

HOTELS & RESTAURANTS INDIA

# fhrai magazine

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A MONTHLY ON HOSPITALITY TRADE  
By DDP Publications



**Maharashtra's  
HUGE  
POTENTIAL**

A person wearing a white full-body protective suit, a hood, clear safety goggles, and a black respirator mask with two yellow filters. They are wearing blue gloves and holding a white rectangular sign. The background is yellow with black diagonal hazard stripes.

**Empowering  
HUMAN  
RESOURCES**

**Choosing creativity  
post COVID**



Watch the  
**crystal  
clear water**  
of lake Tahoe from the sky



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*managing your destinations' image*

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**Gurbaxish Singh Kohli**  
Vice President  
FHRAI

*Dear fellow members,*

I wish to reassure members that the FHRAI Executive Committee and Secretariat stand in solidarity with the fraternity and committed to tackling the COVID pandemic.

With the announcement and implementation of Unlock 1 and 2, a ray of hope has been seen by the professionals, employees and people directly and indirectly associated with the hospitality industry. The Federation played a very constructive role during the lockdown months by way of numerous written representations to the Central and state governments. We have been in constant touch with various Ministries via meetings, representing to them our challenges and possible solutions and requesting to come up with a relief package. The announcement of moratorium and special package was good news for a few industries, however, hospitality sadly will have to push the government further for a specific package as what has been announced haven't addressed the issues or extended any benefit to our industry. I would like to assure you that the entire team at FHRAI is doing its best to represent and lobby at both Central and state level for the betterment, upliftment and overall revival & survival of the hospitality industry.

Apart from the regular follow-ups with the Ministers and Departments, FHRAI in last three months, organised nine rounds and 40 sessions of the COVID-19 awareness training programme. I am delighted to share that more than 2,500 hospitality professionals both white and blue collar have availed the benefit free of cost as this is a part of the membership services.

As we all are well aware that there's no revenue during the lockdown, yet our rentals and salary bills, statutory payments still have to be paid. However, the hospitality industry extended its helping hand and came out and offered its hotel rooms for housing quarantined passengers, doctors,

medical workers, police, municipal workers, etc. Our restaurants have thrown open their kitchens and are presently preparing and distributing meals for all needy in excess of 3 lakh meals a day. There is no doubt in my mind that 'Hospitality Workers' are as much 'Corona Warriors' as the doctors and other workers working selflessly to provide relief to our citizens and surely deserve appreciation and recognition. I thank all those participating in the above, for the goodwill gesture.

To conclude, I would like to share that apart from the regular issues we have also represented to the government and taken up extension of advance tax payment, moratorium, revise social gathering norms and many other related issues. Based on the inputs received from members with regard to the implementation of guidelines, SOPs issued by various Ministries and Departments, we have launched a COVID-19 Desktop training for members at subsidised rates to learn and implement the same. This unique initiative is headed by Dr. V. Pasupathy, National Advisor to FHRAI and renowned scientist. Last but not the least, please do visit our social media handles for regular updates and activities of the Federation and initiatives by the government for the hospitality industry.

Be Safe and Stay at Home.

**Note:** The July 2020 edition of the FHRAI magazine will not be available as a printed version due to the pandemic. However, the e-version of the same shall be available on the FHRAI website and circulated to all members as broadcast on registered email.

With kind regards,  
Gurbaxish Singh Kohli  
Vice President, FHRAI



During the last three months FHRAI organised nine rounds and 40 sessions of the COVID-19 awareness training programme. Over 2,500 hospitality professionals have availed the benefit free of cost



# JULY 2020

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FHRAI's poll themed Housekeeping Redefined – COVID-19 Era Safety Procedures talked about safety measures during the pandemic. We share more details with you.

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# HRAWI launches #SaveRestaurants campaign



**Dr. Suhas Awchat**  
Chairman PR & Laisoning, HRAWI



**Gurbaxish Singh Kohli**  
Vice President, FHRAI



**Pradeep Shetty**  
Jt Hony Secy, FHRAI

The smallest restaurants employ 8 individuals, so on an average 5 lakh residents will be jobless

Excise license fee was increased this year by 15% when businesses were shut!

For an average restaurant the monthly outgoings are approximately ₹3 lakhs to ₹4 lakhs

**H**otel and Restaurant Association of Western India (HRAWI) has announced the launch of a public campaign to highlight the looming collapse of restaurants in Maharashtra. Launched as #KhadyagrahaWachva (#SaveRestaurants), the campaign will act as the voice of the industry, especially the small and medium sized eateries that serve the everyday working class of Maharashtra.

"The government needs to act not today or tomorrow, but as of yesterday. We are talking about the tourism industry that is responsible for 10 per cent of the GDP. More than 100,000 estimated small and medium sized eateries serve the everyday working class of Maharashtra. Our assessment is that at least 50 per cent of restaurants in Maharashtra will be unable to reopen. Of those that reopen, a majority will find it difficult to sustain and may end up closing down within six to eight months. The smallest of restaurants employ eight individuals,

so on an average 5 lakh residents of Maharashtra are going to be jobless. Add the loss of indirect jobs and closure of vendor businesses, and we are staring at a disaster," says **Dr. Suhas Awchat**, Chairman PR and Laisoning Sub Committee, HRAWI.

While restaurants across India opened on June 8 with restrictions, in Maharashtra they continue to remain closed. It has one of the highest statutory fees and taxes, and these have to be paid in advance. "In normal times these levies were exorbitant, but at times like these it is simply unaffordable. For instance, the excise license fee was increased this year by 15 per cent when businesses were shut! ₹8 lakhs is a significant sum for a small establishment even in the normal course of business, yet businesses are expected to pay this sum upfront for the coming year. On electricity we pay 21 per cent surcharge which again is exorbitant. We also have to pay electricity charges based on the contracted demand

rather than the actual consumption. Establishments also are burdened by the property tax in Mumbai which is the highest taxed among all cities in the country," says **Gurbaxish Singh Kohli**, President, HRAWI.

"An average restaurant employs 20 heads which include waiters, cleaners and cooks, accountants, managers, delivery boys, security and gardeners. The average monthly outgoings are around ₹3 to ₹4 lakhs which include maintenance bills, utility bills, electricity and salaries. A business closed for three months translates to ongoing expenses plus zero revenue," says **Pradeep Shetty**, Vice President, HRAWI.

"Tourism is directly proportional to the number of good restaurants serving hygienic authentic Indian regional food. iRestaurants are capital-intensive, energy-intensive and labour-intensive but the government remains insensitive," concludes Dr. Awchat.

**HRAWI**



## FHRAI questions order converting hotels into extended hospitals

The apex industry body, Federation of Hotel and Restaurant Associations of India (FHRAI) wrote a letter to Prime Minister Narendra Modi raising concerns regarding the orders by the state government for requisitioning of hotels for attaching them to hospitals and converting them into extended COVID-19 hospitals for patients. Questioning the order of the Delhi government dated May 29, 2020, FHRAI has said that the administration seems to be in a hurry to take over private hotels in the city, while there are plenty of other options available.

"The hotels that are being requisitioned for the purpose are being requisitioned only partially and not completely. We have no idea why that is being done. This means that hotels cannot utilise the rest of their property with COVID-19 patients in the premises. This then raises the question of whether there is a need to requisition so many hotels rampantly," says **Gurbaxish Singh Kohli**, Vice President, FHRAI.

Highlighting that government-owned large facilities such as Vigyan Bhavan would have been a better choice for



**Gurbaxish Singh Kohli**  
Vice President, FHRAI

We request the govt to act immediately and allow us to start operations soon

requisitioning into a hospital, the letter said that the state must requisition nursing homes, medical facilities and other hospitals, polyclinics, among others, with beds before requisitioning

hotels. Going further, the letter also asks why there is a hurry on the part of the government to attach hotels for COVID care, when there are a whole lot of auditoriums, clubs, stadiums available in the city which are more suited for the purpose. The letter specifically mentions Vigyan Bhavan, the government-owned convention facility, as an example.

"There is no mention of responsibility by the concerned department or government of any liability or eventuality subsequent to the requisitioning," the letter added. The letter also said that there was no specific time period mentioned in which the compensation is to be received by the hotels. This will cause a huge delay in the settlement of bills and will push the industry into further problems.

Asserting that the government needs to realise that the hotels are ready to start operations as hotels and not as hospitals, Kohli says, "In hotels and restaurants, all sanitisation and social distancing guidelines can be followed thoroughly. Hence, we once again request the government to act immediately and allow us to start operations soon."

# Uddhav Thackeray meets HRAWI members to discuss re-opening

**T**he Hotel and Restaurant Association of Western India (HRAWI) is thankful to **Uddhav Thackeray**, Chief Minister of Maharashtra and **Aaditya Thackeray**, Minister of Tourism & Environment for Maharashtra government for meeting with the hotel & restaurant industry members on the important issue of re-opening business.

HRAWI has assured the Ministers as well as the Chief Secy / Tourism Secy and the CMO that the industry is completely geared up for re-opening and has exhibited its readiness to conduct business in a safe environment.

**Gurbaxish Singh Kohli**, President, HRAWI, said, "Our main issue is survival because if we do not survive, we can't revive and thrive. This is the time to press the reset button for hospitality."



**Uddhav Thackeray**  
Chief Minister  
Maharashtra

While acknowledging the vital role of hoteliers and restaurateurs during the COVID-19 pandemic, Uddhav Thackeray thanked them for standing with the government through this phase. He assured the association

that the government is working on re-opening protocols and urged the industry to take all due care and expected due compliance from all categories of hotels from lodges to 5-star hotels as well as restaurants.

He went on to add that they would re-open in a phased manner to avoid any backlash. He also informed that the government is also working on certain concessions such as in excise fees to help revive the industry.

Aaditya Thackeray too addressed the participants from HRAWI and assured them that tourism is vital to the state and the government will do everything it can to ensure that tourism gets back on track at the earliest. He appreciated the suggestions put forth by the association regarding the revival of tourism in Maharashtra.

HRAWI

# HRAEI opens hospitality counter for Vande Bharat Mission

**M**ore than 2,600 rooms in Kolkata hotels were opened up for paid quarantine of citizens who are arriving from abroad in the Vande Bharat Mission – Central government's endeavour to bring stranded Indians home amid the COVID-19 lockdown through an initiative of the Hotel & Restaurant Association of Eastern India (HRAEI) and MSME department of West Bengal.

"All those flying into the city are required to get into compulsory institution quarantine for 14 days into the designated hotels, that includes budget, three-star and five-star hotels," said HRAEI President **Pranav Singh**. "The returnees can either pay and get quarantined at earmarked hotels or



opt for free quarantine at government facilities." HRAEI has opened a hospitality counter at the Kolkata Airport to receive the passengers and guide them to the required procedures to check-in at the designated hotels. The state government, which had initially reserved 750-odd hotel rooms for quarantine, had asked HRAEI to add more rooms to

the quarantine inventory to prepare for a large number of returnees from abroad. The hotels charged between ₹2,000 and ₹5,000 per room per day. "The bills at the hotels will have to be cleared by the passengers. We have arranged for discounts up to 60 per cent", said **Sudesh Poddar**, Honorary Secretary, HRAEI.

HRAEI

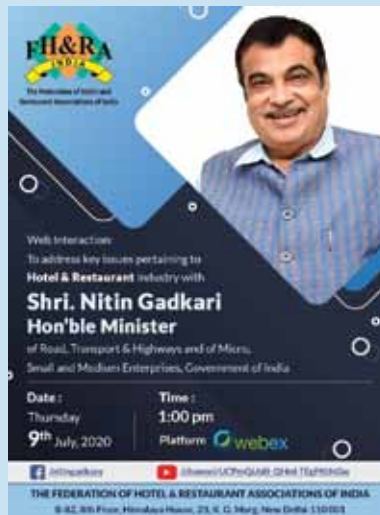


# Taking the highway to recovery

In an online meet, **Nitin Gadkari**, Minister of Road Transport & Highways and MSME addressed major concerns highlighted by FHRAI.

The Federation of Hotel & Restaurant Associations of India (FHRAI) held an online meeting on July 9 with Nitin Gadkari, Minister of Road Transport & Highways (RT&H) and Micro Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME), Government of India to discuss pertinent issues affecting the hospitality industry.

**Nitin Gadkari** said, "We need to now understand the 'Art of living with coronavirus'. It is not possible to leave topics of high importance unaddressed for so long. We are following the re-opening guidelines given by the govt for hotels and restaurants.



Also, we are opening many roadside amenities, and restaurants have great potential for growth in these upcoming green highway projects. Wherever we are developing tourism, we would be needing more hotels, restaurants, taxis and entertainment options. Our cabinet is working on introducing ropeways, cable cars and funicular railway in many areas instead of roads. As the highway projects are going on in full swing, people will be travelling in large numbers by road, so they will be looking forward to visiting resorts and restaurants which are hygienic and safe; this will give a boost to the industry. It will also promote the culture of the area as well as regional food, which will be served to them by the respective hotels and restaurants."

*Details of the meeting will be highlighted in the next issue of FHRAI magazine.*

New roadside amenities, and restaurants have great potential for growth in our upcoming green highway projects

# Planning revival strategies

FHRAI and HRAWI members put forth key issues related to the hospitality industry.



The Federation of Hotel & Restaurant Associations of India (FHRAI) held an online meeting on July 13 with Piyush Goyal, Minister of Commerce & Industry and Railways, Government of India to share and discuss key impending issues of the hospitality industry.

Gurbaxish Singh Kohli, Vice President, FHRAI & President, Hotel and Restaurant Association of Western India (HRAWI); Pradeep Shetty, Jt. Hon. Secretary, FHRAI & VP, HRAWI; Vivek Nair, Member of Honour, HRAWI; Surendra Kumar Jaiswal, Vice President, FHRAI; DVS Somaraju, Hon. Treasurer, FHRAI; Nirav

Gandhi, EC Member, FHRAI and S P Jain, Ex-officio Member, HRAWI participated in the meeting and put forth concerns to the Minister.

**Piyush Goyal** said, "I appreciate the contribution of the hospitality industry to the country and assure you that the government is doing everything in its capacity to alleviate the pain of every sector, including hospitality and tourism. We should look at MSME category for charting out revival strategies. I acknowledge the importance and need of single window clearance and I am on board with the industry for expediting this policy. Transparent, online process is the need of the hour for establishing Ease of Doing Business and which is beneficial for both the government and for businesses."

*For more details about the meeting, read the August issue of FHRAI magazine.*

Transparent, online process is the need of the hour for establishing Ease of Doing Business



# Combating COVID-19

FHRAI's poll themed Housekeeping Redefined – COVID-19 Era Safety Procedures talked about safety measures during the pandemic. We share more details with you.



The poll asked attendees about what they thought was most important right now for hotel operations; out of a total of 707 attendees, a significant number, that is, 97% felt the need for training staff for COVID-19 operations, whereas only 3% thought sales & marketing was vital. When queried on whether despite all the problems of hazardous/untrained delivery boys, were they

willing to start their own delivery system, 43% said yes while 57% were not in favour of this move – out of a total of 520 attendees. Also, when asked, “Do you think this webinar will be enough for you to efficiently implement 100% the new FSSAI rules? Out of a total of 521 attendees, 29% said yes, 39% said they would need on-site training, 25% said they would need a repeat webinar session, while 6% said no.

## HOUSEKEEPING REDEFINED – COVID-19 ERA SAFETY PROCEDURES - 2 MAY 2020

<b>Poll 1</b>	<b>What do you think is most important right now for hotel operations?</b>					
	Training staff for COVID-19 operations		Sales & Marketing		<b>TOTAL</b>	
	688		19		<b>707</b>	
	97%		3%		<b>71%</b>	
<b>Poll 2</b>	<b>Sodium hypochlorite, hydroxychloroquine, bleach, chlorine – are they all the same?</b>					
	Sodium hypochlorite & hydroxychloroquine are inter-changeable	Sodium hypochlorite, bleach & chlorine are inter-changeable	All the four are the same & are inter-changeable	Hydroxy-chloroquine & bleach are inter-changeable	<b>TOTAL</b>	
	61	135	105	26	<b>327</b>	
	19%	41%	32%	8%	<b>33%</b>	
<b>Poll 3</b>	<b>With all the problems of hazardous/untrained delivery boys, are you willing to start your own delivery system?</b>					
	Yes	No		<b>TOTAL</b>		
	225	295		<b>520</b>		
	43%	57%		<b>52%</b>		
<b>Poll 4</b>	<b>Do you think this webinar will be enough for you to efficiently implement 100% the new FSSAI rules?</b>					
	Yes	Will need on-site training	Will need a repeat webinar session	No	<b>TOTAL</b>	
	151	205	132	33	<b>521</b>	
	29%	39%	25%	6%	<b>52%</b>	
<b>Poll 5</b>	<b>With the current situation, are you going to allow and accept food delivery for room guests from outside the hotel?</b>					
	Yes	No	Yes, but on chargeable basis		<b>TOTAL</b>	
	30	542	21		<b>593</b>	
	5%	91%	4%		<b>59%</b>	
<b>Poll 6</b>	<b>Which material is better &amp; most effective for COVID sanitisation?</b>					
	Washing with soap		70% alcohol-based sanitiser		<b>TOTAL</b>	
	227		458		<b>685</b>	
	33%		67%		<b>69%</b>	
<b>Poll 7</b>	<b>Do you think that all guests will follow the NEW house rules of the hotel?</b>					
	Majority of guests will follow the house rules	They may threaten staff with bad comments on social media	They may call top management for concessions on rules	They may tip the staff to bypass some rules	They may use their corporate business power to bypass rules	<b>TOTAL</b>
	469	37	17	14	9	<b>537</b>
	87%	7%	3%	3%	2%	<b>54%</b>

# Adapting to the COVID era

FHRAI EC members share insights on how to train people, improve management-employee relationships, and tackle challenges.



Neha Rawat



Souvagya Mohapatra

## Souvagya Mohapatra Co-opted EC Member, FHRAI

### **How to get the staff to come back to work?**

We as such are facing no issues in getting our staff back to work. As our operations are picking up, we are asking our resources to rejoin. However, keeping in mind the overall conditions that prevail, we are following a need-to-come basis approach i.e. those who are required are asked to join whereas others are, as of now requested to stay at home. Our HR Cell is in direct contact with each team member and regular updates are passed on.

### **What are the challenges?**

COVID-19 is all about challenges only. Testing our patience and resilience like never before, it has radically altered everything around us and coming to terms with this new normal is the newest challenge that our industry is faced with. For a sector like ours, personalised service approach and human touch are two aspects that have been very important than anything else but now in the face of this outbreak, balancing these aspects with concepts like contactless service, reducing person-to-person interface & least interaction as far as possible along with other prescribed social distancing norms is a big challenge.

The hospitality & travel Industry was the first to get hit and shall be the last to recover in this pandemic. We have

overcome the survival mode & have just entered the revival mode but as footfalls are almost nil, this phase will pose the biggest challenges.

### **How are you training employees on the new SOPs?**

We have come up with a concept of 'The New Normal -- Redefining Luxury with State-of-the-art Safety/Hygiene Facilities'. Prepared with the help of medical experts and domain specialists, it essentially ensures that precautionary measures of the highest standards are at the core of everything that we do while ensuring complete compliance with the directives issued by Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Govt of India. We are training our staff around this theme wherein they are being sensitised about the seriousness of the situation and are being made to understand on how we can make 'the new normal a new opportunity' by adeptly adapting and responding to the situation through simple yet effective ways.

### **How are the contracts changing?**

The revenues of hospitality industry are at an all-time low. Any business, however strong it may have been will find it difficult to survive when its revenues are dried up for successive 3-4 months. Cost cutting is expected to be witnessed on a large scale in the hospitality industry and it is obvious that terms of contract will change but how and to what extent is something which will be organisation-specific.



We have come up with a concept of 'The New Normal -- Redefining Luxury with State-of-the-art Safety/Hygiene Facilities'



## Param Kannampilly Co-opted EC Member, FHRAI

### **How to get the staff to come back to work?**

With the COVID-19 outbreak where on one hand organisations have been struggling to ensure survival, it has also disrupted the personal and professional lives of people. We have a responsibility to step up, take care and support our people. It is far better for employees to be made aware of situations as they are unfolding than otherwise. A lack of information can make some people feel unsupported. Communication at these times should be more frequent, honest and empathetic and we also need to take steps to improve the well-being of our people.

We need to do the following to get people to come back to work:

- Build up employees' confidence in the precautions taken for their safety by managing their numbers to reduce the risk of spreading and contracting the virus.
- Continue with the practices of work from home at least until the COVID situation is brought under control.
- Offer team members opportunities to relocate to hotels within the chain near their hometown.
- Ensure all safety regulations regarding hygiene practices

every step we take is focused on putting their minds at ease. As an industry that believed in "Personalised Service with a smile" to an overnight change to "Contactless Personalised Service with a mask" while maintaining the essence of hospitality is a concept that requires flexibility to which our teams have adapted themselves well.

### **How are you training employees on the new SOPs?**

The key to our collective success lies in 'training' our team members, 'implementation & adherence' on the shop floor & 'monitoring' to eliminate any deviation. We have effectively implied blended learning techniques such as virtual led programmes coupled with self-learning & on the job role plays (with minimum numbers while maintaining social distancing) to train our team members & heighten their awareness on the new SOPs.



The key to our success lies in 'training' team members, 'implementation' on the shop floor & 'monitoring'



**Param Kannampilly**



and social distancing are observed at the workplace.

- Educate people to stay at home if they are feeling unwell, capture workplace sentiments in the form of employee surveys and act on it.
- Be empathetic to people who may be afraid to resume duties due to fear of contracting the virus and build the morale of people by appreciating their achievements.

### **What are the challenges?**

Uncertainty is the major challenge we all face, and this has put people under a lot of stress. They are relying on their company to consider their safety and well-being first and

### **How are the contracts changing?**

While COVID-19 has made performance/deliverables difficult or impossible for people, it has caused hindrances to some people in performing their contractual obligations, while others have been completely incapable of performance/delivering. Organisations therefore are replacing their full-time employees with temporary or conditional appointments either as a cost convenient measure or to avoid employees' lien on employment. However, we believe we are in the service of people and do not wish to part with them who are our greatest assets.



**Lakshyaraj Singh Mewar**

## **Lakshyaraj Singh Mewar EC Member, FHRAI**

### **How to get the staff to come back to work?**

The pandemic has proved to be a test of our times, our commitment towards society, towards our staff and, of course, towards our business enterprises. We have to discharge our responsibilities at so many levels now. Yes, we are adhering to the government's rules and regulations regarding the unlocking of public places. Our HR teams had been in regular touch with the staff members. We have begun our operations in Udaipur and every member of the HRH Group of Hotels is putting their best foot forward.

### **What are the challenges?**

The challenges are at the macro-level, the country and the global level. Tourism is the key to the revival of our economy but the airlines, railways, buses have to begin operations in full swing. We have a long way to go before the new normal becomes norm, so to say. But I am optimistic we shall overcome these challenges in due course of time.

### **How are you training employees on the new SOPs?**

There have been several rounds of HR training across our HRH Group of Hotels. The new SOPs have been finalised,



shared and internalised by the staff. During the lockdown, and now as we are unlocking, the online and offline training sessions have been underway. Our palace-hotels and sanctuary-resorts are spread over acres of space, with gardens and greenery all around. Special care has been taken to sanitise the public areas.

### **How are the contracts changing?**

We are a third-generation family business. Our staff and management have been with us for years. One can safely say they are a part of our family. Yes, in these challenging times, they have stood by us; and we have stood by them. The nature of employment rules are not subject to such immediate change. Our HR teams will ensure that the status quo remains. Together, we will be there as the country unlocks and the wheels of tourism begin to move.



We have begun operating in Udaipur and every member of the HRH Group of Hotels is putting their best foot forward



# Learning online to be new normal

**Dilip Puri**, Founder & CEO of Indian School of Hospitality (ISH) says that for educational institutes, delivering high-quality learning online is going to be the new normal.

 Nisha Verma

**C**laiming that institutes like ISH are well prepared for the new normal, Puri adds, "In the last three months, all our curriculum, barring the practical side, is being delivered online, and is providing more effective learning. By doing that, we have also been able to look at our curriculum from a different perspective and see how much of that can be digitised to create a blended learning opportunity. We are already delivering the new semester online full-time, five days a week and students have moved on to the new semesters.

While we had a challenge as one batch was meant to go for internships, we could flexibly bring the later curriculum to these six months and push their internships to January. In education, if you are able to adapt and use technology effectively, delivering high-quality learning online, it's going to be the new normal. I'd like to believe that institutions like ISH are very well prepared for it, and the same goes for other academic institutions, as they are getting prepared for it too, since this is the new normal."

Puri insists that to be able to stay relevant in the post-COVID scenario and open the institute, they have to adhere to the guidelines, and hence it is all the more important to offer a blend of online learning and classroom learning. "We've looked at our curriculum and we believe that almost everything can be delivered online, except the pure practical side. However, today there are enough tools and techniques to deliver practical learning effectively online. We are already working on solutions for that as well.

However, practically speaking, we will complete the academic, theoretical side of the curriculum by August-September because we have already started them online. When students would come back to college or campus, they would be able to devote more time to completing the practical subjects. However, it's not as big a challenge as it's made out to be and you can deliver all kinds of learning very effectively, and one just has to understand how students can adapt to technology," he shares.



Puri thinks it is the best time for students to get trained for the new normal. "This is the time, when they can actually get a ring side view of some very monumental changes towards what we describe the new normal to be, including the way they consume education and learning."

Sharing details about their programme for postgraduates, he insisted that it is appropriate for also upskilling newcomers in the industry, who might not have a job today. "In August, Indian School of Hospitality will be launching a postgraduate programme in service operations. This programme is meant for all industries from retail to hospitality, and F&B to aviation. It is designed for young graduates who want to opt for an operating programme to be employed with newer skills," concludes Puri.



**Dilip Puri**



You can deliver all kinds of learning effectively; one just has to understand how students can adapt to technology





# “Maharashtra has huge potential”

**Aaditya Uddhav Thackeray**, Cabinet Minister of Tourism and Environment, Government of Maharashtra, talks to HRAWI members in a freewheeling digital interview.

 Hazel Jain



**Aaditya Uddhav Thackeray**

**T**he young and dynamic minister who is pro-tourism and a friend of the hospitality industry, discussed plans for the state with **Gurbaxish Singh Kohli**, President, HRAWI and Vice President of FHRAI, along with other key members of the association. The association is looking to him to address three points: need for liquidity and working capital, how to exit lockdown, and how to survive post lockdown. The webinar saw around 800 participants.

**Aaditya Uddhav Thackeray** emphasised on the need for a collaborative approach from all the stakeholders for revival and growth of the hospitality industry. “We recently had a meeting with the Ministry of Tourism in Rajasthan and the government of

Maharashtra to figure how we can collaborate in terms of tourism and hospitality,” he said. In the wake of the industry being virtually abandoned by the Central government, the industry’s eyes are set on the state for help. To this, Thackeray said, “The reason why we have not announced any package for this industry is because we are fighting a battle at the forefront. As the state of Maharashtra, our every digit, every effort is accountable. This is a long-drawn battle and to fight it we need to look at economic sustenance as well. Having said that, I am extremely keen that Maharashtra be the first state to declare something promising and deliver on that promise for everyone.”

## STATE’S FOCUS ON TOURISM

“My aim is to make the entire state of Maharashtra





I am keen that Maharashtra be the first state to declare something promising and deliver on that promise



## ISSUES PUT FORTH

- Need for liquidity and working capital and facilitating working capital requirements
- Exemption in electricity duty, which is charged at 21 per cent
- Property tax waiver for 6-9 months with the caveat that landlords should pass it on to the establishments
- Waiver of increased excise licence fees that are payable upfront
- Subsidies available to the manufacturing sector should be extended to hotels and restaurants

run on tourism. The state government wants to develop Maharashtra as a tourism-positive state. Probably the single-largest budget allocation for tourism was done this year where Mumbai alone got ₹1,500 crore and the rest of Maharashtra got a good budget, too. Then this pandemic happened," said Thackeray. He also thanked the hotel industry that has helped the government of Maharashtra house healthcare professionals and police force for quarantine.

### EXIT STRATEGY

In terms of getting out from the lockdown, Thackeray revealed that some 5 lakh workers have already started coming back to the 50,000 industries located in some of the green zones of Maharashtra. But these zones keep fluctuating because of the number of cases that keep rising or falling. "Our tourism and hospitality industry will take some time to get back on its feet. I am going to write to the Centre for including some sort of package for the industry. Maharashtra has huge potential as a tourist destination. I want to pitch our state to the world. However, international travel will probably not start before December 2020," he stated.

### TASK FORCE FOR STATE

"I want to establish a task force for Maharashtra and I want you – the industry – to have an equal voice in that. As you said, hospitality has the industry tag to it but isn't recognised as one. So, how do we work with other sectors closely in that? I would suggest that the task force we have made for the state's economic revival – we have Deepak

Parekh in it and a few more people from the finance and PE sectors – I would like us to create one document which we can present to them so we can work in sync. They can tell us what is doable in the short, medium and long-term," Thackeray suggested.

### BUSINESS TRAVEL, A FOCUS AREA

With Mumbai the financial capital of India, the industry urged him to help promote business travel in the city. "Business travel is our core competency so we cannot ignore that. We already have a plan to make Mumbai, Pune and Thane more vibrant in terms of using F&B and hotel space innovatively. That was the initial plan, but we will have to execute this now. Let us work on two clear agendas: one is how to sustain this lockdown period and come out of it safely, and how do we use open space keeping in mind physical distancing norms," he said.

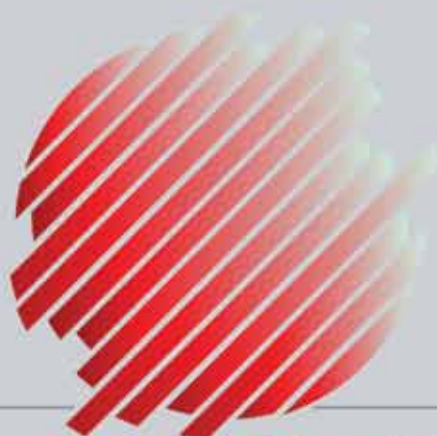
### OTHER PARTS OF MAHARASHTRA

Driving the focus to other parts of Maharashtra that have seen development, Thackeray shared that Aurangabad, where basic infrastructure needed an overhaul, now has new roads laid down and tourist buses have started running. "We will be looking at the airports and its facilities now. We have also drafted a tourism policy, but it hasn't been released yet. We are also looking at the entire Raigad-Ratnagiri-Sindhudurg belt where we are planning a coastal road. Along with that I have been very keen on having hotels in that region as well. Plus, we are looking at a joint venture in a PPP model with MTDC and I am very keen on taking this forward," he summed up.

# COVID Safe



# **COVID Compliance Audits & Certification for Hotels & Restaurants**



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**QualSTAR**  
CLASSIFICATION & RATING

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In accordance with ISO/IEC 17065:2012



**NABCB Accreditation**

(Under process)



# A new journey begins...

In his fourth article of the series on tourism, **Himanshu Talwar**, ASG, FHRAI talks about how the hospitality & tourism sector seems to be on the way to recovery.



**Himanshu Talwar**

**T**he world could have never possibly predicted this large a pandemic which has taken every continent by storm. After months of lockdown, the world is slowly opening up and the economy is back on the tough path to revival. With restaurants and hotels slowly opening up in phases since the beginning of June, the Indian hospitality sector has been very determined in its approach.

The hospitality and tourism sector, and most other sectors included, had been almost entirely inactive during most of

the lockdown period. Restaurants were shut down and hotels are empty, other than the ones which have been converted to provide quarantine facilities. While this was the lockdown reality of the hospitality sector, the sector has been quick in drafting and preparing new guidelines for their sustainability in the aftermath of this worldwide pandemic that has left humans extremely sensitive.

Delivery and takeout service constitute one of the major revenue points of restaurants as people are still apprehensive about dining in even after lockdown ends. For dining in, the spacing of tables is a critical decision for guests looking at venues and the Restaurant Manager's ability to space guests to different areas of a room to ensure space is maximised. Normally the staff would frequently visit the tables for additional sauces, condiments and service checks but now these have been minimised to only when necessary. The staff conduct a



With government support we will be back to our usual strength and power sooner than we could imagine



one-stop delivery with a step back to provide optimum and appreciable hospitality service. The restaurants have minimised furniture use and provide as much space as possible between tables. Fewer tables are now laid out to allow social distancing norms to be followed. The employees are all medically fit and accordingly customers are assured.

Sanitisation methods are compulsory before entering every hotel or restaurant. Masks and gloves are compulsory for all staff members who strictly adhere to these policies for their own safety as well as the guests' safety. Screening and temperature checks of all guests and staff on arrival is a part of the daily routine. Health and hospitality now walk hand-in-hand since most hotels and restaurants have resumed business. Automatic electric doors are more favourable to push/pull. The frequency of wiping down high-use items such as door handles and lift buttons has been increased, and guests use provided or their own disposable wipes with allotted waste bins to dispose off these items.

Hotels have made investments in technology to sustain the inflow of people and in turn, revenue. Automated

guests stand on allocated or marked areas or follow social distancing during most forms of in person communication. Check-ins are mostly digitised with as less interaction as possible. In most kitchens, there are only three staff members for every ten feet.

The hospitality sector has been very successful in adapting quickly and steadfastly to the changing environment. The way we project our hospitality may have changed but at its core, being hospitable still maintains the same definition of being warm and welcoming. People already miss the daily urgent flow that life had before the pandemic swept all of them inside homes with no social interactions. There is a lot of hope for the hospitality sector to doubly prosper once the pandemic ends. Till then, we need to stick to the plan and look at the bright side of things.

The hospitality sector has been very successful in adapting quickly and steadfastly to the changing environment



entry systems, technology-based sanitisation, automatic light system, and other such advanced technological measures are being rolled out. This ensures a touch-free experience and interaction. The technological innovations have been taken up by restaurants who can afford to invest in them. Slowly and steadily, the hospitality sector will be back to normal but with a safer and more hygienic experience.

Social distancing norms is a big part of the picture, at least in the near future. The staff as well as the

With limited support of the government, the hospitality and tourism sector seems to be on its way to make a strong comeback on its own. If our government joined us in our efforts towards revival of the hospitality and tourism sector, and we would request them to do so, we will be back to our usual strength and power sooner than we could imagine.

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

# Leadership amidst crisis

Industry leaders share insights on how during these times, it is important to connect with employees on a psychological level.

 Neha Rawat



Gurmeet Singh

## Gurmeet Singh Senior Area Director Human Resource – South Asia, Marriott International

### REACHING OUT TO EMPLOYEES

At Marriott, we take pride in our associates & constantly aim at enhancing our relations with them, now more than ever. Some of the initiatives taken by us are as follows:

- **Communication is key:** There is transparent and constant communication about COVID-19 and its prevention, impact on business, local happenings and the 'new normal' that we all have to embrace.
- **Recognising associate efforts:** Hotels have been regularly recognising the efforts of associates by instant recognition programmes, public acknowledgement, certificate of appreciation and personalised notes by the General Manager for all those who worked tirelessly during the lockdown.
- **Focusing on associate well-being:** This involves connecting with associates & understanding if they are facing any challenges with their physical/mental health or financial security.

### IMPLEMENTING BEST PRACTICES ACROSS THE BOARD

We are focused on maintaining great relationships with our associates by supporting one another. Some of the best practices that we have implemented are:

- **#MarriottStrong Stay in Touch Communication** – Weekly communication from Marriott Asia Pacific which highlights business news; leadership voice – podcast and links of videos whereby senior leaders in the company talk on various topics; resources and tips for associates on how to manage during these uncertain times; learning and development highlights; taking care of our local community; and cross-sharing campaigns & stories to encourage others.
- **#MarriottStrong Associate Stories** – Associates are encouraged to share stories about their personal wellness & journey during these trying times.

### IMPACT OF COVID RELATED TRAINING ON EMPLOYEES' PERFORMANCE

We have developed guidelines for the 'new normal' as well as adopting the robust 'Commitment to Clean' global programme that redefines cleaning and safety standards. An in-depth training is conducted in all our hotels to disseminate information on the new campaigns and initiatives which help us keep the teams motivated and instill reassurance among them. The company is also providing an opportunity to associates to upgrade their skillset and gain knowledge about other departments' functions. We have witnessed a positive impact on the productivity levels through these trainings as the associates gained a sense of belonging, thus resulting in great customer relations.

### STRATEGIES DEVELOPED TO RETAIN TALENT

As we change and grow, the beliefs that are most important to us stay the same – putting people first, pursuing excellence, embracing change, acting with integrity and serving our world. Some of the strategies undertaken to retain talent are digital learning programmes and resources; job role enhancement to build a motivated team; making resources available for associates to enhance or learn new skills; and initiatives which involve taking care of our team.



Associates are encouraged to share stories about their personal wellness & journey during these trying times



## Rajesh Kumar VP Human Resources, Lemon Tree Hotels

### REACHING OUT TO EMPLOYEES

The most vital element when it comes to management-employee relations is communication. A clear crisis communication strategy is what we have maintained through this period. There is consistency in our internal and external messages so that employees feel a sense of trust towards the management. Our leaders are the ones who are leading by example as now is the time to rebuild trust in the workplace. Right from the CMD to the President to Corporate Function Heads to Unit General Managers and Heads of Departments, all speak the same language and inspire the teams on the shop floor and also those who are working from home.

### IMPLEMENTING BEST PRACTICES ACROSS THE BOARD

There are many things that we have continued from the

directives in light of the current pandemic. Since the lockdown and the change in the way we engage with guests occurred without notice, employees had to be re-trained and mentally prepared to serve guests in a contactless manner. There were a lot of changes and overlays in our processes and consequently the employees were trained so they were more aware, safe, secure and confident about doing their job par excellence.

### STRATEGIES DEVELOPED TO RETAIN TALENT

Our biggest strength has been our employees; our journey from a single hotel to 80 hotels in 18 years is surely attributed to the efforts the employees on the shop floor who have made guests feel at home even when they are away from home. Hence, it was our joint decision to take a salary cut for managers and above so that no one loses his/her job. Travel & tourism industry has been adversely



Rajesh Kumar



earlier times, for example, engagement chats between the General Manager and employees are continuing. The main purpose of these chats being that the General Manager gets to know what the colleague is feeling since these are stressful times for especially for the frontline staff. We are conducting regular morning or evening briefings to discuss important issues for the day. New initiatives include the use of technology, for seamless communication the Telegram app is now being used by all employees. This is one place where a text message sent by the CMD can reach a shop floor level employee directly.

### IMPACT OF COVID RELATED TRAINING ON EMPLOYEES' PERFORMANCE

The only constant in the way that we work today is that there is no compromise in service delivery. We have updated all our service standards in line with government



There is consistency in our internal & external messages; employees feel a sense of trust towards management



affected due to this pandemic, yet the hotel employees have stood firm in providing exemplary services to all guests who have walked in through the hotel's doors. Our focus has been to retain every single person who has stood by us during this time. Like in the years before, this year too we have shortlisted High Potential Employees and Super High Achievers. Individual development plans have been put into place for every person. In case employees have asked for transfers to properties closer to their homes, we've tried to accommodate everyone.



**Yogendra Agnihotri**

**Yogendra Agnihotri**  
**Director Human Resources – South Asia**  
**Radisson Hotels**

**REACHING OUT TO EMPLOYEES**

Our hotel and corporate teams are working exceptionally hard to manage the impact of the COVID-19 outbreak, and our primary focus is of course the health and well-being of all our guests and colleagues. Our endeavour is to strengthen the bond with our colleagues through a three-fold approach: communicate, connect and care.

**IMPLEMENTING BEST PRACTICES ACROSS THE BOARD**

Some of our engagement initiatives include periodic newsletters around relatable topics; weekly learning vitamins to enhance leadership and functional capabilities

relevant in the current scenario; and ‘Radisson Academy Online’ which will take center stage for employees. Going forward, most of our new programmes would be administered through this initiative.

**IMPACT OF COVID RELATED TRAINING ON EMPLOYEES’ PERFORMANCE**

To ensure a seamless transition to their new roles and exceed guest expectations, we have devised ‘Business Recovery & Re-Opening Training’ modules for employees across all our hotels. The role of these trainings is to empower employees to make the right decisions and be prepared for complex scenarios.



**STRATEGIES DEVELOPED TO RETAIN TALENT**

With a robust network of 94 operating hotels, we are in a unique position to leverage the strength of our scale to deploy talent in an optimal manner. Clustering of resources and deployment of internal task forces to new projects are some of the measures we have taken to retain talent.



Most of our new programmes would be administered through the ‘Radisson Academy Online’ initiative



**Nihar Mehta**

**Nihar Mehta**  
**GM – HR, Sarovar Gurgaon**

**REACHING OUT TO EMPLOYEES**

We ensure there is constant interaction between respective functional heads & teams for understanding job functions better & resolving issues. The company has also increased its focus on online training sessions.

**IMPLEMENTING BEST PRACTICES ACROSS THE BOARD**

Best practices such as corporate social responsibilities, helping local administration or hospitals by providing basic facilities during the pandemic, and motivational activities for employees are highlighted across the company.



**IMPACT OF COVID RELATED TRAINING ON EMPLOYEES’ PERFORMANCE**

Functional trainings play an important role in overall development of employees, and Sarovar Hotels ensure the trainings continue.

**STRATEGIES DEVELOPED TO RETAIN TALENT**

We believe in retaining talent and looking at good appraisals and promoting deserving employees. Many employees get good opportunities while working with Sarovar Hotels.



Functional trainings play a vital role in overall development, and Sarovar Hotels ensure the trainings continue





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

**REACHING OUT TO EMPLOYEES**

For organisations where human touch is the key, like hospitality, one cannot completely go virtual. Though technology is playing a major role, it is a means to fulfil our mission and not an end in itself, therefore maintaining employee morale becomes that much more important.

**IMPLEMENTING BEST PRACTICES ACROSS THE BOARD**

Here are a few ways in which we provide the much-needed support to our employees:

- Appoint an Internal Crisis Committee for help
- Instill a work-life balance culture by helping employees create a personal growth path
- Provide for and encourage professional development and career advancement
- Encourage employee participation in planning processes
- Build effective channels of communication
- Introduce new wellness programmes and counselling



We advise hotels & restaurants to seek alternate corporate strategies such as using technology and reviewing costs



**Gurbaxish Singh Kohli**

Hence, HR needs to be flexible, providing direction, enhancing confidence and building resilience during these trying times.

**STRATEGIES DEVELOPED TO RETAIN TALENT**

It is clear that many businesses will have to tighten their belts. Instead of laying off workers or slashing wages, we advise hotels and restaurants to seek alternate corporate strategies such as using technology and reviewing costs to stretch the budget. Companies can offer more generous and flexible benefits packages, but that will depend if our government might be able to help out with that.

**Pradeep Shetty**  
Director – Maharaja Foods  
VP & Chairman, Legal Matters – HRAWI and Jt. Hon Secretary – FHRAI

**REACHING OUT TO EMPLOYEES**

In the present scenario, we are engaging in direct communication with our employees and making them aware of the criticality of the situation and at the same time being sensitive to employee concerns. As such, we have assured all that we are in this together and have to collectively find a way out to make it a win-win situation for all concerned. Fortunately, there has been tremendous support and understanding from the employees

**IMPLEMENTING BEST PRACTICES ACROSS THE BOARD**

Well it's time for being light on fixed costs. Hence, to be able to work with limited staff, pooling in resources and ensuring optimum results in limited capacity operations are key. We are deploying staff, with stay-in facility to work to ensure safe environment for all.

**IMPACT OF COVID RELATED TRAINING ON EMPLOYEES' PERFORMANCE**

The impact is for the good and surely positive. With so much of lockdown period behind us, there was enough time to train and gain for everybody. Adapting to new measures is way better during these times whereby employees are mindful of the seriousness of the issue as well as how our business and survival now depends on providing safe environment for our guests.

**STRATEGIES DEVELOPED TO RETAIN TALENT**

Of course, talent is still valued and the only way to retain employees is to take care of them through these times. As such, we have ensured sufficient pay checks support to talent along with engaging with employees to bring them together with us for the betterment of the organisation and most importantly 'survival.'



**Pradeep Shetty**



To be able to work with limited staff, pooling in resources and ensuring optimum results are key



# What lies ahead...

Regional Presidents discuss how hotels & restaurants are coping after the lockdown, what kinds of challenges they are facing and their strategies for surviving in the new normal.

Neha Rawat



**Gurbaxish Singh Kohli**  
President, HRAWI

## ZERO CASH FLOW AND DRIED UP REVENUES

The biggest challenge for now is survival with zero cash flow and dried up revenues. We must understand that whenever this lockdown ends, there are bound to be casualties and this will directly impact jobs. The process has started.

When a premises shuts or scales down, the workers are also reduced and that means loss of jobs. The hospitality industry depends largely on migratory labour. Whether they return, when they return is another question. Right now the priority is to keep kitchen fires burning,



Every group is thinking afresh, re-calibrating, localising supply chains, and looking at new revenue streams

ours and of our employees. Even after restarting, until there is a cure for the virus in the form of a vaccine or similar, the fear of it resurging will always be there.

## PRESSING THE RESET BUTTON

This is a time for pressing the reset button. Every group is thinking afresh, re-calibrating, localising supply chains, changing the way they operate, looking at new and additional revenue streams.

I see greater use of technology, with many more functions getting digitised. Every fixed cost will be reviewed afresh. Each establishment will have to be geared towards greater efficiency. This could mean redeployment of staff, outsourcing of some services, reduction or consolidation of services.

## NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR OUR DOMESTIC MARKET

The future will see different forms of travel. International travel will remain weak for some time, and Indian outbound of 22 million will offer new opportunities for our domestic market.

A lot of the outbound is MICE. If we can get the government to somehow incentivise these so that they can be contained within India, it could help us in bridging the gap and bouncing back. I foresee a market focused on the guest experience.



**Pranav Singh**  
President, HRAEI

## HARDLY 5-10% OF THE USUAL FOOTFALLS WERE WITNESSED

Restaurants and bars reopened early June in the region strictly following the "serve no liquor" order after a two-and-half-month closure. Strict social distancing norms and fear of the pandemic restricted footfalls to a bare minimum. Hardly 5-10 per cent of the usual footfalls were witnessed. Alcohols served in the bars and restaurants



If there is no waiver for fixed expenses, 40-50% of the hospitality industry will have to shut business

account for over 40 per cent of the total sale volume at most of the restaurants in the big cities. Some restaurants added new food and live music to compensate for the absence of

alcohol. Many small restaurants focused on home delivery to gain some traction. But these steps have not been able to draw many customers and we don't see any chance of revival.

## NO WAIVER FOR ANY OF THE FIXED EXPENSES

The biggest challenges are low footfalls and abysmal sales revenue. Paying salary to the staff, monthly rent to the landlord, electricity charges, property tax – the fixed expenses – is becoming more difficult as the pandemic and its effects keep spreading its tentacles in the hospitality industry. Despite appeals to both Central and multiple state governments we have not got any waiver for any of the fixed expenses. If this goes on, 40-50% of the hospitality industry will have to shut business.

## GUIDELINES TO COMBAT COVID-19 ARE RAPIDLY CHANGING

The future is so uncertain that you cannot plan any strategy in advance. Rate of infection is increasing. The guidelines to combat COVID-19 are rapidly changing. In the beginning the virus was believed to be transmitted by aerosols from one person to another, but now experts are saying the virus is airborne. Hence, social distancing measures are being modified. No future strategy is going to work in the situation. There is no 'new normal', things are changing fast.



**K. Syama Raju**  
President, SIHRA

### **PROVIDING EMPLOYMENT TO OVER 4 CRORE PEOPLE**

Hospitality has been one of the most severely affected industries by the COVID-19 pandemic and the subsequent lockdowns. Our industry provides employment to more than 4 crore people in the country and their livelihood has been impacted by the closure of the hotels and restaurants. After the initial total lockdown, restaurants were allowed to provide food take away and delivery services and a number of restaurants decided to opt for this service. But for many others, most of their staff had returned to their hometowns and it was not viable for them to remain open. We have seen some hotels and restaurants close down since they have been unable to manage payment of rent for their premises and salaries without any income. During this time many hotels provided accommodation at special rates for doctors and Indian nationals returning from abroad who had to undergo compulsory quarantine.

### **NEED FOR COMPREHENSIVE TRAINING**

The entire standards for running a hotel or restaurant have changed due to the pandemic,

there are strict guidelines to be followed, and this has been disseminated to all our members. The challenges are many, such as, ensuring adequate staffing, training in the new procedures covering the range of services from check-in to check-out.

### **WE MUST ADAPT TO CHANGES AND MOVE FORWARD**

We remain optimistic and we are looking forward to the time when things return to normal,

“Hospitality industry must be prepared for challenges and provide the service levels that guests are seeking”

though we know this could take time. With the easing of restrictions and the re-opening of hotels and restaurants in most places in South India, our industry must adapt to the changes and move forward.

Domestic tourism, especially travel within a state will be the first step, followed by interstate travel. Hotels must ready themselves in line with the standard operating procedures and guidelines shared by the Ministry of Tourism to receive these guests. As things improve, interstate travel will commence and many people will look at the option of driving to the location, since air travel is curtailed and has many restrictions. The hospitality industry must be prepared for the challenges that follow in this phase and yet provide the service levels that guests are seeking.



**Surendra Kumar Jaiswal**  
President, HRANI

### **BARS SHOULD BE ALLOWED TO OPERATE**

Due to closure of operations of all hotels in Delhi, the hospitality industry is now looking at large scale bankruptcies, which will lead to job losses. Also, dining-out culture has taken a particularly bad hit from lockdown regimes.

The restaurant industry is facing its worst existential crisis. Bars have not been allowed to operate till date by GOI. Sales in bars is a key source of revenue and is also taken in account while calculating the operating cost of hospitality units. In fact, bar is an integral part of hotel and restaurant operations which is seen as value addition in increasing F&B sales including rooms.

A hefty amount of excise fee has been paid by the bar owners to the respective state governments. Therefore, following the SOPs for restaurants, the operations of bars should also be allowed at par with hotels and restaurants.

### **SURVIVAL & REVIVAL PACKAGE**

HRANI has sent representations to Central and state government with a request for Survival & Revival Package comprising of soft loans for longer periods at lowered

rates of interest; increase in moratorium; refund / adjustment of bar license fee; waiver of demand /fixed charges levied in electricity bills, waiver on property tax / house tax along with revisit on the GST and input tax credit issue.

Govt must allocate funds for promotional activities The primary aim of all the stakeholders of the country would be to bring back the confidence of the tourists to visit India.

The government and private stakeholders should very subtly publicise this newly acquired credibility for promoting our travel and tourism sector. Government should allocate sufficient funds for organising road shows and other promotional activities in prospective markets.

### **HOTEL FRIENDLY DIGITISATION PACKAGE**

Hotels need to invest in technology to sustain the

“Govt should allocate funds for organising roadshows and other activities in prospective markets”

inflow of people and in turn, revenue. They should adopt a hotel friendly digitisation package as it includes a number of tools that will help to maintain social distancing and adjust the hotel to new requirements.

This package could offer commission-free room booking, immediate revenue generation, Cloud-based hotel software, information app and service order app.

# Empowering human resources

Stalwarts of the hospitality industry share insights on how to sharpen the skillset of employees and prepare them to tide over the current crisis.



Neha Rawat



Rishabh Tandon

## Rishabh Tandon

Area Director Human Resources, North India – IHG  
& Director Human Resources, Crowne Plaza Greater Noida

### IMPROVING MANAGEMENT-EMPLOYEE RELATIONS

In this dynamic and ever evolving management-employee relationship, the three strong pillars are – transparency, empathy and fairness. Transparency of hotel updates as regards our people, guest experiences and even financial returns builds a strong culture between all important stakeholders. Feelings of empathy especially in these challenging times have yielded long-lasting relationships between the employees & management. Fairness in all decisions and its effective communication helps in optimising management-employee relationships. The three pillars have proved to be game changers in delivering quality performance in these testing times.



There are around 105 new SOP-based training sessions which colleagues must complete before resuming operations



### SHARING BEST PRACTICES ACROSS THE SPECTRUM

Some of our best practices are:

- **I am here** – A colleague wellness programme at IHG with a strong message of “It’s OK not to be OK.” Our colleagues get an opportunity to be certified as Tribe and Ambassador members to aid colleagues in need.
- **An hour with Human Resources** – An open-door platform to share thoughts, feedback and queries to support colleagues in trying times.
- **True Hospitality stories** – We have featured the stories of our people who have gone above and beyond the call of their regular duty on IHG Careers page.
- 1000 Hours learning challenge with colleagues successfully completing the entire set of 43 Harvard Manage Mentor leadership programme.

### TRAINING STAFF ON NEW SOPs

Considering safe distancing measures, we are using a blended learning approach of online IHG My Learning sessions, classroom sessions with special seating arrangements and digital learning sessions at scheduled intervals. There are around 105 new SOP-based training sessions which colleagues need to complete before resuming hotel operations in the new normal. Signature training programmes include IHG Culture of Clean; IHG Foundation Safety Level 1 & 2; Food Safety & Management System Programmes; and IHG Way of Clean.



**Satish Kumar**  
Senior Director – Talent & Culture, Accor India & South Asia



**Satish Kumar**

**IMPROVING MANAGEMENT-  
EMPLOYEE RELATIONS**

At Accor, employees are always considered to be key differentiators and most valued assets. Employees are at the centre of every single strategic initiative, project, action, or decision. Currently, our focus is on enhanced employee relations, with special attention to a conscious choice of the right company culture. There is a great energy, support and trust within the teams while responding to the world of uncertainty and this has been possible because we are all aligned to a shared mission and values. It is also important to provide a safe environment

Accor has also launched the ALL Heartist Fund, a Euro 70 million COVID-19 special purpose vehicle which will, amongst other missions, assist the group’s employees, pledging to pay COVID-19 related hospital expenses for those who do not have social security or medical insurance and on a case-by-case basis, help the furloughed employees suffering any financial distress.

**TRAINING STAFF ON NEW SOPs**

At Accor, we have launched the ALLSAFE label, our new elevated cleanliness protocols and standards and



to our employees. At this time of crisis, we want our employees to look after themselves and their families. We are communicating regularly with our staff members to ensure they are safe, providing masks and sanitisers to all our employees, personal protective equipment for those who require, and adhering to the social distancing guidelines.

**SHARING BEST PRACTICES  
ACROSS THE SPECTRUM**

To better support our teams during this time, we have rolled out several initiatives intended to keep them motivated. We launched a 24x7 Employee Wellness Assistance Plan (EWAP) through which employees are encouraged to seek professional assistance which includes several services that are confidential and free for employees and their family members. These include confidential counselling with stress, grief, anxiety, or any other concern they might have.

At Accor, employees are at the centre of every strategic initiative, project, action, or decision

provide assurance that these standards have been met in our hotels. To ensure all teams are aligned, we are using space of virtual trainings along with physical trainings for the employees who are working in the hotel. We have an ALLSAFE Officer from within the senior management of the hotel team whose job is to ensure that all staff members of the hotel including contract staff will be given comprehensive safety and hygiene training. We are training our staff to operate hotels in the era of new normal and are promoting contactless check-in, check-out, and payments whenever possible.



Anil Mishra

**Anil Mishra**  
**Corporate HR Manager**  
**Lords Hotels and Resorts**

**IMPROVING MANAGEMENT-EMPLOYEE RELATIONS**

At Lords we build our relationship with employees through 'Employee Connect with Empathy & Support'. Post-COVID our HR transformation would be based on the pillar of 3Rs, viz. reassuring the team about their safety & security & also building resilience in their minds against ambiguity or any conflict; reintroducing the system to deal with new challenges; and rebuilding confidence in the team to handle the situation & have faith in their abilities. We will continue with the practice of open & consistent communication with the team & ensure transparency, keep the process simple & efficient and deploy a robust employee listening mechanism.

**SHARING BEST PRACTICES ACROSS THE SPECTRUM**

We share new trends, news & insights across the spectrum about the latest updates in the industry & this helps us to upgrade for competitive edge over competitors. At Lords we have a structure that ensures communication within

We project multiskilling as an opportunity & being a learning organisation, we reward the same



an organisation, an organisational culture that supports collaboration, and absorptive capacity which enables organisations to have the skills to change practices. This "generates creative and innovative ideas" & in turn boosts the performance and productivity of an organisation, nurtures learning & identifies knowledge gaps.

**TRAINING STAFF ON NEW SOPs**

We prepare the team for paradigm shifts and also train them to use crisis as a catalyst for change. We are using both the tools, formal & informal. However, emphasis is on webinars, conference calls/one-on-one discussions, social media and also other means of digital communication. We also restructure HR policies and train the team & update them on new SOPs. This includes regular classroom training/webinars/OJT on experts' recommendations, new guidelines & SOPs on safety & hygiene and new operational procedures with lot of engagement activities to keep the team involved & enjoy the implementation of the same. We project multiskilling as an opportunity for learning new skills & being a learning organisation, encourage & reward the same.



Sarbendra Sarkar

**Sarbendra Sarkar**  
**Founder and Managing Director, Cygnett Hotels and Resorts**

**IMPROVING MANAGEMENT-EMPLOYEE RELATIONS**

In these strenuous times, it's natural for employees to get worried about their jobs and salaries. This will certainly affect the employee-management relationship and dissatisfaction amongst the employees may surge. Any organisation should emphasise on building concrete relationships with its employees. Like at Cygnett, we enhanced trust by informing our over 1,200 human assets that there would not be any retrenchments, however, there could be salary cuts. Also, all the GMs and HR managers are in constant touch to build empathy with respective employees and check their well-being. This

We have started training on-ground human resources in adherence to guidelines by healthcare authorities

continuous communication will yield positive results and lead to minuscule attrition numbers.

**SHARING BEST PRACTICES ACROSS THE SPECTRUM**

The corporate and hotel HR teams should be in touch with all their counterparts even in other organisations and share best practices. Practices like leave utilisation, salary cuts, employee morale-boosting techniques are shared and learnt too.

**TRAINING STAFF ON NEW SOPs**

Cygnett Hotels Operations and L&D teams have come up with robust SOPs and guidelines, which have been made sacrosanct to ensure that guests have the same experience across the board. We have started regular training of the on-ground human resources in adherence to the guidelines released by the healthcare authorities. Virtual training using on-site videos is carried out for units under the reopening phase.



# Explore, find and source – virtually!

The IHGF Delhi Fair 2020 Virtual to be held from July 13-18 will bring to you exclusive home, lifestyle, fashion & textile collections from leading Indian manufacturer exporters.

**T**he globally iconic fair – IHGF Delhi Fair, had been out of reach for domestic volume buyers and sellers for decades. Over the last few editions, exporters who manufacture and sell to the world's leading brands, opened to select clientele in India, that too on invitation. Although, since then some from the organised retail and e-commerce segment have managed to source more and more with every passing edition, the present challenging environment poses an opportunity for many more to source through the virtual platform. With many overseas buyers' volumes uncertain or deferred, more exporters would be open to selling to domestic volume buyers. So, if you want a piece of the pie of the exclusive world-class products, now is the time.

IHGF Delhi Fair 2020 would be in a virtual format composed with engaging onsite experiences. This is a platform to connect in real time during the event. You can reach this show at a time convenient to you and from your current location. Brought to you by the Export Promotion Council for Handicrafts (EPCH), the show is sure to woo visitors with myriad designs, classic & innovative natural materials and sustainable concepts in both traditional and contemporary offerings, all comprising the inimitable home, lifestyle, fashion & textiles

collections. You can expect relevant and exotic world famed display lines thoughtfully developed and exhibited by credible manufacturers, exporters and artisans. The presented innovations are a result of consistent feedback, research and exploration of materials, crafts, forms & finishes. Mainly catering to the international buying community, on persistent demand, this show is now selectively open to domestic volume buyers in India,

including importers, wholesalers, distributors, retail chains, merchandisers and interior designers. The fair will focus on product origins and inspirations that are popular worldwide.

From products that exude the latest international design trends to those that boast of unique traditional workmanship & techniques, IHGF Delhi Fair offers it all. So, get ready to find promising assortment of creations, varied in inspiration, processes and materials – art metal ware, EPNS ware, wood carvings, furniture & accessories, glassware, fashion jewellery & accessories, hand-printed textiles, shawls, stoles & scarves, embroidered goods, toys, houseware, decorative gifts & general handicrafts, home textiles & home accessories, candles & incense, pottery, terracotta & ceramics, nautical instruments, Christmas and floral decorations, dry flowers & potpourri, handmade paper products, crafts made of leather, lacquer, marble, etc.

IHGF Delhi Fair 2020 will present over 1,500 leading exporters. A choice of 2,000+ products and 300+ trend specific design developments encompassing the complete supply chain of home fashion & utility, collectibles, gifting and fashion accessories, would spread out in the virtual space.

## BROAD CATEGORIES

- GIFTS AND DECORATIVES
- FURNITURE & ACCESSORIES
- HOME FURNISHINGS
- BATHROOM AND BATH ACCESSORIES
- GARDEN AND OUTDOOR
- EDUCATIONAL TOYS AND GAMES
- HANDMADE PAPER PRODUCTS AND STATIONERY
- FASHION JEWELLERY & ACCESSORIES
- LEATHER BAGS & CASES



# Stalwarts in kitchen equipment

Mittal International is one of the pioneers in providing commercial kitchen equipment to hotels since 1968. **Rajinder Mittal**, Owner, Mittal International, tells us more.

**M**ittal International is the leading importer of kitchen equipment for hotels and other institutions catering to the needs of food & beverage industry of India. Renowned for its customised service, the company offers a wide range of products for the hospitality industry. On long-standing and humble beginnings, **Rajinder Mittal** shared, "Mittal International has

been a marketing company since 1968. Initially we marketed refrigeration and air conditioning spare parts. Around 42 years ago, we introduced the Scotsman ice machine, and then the Taylor ice-cream machine. A couple of years later we introduced Cappuccino and Espresso machines, the make was Kimberly. Then we started marketing the dishwasher called Winterhalter. Post this, we have added more companies."



I think our company has the highest stock of equipment; 20 per cent of our stock is spare parts



## USP

Explaining about their company, he said, "We are marketing equipment to hotels, restaurants, key accounts like McDonald's, KFC, Pizza Hut, Taco Bell etc. We do sales as well as provide after-sales service; 20 per cent of our stock is spare parts & there are 35 technicians all over India.

We have a stock of parts in Mumbai and Chennai as we have branches there. In June 2019 we opened a new showroom in Mumbai. The showroom has an office, a demo centre, and samples of all major equipment. We also keep stock of equipment, machines and spares in Chennai. This helps feed the South India market."

Elaborating on his years of experience, he stated, "I have been in the business for 52 years, my son joined me 25 years ago. He is now managing the business and is responsible for imports, sales, marketing etc. I am his helping hand.

He is based out of Delhi and keeps travelling. I think our company has the highest stock of equipment and







spare parts.” Reminiscing on how the industry has grown, Mittal shared, “I have seen the 1982 Asian Games when many hotels were built, and no import of equipment was allowed. We had to get our own licenses and promote our machines.

For restaurants, we did not sell anything as we could not have stock of the equipment. Later on, it was allowed, whereby we could keep a stock of the equipment to be sold – that helped us grow manifold.”

### COMPETITION AND SERVICE

“A lot of competition has come up, 15 of our former employees have started the same business. We must have trained more than 100 technicians all over India to look after the equipment-related problems; the market has expanded.

We generally employ refrigeration and electrical engineers; training is going on regularly. We have to give the installation service. We have done a lot of hotel projects in the past. We keep getting enquires from all hotel chains. Our recent projects include Like Holiday Inn Pune, Fortune Gurgaon, Westin Pune, Radisson Pune, Fortune Chail, Fortune Rajkot & Fortune Durgapur,” he added.

### KITCHEN EQUIPMENT TRENDS

Elaborating on trends in kitchen equipment, he said, “The main item of demand is the dishwashing machine as labour is becoming costlier. This product is going not only to hotels and restaurants, but canteens, institutes & government establishments. However, our major item is the Scotsman ice machine, the largest ice machine in the world. The company has six factories in US, Italy and China. They manufacture 200,000 ice



The main item of demand is the dishwashing machine as labour is becoming costlier



machines. The capacity of these machines is from 25 kg to 10,000 kg. The 10,000 kg machine is used in the fish and marine products industry, laboratories, and Sports Authority of India.”

### EASE OF DOING BUSINESS

On government policies, he commented, “They have improved for importers, allowing them to get custom clearances. However, 28 per cent GST on dishwashers is too much. After all, dishwashing machines save labour, are hygienic and reduce breakage of cutlery. For other items, 18 per cent GST is okay. On challenges, he added, “Unfortunately, there is a tendency to use the equipment for a very long time. Many people do not replace the equipment, which is very important.”

On hospitality, he said, “I heard few years ago that Shanghai has more star category rooms than India. Today India too has a lot of star category rooms. Yet more needs to be done.”





# Choosing creativity post COVID

**Niranjan Khatri**, Founder, iSambhav and ex-GM Environment Initiatives, ITC Hotels mulls whether the post COVID-19 world would be a harbinger of change for industry.



**Niranjan Khatri**

**T**he scale of the current global COVID crisis has brought the global economy to a grinding halt and different sectors of industry are quickly scrambling to create a new 'COVID product and service design' in order to be relevant in the business for the new normal. It is doing so by putting many appropriate COVID pertinent measures relevant to its respective businesses. Businesses must apply the lessons learned from the crisis to make their systems more resilient and its products, processes and business models more sustainable and resource efficient to prevent future shocks. Industry has the opportunity to take proactive steps. Its management leadership has a pivotal role to play as the engine of growth and development of local economies. In the end, social stability and economic stability go hand-in-hand; business will be successful when societies are successful and vice versa.

## SUSTAINABLE APPROACH

In the COVID haze, our attention must not move away from the climate crisis we are currently experiencing and its much larger impact on the economy in comparison to the present health crisis. While we have tools like Global

Reporting Initiatives, Carbon Disclosure Project, Earth Overshoot day, their impact in slowing the growth of consumerism & hence natural resource exploitation, falls dramatically short. Concepts like green economy, circular economy, ramping up the use of renewable energy (RE) and ensuring intermittency of RE is overcome with R&D on energy storage tech, is the need of the hour. India, by virtue of its heritage had sustainability woven into the very fabric of its 5,000-year-old civilization. It has only now begun abandoning some of this past wisdom at the altar of modernisation and globalisation. By taking a critical look at what worked for both the planet and people in every aspect of life and applying it to the contemporary context in homes and hotels, industry and offices we could consciously revive resource-modest practices.

## SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF POLICY INITIATIVES

It is often said that a crisis is blended with opportunities. Many chambers of commerce have an opportunity to engage with policy makers in the areas beyond the COVID-centric economic agenda. The different chambers may like to collaboratively work to request the GOI to implement policy initiatives to address the interlinked issues of public health, climate emergency, water stress and food security so that businesses in the future have built-in resilience to withstand future mega shocks like COVID-19. This will help create new



The hospitality sector must focus on revival and look at its business practices with a resource regenerative lens





jobs. Towards this objective here are some suggestions for implementation.

### **BUREAU OF WATER EFFICIENCY (BWE)**

In 2019, NITI Aayog announced that 21 cities would go dry by the year 2021. If this does happen, migration will take place from such cities to a few water surplus regions in the country. The current image of millions of migrants heading for their villages is a real-life case study to learn from, of what is in store for us, if we do not change our water-intensive use practices on a war footing. With the climate crisis bringing erratic monsoons water for the hotel business and all industries is a critical area to innovate. The establishment of a Bureau of Water Efficiency under the Jal Shakti Ministry would help provide strategic direction, programme planning and execution of water conservation initiatives in close coordination with central and state agencies. This will help India be drought-proof while building climate resilience.

### **NO LANDFILL POLICY**

In a pre-determined time frame of five years from now India can aim to have no landfills. As per Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), landfills in India occupy 1,546 sq kms of valuable land in the periphery of our cities and towns. This can, with a business as unusual approach, come down to virtually zero. Such spaces released should not be squandered away by erecting urban concrete jungles, but instead be replaced by urban forests that will work towards increasing the green cover to 25 per cent or 30 per cent of the cities land area, as needed for every city. There would be other advantages as well. The construction industry will have an opportunity to convert their construction debris in situ to make useful construction material – an example of the PM's vision of local and vocal to set a new benchmark for the rest of the world.

### **FOOD WASTE POLICY**

The global food industry contributes approximately 30 per cent of global greenhouse gases (GHG) emissions. The Food Safety Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has a draconian policy on food safety, which discourages hotels from giving away their leftover food to needy

NGOs because should there be a case of food poisoning, the hotel, or restaurant staff can go behind bars, a non-bailable offence. The FSSAI may be persuaded to emulate the US Bill Emerson Good Samaritan Food Donation Act. The essence of this Act is to protect hotels and restaurants from criminal liability should the food donated in good faith later cause any harm to the recipient.

### **CARRYING CAPACITY**

Carrying capacity of tourist destinations must be conducted along with new places that are opened, so that after the limit is reached no further activity is allowed.

### **REGENERATIVE AGRICULTURE**

As migrant labourers return to their villages, the agriculture industry in partnership with the GOI, can help the farmers improve their productivity by introducing best farming practices with the aim of going back to organic farming. They can assist farmers in improving water productivity by a comprehensive demand side approach, such as, converting 1.3 billion tonnes of cow manure to operate decentralised bio-gas plants supplying online gas to villagers as opposed to imported gas under the GOI's Gobar Dhan initiative. The positive externality of this initiative will be a game changer at scale, as the bio-gas slurry can be used for enriching the degraded soil. Bio-gas can be converted to Bio-CNG-compressed natural gas for rural transport fuel, and conversion of carbon dioxide to dry ice production will change the cold chain infrastructure of rural India helping to double the income of the farmers. Can the industry embrace principles of a circular and green economy? Can it help enhance water management strategies by putting water harvesting systems in place? Only time will tell whether it rises to these and other challenges. In conclusion, the opportunities available in a post COVID era are vast and transformative in scope. The hospitality sector must display a higher purpose for survival /revival and look at its business practices with a resource regenerative lens.

*(The article has been written by Niranjana Khatri, Founder, iSambhav and ex-GM Environment Initiatives, ITC Hotels, the views expressed are the author's personal views.)*

# Bharat

## A Cultural Treasure



In the continuation of Dekho Apna Desh webinar series, MOT organised the session titled 'Bharat: A Cultural Treasure' on June 20, 2020. We share details with you on the same.

The 34<sup>th</sup> chapter of the Dekho Apna Desh webinar series titled 'Bharat: A Cultural Treasure' was led by Minister of State (I/C) for Tourism and Culture,

**Prahlad Singh Patel** and witnessed participation by **Sadhguru Jaggi Vasudev**, a yogi, mystic, poet and visionary. Renowned panellists included **Ajay Singh**, CMD, Spicejet; **Ritesh Aggarwal**, OYO; **Anita Dongre**, Fashion Designer; **Ranveer Brar**, Celebrity Chef; and **Ranju Alex**, Vice President – Marketing, Marriott. The session was moderated by **Rupinder Brar**, Additional Director General, Ministry of Tourism. Dekho Apna Desh webinar series is an effort by the Ministry of Tourism to showcase India's rich diversity under Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat programme.

**Prahlad Singh Patel** addressed the welcome note by emphasising the significance of yoga, which has been a tradition passed on to Indians by their forefathers who practiced and became gurus of yoga since ancient times. He also applauded the initiatives undertaken by Prime Minister Narendra Modi who has relentlessly encouraged the citizens of our country to ensure physical and mental health through yoga.

Brar introduced the first panellist, **Ajay Singh**, who mentioned how the airline industry was focusing on expanding its operations slowly and steadily to promote tourism once again post COVID. Revealing a very interesting and unknown fact about the Sadhguru, Singh apprised the audience on how Sadhguru is also a pilot himself. He continued by asking Sadhguru what drives his passion to fly and what are the most fascinating places he has visited in India that he would like to encourage people to visit. Sadhguru replied to this by saying that he became passionate about flying at an early age. Sadhguru was of the opinion that India should utilise helicopters extensively so that diverse terrains such as the Western Ghats, Himalayas, Northeast, etc. are made accessible to a greater number of tourists. And, if one wants to acquire spiritual awakening there are multiple spiritual destinations that offer just that which is not available anywhere in the world. Tourism in India needs to be exploited in its right sense, the visionary believes.

**Ranju Alex** described how women in Indian culture have been perceived as caregivers and an epitome of warmth in a family, given the fact that women are naturally blessed with the grace of hospitality. Despite such an honourable perception, the workforce of women in the Indian hospitality industry comprises just 12 per cent. Alex asked Sadhguru on how he thought we can combat this crisis and bring these incredible women in the industry both as participants and travellers travelling across Incredible India.

Sadhguru replied to this question by saying that increasing the percentage of women in the workforce in hospitality



Prahlad Singh Patel



Sadhguru Jaggi Vasudev



Ajay Singh



Anita Dongre



Ranveer Brar



Ranju Alex



Rupinder Brar

industry needs a lot of cultural and economic changes in family situations, how we look at child bearing, etc. that are deeply embedded in our culture and might take a long time to change, but surely things are changing with time and hopefully an increase in the percentage of women will be seen in the near future.

**Ritesh Aggarwal** emphasised on rural tourism in India and its impact. He said that villages are the heartland of India and we've known from our textbooks that agriculture, farming and villages are the heart and soul of our country. The current situation and the pandemic have made it possible for us to understand the value of rural treasures of our country. He went on to understand Sadhguru's opinion on how we can create a sustainable tourism movement, bringing in opportunities for the farmers and tourists to go see the local villages and to inspire a tourism movement in such places.

To this Sadhguru responded with a very constructive idea that he himself has been wanting to work on. He suggested that clusters could be developed in a particular region so that they can be easily controlled and promoted by highlighting the authentic behaviour

Clusters could be promoted by highlighting the authentic behaviour of ethnic groups, farmers and villagers

of ethnic groups, farmers and villagers. Discrepancies can be avoided by managing such clusters which have interesting cultural features. Such steps can help authorities and aggregators in raising the flag of responsible tourism.

**Ranveer Brar** wanted to know how to bridge the disconnection between Indian culinary and Western culinary owing to the fact that Indian food is more about taste and nourishment, but modern Western food involves more science of health benefits. Sadhguru answered this question citing his personal experiences and noting that communicating with people about the significance of eating fresh food will help in bridging the gap between desi and Western cuisines. The importance of presenting it in the most authentic way will help non-Indians perceive Indian food the way we perceive it.

Lastly, **Anita Dongre** shed light on one of the most crucial topics of the present day. She said that today we tend to follow trends easily and do yoga for the sake of it but we need to look at yoga as what it could provide to our mind and body instead of how it makes us look to the world.



# World of fragrance

**Vishesh Vijayvergiya**, Perfumer & Scent Branding Consultant, Vedic Aroma Lab shares more about trends in the industry and what is in the pipeline.



**Vishesh Vijayvergiya**

### **What is your growth and targets?**

We have had an exceptionally good year in terms of new product launches and acquiring new clients. We also witnessed a new shift to online business and are now in the process of getting on board more online marketplaces for a wider reach, ensuring our aromas reach even the remotest hotels. For 2020, we have some exciting and new innovations in the pipeline. We are coming up with encapsulation technology for hotels wherein we will 'print' their signature scent on a variety of media – from business cards to the in-room stationery.

Further, we are probably the first perfumery house in India to deploy Artificial Intelligence in blending and we are very excited to see the kind of effect it will have on the overall market. Another area which we will be focusing on will be gifting. We will be offering an array of highly customised aroma gift packs with latest cutting-edge technology that can even print the photos of guests on the bottles. This will make the most special gift for esteemed dignitaries staying in the hotel.

### **What are the latest trends?**

Hoteliers know for sure what they have in mind and which sensory perception they want to implant into the memories of their guests. More and more hoteliers are keen on implementing our strategic scent marketing wherein, for example, we diffuse the aroma of coffee in a coffee shop thereby attracting guests to come in and have some coffee which in turn increases the revenue. Another shift is from using basic fragrances to more complex accords. For instance, a hotelier will not just look for lemongrass, but lemongrass with some hints of bergamot, lemon and orange.

### **Kindly elaborate on the new offerings.**

We are actively promoting our division that creates Signature Scents enabling each hotel to have its own, unique olfactory logo. Apart from that, there has been a rise in the usage of odour neutralisers to combat the problem of cigarette smoke etc.

Another good concept that is now getting accepted is that of aroma gifts to be given to guests as souvenirs during their stay in the hotel. These gift sets come in a variety of shapes, sizes, budgets and offer several customisation options – from printing and embossing of the hotel name and logo to matching the hotel's colour theme, and printing the guest's name, to make it more personal.



We are probably the first perfumery house in India to deploy Artificial Intelligence in blending





# Turnkey Interior Solutions

H. S. Ahuja & Associates (HSAA) has brought the best in the industry designs for their clients.



**T**hey started with one room renovations, based out of Delhi, India, HSAA has developed faith of esteemed clients pan-India. Clarks Inn, Ramada, Sagar Ratna, Oxford Public School, Graphisads, Embassy of Bahrain and the list goes on.

They have demonstrated their competence in luxurious residential interiors, restaurant & hotel designs, villas, schools, architectural consulting and commercial concepts. Their exceptional work can be explored at [www.hsaa.co.in](http://www.hsaa.co.in). In addition of being awarded with some of the most iconic awards like MAMR India's Most Prominent Architect & Design Awards and National Icons Award, HSAA has won a million hearts with their craftsmanship. With end-to-end solutions including civil, 3D, interior, custom paintings, custom furniture, custom lighting and almost everything that is needed to turnaround your imagination into reality; HSAA achieves it with their two massive in-house production facilities at the heart of Asia's largest hub.

Hema, who is the Principal Interior Designer at HSAA, revealed her latest creation. "We are currently working on a new hotel project in Rishikesh, which is one of its

kind, where we were given imagination independence. This hotel has multiple floors and every floor is different from the other. The idea is to create diverse experiences under one roof."

Hema is a dynamic and thoughtful designer whose work is contemporary and emotionally expressive. "After weeks and months of creative brain storming and hard work, it really pays off when we see that 'Surprising Smile' on the faces of our esteemed clients," she adds.

"We at HSAA believe that empires are built with people. Our vision is to astonish humans with absolute creativity and to cultivate best places to work for our teams," says **Subhash Ahuja**, CEO, H.S. Ahuja and Associates.



**Hema**



After months of hard work, it really pays off when we see that 'Surprising Smile' on the faces of our clients



## Metal Wall Art by Pequra

◆ The home and office environments that need a little oomph to their bland walls have got a new destination. The latest addition of Metal Wall Art by India's premium carpet brand Pequra fills a much-needed void in the home-decorating arena. Framed artwork is a wonderful way to express yourself, but sculptural wall decor is a unique way to add texture and visual interest to your favourite room. When you add wall accents to your bedroom, living room, office or hallway, it adds depth & a striking presence. Wall art is that finishing element that can help pull a space together and make it feel complete. Pequra offers a range of incredible styles to suit any motif.



## Starbucks unveils summer beverages

◆ With an aim to celebrate the season of sunshine, Starbucks has launched seven new delectable and refreshing delights.



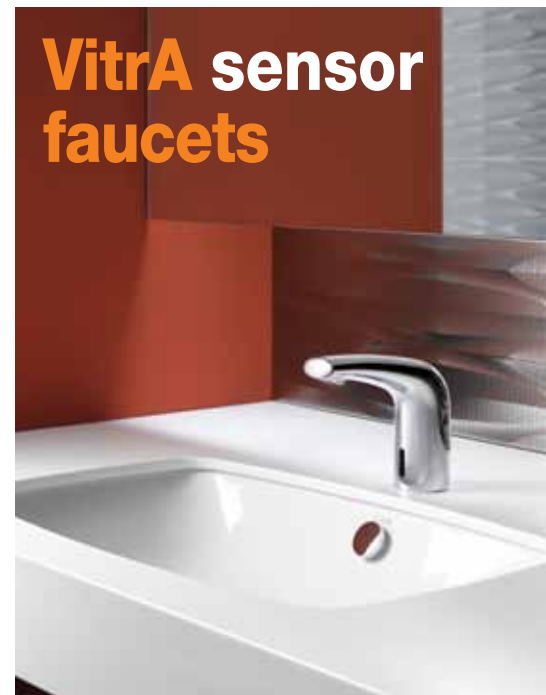
The limited-edition summer menu boasts of seasonal classics like the fan-favourite Midnight Mocha Frappuccino and a tropical and fruity delight, Mango Popper Frappuccino. The brand has also launched Honey Turmeric Latte, a robust combination of espresso, turmeric & honey along with a new variant in the cold brew section called Vegan Cold Brew.

## Earthy tones

◆ IDUS has launched the Earth Colour Furniture Collection, which comprises furniture in different earth tones such as brown, coffee, camel & tan shades. The furniture is in leather & fabric supported with materials such as wood, stainless steel in different finishes & shades. Lisa Revolving Chair is made with palm wood & nubuck leather upholstery which ensures comfort with its extra lumbar support.



## VitrA sensor faucets



◆ VitrA's stylish water saving faucets come in the AquaSee range. VitrA's Aquasee, technologically savvy, practical and hygienic water-saving photocell faucets operate with a brand-new sensor technology that helps you preserve natural resources. It has a comfort design that is easy to use thanks to its inclined body and angular outlet. VitrA's Powerbox converts the flow of water into electricity with its internal power generator. One VitrA Powerbox can operate upto five sensor faucets. VitrA faucets come with a 10-year warranty.





## Austin Plywood launches luxury collection

◆ Austin Plywood has launched the luxury plywood collection including three main categories – Austin Platinum Plus, Austin Cabin Plus and Austin Gold. The range is made from imported Gurjan timber and is ideal for furniture, cabinets, wall panelling, ceiling, flooring and elsewhere in exposed and enclosed forms in the interiors. It goes through quadruple pressing to ensure uniform distribution of moisture and adhesive to create plywood that is strong, durable and free from warping, twisting and cupping. The collection can withstand water boiling proof for 200 hours, is double calibrated for uniform thickness, and goes through two-tier preservative treatments to ensure termite proofing.

## ITC introduces Nimwash

◆ ITC has launched Nimwash Vegetable and Fruit Wash with 100% natural action that ensures washing away of pesticides and 99.9% germs. With neem and citrus fruits extracts, Nimwash Vegetable and Fruit Wash has been specially designed as a preventive hygiene solution which is safe to use and has no added chlorine, bleach or artificial colour. Nimwash Vegetable and Fruit Wash is being launched in two variants – Spray & Wash and Soak & Wash.



## Faber's kitchen hoods

◆ Designed & crafted in Italy, Faber's premium kitchen hoods incorporate a highly evolved blower which means quality performance in terms of efficiency, consumption, silence and effectiveness, even with long extraction ducts. Also, Faber's High Filtering Hood (HFH) technology improves hood performance by removing odours from the air almost totally. Faber's potent HFH technology is twice as effective too, because it uses two high-efficiency filtration layers with different porosities and activated carbon concentrations. That's how the filter captures both large and small particles.



## Amazfit BIP S

◆ Huami has launched Amazfit Bip S smartwatch in India. Bip S integrates Huami-PAI, an indicator of personal activity that gives you details about your heart health and overall fitness, helping you reach or maintain your personal best. Bip S is equipped with power-packed battery life and sleep tracking with ultra-lightweight and thin body design. Featuring a colourful transfective display, and 5 ATM water resistance, great battery life of up to 40 days, Bluetooth music control and built-in GPS, the latest Amazfit Bip S provides an exceptional experience at a promising price bracket.

# Appointments



**ABINASH MANGHANI**

CEO  
WelcomHeritage

★ WelcomHeritage has appointed Abinash Manghani as its Chief Executive Officer. In a career spanning three decades, Manghani has donned several hats primarily in tourism, hospitality & real estate advisory services. His last position was Area Manager & Head Travel Industry Sales for ITC Hotels. He joined Colliers Jardine, a real estate MNC Consultancy as General Manager in 2000 and was involved in several landmark transactions and advisory including valuation & divestment of hotels.



**PUNEET DHAWAN**

Senior VP Operations  
India & South Asia, Accor

★ Accor has announced the appointment of Puneet Dhawan as Senior VP Operations, India & South Asia with effect from August 1, 2020. He will handle the group's operations and strategies to ensure Accor's continued growth momentum in India and South Asia. Dhawan has been with Accor for over two decades and has held key positions across countries such as Australia, Vietnam, Hong Kong, Singapore, India, UAE and The Philippines. His most recent role was General Manager at Sofitel Philippine Plaza Manila.



**ANJALI MEHRA**

Vice President Marketing  
The Leela Palaces, Hotels and Resorts

★ The Leela Palaces, Hotels and Resorts has appointed Anjali Mehra as Vice President Marketing. Mehra brings with her over two decades of experience in hospitality brand marketing and communications. She spearheaded the marketing and communications strategies for Starwood Hotels and its brands in India, Maldives, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal and Bhutan from 2009 to 2015. Prior to joining The Leela, Mehra was the Senior Director Communications Middle East and Africa, Marriott International.



**VIKRAM ADITYA SINGH**

General Manager  
The Leela Palace Udaipur

★ The Leela Palaces, Hotels and Resorts has appointed Vikram Aditya Singh as the General Manager of The Leela Palace Udaipur. In a career spanning over two decades, he has mentored, managed, and launched over 56 restaurants, bars and lounges across the world. He started his career with Four Seasons Hotels and Resorts in Seattle, Vancouver and Chicago and then moved on to The Oberoi Udaivilas as Head of Food & Beverage. He has worked with the Taj Group, Alila Hotels, The Trident Mumbai & The Lodhi, New Delhi.



**SUDHANSHU KUMAR SINGH**

General Manager  
Marriott Courtyard, Nashik

★ Sudhanshu Kumar Singh has been appointed as General Manager at Marriott Courtyard, Nashik. Earlier to the assignment, Singh was GM at Fairfield By Marriott, Visakhapatnam, Marriott Hotel & Convention Center, Hyderabad, Marriott Courtyard, Hyderabad, Fairfield By Marriott, Indore. Prior to Indore, he was responsible at Amby Valley for the overall hospitality in Sahara Group of Hotels, India. During his two decades in the hospitality industry, he has been a recipient of the 'Athithi Devo Bhava' award from Govt. of India.



**PARIMAL SAWANT**

Director Culinary  
Meluha, The Fern an Ecotel Hotel, Mumbai

★ Parimal Sawant has joined Meluha, The Fern an Ecotel Hotel, Mumbai as the Director Culinary. Prior to this, he was working with The Lalit Mumbai as an Executive Chef since May 2017. Sawant has 25 years of experience and has worked with Kamat Hotels, Renaissance Mumbai and Courtyard Ahmedabad before he joined Meluha, The Fern in 2013 in his earlier stint. His areas of expertise include food preparation, planning menus, cost control, kitchen hygiene, catering hospitality, food for special occasions/events etc.

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