

HOTELS & RESTAURANTS INDIA

# fhrai magazine

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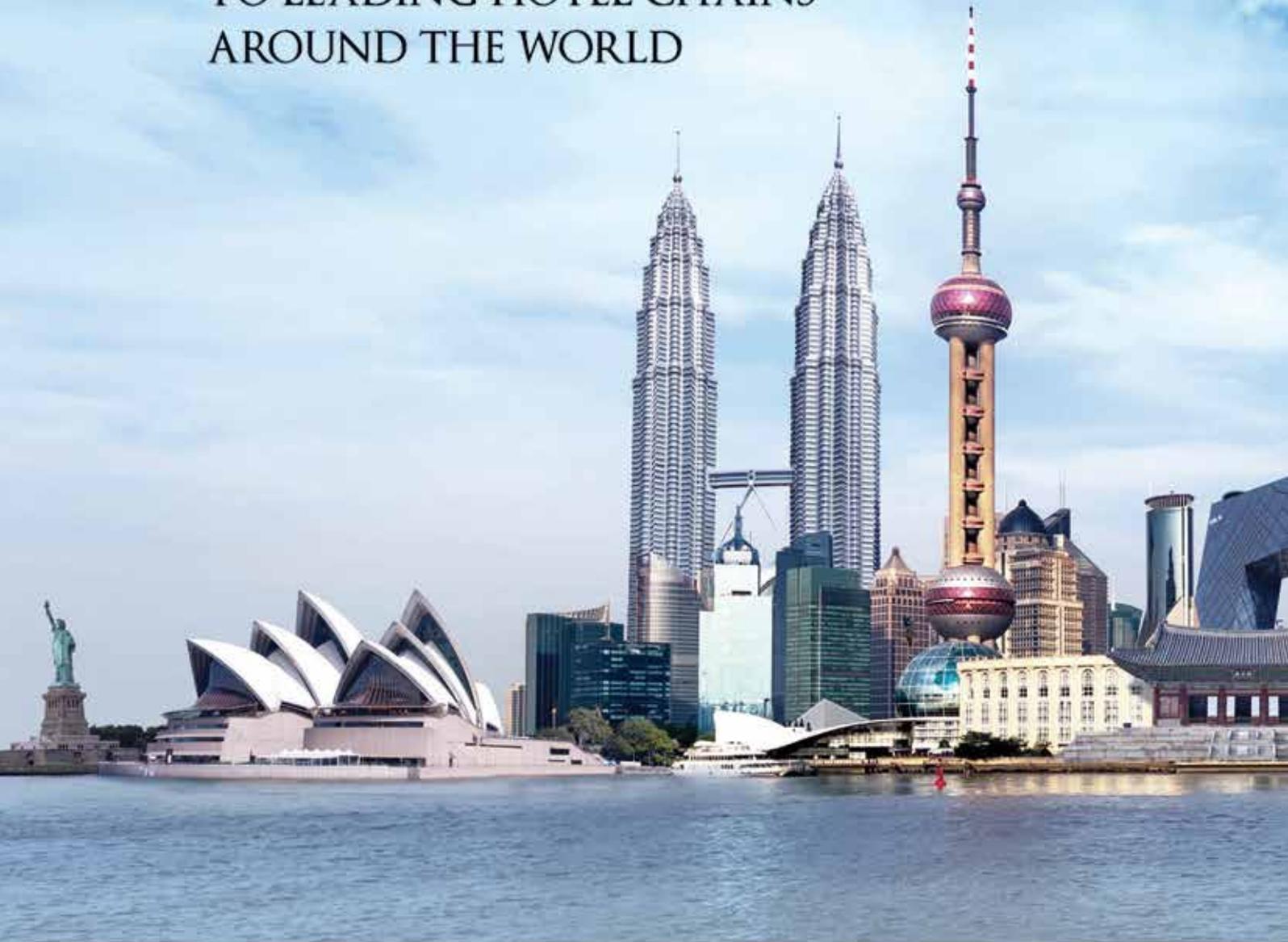
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# JANUARY 2020

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## HRANI SIGNS MoU WITH IRCTC TO PROMOTE DOMESTIC TOURISM

Hotel and Restaurant Association of Northern India (HRANI) and Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC) signed an MoU to list their room rate and inventory on the IRCTC booking engine.



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Courtesy: Beyond Designs

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LET THE BUDGET GIVE IMPETUS TO HOSPITALITY	

Hospitality industry always has high expectations from the Union Budget, we hope the government will heed the recommendations suggested.

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44 PRODUCTS

**FHRAI**

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**Rahul Lall**  
Secretary General  
FHRAI

“  
A recent report by the Organization of Economic Growth and Development indicated that India's GDP could grow 6.6% in 2020-24 which is lower than the last 5 years”

Dear fellow members,

**A**t the outset, we would like to wish all the readers a very happy, healthy, and prosperous New Year! We are hopeful that the year will be full of opportunities for the tourism and hospitality sector.

The Indian economy is called the mixed economy, as literally half of the workforce relies on agriculture, and one third on the services, which is two-third of the output. It is imperative to note that despite the global downturn, India did fairly well as compared to other developing nations in the last few years. A recent report by the Organization of Economic Growth and Development (OECD) indicated that India's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) could grow 6.6 per cent in 2020-24 which is slightly lower than the last five years. With continued and sustainable efforts by the government such as Corporate Tax reduction, incentivising the sectors by way of curtailing the GST, and by giving a push to the further development of infrastructure, the country is expected to achieve the growth rate adequately.

At the end of the year, the Ministry of Tourism published the year-end review 2019. Some of the major highlights are steps taken under Swadesh Darshan, Prashad Scheme and events such as Ek Bharat, Shresth Bharat. Also, a reduction in the e-Visa fee and opening of 120 new peaks for mountaineering are the major decisions taken by the government. India now ranks 34<sup>th</sup> in the Travel & Tourism Competitiveness Index (TTCI) of the World Economic Forum as compared to the 65<sup>th</sup> position in 2013. Foreign Exchange Earnings saw a growth of 7.4 per cent during the period of January – November 2019 (₹1,88,364 Cr.) as compared to January – November 2018 (₹1,75,407 Cr.). We are hopeful that with

such efforts by the Ministry last year, the tourism sector will surely reap the benefits and flourish in the year 2020.

As you may be aware, the Federation conducts an exercise – annually, by inviting inputs from the industry about the proposed inclusions in the yearly Union Budget. For this year as well, based on the inputs received from our members, we have collated and submitted the suggestions such as the declaration of foreign exchange and deemed foreign exchange earnings from hotels and tourism as export earnings, having a standardised definition for hotels and restaurants that should be applied across the country.

Also, enabling of SEIS to discharge GST liabilities, review of labour hiring and compensation policies were some of the key points submitted to the concerned Ministry for their review and possible inclusion in the budget document. You may visit the FHRAI website to access the entire document containing suggestions.

To conclude, I would like to say that the tourism and hospitality sector is the key driver of the growth of the Indian economy. We, the FHRAI, are committed to helping the sector grow and, double the foreign exchange earnings, reach the target of one per cent market share in world international tourist arrivals, and generate maximum employment opportunities for the country, as envisioned by the Government of India.

With kind regards,  
**Rahul Lall**  
Secretary General, FHRAI

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## HRANI MEETS MoS FOR FINANCE ANURAG SINGH THAKUR



A delegation led by **Surendra Kumar Jaiswal**, President, HRANI and Vice President, FHRAI, comprising of **Garish Oberoi**,

Treasurer, **Vinod Gulati**, MC Member, along with **Renu Thapliyal**, Secretary General met **Anurag Singh Thakur**, Hon'ble Minister of State

Ministry of Finance, Govt of India. The concerns of the hospitality industry were discussed and submitted to the Hon'ble Minister.

HRANI

## HRANI SIGNS MoU WITH IRCTC TO PROMOTE DOMESTIC TOURISM



**Nisha Verma**

The aim of the MoU signed between HRANI and IRCTC is to promote domestic tourism and reduce the customer acquisition cost. The MoU signing saw in presence MP Mall, CMD, IRCTC; Surendra Kumar Jaiswal, President, HRANI & Vice President, FHRAI; Amarvir Singh, Hony. Secretary, HRANI; Garish Oberoi, Treasurer, HRANI and Renu Thapliyal, Secretary General, HRANI, as well as leading hoteliers.

Speaking about the MoU, **Surendra Kumar Jaiswal** said, "It is a great moment for promotion of domestic tourism in India, as per our PM's vision. With this MoU, we can pass the maximum benefit and

39<sup>th</sup> EDITION



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President  
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“With this MoU, we can pass the maximum benefit to the tourists, allowing them to get a clear picture, since IRCTC is a well known brand”

better destinations to the tourists, allowing them to get a clear picture, since IRCTC is a prestigious brand and everybody knows it. People know that it doesn't give false information. Hence, tourists will also be benefitted and ultimately domestic tourism in India will grow and it will become cheaper.”

**MP Mall** echoed the same thoughts, saying, “It's basically an understanding between IRCTC and HRANI to give customers value for money. We are going for the lowest commission in the industry, and at the same time keeping ourselves viable and sustainable.

We all want a system like that. It's a first of its kind MoU we have signed with an association and going forward, we are open to partnering with any association that is willing to work on these terms and conditions.” Under the partnership, IRCTC will facilitate the hotel members of HRANI for the listing of their room rate and



**MP Mall**  
CMD  
IRCTC

“It's basically an understanding between IRCTC and HRANI to give customers value for money. We are going for the lowest commission in the industry”

inventory on IRCTC booking engine portal. The same has been done in a bid to promote domestic tourism and reduce the customer acquisition cost. IRCTC will offer 10 per cent commission from the Member Unit of HRANI. HRANI members will also get 50 per cent discount on one-time integration charge of ₹20,000/- plus tax. Individual members need to pay an amount of ₹10,000/- plus tax to IRCTC for integration on the booking portal of IRCTC.

Jaiswal stated, “HRANI members can directly integrate with the portal of IRCTC. Only a certificate of membership will be needed from them and minimum integration fee would be required, which the IRCTC Chairman has been very kind to reduce to only ₹10,000. It will be beneficial to the members. The formalities are not a lot, as they are only required to give the HRANI certificate and you will be integrated with the expression of interest.” He added that, it is an achievement for Hotel and Restaurant Association of

Northern India (HRANI). Taking the lead, HRANI is the first association to partner with IRCTC in the interest of its members, and other regional associations under FHRAI would also be following suit and will be listed on the IRCTC website.

When asked about how many hotels have already registered on IRCTC platform, Mall said, “As of now, around 6-8 hotels have already signed this MoU and many other hotels have also applied to HRANI for the same. We'll gradually be integrating them one by one.”

IRCTC handles the catering, tourism and online ticketing operations and claims that it has 60 million registered users on the website, and is the world's second busiest, with around 8 lakh bookings per day.

In addition to ticket booking, people can also book their stays, domestic & international holiday packages, flights and meals on the IRCTC website. Today, IRCTC is into the direct contracting with hotels of all categories on pan-India basis and would be making all hotel inventory for sale through all its websites i.e. [www.irctc.co.in](http://www.irctc.co.in), [www.irctctourism.com](http://www.irctctourism.com) and [www.irctc.co.in](http://www.irctc.co.in) for online sales to its customers. Mall said that 2019 proved to be a good year for IRCTC. Going forward in 2020, he said, “We are working on many areas. We are conducting trials for many projects, and when we succeed, we will come out with new products.”

HRANI, a Northern outfit of the Federation of Hotel & Restaurant Associations of India is an apex body represents hotels & restaurants and associates of the nine North Indian States. The legendary Rai Bahadur M. S. Oberoi formed the association in 1950. These nine states are Delhi, Haryana, Punjab, Rajasthan, Chandigarh, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, U.P. and Uttarakhand. HRANI is assisting its members to create a conducive environment to tap the vast potential of hospitality.

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# HRANI SIGNS MoU WITH IRCTC

Hotel and Restaurant Association of Northern India (HRANI) and Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC) signed an MoU to list their room rate and inventory on the IRCTC booking engine.



HRANI

# Memorandum of Understanding SIGNING CEREMONY between HRANI & IRCTC



FHRAI DESK

December 23, 2019  
Aloft New Delhi Aerocity  
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Memorandum of Understanding  
**SIGNING CEREMONY**  
between  
**HRANI & IRCTC**  
December 23, 2019 | 12:00 hrs  
Aloft New Delhi Aerocity, New Delhi



# HRAWI CONDUCTS FSSAI'S FoSTaC PROGRAMMES IN MAHARASHTRA



In December 2019, the Hotel and Restaurant Association of Western India (HRAWI) in association with the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) conducted a Food Safety Supervisory Training in Advance Catering (FoSTaC) programme at the Hotel Jakson Inn located at Phaltan town of Satara district in Maharashtra. Through the programme, 36 hospitality professionals in the region were trained and certified under the supervision of Trainer Pravin Andrews.

"When a food handler working in a hotel or restaurant establishment completes this programme, he acquires knowledge and skills pertaining to the food safety standards. While there is much impetus given on food safety across all reputed establishments, understanding standards is equally important.

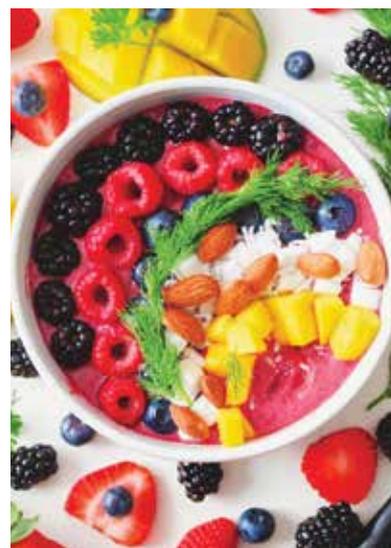
This programme is aimed at imparting knowledge on this important aspect and will benefit the establishment in the long run," says **Gurbaxish Singh Kohli**, Vice President, FHRAI and President, HRAWI. Last month, HRAWI had conducted the FoSTaC training programmes in Aurangabad and Nasik through which a total of



**Gurbaxish Singh Kohli**  
Vice President, FHRAI  
President, HRAWI

“  
While there is much impetus given on food safety across all reputed establishments, understanding standards is equally important  
”

57 hospitality personnel were trained and certified. Over the last couple of years, the Association has successfully trained and certified 1,563 hospitality professionals across India's Western



region. HRAWI is 68 years old and its members include various restaurants and smaller hotels up to 5-Star Deluxe categories. The bulk of its members are made up of restaurants and budget hotels.

With membership base spread across Western India, HRAWI covers Maharashtra, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Goa and the UTs of Daman, Diu & Silvassa. The association is part of the national body of Federation of the Hotels & Restaurants Associations of India (FHRAI) in New Delhi.

HRAWI



## THE 'EAGLE' HAS LANDED

The Tamil Nadu Police in consultation with Amtex System, have developed an application called Eagle. This application, if installed in the hotel software, will immediately transfer details of the guest checking-in to the police station nearby where hotels are statutorily required to file the details on a daily basis. This application would reduce paperwork as well.



as additional data entry work. The data is transmitted real time and is available with the police, who will check for anti-social elements, people with lookout notices against them staying in hotels and would alert the hotel and take appropriate action. This is now available only in Tamil Nadu. Earlier, as an initiative of the Tamil Nadu Police, Amtex developed the Kavalan SOS application, which is widely used in TN. It allows the user to seek police assistance in the event of an emergency or safety concerns.

The Tamil Nadu Police were keen

to popularise the Eagle application among all the hotels in Tamil Nadu. T. Natarajan, CEO, GRT Hotels and Resorts and Honorary Secretary, SIHRA, arranged to inform all the member hoteliers from Chennai and

“  
The Eagle application, if installed in the hotel software, will immediately transfer details of the guest checking-in to the police station nearby  
”

the rest of Tamil Nadu and arranged for a meeting to explain the benefits of the application, which can also be used to verify the antecedents of staff working at the hotels.

The meeting was held on December 14, 2019 at GRT Grand, Chennai. The Commissioner of Police, A. K. Viswanathan addressed the meeting. Sunny Pokala, Chairman and CEO of Amtex Systems, explained the benefits of the Eagle application. The meeting was attended by personnel from over 50 hotels and a large number of senior police officials.

# HRAEI BID TO MAKE ROADS SAFER



**H**otel and Restaurant Association of Eastern India (HRAEI) is trying to do its bit to have safer streets. Drunken driving is a rising menace that often causes road accidents and deaths in the party season.

Even though not all accidents are caused by drivers emerging out of a bar, hotel or a restaurant, the hospitality industry can play a key role in raising awareness and prevention of rising number of fatalities caused by drunk drivers on the road. Since last year, HRAEI has been collaborating with Kolkata Police to raise awareness on the menace of drunken driving.

**Pranav Singh**, President, HRAEI, says, "Like last year we are going to campaign for the prevention of drunken driving among our members and customers in different bars, restaurants and hotels across the city as well as the region."

The aim is to sensitise members to keep a pool of drivers in case customers are found on the steering wheel with alcohol level of 30 ml or above in the blood. Facilities of



**Pranav Singh**  
President  
HRAEI

“  
We are going to campaign for the prevention of drunken driving among our members & customers in bars, restaurants & hotels

keeping breathalyser test is used to determine the level of alcohol. "The drivers will be available at a chargeable basis," adds Singh.

## SAY NO TO ROAD RAGE

1. **Never Drive**  
**Under the Influence**
2. **Do Not**  
**Text and Drive**
3. **Respect**  
**Yellow Lights**
4. **Obey**  
**Speed Limits**
5. **Yield**  
**Right of Way**

Last year the campaign had successfully encouraged some members to set up booths of app cabs, such as Ola and Uber at their premises, to help drunken customers travel home safely. "This year our target is to inspire more members to adopt such steps to save more lives, ensuring safe drives," shares Singh. "We are advising our members to also provide a pool of drivers at a nominal cost, in addition to setting up Ola and Uber kiosks."

The Hotel & Restaurant Association of Eastern India (HRAEI) was established on July 18, 1961 and represents the hotel and restaurant industry of twelve states and a Union Territory in Eastern India.

These comprise of Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Jharkhand, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Odisha, Sikkim, Tripura, West Bengal.

HRAEI's mission is to take the lead role as a single voice organisation representing the hotel and restaurant industry of the Eastern states. It aims to protect the interest and welfare of the hospitality industry. Its ultimate goal is to upgrade and professionalise the hospitality industry of Eastern India. Make the Eastern Region comprising 12 States and a Union Territory a flourishing destination for domestic and foreign tourists by projecting their captivating tourism assets.

# GST reduction makes hotels more affordable

**K Nagaraju**, Vice President, FHRAI, says that the reduction of GST is a good move to boost the hospitality industry.

The GST Council had reduced the Goods and Services Tax (GST) rates to make India a more viable tourist destination. The GST on the hotel room tariff from ₹1,000 to ₹7,500 is 12 per cent and for hotel room tariff above ₹7,500 it is 18 per cent.

**K Nagaraju**, Vice President, FHRAI, shares his point of view on the evaluation of the business scenario post the GST reduction. He says, "Due to reduction from 18 per cent to 12 per cent, the tax burden passed on to guests has lowered by six per cent and thereby, leaving more cash in the hands of guests to spend on other facilities of the hotel. Wherever there is/was an all inclusive rate, hotels have benefitted, since the liability of paying tax portion within the rate



**K Nagaraju**  
Vice President  
FHRAI

reduced. It is a step forward to compete with the other neighbouring SE Asian countries where tax charges are even lower and are our direct competitors. Although the relief is substantial but the same kind of approach for food would have been even more beneficial to the industry when compared to tourism-developed neighbouring countries."



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# Let the Budget give impetus to hospitality

Hospitality industry always has high expectations from the Union Budget, we hope the government will heed the recommendations suggested below.

Finance Minister, **Nirmala Sitharaman**, Finance Minister will present the Union Budget for the Financial Year 2020-21 on February 1. This will be the first full-year Budget after the re-election of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government in May last year. The Federation of Hotel & Restaurant Associations of India (FHRAI) has given its recommendations to the Finance Ministry.

Sharing the gist of the same on the policy front, **Gurbaxish Singh Kohli**, Vice President, FHRAI and President, Hotel and Restaurant Association of Western India (HRAWI), said, "The hospitality industry is at an inflection point after a decade of stunted growth and the government must capitalise on the huge potential of this sector. One of the major boosts to achieve this target is to grant industry status to the sector on a national level and compensate states for any notional loss. Hospitality and tourism does not come under any of the three lists. We have been battling since 20 years to get it under the concurrent list which would solve many issues. In fact, in a 2002 article in the Economic Times, it is mentioned that tourism soon to be included in the concurrent list... this article was published on April 26, 2002. Hotels play a vital role in the development of tourism in the country. The hotel industry is capital-intensive. Construction of hotel rooms requires huge investments. Hotels also have a long gestation period. To have access to funds of required magnitude, the industry needs to be made eligible for the tax incentives and concessions available to



**Gurbaxish Singh Kohli**  
Vice President  
FHRAI

“  
It is essential to grant industry status to the hospitality sector on a national level and compensate states for any notional loss”

infrastructure industries under Section 80 I/A of the Income Tax Act as savings from such tax can be ploughed back to build hotels." On the tax front, Kohli recommended, "Firstly we would recommend that the GST on hotels is further reduced to 12 per cent. The benefit under Section 35 AD of Income Tax Act should be made available to hotels undergoing capacity enhancements, renovation and reconstruction as rooms

being the most perishable commodity have a very high rate of wear and tear and need constant renovation due to changing trends and preferences which comes at a huge capital investment cost. Capital expenditure (investment-linked) pertaining to Section 35 AD under Income Tax Act at present, is only applicable to new hotels." Also, the government needs to allow Dividend Distribution Tax (DDT) set off under Section 115 O in cases where indirect holding exceeds 50 per cent. "Government taxes should be included for calculation of foreign earnings. For the stay of foreign guests in hotels in India, the hotels should be entitled to claim the entire amount of the billing (including government taxes) as the same have been paid by the guest in foreign exchange," said Kohli.

Many other recommendations on labour laws; Single Window Clearance for hotel projects, Deferring applicability of Income Computation and Disclosure Standards (ICDS); Increase in SEIS incentive to five per cent; IGST is not allowed so to be allowed against utilisation of duty-free license; Hotels to be charged power tariff applicable to industry; Increase license timelines; Simplified property tax to be linked to revenue generation of cash generating unit, among others, have been put forth by FHRAI. We are in tune with the Government of India's plans to attract one per cent of the global tourists in 2020 going up to two per cent in 2025. However, they need to help us with policy change for the same.

LAUNCH



## GRAND MERCURE HOTEL IN GUJARAT'S GIFT CITY

**G**IFT City, developed with India's first intelligent and green infrastructure, has welcomed its first international hotel with Grand Mercure Gandhinagar GIFT City. Located on the bank of the Sabarmati river, GIFT city connects Ahmedabad and Gandhinagar in Gujarat.

The nine-floor hotel features 151 guest rooms and six meeting rooms. "We are extremely happy to launch Grand Mercure Gandhinagar GIFT city, the first international branded hotel, in the foremost operational smart city of the country. With the support of Brigade Group, we have successfully established three Grand Mercure properties in the country

and look forward to collaborating for more hotels going forward," said **Jean-Michel Casse**, COO, India & South Asia, Accor. "We are extremely delighted to present Grand Mercure Gandhinagar GIFT City, our very first hotel outside South India and the seventh hotel by Brigade Group. It is our privilege to have been offered an opportunity to create this landmark project in Gujarat and we are grateful for all the support and encouragement we have received from the government and from the GIFT City authorities. We are confident our guests will love the experience of staying and dining at the hotel," said **M.R. Jaishankar**, CMD, Brigade Group.

RESTORATION

## THE MANOR, NEW DELHI, RELAUNCHED



**T**his autumn, The Manor reopens after being restored, renewed and reimagined for its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Recreated by the original design team, Shirley Fujikawa and Vinay Kapoor, The Manor steps up to its reputation for a blend of contemporary chic reinterpreted with local materials and craftsmanship, including authentic terrazzo, natural textures, and fabrics paired with rich wood and stones.

The Manor first opened to high acclaim being featured in new and hot hotel lists of 2000 across multiple leading travel publications, with notable mention of its zen environment and comparisons to the 'a la mode' hotels of London and New York. The gentle and careful renovation has taken it to a new level of sophistication, style and comfort for today's discerning traveller, while retaining what made The Manor special. Each of the 12 rooms and suites have their own unique style making them as individual as guests. **Akshay Chawla**, General Manager at The Manor, speaking on the launch said, "Over the past decade, I have had the opportunity to work at some of the finest luxury hotels in the country, along with travelling and staying at countless hotels in major international destinations. While many regions in India have seen success with boutique hotels, travellers do not have such options in gateways like Delhi. Putting The Manor back on this map after a year-long renovation is our objective, which with the quality of accommodation, food and services we offer; we shall graciously fill this gap for visitors entering India through its capital."

## GROWTH

## PREFERRED EXPANDS WITH RESIDENCES

Preferred Hotels & Resorts, the world's largest independent hotel brand, has achieved a major milestone with its Preferred Residences collection, expanding to 100 residential-style properties with the addition of 13 new members from January 1 through October 31, 2019. Since introducing Preferred Residences as one of its five collections in 2015, the brand has been on a strong growth trajectory, developing best-in-class transient lodging experiences that invite families, groups of friends, and business travellers to live inspired by coupling the best features of a home with the security, amenities, and services enjoyed at a luxury hotel.

"Today's luxury travellers are seeking distinctive, residential-style lodging options, whether that is a countryside villa or a city-centre apartment, that connects them to their chosen destination and its unique culture while enjoying a space that caters to their specific needs, whether it is for a special one-night celebration or an extended relocation, and we are pleased to continue catering to this growing need through Preferred Residences," said **Michelle Woodley**, President, Preferred Hotels & Resorts. "Reaching the 100th property mark demonstrates our commitment to this expanding travel segment and sets the pace for 2020 when we will continue to welcome memorable properties that range from city-centre serviced apartments to countryside villas and bungalows to satisfy the demands of curious



travellers seeking inspiration and comfort when their journeys take them away from home."

Guests who book a Preferred Residences experience can access exclusive member rates and earn reward points upon eligible stays through the Preferred Hotels & Resorts | Prefer Hotel Rewards programme. The programme extends points redeemable towards free nights and other on-property expenditures, elite status, and other complimentary benefits to guests at more than 700 hotels, resorts, and residences worldwide. Bookings can be made online at PreferredHotels.com or on the I Prefer mobile app.

## STATE

## MPTB SETS UP ADVENTURE CAMPSITES

Madhya Pradesh, known for historic temples, forests, tigers and culture, is a sought-after destination in India having immense possibilities for adventure tourism. The state tourism board is working with Expert Agency and developing camping sites to boost adventure tourism in Madhya Pradesh. This Expert Agency is acting as a knowledge partner to Madhya Pradesh Tourism Board (MPTB) in building the state as an adventure tourist spot. 30 new camping sites and adventure activities have been built across the state, and besides this a gamut of activities such as jungle safari, hiking, nature trails,

trekking, stargazing, birds watching, camping, canoeing and plenty of different signature experiences can become available in the destination.

These campsites were developed in different regions of Madhya Pradesh such as Sole Adventure Park in Punjabura and Mandav, Kamp Kalakund, Forest Gum Dhavalgiri, MM Farm, Usha Farm and Omkareshwar from Indore region, Chiklaud, Natures Karwa, Enterwoods, Serenity, Halali, Dream Ocean from Bhopal region, Camp Kabila, Riverside, Waterfall View Camp, Green Valley from Jabalpur region and Godinga from Gwalior region. These camps witnessed more than 5,000 tourists experience adventure activities like trekking, horse riding, village tour, nature walk, yoga, bonfire, and outdoor games.

Speaking on the occasion, **Faiz Ahmed Kidwai** - IAS, Secretary, Govt. of Madhya Pradesh, Managing Director, Madhya Pradesh Tourism Board and Madhya Pradesh State Tourism Development Corporation, said, "Madhya Pradesh Tourism is working vigorously to build adventure tourism in the state, many of the policies like Water Tourism Policy, Camping Policy, capital subsidy for adventure infrastructure development, have been formulated in the state for adventure investors / operators. Currently we have set up 30 adventure campsites in Madhya Pradesh and are getting good response. So, we have planned to set up around 100 adventure campsites across the state. We are expecting around 10,000 adventure loving tourists this year."



LAUNCH

# PUNJAB CM OPENS WELCOMHOTEL AMRITSAR

ITC Hotels recently announced the opening of Welcomhotel Amritsar. Inaugurating the latest addition to Punjab's hospitality destinations that promises to further enrich the vibrant tourism landscape of the state, **Capt. Amarinder Singh**, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Punjab, said, "The property built around the century-old Haveli will further strengthen Punjab's industry and tourism." Spread across eight acres of manicured greens, the magnificent Welcomhotel Amritsar is centred around a colonnaded mansion, the erstwhile Sandhanwalia

Haveli, which traces its origins to the early 1900s and has been restored with all modern comforts while preserving the cultural, architectural and culinary nuances of a splendid era.

The splendour of this century-old heritage property which ITC has aesthetically restored is set to redefine the tourism landscape of Punjab and will make a meaningful contribution to the tourism potential of the state. Located close to the airport and a short drive from the revered Golden Temple 'Darbar Sahib', the 101-room hotel blends Amritsar's famed exuberance alongside the tranquil calm of the rustic Raja Sansi. Historically also known as Ramdaspur and colloquially as Ambarsar, Amritsar is home to the The Harmandir Sahib popularly known as the Golden Temple, one of the world's most spiritually significant shrine.

Speaking on the occasion of the launch, **Sanjiv Puri**, Chairman and Managing Director of ITC, said, "ITC is committed to building iconic hotel properties that enhance the tourism potential of India. We are indeed proud to add another feather in the cap of ITC's diverse hotel portfolio by launching our landmark hotel in Amritsar under the Welcomhotel brand. The magnificent property is our tribute to the rich legacy of Punjab and is a part of ITC's growing footprint in the state across all sectors encompassing agriculture, manufacturing and services."



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# A safe haven for women

In a bid to improve the image of India in the minds of female travellers, regional Presidents share the steps that hoteliers in their regions are taking to ensure the safety of women travellers at their hotels and in the city.

## Kanchan Nath



**Gurbaxish Singh Kohli**  
President  
HRAWI

### NEED FOR WOMEN SAFETY

During a study held for identifying the special needs of women travellers, members were asked what was the thing they most wanted from their hotel; safety was the overwhelming response. More than 51 per cent of the women surveyed revealed they had felt vulnerable at some point, in the hotels they stayed at for business. The hotels in our region, i.e, the western region under HRAWI that have taken the cause of safeguarding their women guests very seriously by offering women-only floors,

“  
More than 51% of the women surveyed revealed they had felt vulnerable in the hotels they stayed in  
”

for instance, ITC Hotels have introduced the concept of Eva rooms that are exclusively for women. Many hotel chains have introduced a host of other security measures including a videophone for additional screening of visitors, restricted floor access via key cards and a women-only staff on all their women-only floors.

### SAFE, RELIABLE AND COMFORTABLE STAY

Hotels which do not have enough inventory to segregate or create a women-only floor, have made it a policy to ensure that single women travellers get rooms near the elevator. Double-locking doors ensure in case one misplaces the room key and the hotel doesn't block it, anyone can't let themselves in. Also, dedicated female concierge/butlers, women-only housekeeping staff and a care kit comprising women's personal products in the room add to the extra facilities being offered.

Besides this, private access to the spa, a women-only bar, lady chauffeurs, women sightseeing guides, special in-room facilities like a rack to hang additional clothes, a full length mirror and ample lighting in the room and bathroom, a hair dryer, and a small area with a table and magazines are offered. The motto is to provide and ensure a safe, reliable and comfortable stay for our women guests.



**Pranav Singh**  
President  
HRAEI

### SECURITY AND PRIVACY

For a growing number of women in India business trips are a part of life. As a result, many hotels are increasingly trying to meet the needs of women travellers,

“  
Hotels are emphasising on security and privacy, and providing amenities they believe women need  
”



emphasising security and privacy, and providing amenities they believe women need, such as complimentary face wash and sanitary napkins available on request.

Some hotels in the region take steps to provide security for the women on the floor by restricting elevator access to the floor to only those with room keycards, maintaining a team of all-women staff on the floor, and an 'interactive doorbell' that allows room guests to see who is at the door.

Room cleaning and room service are attended by women staff. Some big hotels have even set up special floors dedicated to 'single women travellers.' Some five-star hotels make available trained lady masseurs for their women guests.

### TAKING PRECAUTIONS

In addition, we advise our members to ensure secure room locks, hallways that are lit at night, and discreet conduct in announcing a woman's room number during check-in.

Some hotels and restaurants offer tables at their premises for single travellers. We also advise our members to take the details of the driver or the car that takes women customers home after a visit.



**K. Syama Raju**  
President  
SIHRA

**SAFETY IMPORTANT FOR EVERY TRAVELLER**

Personal safety is of paramount importance for a traveller, more so for single women and small groups of women travelling to different places around the country. The ease of travel and the increase in spending power have resulted in increased travel especially among the millennials. Single women travellers is a growing niche market. With changing trends, many women travel for work as well as for leisure and stay in hotels where they expect a standard of safety.

Hotels have recognised the increasing number of single women travellers and have included some additional measures that would help ensure safety. In general, single women are usually allotted rooms near the elevator and not at the far end of the corridors. In many hotels women guests are escorted to their rooms by women who are part of the Front Office Team. Some hotels have taken this a step further and if a woman guest orders with Room Service, it is more than likely that she will be served by a lady associate from Room Service. Other hotels also try and allot rooms to single women staying

with them on a particular floor or wing and back it up with additional patrols by security staff. All this is of course backed up by mandatory requirements such as CCTV in the hotel corridors and floor lobbies and patrolling by the security teams of the hotel.

**EAGLE APP**

Training and sensitisation of hotel staff is also important when it comes to interaction with women guests. Staff must be trained in matters such as eye contact, body language, appropriate distance to maintain while talking to guests and providing prompt responses to any queries they receive. Technology also plays a key role in ensuring safety. An application called Eagle has recently been launched in Tamil Nadu. As part of the operating procedure hotels are required to share their daily visitors log with the Police Department. In the past this

“  
**Single women travellers is a growing niche market and they require safety in hotels**”

used to be handwritten and was a cumbersome task. Later it used to be sent through email. The Eagle application does away with that as well. Once the application is installed in the hotel software, it uploads the required guest data to the Police Department. With the help of this the Police Department can monitor and check if any criminals with a lookout notice are among the guests. The application can also be used to verify the antecedents of staff working at the hotel.



**Surendra Kumar Jaiswal**  
President  
HRANI

**SINGLE LADY PROGRAMMES**

The hospitality industry in Northern India is seen to be doing their bit to cater to the 'ladies' demand and ensure their security. With the change in trends, where more and more women are now travelling for official work trips outside the comfort zone of their home and cities, safety and security is of utmost priority.

Hotels have now started becoming more considerate towards this aspect and are adopting various methods to ensure good service to the guest. Hence, specially designed Single Lady Programmes are adopted by hotels to assure their lady guests a safe and sound environment. Steps such as allocation of rooms close to the elevator; escorting her by lady associate to the room; female hostesses for room service, offering call screening facility; women driven cabs

“  
**List of the single women travellers is shared to ensure better patrolling and security**”

and separate floors for women are some of the initiatives taken by hotels to make their stay comfortable and safer. The list of the single women travellers is shared with the loss prevention team on a regular basis to ensure there is better patrolling and security. Rooms are allocated near brightly lit parts of the corridor covered by CCTV camera.

Apart from these quintessential measures, express check-in and checkout, staff access to the room has to be with a team leader / manager, female guest relationship executive etc. are also seen to be followed by hotels chains in north region. Some of the hotel brands have also reserved an entire floor or created a wing dedicated to ladies, which has been designed keeping in the mind the taste and comfort of solo women travellers.

**HANDLING WITH CARE**

Hotels are also making an extra effort to sensitise their staff when it comes to dealing with single female guests, some also conduct special training to cater to this segment. The staff is sensitised through training regarding the needs of all guests, particularly single lady travellers.

This training involves making the staff aware of all the facilities offered and all procedures to be followed in case of a single female guest.

The staff is trained in terms of eye contact maintaining business gaze, two feet distance, positive body language, to address guests by their last name and salutation, empathetic concierge and prompt service to women guests.



# Hotels handling OTAs and FSAs

In light of the new 'The Consumer Protection (e-Commerce) Rules, 2019', hoteliers share how they intend to deal in the future with e-Commerce sellers of 'hotel rooms/hotels' and 'restaurant food/FBOs' like OTAs and FSAs.

**Kanchan Nath**



**Pradeep Shetty**

**Pradeep Shetty**  
Jt Hony Secretary  
FHRAI

## FAIR BUSINESS PRACTICES

The rules now cast huge responsibilities on the Online Travel Aggregators (OTAs) to have written contracts and all terms of engagement with the hotel as well as the consumer well documented and disclosed. Further, there are clear guidelines for the sellers – hotels on the OTAs, which will be easy to comply with and hence hotels will not be at the receiving end of consumer complaints for the deals, ads, claims etc. made by the OTAs. Finally, the huge liabilities cast upon the OTAs will ensure that transparency and fair business practices are adopted by the OTAs. We finally believe that hosting of illegal accommodation will stop and thus would bring the requisite level-playing field as also unlicensed food business operators.

## CLEAR TERMS OF ENGAGEMENT

The OTAs would fall within the meaning of the marketplace model of e-Commerce wherein hotels are sellers of rooms, consumers are the buyers and the OTAs are merely facilitators. OTAs and food portals will now have to be registered with the Consumer Department and will have to disclose all contracts with sellers on their platform. Thus, hotels will be able to enforce written contracts and bring an end to the dynamic, one-sided and unilaterally changing contracts that are imposed on hotels by the click of a button.

Further, hotels will be able to clearly disclose the price of their product, total and the break-up, for the consumer to see. Therefore, hotels / restaurants will now be able to have clear terms of engagement with the OTAs and can avoid liability for all unilateral initiatives of the OTAs. Finally, with the new rules coming into force, consumers are now armed with great power to sue the OTAs in the Consumer Forum for redressal of their woes.

“  
Consumers are armed with great power to sue OTAs  
in the Consumer Forum for redressal of woes”

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**Lakshyaraj Singh Mewar**

**Lakshyaraj Singh Mewar**  
EC Member  
FHRAI

**DEFINING ACCOUNTABILITY**

In the current age of technology, the use of e-Commerce platforms in the purchase of hotel rooms and food has seen a considerable increase in the past three years. The ease of purchase and lucrative visible pricing options have encouraged both consumers (buyers) and sellers (hotels and restaurants) to engage in this method of buying and selling. But, due to lack of knowledge and consumer legislation both the buyer and seller felt deceived by



The use of e-Commerce platforms has seen a considerable increase in the past three years



these bookings' mediators. The inception of this Act will bring the booking engine and platform on same levels as the buyer, seller and define accountability of the booking engine / platform.

The obligations in point 5 of the "The Consumer Protection (e-Commerce) Rules, 2019", will define and straighten the delivery on part of these booking agents and encourage both hotels and consumers. This Act will bring the hospitality in a better and organised segment which was missing prior to this.



**Souvagya Kumar Mohapatra**

**Souvagya Kumar Mohapatra**  
Co-opted EC Member  
FHRAI

The Indian e-Commerce market which is witnessing a very high growth is expected to reach \$230 billion by 2028— roughly accounting for around 10 per cent of India's total retail market. A robust regulatory framework was much required to regulate this sector.

**RESOLVING ISSUES**

Issues like predatory pricing, deep-discounting and influencing the price via creating an artificial demand-supply gap for long were hurting the business prospects of the industry and an effective policy intervention was the need of the hour. With express provisions to curb all the practices mentioned above, it comes as a real respite and will go a long way in developing a healthy marketplace and promoting sound business practices, where everyone grows and thrives without adversely impacting anyone. Though



Our brand permission remains a non-negotiable prerequisite to extend high discounts



it bodes very well for the industry overall, speaking specifically about our brand, I consider it will be of not much impact on our business as the issues that this draft legislation attempts to address have been duly taken care of by MAYFAIR in advance. As regards to the concern of predatory pricing, we have our own in-house Revenue Management Team which is mandated with the exclusive authority of deciding our room-tariffs. Also, the content of advertisements on these marketplaces is thoroughly vetted by our in-house team, ensuring that they genuinely reflect our offerings.

Similarly, to curb deep-discounting, we have an arrangement where our brand permission remains a non-negotiable prerequisite to extend high discounts. Another important concern of the industry has been – influencing tariffs through artificially creating a demand-supply gap. As a remedy to this issue, we at MAYFAIR have devised a mechanism wherein we control our overall inventory on a real-time basis. Regarding Food Service Aggregators (FSAs), our understanding with them is confined to booking a table at our restaurants. We don't offer food-delivery services through the aggregators owing to the high organic rush at our restaurants, which by and large, remain the numero uno choice of food connoisseurs of that destination. However, on an overall note, the draft legislation is an all-encompassing document covering various dimensions of e-Commerce. It, in all likeliness, will effectively address some long-flagged concerns of the hotel and restaurant associations.



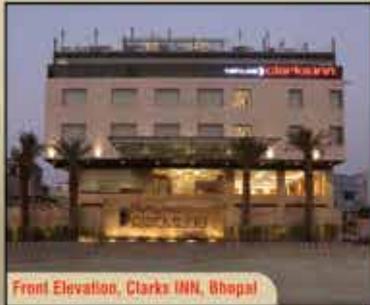
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# The year gone by...

Kanchan Nath

As they welcome the new year, hoteliers share the inroads that they have made in Corporate Social Responsibility, being sustainable and adopting new technology throughout last year.



Sarbendra Sarkar

## Sarbendra Sarkar

MD

Cygnett Hotels and Resorts

### CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

For the company, giving back to society is imperative for our existence. This has always been our motto and I dedicatedly ensure that we pass on benefits back to society. This year, we focused on appointing skilled differently-abled resource at our Kolkata unit. Despite not being able to hear and speak, the person is an inspiration for us all – he is one of the most energetic staff members and does his work with utmost sincerity. While our Guwahati unit celebrated the birthday of a staff member at an orphanage, the entire team spent a day managing the kids,

cooked food for them and engaged in playing games with them. We always do our best to find such opportunities to bring smiles to the less fortunate who deserve care and understanding from us.

### STAYING SUSTAINABLE

We have started putting various tent cards in rooms such as – 'Save water' and 'Turn off the electricity while away', etc. Our Nainital unit ran an afforestation campaign, planting new trees and even cleaned their vicinity to ensure a great experience for tourists.

### LATEST TECHNOLOGY

Cygnett is a very tech-savvy company. We never stop upgrading ourselves and innovate to bring about efficient ways of approaching different jobs. We have recently upgraded our CRS system, now it provides seamless connectivity with our other tools.

“

Our Nainital unit ran an afforestation campaign, planting new trees and cleaning their vicinity

”

**Biswajit Chakraborty**  
General Manager Delegate  
Pullman and Novotel New Delhi Aerocity

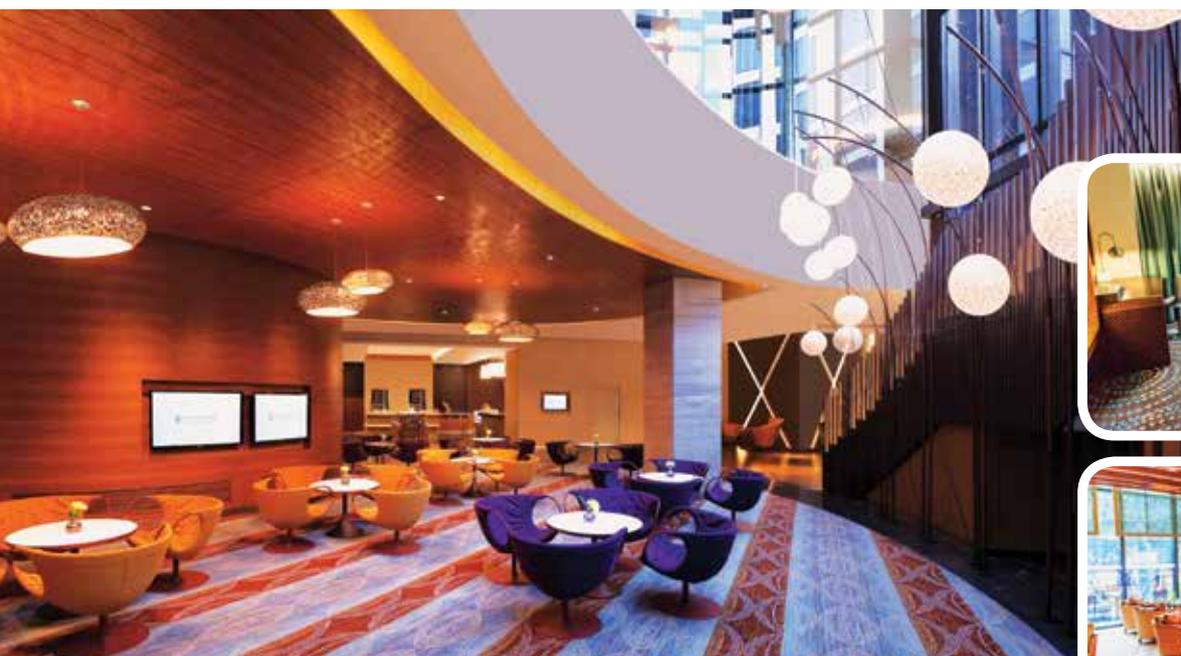
**TEAMING UP WITH NGOS**

CSR initiatives are implemented for communities under the Planet 21 initiative of Accor. Planet 21 is Accor's sustainable development initiative with a vision to drive change towards positive hospitality and care. Pullman and Novotel New Delhi Aerocity is associated with Sarthak, a NGO in the development of inclusive talent and rehabilitating

flavours. It offers the freshest and safest ingredients in a seasonal menu that is locally produced in an in-house farm of 5,000 sq. ft., cultivating a healthy relationship on the table. Pullman and Novotel New Delhi Aerocity is highly focused on the usage of single-use plastic items such as wooden cutlery, wooden spoons, and forks. The 200 ml plastic bottles have been replaced by glass



**Biswajit Chakraborty**



persons with disability through its inclusive education initiative via Sarthak Skill Development Centers and has made them part of the hotel journey. The upscale property is also associated with the Hope Foundation whose main objective is to bring change in the lives of children, young people and vulnerable individuals, in the fields of education and healthcare. They also provide shelter to children, women and the aged and train them for a living. Moreover, Pullman and Novotel New Delhi Aerocity is associated with NGOs like Kamalini, an educational and development initiative, the Bal Vikas Dhara, an NGO which works for women empowerment, and Earth Saviour Foundation – an internationally recognised NGO that works to serve less privileged people and to protect the environment.

**THE SUSTAINABLE PATH**

There is an increased focus on the concept of sustainability at Pullman and Novotel New Delhi Aerocity. The hotel's signature restaurant, Pluck, serves modern European and contemporary Indian

bottles in our rooms and meeting rooms for guests to consume pure water. These have been replaced with all plastic cutleries that were being served at the property a few years ago. Moreover, the 5-star property has its own in-house coffee roaster. The organic coffee grounds are even given to guests for use in their garden as a pest repellent, fertiliser and as compost later. Further, the upscale hotel has Winnow – a food wastage management system. It is the most accurate and profitable way to reduce food wastage in the kitchen. It offers improved data accuracy by validating each food waste entry and providing richer insight to help reduce waste.

“

CSR initiatives are implemented for communities under the Planet 21 initiative of Accor

”



Rahul Nama

**Rahul Nama**  
General Manager  
Mercure Chennai Sriperumbudur

**ENGAGING WITH COMMUNITIES**

Mercure properties are globally influenced by local culture, food and engage with communities of the region. Thus, at Mercure Chennai Sriperumbudur we have closely associated ourselves in 2019 with several NGOs in Chennai namely New Life Charitable Trust & Hope Foundation contributing through donations of books, food supplies, kitchen and cleaning equipment, and sponsoring meals to the elderly, orphans and mentally challenged foundations.

**BIODEGRADABLE OPTIONS**

Mercure is fully committed to Accor's Planet 21

“

Mercure manages its own organic garden, producing herbs & vegetables in 5,000 sq. ft.

”

initiative and is one of the leading hotels in the chain to develop and manage its own organic garden, producing herbs & vegetables in 5,000 sq.ft. During the peak harvest season, it not only fully supports our cafeteria food but also contributes to restaurant menu dishes curated for guests. The hotel has eliminated usage of plastic items in its food and beverage outlets and implemented biodegradable alternatives. The 120 aerators fixed in water taps help reduce water consumption.

**TECHNOLOGY UPGRADES**

The hotel features state-of-the-art IT infrastructure in rooms and banquets. Part of the energy needs are fulfilled by 20 solar panels. We have installed 1900 LED lights to reduce energy consumption and opted for 100 per cent non-CFC gas for air-conditioning to preserve the ozone layer. We have also introduced 'Pulse', the real time guest feedback system.

## Pradipta Mohapatra

Asst. Vice President (Sales & Marketing)  
MAYFAIR Hotels & Resorts

### SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

As a business we have always attached great importance to the concept of Social Responsibility. We regularly undertake community plantation drives, encourage our employees to participate in societal awareness campaigns, organise blood donation camps at our properties as well as periodical health check-up camps which can be assessed by the public at large.

### NATURE-THEMED LUXURY

We enjoy a distinct reputation of being a brand offering nature-themed luxury. Our properties have a sizeable area dedicated to green cover as it helps



offset the carbon footprint as well as recharge the groundwater, thereby helping effectively mitigate two most pressing environmental concerns i.e. global warming and the looming water crisis.

3Rs – reduce, reuse & recycle is yet another empirical way forward to ensure sustainability in operations. Here, while assuring guests the highest standard of hygiene, we request them to reuse, if possible, the bed linens and towels. To ensure optimum and efficient utilisation of resources, we have energy-efficient electrical equipment and a smart water monitoring system in place. Also, we have a high capacity solar power generation system across our properties.

### CUTTING-EDGE TECHNOLOGY

We have embraced many new technologies, important among them being the cloud-based property management system, cloud-based private branch exchange system, and Artificial Intelligence-based property surveillance system. To ensure a more satisfactory guest experience, we are using cloud-based guest service facility wherein guests using their reservation ID can fill in their preferences, expectations and special requirements, if any, to the property prior to their check-in through a mobile application.



**Pradipta Mohapatra**

“

3Rs – reduce, reuse & recycle is yet another empirical way forward to ensure sustainability”

”





Saumitra Chaturvedi

## Saumitra Chaturvedi General Manager ibis Jaipur Civil Lines

### CSR INITIATIVES

We have contributed immensely towards CSR by taking many initiatives. To name a few, we have been giving employment opportunities to the physically disabled. We increased the gender diversity at our hotel and took it to 24 per cent from nine per cent in 2018. We tied up with an NGO, Ashray Care Home, and supported the HIV + diagnosed kids. We celebrated Earth Day by organising complimentary vehicle pollution testing for the locals and blood donation camp for our employees and guests. We also celebrated International Yoga Day in partnership with Naya Sawera, an NGO.

### ECO-FRIENDLY PATH

We took many sustainability initiatives in 2019 supporting Acting Here Planet 21, Accor's global pledge towards environment. We identified few locations in the hotel and developed organic herb and vegetable gardens. We also created a vertical garden at the entrance of the hotel by planting more than 150 saplings on International Earth Day. We followed no plastic usage in our public area, meeting room and restaurant and bar by introducing environment-friendly packing boxes/ containers, straws, stirrers and water bottles. We introduced eco-friendly cleaning

chemicals from Diversey to support the environment. We also introduced water saving aerators in the public area washrooms and guest rooms.

### TECH-DRIVEN MEASURES

We installed a food compost machine to manage food waste. The meeting room was recently refurbished with new gen mood lighting which can be controlled by a remote/mobile handset. The new HRMS software manages the entire HR function digitally. We also introduced a battery-operated bicycle (e-Bike) for our guests to show our commitment towards technology and sustainability. This bike in one full charge can run for up to 70 kms at a maximum speed of 25 kmph.



“

We introduced an e-Bike for guests to show our commitment towards technology & sustainability”



**Stephen Ganon**  
General Manager  
Grand Plaza Lords Inn Jammu

**CSR ACTIVITIES**

We have collaborated with Save The Children India – an independent Indian NGO working with women and children in vulnerable communities. Donation boxes of Save The Children India have been placed at all our hotels across India. The funds that get collected are donated to the NGO every month.

We organised the Marathon – Run for Unity on October 31, 2019, to mark the birth anniversary of India’s first deputy PM, Sardar Vallabhai Patel. The

**SUSTAINABLE TOURISM**

We became the first Indian hotel company in 2019 to launch and adopt a complete environment charter, along with the oath of sustainable tourism and code of conduct for safe tourism. In our annual leaders’ summit all leaders pledged to conduct our business in a manner that befits the culture and ethos of our rich and ancient civilisation and protects all individuals, especially women and children, from all derogatory acts, which are contrary to the spirit of our country.



**Stephen Ganon**



objective of this marathon was to keep ourselves fit and our city clean. Plogging was carried out on the streets and beaches keeping in vein with Swachh Bharat mission of PM Narendra Modi. More than 850 employees across India participated in the marathon.

We participated in the worldwide ‘Earth Hour’ movement by turning off the lights for an hour on March 30, 2019. A total of 4,284 units was saved which was enough to power 214 rooms for a day. We also conducted CSR activities at our hotels like blood donation, tree plantation in the premises and gifting saplings to guests, donating at old age homes and orphanages.

**CLOUD-BASED TECHNOLOGY**

We have upgraded our PMS to cloud-based technology in 2019. Cloud-based software enables us to monitor our hotel even at the convenience of a mobile phone.

“ We became the first Indian hotel company in 2019 to adopt a complete environment charter ”

# JAIN TOURISM

## An untapped sector sees the light of day

There remains a huge potential for tourism and hospitality in India, where culture and history are rooted in its different religions. Curating a wholesome travel experience by catering to specific religious needs would attract an untapped market.



India is a land of various cultures and, many religions have found their birthplace in India. India's connect with spirituality is very deep-seated. It is believed that Jainism found its roots in India. As a matter of fact, Jainism's history is intertwined with that of India. There are many places which commemorate this belief. The masterpieces of architecture, carvings, sculptures and layout, the Jain temples combine beauty with bliss. Each of these Jain pilgrim spots provide a sense of calm and serenity and draw numerous Jain tourists.

One such place and probably the most well-known Jain spot in India and the world is a massive black stone structure of Gommateshwara, the first



Tirthankara standing, which is 18 metres in height, situated in Karnataka. Another one of the most popular and beautiful Jain temples in India is the Dilwara group of temples, situated in the midst of a forest near Mount Abu, and renowned for the stunning use of marble in its structure. Apart from these famous Jain pilgrim spots in India, there are a lot of obscure and underrated sites related to Jainism all over the country.

The Tourism Ministry of India has decided to focus on the development of thematic circuits, each circuit covering tourist places of a particular theme. One such circuit happens to be the Tirthankar Circuit which covers sites related to Jainism such as Jain temples and pilgrim spots. The Ministry is working closely with

various state governments to develop this circuit with adequate funds and strict guidelines.

The hospitality sector is crucial in the implementation of such schemes. It is imperative to focus on the augmentation of infrastructure at these pilgrim spots to make it at par with sites in Varanasi, Rome, Amritsar, etc. which have an enormous footfall of pilgrims. The provision of better facilities for pilgrims or tourists enhances their experience and brings in more people. The development of these pilgrim sites is important to promote cultural and heritage value of the country and enhance the tourist attractiveness. The spiritual tourism category is untapped and



**Himanshu Talwar**



“

The tourism and the hospitality sector should tap into the market that spirituality and religion provides

”

fragmented, and the hospitality sector could gain a lot out of this category. Curating a wholesome, comfortable and organised travel experience by catering to specific religious needs and beliefs would attract a huge untapped market. Pricing of facilities and products by the hospitality sector should be worked out in a way which would fit into any budget as the spiritual tourism sector brings in pilgrims or tourists from various walks of life. The provision of pamphlets or guided tours or various other methods to throw light on the rich history of Jainism could be another highlight of the spiritual experience.

Spiritualism and religion is an indispensable part of India and its people. The tourism and the hospitality sector should tap into the market that spirituality and religion provides by augmenting pilgrim spots related to all religions.

*(The article has been written by **Himanshu Talwar**, Assistant Secretary General, FHRAI, the views expressed are the author's personal views.)*



# Munch right with **Go Nuts!!**

With its authentic collection of mini bar nuts, Go Nuts!!, the munchies brand of Gold Tree Nuts, is a sought-after healthy snacks brand. Their latest offering is Sriracha Edamame & Edamame Trail Mix, both protein dense super-food munchies.

**D**ry fruits and nuts have always been a part of Indian tradition. Loaded with benefits akin to increasing memory, keeping the heart healthy and many more, this tradition has been passed on for generations. But our busy schedule, changing lifestyle, and food consumption patterns almost broke this tradition and we forgot to munch anything healthy. Rather the fried and baked food items replaced our healthy snacking options, making us more prone to diseases. But Go Nuts!! has been working since 2007 to bring this tradition back into our lives through its array of nuts-loaded snacks.

Go Nuts!! is the munchies brand of Gold Tree Nuts. The company has transformed into being one of the most sought-after healthy snacks brands for not just corporates but the hospitality industry too due to its authentic collection of mini bar nuts. Go Nuts!! focuses on the health mixes providing high nutrition and flavoured nuts. Its attractive packaging comprises of cans, pouches, premium glass bottles in four shapes.

With the new government initiative to ban plastic use in hotels, Go Nuts!! with its premium glass bottle packaging in various sizes, can be the ideal partner for the hospitality segment.

“

Supplying to almost 250 hotels, Go Nuts!! is the leading hospitality mini bar solutions provider

”

## HEALTHY SNACKING OPTIONS

With increasing cases of lifestyle diseases on rise, increasing income and easy access to health-related information on the web, today's youngsters are moving towards healthy snacking. Banking on this growing opportunity, Go Nuts!! have brought a range of quality nut-based products that reflects its philosophy of 'munch right'. Go Nuts!! provides a range of products including almonds, cashews, pistachios, gourmet nuts, mixed nuts, flavoured nuts, health mixes and low-calorie snacks. The company has also developed special mixes in consultation with nutritionists and based on the changing habits of urban consumers. Go Nuts!! 4 O'Clock Nut Munch is one such product which has to be consumed in between your lunch and dinner. Encompassing the right amount of fats and proteins, it helps avoid eating any junk till dinner. Go Nuts!! has also introduced Night Munch, a mix of nuts and seeds high in fibre and suitable for consumption at night for easy digestion.

## GROWTH STRATEGY

Go Nuts!! products are handpicked and packed with utmost care in a hygienic environment. Go Nuts!! was mostly focused on institutional sales with hospitality, corporate gifting and weddings customers. Having established its product quality in these sectors and creating brand awareness through these channels, Go Nuts!! has now diversified its marketing strategy to set its foot in the retail spaces to reach to individual consumers directly, with focus on health mixes.

# PARTICIPATE

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# Smooth sail for students interested in



# CRUISE LINERS

Sai International Institute of Hotel Management is a Chennai-based institution that has been training professionals for more than a decade. The institute aids students in receiving CDC, which helps open many doors for a career in cruises.

The year 2019 marked a significant milestone of 16 years of them being into the education industry. The institution offers an accredited course in the discipline of cruise liners. This training has been accredited By American Global Standards, USA. Sai International Institute of Hotel Management offers job-oriented cruise liner courses such as advanced course in cruise ship galley operations and culinary arts (continental \Garde manger\ pastry) certification in housekeeping operations and services, certificate in F&B services, with STCW courses and CDC license for catering professionals and exclusive elite spa and salon training for cruise liners.

The duration of the all the courses offered is one month. Being a fresher is no bar for admission into the courses, freshers are also welcomed, to join the course. The distinctive features of the courses offered by Sai International Institute of Hotel Management include 100 per cent placement assistance in leading cruise liners (Cruise Maritime voyage, Carnival cruises, Disney cruises, P&O cruises, MSC cruises, Celebrity cruises etc.), bank loan assistance, practical sessions, communication and soft skill training, guaranteed off campus/ on campus interviews, to name a few. The certification issued is valid in more than 70 countries around the globe. The institute aids in receiving CDC which can be synonymous with seamanship passport, a vital document that introduces

an individual to several unexplored contingencies. They aim at educating the student on the abundant opportunities in cruise liners and abolishing the myth that these are inaccessible to Indian students. The individuals are trained as per standards of cruise HRD into ideal professionals and all the necessary knowledge is being inculcated sufficing the placement needs at a very affordable cost to the individual during his/her course of study. That said, all that you require is enthusiasm and passion to learn as knowledge is the only investment in this case. There have been instances where the lack of awareness among people has been capitalised by some bodies that indulge in fraudulent activities which leads to monetary loss and unnecessary depression. With the intent of condemning such activities, Sai Institute does not dispense any sugar-coated fake promises to the students, instead it furnishes the accurate details.

"Gone are the days when there were compromises being overlooked in the standard during recruitment of cruise liner professionals, with every passing decade, the standard of the industry has been raised manifold. Hence the fittest only survive, it is the best of the fittest that succeed," says Dr **Chef Vinoth Kumar**, Principal/ Chief Trainer, Sai Institute, a luminary in hospitality industry with several accolades such as the youngest chef to be honoured with a doctorate, holder of 5 world records in the discipline of carving, to name a few. He firmly believes all that





“

Human Resource Departments of the cruise industry are looking for USPH Certification & STCW+CDC

”



knowledge is only worth when put to performance. If you have the knowledge and passion, and looking for the right opportunity, Sai International Institute of Hotel Management is the right destination. Elaborating on the trends in terms of novel ways in imparting education to students today, he said, "As per the current trends HRDs of the cruise industry are looking for USPH Certification & STCW+CDC, which is onboard standards certification.

Candidates with all mandatory documents are given first priority on merit selection for cruise line jobs. Cruise liners could well be referred to as 'floating paradise' for they offer all possible luxuries overboard. It has been a dream of many, perhaps the life goal of some to work in an environment that is imbued with riches and luxury. It is said that "World is a book, and those who do not travel read only a page."



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# Creating luxurious interiors

With over 32 years of experience, H. S. Ahuja & Associates has delivered some of the best designs in the industry.



**Hema**

The Fairy Land Hotel by Clarks Inn in Bhopal has been completed recently by H.S. Ahuja & Associates (HSA). Every detail of the spaces has been drawn; discussed and executed precisely which makes it a very special project for HSA. Users can experience luxury in this well-designed hotel. It has a double height reception lobby with inlay pattern in the flooring and well-equipped rooftop interiors. The hotel has a uniquely designed bar lounge with a luxurious banquet area. Fully furnished rooms with different and individually designed themes are the USP of this hotel.

**Hema**, Principal Interior Designer, H.S. Ahuja & Associates, says, "I paid more attention to craftsmanship and loved finishing this project as I got the chance to express my aesthetic vision and showcase my style."

With on time delivery and precise detailing, we made the client happy and satisfied with our work, which is the main aim of our company."

Another project which has been completed by the pan-India company is Delhi Darbar in Arera colony in Bhopal. The resort's innovative interiors create an ambience which have a relaxing and rejuvenating effect. Also, HSA has completed Landmark Nx & Landmark Hotel in Bhopal. Another upcoming project is Sayaji Group Hotel Effotel in Indore. HSA will be coming up with more innovations in the year 2020.

“

Fully furnished rooms with different and individually designed themes are the USP of this hotel

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# IHE 2020: The future of hospitality

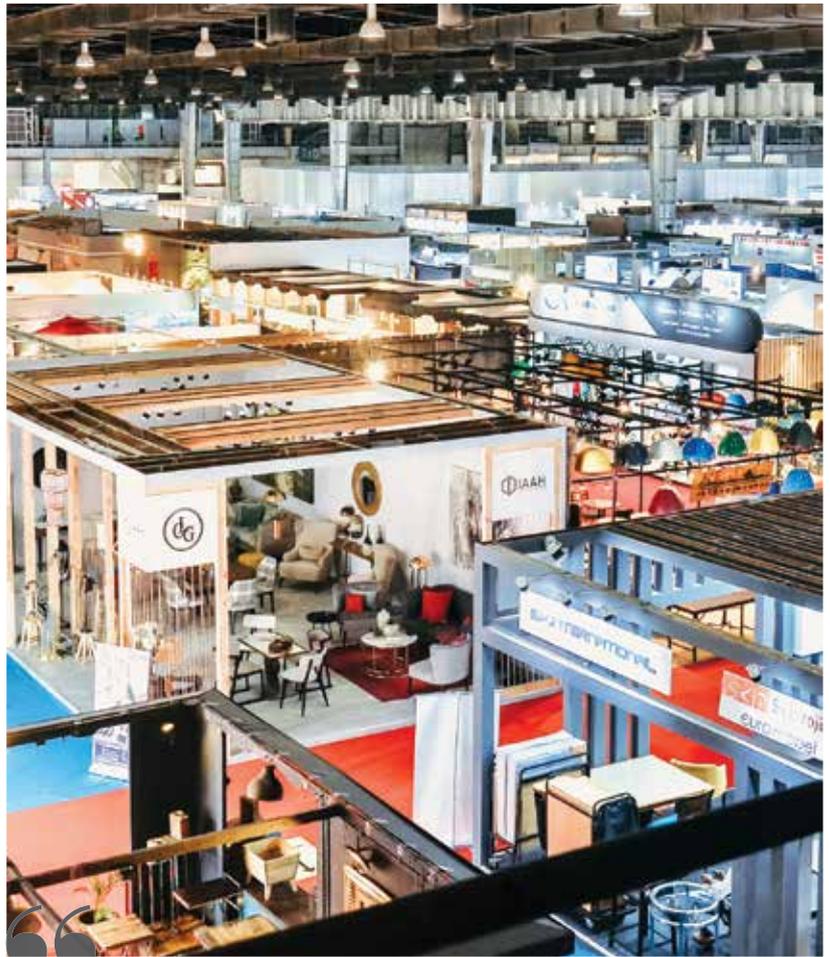
The third edition of IHE will be held from August 5-8, 2020. This year, the largest Hospitality and F&B Expo in South Asia, is aiming to become the greatest global show.

While the second edition held in 2019 became the largest exposition in South Asia celebrating hospitality, F&B, and more, the third edition is all set to become synonymous with the future of hospitality. IHE 2019 witnessed over 30,000 attendees and 900+ exhibitors, making it a grand success with participation from countries like Indonesia, Canada, Peru, Ecuador, El Salvador, Italy, Chile, Myanmar, Vietnam and New Zealand.

On being asked about his vision for IHE 2020, **Rakesh Kumar**, Chairman, IEM & DG, EPCH, said, "It is our goal to make IHE 2020 the greatest hospitality show not just in India, but across the globe." While building a platform for global brands to showcase their new tech, innovation, and more, IHE has also rapidly become a platform that celebrates MSMEs and their unmatched contribution to the hospitality industry.

IHE 2020 aims to bring together hospitality professionals, students, and experts under one roof to share knowledge, learn about innovation, and expand their horizons. The event encompasses everything about hospitality including F&B, Housekeeping, Management, and more. One can expect to witness gastronomic experiences of a lifetime, impressive product demos, and the who's who of hospitality taking masterclasses, presenting research, and partaking in panel discussions with eminent speakers and industry leaders. The 2020 event is expected to grow in terms of business volume generated and the number of exhibitors and visitors. There is also an expected rise in the number of conferences, panel discussions, keynotes, and masterclasses, which only means more immersive learning for the attendees.

Speaking about the scale of IHE 2019, **Vineet Bhatia**, Michelin Star Chef and Restaurateur said, "I think it's a great event to have. Platforms like these showcase Indian hospitality at its finest. This is, by far, the largest expo of this kind. There are beautiful products, great for sourcing, and great for networking too. I am honoured to be here."



There are beautiful products, great for sourcing, and great for networking too

**Zorawar Kalra**, MD, Massive Restaurants, said, "We need more and more events like this. I think something on this scale has rarely been done. This is truly next level. I have seen such incredible exhibitors putting up their products, people from all over the world, and I've seen the best of India being represented at IHE 2019."

With such an overwhelming response from the hospitality and F&B Industry, the organisers, India Exposition Mart Limited, are gearing up to raise the bar a lot higher in making IHE the most sought-after hospitality and F&B expo in the world.



**Rakesh Kumar**

## DINE WITH ASHLEY

◆ Ashley Furniture Home Store has launched a new collection of dining room furniture that brings with it a charming vintage vibe. A contrasting palette of wood tone and stark white makes for a wonderful combination of traditional and modern styles. The dining table and chairs are made with select veneers and paint grade materials and rubber wood solids, finished in a two-tone scheme. The wood tone is a weathered russet with saw kerf detailing and offset veneer planking for a handcrafted appearance. Cottage white paint has rub-through effects on the edges. Though the turned legs give them a traditional look, the overall design and finish make them fit for any space.



## ADJUSTABLE SALAMANDER

◆ Akasa has come up with the Adjustable Stainless-Steel Electric Salamander which offers a choice of cooking heights (adjustable travel distance of 200 mm). Self-balancing grill height and temperature control functionality allow for precise cooking of every item. With the capability to cook, grill, hold and reheat, it's ideal for banquets, hotels, restaurants, food courts or any food outlets.



## ORGANIC ICE TEA

◆ BrewHouse Tea Brewing has launched India's first certified organic ready-to-drink ice tea, which is available across all metros & Tier-I cities. The brand is available in five flavours – Blueberry, Forest Berry, Mojito Lime, Classic Lemon and Classic Peach. The tea is real-brewed right before bottling and never made from concentrate or tea powder. So far available only in glass bottles, the brand will soon roll out affordable variants. BrewHouse is all set to disrupt the ice tea market with its superior quality, taste, organic ingredients and preparation from whole tea leaves.



## SIMPLE SOPHISTICATION

◆ VitrA, a leading bathroom solutions brand of Eczacıbasi Building Products Division in Turkey, recently introduced its Equal Series. The new range, Equal, makes use of geometric shapes and minimalist borders and reveals an exciting collaboration with Italian architect and designer Claudio Bellini. As a design approach, simplicity is the human shortcut to creating equilibrium within the urban clutter; it offers harmony by welcoming diverse needs and characters; it also excludes noise. Simplicity must be treated as the outcome of brave sophistication.





## METALLIC SURFACE DECORS

◆ The 'Splendid Stories' collection from PlyMahal is an intersection of exceptional craftsmanship and contemporary decoration. Known for their exclusive curation of luxurious decorative surface panels, PlyMahal's latest launch features inspired interpretations of rare metals, delicate textures, and lively patterns. According to **Pankaj Kumar**, Director of PlyMahal, "Our collection, Splendid Stories, is a celebration of exquisite details. From the tastefully distressed patina of metals to the whimsy of geometric patterns, we have sought to capture subtle intricacies through expertly engineered decor surfaces."

## WOOD THAT TERMITES HATE



◆ Notion has launched Termite Proof Laminate Wooden Flooring with 10 years warranty in the Indian market. The flooring is made up of multi-layered synthetic flooring product fused together with high-density fiberboard and lamination process which capture the looks and texture of real wood.

## AEROSTATION HOOD IN COPPER



◆ Keeping your health in mind, Faber has launched 3 in 1 Aerostation technology that comprises of a chimney, a fan and an air purifier. The Aerostation Hood comes with 'spot cooling' and 'air purification' technology. The Aerostation Hood has been launched in copper that was earlier available in two finishes – Alligator Black & Antique Silver. The Aerostation's DC Motor comes with soft touch control and a bio colour LED for speed indication.

## THE LEATHER LOOK

◆ Famed for their luxurious hand-woven silk fabrics with original designs rooted in Indian traditions, yet exuding a universal appeal, RR Decor as a brand, stands apart in the furnishings world. Their latest collection of faux leathers, Alpaca, offers vibrant colour options and smooth texture. What is striking about the Alpaca collection is the range of bright hues it offers. The colour block shades instantly add peppiness to any interior. Juxtaposed with neutral tones, the vivid colours provide an alluring contrast. And the smooth texture and sheen on the surface evoke an opulent air.



# Glimpses from 'Hall of Fame' awards

'Hall of Fame' awards for the Food Service Equipment industry was held in Delhi. **Sunil Khanna**, Director, Aster Technologies, was behind the initiative to honour the unsung heroes of Commercial Food Service Equipment industry.





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# appointments



**MARCEL KLEFFNER**

Vice President Finance Europe  
Kempinski Hotels S.A.

★ Kempinski Hotels S.A. has appointed Marcel Kleffner as Vice President Finance Europe based at the company's corporate office in Geneva. In his new role, he will oversee the financial performance of the European hotel portfolio of Kempinski and directly report to the company's CFO. Kleffner has gained experience over the last 20 years in various positions in the hospitality industry. He started his career in 1998 at the Crowne Plaza in Heidelberg, Germany as Accounts Receivable Clerk, followed by Accounts Payable, Cost Controller and subsequently as Assistant Financial Controller. He joined Swissôtel Düsseldorf/ Neuss in 2001 as Assistant Financial Controller and was promoted to Financial Controller in 2004.



**SUDEEP JAIN**

Managing Director, South West Asia  
IHG

★ InterContinental Hotels Group (IHG) has appointed Sudeep Jain as Managing Director, South West Asia (SWA) with effect from January 1, 2020. In his new role, he will take on a broader leadership agenda to drive IHG's business in the region, covering both development and operations responsibilities across the existing portfolio of 39 hotels representing five brands; InterContinental, Crowne Plaza, Holiday Inn, Holiday Inn Express and Six Senses Hotels Resorts Spas. Jain will continue to be based in Gurugram, India and will report to Pascal Gauvin, Managing Director, India, Middle East and Africa, IHG.



**SUBHASH SINHA**

General Manager  
The Westin Kolkata Rajarhat

★ Subhash Sinha has been appointed as General Manager of The Westin Kolkata Rajarhat. In an illustrious career spanning more than two decades, he has enjoyed exponential success in all the top-notch properties he has served. An authority in the fields of operations, sales and marketing, he has also gained the reputation of successfully handling challenging markets vis-à-vis the finance department. Prior to Westin Kolkata, Sinha has achieved outstanding results in his role as GM of Marriott Suites Pune.



**RAHUL PANWAR**

Hotel Manager  
Novotel & ibis Bengaluru Outer Ring Road

★ Novotel and ibis Bengaluru Outer Ring Road announced the appointment of Rahul Panwar as Hotel Manager. He brings with him a rich international hospitality experience with over 13 years across global hospitality brands in India, USA, China & Vietnam. He has also bagged a multitude of awards like HOD of the Year & GSI Champion of the quarter in his previous stints. In his new role, Panwar will be responsible for the day-to-day operations at the 526 keys combo hotel – Novotel & ibis Bengaluru Outer Ring Road.



**ABHISHEK SACHDEV**

Hotel Manager  
Fairfield by Marriott, Kolkata

★ Abhishek Sachdev has been appointed as the Hotel Manager of Fairfield by Marriott Kolkata. He has over 13 years of hospitality experience across multiple hotel companies and held varied roles at ITC, Starwood Hotels & Resorts and Indian Hotels Company. He was associated with the pre-opening team of ITC Gardenia, Bangalore. From here on he proceeded to pursue his Master's degree in Hospitality Administration from the renowned École hôtelière de Lausanne, Switzerland in 2011.



### VIJAY RAMAMOORTHY

Director of Marketing  
Four Seasons Hotel Bengaluru

★ Vijay Ramamoorthy has been appointed as Director of Marketing at Four Seasons Hotel Bengaluru. He has over 19 years of experience in hospitality sales from The Oberoi Group in India with a proven record of building successful teams to drive revenues, brand positioning, revenue management, and sales processes. In his current role, Ramamoorthy will be responsible for overseeing the dynamic Sales & Marketing team at the hotel as they position the second Four Seasons in the country as the top luxury destination in the Garden City, for business travellers and leisure guests alike. Novotel Hotels, Suites & Resorts offers destination hotels designed as comforting and energising places.



### AKSHAY SOOD

Director of Food & Beverage  
Sofitel Mumbai BKC

★ Sofitel Mumbai BKC announced the appointment of Akshay Sood as the Director of Food & Beverage. He will be responsible for the entire F&B operations across the five restaurants and bars at the luxury property. In his new role, Sood will be managing and executing events held at the hotel and assist clients in programme planning and menu selection, wherever required. As a proficient professional, Sood comes with more than 10 years of experience in the hospitality industry. His role will also include overseeing the costs and control of food quality, ingredients to achieve customer satisfaction, profitability of the outlets, business and development and ensuring the best gastronomy experience to the guests at the property.



### VIKAS MITTAR

Director of Finance  
Novotel & ibis Bengaluru Outer Ring Road

★ Vikas Mittar has been appointed as Director of Finance at Novotel & ibis Bengaluru Outer Ring Road. An industry veteran, Mittar brings across a rich experience in hospitality of 15 years and an overall experience in finance of over 19 years. His deep understanding and command of domain experience in Accounting & Financial Management through SAP, OPERA, Control Gap Analysis and Supply Chain Management will be an asset to the dual property. Previously he has held the role of Multi Property Director of Finance at Marriott International in Kerala and Director of Finance for hotels at Eros Group.



### KEERTHAN SHETTY

Executive Housekeeping Manager  
Holiday Inn Chennai OMR IT Expressway

★ As the Executive Housekeeper of Holiday Inn Chennai, OMR IT Expressway, Keerthan Shetty is helming the affairs of administration of housekeeping and laundry facilities while ensuring secure environment for guests. Shetty is skilled in Hospitality Industry, Guest Recovery, Rooms Division Management, Yield Management, and Property Management Systems. Backed with 11 years of work experience in this field, he supervises all work and ensures compliance to all operational standards and organisation regulations. Having worked at Hotel Royal Orchid Bangalore, Radisson Resort & Spa Kumarakum, Kerala, Zuri Resort & Casino Goa, and Hyatt Regency Pune & Ludhiana, Shetty is adept with a love for adventure and a desire to stretch limits in the hospitality sector.



### SHIVA ARORA

Executive Sous Chef  
Fairmont Jaipur

★ Fairmont Jaipur has appointed Shiva Arora as their new Executive Sous Chef, who will lead the operations of the culinary team, along with Executive Chef Prasad Metrani. With 11 years of experience, Arora is proficient in managing high-quality kitchen operations while keeping a check on budgets and cost control. He is also a certified Food Safety Manager having completed the TAP (Training Achievement Program) Series. Prior to joining Fairmont Jaipur, Arora has worked with various hospitality brands such as JW Marriott New Delhi Aerocity, Accor's Pullman Novotel complex at Aerocity, The Oberoi Gurgaon, Old World Hospitality's Delhi O Delhi and Chor Bizarre, to name a few. He will use his talent and creativity to grow further in his new role.



## 6<sup>TH</sup> INTERNATIONAL YOUNG CHEF OLYMPIAD

The sixth edition of the world's biggest Olympiad for culinary students, the International Young Chef Olympiad (YCO), will be held across five cities of India – Delhi, Pune, Goa, Bengaluru and Kolkata – from January 28 to February 2. YCO 2020 will witness participation of student chefs from 60 countries, including Scotland, England, Singapore, USA, Spain, Portugal, Kenya, Iran, Cambodia and Germany, among others. Adopting the theme of 'Sustainability', this year the competition will be uniting the young talent of the culinary world. During a five-day long intense competition, which is being organised by the International Institute of Hotel Management (IIHM) in partnership with the International Hospitality Council

(IHC) and Founder YCO, said, "With 60 countries coming together under one roof to celebrate the diversity of food from across the borders, YCO 2020 is not just the biggest culinary competition in the world but also a global platform fostering the spirit of youth, friendship, inclusiveness and camaraderie."

**Dr Suborno Bose**, the CEO of International Hospitality Council (IHC) and Founder YCO, said, "With 60 countries coming together under one roof to celebrate the diversity of food from across the borders, YCO 2020 is not just the biggest culinary competition in the world but also a global platform fostering the spirit of youth, friendship, inclusiveness and camaraderie."

## TECHNOLOGY

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- Jean-Michel Cassé, COO - India and SA, AccorHotels
- Kenneth Macpherson, Chief Executive Officer - EMEAA, IHG
- Puneet Chhatwal, Managing Director and CEO, IHCL
- Radha Arora, President, Rosewood Hotel Group.

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