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A MONTHLY ON HOSPITALITY TRADE
By DDP Publications



BUDGET 2025
HOSPITALITY SECTOR
SEEKS LEVEL
PLAYING FIELD

**FHRAI'S
HR SUMMIT**
DISCUSSES
WORKFORCE
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info@itwfeg.in, razi.haider@itwfeg.in

RAZI HAIDER - COUNTRY MANAGER - 09920384666

ABHISHEK KR TIWARI - BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT MANAGER- KEY
ACCOUNTS ER - 09205549719

ADNAN KHAN- SALES MANAGER SOUTH - 07000859420

MOHIT CHAUHAN - EXECUTIVE SALES NORHT - 08569819692

abhishektiwari@itwfeg.in, adnan.khan@itwfeg.in, mohit.chauhan@itwfeg.in

President's Note



Dear Members and Stakeholders,

As we approach the Union Budget for 2024-25, the hospitality sector in India is gearing up to address several pressing concerns, with hopes for a policy framework that will unlock its full potential. Representing the industry, the Federation of Hotel & Restaurant Associations of India (FHRAI) has long been at the forefront of advocating for the sector's needs at the highest levels of government. In this regard, we had the honour of leading a delegation of industry experts and stakeholders to present our comprehensive suggestions to the senior officials from the Ministry of Finance.

Our discussions focused on several critical issues that influence the growth and sustainability of the hospitality sector, a vital contributor to India's economy, employment, and tourism. One of the core recommendations from our delegation was the urgent need to grant infrastructure status to the hospitality sector, particularly for hotels. This would enable the industry to access better financing options and encourage growth across both urban and rural regions.

Another key concern raised was the need to improve the ease of doing business in the hospitality sector. We also demanded regulatory reforms that would simplify compliance processes, reduce paperwork, and streamline approvals, ensuring a more business-friendly environment for entrepreneurs and investors.

GST rationalisation was also a major point of discussion. While the introduction of Goods and Services Tax (GST) was intended to simplify tax structures, it continues to be complicated and burdensome, especially for small and mid-sized establishments. The current tax structure has created significant challenges for the sector, with inconsistencies and higher compliance costs. We advocated for GST rationalisation, proposing a more transparent and simplified tax system that would reduce these burdens, making the hospitality sector more competitive and encouraging investments.

A particularly pressing issue that FHRAI raised was the ambiguity surrounding the 'place of supply' provisions within GST rules, which causes confusion, especially in the case of international clients and services that span multiple states. Additionally, we urged the government to review the high excise duties imposed on liquor, as these duties contribute to rising operational costs, which are ultimately passed on to consumers.

“

One of the core recommendations from our delegation was the urgent need to grant infrastructure status to the hospitality sector, particularly for hotels.”

On 10th December, we had the privilege of meeting the Secretary and Additional Secretary of the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India to seek their active support for resolving different issues of the industry in a timely manner as well as to apprise them about the various initiatives of FHRAI.

The FHRAI's Centre of Excellence, in collaboration with the National Council for Hotel Management and Catering Technology (NCHMCT) and HRANI, successfully hosted the HR Summit in New Delhi recently. The summit focused on creating long-term strategies to tackle emerging challenges in hospitality education and career development, emphasising the need to prepare skilled professionals for the industry's future.

As we look ahead to the Union Budget, we remain hopeful that the government will consider our vital recommendations, enabling the hospitality sector to thrive and continue contributing to India's growth and global presence.

Warm regards,
K Syama Raju
President, FHRAI

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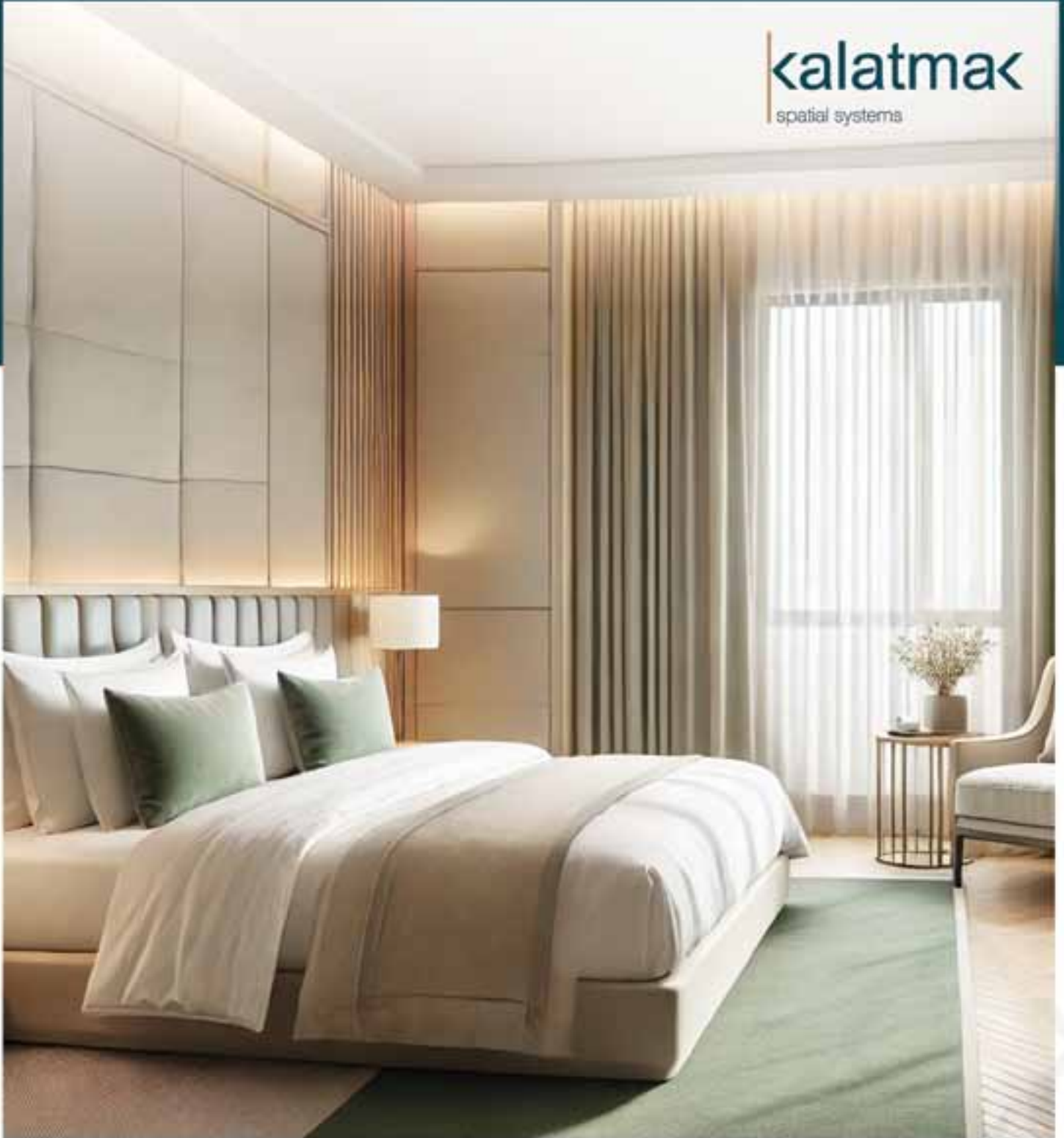
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SECRETARY GENERAL
Jaison Chacko - sg@fhrai.com

PUBLISHER
Devika Jeet - devika@ddppl.com

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

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

DESIGNERS ADVERTISEMENT
Nitin Kumar
Aditya Pratap Singh
Anil Khatri Chhetri

PRODUCTION MANAGER
Anil Kharbanda

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

Meetu Malhotra - meetu.malhotra@ddppl.com
Assistant Vice President (+919650911399)

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

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

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



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The hospitality industry needs to address mismatch between potential candidates' expectations and industry's offerings

THE FEDERATION OF HOTEL & RESTAURANT ASSOCIATIONS OF INDIA
B-82, 8th Floor, Himalaya House
Kasturba Gandhi Marg, New Delhi 110001
Tel: 91-11-40780780, Fax: +91-11-40780777
Email: fhrai@fhrai.com

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Dream weddings on budget

Hotels are getting creative with budget-friendly weddings, opting for minimalist decor and curated menus to deliver a memorable experience

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Hospitality sector seeks level playing field

FHRAI recommends reforms in Union Budget 2025-26, focusing on infrastructure status, licensing simplification, and GST rationalisation.



DDP Bureau

As the backbone of India's tourism industry, the hospitality sector plays a crucial role in driving economic growth, creating jobs, and showcasing the country's cultural heritage. Recognising the sector's immense potential, FHRAI has proposed a series of recommendations for inclusion in the Union Budget 2025-26. In a detailed letter to **Suman Billa**, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Tourism, FHRAI has outlined reforms to simplify licencing, reduce GST burdens, and grant infrastructure status to hospitality projects. Following are the suggestions put forth by FHRAI:

- **Granting infrastructure status to hospitality sector—Classification of hotels under the harmonised master list of infrastructure:**

a) Infrastructure status should be granted for all hotels across all the categories and convention centres built at a project cost of ₹10 crore and above to give fillip to budget segment in the hotel industry.

Justification: Amendment is required of the current nomenclature of tourism infrastructure in the harmonised master list of infrastructure sub-sectors. In 2013, the Department of Economic Affairs granted infrastructure status to the hotel and hospitality sectors. However, this benefit was only available for hotels project worth of ₹200 crore (excluding land cost), convention centres with project costs of ₹300 crore or limited to 3 star and higher category classified hotels located outside cities with a population of more than one million people.



b) Infrastructure status should be awarded irrespective of the city's population.

Justification: But it is highly imperative to note that except a small percentage, hotel projects in India typically have project costs between ₹10 and ₹50 crore (excluding land cost). Equally important is the fact that the criteria of population of under one million is too restrictive for growth of tourism because as per the Census of 2011, only 53 cities are above the population limit of a million persons. Many historically important cities, heritage sites, and newer locations in the country with extensive tourism potential are having population of less than one million only and therefore this clause is causing a major disadvantage for promotion of tourism in the country.

Ease of Doing Business in hospitality sector:

a) Simplification of licencing norms and approval systems.

Justification: The licencing norms and approval system should be simplified. Large project investors have a lot of nervousness around permissions and blocking actions after commencement of project. For large hotel projects at least, there must be a blanket preapproval to be able to invest and execute with confidence beyond single window actually working.

b) Single window clearance systems at Centre and state levels

Justification: Two separate single window clearance systems separately for the state government licences/compliances and the Central Government specific approvals and permissions, need to be put in place. The state-level single

window system should set a common national standard and protocol for projects in the hospitality sector.

c) Clarification for getting licence with regard to registered copyright societies

Justification: A clarification should be issued that hotels and restaurants only provide accommodation and food for the event and any licences for copyright societies (registered under the Copyright Act) needs to be taken by the event management companies or the guest who are actual users of the copyrighted content.

GST rationalisation:

a) The GST rates for restaurants should be delinked from room tariffs if they are part of the hotels. b) The GST on restaurants and banquets to be linked with input credit where at those availing no input be at 5 per cent and those claiming input credit may be put to 12 per cent delinking from the rates of hotel accommodation.

Infra status should be granted to all hotels with project costs of ₹10 crore or more to boost budget hospitality.

Justification: Indirect tax rates (GST) for hospitality in India are one of the highest in the world. This makes both domestic and inbound tourism in India very expensive. India is facing tough competition from neighbouring countries especially due to the higher rate of GST in India and other factors which make the tourism package expensive to India. The system of GST shifting





to different slabs in the same hotel on different dates—under/over ₹7,500 room rate—creates compliance issues. It also spills over to F&B.

Place of supply in the GST rules:

a) Revisiting the place of supply provisions in the GST rules

Justification: Under the GST regime, the place of supply provisions play a crucial role in determining whether a transaction will be taxed as intra-state or inter-state, which in turn dictates

whether CGST/SGST or IGST will be levied. This distinction directly impacts the availability of Input Tax Credit (ITC) for business clients in the hospitality sector. For hotel accommodation and related services, the place of supply is typically the location where the immovable property (such as the hotel) is situated. According to Section 12(3)(b) of the Integrated Goods and Services Tax (IGST) Act, 2017, the place of supply for services related to lodging accommodation is the location of the hotel itself. As a result, even if the recipient of the service is from a different state, the invoice would reflect CGST and SGST rather than IGST. This limits the ability of out-of-state businesses to claim ITC on such expenses unless they are registered in the state where the service is provided.

By reclassifying such transactions as inter-state supplies, business clients from other states would receive invoices reflecting IGST. This would enable them to claim ITC seamlessly, thereby reducing the cost of booking accommodation or event spaces across state lines.

Excise rules and liquor licensing:

a) Rationalisation of excise rules across states and harmonise them as far as possible.

Justification: The current bar licensing system is overly lengthy, requiring multiple no objection certificates (NOCs), and the licence fees are excessively high. It needs to simplify the process, similar to online FSSAI registration with a nominal fee, would be beneficial. Since tourists often seek leisure and enjoyment, and alcoholic beverages are widely accepted in society, streamlining the licencing process and reducing fees would significantly promote a positive growth in the hotel industry. ❑

India's high hospitality GST rates make both domestic and inbound tourism costly, impacting competitiveness against neighbouring countries.

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Seeking **govt support** on key issues

K Syama Raju and Garish Oberoi sought the Ministry's assistance in promptly resolving key challenges affecting the industry.



FHRAI President K Syama Raju, along with FHRAI Hon. Treasurer Garish Oberoi, met with V Vidyavathi, IAS, Secretary, Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, to seek active support of the Ministry to resolve major issues of the industry on time. They also apprised her about the various initiatives of FHRAI.

The delegation also held a meeting with Suman Billa, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Tourism, and submitted the recommendations from the HR Summit organised by the FHRAI Centre of Excellence in partnership with the NCHMCT in the capital recently. 



Strategies for National Tourism Policy

MoT formulates National Tourism Policy's draft with the strategic objective to boost inclusive development of tourism.




The Ministry of Tourism (MoT) has prepared a draft of the 'National Tourism Policy' incorporating suggestions received from central ministries, state governments, UT administrations, and industry stakeholders. The information was given by the Union Minister for Tourism and Culture Gajendra Singh Shekhawat in a written reply in Lok Sabha. The draft focuses on the following key objectives:

- Enhancing the contribution of tourism to the Indian economy by increas-

ing visitation, length of stay, and establishing India as a year-round tourist destination

- Creating job opportunities in the tourism sector while ensuring a skilled workforce supply
- Enhancing the competitiveness of the tourism sector and attracting private sector investment
- Preserving and enhancing the country's cultural and natural resources

- Ensuring sustainable, responsible, and inclusive development of tourism across the country

Besides, the Ministry of Tourism has revamped the Swadesh Darshan Scheme as Swadesh Darshan 2.0 (SD 2.0) with the objective to develop sustainable and responsible tourism destinations. The Ministry has formulated national strategies for sustainable tourism, rural tourism, rural homestays, MICE, and eco-tourism for focused development of these areas. 

Unlocking tourism potential of Northeast India


With a slew of initiatives and programmes, MoT continues to promote and encourage the tourism potential of the north-eastern states of India.

To promote the tourism of north-eastern states of India, the Ministry of Tourism (MoT) launched various initiatives, events, and campaigns. Following are the initiatives organised by the ministry.

The ministry organised the International Tourism Mart (ITM) in Kaziranga, Assam. The event showcased the potential of the region's potential.

The ministry in collaboration with the Central Institutes of

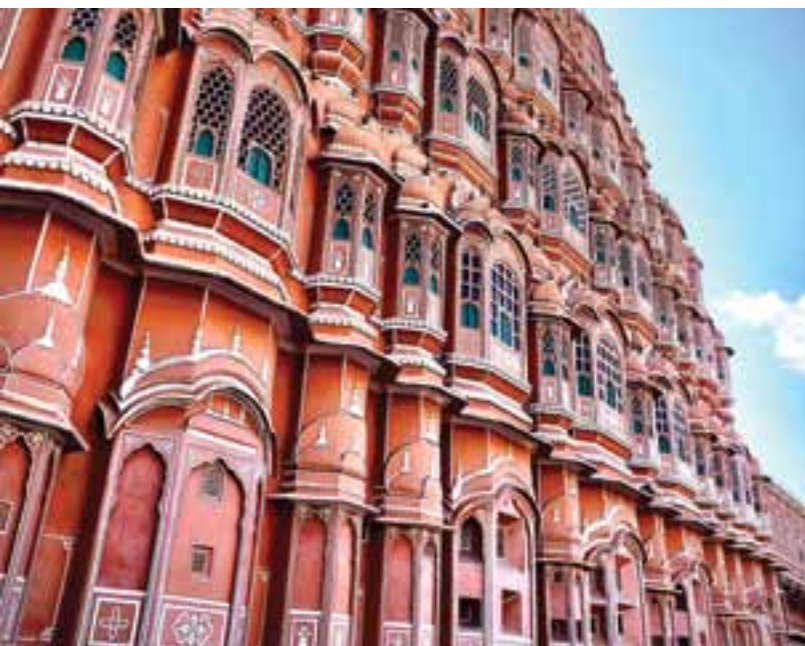
Hotel Management (CIHMs) at Guwahati and Shillong, imparted professional education and training in the field of hospitality to create a pool of manpower to meet the needs of tourism and hospitality.

In addition, the ministry under its scheme, "Capacity Building for Service Providers," has undertaken various skill development programmes to provide education, training, and certification to the tourism service providers covering different levels of the hospitality sector. 




Boosting heritage tourism in tier-II cities

MoT steps up with various initiatives to drive heritage tourism in tier-II cities across the country.



The Ministry of Tourism (MoT) promotes various tourist destinations and products including heritage tourism in tier-II cities, through various initiatives. These initiatives include promotional events, assistance to state governments, fairs and festivals, and exhibitions. The MoT set up the "Incredible India" exhibition for the international delegates of the 46th session of World Heritage Committee Meeting in New Delhi. In addition, heritage walks for the delegates were also organised during the event.

The MoT also organised the 12th International Tourism Mart in Kaziranga, Assam, one of the UNESCO World Heritage Sites in India. The delegates also visited Charaideo Moidams, Rangghar, Sivasagar during the event.

In addition, the ministry through its domestic tourism offices undertakes various activities such as webinars, quizzes, seminars, tourism promotional events, fam tours, heritage walks, etc. across the country for the promotion of heritage tourism. 

Indian Hospitality at the cusp of a transformative era

From seamless digital innovation to eco-conscious transformations, Hospitality Highwire spotlights the game-changing shifts poised to redefine the guest experience, with insights from industry leader Param Kannampilly.



The Indian hospitality industry is on the brink of a transformative era, defined by a confluence of factors such as evolving traveller preferences, advancements in technology, and a heightened commitment to sustainability. This dynamic sector plays a critical role in shaping the country's economy and cultural landscape, and its evolution mirrors broader global trends. With an increasing focus on eco-conscious practices, wellness experiences, and seamless digital integration, the future of hospitality in India promises to be vibrant and innovative, offering opportunities for brands to redefine guest experiences while addressing pressing environmental and social concerns.

The rise of responsible tourism

Sustainability has become a cornerstone of modern hospitality, driven by an urgent need to address climate change, resource depletion, and other environmental challenges. Guests are now more discerning, seeking accommodations that align with their values



Param Kannampilly
Param Kannampilly
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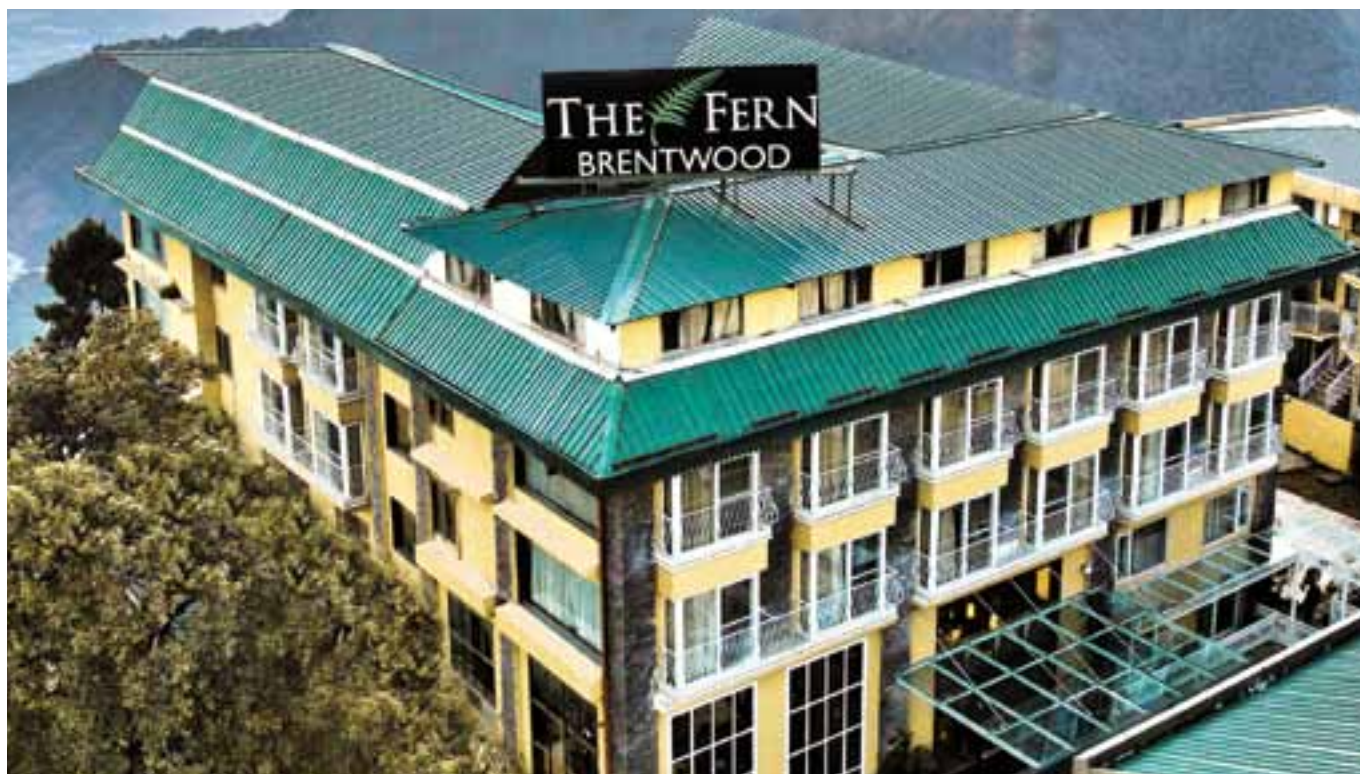
of environmental conservation. Hotels across India are responding by incorporating green practices such as renewable energy usage, waste management systems, and water conservation initiatives. Many properties are also adopting eco-certifications and investing in energy-efficient infrastructure, including LED lighting and solar power installations. At The Fern Hotels & Resorts, sustainability is a guiding principle, as evidenced by our "Go Green" programme. This initiative fosters environmental awareness among guests and staff alike, creating a collective effort to minimise the ecological impact of operations.

“
The focus is on environmental stewardship and fostering community development.”

Sustainability extends beyond operational practices and influences the way hotels interact with local communities. Responsible tourism initiatives are becoming a priority, with properties collaborating with local farmers, artisans, and businesses to create mutually beneficial relationships. By sourcing ingredients locally for farm-to-table dining experiences or promoting regional crafts, hotels are not only supporting local economies but also offering

An environmentalist at heart

The driving force behind the phenomenal growth of The Fern Hotels and Resorts, Param Kannampilly is one of the foremost environment champions with over 40 years of active involvement in the industry traversing many milestones. A Fellow of The Institute of Hospitality, London as well as a Fellow of the World Academy of Productivity Science, he was awarded Fellowship to the Academy of Productivity Science for his significant contribution to the environment through sustainable development.



guests an authentic taste of the destination. These efforts reflect the industry's broader shift toward social responsibility, where the focus is not just on environmental stewardship but also on fostering community development.

Elevating the traveller's experience

One of the most notable trends in the hospitality sector is the rise of experiential travel. Today's travellers are seeking more than just luxurious accommodations—they want meaningful, immersive experiences that connect them to the destinations they visit. This demand has led hotels to curate activities that highlight local culture, heritage, and traditions. Experiences such as culinary workshops, craft-making sessions, and guided heritage tours allow guests to engage deeply with the communi-

scenic landscapes. Guests here can enjoy eco-conscious luxury while engaging in activities that reflect the essence of the location.

Similarly, The Fern Habitat, Candolim, caters to modern travellers with its apart-hotel concept, featuring multi-room apartments, rooftop dining options, and close proximity to natural and cultural attractions. These expansions under the Zinc Journey brand underscore our commitment to creating unique, location-inspired experiences. Another area of rapid growth in hospitality is wellness tourism. This trend has prompted hotels to integrate wellness offerings such as yoga retreats, meditation sessions, detox programmes, and spa therapies into their services. India's rich tradition of Ayurveda and holistic healing positions it uniquely to cater to this growing demand. Wellness-focused properties are no longer limited to niche markets; they are becoming central to the mainstream hospitality experience.

“

Mobile check-ins, voice-activated room controls, and digital concierge services are becoming industry standards.”

ties they explore. For instance, properties under the Zinc Journey by The Fern brand emphasise curated stays that blend local culture with unique adventures. Villament Zinc Journey by The Fern, Karjat, is a perfect example of this approach. This newly launched property offers the privacy and exclusivity of villas paired with hotel-like services, set amidst

Digital push to operational excellence

Digital transformation is reshaping the Indian hospitality sector, enhancing both guest experiences and operational efficiency. From AI-powered chatbots to IoT-enabled rooms, technology has revolutionised how hotels interact with their guests. Features such as mobile check-ins, voice-activated room controls, and digital concierge services are becoming standard across the industry. These innovations not only provide convenience but also create opportunities for personalisation. For example, hotels are

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“
Our brand aims to deliver a blend of innovation and cultural richness that resonates with our guests.”

increasingly using guest data to tailor services to individual preferences, offering curated room settings, bespoke dining options, and even customised local itineraries. At The Fern Hotels & Resorts, the integration of smart technologies ensures that we can deliver seamless, intuitive services that enhance the guest journey.

Automation has also become a key tool for driving sustainability in hospitality. Predictive maintenance systems and smart energy management tech-

nologies allow hotels to optimise resource usage and reduce waste. For instance, IoT sensors can monitor water and electricity consumption in real-time, helping properties identify areas for improvement. These advancements not only contribute to environmental conservation but also result in significant cost savings. At The Fern Hotels & Resorts, we are exploring ways to harness these technologies, ensuring that every innovation aligns with our broader mission of eco-sensitivity.

Growth rooted in local authenticity

As Indian hospitality brands expand their global presence, they face the challenge of balancing international trends with local authenticity. Properties that can successfully integrate global best practices while retaining a distinct regional identity will stand out in an increasingly competitive market. At The Fern Hotels & Resorts, this balance is reflected in our efforts to create properties that celebrate their unique locations while adhering to global standards of excellence. Whether through sustainability initiatives, wellness programmes, or experiential travel offerings, we aim to deliver a blend of innovation and cultural richness that resonates with our guests.

Looking ahead, hotels will need to adopt green technologies, foster meaningful connections with local communities, and curate personalised experiences to meet the evolving expectations of travellers. As the industry moves toward this future, brands must remain agile, continuously innovating to stay relevant in a rapidly changing landscape. ▣



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Empowering workforce

FHRAI organises HR Summit

FHRAI's HR Summit brought together industry leaders and academics to explore strategies for improving enrollment & retention within the industry.



Lipla Negi

Highlighting the hospitality sector's pivotal role in job creation and addressing pressing workforce challenges such as the shortage of skilled workers, low student enrollment, and high employee turnover, the Federation of Hotel & Restaurant Associations of India (FHRAI) recently hosted an HR Summit on "Education and Careers in Hospitality." The summit was organised in collaboration with the National Council for Hotel Management and Catering Technology (NCHMCT) and the Hotel & Restaurant Association of Northern India (HRANI).



Gyan Bhushan
IES, CEO of NCHMCT, and Senior
EA(T), MoT



We must align with evolving preferences customers as well as next-gen workers."

The event, inaugurated by **Gyan Bhushan**, IES, CEO of NCHMCT, and Senior EA(T) at the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, brought together over 200 industry leaders, educators, and government representatives to discuss the future of hospitality education and career opportunities in India. Emphasising the industry's enormous potential for job



Pradeep Shetty
VP
FHRAI



Industry is projected to generate 53 million jobs, with an annual growth rate of 7-9%.”

creation, he noted, “The hospitality sector is at a crucial juncture, where shifts in customer behaviour and new trends are fast emerging. To stay relevant, we must align with the evolving preferences of both our customers and the next generation of workers.”

During the summit, a report titled, *“Future of Hospitality Employment: Challenges, Skill Shortages, and Solutions,”* was unveiled. The report highlights the significant shortfall in the skilled workforce, a challenge worsened by the COVID-19 pandemic. Developed by the FHRAI Centre of Excellence, the report draws on extensive consultations with over 1,500 stakeholders.

Pradeep Shetty, Vice President of FHRAI, pointed out the long-lasting impact of the pandemic on the workforce, noting, “The crisis not only depleted the workforce but also revealed a reluctance among students to pursue careers in hospitality, due to long working hours, high turnover rates, and limited career progression opportunities.”

He further added, “Looking ahead to 2047, when India is expected to welcome

over 100 million tourists, the hospitality industry is projected to generate 53 million jobs, with an annual growth rate of 7-9 per cent. This makes the demand for a skilled workforce more urgent than ever.”

Speaking at the summit, **KB Kachru**, President, Hotel Association of India (HAI), emphasised how the hospitality sector’s critical role as a major driver of job creation in the country has often been overlooked and undervalued.

Kachru stated, “India is on the verge of becoming the third-largest economy, but that will only happen if we all play our part. Every year, 20 million young people enter the job market, but only 5 million find employment. It is our responsibility to change that. Hospitality, for example, is a key driver of our economy, and this year, we have seen 13 per cent growth in workforce absorption—this is good news, but we must keep pushing forward.”

Furthermore, he stressed upon the crucial role of mentorship in shaping the next-gen leaders. “The first step towards ‘Incredible India’ is unity. It is time for us to take responsibility—government, industry, and each of us individually. If we



KB Kachru
President
HAI



We witnessed 13% growth in workforce absorption, but we must keep pushing forward.”



Surendra Kumar Jaiswal
President
HRANI



Role of education in shaping the future of industry is critical.”

want India to become an inevitable global leader, we must stop just talking about it and start acting. It is just the beginning, but we are committed to working together and making things happen,” he added.

Addressing the select gathering of hospitality professionals, academicians, and students, **Surendra Kumar Jaiswal**, President of HRANI, said, “The challenges and opportunities before us in the hospitality industry are vast, particularly in the areas of workforce development and career growth. The summit highlights the critical role education plays in shaping the future of our industry. We are thrilled to see so many stakeholders from students to industry leaders, gathered here to discuss the way forward.”

Closing the summit, he called for greater collaboration among all industry stakeholders to realise the vision of India as a global talent hub. He stated, “As we move forward, it is essential that we work together to address the workforce shortage, enhance training programmes, and create better career opportunities. Your presence underscores the importance of collaboration and knowledge-sharing in ensuring a sustainable future for the hospitality sector.” □

DRIVING POSITIVE CHANGE

The HR Summit explored the future of hospitality education and ways to boost the sector's popularity as a promising profession among young students.





It's time to thrive in hospitality

Gyan Bhushan, IES, CEO of NCHMCT & Senior EA(T) at MoT, talks about aligning academic curricula with industry trends.



DDP Bureau

Speaking at the FHRAI's HR Summit exploring education and career opportunities in hospitality, **Gyan Bhushan**, IES, CEO, NCHMCT & Senior EA(T), MoT, emphasised the hospitality industry as a potential economic growth engine and the biggest job creator for the country. Addressing the conclave of industry professionals and top academics, he highlighted that the pandemic has brought about trends similar to those observed after the 1918 pandemic, such as increased participation of women in the workforce and greater international cooperation in medicine. "Today, we face trends in hospitality that call for more robust collaborations between academia, industry, and government," he stated. He further echoed the need for continuous collaboration across sectors to meet the



Gyan Bhushan
IES, CEO, NCHMCT &
Senior EA(T), MoT

growing demand for skilled labour in the hospitality sector.

Addressing the issue of skill gap, he underscored the importance of aligning



Collaboration across sectors is needed to meet the growing demand for skilled labour in hospitality."

academic curricula with industry trends, pointing out that exposure to real-world industry experience must be increased for both students and faculty. "We are already taking steps to integrate cutting-edge topics like artificial intelligence, Internet of things (IoT), dynamic pricing, and revenue management into the curriculum," he said. "Furthermore, we have partnered with leading academic institutions like Jawaharlal Nehru University and international hospitality schools like Michigan School of Hotel Management to provide global exposure to our students."

In a bid to further bridge the divide, Bhushan said that the National Council for Hospitality has signed several Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) with major hotel chains to facilitate industry mentorship for students and faculty alike.

Encouraging all stakeholders to take proactive steps and work towards making India a hub for hospitality excellence, both in terms of services and skilled manpower, he urged, "We should aim to be among the top three global leaders in hospitality by leveraging our talent, service standards, and innovative approaches." He further added, "In India, we say 'Atithi Devo Bhava'—the guest is God. We need to ensure that everyone, from industry professionals to local communities, embodies this spirit." □





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Nurturing new talent

Collaborative approach

At the FHRAI's HR Summit, Pradeep Shetty called for urgent and unified action to address the workforce challenges in India's hospitality sector.



Lipla Negi

While unveiling the report, 'Future of Hospitality: Challenges, Skill Shortages and Solutions,' at the recent FHRAI's HR Summit, **Pradeep Shetty**, Vice President, FHRAI, emphasised the need for collective responsibility and strategic collaboration across all stakeholders to make India the global hub for hospitality talent. He stated, "While the sector is projected to support around 53 million jobs by 2029, a significant workforce shortage threatens to undermine this growth trajectory."

He underlined the role of hospitality industry, a major segment of India's broader travel and tourism sector, as a crucial employment generator, contributing to the country's GDP and foreign exchange earnings. According to industry estimates, the sector currently supports approximately 8-9 per cent of India's

workforce. Despite optimistic projections for future growth, workforce challenges have become a major roadblock.

Bridging workforce gaps

The latest report titled, "Future of Hospitality: Challenges, Skills Shortages, and Solutions," highlights the growing demand for skilled professionals in the hospitality sector, but warns that the industry's high turnover rates threaten its ability to meet this demand. The report estimates that by 2029, nearly 53 million jobs will be created in the sector, but to fill these roles, a comprehensive approach to talent development and retention is essential.

According to the report from the FHRAI Centre of Excellence, by 2029, India's hospitality sector is expected to grow to a value of US\$475.37 billion. This growth, however, is contingent on addressing the workforce gap, with an



Pradeep Shetty
Vice President
FHRAI

“Workforce gap is a real threat to the industry's long-term sustainability.”

estimated shortage of 100,000 to 150,000 skilled workers annually. "The demand for hospitality services is growing rapidly, driven by rising disposable incomes, increased domestic and international tourism, and a surge in business events. Yet, we are facing a critical shortage of skilled talent," said Shetty. "The workforce gap is not just a challenge; it is a real threat to the industry's long-term sustainability."

A shift in outlook

One of the critical recommendations in the FHRAI Centre of Excellence's report is to attract the next generation to hospitality careers. Current trends show a



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steady decline in enrolments at hospitality institutions, which could exacerbate the shortage of skilled workers. He exhorted that the traditional perception of hospitality jobs as low-paying and demanding needs to change. “We need to show young professionals the diverse, rewarding career opportunities in hospitality, from management roles to entrepreneurial ventures. The sector offers not just jobs, but careers with potential for growth,” he added.

Enhanced practical exposure

One of the report’s key findings is the need to strengthen the link between academic learning and real-world application. Practical exposure through internships, live projects, and collaborations between academic institutions and industry leaders is essential to developing a skilled workforce.

Highlighting the importance of real-world experiences, he said, “Hands-on experience is crucial. Academic programmes must move beyond classroom theory and integrate more real-world experiences. This would not only help prepare students better but also make them more attractive to employers.”

Building a resilient workforce

The hospitality sector is also grappling with high employee turnover, a trend

exacerbated by the demanding nature of the job. Long working hours, low wages in certain segments, and insufficient work-life balance have contributed to burnout and dissatisfaction among employees.

“The hospitality industry is notorious for its high attrition rates. It is a demanding field, and retaining talent has always been a challenge. Without effective retention strategies, we risk losing our best talent to other sectors that offer more predictable hours and better work-life balance,” he explained.

“This is an exciting time for Indian hospitality, and the future is bright, but we must act now to secure it.”

Employee retention remains the most urgent issue facing the industry. Citing the findings in the report, he called for a multi-pronged strategy to address retention, focusing on better work conditions, career growth opportunities, and improved employee engagement. “Retention is about more than just sal-

ary. Employees need to feel valued, supported, and part of an organisation that cares about their growth. Flexible work hours, wellness programmes, and professional development opportunities are all essential elements in reducing turnover. Creating an environment where employees feel motivated and appreciated is the key to reducing attrition,” he suggested.

Strategies to attract the best talent

To create a comprehensive solution, he urged the government bodies, educational institutions, and hospitality businesses to work together. According to Shetty, this could involve modernising curricula to better align with market needs, offering incentives for vocational training, and fostering stronger partnerships between academia and industry.

He emphasised that the recommendations laid out in the FHRAI Centre of Excellence’s report provide a roadmap for a sustainable, thriving hospitality sector in India—one that will continue to drive economic growth and employment. “By working together, we can build an industry that attracts, nurtures, and retains the best talent. This is an exciting time for Indian hospitality, and the future is bright, but we must act now to secure it,” he concluded. □

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Skills shortage: Bridging the gap

Industry-academia leaders share their actionable insights to effectively navigate the hospitality talent chasm at the FHRAI's HR Summit.

“Post-COVID, we have completely revamped our curriculums to align with the industry's evolving needs.”



Rajan Bahadur
CEO, Tourism and Hospitality
Skill Council (THSC)

Post-COVID, we have completely revamped our curriculums to align with the industry's evolving needs. We operate around 1,100 training centres nationwide, offering short-term courses (3-9 months) that equip young people with the skills they need to succeed in hospitality. Upon completion, these individuals get certified and are ready to enter the workforce. Our goal is to scale our efforts to meet the global demand for skilled hospitality professionals.



Kamal Kant Pant
CHA, Principal and Secretary
IHM, Pusa, Delhi

Historically, hospitality education has heavily focused on developing managers, neglecting the need for skilled workers. This imbalance creates a significant gap at the operational level. To address this, we need to prioritise training and development for skilled positions. To meet this demand, we must scale up training programmes. Here, government agencies like THSC and the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship can play a crucial role.

“Historically, hospitality education has heavily focused on developing managers, neglecting the need for skilled workers.”



Dr Satvir Singh
Director (Studies)
NCHMCT

“Our curriculum ensures that students are well-rounded, capable of fulfilling various roles within the sector.”

Curriculum is a critical component of any programme. Our approach is to focus on skill development in the early years and gradually introduce management concepts in later years. This ensures that graduates are equipped with both practical skills and managerial knowledge. When industries recruit, they seek specific talents. NCHMCT's curriculum ensures that students are well rounded and capable of the various roles within the hospitality sector.



AK Singh
Director
FHRAI-IHM

We have a robust system catering to various levels of training. Our bachelor's programme prepares graduates for managerial roles in leading hotel chains. The diploma programmes focus on food production, food and beverage service, front office, and housekeeping, equipping students for entry-level positions. This tiered approach guarantees a steady supply of talent for the diverse needs of the hospitality industry.

“A tiered approach guarantees a steady supply of talent for the diverse needs of hospitality industry.”

New Fagor Experience Center in Chennai

Elevating Hospitality in Chennai

Cuisinec Chennai has unveiled the Fagor Experience Center, a dedicated hub for chefs, restaurateurs, and hospitality professionals seeking practical, efficient kitchen solutions. Designed to address real-world challenges, the center offers hands-on access to Fagor's latest equipment, enabling users to make informed decisions to streamline their operations and enhance productivity.

As Chennai continues to thrive as a hub for the food and hospitality industry, the Fagor Experience Center plays a pivotal role in supporting this growth. With tailored solutions that boost efficiency, reduce costs, and prioritize sustainability, the center provides tools and insights to meet the unique demands of the region. Beyond showcasing products, it offers an interactive environment where professionals can see how these solutions fit into their operations, whether for busy restaurants or large-scale event kitchens.



Building a Community of Learning and Collaboration

The Experience Center is not just a place to explore equipment—it's a platform for connection and growth. Through interactive workshops, live demonstrations, and training sessions, the center fosters learning and collaboration among

industry professionals.

Speaking on the occasion, Fagor Professionals South India Regional Manager Johnson Koshy shared:

"The Fagor Experience Center is our way of helping foodservice professionals overcome daily challenges. It's a space where they can explore solutions, ask questions, and improve their kitchens. We're proud to create something approachable and valuable for the community we serve."

A Shared Vision for the Future

Cuisinec Chennai and Fagor Professional have envisioned the center as a step forward for the hospitality industry, not just in Chennai but across Southern India. This initiative reflects their commitment to practical innovation and community support, aiming to build a stronger, more connected network of professionals who can adapt to the evolving demands of the industry.

The Fagor Experience Center is centered on people—acknowledging their challenges and offering meaningful support. It focuses on addressing the industry's needs with thoughtful and effective solutions. Through this initiative, Cuisinec Chennai is not only setting higher standards but also fostering a stronger and more connected hospitality community.



“An innovative curriculum and mentorship are vital to help navigate the changing dynamics in the hospitality industry.”



Sanjay Kaushik
Senior Regional Director, South West
and Central India, Radisson Hotels

An innovative curriculum and mentorship are vital in the hospitality industry. Curriculum should be dynamic, adapting to operational needs of the industry. It is about teaching what is truly relevant. Radisson collaborates with universities and Institutes of Hotel Management (IHMs) to evolve curriculums. This ensures graduates are industry-ready and equipped to navigate the changing dynamics of the hospitality business.



Dr PD Lakhawat
Director (Academics)
NCHMCT

Our curriculum ensures graduates are prepared for both managerial and operational tasks. The industry undoubtedly has the demand to absorb the increasing number of hospitality graduates. The challenge lies in attracting young people to pursue hospitality careers. We need to highlight the positive aspects of a hospitality career and its potential for growth. By showcasing the industry's appeal, we can inspire the next generation of hospitality professionals.

“We need to highlight the positive aspects of a career in hospitality and its potential for professional growth.”



Yogendra Agnihotri
Area Senior Director, People & Culture,
South Asia, Radisson Hotel Group

“As global hotel chains are creating numerous jobs, the industry must invest in skilling to attract quality talent.”

Given the industry's rapid growth, there is a massive demand for talent. Global hotel chains are expanding, creating numerous job opportunities. The industry must invest in skilling to ensure attracting quality talent. Collaboration between the industry and academia is crucial to improve curriculum and the quality of students entering hotel schools and vocational institutions. If we can guarantee quality, the industry is well-positioned to absorb the influx of talent.



Raajit Akhilesh Sheth
Associate Director - L&D
The Leela Palaces, Hotels and Resorts

To address talent shortage, we need to implement strong mentorship programmes that help employees develop their skills and advance their careers. We must also engage with institutions to introduce students to the industry early on and build a pipeline of future talent. It is important to build strong employer brands to create a positive image of the hospitality industry to attract and retain top talent.

“To address talent shortage, we need to implement mentorship programmes, that help employees develop skills.”



Divya Krishan
Vice President - Operations
The Job Plus

“It is about building a sustainable talent pipeline for the future and highlighting the industry's potential for growth.”

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SIHRA creates ripples down South

The last few months have seen SIHRA promoting skill development, fostering collaboration, and facilitating meaningful engagements with stakeholders across Southern India.



From participating in high-profile events to championing industry concerns, SIHRA continues to strengthen its presence in the region by collaborating with key stakeholders. Their recent activities reflect the commitment to industry advocacy, workforce development, and collaboration with stakeholders. As the hospitality sector in South India evolves, SIHRA remains a steadfast ally, driving progress and ensuring that the region continues to shine as a global tourism destination.

Here's a roundup of its recent activities and initiatives:

Meeting DG, Tourism

On 8 August, SIHRA representatives greeted Mugdha Sinha, IAS, Director



General (Tourism), Government of India, along with Vikram Cotah, CEO, GRT Hotels and Resorts. The meeting, organised by the Ministry of Tourism in Chennai, provided a platform to discuss strategies for advancing South India's tourism sector.

Pushing for Kerala

During the "Invest Kerala Roadshow" in Chennai, SIHRA interacted with key government officials, including P Rajeeve, Honourable Minister for Industry, Government of Kerala. SIHRA highlighted a number of initiatives and discussed avenues for collaboration to attract investments in Kerala's tourism and MSME sectors.

Greeting Tamil Nadu Chief Secretary

Sundar Singaram, Director of Operations, SIHRA, welcomed Shilpa Prabhakar Satish, IAS, Director of Tourism, Government of Tamil Nadu. Satish expressed her optimism in promoting Tamil Nadu as the most preferred destination in the country.

Skill Development Programme

The second batch of the "SIHRA Skill Development" programme concluded



successfully on 27 August at Courtyard by Marriott, Madurai. Certificates were awarded to participants, and job placements were facilitated with the support of SIHRA member hotels.

PEST Control Awareness Programme

On 3 September 2024, T Nataraajan, Honorary Secretary, SIHRA, inaugurated the PEST control training programme

for hoteliers in association with Envu and Parikshan at GRT Grand Chennai. Dr Pasupathy, Managing Director, Envu, and Sundar Singaram participated the programme. SIHRA plans to organise such training programmes to raise awareness of PEST management in hotels.

Addressing GST Concerns

On behalf of SIHRA, Executive Committee Member Hari Arumugam





ers, including Puneet Chhatwal, MD and CEO, Indian Hotels Company (IHCL), and Suman Billa, IAS, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Tourism. These interactions emphasised SIHRA's role in national-level hospitality discussions.

Boosting tourism in Tamil Nadu

Shilpa Prabhakar Satish, IAS, Director of Tourism for Tamil Nadu, was warmly welcomed by SIHRA representatives. She highlighted Tamil Nadu's tourism potential and the state's goal to emerge as India's top travel destination.



and Sundar Singaram met with Nirmala Sitharaman, Honourable Finance Minister, Government of India, to seek clarification on the GST charged in restaurants located within hotels. The Minister acknowledged the complexity of the issue and expressed confidence in receiving a favourable response.

AGM & new EC members

The 73rd Annual General Meeting of SIHRA was held on 14 September at Radisson Blu GRT Chennai, witnessing active participation from over 100 hoteliers. During the event, Gopinath Balasundaram, CEO, The Residency

Group of Hotels, was inducted as a member of the Executive Committee.

KTM 2024

K Syama Raju, President, SIHRA, represented the association at KTM, where he met key stakeholders, including Biju K, IAS, Kerala Tourism Secretary. SIHRA sponsored the event's kit bags, unveiled by Adv. P A Mohamed Riyas, Tourism Minister, Government of Kerala, reflecting its support for Kerala's tourism growth.

FHRAI Convention

At the FHRAI Convention in Goa, K Syama Raju engaged with industry lead-

Karnataka recognition

In a significant milestone, the Government of Karnataka appointed K Syama Raju as an independent director of Mysore Sales





International, a company with a turnover of ₹4,000 crore. He assumed office on 15 November 2024, marking another achievement in his illustrious career. Mysuru Hotel Association felicitated Raju for being elected as the FHRAI President.

Global presence


K Syama Raju also attended WTM London and met with Gajendra Singh Shekhawat,






Minister of Tourism, Government of India, alongside Salma K Fahim, IAS, Secretary Tourism, Government of Karnataka, and Vijayeshwari, MD, Ramoji Rao Film City, Hyderabad.

Meeting with MoCA

Balakrishna Reddy, Executive Committee Member, SIHRA/FHRAI, joined the inauguration of first direct flight

between Tirupati and Delhi by Kinjarapu Ram Mohan Naidu, Minister of Civil Aviation. Priced at ₹5,498, the route boosts connectivity.

In addition, plans for links to Mumbai, Ahmedabad, and Dubai were unveiled, marking progress in Tirupati's aviation network. Reddy expressed pride in supporting this milestone. 


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Say 'I do' to free music

HRAWI clarifies the law remains unchanged and music licences are not mandatory for weddings and other related festivities.



DDP Bureau

The Hotel and Restaurant Association of Western India (HRAWI) has clarified the legal stance for obtaining music licence for weddings and other social festivities held at hospitality establishments. The clarification comes in response to recent confusion caused by certain private agencies claiming that music licenses are now mandatory.

The association reconfirmed that there is no change in Indian law, therefore, marriage processions and other festivities associated are exempt from music licensing requirements. It further clarified that that if certain private agencies seeking payment for licenses for a marriage and related celebrations would be acting contrary to the provision of Section 52(1)(za) of the Copyright Act.

“We have received reports of private agencies misleading hotels and guests



Pradeep Shetty
Spokesperson and Hon' Secretary
HRAWI

regarding the need for music licenses at marriages and related festivities. Some agencies are also publishing misleading reports suggesting the exemption for a marriage is no longer valid. These agencies are citing the Goa High Court Order dated 13.08.2024 and the DPIIT Public Notice dated 07.11.2024, mis-



Nirav Gandhi
Senior Vice President
HRAWI

interpreting it as a legal requirement to obtain music licenses.” said **Pradeep Shetty**, Spokesperson and Hon. Secretary, HRAWI, adding, “HRAWI has verified that Section 52(1)(za) of the Copyright Act, 1957, which exempts marriage-related festivities from licensing requirements, remains intact and enforceable.”

In a public notice issued on 24 July 2023, the DPIIT informed the public that weddings and associated social celebrations were exempt from needing music licenses under Section 52(1)(za) of the Copyright Act, 1957. In a subsequent notice, dated 7 November 2024, the DPIIT put the earlier notice on hold. However, HRAWI clarified the public notice in any event was an explanatory note and did not establish new legal requirements.

To dispel the confusion, **Nirav Gandhi**, Senior Vice President, HRAWI, said, “The law remains clear, a marriage and associated social festivities are not subject to royalty payments or licensing requirements for music.” □




Food safety comes first

A comprehensive training programme imparting participants on the significance of robust food safety measures in daily operations.

The Hotel and Restaurant Association of Western India (HRAWI) organised an advanced food safety and management training program in collaboration with the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI). Held at DY Patil University's School of Hospitality and Tourism Studies

Providing participants with practical skills to uphold rigorous food safety measures and standards

in Navi Mumbai, the event focused on improving food safety practices in the hospitality industry.

The programme was inaugurated by key dignitaries, including Dr Pasupathy V, Trainer; Aarti Pandirkar, Vice Principal; and Padmaja Binakar, Assistant Professor-Catering Science, from DY Patil University. The event also saw the presence of Manasi Parab, Admin Assistant, Training and Seminar, HRAWI. A total of 39 students participated in the Food Safety Supervisor Training in Advance Catering (FoSTaC). The training covered various topics, including food handling, hygiene, sanitation, and waste management. The programme provided participants with practical skills to implement comprehensive food safety measures in their daily operations. 



An advertisement for So Sweet Stevia products. The background is a lush green forest. In the foreground, a wooden table displays various So Sweet Stevia products, including packets of Stevia Lemon Drink Mix, Stevia Sugar Substitute, and Stevia Sweetener. A glass of lemonade and a plate of fruit are also on the table. The text "The Sweet taste of good health" is prominently displayed in the center. Logos for So Sweet and HERB VEDA are visible in the top corners. A vertical strip on the left lists benefits: 100% Natural, Zero Sugar, Zero Calories, No Artificial Sweeteners, Sugar Free, and Keto Friendly. At the bottom, contact information is provided: www.sosweet.co.in | shankar@herbveda.co.in | +91 98112 74853, 96506 64242.

MoU for inclusivity



In a pivotal move, HRAWI signed an MoU with Vihaan Outdoors setting new standards towards inclusion of individuals with disabilities in hospitality.



DDP Bureau

HRAWI has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Vihaan Outdoors, to foster capacity building and job opportunities for persons with special needs. The MoU aims to promote inclusivity and help create a more accommodating environment in the hospitality industry.

At the event, Pradeep Shetty, Vice President, FHRAI and Honorary Secretary, HRAWI, and Sudhir Kothare, Founder and Partner, Vihaan Outdoors,

launched a visionary initiative, “Vihaan Outdoors,” dedicated to creating an inclusive and equitable society for persons with special needs. The initiative will delve into key pressing challenges in the industry and address them. To achieve its goals, the initiative will encourage the adoption of inclusive policies in human resource man-

agement in hospitality organisations and create employment opportunities.

Besides, the collaboration will focus on providing the required skill sets and competencies to help build confidence and secure a job in hospitality. It will spearhead a more inclusive hospitality sec-



Inclusion is not just a buzzword but a fundamental human right, where everyone, regardless of their abilities, is valued.

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tor that celebrates diversity and ensures mainstream acceptance of persons with special needs.

“This noble endeavour is a shining example of how meaningful actions can create ripples of positive changes in our society. Vihaan Outdoors not only opens avenues for persons with disabilities to experience the joy of exploration and self-reliance but also works towards reshaping perceptions, creating awareness, and building an inclusive community,” said Pradeep Shetty, Vice President, FHRAI and Honorary Secretary, HRAWI.

With an objective of breaking barriers in the industry, the initiative will prioritise inclusion through specially tailored outdoor experiences, sensitisation programmes, and empowering individuals for independent living. It is a step towards transforming perceptions and building a society where every individual is valued and respected equally.

Shetty further said, “As we gather here today, let us reflect on the power of inclusion. Inclusion is not just a buzzword; it is a fundamental human right. It is about creating a society where everyone, regardless of their abilities, is valued, respected, and empowered.” The hospitality industry, traditionally known for its diverse



workforce, is taking significant strides to create more inclusive work environments. By embracing diversity and fostering a culture of belonging, hotels and restaurants can uplift employee morale, boost productivity, and enhance customer satisfaction.

“We are focused on providing transformative outdoor experiences benefiting children and young adults

with disabilities to boost empowerment and elevate their confidence,” Kothare.

Remarkably, the Indian hospitality industry is also taking an active participation in this movement, with leading hotel chains like Lemon Tree Hotels, IHCL, and ITC. Hotels are empowering individuals with disabilities through skill development and are also actively hiring them. □

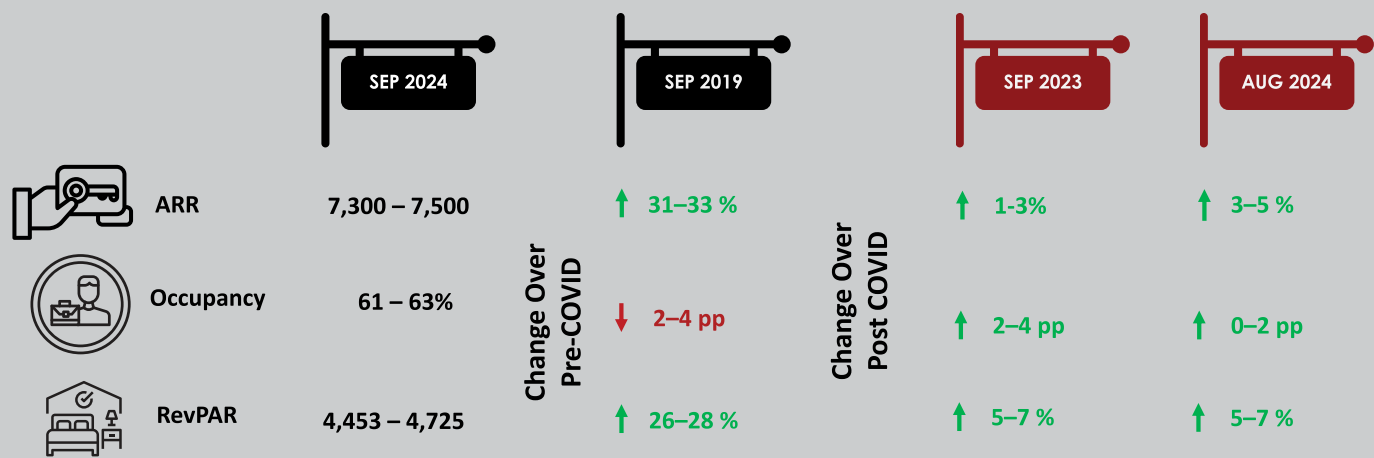




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Source : HVS Research

Bengaluru leads hotel demand

In September 2024, India's hospitality sector maintained constant growth, as occupancy rates remained stable and ARR rose at moderated pace.



DDP Bureau

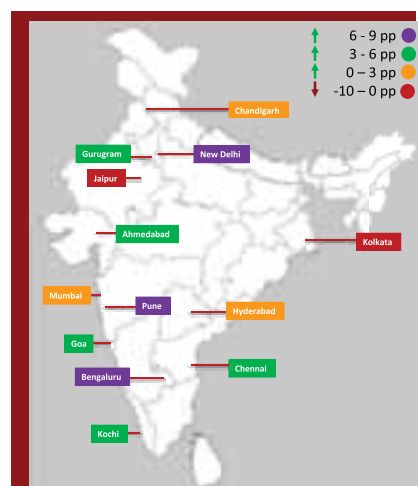
India's hospitality sector displayed steady growth and stability in September 2024, with national occupancy rates holding firm compared to August as per HVS Anarock's Hospitality Monitor report.

While some cities experienced robust increases, others faced slight declines, reflecting the nuanced demand dynamics within India's hospitality landscape.

Overall, September saw occupancy rates stabilise, ensuring consistent demand across many regions. Meanwhile, Average Room Rates (ARRs) continued on an upward trajectory, though the rate of growth began to stabilise. This shift suggests that while demand remains strong, ARR growth may be reaching a plateau in certain areas.

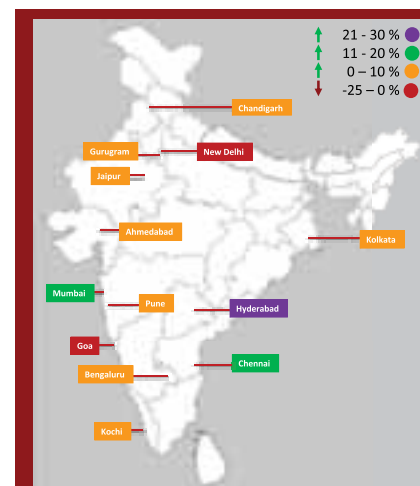
Among the cities with occupancy gains, Bengaluru led the way, posting an increase of 8 to 10 percentage points compared to August, reinforcing its position as a high-demand market. New Delhi also

Occupancy Trends Across Key Indian Markets (September 2024)



Source: HVS Research; year-on-year change; Data for Calendar Year

ARR Trends Across Key Indian Markets (September 2024)



showed growth, underscoring its continued appeal for both business and leisure travellers. However, Jaipur and Kolkata saw dips in occupancy, indicating region-specific fluctuations in demand.

The report reflected that ARR displayed city-specific trends. Hyderabad

experienced the most significant ARR growth, with a 22 to 24 per cent increase over the previous month.

Mumbai and Chennai also posted gains of 10 to 12 per cent, reinforcing the strong demand for premium accommodations in these metros. □



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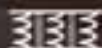
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GST reform: Striving for equity

The industry calls for a uniform GST rate of 12% on hotels in the Union Budget FY25, emphasising such a move would provide clarity for the sector.

Need parity in GST rates: **HRAEI**



Sudesh Poddar
President
HRAEI

“

The sector expects tax incentives for promoting green measures such as water-saving devices, waste-reduction practices, and energy-efficient lighting.”

The hospitality industry in India is looking for GST rationalisation to make hotel stays more affordable and encourage investment in the sector. The industry's expectations for GST rationalisation include: a uniform GST rate, input tax credits, tax incentives, and parity in GST rates.

A uniform GST rate for hotel rooms would eliminate price differences between peak and lean seasons. For example, a room night costing ₹10,000 falls under the 18 per cent GST rate, while an off-season rate of ₹7,000 falls under the 12 per cent GST rate. The current GST rates for hospitality are among the highest globally, making tourism expensive. We request the finance minister to consider a uniform GST rate of 12 per cent on hotels

in the Union Budget FY25, which would streamline compliance processes and bring greater clarity to the sector.

In addition to this, allowing input tax credits for hotel construction would make hotel stays more affordable and encourage investment in the sector. The industry is seeking tax incentives for hotels and homestays that adopt eco-friendly practices to reduce the carbon footprint. In other words, the sector expects tax incentives for promoting green measures such as water-saving devices, waste-reduction practices, and energy-efficient lighting.

The industry is calling for parity in GST rates among e-commerce suppliers and online aggregators. The hospitality industry is also looking for the government to provide infrastructure status to the industry. Industry players expect priority sector status to the hospitality sector. The priority or infrastructure status would help them with cheap loans, easy financing, and ease of doing business. These steps will not cause any revenue loss for the government, as airlines are already discharging tax on their sale. We also recommend reducing the TCS (Tax Collected at Source) to one per cent. Alternatively, standardising it at five per cent for foreign travel packages (currently split between five per cent and 20 per cent slabs) would be beneficial. ■



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Align GST slabs with international benchmarks: **SIHRA**

“

A rational and industry-friendly GST structure will act as a catalyst, ensuring sector's resilience.”



K Syama Raju
President
SIHRA

The hospitality and tourism sector is a key pillar of India's economic progress. It contributes vitally to GDP, creates jobs, and earns foreign exchange. However, the existing Goods and Services Tax (GST) framework has certain anomalies that need immediate attention to help the sector reach its true potential.

While introducing GST was a transformative step in simplifying indirect taxation, its implementation has led to unintended challenges, particularly in the hospitality industry. For instance, the threshold limits for GST slabs often need to reflect regional economic variations and seasonal demand patterns. The high tax rates for luxury hotels make India less competitive than neighboring countries with more favourable taxation policies.

A specific concern is the linkage of GST on restaurant food services with hotel room tariffs. This practice creates operational challenges and financial burdens. We strongly recommend that the GST Council delink restaurant GST from accommodation tariffs and introduce a lower, independent tax rate for food services.

Furthermore, the hospitality industry, being highly capital-intensive, faces significant barriers to investment. To address this, we propose that the government allow input tax credits on construction and project expenses for hotels. Such a move would encourage further investments in the sector and support its long-term growth.

Addressing these GST-related anomalies is not just about numerical adjustments; it is about ensuring that the hospitality sector in India's remains a globally competitive and attractive destination. Rationalising GST slabs to align with international benchmarks and establishing a clear and predictable tax structure will enhance growth and sustainability across the industry.



The South India Hotels and Restaurants Association (SIHRA) strongly advocates for a collaborative effort between policymakers and industry stakeholders to reform the GST framework. This will remove ambiguities, improve the ease of doing business, and drive growth across all facets of the hospitality and tourism value chain.

We urge the government to prioritise these measures as part of its vision to position India as a global tourism leader. A rational and industry-friendly GST structure will act as a catalyst, ensuring the hospitality sector's resilience, competitiveness, and sustained growth. □

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We need more affordable stays: HRANI

“

A rationalised GST framework ensures uniformity across all dining outlets.”



Surendra Kumar Jaiswal
President
HRANI

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Region	Name of Person	Mobile No.	Email Address
Maulik Shah	Central, Chain wide implementation and South	9819001835	maulik.shah@ingrammicro.com
Jaimin Shah	Rajasthan MP, Gujrat, Mumbai, Chhattisgarh	9510213632	jaimin.shah@ingrammicro.com
Manjunath Lotlekar	Goa and Maharashtra	9637096554	manjunath.lotlekar@ingrammicro.com
Subhas Ranjan Roy	North and East India	9903206884	subhasranjan.roy@ingrammicro.com

GST complexities add to operational burdens: **HRAWI**

“

GST on F&B services in hotels is incorrectly linked to the room rate.”



Jimmy Shaw
President
HRAWI

At present, a hotel has to charge 5 per cent GST on food and beverage (F&B) services if its room rates are below ₹7,500. However, if a single room is sold at a rate above ₹7,500 even once in a financial year, the hotel is required to charge 18 per cent GST on all F&B services for the rest of the year. The higher GST rate allows hotels to claim Input Tax Credit (ITC), but denying it at the 5 per cent rate contradicts the B2B nature of GST, which aims to prevent tax cascading. Without ITC, hotels and restaurants face higher costs, often passed on to consumers.

Additionally, under indirect tax laws, there is no precedent for taxing one service category based on rates applicable to a completely different category. Doing this undermines the purpose of distinct GST codes. The only exception is when bundled

services are offered, in which case the GST rate of the primary service applies to all secondary services. However currently, GST on F&B services in hotels is incorrectly linked to the room rate, even though room rent and F&B services are distinctly defined service categories.

The current tax policy which links hotel room rates to F&B services poses challenges for both businesses and consumers. For instance, if a hotel offers a suite that can accommodate multiple adults and charges marginally above ₹7,500 even once, it triggers a mandatory shift from 5 per cent to 18 per cent GST on F&B services. This would also mean that if a guest has paid a full advance for stay and services on a future date of service, the hotel would have to demand additional tax from these customers to comply with this difficult tax rule. This could potentially cause misunderstandings and damage customer relationships.

The GST on standalone restaurants was reduced to 5 per cent without ITC to support smaller businesses. However, to protect its own tax revenue, the GST department chose to charge a higher 18 per cent GST with ITC benefit to restaurants within hotels just because it is perceived to offer luxury. Unfortunately, this policy has deprived standalone restaurant businesses of the option to levy a higher GST and thereby avail ITC. For many restaurants operating with high rents and multiple service expenses,

the ability to claim ITC is far more beneficial than charging a lower GST, which anyways is paid by customers. Additionally, it should reinstate the earlier VAT-era option, allowing restaurants to choose between a lower composite tax without ITC or the standard 18 per cent GST with ITC benefits.

Lastly, we feel the outdated ₹7,500 threshold set in 2017 for 12 per cent GST on room tariffs needs to be adjusted based on the capital index value and reflect inflation-adjusted growth. This indexation should be updated automatically each year to maintain fairness and alignment with current economic conditions. ▣





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Analysing

Industry-academia mismatch

Even as shortage of skilled workers persists, it is essential to understand expectations of potential candidates and address mismatch between their aspirations and hospitality industry's offerings, say experts.



Somya Deep

The first panel discussion at the FHRAI's HR Summit on Education and Career in Hospitality focused on how to align the hospitality associations to fulfil the shortfall 15 million jobs and discussed the future of hospitality sector, education and career opportunities in India. However, reports forecast there is a requirement of 3 million people, while the problem is—too many people and not too many skills.

Promising industry

"India's hospitality sector currently has 180,000 rooms. To achieve our goals, we need over two million organised rooms, translating into three million jobs. But the question remains, who will fill

these roles?" **Aashish Gupta**, Consulting CEO, FAITH questioned.

"Despite lower enrolment in hospitality programmes, the industry is experiencing growth. A few months ago, we hired a new batch of management trainees. The career prospects are brighter than ever, and we often place our trainees in roles beyond their initial expectations," **Ramesh Takulia**, Consultant, L&D, IHCL said.

"It is perplexing why a well-established programme is not attracting sufficient enrolment. Another issue is the mismatch between industry needs and educational output. The traditional pyramid structure, with a few leaders and a large base of frontline staff, is inverted in our educational sys-

tem. We have a surplus of aspiring managers and a shortage of individuals seeking frontline roles. We need to align our educational institutions with the industry's demands. For every GM, we need a larger number of frontline associates," Takulia added.

"During COVID-19, the tourism and hospitality industry drastically suffered, leading several service-skilled workers to leave their jobs. Even after the initial shock, the labour shortage persisted across the global tourism value chain. A recent trend is the growing preference for gig economy jobs. Companies such as Swiggy, with a massive workforce of delivery riders, illustrate this shift. Young graduates are drawn to flexible, incentive-based work, rather than traditional service industry roles. This poses a challenge for the industry. It is essential to understand the expectations of potential candidates and address the mismatch between their aspirations and the industry's offerings," Gupta added.

"I commend FHRAI and NCHMCT for organising this summit. While I may not have the experience of Takulia, but I can shed light on the evolution of hospitality education in India. Sir Belford Smith, a pioneer in hospitality education, envisioned a pyramid structure with many food craft institutes supporting a smaller number of IHMs. However, we have adopted a top-heavy model, focusing on degree-level programmes, leading to a mismatch between industry needs and educational output," **Kamal Kant Pant**, CHA, Principal and Secretary, IHM, Pusa, said.

The industry is facing a dual challenge: a shortage of skilled workers and a surplus of graduates without job opportunities. Industry-academia partnerships are crucial to bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and real-world applications. Also, we must recognise the traditional employer-employee relationship is evolving. Flexible work arrangements and shorter tenure periods are becoming common. To adapt to these changes, we need to invest in continuous learning and development programmes to upskill our workforce, he added.

"We should consider auditing the ratio of IHM seats to food-craft institute seats. If there are, say, 12,000 IHM seats, we might need 50,000 to 60,000 food-craft institute seats to maintain a balanced ecosystem. It is important to shift our mindset from managerial focus. While catchy slogans inspire, the real challenge lies in implementation. We need to ensure graduates are equipped with the right skill sets to thrive in the industry," Gupta said.

"Recently, we saw a decline in industry interest among youngsters. Firms like ours implemented strategies to address this issue. By focusing on mentoring, internal growth, and succession planning, we have achieved success in developing our workforce," **Sanjay Kaushik**, Senior Regional Director, Southwest and Central India, Radisson Hotels, said. "For instance, 70 per cent of our growth is driven by internal promotions. To attract and retain top talent, we must emphasise the diverse range of opportunities available within the industry—beyond



Ramesh Takulia
Consultant
L&D, IHCL

“
We often place our trainees in roles beyond their initial expectation.”





Dr. Rini
Consultant, Business
Strategy, Build Track



We can empower students to leverage AI to enhance customer experience.”



managerial roles. A collaborative effort between the industry and educational institutions is a must to address this shortage,” he added.

Continuing, Aashish said, “It is crucial to attract top talent, while nurturing and developing internal talent. One key aspect is Radisson has nailed its career path visibility. Employees in hospitality, lack clarity about their career progression.” As Ramesh Thakulia said, we need to strike a balance between training for managerial roles and frontline positions. While leadership roles are important, a strong foundation is essential.

“Skilling at the bottom of the pyramid is crucial. However, we need a holistic approach to address the industry’s talent needs. THSC is fortunate to have a strong board of advisors, including experienced leaders such as Kachru and Bhushan, who guide our efforts. COVID-19 had forced us to rethink traditional approaches. Today, there is a huge pool of youngsters interested in tourism and hospitality, but many lack the skills and training,” **Rajan Bahadur**, CEO, THSC, said.

THSC is addressing this gap through a 1,100 training centres across India and collaborating with industry partners to develop training programmes, including short-term courses. One innovative approach is the ‘recruit, train, and deploy’ model. And partnering with companies

such as Radisson to identify their talent needs, recruit and train candidates, and place them in suitable roles, he added.

Integrating AI into hospitality management courses is a must nowadays, **Dr Rini**, Consultant, Business Strategy, Build Track, said. “By providing students with real-world exposure to AI tools such as IBM Watson, we can empower them to leverage AI to enhance customer experiences, optimise operations, and improve decision-making.”

It is important to strike a balance between technology and human interaction. While AI can automate routine tasks and provide valuable insights, it cannot replace the human touch. By combining the power of AI with empathy and creativity of human professionals, we can create exceptional guest experiences, he added.

“The demand for skilled professionals and the need to attract youngsters are pressing issues. This involves stressing the diverse range of opportunities, the potential for growth, and the impact that hospitality professionals can make. The council is revising the curriculum to incorporate emerging trends such as AI, sustainability, and digital marketing to address these issues. We are investing in marketing and outreach efforts to reach potential students in tier II, III and IV cities,” **PS Lakhawat**, Director Academics, NCHMCT, said. □

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Dream weddings on budget

Hotels are getting creative with budget-friendly weddings, opting for minimalist decor and curated menus to deliver a memorable experience.



Charmaine Fernz

Come December! It is the wedding and festive season, with big budgets, lavish setups, elegant venues, and wedding planners/hotels on their toes. However, the trends are changing with every passing year. And today's couples are more aware of costs and are looking for more value for money while also blending in their dreams.

Balancing dreams with reality

To have a successful low-budget wedding, hotels and wedding planners need to stress setting priorities, keeping expenses in check, and understanding each couple's preferences. **Colonel Manbeer Choudhary**, CMD, Noormahal Group and former President, FHRAI, said, "Intimate weddings typi-

cally cost between ₹35 to ₹50 lakhs, while luxury weddings can exceed ₹50 lakhs and reach up to ₹1 crore, depending on the scale, guest count, and services. With the experience of hosting around 5 to 6 weddings per week during peak wedding season and with rising demand, we may adjust our pricing slightly due to the venue's popularity and luxury offerings. However, if grandeur is a priority but resources are limited, scaling back on secondary elements like decor or catering can achieve a luxurious feel within constraints."

Sharing similar views, **Rakesh Wadhwa**, Managing Partner and Founder, Event Dynamics India, explained that couples need to balance their dreams with reality. Today, weddings typically cost around 30 lakhs plus artist costs. Thus, by engaging





Col. Manbeer Choudhary
CMD, Noormahal Group

“
If grandeur
is a
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resources
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scaling back
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can achieve
a luxurious
feel within
constraints.”

in detailed discussions, the team needs to understand the couple's priorities and crafts financially feasible plans. We handle around three to four weddings per week during peak season, and owning most of the event execution elements allows us to offer cost-effective and flexible solutions, ensuring couples enjoy a memorable wedding experience that balances aspirations and financial practicality.

Minimalist decor: Achieving quality

For every dream wedding, it is not just the venue but the overall ambience that makes all the difference. Taking on a sustainability angle, **Anjali Tolani**, Assistant Vice President-Weddings, Tamarind Global, said that modern weddings are increasingly adopting stylish yet cost-effective trends. Minimalistic decor, with clean lines and strategic lighting, creates a stunning atmosphere without overspending. Tolani added, “Intimate weddings are gaining popularity, allowing couples to focus on quality. For a more authentic touch, using local,

seasonal flowers for decor is economical and environmentally friendly. This suggests how style and sensibility can coexist.”

Navneet Jain, CEO, Radisson Blu and Radisson Blu Towers Kusshambi Delhi NCR, shared that their experienced team works closely with couples to align their expectations, priorities, and budget. We offer customisable wedding packages that ensure quality and flexibility. For example, if a couple desires grand floral decor but has a limited budget, we suggest strategic placements and arrangements and use elegant, cost-effective materials like LED lights and drapes. This way, we achieve the desired look without overspending. We also negotiate with our trusted vendors to secure competitive service rates.

Putting the spotlight on natural themes, **Deval Tibrewalla**, CEO and Director, Hotel Polo Towers Group, said, “We specialise in creating bespoke



Anjali Tolani
Assistant VP-Weddings
Tamarind Global

“Minimalistic decor, with clean lines and strategic lighting, creates a stunning atmosphere without breaking the bank.”

wedding experiences that reflect our clients' dreams while providing value for their investment. Our USP is the stunning natural outdoor spaces reducing the need for elaborate decor and creating a luxurious ambience.”

Discussing budget-friendly choices, **Anuradha Venkatachalam**, Hotel Captain, Moxy Bengaluru Airport Prestige Tech Cloud, shared Moxy Bengaluru Airport crafts stylish, budget-friendly weddings by aligning couples' dreams with financial practicality. Through personalised consultations, authentic touches are offered such as local elegance of *Jaipuri* block prints or creative solutions like DIY decor or regional menus, that add uniqueness without escalating costs. Hybrid wedding options further enhance inclusivity while minimising expenses.

Making no compromises

Weddings today are all about striking the perfect balance between style, personalisation, and cost-effectiveness. To achieve this balance, one

needs to prioritise minimalism and sustainability. Choudhary noted, “This shift towards smaller weddings allows couples to focus on meaningful experiences, enhancing key elements like gourmet food and bespoke decor.” Similarly, Tibrewalla sees micro-weddings as an opportunity for luxury. “At Polo Orchid Resort, our serene landscapes and intimate settings make each moment feel exclusive, allowing couples to prioritise intimacy without sacrificing elegance. Natural backdrops like cliffs and waterfalls minimise the need for decor while enhancing the wedding's unique charm.”

Technology shaping wedding experience

Technology is transforming weddings into hybrid, immersive experiences. Digital invitations are an eco-friendly, cost-saving choice. Venkatachalam explained, “E-invitations are replacing traditional ones, saving money while reflecting a modern aesthetic.” Minimalist decor delivers an upscale vibe with simple elements like greenery and statement pieces. Echoing this sentiment, Jain said,





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Navneet Jain
CEO,
Radisson Blu

“
A curated menu with signature dishes ensures a memorable dining experience while keeping costs down.”



“Minimalist decor, paired with the natural beauty of our venues, achieves a sophisticated ambience without excessive spending.”

Creative budgeting

Prioritising key areas is important to ease financial stress. Highlighting on the focal points of wedding

decor such as entrances and dining tables, Wadhwa suggested, “Strategic lighting and a few statement pieces create a luxurious vibe without excessive embellishments.” Customised menus are another cost-saver. “A curated menu with signature dishes ensures a memorable dining experience while keeping costs down,” Jain said.

The important mantra ‘contingency is key,’ planning for the unexpected is essential. Tolani recommended setting aside 10-15 per cent of the budget. “This buffer helps manage last-minute guest additions or weather-related changes. Reliable vendors, backup venues, and on-site coordinators ensure seamless execution, even in emergencies.”

Reminiscing a success story, Wadhwa shared, “During a wedding in Pune, unseasonal rain threatened the outdoor ceremony. Thanks to contingency plans, we quickly transitioned to a covered area, maintaining the original theme seamlessly.”

With thoughtful planning and creative solutions, today’s couples can enjoy weddings that are stylish, sustainable, and stress-free. By prioritising what matters most and adapting to trends, they create unforgettable memories without breaking the bank. As Tolani aptly put it, “Every couple deserves a wedding that reflects their aspirations, regardless of budget constraints.” ■





Revolutionising Foodservice

GulfHost 2024 proved to be a landmark event for Fagor Professional, a name synonymous with powerfully efficient dream commercial kitchens.

A global leader in foodservice equipment, Fagor Professional showcased cutting-edge solutions designed to enhance kitchen efficiency and culinary excellence at GulfHost 2024. Connecting with a global audience, the brand's participation at GulfHost was a testament to its commitment to shaping the future of the hospitality industry.

Among the event's most engaging moments were the live cooking demonstrations by renowned chefs Oier and Tarun, who captivated audiences with their culinary expertise. Using Fagor's state-of-the-art kitchen equipment, they demonstrated how the brand's products streamline kitchen operations, ensuring consistent, high-quality results in even the busiest of professional kitchens. A

perfect balance of reliability and innovation, Fagor's equipment make cooking smoother and more efficient, allowing professional chefs to focus on creating exceptional dishes.

Visitors had the opportunity to explore Fagor's full range of products, including advanced ovens, dishwashing systems, and refrigeration solutions. Designed for durability and efficiency, these products are tailored to meet the needs of modern commercial kitchens,

**Focused on quality,
efficiency & innovation,
the brand continues to
shape the future of
culinary excellence**

ensuring maximum performance and minimal downtime. The face-to-face interactions allowed Fagor to better understand customer needs, strengthening its relationships with chefs, hoteliers, and restaurateurs, while gaining valuable insights into emerging market trends.

As Fagor Professional continues to push the boundaries of innovation, the brand's presence at GulfHost 2024 has proven once again that they are a trusted partner in the global foodservice industry—focused on quality, efficiency, and the future of culinary excellence. Its primary focus is to enhance culinary standards worldwide. Besides, the brand aims to expand its global reach, forge stronger partnerships, and continue empowering kitchen teams with innovative, reliable, and robust solutions. 



Inspiring next gen chefs

VM Salgaocar Institute of International Hospitality Education has been honoured as “Best Culinary School of the Year.”



DDP Bureau

VM Salgaocar Institute of International Hospitality Education (VMSIHE), Manora-Raia, Goa, has solidified its place as a trailblazer in culinary education, earning the title of “Best Culinary School of the Year” at the Food Connoisseurs India Awards-National Edition 2024. Celebrated at The Leela Ambience Convention Hotel, Delhi, the ceremony brought together luminaries from the culinary and hospitality world to honor excellence and innovation.

The award was received by Professor **Irfan Mirza**, Director and Principal of VMSIHE, from the hands of **Chef Manjit Singh Gill**, President, Indian

Federation of Culinary Associations, in the presence of prominent personalities such as **Chef Kunal Kapur**, Indian chef and restaurateur, and **Dr Kazem Samandari**, Executive Chairman, L’Opera.

“**VMSIHE distinguishes itself through its innovative curriculum, international exposure opportunities, and focus on sustainability and modern culinary techniques.**”



Prof. Irfan Mirza expressed his gratitude, stating, “This award affirms our vision of fostering the next generation of hospitality leaders who will define the future of the culinary industry. We are proud of our achievements and will continue to inspire in the education sector.”

VMSIHE distinguishes itself through its innovative curriculum, international exposure opportunities, and focus on sustainability and modern culinary techniques. The institute offers a wide range of add-on courses in plant-based pastry arts, medicinal cuisine, and the farm-to-table movement.

With its excellent faculty, global partnerships, and advanced infrastructure, VMSIHE aims to continue shaping future leaders in the hospitality industry and expanding its offerings in the years to come. ■

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Reinventing culinary heritage

Najrul Beg emphasises how a distinctive F&B experience can set a hotel apart from its competitors and augment repeat business.



DDP Bureau

Food & Beverage (F&B) has emerged as a key contributor to revenue growth. Crafting a robust F&B offering is crucial, which can significantly enhance a guest's overall experience and drive F&B revenue. **Najrul Beg**, Executive Chef, Hyatt Place Malviya Nagar, Jaipur, revealed that Hyatt Place Jaipur's F&B contributes a revenue of 35-37 per cent from their rooftop bar restaurants, bars, and banquet services.

Strategies for repeat guests

A strong F&B offering can significantly enhance a guest's overall experience. Unique dining options, food quality or exceptional service can create memorable experiences that encourage guests to return. **Beg** shared, "Hyatt Place Jaipur invests in distinctive F&B services, such



Najrul Beg
Executive Chef
Hyatt Place Malviya Nagar, Jaipur

as themed restaurants or Zeest rooftop dining, positioning ourselves as lifestyle destinations, not just places to stay."

The brand provides various HDC loyalty programmes and offers, from discounted meals to exclusive dining events for repeat customers. They also incorporate local ingredients and seasonal menus for guests who appreciate sustainable dining experiences, increasing the likelihood of repeat business.

Reinterpreting culinary traditions

Contemporary dining in India is a dynamic fusion of tradition and innovation. Chefs are modernising age-old recipes, incorporating global influences, and adapting to the evolving tastes of diners while maintaining the rich diversity of India's culinary heritage. **Beg** pointed out, "This evolution not only appeals to the modern Indian diner but is also putting Indian cuisine on the global map."

Indian chefs are redefining how traditional food is prepared, plated, and presented, while still maintaining its essence. **Beg** highlighted that many contemporary dining experiences are focused on celebrating India's culinary history and cultural heritage.

Indian F&B landscape

The Indian F&B scene stands out due to its deep-rooted traditions, immense diversity, and a unique mix of street food culture alongside high-end culinary innovation. "It is this ability to constantly evolve while preserving its rich heritage that makes the Indian culinary landscape so distinct compared to other global markets," **Beg** highlighted. □

Contemporary dining in India is a dynamic fusion of tradition and innovation

Driving tech adaptability

With a multilingual platform and personalised support, Hotel-Spider aims to expand its market share in Indian hospitality sector.



Somya Deep

Hospitality distribution platform, Hotel-Spider offers online marketing services to hoteliers seeking to effectively manage, automate, and optimise online distribution. **Marco Baurdoux**, CEO, and **Shveta Sharma**, COO, Hotel-Spider India, discuss the platform's benefits, tech implementation challenges, and future plans in the Indian market.

Available 24/7 with no upfront cost, the platform helps hotels increase occupancy rates by leveraging the power of Online Travel Agencies (OTAs). Baurdoux said, "We leverage the power of cloud computing to ensure seamless global connectivity while staying committed to prioritising data security, particularly guest data." It also provides hotels access to valuable market data to personalise offerings and enhance their online distribution strategy.

Global reach, localised strategy

To effectively penetrate the Indian market, Hotel-Spider adopts a localised strategy. The platform is available in six languages, including English, Bengali, Gujarati, Hindi, Marathi, and Telugu. This approach, coupled with a multilingual team, enables to connect with hoteliers on a deeper level. Further, to enhance services, the distributor actively pursues partnerships with local tech companies.

Hotel-Spider gathers feedback from partners through direct interactions via its customer care team. Sharma shared, "As a B2B platform, our focus is on meeting the needs of our hotel partners. We track con-



Marco Baurdoux
CEO
Hotel-Spider

“Technology combined with strong human element is key to success in modern hospitality industry.”

version rates on our web booking engine to measure the effectiveness of our direct booking solutions.”

Shaping the future of hotel tech

Highlighting the primary challenges in implementing tech solutions in India, Sharma said many hoteliers still perceive technology as a threat, rather than an opportunity. However, the distributor prioritise to help hoteliers understand the positive impact of technology on business. "Our strategy involves strengthening local partnerships, expanding language sup-



Shveta Sharma
COO, India
Hotel-Spider

“Our strategy involves strengthening local partnerships, expanding language & customer care support.”

port, and enhancing local customer care. We aim to capture 10 per cent of the market,” Sharma shared.

To ensure seamless scalability and accommodate increasing demand, the brand plans to outsource its infrastructure to a cloud provider. Underlining the long-term vision for India, Baurdoux said, "We want to make tech adoption a seamless and essential part of the hospitality landscape. We believe that technology, combined with a strong human element, is the key to success in the modern hospitality industry.”

Products & Services



« Display solutions

Antarctica Equipment has introduced Ifi S.p.a.'s TONDA gelato display case to the Indian market. The circular and rotating design offers a 360-degree product view, maximising visibility. It features advanced sensor-controlled technology allowing simple hand gestures to activate the rotation, enabling the gelato server to select flavours with minimal effort. With its energy-saving features, TONDA delivers up to 25 per cent savings compared to traditional gelato display cases.

Cultural aesthetics reimagined



Cristiana Masi's Terra Collection, a collaboration with UDC Homes, is a significant step in the Indian interior design market. The collection, a blend of Italian elegance and Indian aesthetics, is more than just wallpapers; it celebrates refined craftsmanship, innovative design, and cultural aesthetics. UDC Homes not only enhances its portfolio but also redefines interior design boundaries by integrating Italian design with Indian décor. The collection is a natural extension of UDC Homes' mission to provide the finest décor solutions. The colour palette is carefully curated to evoke comfort and relaxation.



» Blending tradition with modernity



WeaveCraft, one of the leading outdoor furniture and retractable roofing providers, has been redefining outdoor luxury for over 22 years. The company's commitment to quality and innovation shines through in every product, blending traditional weaving artistry with modern materials, such as wicker, resin, wood, and concrete. Their offerings include outdoor furniture, sculptured lighting, unique outdoor accessories, and custom retractable roofs.

With a strong presence across more than 10 states, WeaveCraft serves all major five-star hotel chains in India, including renowned names like Oberoi, Taj, and Leela.



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MOVEMENTS

Arbind Singh

Deputy VP, Operations & Pre-Opening
Absolute Hotel Services India



Absolute Hotel Services India has appointed Arbind Singh as the Deputy Vice President, Operations and Pre-Opening. Singh will oversee all crucial functions within operating and yet to open properties that will resonate the brand's essence and personality. He will further support the company's functional efficiency and effectiveness in the various strategic business models.

Pradeep Jodha

General Manager
SKK The Fern-An Ecotel, Jaisalmer



Pradeep Jodha has been appointed as the General Manager of SKK The Fern-An Ecotel, Jaisalmer. With over 15 years of experience, Jodha has a strong background in hotel operations. He has worked with various brands, such as Suján, Carlson Rezidor Hotel Group, Keys Hotels, Royal Orchid, and Regenta Hotels. He will ensure seamless operations and elevate the guest experience.

Rajani Nair Deb

General Manager
DoubleTree by Hilton Agra



Rajani Nair Deb has been appointed as the General manager of DoubleTree by Hilton Agra. With over 22 years of hospitality experience, Rajani recently served as Commercial Director at Hilton and Hilton Garden Inn Bengaluru Embassy Manyata Business Park, where she played a pivotal role in driving exceptional growth in hotel performance metrics.

Arsheesh Todywala

Cluster Director, Marketing
Grand Hyatt Gurgaon



Grand Hyatt Gurgaon has roped in Arsheesh Todywala as its new Cluster Director of Marketing. Todywala will oversee the marketing and communication strategies for Grand Hyatt Gurgaon, Hyatt Regency Jaipur Mansarovar, and Hyatt Regency Dehradun. He aims to refine each hotel's unique value proposition, execute initiatives that elevate brand visibility, and transform guest experiences.

Roshan Khandelwal

Director, Finance
InterContinental Jaipur Tonk Road



InterContinental Jaipur Tonk Road has appointed Roshan Khandelwal as its new Director of Finance. With a solid foundation in finance and hospitality, Khandelwal will work closely with the leadership team to enhance revenue generation strategies, ensure efficient financial operations, and support the hotel's mission to provide outstanding services to guests.

Uday Barua

Director, Food and Beverage
Radisson Gurugram



Uday Barua has joined as the Director of Food and Beverage at Radisson Gurugram Sohna Road City Center. With over 29 years of experience in the hospitality sector, Barua has worked with prestigious hotels such as The Oberoi, Taj Hotels and Resorts, The Claridges, RHG, and The Pllazio Hotel. His expertise spans culinary knowledge, financial acumen, and operational expertise. 

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Anil Chodha
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Barbara Muckermann
Chief Operating Officer
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Dr. Jyotsna Suri
Chairperson & MD
The Lalit Suri Hospitality Group



Pooja Ray
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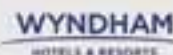
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