinations. We intend to strengthen our upscale brand in India."

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ODIA CUISINE

MAYFAIR Lagoon, Bhubaneswar, promotes the regional cuisine of the state of Odisha through a specialty restaurant 'Kanika'. The popular dishes here are Chuna Macha Tawa Bhaja (small river fish), Chattubara (local mushroom), Mati Handi Mangsho (mutton), Dalma (lentil with vegetables), and Chenna Poda (steamed cottage cheese dessert).

OUT WITH THE OLD

With nuclear families and increased disposable income, mostly in urban areas, the trend of eating out has gone up and people are on the lookout for healthier options. Another current restaurant trend is fusion food. Some restaurateurs are also adding



international ingredients such as truffle oil to Indian dishes and creating new flavours that are both interesting and popular among diners.

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We have recently included the latest model of the RATIONAL combi-oven that can be programmed to cook overnight as well as perform multiple tasks. We are also planning to add a salad robot that represents the next generation of salad bars. It can create up to 1000 salad combinations, while providing us with the calorie content before mixing. It will also help us in controlling portions through a weight sensor and will be Wi-Fi enabled to notify operators if an ingredient canister is running low. We also have in the pipeline procurement of environmentally friendly designs of refrigerators that rely on R290 refrigerant. This naturally-occurring substance has been deemed a low global warming potential substitute for older refrigerants.



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The Imperial, New Delhi

PUNCHING NUMBERS

At The Imperial, all the restaurants are occupied by expats. We mostly have in-house guests, leisure travellers, embassy delegates, and those visiting Delhi. We do around 25,000-30,000 covers in a month in all the restaurants together.

PUNJABI AND AWADHI CUISINE

In North India, especially Delhi, people enjoy Punjabi and Awadhi cuisines, together termed as North Indian food. Some famous dishes we serve are Rogan Gosh, Mutton Korma, Nalli Nihari, Paneer Lababdar, and a variety of breads.

For most expats coming to Delhi, Indian food is a combination of five to six recipes that may include



tandoori chicken, murgh makhani, paneer makhani, dal makhani, and biryani, mostly with bread or roti.

A HEALTHY CHANGE?

Diets vary and have evolved over time. Many processed and convenience foods such as pickles and *papads* are now easily available just as Western foods which may include pizzas, burgers, and fries. This has bumped up the national average of fat and sugar.

There is no doubt that authentic Indian food is healthy, but are all traditional Indian foods healthy and fit to be consumed by the modern man? With time, needs change. As a consumer, the average Indian today is a lot more informed about food than he was 50 years ago and is spoiled for choice.

TECHNO KITCHENS

A top-tier chef can whip up a memorable meal using little more than a good knife and a decent set of pans. Technology has been a dominant part

of the kitchen for years. From the blender and food processor to regular advances in familiar appliances, we've been relying on gadgets to help us prepare our meals for most, if not all, of our lives. And just as it has in other fields, technology is not showing any signs of slowing in the kitchen.

THE LATEST IN COOKING

Sous vide, the practice of cooking food in a plastic pouch and placing it in hot water or a steamer, has seen its popularity explode in the past couple of years. Airfryers are also gaining popularity. We may love the taste of fried foods, but our waistlines and our hearts aren't so crazy about them. Using just a teaspoon of actual oil and a whole lot of hot air, it cooks food quickly and evenly and will give you that crunch you crave without the extra fat and calories.

Wireless thermometers are also making a mark. It lets you monitor the temperature of ribs, chicken, or brisket from a good distance.



Prem K Pogakula



- Dry red chilli powder
- Turmeric powder
- Cardamom
- Clove
- Cinnamon



Neelabh Sahay

Neelabh Sahay Executive Chef Novotel Kolkata - Hotel & Residences Hotel

COVERS THROUGH MICE

The maximum footfall we receive is from corporates situated in the hotel's vicinity. Given the popularity of The Square and Studio, the hotel's in-house restaurants, we have a fair capture from our in-house guests along with visitors who are not staying with us. While we get approximately 12,000 covers, if we look at the mix of the profile of guests, we get a health mix of MICE and social movement as part of our portfolio, which is highly encouraging.

BENGALI CUISINE

Being located in Kolkata, Bengali cuisine is the regional cuisine we specialise in. The authentic dishes that are popular with our patrons are Maccher Jhol (fish curry), Luchi and Aloo Dum, Kolkata Kathi Roll, Kolkata-style Dum Biryani, Chingri Malai Curry, Kosha Mangsho, and Mishti Doi among others. International guests are well-exposed to the cuisine of West Bengal and enjoy the flavours used in this style of cooking. While most of them thoroughly enjoy the fish preparations at the hotel, some all-time favourites they have include Mishti Doi and *biryani*.

ETHICAL AND EXPERIMENTAL

Based on the ever-evolving taste of today's traveller, we are always trying to reinvent our menu and food

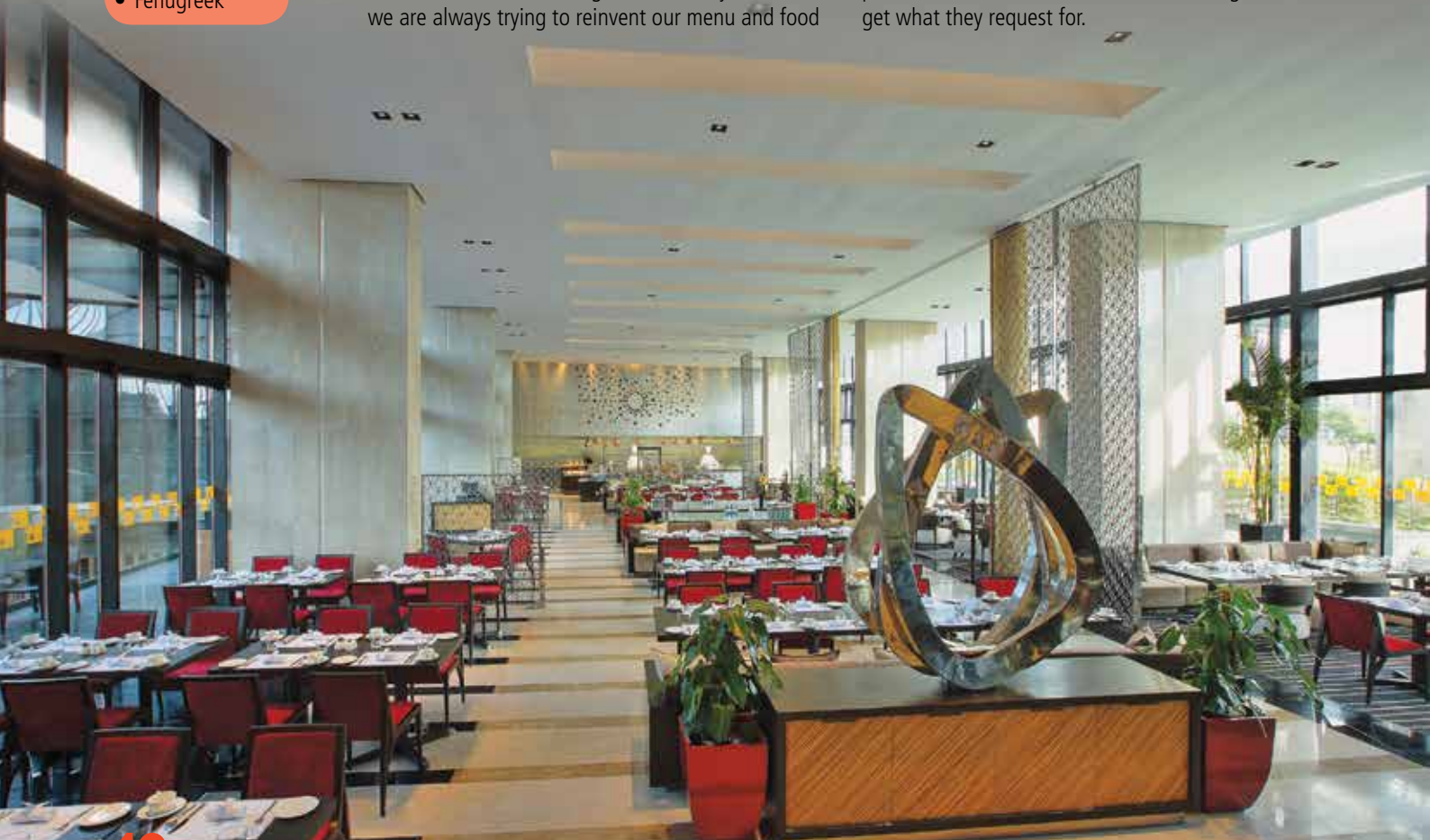
offerings to match the changing dietary habits of guests. People now prefer places with strong food ethics. Not only the taste of the dish, they also want to know how fresh or organic their food is, where their food is coming from, and if it is ethically sourced or not.

While earlier people preferred sticking to a few tried and tested cuisines, today food habits are more adventurous and do not shy out on experimenting with different cuisines on the domestic and international levels. This has increased our options as chefs and given us a lot to work with. It's an exciting time for the culinary industry for sure.

SOURCING INGREDIENTS

It is possible to source ingredients, which are not easily available, from various parts of the country through certified vendors who understand the importance of supply chain and give us safe ingredients to use. The only challenge here is that ingredients that are not readily available need to be planned for in advance.

We work closely with the procurement and purchase team in the hotel to ensure that guests get what they request for.





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Sudip Mishra

Sudip Mishra
Executive Chef
Bengaluru Marriott Hotel Whitefield

MORE CORPORATES FOR FOOTFALLS

The maximum footfall at the hotel's restaurants comes from residents and locals residing in and around Whitefield, Bengaluru. In terms of covers in a month, we have approximately 15,000. The breakup of guests received would be 80 per cent corporates and 20 per cent socials.

THE POPULAR SOUTH

Given our location, our hotel focuses on the regional cuisine of the southern states of Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, and Karnataka. The most popular authentic dishes are Dosa, Appam,



Malabari Paratha, butter chicken, Chettinad chicken, and *kebabs*. Our international guests like *biryani*, *kebabs*, curries, South Indian breakfast items, and local beverages like filter coffee and buttermilk.

TIME AND COST-EFFICIENT FOOD

With more modern working families, more people are dining out on a regular basis and the preference is for local comfort food in a casual setting with great value on pricing. Buffet restaurants are becoming increasingly popular as they suit the entire family.

NEW TECH IN KITCHEN

The new technology element in our kitchen is sous vide cooking, wherein meats and vegetables are slow cooked under controlled temperature settings.

SOURCING, LESS CHALLENGING

With globalisation and reduction in travel time, sourcing ingredients is less challenging, but ingredients are expensive due to high freight costs. Lead-time can also sometimes be very high for exotic ingredients.



- Aniseed
- Cinnamon
- Clove
- Coriander
- Cumin

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Gaurav Mathur

Gaurav Mathur
Executive Chef
Radisson Blu Hotel New Delhi Dwarka

FOOTFALLS AND COVERS

The restaurant gets the maximum footfall on account of residential meetings and the catchment area of the hotel. We do about 700 covers in a month. The mix of guests we get at the hotel's restaurant is made up of 70 per cent corporates and 30 per cent social gatherings.

AWADHI FOOD

Awadhi food, which is a combination of cuisines of North India and the North West Frontier, is extremely popular among guests. The authentic dishes that guests love to indulge in include Murgh Tambaqui, Nalli Shehnai, Dal-e-Dvar, and Paan Kulfi. International guests also get excited about trying out regional Indian food and the whole experience of Indian tradition and culture.



REGIONAL DISHES

Indians relish authentic regional Indian food that is prepared in contemporary style with a low fat content.

EASING THE TASK

We have introduced the fully-automatic and highly functional high-tech baking oven constructed with advanced technology. This really eases the task of everyone in the kitchen.



Anuj Wadhawan

Anuj Wadhawan
Executive Sous Chef
Roseate House, New Delhi

MORE WALK-INS

We mostly get walk-in guests at Kheer, a restaurant that brings exquisite Indian cuisine par excellence teamed with the best street food, offering an experience that marries traditional cooking with luxurious fine-dining. The restaurant has gained immense popularity since its launch in October 2017. The mix of clients would be around 80 per cent non-resident guests and 20 per cent resident diners. We do about 1500 covers on an average, daily.

A FAVOURITE AMONG GUESTS

Aerocity has multiple options for diners when it comes to cuisine. At Kheer, the most popular authentic dishes include Murg Tikka, which is our take on a

regular chicken *tikka*, Barra Kabab, Dal Dunga, Jodhpuri Aloo, and our range of exquisite breads.

International guests are fond of everything on the menu as the dishes have been handcrafted in such a way that they use less oil and chillies and more flavours.

REGIONAL FOOD PREFERRED

The general trend is that diners now enjoy regional cuisines from different parts of India. Both foreign and domestic guests do not shy away from experimenting, and we ensure they are served authentic regional dishes that keep them coming back for more. States like Maharashtra and Kerala are most popular among them, but they are always on the lookout for something new and more tantalising to the taste buds.



SOURCING INGREDIENTS

It is difficult to source ingredients at times, but we are closely working with vendors associated with farmers directly to help us procure ingredients as and when they are required.



Alok Kumar
Executive Chef
Balaji Sarovar Premiere, Solapur

A GOOD MIX

We get the maximum footfall from Solapur city and the smaller towns nearby. Our average covers per month are 2980. Corporates, professionals, and tourists who visit the region for religious tourism form our client-mix.

Courtyard Restaurant is our all-day dining restaurant that also features a bar and offers delectable, multi-cuisine à la carte delicacies along with a lavish spread of buffet; High Point is an ideal venue for post and pre-dinner drinks and offers a wide selection of premium spirits and the Oriental Blossom, our in-house Chinese restaurant, lets guests indulge in Szechwan and Cantonese recipes.

MAHARASHTRIAN CUISINE

According to the location of the hotel, the regional cuisine is Maharashtrian. The most popular authentic dishes among our guests are Kadak Bhakari, Shenga Chutney, Chicken Rassa, Matki Chi Ussal, Bharli Wangi, Katachi Aamti, Puran Poli, Varan Bhaat, Gehu ki Kheer, and Shrikhanda. Most international guests that



come to the hotel prefer North Indian cuisine and they love continental desserts.

CHANGING HABITS

Nowadays, many guests prefer healthy food options as well as combo meals. These changing habits have provided opportunities for innovation.

KITCHEN SMART

We have got the usual commercial combo oven, a three-deck oven, gas tandoor, and smart kitchen appliances.



Alok Kumar

5 SPICE FILE

- Cardamom
- Cinnamon
- Clove
- Black peppercorn
- Turmeric





Gaurav Anand

Gaurav Anand Executive Chef Courtyard by Marriott Bengaluru Hebbal

GUESTS FROM AROUND

The maximum footfalls for our restaurant are from Manyata Tech Park and other commercial districts around the area. Most of the surrounding residential areas are also major contributors of guests at the restaurants. The profile of guests, however, mainly comprises corporates.

SOUTH INDIAN CUISINE

The hotel's location is in Bengaluru and a variety of our regional cuisine options are mostly of South Indian origin. Our menu classics include a wide array of *dosas*, steamed breads, *chutneys*, and lentil dishes apart from South Indian seafood. Some guest favourites are kingfish in coconut base, fish in *kokum* curry, lamb *biryani*, and home-style fish curry with fresh coconut.

International guests prefer steaks and roast meat, but when trying out our regional cuisine options they generally go ahead with dishes that are mildly spiced and light on the palate.

GOING DOWN FUSION STREET

The generic trend that is dominant amongst Indian travellers is experimenting with fusion street food. People are also on the lookout for healthier options as they are now more conscious not only about



calories going into their body, but also the health benefits and source of ingredients used to prepare the food. There is also a big shift with people now exploring cuisines from the Eastern front, like Japanese, Thai, Cantonese, etc., and moving away from Western classics like steaks, burgers, stews and more.

WEATHER, A HINDRANCE

It is sometimes difficult to get zero-pesticide ingredients and products directly from farms as we are dependent on the right supply. Sometimes, the nature and weather make things challenging, and that could determine the quality of the final product.



SPICE FILE

- Cinnamon
- Turmeric
- Ginger
- Parsley
- Sage



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Vying for profitability

Senior members of FHRAI share their opinion on where most hospitality investments are taking place- greenfield or brownfield projects. They tell us if in the current market scenario it would be viable to take on Non-Performing Assets.



Garish Oberoi
President
FHRAI

ROI PLAYS A DECISIVE ROLE

For most independent hoteliers and business, investing in profitable projects is what gives life and growth to a company. Therefore, it becomes essential to understand the market dynamics on whether to invest in new projects or take on non-performing ones and grow them to become profitable.

Ease of doing business was brought into force to encourage investments in the country. Greenfield projects, especially in hospitality, require huge investments. Since hotels see long-term growth and ROI, the projects require long gestation loans.

Therefore, FHRAI has recommended that infrastructure status be given to hotel projects of up to ₹25 crore. Through this, the sector can be stimulated into developing infrastructure for the hotel industry.

“
FHRAI has recommended that infrastructure status be given to hotel projects of up to ₹25 crore
”

Also, we have been pushing for easing of CRZ norms so that the 7,516.6-km-long coastline of India is developed, keeping in mind sustainable initiatives.

Companies of any size and entrepreneurs starting a new business should definitely go in for a viability and feasibility report of that particular area. Location plays a vital role in the profitability of a hotel.

So, taking on a brownfield project in the right location would mean good business. Unfortunately, a high tax rate of 28 per cent on tariffs above ₹7,500 is definitely pushing many establishments to becoming Non-Performing Assets (NPAs). FHRAI has been perpetually trying to get the GST reduced to 12 per cent in this regard.

As India grows in terms of development, greenfield projects are being proposed in the newer, untouched Tier-III cities which are being favoured for rising domestic tourism.

As we get more inbound tourists, we do need good hotels to cater to this rising demand. Hospitality and tourism remain one of the biggest employment generators; this is something that must be foremost in mind when developing policies for licensing, tax, and infrastructure. In the mid-segment market, hotels will continue to grow. There is increasing opportunity in upper-upscale, leisure, and lots of possibilities for MICE. Some of the newer developments are taking place in Pune, Guwahati, Chandigarh, Goa, Jammu, Mumbai, Delhi-NCR, Chennai, Bhubaneswar, Ahmedabad, Kochi, Jaipur, and Hyderabad. Hotels can make or break tourist destinations, hence, this segment needs promotion and concessions for growth.



Sanjay Sood
President
HRANI

TAKING ON NPAs, A RISK

The last significant year for the hotel transaction market in India was 2015, when the market witnessed deals worth about ₹2423 crore in existing and brownfield assets. Hotel buyers in the market today are strategic investors who firmly believe that the boom in the hotel economic cycle is resuming, making it ideal to acquire operating hotels.

New hotel supply in the country is anticipated to slow down to 3-4 per cent year-on-year, over the next two to three years, from a high of 6-8 per cent over the past five years and the opportunity to invest in the sector is ripe.

In the last four to five years, the cost of construction has gone up while supply has also risen; hence, the pain in the hospitality space will be there for some time. Hoteliers today are looking at consolidating their business; they are vying for profitability, trying to ensure decent operational assets for the next few years.

While the political leadership of the country as well as the regulator are on the job to contain the bad loans and strengthen the financial base of the banking system in the country, there is still no clarity on the *modus operandi*. Therefore, taking on Non-Performing Assets is definitely a risk.



Sudesh Poddar
President
HRAEI

BETTER CONNECTIVITY, MORE OPPORTUNITIES

The connectivity in this part of the country is getting better. Land is available in most of the states and it's easier to set up a greenfield project here. Internationally-acclaimed hotel brands have made their debut in Guwahati, soon to be followed by Shillong. JW Marriott also has plans to foray into the pristine Northeast. Sikkim, India's only organic state with its pristine Himalayan beauty, is also on the radar of international hotel brands.

Among Indian brands, MAYFAIR Hotels & Resorts has a mission to promote the eastern and north-eastern parts of India as attractive tourist destinations. The group is working closely with various stakeholders to identify potential tourist sites it can develop into hospitality properties. Plans are afoot to set up a five-star property in Kolkata and boutique hotels in Siliguri, Raipur, and Paradip. All of the group's hotels are greenfield projects.

Ambuja Neotia Hospitality, a Kolkata-based brand, has also stepped up several gears with its unique greenfield projects. It has eight properties under construction and aims to have these boutique resorts operational by 2020, taking the total tally to 10. The group has ventured into virgin locations in the Sundarbans, the first company to do so. It is also coming up with a property at Makaibari, renowned for the world's oldest tea factory. The future of greenfield projects is most exciting in these parts of the country.



K. Syama Raju
President
SIHRA

GREENFIELD PROJECTS, A BETTER PROPOSITION

Hotel investments in the South are mostly in new greenfield projects, depending on supply, incentives, and concessions given by the government to attract more investors and improve occupancy, making the project profitable. Old projects need to be refurbished, a process that is time consuming, over expensive, and does not attract investments, making such properties non-performing assets.

The Ministry of Tourism wants India to be the most favoured and most attractive destination. Many investor

forums have been convened in important places of investment with a promise to support new investors. This has resulted in many international chains, along with Indian entrepreneurs, investing in unknown and lesser-known destinations. Even international and local airlines are looking to enter new destinations, facilitating the establishment of new projects and other amenities by providing employment and smooth and profitable operations.

The old or existing projects have to compete with new chains for increased revenue, affordable tariff, and modern facilities. They also get fiscal concessions from the government as well as banks, allowing gestation period in the payment of interest.

Due to the stringent measures in the issuance of various licences to hotels and not being provided single-window clearance, a lot of energy and money gets wasted. Both government and banks are not generous in providing funds for refurbishment of existing operations, thereby making such properties Non-Performing Assets.

Cost-effective purchases

Shiv Kr Mehan, Chief Operating Officer, Leisure Hotels, talks about purchases that are relevant to a changing and dynamic market, and the nuances of engaging new vendors for hotels.



Shiv Kr Mehan

HAS GST BROUGHT ABOUT CHANGES IN THE PURCHASE PATTERN OF HOTELS?

The processes of organised purchase channels were prevalent before the GST as well and therefore there isn't much change in how we go about purchasing at Leisure Hotels. As a business, of course, we do realise that the silver lining comes in the form of Input Tax Credit (ITC) which is more than welcome under many categories of purchased items.

A noticeable and forced change, however, does come to bear upon the segment of registered vendors. Since we are unable to take ITC from a vendor who is not registered under GST, the purchase and finance departments of our hotels now ensure that we purchase from organised or registered vendors. This aspect was earlier more relaxed being governed only by quality and cost-effectiveness in terms of vendor selection, mostly in Tier-II and III locations.

The tendering process today is more efficient, with most vendors enrolled with standard GST in their purchase segment or listing for goods. IGST has replaced indirect taxes on imports, making that

option also simpler and more efficient for hotels; we do see this aspect growing.

WHICH COMMODITIES ARE DIFFICULT TO OBTAIN DURING THE PEAK SEASON?

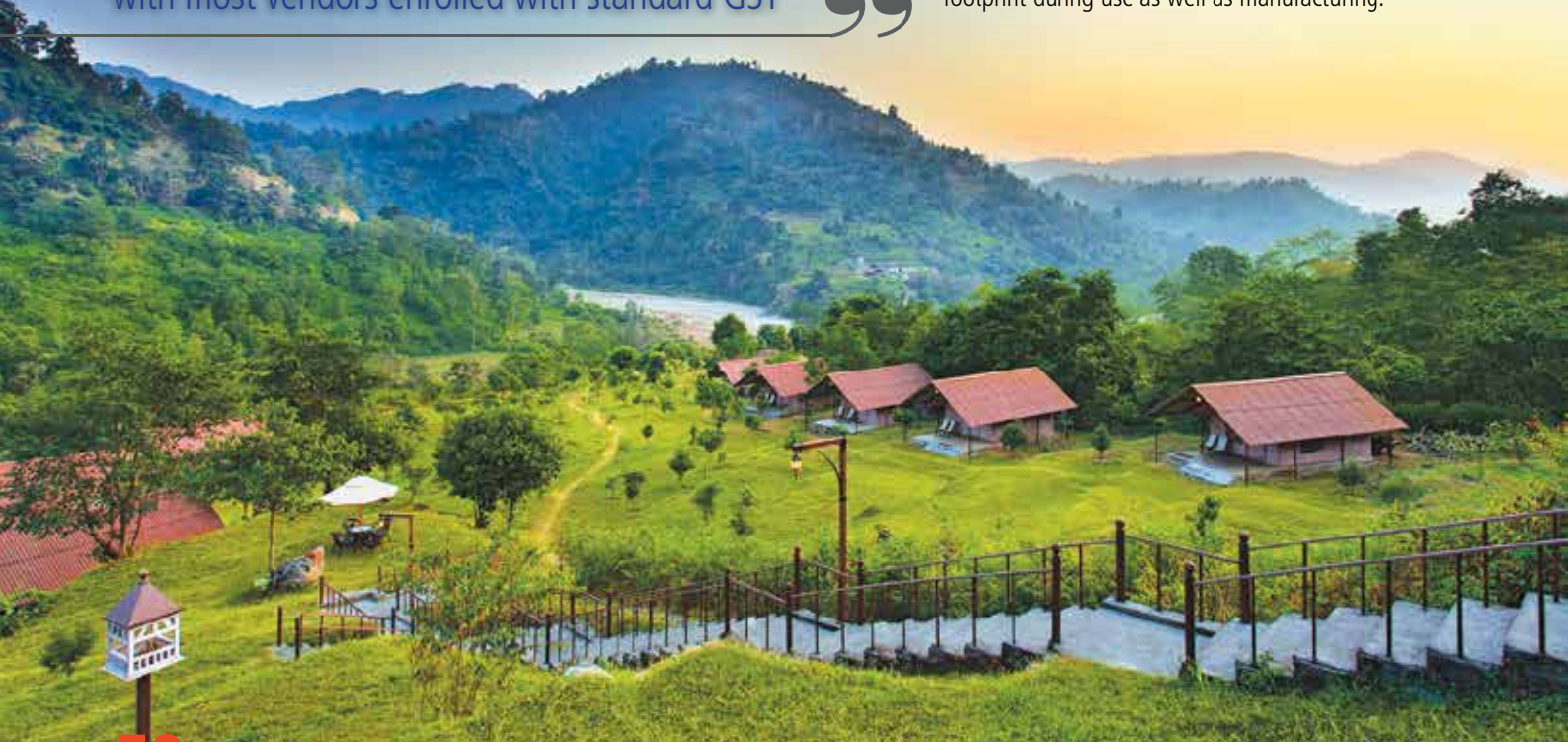
Most destinations for the chain are leisure retreats or located in religious destinations in Tier-II regions such as Jim Corbett, Nainital, and Rishikesh. By and large, sourcing is done through regular channels with little or no difficulty. However, there is a measure of extra effort required in sourcing the correct quality of certain continental vegetables, exotic fruits, certain fresh seafood, and imported cheese at such locations due to proximity of these markets and logistical limitations. We currently work this through Delhi-NCR as a hub.

HOW FINANCIALLY VIABLE IS IT TO MAKE GREEN PURCHASES?

Going forward, Green purchasing is a key focus for the Leisure group, especially given the locations and the nature of properties we operate in. Companies need to be ecologically conscious.

The primary aspect for our hotels is the purchase of energy-star capital equipment, which comes from known brands and with a price tag. Green purchasing involves goods that have a low carbon footprint during use as well as manufacturing.

“The tendering process today is more efficient, with most vendors enrolled with standard GST”



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“

Green purchasing involves goods that have a low carbon footprint during use and manufacturing ”

This itself is a highly variable cost. Recycled paper and cardboard is again a more expensive commodity. Organically grown vegetables and fruits are not easily available, demand is higher than supply, and hence, the cost of purchase and carting them is high. As an industry, we would like to reduce wasteful expenses and divert the same to Green purchasing practices.

WHAT DO YOU LOOK FOR IN VENDORS? DO YOU PURCHASE ONLINE?

We turn to regular vendors as a practice, as here we are assured of consistency in quality, supply, and rate. Regular vendors mostly include suppliers of perishable food products, groceries, guest supplies, etc.

For us, the vendor must be registered under the GST guideline. The vendor may be a direct company distributor or a wholesaler, so we know the products would not be spurious and we would get them at correct price points. The vendor should also be able to weather the capital circulation in supplying to a hotel, as this would be on a contractual monthly payment mode and therefore, will need to be financially sound.

We also require that the vendor maintain well-executed storage and stocking areas. The price of any supply should be conducive to the expectation of the hotel and not overpriced when compared to other vendors in the same category. The vendor must also be able to stay within the stipulated delivery schedule. He must have an alternate procurement arrangement to be able to deliver in case of break in the supply chain or shortage in the market.

WHAT DO YOU KEEP IN MIND WHEN PURCHASING NEW TECHNOLOGY FOR THE HOTEL?

Technology is ever-changing and we need to keep abreast of the same. Hotel technology needs to fulfil the basic criteria of providing benefit on enhancement of guest experience, convenience in real-time scenarios for employees, and bringing efficiency of time and cost in operating processes of the organisation, thereby adding value.

That said, striking the right balance that fulfils all the needs of a hotel isn't the easiest task; there is a lot that is taken into account to strike the right chord, but all these technologies at a realistic price point is always doable.

We are now, as a hotel group, investing in technologies that enhance guest experience for their stay, their dining experience, their feedback process, allowing us to standardise delivery across the group.

A significant example is the introduction of the electronic guest request system and its escalation matrix within the hotel's operations team. In addition to that, technology such as chatbots, in the reservation and enquiry process, allows for more verbal interaction with guests.

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Able & Sustainable

Hotel properties are huge resource consumers and waste generators, so adoption of green initiatives by them is imperative. The following article highlights the importance of a sustainability policy for the hospitality industry.



Niranjan Khatri

Sustainability is often referred to as future-proofing. It is the process of meeting today's demands without compromising on future needs. Sustainability in an organisation comprises action in three spheres - economic, environment, and social. There is scope in every industry to adopt sustainable business practices, especially in the hospitality industry. Adoption of sustainable practices improves the financial performance of an organisation. It helps a business adhere to governmental regulations aiming to encourage sustainable business practices, differentiate an organisation in the eyes of investors and customers, increase its brand value, and promote innovation. As a means to achieve all this, framing a policy providing a strategic approach for an organisation to achieve sustainability is essential.

SCOPE

The number of hotel rooms in India is estimated to be around 6.6 million. If we look at only waste generation, going by the statistic that about one to six kilograms of waste gets generated per room in a day, the quantum of waste that could be generated is likely to be around 6.6 million to 39.6 million kg annually, so there is a huge scope for waste reduction among other things.

METHODOLOGY

Waste management is one component of a sustainability policy. An organisation conscious about waste generation and keen to reduce waste

will have a tangible target to work towards. This process involves a series of steps that include:

- Identification of sources of waste, which is vital. It is essential to do a comprehensive listing at this point as this is the fundamental data around which reduction targets can be framed.
- Application of the principle of reduce, reuse, recycle, and refurbish. If there are materials that cannot undergo any of the aforementioned processes, they have to be replaced by more sustainable alternatives.
- Study of industry-level benchmarks available for waste management and applying them.
- Putting processes in place to ensure adherence to benchmarks through technology, efficient practices, training, and skill development.
- Conduct of regular audit to ensure compliance to targets.

BENEFITS

Brand value improvement

Sustainable practices help a business differentiate itself and position itself as ethical. It is an important tool in customer engagement through awareness creation. A sustainability policy helps an organisation walk the talk, otherwise it runs the risk of losing credibility.

Increase in productivity and reduction in cost

Sustainable practices help streamline operations and create efficiencies. Contrary to the belief that sustainability is expensive, it actually helps in waste reduction and savings. This includes resource efficiency; reduction in wastage of food, water and electricity; and promotes reuse.

“Adoption of sustainable practices improves the financial performance of an organisation”



SOURCES OF WASTE IN THE HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY

NON-HAZARDOUS WASTE			HAZARDOUS WASTE	
WASTE TYPE	COMPONENTS	SOURCE	WASTE TYPE	SOURCE
Household waste	Food/kitchen waste; used paper, plastic, and composite wrappers	Hotel's different departments	Frying oil	Kitchen, restaurants
Cardboard	Packaging	Hotel's purchasing and other departments	Mineral oil	Maintenance service
Paper	Printed documents, brochures, menus, maps, magazines, newspapers	Administration, reception, guest rooms, restaurants	Paint and solvent residues	Maintenance service
Plastic, metal, glass, cloth	Bags, bottles (that did not contain hazardous material), tin cans, aluminium packaging, linen, rags	Guest rooms, restaurants, administration, kitchen	Flammable material (gas, petrol, etc.)	Kitchen, garden, maintenance service
Wood	Wooden packaging, pallets	Purchasing department	Fertilisers and chemicals	Garden
Organic waste	Fruit and vegetable peelings, flowers and plants, branches, leaves, grass	Restaurants, rooms, gardens	Cleaning chemicals	Maintenance service, laundry room
			Ink cartridges	Administration
			IT discs and CDs	Administration, guest rooms
			Batteries, neon tubes, bulbs	Maintenance service, administration, rooms

Source: Journal of Environmental Management 2014



High-sustainability firms perform better on metrics such as return on assets and return on equity



Sriram Kuchimanchi

Regulation compliance

Governments are increasingly pushing business undertakings to become sustainable, through regulations, compliance standards, fiscal measures, and incentives. To operate in such an environment and to take advantage of the incentives and subsidies provided by the government, a business has to have a sustainability policy in place.

Attracts investment

Investors prefer to invest in companies that are sustainable and as mentioned earlier, future-proof. Sustainable companies have regulatory compliance and good brand value among consumers, making such business attractive to investors.

Encourages innovation

Sustainable business is in tune with evolving customer needs and changing regulatory environment, as a full-fledged sustainability policy provides insights for product innovations.

TAKING THE LEAD

The research-tracking performance of companies high on sustainability metrics has found higher return on investment in sustainability for these business compared to companies operating in a business-as-usual scenario. The high-sustainability firms also performed better on metrics such as return on assets and return on equity. Organisations can really benefit from a sustainability policy.

According to **Lavanya P Arun**, Policy Consultant, Smarter Dharma, "The government aims to attract 20 million international tourists annually by 2020, doubling the present number of Foreign Tourist Arrivals. In a country with 6.6 million hotel rooms that are expected to grow, the waste generated per room in a day is one to six kg. This is a phenomenal challenge and a responsibility looming over the industry which underlines the need for adoption of sustainability policy."

(The authors are **Niranjan Khatri**, Founder of iSambhav, a sustainability training organisation and **Sriram Kuchimanchi**, CEO of Smarter Dharma, a social enterprise operating in the field of social and environmental sustainability. The views expressed above are the authors' personal views.)

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300-PLUS CHEFS at CULINARY ART INDIA

The 13th edition of Culinary Art India was organised by Indian Culinary Forum and ITPO alongside AAHAR 2018, the international food and hospitality fair, at Pragati Maidan, New Delhi.

This year's Culinary Art India saw more than 300 chefs from around India showcase their culinary expertise through chocolates, cakes, fruits, vegetables and everything edible, during the four days of the fair, followed by the award function. The challenge saw chefs competing in 16 different categories including 'Authentic Indian Regional Cuisine', 'Three-Course Set Dinner Menu', 'Chocolate Mania', 'Artistic Pastry Showpiece', 'Fruit & Vegetable Carving', 'Plated Appetisers', 'Three-Tier Wedding Cake', 'Artistic Bakery

Showpiece', 'Contemporary Sushi Platter', 'Petit Fours or Pralines Category', 'Plated Desserts', 'Live Cooking Competition' open to CDP and above, 'Live Cooking Competition' open to all, 'Enthusiastic Hobby Cooks Students Apprentice/Students', 'Cake Decorating - Dress the Cake', and 'Mocktails Competition'.

The winners of the challenge were felicitated at the award function on March 17, 2018, at Pragati Maidan. The objective of the competition was to establish an opportunity for senior and apprentice chefs across India to display their individual and combined skills and creative talent, as well as learn and share experiences.

Chef Davinder Kumar, President, Indian Culinary Forum, said, "I feel proud to announce

“

We saw transparency through structured rules and systems, and a panel of WACS-certified judges

”



EVENT



the 13th Culinary Art India through which I hope to create a platform for chefs to demonstrate their culinary skill as well as help them improve to meet international standards. Like in the past 12 years, we saw total transparency through structured rules, regulations and systems, and a panel of WACS-certified judges.”

Sharing his opinion, **Chef Vivek Saggar**, General Secretary, Indian Culinary Forum, said, “ICF constantly thrives to bring our fraternity closer and continues its commitment to encourage the betterment of the culinary profession in setting new benchmarks in the hospitality industry. Through the 13th edition of Culinary Art India, we want to create a bigger stage for chefs from India and abroad to come together and share their culinary expertise.

This year, to encourage budding chefs, tourism and hospitality has instituted an award for the best student chef.”

The event saw the participation of renowned names among the culinary fraternity as guests and jury. The jury members included Chef Sireesh Saxena, Organising Secretary, Culinary Art India; Chef Rajiv Malhotra; Chef Alex Moser; Chef Rajiv Chopra; Chef Tarun Dacha; Chef Prem Kumar Pogakula; Avin Thaliath; Chef Syed Ali Naqvi; Chef Surinder Kumar; and Chef Abhiru Biswas, among

others, along with the Chairperson of the Jury, Chef Satish Arora.

The winners under different categories were **Rishabh Sharma** (Le Méridien) for Three-Tier Wedding Cake, **Shobhit Kumar** (The Oberoi, Gurgaon) for Artistic Pastry Showpiece, **Aman Kumar** (Theobroma Foods) for Artistic Bakery Showpiece, **Jitender** (The Ashok Hotel) for Fruits & Vegetables Carving, **Abhishek Sharma** (Radisson Blu, Paschim Vihar) and **Saba Yusuf** (Oberoi Centre for Learning and Development) for Plated Appetisers. Under Petit Four or Pralines, **Lakhwinder Singh** (Le Méridien) was the winner and those under other categories were **Jobin John** (Le Méridien) for Three-Course Set Dinner Menu, **Pratik Deshmukh** (Oberoi Centre for Learning and Development) for Plated Desserts, **Lukesh Bajaj** (Radisson Blu, Paschim Vihar) for Authentic Indian Regional Cuisine, **Raghubar Singh** (The Oberoi, Gurgaon) for Contemporary Sushi Platter, **Dinesh** (Olive Bar and Kitchen) for Chocolate Mania, **Hari Prasad** (Crowne Plaza, Rohini) for Mocktail Competition, **Suman Vaish** (Enthusiastic Hobby Cooks) under the category of Enthusiastic Hobby Cooks Students Apprentice/Students, **Dinsraj** (Trident, Gurgaon) for Live Cooking Competition that was open to all, and **Manish Kumar Ahlawat** (Jaypee Greens Golf & Spa Resort) for Live Cooking Competition that was open to CDP and above.

MAD OVER ÉCLAIRS

◆ Mad Over Donuts has unveiled its extraordinary line of éclairs that is sure to get you queuing up! The chefs at Mad Over Donuts have retained the original charm of the éclairs and given it their own twist, using popular ingredients in the most charming combinations. These éclairs come in tantalising flavours of Dark Chocolate, Coffee, Nutella, and Salted Caramel Custard.



TILES GONE WIDE!

◆ Antica Ceramica, a company that manufactures tiles and sanitary ware, has introduced its new collection of wider tiles that are visually more appealing than smaller tiles to make a space look bigger. Available in 60x60 cm, 60x120 cm, and 20x120 cm in a variation of 15 shades and innumerable design options, Antica Ceramica's new collection oozes sophistication and simplicity.

SPICE IT UP WITH BIRA

◆ Bira 91 heats things up this spring with the launch of Bira 91 Hot Sauce. Made with fresh Habanero chilli, mustard, tomato and chilli paste, Bira 91 Hot Sauce adds the vibrancy of spice to your favourite meal, be it a bowl of spaghetti or your favourite fries. The company is constantly innovating and coming up with new and flavourful products.

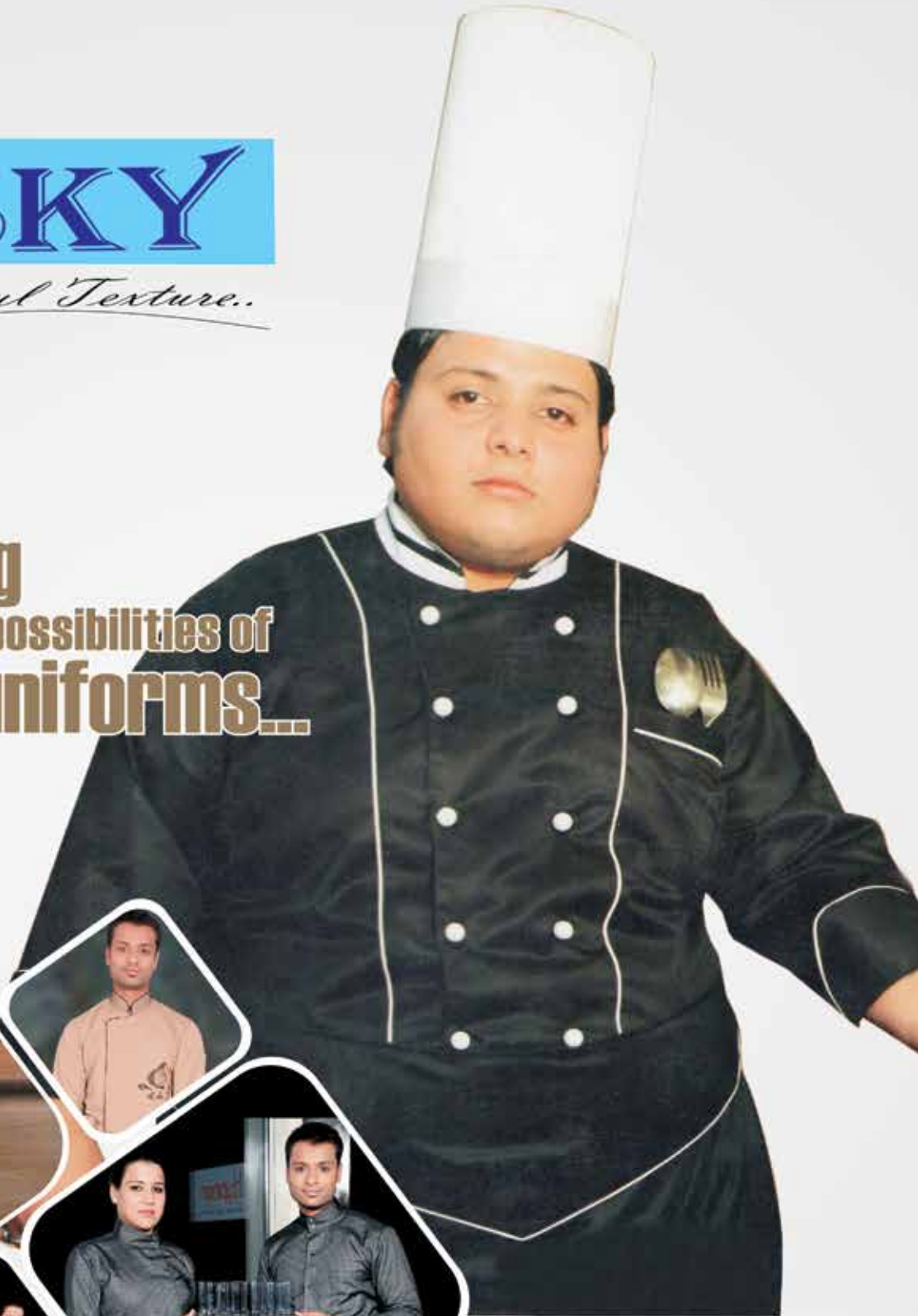




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PERFECT FLOORS

◆ Notion has launched 'Premium Inlay Laminate' flooring series, a modern and technologically superior take on the floor with high gloss and super matte surfaces. Available in hues of brown, grey, and beige with various design options such as Blue Line Wood and Blue Line Nature, this series is a perfect combination of versatility, convenience, and affordability that enhances the look of rooms. It is manufactured in a single size and milled to precision, with worry-free installation and lifelong durability.

DIP-SO-DELICIOUS



◆ Cornitos brings the exciting and lip-smacking range of cheese dips, which includes Cheesy Chipotle dip, Cheesy Jalapeño dip, and Ranch Cucumber dip, to make snacking more exciting and utterly yummy. While Chipotle Cheesy dip is a hot flavour with a savoury tang, Cheesy Jalapeño dip has a hint of tangy hot jalapeño pepper. The dip can be used as a spread for burgers and sandwiches. Finally, the Ranch Cucumber dip contains natural cucumber juice as one of the key ingredients and makes a great companion to French fries, cucumber and carrot sticks.

SAFE UNDER WRAPS

◆ Oddy Uniwraps has introduced a safe and convenient way of reheating and even cooking everyday meals using the eco-friendly food wrapping paper that does not contain plastic or metals. Oddy Uniwraps is a healthy alternative to aluminium foil, plastic wraps, newspapers, and muslin cloth. It is microwave and oven-safe up to 230 degrees Celsius. Its non-sticky, environment-friendly, grease-proof, and high strength retention characteristics keep food fresher than other wraps. The product is 100 per cent organic and provides the highest degree of hygiene and food safety.



SLIDE WITH EASE



◆ Ozone has launched its latest product, Airdrive, the world's slimmest automatic sliding door system. It is designed with the tiniest, yet powerful operator of only 68mm height and 135mm depth. It is manufactured following ISO 9001: 2000 standards which ensure stringent quality check at every stage. Ozone Airdrive helps achieve maximum door opening of two and three metres in case of single sliding and bi-parting sliding double panels, respectively. It can be integrated with all access-control devices such as microwave sensor, push button, remote control, etc., and can integrate safety beam barriers for safe movement of people.

California Walnuts

RICH IN OMEGA 3 FATTY ACIDS



A recent study among U.S. consumers found that walnuts are rated highly on nutrition (91%), convenience (81%) and taste (78%)*, all key attributes for product selection.

With a powerhouse of important nutrients, delicious taste and satisfying crunch, walnuts offer unlimited versatility to a range of product categories from baked goods, desserts, confections, and spreads/sauces to meat alternatives.

NATURALLY GLUTEN FREE
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10 Reasons

you should add california walnuts
to your menu

- 1 Heart-healthy walnuts are the only nuts that contain a significant amount of plant-based ALA omega-3 (2.5g/oz).
- 2 Versatile walnuts add flavor and texture to all kinds of recipes, from salads to desserts, baked goods to entrees, and sides to smoothies.
- 3 Walnuts can be used in all day parts, from breakfast to lunch to dinner.
- 4 44% of Foodservice operators report that you can charge more for a dish by adding walnuts.
- 5 Walnuts make great gluten-free crusts and coatings.
- 6 41% of Foodservice operators report that specifying California Walnuts makes a menu item more appealing than simply saying walnuts alone.
- 7 Walnuts add texture and flavor as a component of a plant-based protein replacement for meat. Adding a menu that appeals to flexitarians is increasingly important as the number of people shifting to more plant-based eating continues to grow.
- 8 The top reason customers enjoy walnuts is because of their reputation as a nutritious addition to their diets.
- 9 Foodservice operators agree that customers perceive a dish containing walnuts to have more texture (64%), and flavor (53%) and to be more unique (53%), more authentic (43%), and healthier (58%) than dishes without walnuts.
- 10 Walnuts can act as a naturally cholesterol-free thickener for soups and sauces, taking the place of cream or butter.

PROPER STORAGE

Cold Storage = Fresh Taste

You can maintain the fresh taste of California walnuts by keeping them cold. Walnuts go rancid when exposed to warm temperatures for long periods of time. Heat causes the fat in walnuts to change structure, which creates off odors and flavors. Fresh walnuts smell mildly nutty, you know they are rancid. And if they are rancid, you should throw them away!

Where to Store Walnuts

The best place to store California walnuts is in your refrigerator or freezer, depending on when you are going to use them. If you are going to use the walnuts right away, place them in the refrigerator. If you won't use them for a month or longer, store them in the freezer.

How to Store Walnuts

Once you open your walnuts, place them in an airtight container for long-term cold storage. If storing them in the refrigerator, make sure they are away from foods with strong odors. Walnuts can absorb the flavors of other foods.

One Final Tip

Wait to shell or chop walnuts until you are ready to use them. The same applies for ground meal. Don't grind walnuts until you are ready to use the meal in your dish. This will help maintain great flavor.



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TAJ HOSPITALITY FOR PRESIDENT STEINMEIER

Taj Diplomatic Enclave, New Delhi hosted German President Frank-Walter Steinmeier and his wife, Elke Büdenbender, on their visit to India. They were greeted with handwoven *pashminas* and the traditional Indian *nagara*-drum welcome ceremony. During their stay at the Tata Suite, the team of chefs at the hotel created bespoke German chocolate truffle, mini pretzels, cookie rings and berries accompanied by handcrafted, white chocolate edible miniature art installations, as well as the German Riesling. The President's wife and the delegation were served the traditional Indian *thali* in peacock-enamelled, silver-plated cutlery. The culinary preparations were reflective of Indian delicacies, ranging from Chicken Tariwala

and Palak Paneer to the quintessential Indian dessert of Rasmalai, which the first lady both relished and appreciated.

Talking about the visit, **Gaurav Pokhariyal**, Area Director - Delhi Hotels and General Manager, Taj Diplomatic Enclave, New Delhi, said, "We are privileged to host the German President and his wife. For over three decades, the iconic Taj Diplomatic Enclave, New Delhi has offered its guests unique and meaningful experiences. It is therefore the most preferred venue for the heads of state and business leaders, and we continue to look forward to delivering the best of guest experiences."

NATUREFRESH SHOWCASES AT AAHAR 2018



NatureFresh Professional, a brand of bakery shortenings and margarine from Cargill's food business in India, brought to its customers and bakers an eclectic range of recipes at AAHAR 2018. The innovative recipes were created using NatureFresh Professional Lite and were displayed at the brand's stall at the exposition. The stall hosted sessions on Danish pastry, desserts, and doughnuts. In addition, Karachi Bakery, one of NatureFresh Professional's most important partners, showcased its range of products at the brand's stall. The brand also launched its recipe booklet for the quarter, showcasing recipes such as Chinese Taosu, crispy sesame strips, Italian plum cake, crisp black sesame strips and cheese crackers, which can be made using NatureFresh Professional Lite.

Over 2500 visitors were at NatureFresh Professional's stall this year, a number higher than the previous two editions at the exposition. Speaking on the occasion, **Deoki Muchhal**, Managing Director, Cargill's food business in India, stated, "NatureFresh Professional is an important brand in the Cargill portfolio catering to both B2C and B2B customers. Adhering to the ethos of the brand, we are committed to providing good quality bakery shortenings that help in making best-in-class bakery products. AAHAR is an ideal platform to reach out to our customers."

ACCORHOTELS CONCLUDES TWO-CITY SHOWCASE



The AccorHotels Showcase 2018 witnessed participation from 35 hotels and resorts from the global network along with 22 hotels from India. The day-long event in Mumbai on March 21 and in Delhi on March 23 was packed with networking sessions where customers discovered the group's newest offerings and met with hotel representatives from across the region. The event was the ideal platform to discuss how to work together to benefit from the burgeoning travel market. The delegates were representing India's topmost travel agents, wholesalers, corporate clients, tourism partners, and MICE organisers. One of the key takeaways from AccorHotels Showcase 2018 was that MICE is on the rise globally, with multiple events being held internationally and also in India, increasingly making it the chosen destination for MICE.

Arif Patel, Vice President – Sales, Marketing, Distribution & Loyalty, AccorHotels, said, "By 2020, Indian outbound travel is estimated to reach 48 million, and Foreign Tourist Arrivals is forecasted to cross the 10-million mark. This annual AccorHotels Showcase gives an opportunity for our attendees to engage with AccorHotels' representatives from around the world to see how best we can work together given the opportunities in the market."



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Bath Linen

Striped/plain beach towel
Colored/plain spa towel
Bath robes & slippers
Hand & face towel
Bath & pool towel
Shower curtains

FSSAI AND AOAC INTERNATIONAL SIGN MOU

Pawan Kumar Agarwal, CEO, FSSAI, inaugurated the fifth annual conference of AOAC International along with **Dr. Kaushik Banerjee**, President, India section of AOAC International. The inaugural in New Delhi was followed by the exchange of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between FSSAI and AOAC International. Through this MoU, AOAC has offered free access to the Official Method of Analysis (OMA) to FSSAI. AOAC will also support FSSAI in its capacity-building programmes and in initiating collaborative studies on developing and validating the methods of analysis for various nutritional and food safety parameters in India. FSSAI will recognise the AOAC methods for official control.

The session included a presidential address by Banerjee and by **DeAnn L Benesh**, President, AOAC International and Global Regulatory Affairs Manager at 3M Food Safety. The keynote address was given by Agarwal where he said, "The goals of AOAC and FSSAI are mostly same and I believe collaboration with FSSAI will be the best collaboration of AOAC International." A special address was also given by Dr. SK Saxena, Director, Export Inspection Council of India and Dr. Erik Konings, Immediate Past President, AOAC International and Global Analytical Method Alignment Co-ordinator, Nestlé Research Center in Lausanne, Switzerland.



MARRIOTT TO ENCOURAGE MORE WOMEN TO LEAD



Marriott International will expand its diversity and inclusion initiatives across Asia Pacific by encouraging more women to assume leadership roles within the company, helping women in the community achieve their career aspirations and by celebrating the region's women who love and inspire travel. The hospitality major has a proven track record of recognising talented women and helping them grow into senior leaders. The company's culture of inclusion focuses on welcoming all and providing a world of opportunity to grow and develop; approximately one in six of the company's General Managers are female and in 2017 alone, the number of women in General Manager positions grew by 22 per cent in Asia Pacific.

Regan Taikitsadaporn, Chief Human Resources Officer for Asia Pacific, Marriott International, says, "Championing women and empowering their leadership isn't just good business, it's smart business. Diversity makes us more capable, competitive, and strategic. Ever since the days of our Co-founder Alice S Marriott, women have powered our growth and I am personally committed to ensuring their continued success." Marriott International's women associates are guided into senior leadership positions from early in their careers.

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appointments



SAMIR MC

Managing Director
Fortune Park Hotels

★ Fortune Park Hotels has appointed Samir MC as its Managing Director. With full responsibility for the leadership and development of Fortune Hotels, he will play a key role in meeting the company's aggressive growth objectives as well as building on the brand's outstanding reputation of providing efficient service to customers and promoters. He brings with him strong knowledge and experience that will be vital as the brand continues to increase its presence in India. In this role, he would also oversee the functioning of the WelcomHeritage brand. Prior to joining Fortune Hotels, Samir worked with the InterContinental Hotels Group for 22 years in operational and leadership roles at various locations.



MOHAMMED SHOEB

General Manager
Holiday Inn Mumbai International Airport

★ Holiday Inn Mumbai International Airport has brought on board Mohammed Shoeb as the new General Manager. He is a seasoned professional with over 28 years of diverse experience in hotel operations, marketing, and management of guest relations. Proficient in devising marketing strategies to accelerate business growth, Shoeb has been successful in achieving increase in turnover, occupancy, and RevPAR. He is a keen planner with a track record for developing and setting up standard operating procedures, business policies, and motivational schemes. He emphasises on continuous improvement, empowerment, and teamwork.



NASIR SHAIKH

General Manager
The Westin Pune Koregaon Park

★ Nasir Shaikh has been appointed as the General Manager of The Westin Pune Koregaon Park. Shaikh has spent 14-plus years with Marriott International in multiple roles. In his last stint as the General Manager of Courtyard by Marriott Pune Chakan, he created multiple landmark achievements. He has worked in varied capacities in the hospitality sector with some of the most prestigious international brands. In the new role, he will oversee the operations of the hotel while ensuring full compliance with the hotel's operating goals.



PANKAJ SAXENA

General Manager
Radisson Blu Pune Hinjawadi

★ Pankaj Saxena is now the General Manager at Radisson Blu Pune Hinjawadi. Prior to this, he was the General Manager at Country Inn & Suites by Carlson, Mysuru. Saxena brings with him 20 years of hospitality experience. Sarovar Hotels and ITC Hotels are some of the other brands that he has worked with. He also served on the Executive Committee as Vice President for Hotels & Restaurants Association of Andhra Pradesh. In the new role, Saxena will be accountable for all aspects of the hotel, including operations.



SHALABH VERMA

Director of Sales & Marketing
Grand Hyatt Mumbai

★ Shalabh Verma has joined Grand Hyatt Mumbai as the Director of Sales & Marketing. He comes with over 18 years of experience across varied brands, and is a skilled revenue analyst and market strategist. With an inclusive management style, Verma's career as a hotelier began after he graduated from the Institute of Advanced Management with a BA in Hospitality. After working with multiple brands, his Hyatt journey began in 2008 as Director of Sales at Park Hyatt Goa Resorts & Spa.



SAGAR GAONKAR

Director of Rooms
DoubleTree by Hilton, Pune

★ Sagar Gaonkar has been appointed as the Director of Rooms at DoubleTree by Hilton, Pune. With over 11 years of experience in hotel operations, he has worked with established names such as Leela, JW Marriott, Starwood, Wyndham, and Hilton. He specialises in handling guest relations, implementing systems, and managing a gamut of key operational divisions. As the zonal incharge at DoubleTree by Hilton, Pune, Gaonkar will be responsible for monitoring activities of all associates as well as ensuring that they adhere to the standards of excellence and initiate the best practices to achieve targets in order to maintain the brand leadership.



RAJESH RAWAT

Pastry Chef
DoubleTree by Hilton, Pune

★ Rajesh Rawat has been appointed as the Pastry Chef at DoubleTree by Hilton, Pune. He has over 14 years of experience in creating and serving wondrous pastry treats as well as unique gourmet indulgences. In his role at DoubleTree by Hilton, Rawat would be heading the bakery and confectionery division. A few of his specialities include customised designer cakes, hand-rolled chocolates, fusion desserts, and edible decorative showpieces. He has an exceptional knowledge of a wide range of food products, culinary applications, and different baking techniques. Rawat's expertise lie in creating dishes that are international in nature and adapting them to regional tastes and diets.



NAMRATA CHAWLA

Associate Director of Sales
Hilton Jaipur

★ Hilton Jaipur has appointed Namrata Chawla as Associate Director of Sales. Chawla brings with her eight years of experience to the new role at the hotel. In her former role at JW Marriott Jaipur Resort & Spa, she was responsible for setting up and streamlining sales processes leading to its successful launch as a destination wedding hotel. Prior to JW Marriott Jaipur, she was heading Groups and Catering at JW Marriott Kolkata and JW Marriott Bengaluru. A keen and dedicated professional, Chawla is a graduate in Hospitality Management from Institute of Hotel Management, Aurangabad.



AMIT KUMAR SINHA

Operations Manager
Lords Inn Somnath

★ Lords Inn Somnath has appointed Amit Kumar Sinha as its Operations Manager. Sinha has more than 19 years of experience in the industry. Prior to joining Lords Hotels & Resorts, he served as the General Manager of Hotel Amit Park International in Bhilai. He has previously worked with Lords Plaza in Surat and with other hospitality brands as well. Sinha specialises in front office and general operations. A process-oriented personnel, his key strengths are setting up and maintaining brand standards. In the new role at Lords Inn Somnath, he will be responsible for bettering the guest response and recognition processes. Ensuring all aspects of the hotel run smoothly will be his core responsibility as the Operations Manager.



VIKAS PANT

Culinary Director
The Suryaa New Delhi

★ Vikas Pant has joined The Suryaa New Delhi as the Culinary Director. He brings with him a rich experience of 21 years in the food and beverage industry. Prior to joining The Suryaa, Pant was associated with various brands such as Hyatt Regency, Crowne Plaza, Hilton, Radisson Blu, and Park Hyatt. He has also played a crucial role in the pre-opening of three hotels under the Hilton, Hilton Garden Inn, and Crowne Plaza banners. An expert in designing international culinary classics and in coupling taste enhancing drinks with meals, he is also attuned to the latest trends in the culinary world and does a frequent revamp of F&B offerings. In the new role, he will ensure compliance with nutritional and quality standards.

Getting summer-ready

Param Kannampilly, Chairman and Managing Director, Concept Hospitality, the company that owns 'The Fern' brand of hotels, shares marketing insights and special activities their properties carry out during summer.



Param Kannampilly

The Fern Hotels & Resorts is managing as many as 53 hotels across the length and breadth of the country, of which eight are resorts. Needless to say, properties located in beach destinations or hill stations witness tremendous rush during the summer holiday months. Our resorts also plan a number of activities to keep guests engaged.

INNOVATIVE MARKETING

We get a large number of repeat clientele that prefers to stay at one of our properties, irrespective of which location they stayed at previously. We also have a robust marketing and public relations team that does innovative campaigns to popularise the properties both online and offline. Currently, we are offering exclusive packages for our hill properties in Kasauli and Bhimtal. These will be publicised on social media platforms as well.

MAKING CHILDREN SMILE

Children are big decision makers when it comes to choosing a hotel. That is the reason special emphasis has been laid on ensuring that children are well-looked-after. In most of our resorts, we



have exclusive play areas, both indoor and outdoor, where children can participate in many activities. Also, all the resorts have pools for children as well, where they can have fun. Safety precautions are in place to avoid any untoward incident. The general managers of the properties are instructed to ensure that the food is also prepared keeping in mind what children like. In our buffets we include finger foods, pizzas, etc., that kids love. Some resorts also promote certain competitive games that are popular among kids.

“

Children are big decision makers when choosing a hotel; special emphasis is laid on looking after them

”



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