

HOTELS & RESTAURANTS INDIA fhraimagazine

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A MONTHLY ON HOSPITALITY TRADE
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**AAHAR 2024
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ON HIGH NOTE**

**FOCUS ON TOURIST
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NUMBERS
G20 SHERPA
AMITABH KANT**

**FHRAI announces
54th Annual Convention**



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Dear esteemed FHRAI Members,

I am pleased to share some significant developments and initiatives undertaken by FHRAI recently. These efforts stand as a testament to the Federation's unwavering commitment to advocating for the interests of the esteemed members and fostering sustainable growth within the vibrant hospitality industry.

I am immensely pleased to inform you that the 54th Annual Convention of FHRAI will be held in Goa from 16 to 18 October 2024 at The Taj Cidade de Goa Convention Centre. The theme chosen for the 54th Convention is 'Tourism @2047: Incredible to Inevitable India: Driving Growth and Sustainability in a Mission Mode', in alignment with the Government of India's vision of making India a developed country by 2047.

A teaser video of the Convention was released by Kant during the Travel For LiFE: Tourism Sustainability Summit 2024 held on 8 March 2024. A link to access the video is given as under:

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/G7gHrh7vumw?si=rcf7P9FLRF IrXwMU>

We will come to you very soon with more details about the Annual Convention to enable your valued participation in this single largest business and networking platform of the tourism and hospitality industry.

Through collaborative partnerships, proactive advocacy, and meaningful engagements, we strive to pave the way for a brighter future for our industry.

Firstly, the Travel For LiFE: Tourism Sustainability Summit 2024, held in New Delhi was a resounding success, thanks to the support of the Ministry of Tourism. This event aimed to drive large-scale behavioural change towards sustainability in tourism businesses. We were honoured to have esteemed guests like **Amitabh Kant**, India's G20 Sherpa, who emphasised the potential for tourism to create 25 million new jobs

and India's commitment to decarbonization. We also signed MoUs with key stakeholders, including the Indian Plumbing Association (IPA) and the Indian Green Building Council (IGBC), to promote water conservation and sustainable building practices and to enable our members to achieve the sustainable development goals.

Secondly, FHRAI and IAAPI have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to enhance collaboration and promote sustainable development within the respective industries. This MOU outlines various areas of cooperation, including sharing publications, faculty exchanges, and concessional rates for events. We believe this partnership will lead to collective growth and mutual benefits for our members.

Additionally, we have been actively advocating for relief from DGFT since 2017, highlighting the decline in foreign revenue in the hospitality sector. We have requested relaxation in export obligations and adjustment of past performance averages, along with a three-month extension for duty payment. We are hopeful for a prompt resolution to our request.

Furthermore, we have written to **Nirmala Sitharaman**, Union Minister of Finance, urging a restructure of the GST framework for restaurants. Our aim is to address disparities in the current system and promote fair competition and industry sustainability.

Lastly, FHRAI has submitted suggestions to **Anup Jalota**, Chairman, The Committee Constituted for One Window Music Copyright Licensing Regime, highlighting various issues plaguing the hospitality sector. We stress the importance of rationalising copyright tariffs to promote compliance and urge the Committee to address these issues.

These efforts reflect our commitment to advocating for the interests of our members and promoting growth within the hospitality industry. We will continue to work tirelessly towards achieving our goals and fostering a conducive environment for our members.

With best regards,
Pradeep Shetty
President, FHRAI



Pradeep Shetty
President,
FHRAI

“
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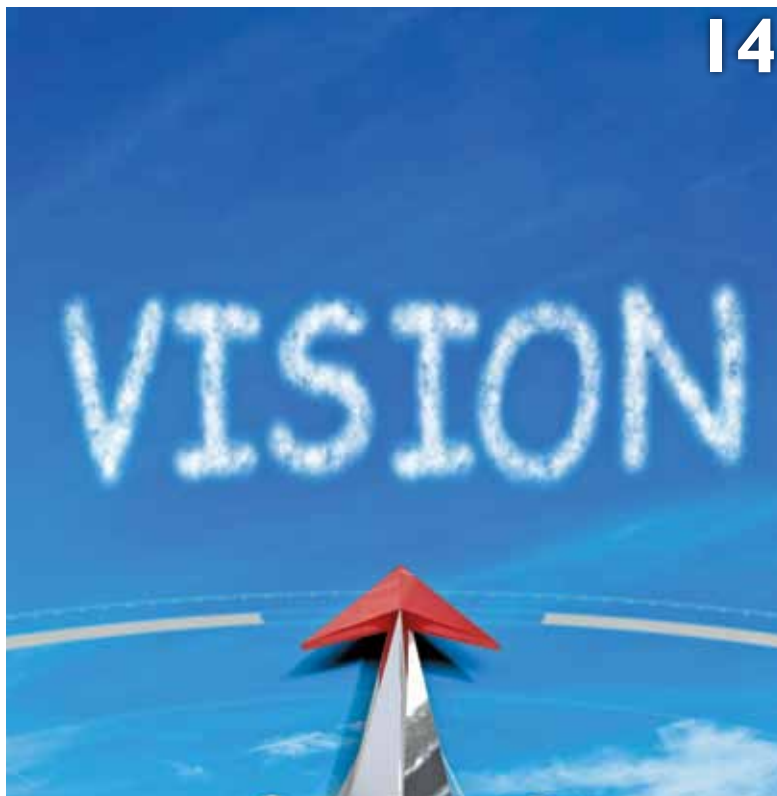


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SECRETARY GENERAL
Jaison Chacko - sg@fhrai.com

PUBLISHER
Devika Jeet - devika@ddppl.com

CHIEF EDITOR
Nisha Verma - nisha.verma@ddppl.com

ASSOCIATE EDITOR
Lipla Negi - lipla.negi@ddppl.com

DESK EDITOR
Punit Mishra - punit.mishra@ddppl.com

CREATIVE DESIGNER
Subhash Chaudhary

DESIGNERS ADVERTISEMENT
Nitin Kumar
Aditya Pratap Singh

PRODUCTION MANAGER
Anil Kharbanda

MARKETING & SALES
DELHI
Nikhil Jeet - Nikhil.jeet@ddppl.com
Director Advertising (+91 9910031313)

MARKETING & SALES
DELHI
Meetu Malhotra - meetu.malhotra@ddppl.com
Manager Marketing (+919650911399)

Jaspreet Kaur - jaspreet.kaur@ddppl.com
Marketing Manager (+919650196532)

MUMBAI
Harshal Ashar - harshal@ddppl.com
General Manager (+919619499167)

Samantha Pereira - Samantha.pereira@ddppl.com
(+919987550769)

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Hotel industry must realise the urgency to combat climate change exacerbated by population growth, industrial expansion & human activity.



THE FEDERATION OF HOTEL & RESTAURANT ASSOCIATIONS OF INDIA

B-82, 8th Floor, Himalaya House
Kasturba Gandhi Marg, New Delhi 110001
Tel: 91-11-40780780, Fax: +91-11-40780777
Email: fhrai@fhrai.com

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Sustainable Tourism

A UNANIMOUS CALL

From policymakers to hoteliers, all stakeholders unite for FHRAI's Travel For LiFE: Tourism Sustainability Summit 2024 to promote green tourism.



Lipla Negi

Defining sustainability as the 'driving force' for the hospitality sector, FHRAI's Travel For LiFE: Tourism Sustainability Summit 2024 set the ball rolling for a joint effort to position India as a leading sustainable and responsible tourism destination on the global map. Underlining sustainability as a 'transformative force', **Pradeep Shetty**, President, FHRAI urged for a large-scale behavioural changes in tourists as well as traders to develop ecological consciousness. "Sustainability in the hospitality industry holds paramount importance as it aligns with global trends, ethical considerations, and long-term business viability," he said in his welcome address at the event. From the dais, the 'teaser video' of FHRAI's 54th Annual Convention, scheduled for 16-18 October in Goa, was also unveiled.

A green epicentre

With discerning travellers and hospitality consumers increasingly inclined to support businesses that prioritise sustainability, it is a point well taken now that hospitality's growth trajectory will run parallel with sustainability. Conceptualised on the core principles of the Travel For LiFE

focus for adopting sustainable practices, including climate action, energy and appliances efficiency, plastic reduction, biodiversity, and efficient consumption, among others," he said while stressing upon the role of the sector as the agent of change, nudging people to develop a lifestyle for the planet.

FHRAI announces its 54th Annual Convention to be held in Goa, from 16-18 October

initiative by the Ministry of Tourism, the summit stressed upon the role of the hospitality sector in instilling eco-friendly habits in travellers. "The Federation shall adopt it as our mission to herald a new paradigm shift in the tourism and hospitality sector in India through an enhanced

Connecting India's rapidly growing manufacturing ability and expanding GDP with the critical need for decarbonization and green growth, Chief Guest for the event **Amitabh Kant**, India's G20 Sherpa and Former CEO, NITI Aayog, Government of India urged the tourism and hospitality industries to focus on tourism offerings that enhance the value of the destination and help develop 'brand entity' of India as leading sustainable destination. He further added, "Tourism will be major driver of India and inclusivity rests at the heart of this growth. With the



potential to create 25 million new jobs in the coming years, tourism not only drives economic prosperity but also presents a unique opportunity for India to lead the way in decarbonization. Despite our low per capita consumption, we must proactively address the looming challenge of greenhouse gas emissions. India's commitment to decarbonization is not just a necessity but a responsibility as we strive to build a greener and more resilient future for generations to come."

A collective effort

The summit was jointly organised by three apex industry associations—The Hotel Association of India, PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Federation of Hotel & Restaurant Associations of India with the support of the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India. An affirmation to the collaborative action, the cohort of sustainably advocates featured names such as **Yugal Joshi**, Mission Director, LiFE & Adviser, Water, Land Resources and Communication, NITI Aayog, Government of India, **Anil Chadha**, CEO, ITC Hotels and Executive Committee Member, Hotel Association of India, **Dr. Suruchi Mittar**, Vice President, Business Strategy, Invest India, **Aalap Bansal**, Partner, KPMG and **Nirav Gandhi**, Honorary Secretary, FHRAI, among others.

It also received support from NITI Aayog, Invest India, Department of Tourism, Government of Rajasthan, Sustainable Hospitality Alliance (UK) and KPMG as the Knowledge Partner,



The summit was conceptualised on the core principles of the Travel For LiFE initiative by the Ministry of Tourism

which also unveiled a detailed report 'Sustainability in Tourism: Reimagining India's Sustainable Tourism Evolution' at the event. As per the report, the sustainable tourism market size in India is anticipated to reach US \$151.88 million by 2032, registering a CAGR of 19.3 per cent during the forecast period from 2022 to 2032. The event saw signing of FHRAI's MoUs with three renowned organizations—Sustainable Hospitality Alliance

(UK), Indian Plumbing Association and Indian Green Building Council. The collaborations seek to enable India to become a global leader in sustainable building practices by 2025.

Further during the day, the dignitaries, industry experts, and panellists brainstormed for the three invigorating panel discussions 'Capitalising on Sustainability Practices & New Growth Potential', 'International Outreach for Tourism Sustainability' and 'Enablers of Sustainable Tourism for Promising Tomorrow: New Technology, Government-Industry Interface & Socially Responsible Business Practices'. The event concluded with the vote of thanks by **Chetan Mehta**, EC Member, FHRAI. □



HIGH-POWERED GATHERING

Travel For LiFE: Tourism Sustainability Summit 2024 witnessed industry leaders discussing sustainable tourism practices for global tourism's future.







Amitabh Kant emphasises multiplier effect of tourism, where every direct job creates 7 indirect jobs at Travel For LiFE: Tourism Sustainability Summit '24.

 **Nisha Verma**

At the recent Travel For LiFE: Tourism Sustainability Summit 2024, **Amitabh Kant**, G20 Sherpa, India, served as the Chief Guest. He emphasised that tourism will be a major driver of India's growth trajectory for the next three decades.

Lauding the theme of the summit, he said, "Tourism will not only drive GDP growth but also create 25 million new jobs in the next five to six years. The multiplier effect of tourism is significant. For every direct job created in tourism, seven indirect jobs are generated. Therefore, for India to achieve equitable and inclusive growth, there is no sector better than travel and tourism. As we expand the travel and tourism sectors over the next three decades, it is essential that we prioritise sustainable and responsible tourism practices."

"India must lead as the first country worldwide to expand its GDP through decarbonization. This entails adopting new strategies for both manufacturing and urbanization," Kant pointed out.

By 2035, India is expected to attract around 10 million tourists. We must recognise the substantial footprint we leave when travelling

Kant mentioned that one of India's key aspects of G20 leadership was to establish a green development pact. "One crucial element was the Travel for LiFE initiative. It is significant because we must recognise the substantial footprint we leave when travelling. By 2035, India is expected to attract around 10 million tourists, with projections indicating an increase to 40-45 million tourists in the future.

Therefore, I have long believed that it is not just about the number of tourists but the value they bring. We should prioritise increasing the value per tourist rather than solely focussing on numbers. It is essential to focus on tourism that sets India apart and enhances its value as a destination. Hence, the Travel for LiFE initiative holds great significance," Kant elaborated.



He concluded by stating that this presents a unique opportunity for India. "Over the next three decades, travel and tourism will be the primary driver of India's growth. It will also be the primary driver of job creation and should lead the charge in promoting responsible tourism and the LiFE movement," he said. □



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Budget-friendly stays Backpacker's boon

Manisha Saxena underscores the importance of micro-level planning and quality standards across all accommodation segments.



Janice Alyosius

India boasts immense potential to attract inbound tourism with its diverse offerings. The Ministry of Tourism is actively promoting India's attractions to educate the world about its rich experiences and to emphasise that there is something for everyone in India. Emphasizing the need for targeted marketing beyond conventional destinations, **Manisha Saxena**, DG Tourism, GOI said, "As travel is becoming more and more aspirational, we really need to relook at the budget hotel segment and ensure that quality hospitality experience is delivered in that segment as well. It may not have the luxurious amenities, but a clean bed and a clean toilet is all people ask for."

Additionally, Saxena stresses on the need for synergy between business and leisure tourism. "While people are travelling to India for business, it is essential to map



Manisha Saxena
DG, Tourism
Ministry of Tourism, GOI

Today's backpacker could be tomorrow's luxury traveller, so it is essential to leave a good impression

out all these events: who is coming from which countries, what are their interests, and what we can offer them in advance.

For instance, "You are coming to India, attending a conference in Visakhapatnam. Here is what you can do. You are visiting Bengaluru for a conference; you can explore Nandi Hills, Mysore, Coorg," and so on. This way, when a person arrives, the site can plan in advance for their leisure activities, and they may even bring their families along. This aspect is crucial for us to facilitate," she suggested.

She points out the disparity between the availability of luxury hotels and the condition of budget accommodations, particularly for backpacker travellers. "While we boast beautiful luxury hotels, what about the budget segment? And what about backpacker travellers? It is challenging to find clean accommodations for backpackers. With travel becoming a trend among the new generation, catering to backpackers' needs is crucial. Today's backpacker could be tomorrow's luxury traveller, so it is essential to leave a good impression," she explained. □



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FHRAI UNVEILS VISION PLAN AND ROADMAP FOR FUTURE



Establishment of the Centre of Excellence in Tourism and Hospitality (CETH) top priority as FHRAI unveils its long term vision plan.

FHRAI has introduced its vision plan for 2024, which aims to drive policy advocacy, enhance industry standards, and foster excellence in the hospitality sector. The plan is designed to impact all stakeholders of FHRAI nationally and internationally, ushering in a new era of growth and innovation in the hospitality landscape.

The vision for 2024 includes the establishment of the Centre of Excellence in Tourism and Hospitality (CETH), envisioned as a national resource centre



Pradeep Shetty
President
FHRAI

for tourism research and knowledge dissemination. CETH will focus on research excellence, undertake comprehensive studies, publish research papers, and disseminate information to stakeholders across the tourism ecosystem. By fostering collaboration among industry experts, policymakers, and academia, CETH aims to promote evidence-based policy advocacy and drive positive change in the sector.

Through CETH, we envision facilitating groundbreaking research initiatives that address issues facing the tourism and hospitality sector

“Through CETH, we envision facilitating groundbreaking research initiatives that address issues facing the tourism and hospitality sector. By fostering collaboration among industry stakeholders, policymakers, and academia, CETH will



spearhead evidence-based solutions and drive policy advocacy to shape the future of the industry,” said **Pradeep Shetty**, President, FHRAI.

CETH’s programmes and activities include research publications, policy dialogues, thematic conferences, investment facilitation, and the promotion of sustainability initiatives. In terms of financial viability, CETH aims to become a self-sustainable entity by leveraging revenue streams such as research assignments, publications, events, and consultancy services.

FHRAI is also equipping the FHRAI Institute of Hospitality Management (IHM) with state-of-the-art facilities and sustained quality improvement efforts to support hospitality education in India and prepare future leaders for the industry landscape.

“We are dedicated to enhancing skill development and preparing future leaders for the hospitality industry. By equipping the FHRAI Institute of Hospitality Management (IHM) with state-of-the-art facilities and through a sustained efforts of quality enhancements, we aim to raise

IHM as an institution of excellence in hospitality education,” said **K Nagaraju**, Vice President, FHRAI.



K Nagaraju
Vice President
FHRAI

By equipping FHRAI-IHM with state-of-the-art facilities, we aim to raise IHM as an institution of excellence in hospitality education

The 54th Annual Convention of FHRAI is set to return after a hiatus of five years. The Convention will bring together thought leaders, luminaries from

the hospitality sector and government officials on deliberate on the industry challenges. Scheduled at The Taj Cidade de Goa Convention Centre from 16 to 18 October 2024, the Convention promises deliberations and innovative insights, signalling a new chapter in industry collaboration and development.

The Federation has been diligently addressing critical issues that have been plaguing the hospitality sector, with the overarching goal of creating a more conducive and equitable ecosystem for all stakeholders involved in hospitality. Through these efforts, FHRAI seeks to drive economic prosperity and enhance the overall consumer experience across the industry.

In addition to this, FHRAI aims to actively engage with various government bodies at both regional and national levels to address major issues affecting the hospitality sector. The Federation endeavors to promote the formulation and implementation of conducive policies that facilitate the development of the sector. This collaborative approach is geared towards creating an environment that not only fosters innovation but also prioritises sustainability across the industry. ■





LIGHT, CAMERA, TRAVEL INDUSTRY CALLS THE SHOTS

6th Global Film Tourism Conclave highlights strategic collaborations between film industry & hospitality sector in showcasing India's heritage to world.

FHRAI President **Pradeep Shetty** attended the recently held 6th Global Film Tourism Conclave, deliberating on the role of films in boosting hospitality industry in India. The conclave further discussed the various aspects such as state incentives, tax rebates, government policies,

Film tourists are driven by desire to immerse themselves in same experiences they witnessed in their favourite movies

international tourism boards, and the role of line producers in facilitating and encouraging film shootings in India in various technical sessions. Here are some of the key insights from the sessions:

Sparking wanderlust

Films have long been revered not only for their entertainment value but also for their profound impact on promoting tourism. The phenomenon of film tourism has emerged as a potent tool for destination marketing, captivating audiences and inspiring them to explore the enchanting locales depicted on the silver screen.

Cinematic journey

Film tourists are driven by a desire to immerse themselves in the same experiences they witnessed in their favourite movies. Whether it is the scenic land-



scapes, iconic landmarks, or cultural nuances, films serve as a compelling invitation to embark on real-life adventures.

Rise of film tourism

Film tourism stands as one of the fastest-growing segments in the global tourism industry, fuelled by the entertainment industry's allure and the surge in international travel. It offers travellers new and immersive ways to engage with destinations, fostering a exchange of insights, knowledge, and experiences among tourists.

Travel enthusiasts are increasingly influenced by films, which serve as powerful motivators to visit new destinations

India's cinematic appeal

Travel enthusiasts are increasingly influenced by films, which serve as powerful motivators to visit new destinations. The portrayal of captivating locales in popular cinema, both domestically and internationally, has placed several Indian destina-

tions firmly on the global and domestic tourist maps.

Vision for future

As India sets its sights on becoming a US \$3 trillion tourism economy by 2047, recognising the transformative potential of film tourism is paramount. By showcasing diverse and culturally rich destinations on the silver screen, we not only allure tourists from around the globe but also catalyse economic development, foster cultural exchange, and promote sustainable tourism practices. Film tourism is not merely about embarking on a cinematic adventure; it serves as a pivotal gateway that opens doors to unlock the vast economic, cultural, and social potential embedded within India's rich treasures. Through deliberate and strategic partnerships forged between the entertainment industry and the tourism sector, film tourism remains steadfast in its mission to leverage India's inherent beauty and rich heritage as a means to captivate audiences worldwide. By doing so, it lays the foundation for a vibrant and promising future that transcends generations, ensuring that India's allure continues to resonate across borders and throughout the annals of time. □





FIX GST FOR HOTEL RESTAURANTS FHRAI TO FM

Federation advocates for uniform GST rates across all F&B services within or outside hotels, to ensure fair competition.



FHRAI has written to Union Finance Minister, **Nirmala Sitharaman** highlighting concerns regarding the current GST framework applicable to food and beverages (F&B) served in restaurants within hotels.

FHRAI stated, "In today's dining landscape, hotels often attract walk-in customers to their restaurants, but the prevailing system, where GST rates for restaurants

Sudden jump in GST from 5% to 18% when room rates exceed ₹7,500, places hotels at a disadvantage

within hotels are tied to room rates, creates unfairness, unpredictability and a substantial disadvantage. The sudden jump in GST from 5 per cent to 18 per cent when

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room rates exceed ₹7,500, creates uncertainty for guests and places hotels at a disadvantage. This discrepancy unfairly impacts restaurants operating in hotels compared to standalone counterparts offering similar high-end experiences and cuisine. It leads to an adverse impact on larger hotel chains, which face challenges in catering to walk-in customers due to the disparity in GST rates. This disparity affects banquets as well, leading to confusion and inconvenience for guests. Additionally, this imposes an excessive burden on restaurants and hotel chains, impeding their capacity to fulfill consumer demands.”

Federation further mentioned, “There is an urgent need for a competitive environment where hotels can compete on an equal footing with standalone restaurants. Uniformity in GST rates across all F&B services is crucial for fair competition and the sustainability of the hospitality industry. Therefore, standardisation of the GST rates for all F&B services, regardless of their operation within or outside hotels, is necessary. The linking of GST for F&B services within a hotel, along with the imposition of an 18 per cent GST on restaurants for rooms sold above ₹7,500, is highly unfair to these establishments and is causing significant hardships. In this

“There is urgent need for a competitive environment where hotels can compete on an equal footing with standalone restaurants

regard, the following suggestions can be considered. Treat all F&B revenue in a hotel & standalone restaurant as bundled services to be charged GST in the following manner: a) 5 per cent composite scheme for units that are not availing ITC; and b) 12 per cent GST for units that are availing ITC.” □



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Synergy for sustainable growth

FHRAI signs MoU with IAAPI to enhance collaboration & advance sustainable development within hospitality & amusement park sectors.

FHRAI and Indian Association of Amusement Parks and Industries (IAAPI) have signed a MoU to enhance collaboration and promote sustainable development in their respective industries. The agreement, signed by **Pradeep Shetty**, President, FHRAI and **Shrikant Goenka**, Chairman, IAAPI aims to facilitate meaningful interactions and business engagements among members, promoting collective growth and mutual benefits through cross-industry collaborations.

Shetty stated, “This MoU marks a significant milestone in fostering collaboration and synergy within the hospitality and amusement park industries. By working together, we can unlock new opportunities for growth and innovation, ultimately benefiting our members and the industry at large.”



MoU aims to facilitate meaningful interactions & business engagements between FHRAI & IAAPI promoting collective growth

Sharing similar sentiments, Goenka said, “We are excited to partner with FHRAI to explore avenues for collaboration and mutual support. This MoU reflects our shared commitment to driving sustainable development.” Key areas of cooperation

include sharing association publications, disseminating important news, information, and event details, exchanging faculty for conferences and webinars, arranging booths at major events, and offering concessional rates for members to participate in events.

Duty payment extension sought

Federation has requested a three-month extension for the payment of duty amount from **SK Sarangi**, Director General, Foreign Trade.

FHRAI has written to **Santosh Kumar Sarangi**, Director General, Foreign Trade, Government of India, requesting three months extension of time for payment of duty amount.

“Since 2017, FHRAI has been continuously requesting to DGFT for providing relief to the hospitality sector, which is in commensurate to the relief granted to export sector as per Para 5.19 (a) & (b) of the Handbook of Procedures, in view of the continuous decline of 5 per cent in the foreign revenue of hotel sector in the country, for the period from 2008 to 2020,” stated FHRAI in the letter. Federation added, “Following reliefs are requested: Relaxation in Average Export Obligation in case where total FOREX has shown a YoY decline of more than five per cent that has illustrated the declining trend of the hotel sector and



SK Sarangi
Director General
Foreign Trade, Gol

Since '17, FHRAI has been requesting relief for hospitality sector due to 5% decline in foreign revenue from 2008 to 2020

relaxation in Average Export Obligation be granted by adjusting/refixation of the preceding three years annual average performance for all years commencing from financial year 2008 onwards due to continuous decline in FOREX (YoY).”



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FHRAI SEEKS REVISION IN CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM

FHRAI writes to the Ministry of Tourism, suggesting changes in the classification scheme for hotels and other accommodation units across the country.



FHRAI has written to **Anubhav Saxena**, Under Secretary, Quality & Standards Division, Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, flagging concerns regarding current hotel classification system under NIDHI +.

Commenting on the drawbacks, **Jimmy P Shaw**, EC Member, FHRAI, stated, "The hotel classifications in the country will automatically increase if a slew of measures and incentives will be undertaken by the state and central governments. What ails the system is the disincentives attached to it. If that is removed, the numbers will automatically pick up."

The Federation said in the letter, "HRACC certifies hotels and classifies them in India to ensure quality in the hospitality industry. ISO certification was adopted in India in the early 1980s, when the Indian government recognised the importance of adhering to international quality standards. Merging HRACC with ISO would be a mockery, as ISO standards only define business quality manuals and monitor progress, leaving room for personal interpretation and disputes. Recertification becomes necessary in shorter periods, at costs that cannot be avoided. HRACC follows objective guidelines and standards, with points and scores being part of the assessment, culminating in a mathematical final score and rank based on which a hotel is classified."

NIDHI+ for hotel classification

The current hotel classification system under the NIDHI+ is deemed ineffective and non-proactive, with long delays due to paperwork submissions from hotels and review by Ministry of Tourism (MOT) or Department of Tourism (DOT). This process takes 45-60 days, and after completion, MOT/DOT raises queries against the initial approved papers, delaying the awarding of classification certificates by over 60-90 days.

Ever since the Nidhi Portal+ has been made operational, there has been a lot of confusion and inconsistency in receiving the information about the inspection visits, due to which the industry associa-

tions have very little time to appoint an expert member for the HRACC committee for classification. The last-minute information or sudden change of inspection plan makes it extremely difficult to arrange for a member to attend the classification visit. It gets even tougher to arrange a for representative to attend the inspection visit in remote areas of the country due to scheduling and travel constraints.



Nirav Gandhi
Senior Vice President
HRRAWI

App-based system of star-classification leads to non-conformity with the guidelines of HRACC & checklist-based objective system of classification

3rd Party assessment

The concept of 3rd party assessment may make the classification process rigid and mechanical. However, hotels benefit from visiting the HRACC classification committee, which draws members from government, academia, and various segments of the tourism industry. This exercise provides valuable insights and creates an interface between industry associations and the hotels being inspected. The current classification programme in India is time-tested and prestige-worthy for hotels that successfully clear it. 3rd party inspections, as outlined in the QCI document, appear to be subjective and may compromise the integrity and consistency of classifications. Additionally, the introduction of 3rd party audits in star classification may increase the cost and make it undesirable.

The inspection exercise lacks involvement from officials from the regulating ministry and industry stakeholders, indicating a lack of sanctity in the process. HRACC members are deeply connected to the industry and will not harm its interests. Hotel classification is crucial for maintaining tourism standards, and maintaining responsibilities within the DOT ensures accountability and credibility. The MOT's uniform classification process is acceptable nationwide. The MOT-led classification team mitigates inconsistencies and discrepancies, boosting tourists' and industry confidence. Involving the Ministry in the classification programme aligns with national tourism objectives and priorities.

Revision of star classification system

Star classification in Kerala needs to be in accordance with the hospitality quality standards. The criteria for mandating a star licence for bar licences should be removed to maintain the prestige of star licences. The State Excise Department should also develop a similar process for bar hotels. The lesser number of classifications in the country is largely due to state-imposed disincentives, such as higher property tax and water charges for classified hotels. Classification should not be a prerequisite for incentives or disincentives, and the Central Government and states should use it only as a guideline.

The Federation advocated against NABCB granting accreditation to



Classification should not be prerequisite for incentives or disincentives and Central Government & states should use it only as guideline

inspection bodies for accommodation unit inspections, following the Star Classification/Rating Scheme requirements in accordance with ISO/IEC 17020.

“The proposed programme would make a simple programme complex by involving non-subject experts, which contradicts the HRACC managed classification programme. The lack of industry participation in the inspection team would make the scheme formal and tedious, leading to inspector raj. A

review of the report by the MOT committee after the accredited body's inspection would be meaningless and increase business costs. The current scheme of the Ministry aims for hotels to self-regulate and comply with guidelines after classification, eliminating frequent inspections,” FHRAI observed.

FHRAI also contradicted the QCI's claim that the 3rd party assessment would result in an improvement in the Ease of Doing Business (EoDB) for the hotel industry. “The 3rd party classification will not bring any EoDB. On the contrary, they will add to the additional burden and escalate the cost of compliance for the hotels. There is no evidence to state that 3rd party assessment is a more effective system and therefore it needs to be reviewed. The assessment is bereft of effectiveness and efficiency,” the Federation noted. □

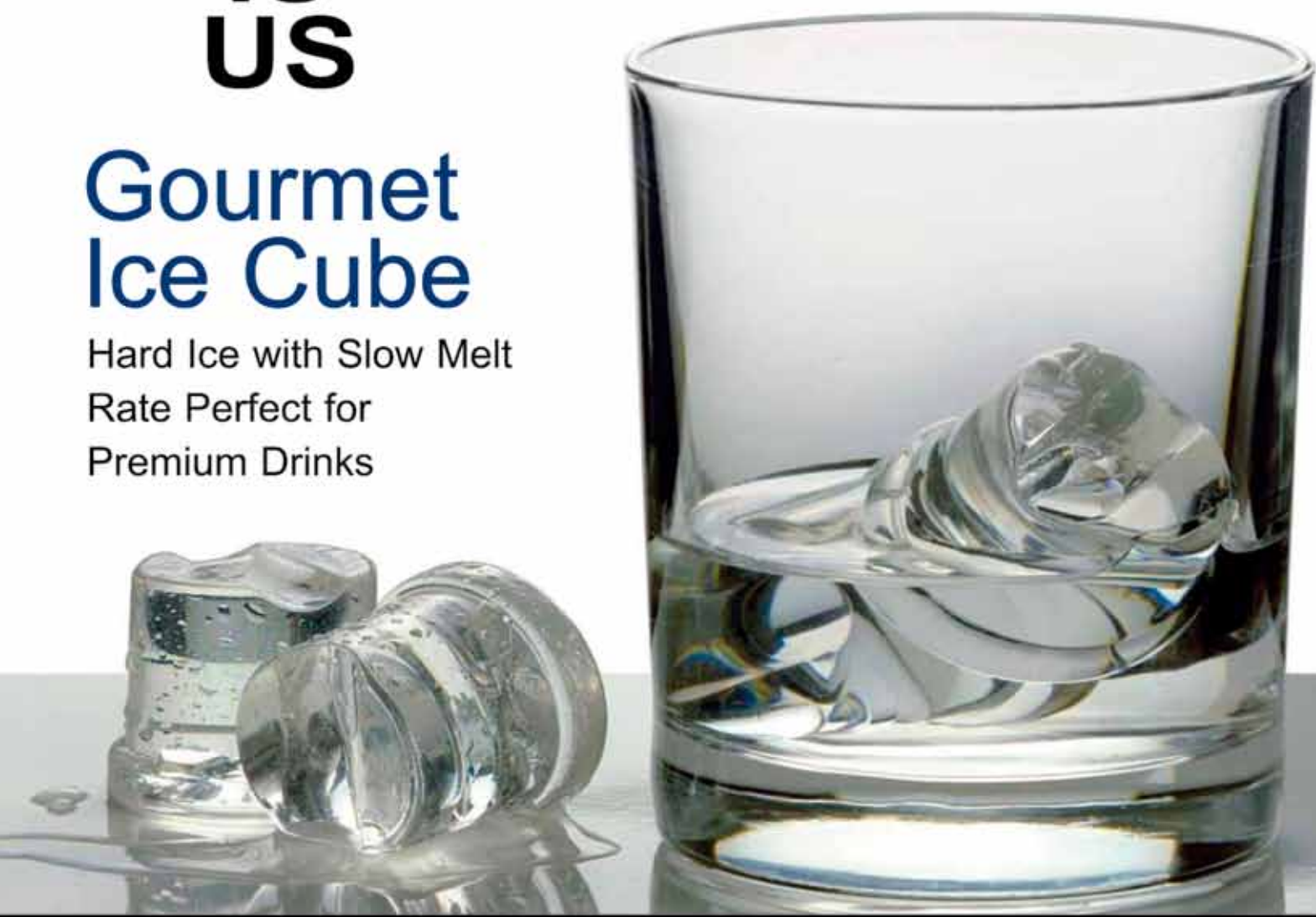


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Copyright overhaul Big ideas revealed

FHRAI welcomes concept of one-window music copyright licensing system but acknowledges it would not resolve all issues within the framework.

FHRAI has submitted recommendations for setting up of one window music copyright licensing regime to **Anup Jalota**, Chairman, The Committee Constituted for One Window Music Copyright Licensing Regime. Here are the recommendations:

One window is not the lasting solution to the multitude of problems in the copyright regime: Though setting up of one window copyright licensing is a welcome move, this cannot be a lasting solution to the multitude of issues that are plaguing the copyright regime presently. The hospitality sector is undergoing constant harassment by the collection agents appointed by Copyright owners under Section 30 of the Copyright Act and the so-called holders of the assignment deeds under Section 18 of the Act.

Notices issued to the directors or owners of hotels: Copyright agencies in the hospitality sector often use arm


Copyright agencies often use arm twisting tactics to intimidate hotel owners when infringements of Copyright Act are detected

twisting tactics to intimidate hotel owners when infringements of the Copyright Act are detected. They send threatening legal notices to hotel owners, who are not responsible for paying the music except for providing venue and food. FHRAI requests that the music industry should not prosecute hotel owners for copyright violations in hotel premises, but the original users of music.

Issue of interplay between Section 30 and Section 33 of the Copyright Act, 1957: Section 33 provides that no person 'shall commence or carry on businesses of granting licences except in accordance with

registration under Sub Section 3. Further, Section 33(3) proviso provides that Central Government shall not ordinarily register more than one Copyright Society to do the business in respect of same class of work. Section 30 of the Copyright Act relates to the owners right to grant individual licences to identified actual users. It is clear from reading Section 30 with 33 that the assignment by the owner does not entitle the assignee to carry on the business of licensing to public at large which is the exclusive domain of a copyright society subject to regulatory control.

Rationalisation of copyright tariffs:

In today's context, the tariffs charged by the copyright agencies are exorbitant and there is no harmony between the agencies regarding the fee they are collected for granting the licences. FHRAI urges the copyright societies to rationalise and reduce the tariffs for copyright licensing to bring maximum stakeholders under its fold. 

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HOSPITALITY TRAINING GETS BOOST

TNSDC approves SIHRA as training partner in Green Channel & seeks their assistance in training ex-service men in hospitality & tourism.

Tamil Nadu Skill Development Corporation (TNSDC) has been awarded hospitality training for Borstal School inmates to create career opportunities for them and develop them as entrepreneurs.

Skill development centres

TNSDC has approved the two training centres identified by SIHRA—one in Manapparai in Trichy district and the other one in Dindigul. Student mobilisation is happening in the two centres and dates for formal inauguration of the centres are expected to be announced soon.

SIHRA has been approved by TNSDC as a training partner in Green Channel. TNSDC has sought the help of SIHRA in training ex-service men in hospitality and tourism in Kanyakumari, the southernmost district of Tamil Nadu. Kanyakumari is the richest district in Tamil Nadu in terms of per capital income. It also tops the state in Human Development Index, literacy and education. Kanyakumari district has places of interest attracting tourists. Being a coastal



K Syama Raju
President
SIHRA

**Samayamoorthy,
Commissioner Tourism &
MD, TNTDC was very keen
to get inputs from
the industry**

region, Kanyakumari has serene beaches that are perfect to spend vacations. There are various temples, churches, waterfalls—all adds up to the stunning experiences

that make Kanyakumari a must-explore destination. Kanyakumari is the only spot in India from where you can watch the spectacle of the sunset and the moonrise happening simultaneously on Full Moon days. It is even grander during the day of 'Chithra Pournami' when the Sun and the Moon will appear facing each other in the same horizon.

Meeting with Commissioner Tourism

Sundar Singaram, Director, Operations, SIHRA met and greeted **Samayamoorthy**, who has very recently taken over charge as Commissioner Tourism and Managing Director, Tamil Nadu Tourism Development Corporation. The Commissioner was very keen to get inputs from the industry and looking forward to work with the stakeholders in promoting tourism in Tamil Nadu. Singaram engaged in extensive discussions regarding the tourism policy of the State. On behalf of SIHRA, he requested the Commissioner to convene a meeting with the stakeholders to solicit practical inputs. The Commissioner has agreed to promptly arrange a meeting with tourism stakeholders. □



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COLLABORATIVE WORKSHOP FOR INDUSTRY ADVANCEMENT

HRANI & MOT host workshop focussing on NIDHI+ portal classification, promoting innovation & empowerment in the hospitality sector.

In a pioneering initiative aimed at fostering innovation and empowerment, the Hotel and Restaurant Association of Northern India (HRANI), partnered with the Ministry of Tourism (MOT), to lead a workshop focussed on the classification and re-classification process on the NIDHI+ portal. The workshop was held on 9 March 2024 at Radisson Blu Plaza Delhi Airport.

The workshop witnessed attendance from industry experts and dignitaries, including Chief Guest **Rajendra Kumar Suman**, Regional Director, North, India Tourism, Ministry of Tourism, Government of India. **Meenakshi Sumbly**, HoD,



Garish Oberoi
President,
HRANI


Institute of Hotel Management Catering and Nutrition, Pusa, also graced the event along with **Garish Oberoi**, President, HRANI; **Vinod Gulati**, Vice-President, HRANI; **Amarvir Singh**, Treasurer, HRANI; **Renu Thapliyal**, Secretary General, HRANI; and **Pranay Aneja**, Managing Committee Member, HRANI, among others.

To mark International Women's Day, the event honoured women trailblazers in the hospitality and tourism sectors. The workshop highlighted a significant milestone in fostering collaboration, innovation and growth within the hospitality and tourism industry.

HRANI announces FoSTaC in Delhi, Noida

To enhance the availability of skilled manpower in the field of food safety, HRANI is organising FoSTaC in all nine states on rotation. The upcoming two sessions will be held at Radisson Blu Hotel, Greater Noida on 23 March 2024, and at Eros Hotel New Delhi Nehru Place on 26 March 2024.

FSSAI has mandated training of all central and state licenced FBOs under FSS scheme. As per the guideline, all licenced food businesses must have at least one trained and certified Food Safety Supervisor under FoSTaC for every 25 food handlers in each premise. HRANI being the lead training partner for organised sector in northern

region is committed to ensuring the highest standard of hospitality. The training programme will cover essential topics related to food safety practices, including proper food handling, storage, sanitation, and hygiene protocols. To access more information and register for the training sessions, log on to https://hrani.net.in/hrani_food_safety.aspx 

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RESTAURANTS CAN'T CONTROL GUEST BEHAVIOUR

HRAWI opposes restrictive order issued by Pune Police Commissioner, fearing its adverse effects on businesses in hotel & restaurant sector.

HRAWI has highlighted concerns regarding a recent order under section 144 issued by the Pune Police Commissioner, which the association believes could have far-reaching and detrimental effects on the hospitality industry in the city. The association has appealed to the **Eknath Shinde**, Chief Minister, Maharashtra; **Devendra Fadnavis**, Deputy Chief Minister, Maharashtra; **Nitin Kareer**, Chief Secretary, Maharashtra; **Girish Mahajan**, Tourism Minister, Maharashtra; and **Jayashree Bhog**, Principal Secretary, Tourism, for a reassessment of the order maintaining that it stifles business growth and hinder the vibrancy of the tourism and hospitality sector in Pune.

“The order issued fails to demonstrate the existence of an emergency warranting such drastic measures under Section 144 of the CrPC. The broad scope of the order unfairly targets establishments that have FLIII licences, without distinguishing between different types of establishments or considering their



Chetan Mehta
Vice President
HRAWI

“These directives go beyond intended purpose of maintaining tranquility. It overlaps upon areas governed by other legal bodies

individual contributions to law and order. We have requested the CM and Deputy CM to intervene urgently in the

interest of preserving the vitality of the hospitality industry and ‘Ease of Doing Business’ in Pune,” said **Pradeep Shetty**, President, HRAWI.

Echoing the similar sentiments, **Chetan Mehta**, Vice President, HRAWI, said, “The order mandates establishments to manage guest behaviour, including prohibiting dancing in specific areas which is illogical. It also expects that patrons who are served liquor do not drive and while restaurants uphold the social responsibility by preventing excessive alcohol consumption and drunk driving, imposing this as a legal requirement is impractical. It shifts the responsibility of law enforcement to establishments by imposing even traffic regulation conditions which are beyond jurisdiction and capacity of the hotel industry. These directives go beyond the intended purpose of maintaining peace and tranquility in the hospitality sector. It encroaches upon areas governed by other statutory bodies, leading to confusion and overlapping regulations.” □



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SHOWCASE OF DIVERSE TALENTS

FHRAI-IHM celebrated its Annual Day with 'Summer Carnival' theme, showcasing students' talents & achievements while fostering sense of community & excellence.



As FHRAI-IHM completes its three academic years under NCHMCT, the institute decided to fill the atmosphere with the warmth of the sun and vibrant hues of summer dancing in the air while celebrating the joyous spirit of the season. This year, FHRAI-IHM's Annual Day celebration was themed as 'Summer Carnival', promising a whirlwind of excitement, laughter, and memories that will linger long.

The air was filled with excitement and anticipation as students, parents, guardians, faculty members, staff members and many industry professionals gathered to celebrate the Annual Day at the institute campus. The heart of the Annual Day celebration was the effort put forth by FHRAI-IHM's students. From deli-

cacies to mocktails, from dance routines to musical performances, each domain showcased the diverse talents and creativity of students. Students were at the forefront of all activities, be it to setting up the colourful venue, receiving of guests and managing live bar and food counters, among others. All their efforts were appreciated by the guests.

As part of the Annual Day festivities, the institute also took the opportunity

The institute also took the opportunity to recognise and honour the academic achievements and contributions of the students

to recognise and honour the academic achievements and contributions of the students. Awards were presented to those who excelled in academics, sports, cultural activities, and community service, underscoring FHRAI-IHM's commitment to holistic development and excellence in all endeavours.

From vibrant live food stalls offering delicacies to interactive displaying the cultural extravaganza was a feast for the senses. As the institute looks ahead to the future, it carries the memories and experiences of this celebration. □



FUELLING COMMUNITY SPIRIT

FHRAI-IHM's annual fest week, LAHAR concluded on strong note with races, cricket, football matches, fostering community empowerment.



In a world filled with hustle and bustle, few things can bring people together quite like the magic of a festival. Each year, the hospitality industry eagerly awaits FHRAI-IHM's annual fest week: LAHAR—a time when creativity flourishes, laughter fills the air, and bonds are strengthened.

FHRAI-IHM kicked off the week with its annual sports tournaments, featuring adrenaline-pumping races, nail-biting cricket and football matches, and more. These sporting events offer something for everyone to enjoy. Beyond the thrill of competition, the event serves as a platform for community engagement and empowerment.

Among the myriad of events gracing this celebration, the Chef and Mocktail Competition stood out as a feast for the senses. With tantalizing aromas and innovative flavors, this culinary extravaganza delighted taste buds and showcased the culinary prowess of talented participants. The competition kicked off with a sizzle as chefs from across the region unveiled their signature dishes, each one a masterpiece of flavour, presentation, and technique. Meanwhile, in the mocktail arena, mixologists worked their magic, concocting vibrant and refreshing mocktails that tan-

talize the taste buds and quench thirsts. Both arenas required culinary experts to identify the deserving talent, thus the final competition was judged by eminent hospitality enthusiast **Dr. Chef Parvinder S Bali**.

Among myriad of events gracing the LAHAR, the Chef & Mocktail Competition stood out as a feast for the senses

The Annual Fest Week is a time of celebration, excitement, and creativity, with cultural competitions such as dance, poster making, face painting, Rangoli, and a Quiz competition at its heart. This event brought together talented students from all batches, divided into different houses, to showcase their skills,

passion, and dedication to various arts. The culmination of the fest occurred on the institute's Annual Day, on 1 March 2024, where the day was celebrated to its fullest extent and the activities were summarised by presenting awards to the winners.

The Annual fest was a big success, as it not only brought out the talent of students but also provided a platform to showcase it in front of industry professionals and their guardians. The FHRAI-IHM team and students will eagerly await the next fest and work hard to elevate it even further. ▣



Mumbai leads hotel sector's resilience

Indian hotels saw mixed occupancy trends in Jan '24, with Mumbai, Kolkata leading, while Hyderabad, Kochi saw spikes in ARR, observes HVS Anarock.

According to HVS Anarock analysis, in January 2024, the Indian hotel sector navigated through a mixed bag of occupancy trends, reflective of the ongoing impacts of the COVID juxtaposed with signs of recovery and resilience. While occupancy levels remained below pre-COVID benchmarks, there was a surge in ARR, hinting at a gradual rebound.

Among the metropolitan hubs, Mumbai emerged as a standout performer, defying the odds by breaching the 80 per cent occupancy mark. Kolkata and Ahmedabad also exhibited resilience, sur-

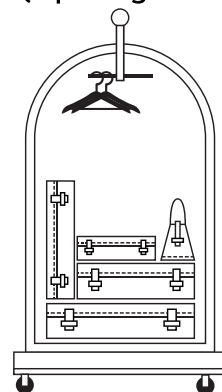
passing the 75 per cent occupancy threshold, showcasing a gradual return of consumer confidence in these markets and potential for sustained growth in foreseeable future.

However, it was in the southern regions where the most significant spikes were observed. Hyderabad and Kochi experienced a year-on-year surge of over 30 per cent in ARR. ■

Kolkata, Ahmedabad surpassed 75% occupancy threshold, showcasing gradual return of consumer confidence

Branded Hotels

(Openings & Signings YTD Jan 2024)



Openings

351

7

Signings

1,970

20



By Keys



By Properties

Source: HVS Research; Data collated by HVS from 10 hotel operators and media reports as of 26th February 2024

Hotel Sector

Key Stats (India Average)

	JAN 2024		JAN 2019		JAN 2023		DEC 2023
ADR	₹ 8,300-₹ 8,500						
Occupancy	66-68%	Change over (Pre-COVID)	↑ 28-30%	Change over (Post COVID-19)	↑ 10-12%		↓ 2-4%
RevPAR	₹ 5,478-₹ 5,780		↓ 3-5%		↑ 1-3 pp		↓ 2-4 pp
			↑ 21-23%		↑ 14-16%		↓ 7-9%

Source: HVS Research

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INFRA STATUS: Catalyst for hospitality's growth



Demand for infrastructure status within the hospitality sector signifies a pivotal moment, indicating potential for transformative change.

Reduced capital cost to drive market expansion: HRANI



Garish Oberoi
President
HRANI

The demand for infrastructure status within the hospitality sector marks a significant turning point, promising transformative change and

unprecedented growth and it has been one of HRANI's longstanding demands.

The status will enable hotel projects to have easy access to cheaper debt that is at par with projects in other industries. A reduced capital cost will have a bearing on both timely completion of projects and their overall financial health.

However, the importance of infrastructure status transcends its economic implications. It serves as a resounding vote of confidence in the industry's vital role in driving tourism and fostering economic prosperity. By conferring this status, policymakers demonstrate their commitment to bolstering the sector's growth trajectory and nurturing its potential as a cornerstone of economic development.

There is a pressing need to prioritise the granting of infrastructure status to the hospitality industry. This decision holds the key to unleashing a wave of innovation and investment, ushering in a new era of progress and opportunity. By

facilitating access to affordable financing, infrastructure status empowers businesses to undertake ambitious projects, driving expansion and competitiveness in the market.

“By facilitating access to affordable financing, infrastructure status empowers businesses to undertake ambitious projects, driving expansion & competitiveness

In summary, infrastructure status is not merely a bureaucratic formality; it will serve as a catalyst for meaningful change and growth within the hospitality sector. With this designation, the industry is poised to navigate a path characterised by resilience, excellence, and sustained prosperity. As stakeholders, we implore policymakers to seize this opportunity and pave the way for a brighter future for the hospitality industry.

Grant lower interest rates for hotel projects: SIHRA



K Syama Raju
President
SIHRA

The hospitality industry stands as a cornerstone of India's economic advancement. SIHRA earnestly urges the government to consider these reforms, acknowledging the indispensable role of tourism and hospitality in shaping India's economic landscape. Granting infrastructure status to the hospitality industry

in India can have numerous significant impacts. This status allows access to long-term funding at lower interest rates, facilitating the development of new hotels, resorts, and other tourism-related infrastructure projects, and improving existing facilities. Additionally, it can attract more investment from both domestic and international sources, attracted by the sector's stability and potential returns.

Improving hospitality infrastructure holds the promise of enriching the overall tourism experience in India. Upgraded facilities, improved services, and expanded capacities can attract more tourists, resulting in increased spending and greater economic benefits for local communities. Additionally, the growth and development of the hospitality industry create job opportunities across different skill levels, lowering unemployment rates and promoting economic growth.

Infrastructure development in the hospitality sector also serves as a catalyst for growth in regions with untapped tourism potential, bolstering local economies and infrastructure networks. Additionally, infrastructure status often entails regulatory oversight and compliance require-

ments, leading to improvements in quality standards within the hospitality industry, thereby ensuring enhanced guest experiences and satisfaction.

Embracing a universal approach, the industry body for hotels has proposed conferring infrastructure status universally to hotels with a project cost of ₹10 crores and above, regardless of city population. This inclusive approach eliminates geographical biases, fostering equitable growth and accessibility within the hotel industry. Such measures align with the ethos of inclusive development, promising a nationwide surge in the hospitality sector.

Improving hospitality infrastructure holds the promise of enriching the overall tourism experience in India

In conclusion, granting infrastructure status to the hospitality industry in India holds the promise of serving as a potent catalyst for growth, investment, and development. This, in turn, contributes to the nation's economic progress and enhances its global competitiveness.



Need to enhance investment attraction: HRAEI



Sudesh Poddar
President
HRAEI

The hospitality sector has long been requesting infrastructure status from the Government of India. This will allow the hospitality sector to avail long-term funds under the RBI infrastructure lending norm criteria to offer quality accommodation supply and in turn, stimulate higher global and domestic travel demand. While tourism and hospitality

sectors have been granted industry status by many state governments, they have not received the associated incentives and privileges. The industry urges the Centre to grant hospitality industry status nationwide and establish a fund to incentivise states to align their policies and offset any potential losses from its implementation.

Infrastructure status offers various incentives and relaxations to sectors, such as cheaper loans, tax concessions, and increased capital flow. It also enhances investment attraction. Additionally, investors can avail a deduction of up to 40 per cent on income derived from financial investments in equity shares. It also enables companies to access viability-gap funding and external borrowing. Currently, hospitality projects are classified as “infrastructure” projects only in cities with a population of up to 1 million.

According to industry analysts, the hospitality sector currently pays interest of around 11 per cent, which would be way lower if the infrastructure status is accorded to the sector. The draft National Tourism Policy released by the Ministry of Tourism in November 2022 stressed the need for infrastructure status for hotels.

Recognizing that accommodation is vital for tourism development, the draft policy emphasises the necessity to expand lodging facilities to support growth in both inbound and domestic tourism traffic across the country.

The majority of hospitality infrastructure, including hotels, resorts, and convention centres, is developed by the private sector in the country. Public investment in hospitality infrastructure is minimal. Moreover, investment in these projects typically requires a significant amount of time to recoup.

“Infrastructure status offers various incentives to hospitality sector such as cheaper loans, tax concessions & increased capital flow”

Government’s tourism-related initiatives such as ‘Dekho Apna Desh’ and ‘PRASHAD’ would be successful only if the hospitality sector grows. Granting infrastructure status to the sector would align with the government’s emphasis on capital expenditure and infrastructure development.



Hotels seek lower cost, long-term funding: HRAWI



Pradeep Shetty
President
HRAWI

The HRAWI strongly advocates for the urgent need to grant infrastructure status to the hospitality sector by the Government of India. This long-standing request holds immense potential to revolutionise the industry and promote its sustainable growth. Granting infra-

structure status to the hospitality sector would not only facilitate access to long-term funds under the RBI infrastructure lending norm criteria but also significantly enhance the quality of accommodation supply. This, in turn, would stimulate higher global and domestic travel demand, thus positioning the sector as a key driver of economic development.

Lowering the threshold for infrastructure status from ₹200 crore to ₹10 crore and above per hotel project is imperative to provide a much-needed boost to the budget segment of the hotel industry. By enabling hotels to avail term loans at lower interest rates and offering longer repayment periods, this adjustment would catalyse investment and innovation across all segments of the hospitality sector.

Furthermore, the declaration of tourism and hospitality as an industry by the Union Government, along with its inclusion in the Concurrent List, is crucial for better coordination between the Centre and the states. This alignment would streamline policies, enhance fund allocation and facilitate the effective implementation of projects aimed at

the holistic development of the tourism sector nationwide.

To achieve ambitious goal of welcoming 100 million international tourists by 2047, the hospitality sector requires more than just infrastructure status. It necessitates comprehensive stimulus packages and incentives from the government, including a favourable GST regime and measures to improve the ease of doing business (EoDB) in hospitality.

Lowering infrastructure status threshold from ₹200 crore to ₹10 crore per hotel project is crucial for boosting budget segment of hotel industry

Granting infrastructure status to the hospitality sector is not just a matter of policy; it is a strategic imperative for unlocking the industry's full potential and driving India's tourism agenda forward. It is time for the government to recognise the pivotal role of hospitality in our economy and take decisive action to support its growth and development. □



PARADISE REGAINED

The opening of Radisson Collection Hotel & Spa, Riverfront Srinagar ushers in a new era of hospitality in the state of Jammu & Kashmir.



Lipla Negi

Touted as a big turning point in the tourism trajectory of Jammu & Kashmir (J&K), the opening of Radisson Collection Hotel & Spa Riverfront, Srinagar marks a first at multiple fronts. It is the first Radisson Collection hotel in India and first hotel in J&K with largest room inventory of 212 keys and the largest banquet facilities in the UT. To introduce its premium, high-end luxury brand to India and Srinagar, Radisson Hotels partnered with the Mushtaq Group of Hotels. The Mushtaq Group owns more than 14 hotels across India, including 8 in the Kashmir Valley, 2 in Jammu, and 3 in Delhi.

The debut of Radisson Collection also brings in cheer for the sector which until now has been struggling with low inventory with limited choice of luxury hotels in the state. Adding an inventory of staggering 212 rooms, the luxury hotel will prove to be a gamechanger for J&K's hotel industry. Not only this will boost domestic tourism, but also work as a big attraction for global travellers and MICE business. In addition, the destination wedding business in



Mushtaq Ahmed Chaya
CMD and Founder
Mushtaq Group of Hotels

Radisson Collection Hotel & Spa, Riverfront Srinagar showcases level of luxury that defines destination & hotel in all its glory

the state will also get a big shot in the arm with opening.

The visionary hotelier

Putting the destination right in the spotlight, **Mushtaq Ahmed Chaya**, CMD and



Founder, Mushtaq Group of Hotels/ Grand Mumtaz Group is credited with bringing in the luxury brand Radisson Collection to Srinagar. Most renowned for his determination to uplift the local communities and bring forth economic ease for all sections of business, he is the most successful businessman cum hotelier of J&K, the Chairman of the J&K Hoteliers Club and past President of PHDCCI. Affectionately called as Chaya Sahab among the fraternity, his robust entrepreneurship wisdom and progressive marketing plans have played a pivotal role in promoting J&K tourism industry, which further generated livelihood for thousands of young boys and girls from entire J&K.

Talking about the luxury property, Chaya, says, “As the tagline states, ‘welcome to the exceptional’, the luxury experience welcomes the guests not just to an exceptional destination but also to an exceptional level of service, customised experiences and varied F&B options. These differentiating elements allow us to not just stand apart from the competition but also showcase a level of luxury that truly defines the destination and the hotel in all its glory.” The brand has developed a comprehensive go-live plan encompassing both digital and offline strat-

J&K region offers a diverse range of experiences, catering to a wide spectrum of interests

egies to promote their luxury offering. “We aim to foster first hand engagement across various key segments including individual travellers, MICE participants, wedding planners, and corporate audiences,” he further added.

Luxury hospitality redefined

Deliberating over the new era of tourism in the UT, he further says, “J&K region offers a diverse range of experiences, catering to a wide spectrum of interests. From the serene Dal Lake and the majestic Himalayan ranges to the vibrant local markets and iconic landmarks, there is something for every traveller to explore. Further, due to enhanced connectivity, linking key feeder markets across the country, and improved safety and security

measures, J&K has seen a notable surge in both domestic and international travellers.”

The upcoming infrastructural development point towards a surge in the tourism business. He agrees, “With notable improvements in connectivity throughout the UT, J&K has become increasingly accessible, which is a crucial factor for both MICE and weddings. Earlier, limited inventory in the organised hotel sector posed constraints on the size of groups that could be accommodated. However, with the recent addition of 200 plus room Radisson Collection Hotel & Spa, Riverfront Srinagar, we hope to become a prominent choice for the high-yielding segments of MICE and weddings.”





POTENTIAL IS LIMITLESS

AAHAR 2024 exposition witnessed an impressive showcase of innovative products from leading hospitality players. Let's delve into their offerings.



Mohit Sharma
CEO
Romio Technologies

Self-ordering and digital kiosks, inbuilt thermal printers in different screen sizes, wall hang displays that can be used on the walls of hotels, restaurants and banquet halls were our new offerings for AAHAR this year. The models that we have designed are based on the feedback that we got from the customer. We saw a 20-25 per cent YoY growth in demand. We are overwhelmed by the market response and look forward to working with new brands.

We are overwhelmed by the market response and look forward to working with new brands



PA Prabhu

Co-Founder & Director
Chef Mate (Revac Systems)

At AAHAR 2024, we have launched a front cooking station, which is ideal for places of breakfast counters for 5-star hotels and airports. We also came up with UV hoods for the first time in India. Safety is one thing that our clients are looking at in every product and we are fulfilling it apart from providing efficiency and cost reduction.

At AAHAR 2024, we have launched front cooking station, which is ideal for places of breakfast counters for 5-star hotels



Rajendra Mittal

Founder & Director
Mittal International

With the start of this year, apart from the hospitality sector, we have seen tremendous growth in demand for our products from the cafes and food chain companies such as KFC and Pizza Hut. In AAHAR 2024, we exhibited a wide range of imported products, including a frying coffee machine and an economical line of ovens. In addition to this, we are also all set to launch our coffee machine range called Java very soon.

In AAHAR 2024, we exhibited wide range of imported products, including a frying coffee machine & economical line of ovens



Ajay Khanna

Partner & CEO
Eagle Forgings

AAHAR is a great venue for brands like us to showcase our products to customers. We supply bedroom and bathroom equipment and other accessories to most of the premium hotels across India, Nepal and Bhutan. For the last two years, we have been concentrating a lot on going green. Taking a cue from PM Narendra Modi's 'Make in India' policy, a lot of our products are now either assembled, made, or backwards integrated in India and we are slowly going to start having more and more products which will be made in India.

For the last two years, we have been concentrating a lot on going green



Manisha Chatterjee

Managing Director
Winterhalter

Catering to kitchen equipment and the hotel industry, we are experts in ware washers and provide professional solutions to the washing requirements of our clients. We deal in dishwashers and provide a complete system of water treatment, washing chemicals and accessories.

Catering to kitchen equipment and the hotel industry, we are experts in ware washers and provide professional solutions



Razi Haider

Country Manager, India, Sri Lanka & Nepal, Hobart

This year in AAHAR, we have launched a pressurised pan, a Combi oven, and a large hood-type machine. We are also providing advanced machines to our customers which can reduce the operating cost, are easy to operate and reduce manpower. As India is growing, we have experienced increased demand and excellent response from the hospital-ity sector.

This year in AAHAR, we have launched pressurised pan, Combi oven, and a large hood-type machine



Puneet Kumar

Founder & CEO, Sterling Solution

We are an importer of commercial kitchen equipment. We provide spare parts and servicing to the customers. This year in AAHAR, we came up with equipped sole inductions, juice dispensers and rice steamers, among others. Post-COVID, we have witnessed great demands in our products from the industry in recent months. Hotels have also started increasing their budgets and started investing in kitchen equipment.

Hotels have started increasing their budgets and investing in kitchen equipment



Leena Mittal

Director, So Sweet

We are catering to hospitality clients who are looking for good-quality stevia products. We have brought down the prices of our products to reach out to more customers and introduced two Vitamin C fortified drinks, lemon and orange. Apart from that, we have also launched monk fruit sweetener, which is 100 per cent natural and zero-calorie sweetener. In the past few years, we have experienced an increase in demand and awareness from the industry.

In the past few years, we have experienced an increase in demand and awareness from the industry



Vasant Rajasingh

CEO, The Bell Match Company

We are a match production company, and this was our second time in AAHAR, hence we showcased more packaging this year. We have expanded our production facility this year and added more printing lines, and equipment to our kitty while some of our offerings will be launched in the next three months.

We have expanded our production facility this year & added more printing lines, and equipment to our kitty



Gaurav Kumar
Director, Aerocide

Since past 10 years, we have been participating in AAHAR and this was our ninth edition. We have launched some new towers and some new scent systems for the hospitality industry, which are economical, affordable and robust in terms of efficiency. We have also introduced new inspirational fragrances and body fragrances. From the time, we started the business till now, the demand has exponentially increased.

We have launched some new towers & some new scent systems for hospitality industry, which are economical, affordable



Oommen Matthew
Founder, Cornell India

In AAHAR 2024, we came up with a front-of-house equipment serving facility, hot and cold cabinets to maintain the temperature of the food, salad bars, ceramic tops, plate dispensers and tray sliders, among others. People appreciated our concept of not importing products from outside and instead manufacturing them in India. We experienced high demand from the market as last year, we sold around 130 units and this year we have sold around 700 units.

People appreciated our concept of not importing products from outside and instead manufacturing them in India



Kuljeet Singh
Director, Cleancare

Our brand has been reckoned as the pioneering manufacturer, trader, and wholesaler of best-quality products. We procure best-suited inventory of raw materials and utilise cutting-edge manufacturing technology to develop remarkable quality products that are globally demanded for its practical costs, durable performance, elegant design, appealing looks, and industry-proven fabrication. Also, our line of products is carefully developed and rigorously inspected by using the latest techniques to assure our patrons of its worth.

We procure best-suited inventory of raw materials & utilise cutting-edge manufacturing technology to develop quality products



Sunil Dutta
Country Head, Sales, Hotels & Institutions, India & SAARC Nation, King Koil

At AAHAR this year, King Koil unveiled an exciting array of new products designed to elevate the sleep experience for hospitality businesses. Our Luxe Collection features premium materials and unparalleled comfort for a truly luxurious sleep experience. We have also introduced the eco-friendly line, crafted with sustainable materials and designed to promote environmental responsibility without compromising on comfort or quality. Response at AAHAR was overwhelmingly positive, with attendees expressing great enthusiasm for our new product offerings.

Among our innovative offerings are Luxe Collection, featuring premium materials & unparalleled comfort for truly luxurious sleep experience



GRT PLANS NATIONAL & OVERSEAS EXPANSION

New era of Hospitality 2.0 heralds a transformative shift characterised by the coexistence of traditional and soft brands, outlines **Vikram Cotah**.



Nisha Verma

From its humble beginnings in Chennai back in 1998, GRT Hotels & Resorts has emerged as a trail-blazer, revolutionising the hotel industry with its distinctive approach under the leadership of CEO **Vikram Cotah**.

“GRT is proud to be part of India’s growth story, starting with its hotel in Chennai in 1998. The hotel was the first to have a 100 ft. atrium and indoor pool, offering 5-star facilities at 3-star prices.



Vikram Cotah
CEO
GRT Hotels & Resorts

In 2024, GRT will open three hotels in Tier II & III cities – Madurai, Vijaywada & Kakinada

The company then acquired the Radisson hotel in Chennai, the second in the country, and co-branded as GRT Hotels & Resorts. The hotel was renovated and relaunched post-COVID, receiving positive reviews. GRT also bought the Temple Bay Hotel from ITDC and rebranded

it as a Radisson. The company's growth story began with these acquisitions," stated Cotah.

Growth policy

With more than 20 hotels in their kitty, GRT owns 80 per cent of their hotels. Cotah elaborated, "We are not just hoteliers; we are also asset owners starting to manage hotels for others, anticipating growth in the asset light model. Currently, we focus on the Southern region but aim to become a national brand. We have acquired our first property in the Maldives and are considering Sri Lanka. We want to be a part of India's growth story in the next decade."

Informing that the company focus is to expand fast in 2024-26, he said, "India's growth is a result of significant demand drivers, despite the global economy slowing down. The country's position as a global destination is a result of years of hard work. The government is promoting tourism, with smart city programmes and Tier II cities such as Ayodhya attracting significant interest. This growth is a result of the country's efforts to attract tourists and attract investment."

"In 2024, GRT will open three hotels in Tier II & III cities, with the first in Madurai with 125 rooms, the second in Vijayawada with 100 rooms, and the third in Kakinada, Andhra Pradesh," informed Cotah.

Augmenting hotel rates

One of the major post-COVID trends is the skyrocketing hotel rates across India, and concerns about their stabilisation continue to loom. In response to this trend, Cotah shared, "Hotels should

Hotels should realise importance of staying afloat amidst the current high demand in India, despite the low supply

realise the importance of staying afloat amidst the current high demand in India, despite the low supply. The hotel industry experiences a cycle every five years, with peaks and declines. The current high demand has led to increased prices for existing hotels. Some guests are opting for cheaper destinations such as Thailand,

Vietnam, and Bali, as well as Sri Lanka, which offers visa-free entry for Indians. While hotels should not necessarily reduce rates, it is crucial to remain sensitive to pricing and avoid becoming an expensive destination."

Challenging global brands

Cotah acknowledged that the entry of international brands poses an evident threat, given their perception of significant demand in India. "Marriott's CEO visited India for the first time at a hotel investment conference and introduced their lifestyle brand, Moxy, to the country, highlighting the potential of the nine metros and Tier II & III cities," explained Cotah.

Cotah observes the emergence of a new era in hospitality as Hospitality 2.0. "It heralds a transformative shift characterised by the coexistence of traditional and soft brands. These developments are allowing owners to have their own identity while still integrating into the existing systems. International brands have advantage of having a distribution system that can be integrated into hotels, but this only benefits hotels catering to international guests." □





Personalised experiences KEY TO GUEST LOYALTY

Hotels are adopting more personalised approach to guest interactions to meet expectations of modern travellers seeking unique experiences.



Charmaine Fernz

The Indian hospitality industry is currently experiencing a period of growth after a prolonged lull. Industry is witnessing a change with the emergence of positivity on the horizon. While many hotels continue to rely on traditional marketing activities, such as road shows, food festivals, and industry meet and greets, it is crucial to adopt a more personalised approach to guest interactions. In the current scenario, travellers are seeking unique and diverse experiences, and hotels are improvising on every level to meet their expectations. Various strategies that hotels are employing to retain and foster guest loyalty:



Amit Raman
General Manager, Radisson Blu Pune Hinjawadi

Doing things differently

The list can be quite varied, ranging from social media to sustainability. Hotels are

now going the extra mile to understand guests' needs. **Dhiman Mazumdar**, COO, The World Hotels and Resorts (WGH and Lyfe Hotels) shares his view saying that

“Through targeted email campaigns and loyalty programmes, we tailor offerings to individual preferences

apart from traditional marketing channels, Lyfe Hotels strategically integrates strong social media engagement and online marketing to cultivate authentic connections with the guests. “Our commitment to sustainability serves as a cornerstone of our



branding, resonating with modern travellers who prioritise eco-conscious choices. By highlighting our green initiatives, sustainability practices and promoting responsible tourism, we differentiate ourselves in the market while attracting guests seeking meaningful experiences aligned with their values,” stated Mazumdar.

Elaborating further, **Amit Raman**, General Manager, Radisson Blu Pune Hinjawadi highlights that personalised experiences are key. “Through targeted email campaigns and loyalty programmes, we tailor offerings to individual preferences, enhancing guest satisfaction and loyalty. Additionally, we emphasise on community engagement by hosting local events and partnering with nearby businesses to offer exclusive experiences to our guests,” Raman averred.

Vikram Bajpe, Director, Sales, Courtyard by Marriott Pune Chakan, shared, “Unique experiences are offered to guests such as nearby agro-tourism, regional-themed Friday brunches and live counters highlighting local delicacies, among others. We focus on eco-friendly initiatives, displaying sustainable practices such as water conservation, renewable energy use, and organic herb farming in our marketing efforts to attract environmentally conscious travellers.”

Srivatsa Allampalli, General Manager, Hyatt Place Jaipur touches upon an



Vikram Bajpe
Director, Sales, Courtyard
by Marriott Pune Chakan

Unique experiences are offered to guests such as nearby agro-tourism, regional-themed Friday brunches & live counters

important factor in the positioning of a property which is essential. He added, “We have marketed our hotel as a leisure-friendly property, the change creates a new type of traveller who is neither a business traveller nor a carefree vacationer but a combination. Leisure travel, combining business and leisure, is on track to take over traditional business travel.”

Seat-to-room connection

The success of any destination hinges on the meticulous placement of each puzzle piece. Within tourism, hotels play a crucial role, but without proper connectivity, tourism numbers falter. Bajpe notes that seamless air connectivity is key to increasing the number of guests. Improved air connectivity leads to an increase in guest arrivals and occupancy levels. Digital advertising and targeted promotions based on departure cities are used to strategically market to potential travellers in connected areas.



Mazumdar describes that Lyfe Hotels has observed a distinct correlation between improved air connectivity and an influx of guests, leveraging Bhubaneswar's status as a smart city and providing enhanced accessibility through international flights. As the city's IT sector and industries expand, the hotel is better able to meet the increasing demand for hospitality services, and guests have superior accommodation options. They position themselves strategically to capitalise on these trends and align their offerings with the evolving needs of discerning travellers seeking both business and leisure experiences.

Allampalli notes that the property's strategic location near the airport and key industrial areas increases occupancy levels with air connectivity. He is thrilled to learn about the development of a new terminal at Jaipur International Airport and new international airlines looking to establish a base in the city, all of which will result in an increased influx of guests.

Raman highlights that airline collaborations are crucial. They closely monitor flight schedules and work with airlines to provide special packages for travellers. They have noticed a direct correlation between improved air connectivity and an influx of guests, especially from key feeder markets. By providing seamless transportation options and attractive stay packages, they take advantage of increased accessibility to Pune.

Enhancing guest experiences

Without sounding too repetitive, the right package is essential without working in silos. In addition to enhanced air connectivity, offering guests unique experiences too matters. Bajpe explains that other than working on special packages



Srivatsa Allampalli
General Manager
Hyatt Place Jaipur

Leisure travel, combining business and leisure, is on track to take over traditional business travel

for long weekends and offers for family getaways, the property offers small excursions from the hotel to nearby places of interest. The list includes various attractions such as a petting zoo, an equestrian park, an ancient temple, and agro tourism. "For special groups, we have also tailored activities such as drum circles, stone

balancing sessions, factory visits, pottery, or Indian cooking, enhancing the overall guest experience," he added.

Allampalli shares that the property undertakes many on-site initiatives to improve guest experience, including scheduling city tours to explore Jaipur's rich heritage and introducing recreational activities through the newly developed recreational desk. However, Mazumdar puts the spotlight on on-ground initiatives aimed at creating lasting impressions. "As a B-leisure hotel, we offer a wide range of facilities from state-of-the-art fitness centres and rejuvenating spa treatments to personalised culinary experiences crafted to cater to individual preferences. We focus on customisation ensuring that each guest receives tailored attention, fostering a sense of belongingness and loyalty," he emphasised.

Raman too focuses on experience sharing that the hotel prioritises experiential offerings, such as culinary workshops, cultural events, and wellness retreats, to create memorable stays for the guests. "Additionally, we invest in sustainable practices and actively engage in eco-



friendly initiatives, which resonate with environmentally conscious travellers,” he added.

Balancing it right

Online Travel Agencies (OTAs) partnership today is the binding factor for growth. Every hotel or hospitality chain has its equation to get this partnership right. As Raman explained, “Balancing direct bookings with OTA partnerships is essential for maximising occupancy and revenue. While we value direct bookings for their higher margins and guest relationships, we recognise the reach and convenience offered by OTAs. Our revenue management strategy involves dynamic pricing and inventory allocation to optimise both direct and OTA channels. We incentivise direct bookings through exclusive perks and loyalty rewards while maintaining a strategic presence on OTAs to capture broader market segments.”

Bajpe further adds that OTAs like MakeMyTrip and Booking.com have significant market share in India. The property continues to work with them. “We continue to drive bookings via our website and mobile apps, providing seamless booking experiences and building customer loyalty through Marriott Bonvoy exclusive offers and ‘best rate guarantee’. By nurturing direct relationships with guests, hotels aim to reduce dependency



Dhiman Mazumdar
COO
The World Hotels and Resorts

We focus on customisation ensuring that each guest receives tailored attention, fostering a sense of belongingness and loyalty

on OTA channels and maximise revenue,” he elaborated.

However, Allampalli is of the view that to maximise occupancy and revenue, striking a mix is key between direct bookings and partnerships with online travel agencies. “Our loyalty pro-

gramme, World of Hyatt attracts visitors from across the globe who receive added benefits and preferential offers. At the hotel level, we aim to provide seamless service and a great experience to all our guests, maintaining a balance between direct bookings and OTA partnerships, as both are critical to our success,” he revealed.

Mazumdar claims that Lyfe Hotels adopts a balanced approach to maximise occupancy and revenue. While prioritising direct bookings through the website and loyalty programmes, the group recognises the value of OTA partnerships in reaching a broader audience and filling inventory gaps. By offering exclusive perks and incentives for direct bookings, such as discounts, upgrades, and loyalty rewards, Lyfe encourages guests to book directly while maintaining strategic partnerships with OTAs to optimise revenue streams and maintain competitive pricing strategies. □



Budget-friendly ways to GO GREEN

While sustainability initiatives by hotels often require significant investments, there are many zero or minimum investment strategies available.

Businesses across the globe are increasingly recognising the importance of sustainability, not only for environmental preservation but also for their bottom line. Sustainable practices not only contribute to reducing operational costs but also play a vital role in safeguarding the planet's interests. While major sustainability initiatives often require significant investments, there are numerous zero-investment or minimum investment strategies that businesses can adopt to achieve sustainability goals without compromising profitability. In this article, we explore ten such strategies that businesses can implement to reduce costs, increase revenue, and contribute to environmental protection.

Energy conservation

Employees of organisations must develop a habit of switching off lights when not in use. While many might meticulously



Dr. Niraalee Shah
Founder, Image Building
and Etiquette Mapping

Investing in energy-saving devices helps in reducing energy utilisation in day-to-day working & consequently saves energy costs

switch off the lights in areas of work, it is places such as bathrooms, stores, and conference rooms, where lights may remain on. An effective way to ensure that lights are switched off when not in use is using sensor lights that automatically switch on and off. Most modern-day devices such as air-conditioners, lights and pantry appliances that have energy stars are energy efficient. Investing in energy-saving devices helps in reducing energy utilisation in day-to-day working and consequently saves energy costs and lowering the company's carbon footprint.

Water conservation

Build understanding in your employees why water is important and let them innovate ways to water conservation. You can announce awards in your company for identifying and innovative solutions to reduce water consumption. Installation on monitoring, water pressure meter





and water flow meter will help to identify leakage in pipes, joints or valves. Organisations should minimal water use in office cleaning and install water saving equipments such as toilet systems, tap aerators, also replace tap from high volume to high pressure and low volume, use modified equipment such as sprayer angle on product and triggers to stop water flow, reduce water flow and pressure.

Waste reduction & recycling

The most effective way to reduce organisation's waste is to generate less in the first place. Waste prevention offers the greatest environmental benefits and cost savings.

Reduce: Organisations can modify their current practices to reduce the amounts of waste generated by changing the design, manufacture, purchase, or use of materials or products.

Companies can partner to learn more about best practices for reducing their carbon footprint & adopting sustainable business practices

Reuse: Reuse of products and packaging prolongs the useful life of these materials, thus delaying final disposal or recycling. Reuse is the repair, refurbishing, washing, or just simple recovery of worn or used products, appliances, furniture and building materials. For instance, by encouraging occupants to use reusable coffee mugs rather than single-use, disposable cups, you do not have to manage the disposal of a bunch of coffee cups.

Donate: Organisations can donate products or materials to others who need and can use the items. For instance, restaurants, hotels and cafeterias promptly distribute perishable and prepared foods to hungry people in their communities. Many local food banks will pick up food donations free of charge, saving storage and disposal costs.

Recycling

Recycling saves energy, helps keep materials out of landfills and incinerators, and provides raw materials for the production of new products. When waste cannot be prevented, recycling is the next best option. Large organisations with kitchens should invest time in composting. Composting is recycling for organics. It converts organic materials such as food waste and yard trimmings, into a valuable soil amendment that contributes to soil health and keeps organic wastes out of landfills.

Sustainable procurement

Businesses can significantly reduce their environmental impact by choosing suppliers with sustainable practices, such as those that are certified by third-party organisations, and by purchasing from local suppliers so that goods do not have to be transported from far away; as an added bonus, this will also reduce shipping costs. Large organisations should purchase eco-friendly office supplies, furniture, and equipment made from recycled or renewable materials.



Source: Stellantis

Reducing Environmental Impact and Costs



of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it is the only thing that ever has." This powerful sentiment rings true not only for social movements but also for businesses determined to combat climate change.

Collaboration & advocacy

Collaborate with other businesses, industry associations, and government agencies to advocate for policies and initiatives that promote sustainability and environmental protection. Leveraging collective influence and resources, businesses can drive systemic change and create a more sustainable future for all.

Telecommuting

Becoming a remote business does not have to be all-or-nothing and it can be brilliant for building a happy company culture, too. Giving employees the opportunity to work from home one day a week is a good place to start, and it will have an immediate impact on the carbon footprint.

Green transportation

Sustainable green transport is more than a modern trend; it is a necessary evolution in the way businesses operate. This includes the use of energy-efficient vehicles, renewable fuels, waste reduction, and optimised routing. Organisations should encourage employees to use public transportation, carpool, bike, or walk to work whenever possible.

Eco-friendly practices

Companies can partner to learn more about the best practices for reducing their carbon footprint and adopting sustainable business practices. In many instances, the non-profit organisations can discover alternative materials, products, and services that are more environmentally friendly. Businesses should adopt eco-friendly practices such as using biodegradable cleaning products, transitioning to digital processes, minimising packaging waste, and choosing digital documents over printed materials. Small adjustments in daily operations can lead to substantial cost savings and environmental benefits over time, showcasing the organisation's dedication to sustainability.

Renewable energy sources

Renewable energy has been growing faster than ever before, in recent years. Wind and solar farms now dot the countryside and compete with traditional fossil fuel sources for a better quality of life for people and the earth. Changing your energy

Large industrial organisations should explore opportunities to harness renewable energy sources to meet the organisation's energy needs

supplier from one which predominantly uses fossil fuel sources to one which sources energy from renewables is one of the most powerful ways your company can make a difference. Large industrial organisations should explore opportunities to harness renewable energy sources such as solar, wind, or hydroelectric power to meet the organisation's energy needs.

Employee engagement

Margaret Mead, environmentalist, once stated, "Never doubt that a small group

In conclusion, the pursuit of sustainable practices does not always necessitate significant financial investments. Through the implementation of innovative strategies, individuals and businesses alike can embrace sustainable practices without breaking the bank, by harnessing the power of simple yet effective solutions. These 10 zero or minimal investment ways serve as a testament to the notion that sustainability is within reach for everyone, offering a pathway towards a greener, more economically viable future. Embracing these practices is not just about reducing costs; it is about investing in a better tomorrow for generations to come.

(The views expressed are solely of the author. The publication may or may not subscribe to the same). □



CROSS

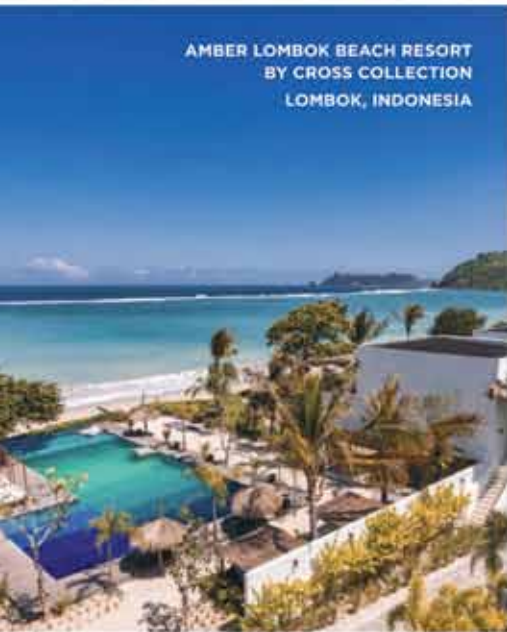
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Your Bali Haven Awaits,
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Cross Hotels & Resorts introduces its new Bali flagship property,
Cross Paasha Bali Seminyak, in the lively heart of Seminyak.

AMBER LOMBOK BEACH RESORT
BY CROSS COLLECTION
LOMBOK, INDONESIA



CROSS PATTAYA OCEANPHERE
PATTAYA, THAILAND



CROSS PATTAYA PRATAMNAK
PATTAYA, THAILAND



AWAY

LUMEN

CROSS
—COLLECTION—

KAURA

M: +91 9599076699

E: sandeep.raghav@crosshotelsandresorts.in

W: crosshotelsandresorts.com



CLIMATE CHANGE

Its impact on hospitality

Hotel industry must realise the urgency to combat climate change exacerbated by population growth, industrial expansion & human activity.

Climate change is a challenging phenomenon affecting the entire planet. With the world's population, automobiles, industries, and human activities growing, the situation worsens. This is an endeavour to analyse and mitigate impacts for a sustainable future.

Hotels have been striving to go green, but severe changes are already harming people all around the world, damaging crops and coastlines and jeopardising

water security, according to a new World Bank research, Turn Down the Heat.

As climate change-driven temperature increases continue to harm India's population and drive-up demand for air conditioning, it is critical to assess the local effects of policies that boost renewable energy generation and lower cooling demand in buildings. A recent study found that rising temperatures due to climate change, coupled with population and economic growth,

are increasing the demand for electricity to cool buildings in Ahmedabad, UNESCO's first heritage city, from 2018 to 2030. The estimate includes the proportion of energy demand met by coal-fired power plants compared to renewable energy sources in 2030. Additionally, it considers the implications of increased adoption of cool roofs on cooling energy demand in the city. We estimate that renewable energy capacity might expand from 9 per cent of cooling energy consumption in 2018 to 45 per cent by 2030. This study indicates a near doubling in total electricity supply and a nearly threefold growth in cooling demand by 2030. This talks about only one city.

The question of this hour is: since climate change has become a global problem, what can hotels do to help mitigate it? Considering all hoteliers as policymakers, I propose 4 Ms that speak for themselves:

- Make our climate-related activities more transparent.
- Measure climate-related progress in tangible ways.
- Modify the climate-related initiatives that can lead to new employment opportunities and become a powerful engine for economic growth.
- Meeting up with the public sector or stakeholders to stay in the game.

We understand that this problem is so large that no single individual or organ-



Dr. Vijay Salla
Senior Lecturer
IHM Ahmedabad

Hotels are among world's top energy consumers & adopting sustainable practices can result in considerable reductions in carbon emissions

isation can fix it alone. Everyone must do their part. Hotels are among the world's top energy consumers, and adopting sustainable technologies and practices can result in considerable reductions in both energy usage and carbon emissions.

A mandatory checklist for all classified hotels may come under scrutiny, but the large number of unclassified ones poses a significant threat to sustainable responsibility. Let us count on the classified and take timeline to fix (As per the Paris Agreement the hospitality industry must reduce emissions by 66 per cent by 2030). The aim is for all hotels to become posi-




tive contributors, helping to limit global warming to no more than two degrees Celsius, as agreed upon.

Some of the prevailing singular initiatives are as follows, and there is a request to consolidate those practices at every level and every hotel for the global good.

- Energy and water use, food waste, sourcing of materials, and cutting the use of single-use plastic have been focus areas for some time now.
- Building architecture with technology that captures waste heat to create energy, and its own waste management and recycling facilities.
- "Greening your surrounding areas" has also been practiced by many as a CSR activity.
- Hotels continue to maintain an environmental drive or programme with regular activities.
- Small deeds such as refillable shampoo dispensers or using bath towels for more than one day.
- Some initiatives also engage the local community, youth and women in supporting climate action.

I am certain that both standalone and chain hotels are making their contributions. Let's think globally and act locally. Let's unite for a cause and maximise our sustainable efforts within our reach and control. By doing so, we can work towards meeting the emission reduction targets set for 2030. This sets the pace for all hospitality and residential buildings to become net-zero, ensuring a sustainable future for all.

(The views expressed are solely of the author. The publication may or may not subscribe to the same) 



Guest-centric tech

Shaping hospitality's future

Hospitality industry is undergoing significant transformation due to innovations such as mobility, IoT integration, and cost optimisation.

In recent years, the hospitality industry has witnessed a profound transformation driven by technological innovations. Mobility advancements, the integration of the Internet of Things (IoT) in guestrooms, and strategic cost optimisation measures have emerged as key players in shaping the guest experience and overall efficiency of hotels. Here are some of the advancements that are being observed in hospitality sector:

Major impacts of mobility innovations on hospitality: Mobile innovations, including check-in/out, digital room keys, and personalised concierge services, have transformed hotel interactions, enhancing guest convenience and streamlining operations for staff. These services allow guests to bypass traditional check-in processes, reducing wait times and providing a seamless arrival experience. Additionally, personalised recommendations enhance the overall stay experience.



Harish Chandra
Managing Director
HotelKey

Mobile innovations, including check-in/out, digital room keys, have transformed hotel interactions, enhancing guest convenience

IoT in rooms and its influence on guest experience: The integration of IoT in hotel rooms can revolutionise the guest experience by allowing guests to control lighting, temperature, and entertainment through smartphones or voice commands. This personalisation enhances comfort and convenience, contributing to a positive guest experience. IoT sensors can also gather data on guest preferences, enabling hotels to provide more personalised services.

Optimising hotel operating costs: Hotels are focusing on optimizing operating costs and reducing energy consumption to improve efficiency and sustainability. Implementing energy-efficient technologies like LED lighting and smart HVAC systems can lead to cost savings and reduced environmental impact. Automated processes and artificial intelligence can free up staff for guest-centric tasks. Eco-friendly practices like waste reduction and water conservation align with growing consumer preferences for sustainable accommodations.

In conclusion, the convergence of mobility innovations, IoT in rooms, and strategic cost optimisation measures is reshaping the landscape of the hospitality industry. By leveraging these advancements, hotels can enhance guest satisfaction, streamline operations, and create a more sustainable and cost-effective business model.

(The views expressed are solely of the author. The publication may or may not subscribe to the same) □



COMMUNITY UPLIFTMENT THROUGH PARTNERSHIP

Reflecting their commitment to uplifting local community, Fairmont Jaipur & PDKF organised special event for female artisans on International Women's Day.



DDP Bureau

Fairmont Jaipur and the Princess Diya Kumari Foundation (PDKF) recently collaborated to organise a celebration for female artisans from Rajasthan in honour of International Women's Day. Held on 5th March at Fairmont Jaipur, the event offered a memorable experience for the participating women artisans.

Jui Sharma, COO, Triton Hotels and Resorts, expressed, "Fairmont Jaipur is

proud to have played a role in creating a day that celebrated the strength and accomplishments of women, and promoting local support for women and the community. The initiative reflects the power of unity and the impact that can be achieved when two organisations join hands together for empowering the local community."

Activities included a Five Senses Arrival Experience, engaging games, and a makeover session conducted by a professional stylist

Activities included a Five Senses Arrival Experience, engaging games, and a makeover session conducted by a professional stylist. Six women were selected through a random draw for a personalised transformation and indulgence experience. The occasion featured a themed lunch, setting the tone for the festivities.

The event underscores the effectiveness of purpose-driven partnerships in achieving noble objectives such as championing the cause of women's empowerment and community development. Fairmont Jaipur and PDKF's commitment fosters empowering initiatives that serve as catalysts for the flourishing of the local community. □



UPWARD TRAJECTORY FUELLING FUTURE GROWTH



Credit rating agency ICRA forecasts pan-India premium hotel occupancy to reach decade-high levels of 70-72% in FY2024 & FY2025.



DDP Bureau

According to an industry forecast by ICRA, pan-India premium hotel occupancy is expected to reach decadal highs of 70-72 per cent in FY2024 and FY2025, after recovering to 68-70 per cent in FY2023. Hotel average room rates (ARRs) are expected to rise to ₹7,200-₹7,400 in FY2024 and ₹7,800-₹8,000 in FY2025. It also predicted a 7-9 per cent revenue growth in the Indian hotel industry in FY2025, up from the 14-16 per cent growth in FY2024.

The credit rating agency, observed, “Sustenance of domestic leisure travel, demand from meetings, incentives, conferences and exhibitions (MICE), including weddings and business travel (despite a temporary lull during the election period), are likely to drive demand in FY2025. Spiritual tourism and Tier-II cities are also expected to contribute meaningfully in FY2025. Domestic tourism has been the prime demand driver in FY2024 and is likely to remain so in the near future. Foreign Tourist Arrivals (FTAs) are yet to recover to pre-COVID levels and the improve-

18-24 months. The premium supply pipeline for FY2024-FY2026 has increased by 25-30 percent compared to what was anticipated for the same period a year ago due to new signings and announcements. Several global brands have made their entry into India. However, supply, which is expected to grow at a CAGR of 4.5-5 per cent over the medium term, would lag demand. Compared to the down-cycle in FY2009, which saw untimely supply increases of over 15 per cent of the inventory at the bottom of the cycle during FY2009-2013, the current low inventory growth is expected to support the upcycle as demand improves over the medium term.”



Vinutaa S

Vice President & Sector Head,
Corporate Ratings, ICRA

Demand is expected to remain strong across markets in FY2025 as consumer sentiments continue to be healthy

ICRA noted that the demand outlook over the medium term remains healthy, supported by a confluence of factors, including improvements in infrastructure and air connectivity, favourable demographics, and anticipated growth in large-scale MICE events with the opening of multiple new convention centres in the last few years, among others. The healthy demand, amid relatively lower supply, would lead to higher ARR. Additionally, several hotels are undergoing renovation, refurbishment, and upgrades, which are likely to further support the ARR going forward. Larger players would also benefit from revenues, or a share of profits generated from hotel expansions through management contracts and operating leases. □

ment would depend on the global macroeconomic environment.”

Commenting on the growth, **Vinutaa S**, Vice President & Sector Head, Corporate Ratings, ICRA, said, “Demand is expected to remain strong across markets in FY2025 as consumer sentiments continue to be healthy and corporate performance is stable. Hotel-specific demand would, however, depend on location, competition, and other property-related dynamics. Further, domestic tourism would be the prime driver, with FTA improvement depending on the global macroeconomic environ-

ment. Mumbai and NCR, being gateway cities, are likely to report occupancy of 75 per cent in FY2024 and FY2025, benefitting from transient passengers, business travellers and MICE events. The ARR would witness a healthy YoY increase in FY2024 and FY2025 across markets. This sharp rise in ARR of premium hotels has also resulted in the spillover of demand to mid-scale hotels.”

She further explained, “The healthy demand uptick has resulted in a pick-up in supply announcements and commencement of deferred projects in the last

Products & Services

ELEVATING ART OF HOSTING

The Kaniry Beverage Dispenser—Boisson and Potum, along with a range of Ice Boxes and Serveware add a touch of chic to any space and elevate the mood of any event. Boisson features a double-walled stainless-steel base and a Tritan material container with a shatterproof and scratch-resistant finish. Potum, on the other hand, exudes chic elegance with a cylindrical Tritan container perched atop a wooden base, available in two colours. It effortlessly blends into any setting, whether it is a pool-side party, backyard dinner, or elegant soiree.



ULTIMATE BAR COMPANION

Frazer and Haws has introduced a collection of barware accessories, combining sterling silver and mixed media. These accessories are designed to create a home bar, making it easy to create a party-ready space. The range includes ash trays, portable bars, hop flasks, whiskey glasses, decants, and shot glasses, all of which are stylish and functional. The accessories are available in customized pieces and are designed to add an extra dimension to your bar. Frazer and Haws' Barware accessories are sure to add a touch of elegance to your home bar.

DINING IN STYLE

Clay Craft's Matt Black collection is a blend of timeless elegance and contemporary flair, crafted with precision and attention to detail. This refined aesthetic elevates any dining experience, whether in upscale restaurants or trendy cafes. The collection features dinner plates and cutlery, designed to enhance the visual appeal of table setting while offering practical functionality. The allure of minimalist luxury is embraced in this stylish dining experience. The Clay Craft Matt Black collection offers a stylish dining experience that captivates the senses and leaves a lasting impression of understated elegance.



DISCOVER LUXURY LIVING

Mira Living brings the latest collections aiming to embody exemplary design. The brand's sleek lines and sophisticated colour palettes resonate with discerning homeowners, while its modern, nuanced, and sumptuous tone evokes comfort and beauty in every home it graces. Mira Living is ultimate destination for homeowners looking to elevate their living spaces with exclusive home decor solutions. Whether it is a statement piece to anchor a room or a subtle accent, the brand caters to every preference and aesthetic.




TIMELESS ALLURE

Sarita Handa, a luxury home furnishing brand, has unveiled its Trousseau collection, featuring three bedding sets: Balmoral, Florence, and Versailles. These sets embody timeless allure with ultra-luxurious fabrics, rich designs, and heritage embroidery. Created by master craftsmen over days, each set spells simple, quiet luxury. Balmoral represents warmth and abundance, with extravagant colours, lustrous metallic yarns, and regal motifs. The Palmette pattern in the Florence bed set symbolises the beginning of a new phase. The Versailles bedding set pairs affluent blooms with a soft pastel palette, showcasing high taste and exquisite style.



CRAFTED FOR CONNOISSEURS

Lucaris' RIMS collection offers a range of fine crystal barware, inspired by vintage elegance and modern creativity. The collection includes four categories: Pillars, Proud, Classic, and Orient. Pillars provide a versatile foundation for mixology, while Proud offers beautiful saucer, coupe, and tulip glasses for shaken cocktails and sparkling wine. Classic features vintage-inspired shapes for stirred or shaken cocktails, while Orient captures Southeast Asian essence with flowing lines and intricate detailing. The RIMS Collection allows creativity to shine and drinks to shine. 

Crafting comfort for global hospitality

Vetra, a luxury outdoor furniture brand established in 2007, prioritises sustainability by using recyclable materials such as cane and bamboo.



Surbhi Sharma

Established in 2007, Vetra, a luxury outdoor furniture brand, celebrates its 15th year in the furniture industry with a commitment to expanding its presence in pan-India hotels and resorts. Situated in Noida, Vetra manufactures a wide range of outdoor furniture styles and designs, including wicker, strap & ropes, teak, and specialised cane furniture suitable for semi-covered outdoor or indoor use. The company's premium furniture has gained popularity among hotels, resorts, cafes, restaurants, and homes worldwide. Vetra supplies a meticulously crafted outdoor living furniture range to the hotels and hospitality industry, meeting their standards for comfort and quality.

Sharing the brand's working style to meet the demands of hospitality clients, **Ankur Modi**, CEO, Vetra Furniture, said, "We have a team of talented designers who work together on new designs and innovation according to the needs of our clients as different hotel properties demand different set of things. For heritage look, we have a special range called cane line which is more antique and sustainable whereas, for modern aesthetic look, we have a separate range called straight line."

A trendsetter

"During our 15-year journey, we have completed approximately 1,500 projects across India. What sets us apart from other furniture companies is the exceptional quality of our products. We prioritise high-end quality in our aluminum, straps, teak, and every product we manufacture," Modi pointed out.



Ankur Modi
CEO
Vetra Furniture

We have talented designers who work together on new designs according to needs of our clients

Calling sustainability, the need of the hour, Vetra Furniture's CEO, said, "If we aim to thrive and endure, it is imperative to utilize more sustainable and recyclable materials. The teak employed in our products is sourced from plantations, ensuring it can be recycled. Additionally, we prioritise the use of cane and bamboo, both of which are sustainable options."

Outreach beyond India

Sharing insights about his brand's outreach and his upcoming projects, Modi said, "We are currently collaborating with countries like Italy and have successfully completed projects at locations such as Taj Zambia, Hyatt Mauritius, and Chaudhary Group in Nepal. Looking ahead, we are excited to undertake more hospitality-related projects on an international level." □





UNLOCKING SOUTH ASIA'S CULINARY PROWESS

19th edition of HICSA would explore potential of South Asia's culinary future & advance a sustainable, technologically driven hospitality ecosystem.



Hotelivate is set to host its 19th edition of the Hotel Investment Conference - South Asia (HICSA) at the JW Marriott Bengaluru Prestige Golfshire Resort and Spa from 2 to 4 April 2024. The conference will focus on the hospitality industry, with the theme 'Savouring South Asia: Innovations in Food Tech and Design' aiming to unlock the potential of South Asia's culinary future and create a sustainable, technologically advanced hospitality ecosystem. The event aims to serve as a knowledge-sharing hub, fostering dialogues to shape the future of the industry.

Manav Thadani, Founder Chairman, Hotelivate expressed excitement about the 19th anniversary of HICSA, "This year we are focussing on the aspect of technology in our business and no other city would be more appropriate than Bengaluru. India is the heart of South Asia's thriving hospitality industry and this year's conference promises to be a dynamic platform for explor-



Manav Thadani
Founder Chairman
Hotelivate

This year's HICSA promises to be a dynamic platform for exploring investment prospects, trends, and best practices



ing investment prospects, trends, and best practices, and to network with the industry's brightest minds. We believe HICSA will set the stage for numerous investment

ventures in this rapidly evolving region. We are extremely grateful for the support we have received from our delegates, patrons, speakers, and sponsors as we come together in celebration of all things remarkable in food & beverage, and hospitality."

Hotelivate also announced the presence of three global CEOs at the conference: **Sébastien Bazin**, Chairman & CEO, Accor; **Federico J González**, Executive Vice-President, Radisson Hotel Group; and **Mark S Hoplamazian**, President & CEO, Hyatt Hotels Corporation.

On Day 1, the conference will feature interviews and keynote addresses in an endeavour to make the event more content rich. The first full day of the conference will culminate into a 'Culinary Carnival'—a celebration of gastronomy, bringing together chefs, artisanal food vendors, and passionate hoteliers at the JW Marriott Bengaluru Prestige Golfshire Resort and Spa. Day 2 of HICSA will feature curated panel discussions and mini keynote sessions with industry leaders. □

Classifieds



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MOVEMENTS



MARIA ARIIZUMI
VP, Development
South East Asia,
Hilton

★ Hilton has appointed Maria Ariizumi as Vice President, Development, South East Asia. Maria comes from Swire Hotels, where she led the establishment of Swire's third-party hotel development platform. She has experience in hotel development, planning, and projects across Asia Pacific, Europe, and North America. Ariizumi will work closely with Hilton's existing and new partners to drive the company's development strategy in South East Asia. Her experience will support Hilton's ambition to double its portfolio in the region within the next three years.



AMOL NERURKAR
Director
F&B, Holiday Inn Mumbai
International Airport

★ Holiday Inn Mumbai International Airport has appointed Amol Nerurkar as the Director, Food & Beverage. With over 15 years of experience in managing high-end city and resort F&B operations, Nerurkar believes in providing excellent customer service. He will oversee operations, strategise new revenue streams, maintain profitability, and train his team for better productivity. Nerurkar began his hospitality career in 2009 with JW Marriott Juhu and later worked with brands such as Jumeirah Vittaveli and JA Manafaru in the Maldives.



ANAND NAIR
General Manager
InterContinental Chennai
Mahabalipuram Resort

★ Anand Nair has been appointed as the General Manager of InterContinental Chennai Mahabalipuram Resort. With over 29 years of experience in the hospitality industry, Nair brings a wealth of expertise in managing both business and leisure hotel portfolios. Nair joined IHG Southwest Asia in 2018 as General Manager and most recently served in the same capacity at Crowne Plaza Chennai Adyar Park. In his new role, Nair will oversee the complete operations and management of the resort, ensuring the highest levels of guest engagement and profitability.



VAIBHAV MATHUR
Commercial Manager
DoubleTree by Hilton
Agra

★ DoubleTree by Hilton Agra has appointed Vaibhav Mathur as their new Commercial Manager. With over a decade of experience in sales and marketing, Mathur will be responsible for developing a robust commercial strategy to drive total revenue, enhance profitability, and increase market share penetration. Vaibhav has demonstrated the ability to increase sales through up-selling techniques and implement profitable processes. He will focus on developing and implementing sales strategies for DoubleTree by Hilton Agra.



AISHWARYA BISWAL
Front Office Manager
Grand Mercure Bengaluru at
Gopalan Mall

★ Grand Mercure Bengaluru at Gopalan Mall has appointed Aishwarya Biswal as the new Front Office Manager. With over seven years of experience in room management and a proven track record of delivering exceptional guest experiences, Biswal brings expertise and leadership to her new role. Prior to her appointment, she served as the Assistant Front Office Manager at Hyatt Centric Chandigarh, where she managed front office operations and ensured customer satisfaction. In her new role, Aishwarya will be responsible for overseeing the daily operations of the front office.

Form - IV

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Signature of the Publisher

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