

# HOTELS & RESTAURANTS INDIA fhrai magazine

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Pages 72 ₹50

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# President's Note



*Dear esteemed FHRAI Members,*

**O**n behalf of FHRAI, I extend our heartiest congratulations to the NDA government under our dynamic Prime Minister Narendra Modi for a resounding victory in the General Elections 2024. I also extend our warmest greetings to the newly elected council of ministers and hope that with renewed enthusiasm and innovative ideas, they will unlock India's immense potential in emerging as a global economic powerhouse channelled through inclusive and sustainable development.

The hospitality industry has seen significant growth during the previous term of the present government, and we are highly optimistic that the enhanced focus of the government on economic stability, infrastructure development, digital transformation and promotion of domestic tourism destinations will further enhance the growth of our sector. Initiatives such as 'Dekho Apna Desh', 'Swadesh Darshan' and the PM's appeal to Indian nationals to visit domestic destinations and 'Wed in India' have boosted domestic tourism, and we anticipate more such programmes to further enhance our sector's growth.

Looking ahead, the government's support is vital for realising our vision in the region's tourism and hospitality sectors. The new government should streamline regulatory processes to enhance the ease of doing business for hospitality establishments. Simplifying licence procurement, reducing bureaucracy, and clarifying regulations will drive growth and innovation. Transparent policies will encourage investment and foster entrepreneurship. These improvements not only enhance accessibility and visitor experiences but also create jobs and stimulate local economies.

The government's continued focus and support in promoting India as a global tourist destination is vital for the growth of the sector. Effective marketing campaigns and collaborations with international travel and tourism organisations can

boost inbound tourism. Development of tourism is also very pertinent in augmenting the country's GDP and employment generation due to its close linkages with a multiple of allied sectors.

To tackle industry disparities, FHRAI proactively shared its concerns with Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs addressing the challenges and unfairness in GST levied on unbundled food services in hotels based on unrelated room tariff. The suggestions of separating the taxation of food services in restaurants from unrelated room rates will promote fairness, certainty, clarity, and adherence to the essence of GST principles.

On May 11, 2024, FHRAI in collaboration with the Ministry of Ayush, Government of India and Morarji Desai National Institute of Yoga, hosted 41-days countdown programme of International Day of Yoga at Radisson Blu Resort, Goa Cavelossim Beach in Goa setting the stage for the upcoming Yoga Mahotsav on June 21, 2024.

“

**To tackle industry disparities, FHRAI proactively shared its concerns addressing the challenges in GST levied on unbundled food services in hotels based on unrelated room tariff**

FHRAI continues its unwavering commitment to advocating for its members' interests and fostering a favourable regulatory environment within India's hospitality sector. Together, we can overcome challenges and emerge even stronger.

*With best regards,*  
**Pradeep Shetty**  
President, FHRAI





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FHRAI voices concerns about GST on hotel food services, arguing it contradicts taxation principles.

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HRAWI, in collaboration with FSSAI, conducts FoSTaC training session, training 40 hospitality professionals in advanced food safety practices.

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## Aligning skills: Key for hospitality success

Hospitality institutes, students and the hotel sector need to put in a collective effort to close the gap between skilled workforce and industry demand.



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## Improved connectivity boosts Northeast India's hospitality

Enhanced air connectivity and govt initiatives, coupled with upgraded infrastructure, have led to boost in hospitality sector in Northeast India.



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## Investor confidence spurs Indian hospitality growth

Driven by burgeoning middle class, govt infrastructural investments and rich tapestry of cultural attractions, the country's hospitality sector is experiencing dynamic upswing.

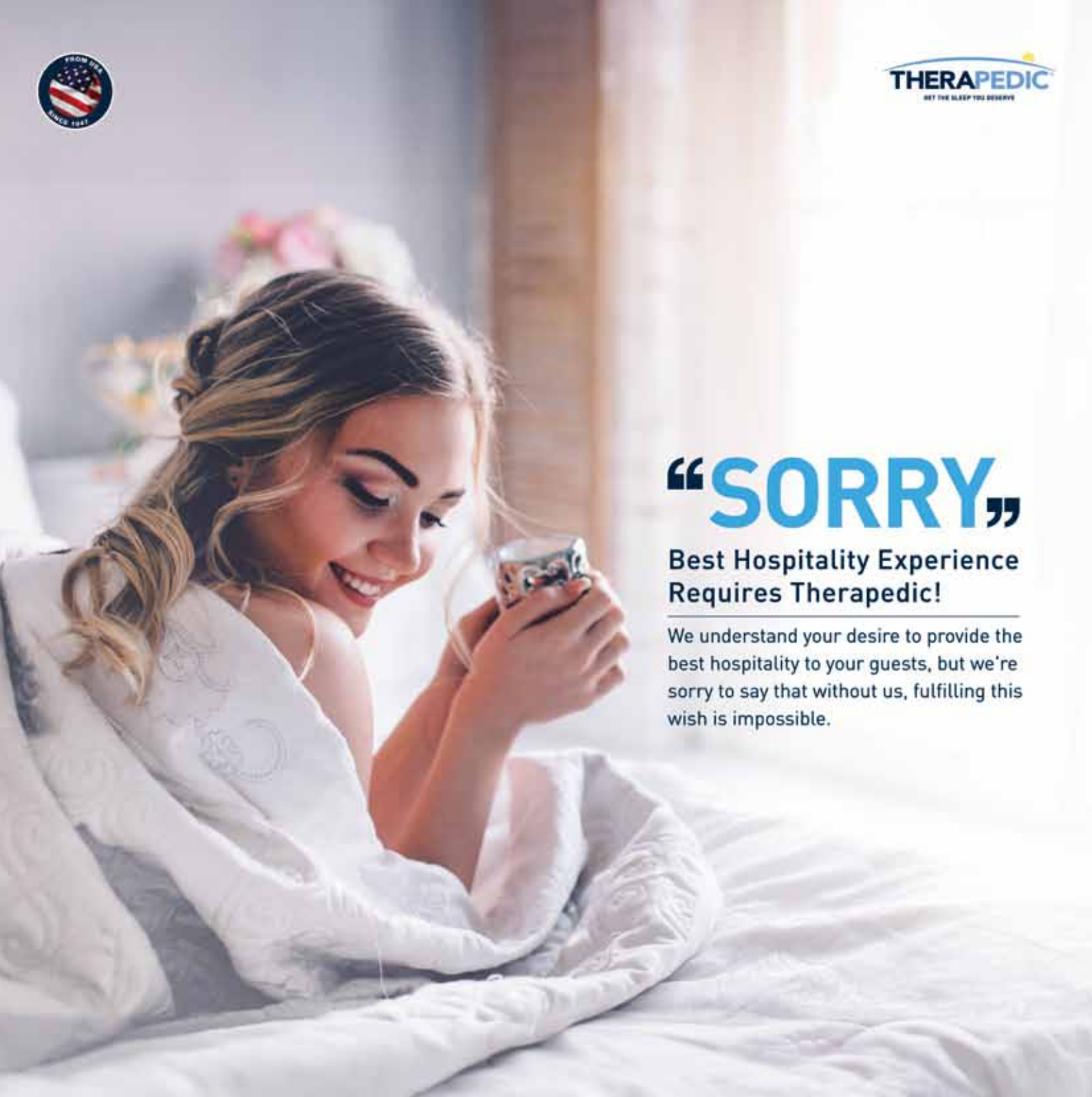


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## Embracing local traditions in hospitality

Modern travel now emphasises cultural immersion, with travellers seeking credible homegrown experiences, prompting the hospitality industry to prioritise local authenticity.





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# Boosting hospitality growth

## Investment and State involvement crucial



**Suman Billa**  
Additional Secretary, MOT

**Suman Billa** emphasises on involving states in hospitality sector's growth, advocating greater investments and outlining revenue opportunities.



**Nisha Verma**

**S**uman Billa, the newly appointed Additional Secretary in the Union Ministry of Tourism, has expressed optimism about hospitality sector's future, outlining a strategic vision to harness the industry. Billa believes that with increased investments, proactive government advocacy, and active state participation, country can not only meet the domestic demand but can also maintain its appeal to international tourists.

"Rooms are an issue because domestic demand is expanding, likely elbowing out international demand as local customers are willing to shell more money to stay in hotels. I believe investments in India need to increase to address this demand, and the best way to achieve this is by involving







such as hospitality and tourism must play a crucial role. We need to expand the hospitality footprint and create jobs that align with our development goals. The next five years will be essential for getting back on track with international promotion and publicity,” he explained.

### MICE boom

Billa claimed that the MICE industry is doing well because India has developed significant infrastructure, which was not the case five years back. “We need to leverage the MICE sector and elevate the industry to the next level. Plans are being developed, and the MOT is already working on this. We aim to enhance our competitiveness in this sector ensuring that India emerges as a leading global destination for MICE events. While there are concerns, such as taxation, some of which we can address and some we cannot, our goal is to make India a cost-competitive MICE destination within the existing framework,” he said.

### Business plan strategy

Billa claimed that the strategy must be planned differently. “We need to broadly

the states. The government should advocate for state participation, as states need to recognise tourism as an entrepreneurial opportunity. They should think like entrepreneurs, considering what they can offer and what they will gain. A key aspect of managing this demand is ensuring that states actively participate in investment



**Domestic demand is elbowing out international demand as local customers are willing to shell more money to stay in hotels**

promotion,” Billa said, while highlighting how inventory shortage is a pressing issue for hospitality industry.

### Onboarding states

“We need to think of Viksit Bharat 2047 and plan for the next five years to create a stronger hospitality sector. This requires increased investments in the sector and ensuring that states are fully engaged in this programme. Currently, eight or nine states have strong tourism policies, incentives, and subsidies, while many others lack them. The first step should be to bring all states on board and highlight hospitality as an opportunity for them to improve their revenues,” Billa explained.

### Skilling is vital

“Skilling will be vital for us because the realisation of Viksit Bharat depends on effectively utilising our demographic dividend. Therefore, labour-intensive sectors

consider developing a business plan-like strategy, addressing questions such as: Where do we stand currently? Where do we aim to be by 2047? And what targets do we set for the next five years regarding investment, job creation, promotion, and publicity?”

He also emphasised the importance of understanding the growth trajectory of the aviation sector. He mentioned, “Some airlines have placed orders for almost a thousand planes in the country. This is a significant factor for tourism to consider. With the emergence of numerous airports in regions previously devoid of connectivity and the convenience of Vande Bharat trains, travel has become much more accessible and seamless for a larger number of people. We need to thoroughly analyse these developments and align them with tourism potential to generate momentum towards achieving our goals.” □







# HOTEL FOOD TAXATION UNFAIR

FHRAI expresses concerns to Union Ministry of Finance about GST on hotel food services, arguing it contradicts GST principles and causes disparity.

**F**HRAI has raised concerns about the application of GST on food services in hotels. The Federation has written a letter to **Sanjay Kumar Agarwal**, Chairman, Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs, Union Ministry of Finance arguing “current practice of linking taxation of food services in restaurants to the

“

***GST leads to incorrect computation of food service tax rates, causing inconvenience to consumers and impacting guest experience***



room rates charged for accommodation is erroneous and poses several challenges. This approach contradicts the fundamental principle of GST, which emphasises levying taxes on goods and services related to specific tax groups”.

FHRAI has flagged following difficulties and disparities linked to the current practice:

## **GST versus restaurant taxation**

- GST principles advocate for specific classification taxation
- Levying GST on restaurant food services contradicts this
- Resulting in confusion and inequitable tax imposition





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### Violation of good principles of taxation

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi's description of GST as a 'good and simple tax' implies adherence to principles of equity, certainty, convenience, and efficiency
- GST make it difficult for consumers to determine the applicable tax for food services in hotels
- GST leads to incorrect computation of food service tax rates, causing inconvenience to consumers as well as guest experience
- GST on food service based on room rates blurs the distinction between accommodation and food costs, thereby creating an unfair perception of pricing and service
- The requirement for hotels to change the rate levied on food services, even



***In hotel restaurants, food services are not bundled as combined packages, hence there is no valid reason to link their tax rates***

when charging more than ₹7,500 per room unit, contradicts the ease of doing

business principle and exposes hotels to potential harassment, and litigation



### GST and bundled services in hotels

- GST applies to 'bundled services' where goods and services from different categories are sold together
- Bundled services are taxed based on the tax applicable to the primary service
- In hotels, rooms may be sold along with meal plans; if the meal plan being charged is at the same tax rate as accommodation
- In hotel and restaurants, food services are not bundled or offered as combined packages, hence there is no valid reason to link their tax rates

### Interim relief sought

- Issue of 'Value of Services Received' and 'Declared Tariff' clarification
- GST rates on restaurant sales to be applied based on the actual value of services received (actual amount received for room) and services rendered (rooms actually occupied)
- Aim to prevent online travel agencies and other platforms from accepting bookings at higher rates than actual room tariffs without hotel's knowledge and consent ☐



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# FHRAI's 41-day Yoga countdown in Goa highlights women's empowerment

FHRAI in collaboration with Ministry of Ayush & MDNIY organised a 41-day International Day of Yoga countdown programme in Goa, emphasising women's empowerment and holistic wellness.

In a remarkable collaboration with the Ministry of Ayush, Government of India, and the Morarji Desai National Institute of Yoga (MDNIY), FHRAI orchestrated the 41-day countdown programme for International Day of Yoga (IDY). The event commenced on May 11, 2024 at the Radisson Blu Resort, Goa Cavellissim Beach in Goa setting the stage for the upcoming IDY, also known as Yoga Mahotsav.

"Yoga is not just about physical fitness: It is a way of life that brings balance, peace, and strength. This year, with the theme of 'Yoga for Women Empowerment', we focus on the profound impact yoga can have on women's lives. We believe that when women embrace yoga, they gain the confidence to challenge societal norms and lead life with authenticity," **Pradeep Shetty**, President, FHRAI commented.

“

*Yoga is not just about physical fitness: It is a way of life that brings balance, peace, and strength*



**Pradeep Shetty**  
President  
FHRAI

The IDY is a worldwide initiative launched by Prime Minister, Narendra Modi. Its purpose is to encourage the practice of yoga and underscore its manifold advantages for physical, mental, and spiritual health. This year's theme, 'Yoga for Women Empowerment' highlights how yoga can empower women, fostering confidence and strength.

**Dr. Mickey Mehta**, Chairman & Managing Director, 360° Holistic Health Healing, honoured the occasion as the Chief Guest. Other distinguished dignitaries in







attendance included **Avantika Tokas Midha**, Vice Chairperson, Council of Royal Roots, and **Ajith Nair**, Resident Manager, Radisson Blu Resort, Goa Cavellossim Beach.


Dr. Mehta demonstrated several techniques from the Common Yoga Protocol (CYP), fostering awareness and harmony within communities through yoga. “Yoga leads to success by uplifting our mental and physical states. Through its practice, we harness creativity, confidence, and optimism. Let us embrace yoga with gratitude, for it



**Dr. Mickey Mehta**  
Chairman & MD  
360° Holistic Health Healing

holds the key to a balanced and fulfilled life,” Mehta pointed out.

The highlight of the event was active participation from over 200 plus students from Xelden School Goa, along with members of the community. The event was a live telecast on the platform of MDNIY social media platforms. This event sought to encourage the incorporation of yoga into daily routines, promoting physical well-being, mental clarity, and spiritual awareness.

Celebration of Yoga Mahotsav was an engaging experience for guests. As a significant step towards fostering relations with Ministry of Ayush and MDNIY, FHRAI will organise the grand celebration on June 21, 2024 at Hotel Andaz Aerocity, New Delhi promoting yoga and its various benefits. 



“

Yoga leads to success by uplifting our mental and physical states. Through its practice, we harness creativity, confidence and optimism



# Leadership development Key to hospitality future

Future of Indian hospitality sector hinges on leadership development, sustainability, and leveraging technology to enhance guest experiences, writes **Anuraag Bhatnagar**.



I am often asked about my vision for the future of the Indian hospitality industry. This is a multifaceted sector that is continuously evolving, driven by dynamic market forces, technological advancements and shifting consumer expectations. I would like to share some insights into this thriving industry and highlight a few critical components that will shape its future.

One of the core strengths of any successful hospitality brand lies in its people. At The Leela, we recognise that nurturing talent and leadership is pivotal to maintaining our position at the forefront of luxury hospitality. This belief is embodied in our Leela Leadership Development Programme (LLDP), a 15-month tailored management training initiative in partnership with the Indian School of Hospitality (ISH) in alliance with Les Roches that we launched in May 2022.

LLDP is not merely a training programme; it is a strategic initiative aimed at identifying and grooming the best talent in the industry to become the luxury leaders of tomorrow. This initiative aligns perfectly with our broader employee acquisition and retention strategy. By investing in the development of our employees, we ensure that we are not only attracting top talent from the industry but also retaining it by providing clear, progressive career paths.

The programme is meticulously designed to blend theoretical knowledge with practical experience. Over the course of 15 months, participants engage in two structured 'On the Job Trainings' at different Leela properties, allowing them to gain diverse, real-world insights into the operations. Additionally, they participate in three intensive 10-day bootcamps at the ISH campus, where they are exposed to a world-class curriculum and online classes led by renowned faculty. This comprehensive approach ensures that our management trainees are well-versed in hospitality fundamentals while being adept at handling the nuanced demands of luxury hospitality. The



programme includes periodic appraisals, practical capstone projects, and regular mentoring sessions to support both professional and personal growth.

Our first batch of 23 management trainees graduated in 2023 and I am proud to report a remarkable retention rate of 95 per cent. These graduates are now serving as Assistant Managers across our properties, poised to take on significant leadership roles in the future. Currently, we have 29 management trainees in the class of 2024, scheduled to graduate in a few months and an unprecedented 43 as part of class of 2025, all of whom are on a promising trajectory towards becoming the next generation of leaders of The Leela.

To join the LLDP, candidates must possess a bachelor's degree in hospitality, a year of experience in a luxury hotel, excellent communication skills, a pleasant personality and leadership potential. Upon completion, they are fast-tracked into managerial roles, with a clear pathway to becoming General Managers or other senior positions within 12 to 13 years.

In addition to leadership development, another pivotal area shaping the future of the Indian hospitality industry is sustainability. It goes beyond just environmental conservation and encompasses a holistic approach that includes economic and social dimensions.



***At The Leela, we recognise that nurturing talent is pivotal to maintaining our position at forefront of luxury hospitality***



**Anuraag Bhatnagar**  
Chief Executive Officer  
The Leela Palaces, Hotels and Resorts



### **The Leela's luxury Architect**

Anuraag Bhatnagar, the CEO of The Leela Palaces, Hotels and Resorts, has over 35 years of experience. Known as the 'Man with the Midas Touch', he is responsible for enhancing The Leela's position as an Indian luxury brand. With an understanding of luxury consumers, Bhatnagar is well-positioned to lead the brand in its next phase of growth, catering to global luxury traveller needs. Bhatnagar spent his early years honing his skills with the Oberoi Group of Hotels.

At The Leela, our commitment extends beyond the opulence of our spaces to a profound connection with nature and communities, embracing mindful luxury as the cornerstone of our philosophy. By partnering with Indian brands that share our values, we aim to create a positive impact on local communities and the broader ecosystem. For instance, our collaboration with Jodhpur Mahila Griha Udhayog, to source bags used by the housekeeping department or with Jalinga Tea Estate, manufacturers of the wellness teas that are placed in our guest rooms, ensures that we ethically source products that support women artisans and entrepreneurs.

“

**By partnering with Indian brands that share our values, we aim to create a positive impact on local communities**



A great example of our commitment to sustainability is our partnership with Phool.co, where we empower 300 women from marginalised communities to upcycle the flowers used at our hotels into charcoal-free incense sticks and cones infused with Tishya by The Leela, our signature fragrance. These initiatives not only provide economic opportunities but also evoke a sense of pride and empowerment among local artisans. These efforts are complemented by our initiatives that span waste reduction, energy conservation, and preserving tradition.

The commissioning of in-house water bottling plants at our hotels is a landmark initiative. This

project, part of our signature wellness programme Aujasya by The Leela, replaces single-use plastic bottles and is projected to eliminate 3.2 million plastic bottles annually, reducing carbon emissions by an impressive 157 tonnes.

Through our association with Nobel Peace Laureate Kailash Satyarthi's, Kailash Satyarthi Children's Foundation, we contribute to the education of children at 11 Bal Mitra Grams or child friendly villages in Rajasthan. This initiative impacts over 2,100 households and protects 4,256 children, showcasing our dedication to child-centred rural development and child protection.





of luxury stays, enhancing the well-being of guests. Travellers are also increasingly valuing milestone memories and leisurely journeys of discovery, preferring experiences that offer deeper connections and personalised engagements.

The hospitality industry must adapt to evolving consumer preferences and technological advancements. Embracing wellness and sustainability, offering experiential and immersive stays and leveraging tech and AI are crucial for staying ahead. These elements are essential for expanding into new spaces and maximising returns in a competitive landscape.



**From AI-powered concierge services to personalised digital interactions, technology will enable hotels to offer more tailored and seamless experiences**



▲  
Kailash Satyarthi hand in hand with smiling children and supporters

Furthermore, our palaces in Bengaluru, Chennai, Jaipur and Udaipur operate windmill and solar plants, achieving an annual carbon reduction of 15,485 tonnes. This effort is equivalent to planting over 583,000 trees each year and supports the livelihoods of 75 families. Notably, 55 per cent of our portfolio operates on renewable energy, with The Leela Palace Bengaluru leading at 86 per cent.

The hospitality industry is witnessing a paradigm shift with emerging trends reshaping luxury travel. Reimagined all-inclusive offerings are merging indulgence with comprehensive experiences. Curated sleep programmes and holistic lifestyle propositions are becoming essential components

As we look ahead, the Indian hospitality industry is poised for significant transformation. The integration of technology will play a crucial role in enhancing guest experiences and operational efficiency. From AI-powered concierge services to personalised digital interactions, technology will enable hotels to offer more tailored and seamless experiences. At The Leela, we are continuously exploring innovative solutions to stay ahead of the curve and provide our guests with unparalleled service.

Despite the growing influence of technology, the essence of hospitality lies in the human touch. The warmth, empathy and personalised service that our associates provide are irreplaceable and will continue to be our distinguishing factor. Programmes such as LLDP ensure that we cultivate leaders who embody these qualities, while staying true to our ethos of 'Atithi Devo Bhava'.

The future of the Indian hospitality industry is bright, filled with opportunities for growth and innovation. By staying true to our core values and embracing change, The Leela will continue to set the benchmark for excellence in the Indian hospitality industry. To the young aspirants entering this dynamic field, my advice is simple: pursue your passion with dedication, embrace innovation and never lose sight of the importance of human connection. The future of hospitality is in your hands, and it promises to be an extraordinary journey. ■

# In tandem with Ministry of Tourism

Association leaders congratulate **Suman Billa** on his appointment as Additional Secretary, MOT, expressing confidence in his leadership.

**G**arish Oberoi, President, HRANI and **Renu Thapliyal**, Secretary General, HRANI extended their heartfelt and warmest congratulations to **Suman Billa** on his recent appointment as the Additional Secretary, Union Ministry of Tourism.

At a meeting held to mark this significant appointment, the HRANI delegation led by Oberoi and Thapliyal conveyed their enthusiasm and optimism regarding Billa's new role. They engaged in a fruitful discussion about the future of tourism and hospitality initiatives, highlighting the association's commitment to enhancing these sectors.

Oberoi expressed confidence in Billa's leadership abilities and emphasised HRANI's readiness to collaborate closely with the Ministry. "We look forward to working closely with the Ministry to implement new initiatives that will benefit the hospitality community," Oberoi said. He further elaborated on the association's plans to align their efforts with the Ministry's vision, aiming to create a more vibrant and sustainable hospitality sector.



**Garish Oberoi**  
President  
HRANI


The meeting concluded with a mutual agreement to continue promoting tourism aggressively, while elevating the standards of the hospitality industry. Both parties recognised the importance of this collaboration in driving economic growth and improving the overall hospitality experience for domestic and international tourists.

After four-year hiatus, Billa has resumed his position at MOT. A 1996 batch IAS officer from the Kerala cadre, Billa served as the Joint Secretary, Tourism, from 2014 to 2019, after which he joined the United Nations World Tourism Organisation as the Director, Technical Cooperation and Silk Road. After

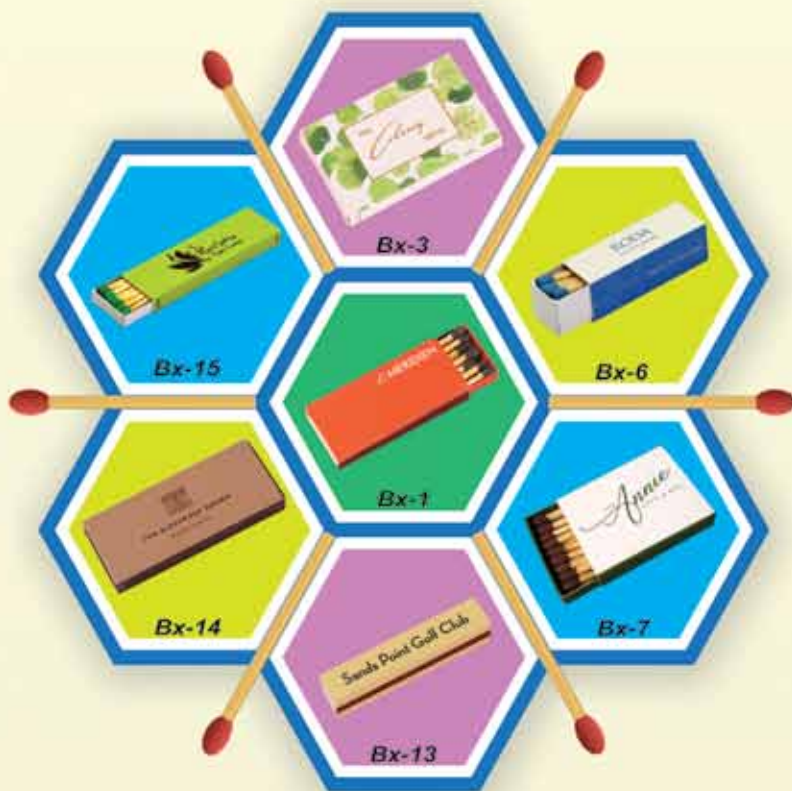
“  
HRANI looks forward to working closely with Tourism Ministry to implement new initiatives that will benefit hospitality community



this, he was appointed as the Principal Secretary, Industries and NORKA, Government of Kerala until the recent move.

Billa is not new to tourism, he had also served as the Tourism Secretary in Kerala and was part of some of the most iconic campaigns for the state tourism board, significantly boosting Kerala's profile as a premier travel destination. As the Joint Secretary, Tourism, he was involved in planning the draft of National Tourism Policy as well as conceptualising many campaigns of Incredible India. 





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# Enhancing food safety training practices

HRAWI, in collaboration with FSSAI, conducts FoSTaC training session, training 40 hospitality professionals in advanced food safety practices.

**H**RAWI recently conducted an extensive Food Safety Supervisor Training in Advance Catering (FoSTaC) programme, in partnership with the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI). Held at Hotel Amarpreet in Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar on May 29, 2024, the session saw the participation of 40 hospitality professionals, trained by Praveen Andrews of Parikshan. This initiative by FSSAI aims to arm professionals with the critical knowledge and skills required to uphold safe and healthy food practices.

The training session was inaugurated by a committee, including **Praveen Andrews** from Parikshan, **Kalpesh Agarwal**, Vice President, Hotel Amarpreet, **Phillip Waidande**, Head, Hospitality Development Khinvasara, **Chef Ramesh Rawat**, Executive Chef, Hotel Amarpreet, and **Manasi Parab**, Administration Assistant, HRAWI.

Participants delved into key topics such as food handling, preparation, hygiene, sanitation and waste management. The programme's focus on these core areas provided attendees with



**Pradeep Shetty**  
President  
HRAWI


the practical skills and knowledge to effectively implement stringent food safety protocols in their daily operations.

HRAWI has made significant strides in promoting food safety within the hospitality industry. Through FoSTaC programme, HRAWI has successfully trained and certified 2,996 professionals. This achievement underscores HRAWI's dedication to elevating food safety standards and ensuring that hospitality establishments adhere to the highest levels of hygiene and safety. By equipping nearly 3,000 individuals with essential food safety knowledge and skills, HRAWI demonstrates its commitment to protecting public

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**Participants at FoSTaC programme delved into key topics such as food handling, preparation, hygiene, sanitation and waste management**

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health and enhancing the overall quality of service in the hospitality sector. 







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# ₹100 crore boost to Nilgiris tourism

SIHRA held meetings in May to bolster South Indian tourism. They discussed national and global promotion for Tamil Nadu and regional concerns.

SIHRA organised a meeting with **D Venkatesan**, Regional Director, Southern Region, Union Ministry of Tourism, and hoteliers of Nilgiris at Gem Park Ooty on May 19, 2024. Hotel Gem Park and NHRA hosted the meeting. Members had meaningful interactions with the regional director, who discussed core issues in Nilgiris. Venkatesan explained Swadesh Darshan 2.0 and the ₹100-crore fund allocation to develop responsible tourism in Nilgiris by the Tourism Ministry to the members. He added that he would arrange a meeting with the consultant, L&T and hoteliers in Nilgiris to get local inputs. He also assured that he would support the development of Nilgiris as a tourist destination. **Sundar Singaram**, Director, Operations, SIHRA, mentioned in the meeting that SIHRA is making every effort to benefit the hoteliers in every region and requested them to come forward for such interactions. He also addressed the members' concerns about the recent e-Pass implementation.

## Enhancing tourism

SIHRA organised a meeting with all leading tourism stakeholders in Tamil Nadu to brainstorm how to promote the state as a





tourist destination to the rest of India and globally. The meeting was chaired by **T Natarajan**, Honorary Secretary, SIHRA. The CEOs of leading hotel chains, tour operators, and transporters participated in the meeting and shared their views. **Vikram Cotah**, CEO, GRT Hotels & Resorts and Chairman of Taskforce for Tourism, CII Southern Region, presented the opportunities in Tamil Nadu. It was decided to project the tourism potential of Tamil Nadu by conducting a buyer-seller meeting at Madurai with the support of the Union Ministry of Tourism and the Tamil Nadu government along with CII and Travel Club Madurai. The next meeting was scheduled for May 25 at Madurai.

### Meet with Kerala hoteliers

SIHRA organised an interactive meeting with Kerala hoteliers at Gokulam Grand Resorts and Spa, Kumarakom, on May 17, 2024. **K Syama Raju**, President, SIHRA, **T Natarajan**, Honorary Secretary and other Executive Committee Members of SIHRA had a meaningful interaction with hoteliers from Kerala. **George Dominic**, Owner, CGH Group highlighted the various issues that hotels in Kerala face and the need for local representation. Raju mentioned, in his address, that he would support the Kerala hospitality industry and highlight the core issues to the Kerala government. He added that because of FHRAI and SIHRA's efforts, the Delhi High Court has admitted the EPCG case and directed the government to discuss it. The Presidents of the associations of all approved and classified hotels of Kerala and Kerala Travel Mart also addressed the gathering. **Sundar Singaram**, Director, Operations, SIHRA, gave his heartfelt thanks to **Baiju Gopalan**, Managing Director, Gokulam Grand Resort and Spa, for the arrangements and the hoteliers who participated in the meeting. 




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**D Venkatesan assured that he would support the development of Nilgiris as a tourist destination**

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# Infrastructure and cultural heritage drive record tourism in Madhya Pradesh

Madhya Pradesh sets a new tourism record in last year by attracting over 11 crore visitors, surpassing pre-COVID levels.



Arumita Gupta

Madhya Pradesh recently celebrated Madhya Pradesh Tourism Day, marking the foundation day of the Madhya Pradesh State Tourism Development Corporation (MPSTDC). This special occasion is particularly significant this year, as the state has set a new tourism record by welcoming over 11 crore (110 million) visitors in 2023, surpassing pre-COVID levels and establishing itself as a premier tourist destination in India.

From January to December 2023, Madhya Pradesh saw an unprecedented influx of 11.21 crore (112.1 million) tourists. This growth is a remarkable leap from the 3.41 crore (34.1 million) visitors in 2022, showcasing the state's recovery and strategic efforts to boost tourism. The increase in tourist numbers underscores the lure of Madhya Pradesh.



## NUMBER OF TOURISTS OVER THE YEARS

- 2023: 112,129,094
- 2022: 34,138,757
- 2021: 25,595,668
- 2020: 21,400,693
- 2019: 89,035,097
- 2018: 84,614,456
- 2017: 58,862,584



**SS Shukla**  
Principal Secretary  
Tourism & Culture, Government of  
MP & MD, MP Tourism Board

**Sheo Shekhar Shukla**, Principal Secretary, Tourism & Culture, Government of Madhya Pradesh & Managing Director, Madhya Pradesh Tourism Board, expressed pride in the state's achievements. "The record-breaking tourist arrivals are testament to Madhya Pradesh's appeal as a diverse and enriching travel destination. Our focus on developing infrastructure, promoting religious tourism, and showcasing our unique cultural heritage are significant in attracting visitors from across India and across the globe," he said.

## TOP 10 DESTINATIONS IN MADHYA PRADESH (2023)

- Ujjain: 52,841,802 tourists
- Maihar: 16,849,000 tourists
- Indore: 10,119,030 tourists
- Chitrakoot: 9,001,126 tourists
- Omkareshwar: 3,475,000 tourists
- Jabalpur: 2,669,869 tourists
- Salkanpur: 2,565,000 tourists
- Narmadapuram (Pachmarhi, Madhai, Narmadapuram, Adamgarh): 2,283,837 tourists
- Raisen (Bhimbetka, Sanchi, Bhojpur): 2,137,058 tourists
- Bhopal: 1,950,965 tourists



**Record-breaking tourist arrivals are testament to Madhya Pradesh's immense appeal as a diverse and enriching travel destination**


Ujjain, a city steeped in spiritual significance, emerged as the state's most popular destination, attracting over 5.28 crore (52.8 million) tourists. The state's top 10 destinations also include Maihar, Chitrakoot, Omkareshwar, and Salkanpur, all of which are renowned for their religious and cultural importance. This trend highlights the growing appeal of spiritual tourism in Madhya Pradesh.

Key projects such as Mahakal Lok and Ektma Dham have been instrumental in attracting visitors. These developments, along with improved infrastructure and enriched visitor experiences, have contributed to the state's tourism success.

He emphasised on the state's conscious efforts to enhance spiritual and religious sites, providing both adequate infrastructure and enriching experiences around these destinations. "We have created a comprehensive strategy to promote our cultural heritage globally. With 10 destinations included under UNESCO's tentative list in the past two to three years, we now have 14 UNESCO sites, three on the permanent list, and the rest on the tentative list. We are continuously working towards getting them on the permanent inscription list."

Shukla also highlighted the importance of improved connectivity, infrastructure,

and amenities in making Madhya Pradesh accessible and appealing to a broader range of visitors. He pointed out that the state's campaigns showcasing its beauty during monsoons and the peak tourism season from October onwards have been successful in attracting both domestic and international tourists.

The rise in tourism has positively impacted Madhya Pradesh's economy, generating employment opportunities, boosting local businesses, and contributing to infrastructure development. The state's diverse offerings, cater to a wide range of travellers, ensures an unforgettable journey. 





# HOSPITALITY SECTOR AWAITS MAJOR REFORMS

New government has ignited optimism within the hospitality sector. A series of anticipated reforms promises to revitalise the industry.

New govt should ensure seamless travel: **HRANI**

“

*One of the primary expectations from the new government is a significant boost to infrastructure such as roads, highways*



**Garish Oberoi**  
President  
HRANI

The new government is likely to usher in a slew of reforms aimed at transforming the hospitality sector, driving growth, and enhancing India's appeal as a global tourist destination. One of the primary expectations from the new government is a significant boost to infrastructure. The tourism and hospitality sectors thrive on the backbone of strong infrastructure—roads, airports, railways, or digital connectivity. The new regime is anticipated to prioritise the development of modern and efficient transport networks, ensuring seamless travel experiences for both domestic and international tourists.

Investment in smart cities and heritage conservation projects will likely take center stage. Upgrading existing tourist spots with state-of-the-art facilities and creating new attractions will enhance the overall tourist experience. Additionally, a focus on sustainable tourism practices will ensure the preservation of the country's rich cultural and natural heritage for future generations.

The industry has long advocated for a reduction in the GST rates applicable to hotels and restaurants. High tax rates have been a deterrent for both businesses and tourists, often making India a less competitive destination compared to its global counterparts. The new government is scheduled to address these concerns by potentially lowering GST rates for the hospitality sector.

Moreover, enhancing the ease of doing business (EoDB) remains a critical agenda for the new government. The tourism and hospitality industries stand to benefit immensely from streamlined processes and reduced bureaucratic hurdles. Simplified licencing procedures, faster approval timelines, and digitisation of regulatory frameworks are anticipated to be vital reforms.

Furthermore, initiatives such as single-window clearances for setting up new ventures and expanding existing ones will attract both domestic and foreign investment in the hospitality sector. This coupled with policies aimed at fostering entrepreneurship will pave the way for innovation and growth of the sector.

With a robust focus on infrastructure development, tax reforms, and improved EoDB, the sector is poised for an unprecedented growth. These anticipated changes will not only enhance India's position as a top tourist destination but also significantly contribute to the country's economic development.

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## Policy reforms will create jobs in industry: **HRAEI**

“

*To enable hospitality industry and create massive employment, government must immediately accord industry and infrastructure status to sector*



**Sudesh Poddar**  
President  
HRAEI

The biggest economic challenge for the new NDA government at the Centre is unemployment. Despite growing at a fast pace, the Indian economy has failed to generate enough jobs for its large and expanding young population. According to the Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy, an economic think tank, the unemployment rate was 7.6 per cent in March 2024.

To solve the unemployment problem, the new government will have to focus on sectors such as infrastructure and manufacturing, among others. But these sectors may not yield quick results, while millions of youths may become unemployed.

The only sector, which can help create jobs quickly is the hospitality and tourism industries. It can add at least five million jobs in the next five years.

To enable the industry to create massive employment, the new government must immediately accord industry and infrastructure status to the hospitality sector. The sector is also expecting a more lenient tax structure and an increased allocation of funds in the new government's Full Budget.

The sector also expects reforms that will standardise offerings. This could involve streamlining processes, enhancing infrastructure, and ensuring a consistent and high-quality experience for tourists. Standardisation would not only elevate the overall appeal but also position the country as a more enticing destination for travellers, thereby driving growth and sustainability in the hospitality sector. Outbound tourism is picking up, especially with many countries implementing 'visa-free' or 'visa-on-arrival' strategies. It is very important for us to remain competitive and make travel more lucrative for travellers.

The hospitality industry is the 'seventh pillar' of the country's economy. Recognising its significance, there is a pressing need for the establishment of multiple regulatory bodies dedicated to facilitating EoDB within the sector. There should be a single window for approval of our projects for faster implementation. It will create easier ways for cash flow and contribution towards the economy. In addition, easier loans will create more opportunities for the industry.







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# EoDB measures vital for hospitality sector: **HRAWI**

“

*We expect the new government to create a more conducive regulatory framework for the hospitality sector*



**Pradeep Shetty**  
President  
HRAWI

As we welcome the newly elected government at the Centre, the HRAWI is optimistic about the future of the tourism and hospitality industries. With the right focus and policies, we believe that India can be transformed into a tourism haven for both domestic and international travellers, contributing towards significant economic growth and development of the country. The recent Lok Sabha elections underscored the importance of every citizen's participation in shaping our democracy. Through our 'Pledge To Vote' campaign, HRAWI actively encouraged voter participation, reflecting our commitment to civic responsibility. Now, with the new government, we hope to see this spirit of engagement translated into proactive support for the hospitality sector.

We expect the government to create a more conducive regulatory framework for the hospitality sector and the long pend-

ing request of the sector for granting infrastructure status is top on the industry's list of demands. This can be a game changer by facilitating long-term loans at competitive interest rates to accelerate growth in the sector. More stimulus packages and incentives are required from the government to equip the sector to achieve the ambitious target of welcoming 100 million international tourists by 2047, which include a favourable GST regime and Ease of Doing Business (EoDB) measures in hospitality.

Also, the current GST structure for food & beverage in hotel restaurants is linked to room charges exceeding ₹7,500, creating a significant disadvantage for the hospitality industry. HRAWI advocates for uniform GST rates for all restaurants, whether inside hotels or standalone, to eliminate unfairness and unpredictability. We propose de-linking GST rates from room charges to promote fair competition and ensure industry sustainability.

The new government must further streamline regulatory processes to facilitate EoDB for hospitality establishments. Simplifying licence procurement, reducing bureaucracy and clarifying regulations will promote growth and innovation. Implementing transparent policies will incentivise investment and nurture entrepreneurship. Additionally, developing infrastructure such as tourist circuits, heritage sites and transportation networks is essential. This not only enhances accessibility and visitor experience but also creates employment and stimulates local economies.

As we look ahead, the government's support will be crucial in realising our vision for the region's tourism and hospitality sectors. By addressing our immediate concerns and promoting a conducive environment for growth, we can collectively work towards positioning India as one of the top global tourism destinations. The government's role in facilitating skill development, ensuring EoDB and promoting sustainable practices will be pivotal in achieving this goal.

HRAWI remains steadfast in its commitment to collaborating with the government and all stakeholders to drive the tourism and hospitality industries forward. Together, we can harness the country's vast potential, creating a thriving, vibrant and inclusive economic landscape that benefits all. Let us continue to work towards a future where India shines as a beacon of hospitality excellence and a preferred destination for travellers from around the world.







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# New govt holds key to industry growth: **SIHRA**

“

*Incentives should be introduced for hotels and resorts that adopt eco-friendly technologies and practices*



**K Syama Raju**  
President  
SIHRA

The hospitality industry in India has several key expectations from the new government to support and enhance its growth and sustainability. These expectations encompass policy reforms, infrastructure development, financial incentives, and regulatory support.

## Policy reforms & EoDB

- Simplification of licencing and regulatory processes
- Implementation of single-window clearance systems for faster approvals
- Reduction of GST rates for hospitality services to make them more competitive

## Infrastructure development

- Improve tourism infrastructure, including roads, airports, and public transportation

- Development of tourist destinations with a focus on sustainability and local culture
- Enhancement of digital infrastructure to support online bookings and digital payments

## Financial support & incentives

- Infra status to industry with subsidies, low power tariffs, and property tax, including funding from financial institutions at a low rate
- Special incentives for investment in hospitality projects in tier II and III cities are introduced

## Marketing & promotion

- Increased funding and strategic planning for promoting India as a global tourist destination.
- Partnerships with international tourism boards and participation in global tourism fairs.

## Skilling & employment

- Initiatives to enhance skill development and vocational training in the hospitality sector
- Collaboration with educational institutions to align hospitality courses with industry requirements
- Employment generation schemes and incentives for hiring locally


## Sustainability & Responsible Tourism

- Promotion of sustainable tourism practices and support for green certifications
- Incentives for hotels and resorts that adopt eco-friendly technologies and practices

## Safety & security

- Strengthening of safety and security measures for tourists, including better law enforcement and tourist helplines
- Implementation of proper health standards
- Development of emergency response protocols and disaster management plans for tourist areas

## Collaboration & PPPs

- Encourage public-private partnerships (PPPs) to develop tourism infrastructure and services
- Involvement of industry stakeholders in policy formulation and implementation processes
- Support for startups and innovative solutions in the hospitality and tourism sector 







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# Engaging millennials in hospitality

Hospitality institutes, students and the hotel sector need to put in a collective effort to close the gap between skilled workforce and industry demand.



**W**ith the increase in IHMs, I feel that hospitality students are not getting jobs as per their expectations, especially during and after COVID, which is becoming alarming.

We have not reached pre-COVID enrolment levels in the hospitality management programme even after three years. This clearly indicates that young talent is not interested in hospitality management education, possibly due to the treatment of staff in hotels and restaurants during COVID, and the current inability to find employment that meets their expectations.

Therefore, it is imperative for all stakeholders in the hospitality industry to analyse the situation and determine where to focus to regain students' confidence and encourage them to pursue hospitality management education.

In my view, to attract budding professionals to the hospitality industry, we need a multipronged strategy with strong cohesion among all stakeholders.

There are a few points that all stakeholders need to address, namely:



**AK Singh**  
Principal  
FHRAI-IHM

edge, relevant skills, and managerial abilities needs to be imparted to students. This ensures they can secure jobs that match their expectations and reflect their hard work and efforts over three years (in hospitality institute) in improving their attitude, personality, communication, knowledge, and skills.

Undoubtedly, it is the institute's responsibility to train potential candidates over three years according to industry expectations and student capabilities. However, many students today lack the dedication, devotion, and discipline needed to develop these abilities for better job opportunities.



**It is imperative for all stakeholders in hospitality industry to analyse situation and determine where to focus to regain students' confidence**

**Aligning skills:** It is unrealistic to expect all students to secure managerial positions. A reasonable percentage of students are only capable of being employed at supervisory or even entry levels. Therefore, a balanced mix of managerial and operational knowl-

Institutes and students must grasp that these three years are a golden opportunity for learning and development. This ensures that employers are compelled to select them for managerial or senior supervisory positions. Students have vast





potential and talent. The need of the hour is to unlock these potentials with the support of faculty members in a positive institute environment.

**Retaining talent:** The hospitality industry also needs to understand that hospitality management graduates are future assets of the organisation and the industry. Therefore, it is imperative for them to provide positive support by offering reasonable pay packages upon their first employment, maintaining motivating working conditions, and strengthening mentorship.

In my opinion, the hospitality industry needs to differentiate between three-year hospitality graduates, 18-month diploma students, and 3 to 4-month skill-trained candidates.

Hospitality graduates should be selected at a level higher than diploma holders, while 3 to 4-month skill-trained staff should be hired in limited numbers. The notion of replacing hospitality graduates with skill-trained students is thoughtless and will weaken the foundation of the hospitality industry in the years to come.



**Continuous upskilling:** Once selected by hotels, students need to upskill to remain relevant in this dynamic industry. Upskilling will not only prepare them for their current jobs but also enhance their career prospects.

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

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# Women driving change in tourism sector

Role of women in business, especially in tourism entrepreneurship, has significantly grown, driving innovation, opines **Dr. Blossom Kochhar**.

The role of women in business, especially in entrepreneurship, has grown significantly in recent years. This trend signifies a shift in leadership styles and business approaches, as women are not just filling positions but also championing innovative ideas. This trend is also evident in the tourism industry, with a notable surge in female entrepreneurs making their mark and infusing new life into the sector.

The rise in women in travel and tourism industries is revolutionary and noteworthy. These women are leading innovative initiatives, such as boutique hotels, eco-tourism ventures, culinary tours, and cultural experiences, redefining the industry. The tourism sector has a higher percentage of female workers compared to other industries.

The tourism sector in India offers numerous opportunities for women to start their own businesses, with the potential for unlimited growth. Factors influencing women's entrepreneurship include economic independence, peer support,



**Dr. Blossom Kochhar**  
Chairperson  
Aroma Magic

and innovative ideas, often emphasising sustainability, cultural preservation, and community involvement. This aligns with the growing demand for responsible and immersive travel experiences in the tourism industry.

Women entrepreneurs in tourism face challenges such as limited access to finance, societal and cultural obstacles like gender biases, and limited access to networks and mentorship opportunities, despite their successes in the industry.

To tackle challenges faced by women entrepreneurs in tourism, it is crucial

“**Tourism sector in India offers many opportunities for women to start their own businesses, with the potential for unlimited growth**”

strategic management, and social values. Women's innate multi-tasking talent is key to their success in this fast-developing sector. They also bring fresh perspectives

to establish an environment that promotes gender equality, offers financial support, and provides training and mentorship programmes.



The field of tourism entrepreneurship is increasingly acknowledging the importance of gender as a critical factor. It is important to acknowledge that while tourism entrepreneurship is often encouraged as a means of offering women flexible and varied employment options, research cautions that it could also reinforce traditional gender roles by offering temporary and part-time positions in industries that are traditionally associated with a specific gender.

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



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**A** move much ahead of its time, ITC Hotels blended luxury and sustainability and pioneered the concept of 'Responsible Luxury' to enable planet positive luxury experiences for guests and other stakeholders. "ITC Maurya New Delhi's achievement of LEED Zero Water certification is a groundbreaking accomplishment on global scale," said **Amaan R Kidwai**, Area Manager, Luxury Hotels (North) & GM, ITC Maurya.

Referring to LEED Platinum certification as a testament to ITC Maurya's pioneering spirit in redefining hospitality for a sustainable future, he said, "SunyaAqua programme uses reusable glass bottles travelling zero kilometres, while filtration technology treats drinking water inside the hotel premises rendering the water at par with standards."

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**Amaan R Kidwai**  
Area Manager  
Luxury Hotels (North) &  
General Manager ITC Maurya


Last year, ITC Mughal achieved LEED Zero Water Certification, becoming first global hotel to get the award. Recently, ITC Maurya along with ITC Rajputana also achieved LEED Zero Water Certification. "These three properties have been following a sustainable process which ensures that water requirements for its buildings and processes are met by capturing rainwater and treating it for appropriate consumption," he explained.

ITC Hotels is the largest hotel chains in the world with the maximum number of LEED Platinum Certified properties. "ITC Maurya is amongst the first in the hospitality landscape to have set a new benchmark in indoor air quality. Apart from achieving



**ITC Maurya New Delhi's achievement of LEED Zero Water certification is a groundbreaking accomplishment on global scale**

Delhi, has implemented several measures to minimise its ecological footprint and promote sustainability.

the results, the hotel has dynamic plaques in the public areas displaying real time measurement," he informed. 



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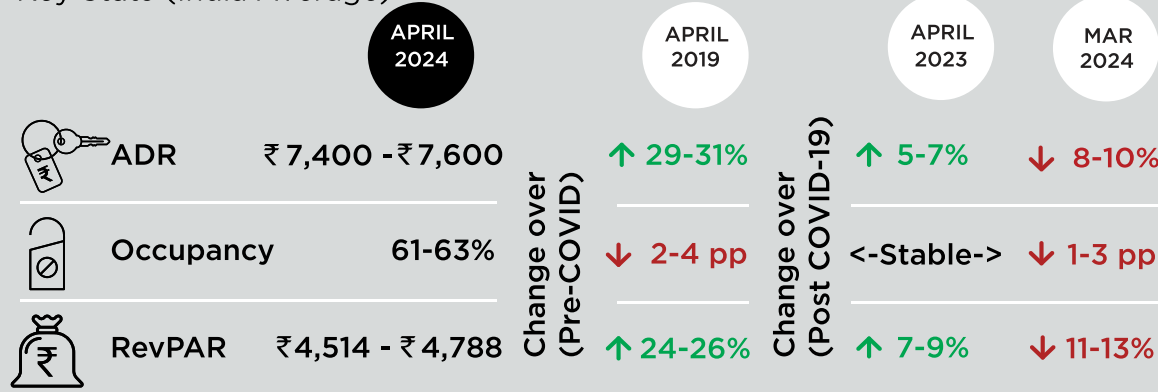


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## Hotel Sector

Key Stats (India Average)



Source: HVS Anarock

# Hyderabad, Chennai lead in ADR growth trends

HVS Anarock report reveals dynamic shifts in occupancy rates and ADRs across India's key markets with Goa experiencing downturn.

### DDP Bureau

Recent trends unveiled by HVS Anarock's Hotels & Hospitality Overview, April 2024, show intriguing shifts in occupancy rates and Average Daily Rates (ADRs) across key markets in India.

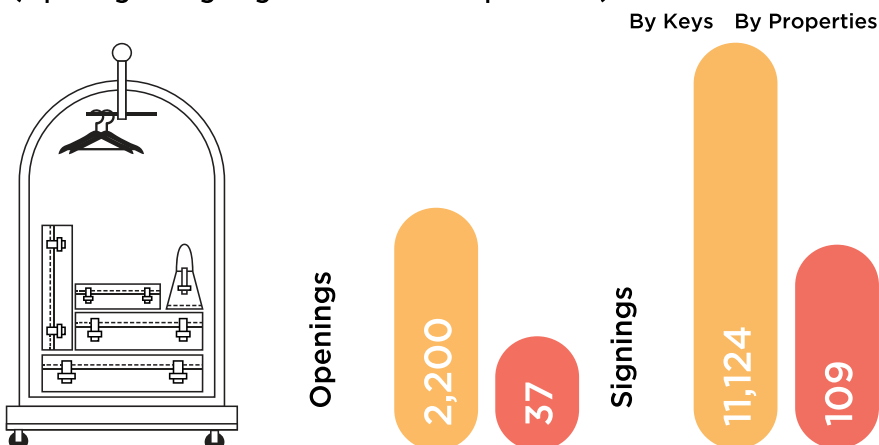
Goa, a perennial favourite among tourists, faced a notable downturn, witnessing the largest year-on-year decline in occupancy rates. Conversely, Kolkata emerged as a beacon of growth, registering the highest surge in occupancy during April underscoring its rising appeal as a destination.

Hyderabad, one of India's bustling metropolises, demonstrated resilience and growth, boasting the highest year-on-year ADR escalation among the top 10 markets nationwide. Following closely behind was Chennai, reaffirming its position as a thriving hospitality hub.

Mumbai, after a prolonged hiatus, showcased a resurgence in its hospitality sector, with average rates surpassing those

### Branded Hotels

(Openings & Signings Year-to-Date April 2024)



Source: : HVS Research; Data collated by HVS from 14 hotel operators and media reports as of 23rd May 2024, all data is for calendar year

of Goa. Surpassing the significant threshold of ₹10,000, Mumbai's ADR surged ahead, signalling a promising revival in the city's hospitality landscape. Meanwhile, Goa, recorded an ADR of ₹9,500, reflecting a competitive market scenario amidst evolving traveller preferences.

These fluctuations underscore the dynamic nature of the country's hospitality industry, where market forces and shifting traveller behaviours continuously shape the landscape. This continuous interplay results in a landscape that is perpetually being reshaped. □



# Customisation for global palate

Acing fusion food art, **Chef Vipin Rohilla** relishes experimenting with different cuisines from around the world and giving them an haute twist.

 **Lipla Negi**

Gourmands across the world are making cuisine explorations a vital part of their travel, and this has made chefs push the envelope when it comes to innovation and creativity in their culinary art. This has given chefs a wide playground to experiment and blend traditional ingredients with modern techniques and presentation to create dazzling gourmet experiences for guests. A master of Fusion cuisine, **Chef Vipin Rohilla** takes pride in blending his culinary reservoir of Indian traditional millets and spice legacy with cuisines from different parts of the world.

Over the years, Rohilla has earned a reputation for giving a tasteful twist to the menus of several restaurants. His expertise lies in creating fusion food which comes with his in-depth exchange with various cuisines from across the world such as Mexican, Italian, French, Indo-American, among others. Currently working in New York, he is renowned for creating custom-




**Chef Vipin Rohilla**

“**Learning about various cuisines is my passion and I use my learning for customising menus for restaurants and catering businesses**

ised culinary menus for weddings, corporate soirées and other big events. The staggering variety of cuisines and taste he brings to the table from around the world is simply mind blowing.

Rohilla started his culinary journey in India with five-star hotels. The experience of working at various top notch, interactive multi-cuisine restaurants at the five-star hotels has helped him develop an understanding of European cuisines as well as polish his knowledge of traditional Indian food.

forgoten millets and healthy greens to menus that otherwise relied heavily on processed ingredients. “Learning about various cuisines is my passion and I use my learning for customising menus for restaurants and catering businesses. Mixing two cuisines requires precision, technique, and harmony of flavours,” Rohilla explained.

“I start my research with a long walk to the nearby market to explore what they are selling, and what is the price structure. Simultaneously, I also look at a restaurant’s guest history, interact with diners and take their feedback. It helps me craft a menu that is no less than a reflection of the local place with a global outlook,” he summed up. 



# Upgraded connectivity fuels NE India's hospitality growth

Enhanced air connectivity and govt initiatives, coupled with upgraded infrastructure, have led to boost in hospitality sector in Northeast India.



**Hazel Jain**

**I**mproved air connectivity and increased attention from the government, including initiatives by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, have played a significant role in boosting hospitality sector in the Northeast region.

**K Mohanchandran**, Senior Vice President, Operations, East & Northeast India, IHCL Hotels, explained, "The demand is robust for the hospitality sector in the Northeast region. We receive enquiries from Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata, Bengaluru, Chennai as well as Bihar and Jharkhand. These are usually for our hotels in Guwahati and Darjeeling,





and we are seeing encouraging interest for our other hotels in the region as well.”

He, however, added the biggest challenge that hotels still face in this region is the weather. “Both road and air connectivity can be disrupted due to adverse weather conditions. Therefore, the devel-

opment of all-weather airports in key cities could prove a game changer,” Mohanchandran added.

**Shreya Barbara**, COO, Landscape Safari, is also receiving queries from agents in metros. “I am more into B2B and we get queries from Delhi, Mumbai, Pune, Nagpur, Hyderabad and Bengaluru. Greater



**K Mohanchandran**  
Senior VP, Ops, East &  
Northeast India,  
IHCL Hotels



“  
**Demand is robust for hospitality sector in Northeast region. We receive enquiries from Delhi, Kolkata, Mumbai among other cities**





**Akash Gupta**  
General Manager  
Mayfair Spring Valley

“  
**Northeast region is on the right track and has attracted major hospitality giants to set up their businesses here**

awareness about Northeast as a destination is a prime reason for the rise in demand. State tourism boards, Union Ministry of Tourism and local tour operators have put in a lot of effort to promote the region. Our tour operators on the ground have infused professionalism in services which gives confidence to tourists to visit the destination. Also, significant development in infrastructure has spread positive word of mouth publicity,” she pointed out.

Unfortunately, flight connectivity and flight rates are a huge challenge she faces. “Connectivity to many sectors have been withdrawn and airfares are high compared to even international destinations, especially Southeast Asia. If this concern is given a serious thought, a lot more tourist footfall can be expected,” Barbara added.

Sharing similar views, **Philip Logan**, Chief Operating Officer, Royal Orchid Hotels, said, “Demand for Northeast India has seen a notable increase in the past one to two years. This rise in demand can be attributed to several factors. We see enhanced infrastructure development, making the region more accessible. There is an increased promotion and marketing efforts by tourism authorities to highlight the unique cultural and

natural attractions of the Northeast. As a result, there is growing interest among travellers for offbeat destinations and immersive cultural experiences. There is also positive word-of-mouth recommendation from travellers who have explored the region.”

He said that managing the growth in a planned manner, urbanisation, and deforestation are some of the issues of the region. “Inconsistent infrastructure hampers the seamless operation of hotels and resorts, affecting guest experience and hindering hospitality growth. Challenges such as poor road connectivity, limited air travel options, and inadequate water and power supply can deter tourists and impact the overall hospitality sector,” Logan explained.

Air connectivity and business focused policies from the current government has resulted in flourishing of business in the region. **Akash Gupta**, General Manager, Mayfair Spring Valley, averred, “It has opened doors for more business opportunities and job avenues. Access to tourist places, development of tourist spots, and improved infra has played a vital role in increasing demand for the industry in Northeast. The region is on the right track now. It has





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**Philip Logan**  
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“  
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attracted major hospitality giants to set up their businesses here. But there is lot more desired on this front as the region is still lagging in hiring and retaining skilled manpower. We expect more quality hospitality management institutes to come up and fulfill this requirement in the coming years.”

Weddings are hard to come by, **E Banlumlang Blah**, Chief Executive Officer, Clara Voyages, & President, Confederation of Tourism Industries, Meghalaya, said. “As of now, we do not receive inquiries for weddings since most of the event planning is handled by wedding planners from the couples’ home states. This situation reflects broader challenges in the region, particularly

the complex socio-political landscape characterised by ongoing ethnic tensions. One of the most pressing issues continues to be the ethnic conflicts that pose significant hurdles to the region’s progress and stability.”

Blah elaborated, “Despite efforts to promote peace and foster development, several states in the Northeast still struggle with various forms of ethnic strife. These conflicts create a volatile environment, impeding socio-economic advancements and deterring potential growth opportunities, including in the hospitality sector. Addressing these deeply rooted issues necessitates sustained and multifaceted efforts. Conflict resolution initiatives must be pri-



oritised, focussing on fostering meaningful dialogue between the diverse ethnic groups within the region. Promoting inclusive development policies that consider the unique needs and aspirations of all communities is essential. It is crucial to tackle the root causes of discontent, such as economic disparities, social injustices, and historical grievances, among others. Until these fundamental challenges are effectively addressed, the Northeast region may continue to face significant obstacles in achieving its full potential. Economic growth, social stability, and tourism development remain intertwined with the ability of the region to resolve its ethnic conflicts and create a more harmonious and inclusive environment. Only through comprehensive and sustained efforts can the Northeast move towards a future of prosperity and peace.” □



# Hamdard forays into innovative food and beverage categories

Committed to bringing high quality, health focussed products to consumers, Hamdard introduces an exciting range of ready to drink beverages and food products.



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**H**amdard Laboratories India, Food Division, has announced an expansion of its product line, introducing a variety of new ready to drink beverages and food products. This move aims to broaden the brand's reach and offer consumers a wider range of quality, health-focussed products.

Commenting on the launch, **Hamid Ahmed**, CEO, Hamdard Foods, said, "It is our endeavour that Hamdard's pure food products bring benefit to people. There is always ample demand for food & beverage products. But making inroads is an uphill task, particularly when one carries the legacy of Hamdard and the Rooh Afza brand. Our challenge is to remain rooted in our values and image and, at the same time, continue to provide the product that customers love. Consistency in brand investment is vital as we are now in the serious business of food products to give the world 'good food'."

## Expanding Rooh Afza's legacy

One of the notable additions is the introduction of ready to drink beverages in aseptic cartons. A major highlight in this

category is the expansion of the Rooh Afza line. Rooh Afza now includes variants such as Rooh Afza Fusion, Milkshake and Lassi. Rooh Afza was launched in a sugar free variant—Rooh Afza LITE—for the health conscious audiences.

## Diversified F&B portfolio

In addition to beverages, Hamdard has broadened its food portfolio with several new products. This includes Hamdard Honey, which meets all FSSAI standards. Another noteworthy product is Nariyal Paani, offering natural hydration benefits of coconut water.

Hamdard has also introduced a selection of edible oils. The lineup features Hamdard Pomace Olive Oil and Hamdard Kachi Ghani Mustard Oil.

## Hamdard Khaalis Spices

The market has also seen introduction of Hamdard Khaalis Spices, offering an assortment of pure and blended spices. These spices are made with selectively sourced ingredients, free from preservatives, ensuring both purity and sustainability. ■

## Socially responsible business

Hamdard is an iconic institution, with legacy brands such as Rooh Afza in its portfolio. Hamdard grew into a household name under the vision of renowned Unani physician **Hakeem Abdul Hameed**, who transformed it into a multi-dimensional and internationally respected organisation. Presently, **Hammad Ahmed**, Chief Trustee, is steering the growth of Hamdard. **Hamid Ahmed**, CEO and Trustee, Hamdard Laboratories India (Food Division) is the driving force of all expansion plans, and forward business strategies.

Hamdard extends its charity work and education services under the aegis of Hamdard National Foundation (HNF-HECA). A significant part of company's profit is used for CSR activities, while building institutions such as Hamdard University, schools, cultural institutes and skill development institutes from the profits earned from business. This social purpose is at the very core of Hamdard.







# India's hotels Big bets, big potential

Driven by burgeoning middle class, government infrastructural investments and rich tapestry of cultural attractions, the country's hospitality sector is experiencing dynamic upswing.





**Ananya Kukreja**

**T**he Indian hospitality industry is at an all-time high with renewed investor confidence which can be witnessed in the number of greenfield hotel developments currently in the pipeline. “Hotel demand is closely linked to various factors, including macroeconomic policy, economic development, and most importantly, the growth of commer-

cial real estate and tourism,” said **Sailee Bhandarkar-Correa**, Assistant Vice President, Hotels & Hospitality, JLL. While the domestic hotel demand base is already a force to be reckoned with, the burgeoning corporate, industrial and manufacturing footprint in India is also resulting in the need for more hotel supply across these regions, thereby expanding the industry and adding new destinations to the map.





**Sailee Bhandarkar-Correa**  
Assistant VP, Hotels & Hospitality, JLL

India offers a rich and diverse cultural heritage, a rapidly growing economy, and a regulatory environment increasingly conducive to foreign investment, making it a prime destination for international hotel chains. “The rate of growth within the domestic market surpasses that of international arrivals by a considerable margin,” said **Joerg Drechsel**, Owner, Malabar House and Purity & Board of Directors, Relais & Châteaux. The burgeoning middle class and increasing urbanisation provide a consistent demand for hospitality services. Additionally, India’s vast and varied landscape—from metropolitan cities to rural settings—presents numerous opportunities for diverse types of hotel ventures, from luxury city hotels to wellness retreats.



**Hotel demand is linked to macroeconomic policy, economic development and most importantly, growth of commercial real estate and tourism**

“India represents an underpenetrated market, particularly in tier II and III cities, which are currently experiencing a lack of sufficient hotel services,” said **Saheb Bagga**, Founder & Chief Executive Officer, Curio Capital & Project Management. However, the sector is poised for a boom, driven by its infrastructural push and a growing middle class. The government’s increasing investments in strengthening India’s road and rail networks and promoting port development is a significant driver for the growth of the travel and tourism sector. The Adarsh Station Scheme is helping modernise railway stations, while the Regional Connectivity Scheme—UDAN, is



helping make air travel more economical and widespread to unserved routes. Such developments are also leading to a push in the formation of regional airlines such as Fly91 and Star Air, among others.

Taking the data into account, there are 2.2 hotel rooms per 1,000 people globally. The USA has outperformed India with 16.3 rooms, followed by China with 3.2. On the other hand, India is underpenetrated by having only 0.1 rooms per 1,000 population. Considering the rise in disposable income post-COVID, companies are also focussing on all segments of hospitality, including holiday homes,





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**Jehangir Aibara**  
Director  
Mahajan & Aibara  
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“  
Certain cities and leisure destinations can easily cater multiple hotels depending on the nature and dynamics of micro markets within city

flight catering, cloud kitchens, private residences and clubs, among others. Indian landscape provides all necessary resources with a diverse culture to add character to the hotels. The growing infrastructure development, availability of land, and funding for construction make it even more favourable for Indian developers to build, and for hotel brands to enter and operate.

The new government must focus on tackling issues pertaining to land acquisition, private equity funding or lower interest rates, approvals and licences process, among others, which will improve the EoDB for domestic and international brands on the Indian soil.


With structured government initiatives delivered through policy, budget allocations and infrastructure development, India is currently witnessing the rise of varied tourism demand on the back of increased connectivity. Not only has this added more destinations to the travellers' map, but it has also resulted in the rise of a wider demand pool for hotels in the form of religious, medical and wellness tourism.

This can also be witnessed in the number of signings and openings recorded across emerging markets. In 2023, signings in tier II and III cities touched 20,873 keys, while openings also registered an uptick in terms of the total number of keys touching 10,312.

Brands look at several factors, while assessing a city. While tier I and II cities are easier to assess since demand is tangible. “Certain cities and leisure destinations can easily accommodate multiple hotels across their brand portfolio depending on the nature and dynamics of micro markets within a city,” said **Jehangir Aibara**, Director, Mahajan & Aibara Advisers LLP.



New locations with potentially latent demand are assessed based on their proximity to demand drivers such as industrial/IT/corporate hubs, leisure tourism, and MICE potential or a combination thereof, offering a better opportunity to stimulate demand.

International hotel chains conduct meticulous research before choosing a city for expansion. Key factors include analysing the city's economic growth potential, infrastructure development, and tourist influx. They also assess the competitive landscape, local regulations, and EoDB. Understanding the cultural and demographic characteristics of the city's population helps tailor services to local preferences. Additionally, proximity to important transportation hubs and attractions can influence the decision-making process. 







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# STEERING THE LOCAL ECONOMY



Hotels are increasingly embracing local sourcing. This move offers win-win scenario, reducing costs and boosting guest satisfaction while supporting local communities.



 **Sakshi Singh**

A decade ago, one could find independent hotels promoting toiletries or bed linen from international brands, which were often imported into the country. The scenario has turned on its head now, hotels have taken a 'local' turn, sourcing everything from toiletries, bed linen, and food ingredients to beverages from local suppliers. Domestic sourcing and engaging local people have become differentiating factors for many properties, especially boutique hotels.



The umbrella of local products is huge enough to cover everything from textiles and art to coffee and soaps. Hotels sourcing locally have not limited themselves to one or two products. Most hotels have shifted to local suppliers entirely for welcome drinks, tonics, vegetables, meat, disposable slippers, laundry bags and even art installations. Incorporating local materials is also helping hotels save on renovation and construction costs. "In our second year of operations, we have also had some enhancements to our resort, which has involved civil work, which is now also sourced locally, saving 15 per cent of the total amount at about ₹3.65 lakhs. In the guest rooms, we locally source our cloth laundry bags and jute slippers, which are biodegradable, potted plants, reading material, and collaterals," **Devidyuti Ghosh**, General Manager, Mulberry Shades Bengaluru Nandi Hills, said. Along with the monetary savings, engaging the local populace for civil and renovation work is also contributing immensely to hotels' goodwill.

Neither did the change happen overnight nor is it just limited to corporate social responsibility (CSR) for hotels. Multiple factors have led to the hospitality sector's widespread adoption of local sourcing. From shorter lead times, lower logistics costs, and better availability to improved consumer experience, local sourcing has a host of benefits for hotel operators. "Implementing a local sourcing strategy can significantly influence a company's cost



**Devidyuti Ghosh**  
General Manager  
Mulberry Shades  
Bengaluru Nandi Hills

“  
In guest rooms, we locally source our laundry bags and jute slippers, which are reusable





**Vaneeta Arora**  
Corporate Director  
Housekeeping  
The Park Hotels

“  
**Utilising  
a local  
sourcing  
strategy can  
significantly  
influence a  
company's  
cost  
structure  
and overall  
profitability  
in several  
ways**

structure and overall profitability in several ways. By sourcing all materials and products within the country or locally, we have been able to eliminate extra tariffs and import fees,” explained **Vaneeta Arora**, Corporate Director, Housekeeping, The Park Hotels. Besides the tariffs and duties, imported goods must cover longer distances to reach the end consumer, which makes them cost more than any comparable domestic product. The hospitality business can be a bit unpredictable. The demand for food, beverages and toiletries and even services fluctuates significantly depending on the occupancy ratio. The unique operating model requires hotels to have a high level of flexibility in products and services. Having a local supplier provides the confidence to maintain a bare minimum inventory, allowing hotels to opt for just-in-time management. It leads to significant savings in inventory costs and helps hotels remain prepared for any fluctuations in demand.

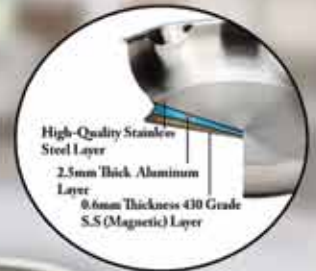
In the hospitality business, maintaining the quality of products at a predefined level is of critical importance. Many local products are often hand-

made, and, in the case of food items, it is not possible to produce the same quality of products every day. Hotels are tackling the issue with increased customer awareness and setting quality standards. Having suppliers in proximity also helps hotels in efficient communication and quick rectification of any quality issues. Hotels are paying special attention to vendor selection and have increased site visits, product sampling, and reference checks to ensure vendors meet the required quality standards. Arora emphasises the importance of negotiating fair prices that align with market standards and establishing long-term agreements to secure stable relationships and consistent pricing. To minimise the chances of delivery issues, hotel owners are engaging with multiple vendors for the same products to ensure a backup option. Local sourcing has also brought the importance of regular audits to the forefront, as unlike large corporations, local suppliers do not have dedicated teams for quality control. The responsibility for ensuring adherence to quality standards has now been transferred to the hotels, prompting many owners to ramp up the frequency of audits. This heightened vigilance





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The important factor for any hotel is the guest experience and their perception of products and services. New-age travellers are tilting towards sustainable practices and they appreciate the involvement of local people and products in their daily itiner-



ary. It also ensures unique experiences for every guest. “Many guests are interested in travelling and appreciate the hotel’s commitment to supporting the local community. It makes them feel good to know their stay benefits local farmers, artisans, and businesses. Local sourcing allows us to offer unique experiences that guests cannot find anywhere else. For example, we are featuring dishes made with seasonal ingredients specific to Goa,” **Sunil Dutt**, Director, Culinary, W Goa, asserted. Local sourcing strategy neatly fits in with the defined sustainability practices being adopted by businesses to lower their carbon footprints across the country.

In recent years, the hospitality industry has increasingly embraced the practice of local sourcing, recognising its dual benefits: Financial gains and social responsibility. By prioritising local suppliers, hotels not only bolster their bottom line but also fulfill an ethical obligation to support nearby communities. This commitment to sourcing locally extends beyond mere economic transactions: It provides livelihoods and employment opportunities to local residents, aligning with CSR objectives.

By championing indigenous practices, hotels contribute to preservation of heritage, while nurturing economic growth at the grassroots level. Ultimately, this holistic approach requires a delicate balance between financial objectives and social impact. Hotels continually refine their strategies, striving to maximise both profitability and positive community outcomes with each passing day. □





# Automate inventory, boost hotel efficiency

Rising online bookings and OTAs drive demand for Channel Manager software, helping hotels efficiently manage reservations and implement dynamic pricing.



The hospitality industry in India is witnessing a significant transformation with the rapid increase in online bookings and the growing popularity of online travel agencies (OTAs). This shift has catalysed a substantial rise in the demand for Channel Manager, a software developed by Hotel-Spider among Indian hotels, driven by the need to efficiently manage reservations and implement dynamic pricing strategies.

## Capabilities

Channel Manager is a crucial tool that allows hotels to automate their inventory



**Shveta Sharma**  
COO  
Hotel-Spider

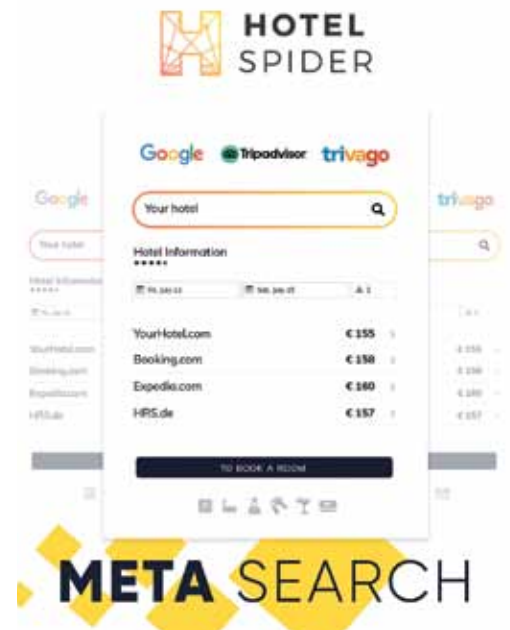
**One of the primary advantages of using a Channel Manager software is the ability to list hotel rooms across all major OTAs**

management. This automation is vital as it drastically reduces the risk of errors and operational inefficiencies that can arise from manual handling of bookings. By integrating these systems, hotels can ensure real-time availability and accurate pricing across all platforms, thereby maintaining competitiveness in a fast-evolving market.

One of the primary advantages of using a Channel Manager is the ability to list rooms across all major OTAs. This wide distribution is essential for hotels to stay competitive, as it increases visibility


and attracts a broader range of customers. Additionally, the automation of distribution processes leads to significant cost savings in labour and resource allocation, making operations more efficient and cost-effective.

Modern Channel Manager is designed to integrate seamlessly with Property Management Systems (PMS) and Revenue Management Systems (RMS). This integration is crucial as it ensures that all systems within a hotel work harmoniously, providing a streamlined and



cohesive approach to managing hotel operations. This interconnectedness allows for real-time updates, ensuring that the pricing and availability information is always current and accurate.

## Wide-scale adoption

The adoption of Channel Manager is not limited to high-end hotels only. Budget and mid-range hotels in India are increasingly investing in these systems to compete effectively in the market. Independent hotels and small chains are also leveraging Channel Manager. Regional and boutique properties are embracing these tools to improve their visibility on niche travel sites, thereby attracting a more diverse clientele. 





# Local authenticity finds fervour with hotels

Modern travel now emphasises cultural immersion, with travellers seeking credible homegrown experiences, prompting the hospitality industry to prioritise local authenticity.





in cultural festivals and traditions, today's travellers are looking for ways to fully embrace the local way of life.

The hospitality industry has observed this shift in traveller preferences and is actively adapting to meet these new demands. Hotels, resorts, and other accommodation providers are now focusing on offering experiences that highlight local culture and traditions. This can be seen in various aspects from the architecture and interior design of the accommodations that reflect the local aesthetic to the inclusion of locally sourced ingredients in their dining options, and the organisation of guided tours that showcase the hidden gems of the region.



**Kush Kapoor**  
CEO  
Roseate Hotels & Resorts

### Attention to detail

"At Roseate Hotels & Resorts, we create a welcoming and inclusive environment by providing culturally specific amenities and services. For instance, prayer mats are available for Muslim guests, and traditional Yukata bathrobes are provided for Japanese guests. Welcome letters are written in French and Japanese languages, and staff members receive cultural sensitivity training to respect and understand diverse customs and traditions," **Kush Kapoor**, Chief Executive Officer, Roseate Hotels & Resorts, explained.

"In Uttarakhand, the guests can enjoy Garhwali and Kumaoni folk music and dance performances. In Mussoorie, hotels organise guided nature walks and treks in the Himalayas, led by local experts who share indigenous knowledge. In Rajasthan, traditional puppet shows and folk dances such as

“  
**Staff members receive cultural sensitivity training to respect and understand diverse customs and traditions**

### **Charmaine Fernz**

**T**ravelling today encompasses much more than simply exploring new places, learning about unfamiliar environments, and experiencing different ways of life. It has evolved into a profound journey of immersion into the local culture of the destinations we visit. Modern travel trends are increasingly highlighting the importance of engaging deeply with local experiences. This means that destinations are now offering a variety of unique and region-specific activities that go beyond the typical tourist attractions, allowing visitors to connect with the essence of the place. From savouring traditional cuisines that tell the story of the region's history to participating







**Rohit Pareek**  
MD  
Earthian Hotels N Resorts

“  
Guests can participate in folk music & dance performances and engage in guided village tours to experience traditional crafts



*Ghoomar* and *Kalbeliya*, among others, are featured and the architecture and decor reflect the local ambience,” said **Manish Goyal**, Founder, Stotrak Hospitality, said, highlighting the culturally immersive activities at Stotrak Hotels.

“The guests can participate in folk music and dance performances at the open-air stage ‘Kriya’. They can also engage in guided village tours in order to experience traditional crafts such as pottery and textile weaving. Cookery classes focusing on traditional Rajasthani cuisine allow the guests to take home a piece of the Rajasthani culture,” **Rohit Pareek**, Managing Director, Earthian Hotels N Resorts, said.

“We welcome the guests in the local language and offer beverages such as Coorg coffee and Ooty Elaichi *chai*. The in-room designs reflect local customs and elements such as Toda embroidery from the Toda pastoral community. Employing local staff further fosters an authentic connection to the surroundings,” **Vishal Tony**, Chief Executive Officer & Founder, Aratt Hospitality said, averring about enhancing the guest experience, while harmonising with local traditions.

### Flavourful palette

Many hotels extend local experiences to their culinary offerings, showcasing regional flavours. At Ayatana Resorts, they prepare local delicacies such as *Pandi Curry* and *Kadambuttu* from Coorg, to educate guests about the region’s culinary heritage, Tony mentioned. Their F&B menus feature regional Rajasthani specialties *Dal Baati Churma* and *Kumaoni Bhatt Ki Churkani*, using locally sourced ingredients to ensure authenticity, Goyal said.

**Prakash Shankar**, General Manager, Lyfe Hotels Bhubaneswar takes a global approach at Lyfe’s kitchen. His hotel offers a menu that celebrates Indian, European, and Asian cuisines. “Our chefs craft special menus tailored to dietary needs, providing a taste of home or new culinary explorations,” he said and added guest feedback is crucial for personalising culinary experiences. Their restaurant, ‘*Tatva*’ blends traditional Rajasthani cuisine with international dishes. Guests can enjoy local favourites such





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Some of our esteemed clients:







**Vishal Tony**  
CEO & Founder  
Aratt Hospitality

“  
Our local staff naturally infuse cultural nuances into their service, creating an authentically immersive experience

as *Laal Maas* and *Dal Baati Churma*, along with live cooking experiences and fresh homemade bakery items. Their F&B menus, catering to various preferences, including vegan, Ayurvedic, and Jain Satvik cuisines, Kapoor said.

### The décor

Hotel stays today go beyond providing a room; they incorporate the local ambience of the city. Shankar explained Lyfe Hotels' interior design draws inspiration from Odisha's heritage, such as the Konark Sun Temple, using traditional patterns and colours in a contemporary way.

Pareek elaborated on Earthian Hotels' accommodations, which reflected traditional Rajasthani architecture and sustainable practices. Their mud villas and stone structures offer rustic charm, with intricate *jaali* work, hand-painted murals, and antique furnishings enhancing the local yet luxurious ambience.

### Ticking all the boxes

Modern hotels prioritised guest personalisation to an unprecedented degree. Roseate Hotels & Resorts recruits staff from diverse regions to represent various cultural backgrounds and traditions. F&B teams are sent to Nashik vineyards, Ooty coffee estates, and Darjeeling tea estates to gain authentic knowledge, to enhance their ability to promote and serve these products. Goyal gave details of their comprehensive training programmes in Uttarakhand and Rajasthan. “We engage local experts to conduct

sessions on regional history, traditions, cuisine, and attire,” Goyal said. Interactive workshops, role-playing scenarios, and field trips to heritage sites and markets ensure staff understand and respect local customs. Language training focuses on key phrases in local dialects to improve guest rapport. Pareek believed in creating links through comprehensive cultural training. “Our staff undergoes workshops by local historians and cultural experts, learning about Rajasthan's history, customs, and etiquette,” Pareek explained. This training, coupled with language instruction, enables staff to provide insightful and respectful interactions, making the guests feel at home.

Shankar prioritised integrating local culture into hospitality. “Our staff greet the guests with a *Namaskar* and are trained to respect local customs,” Shankar said. During *Pakhala Divas*, they serve ‘Pakhala’ and organise interactive cooking sessions. For the *Rajo* festival, the premises are decorated, and guests can enjoy traditional games and treats such as ‘Poda Pitha’. □





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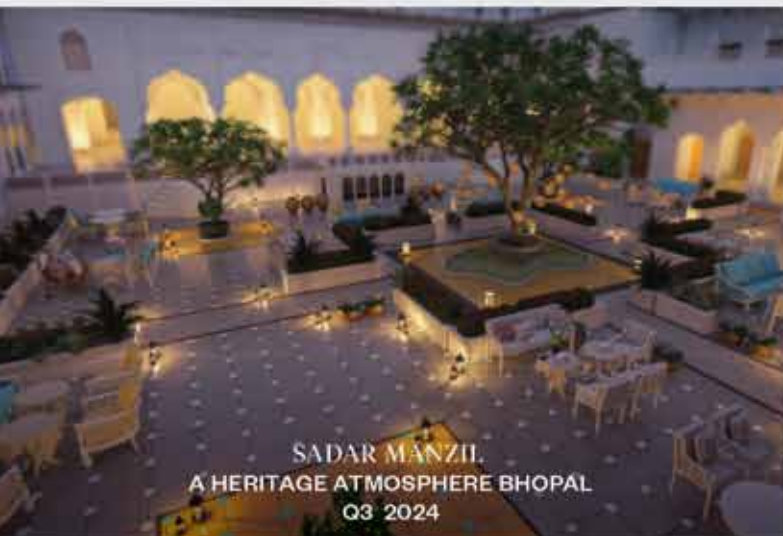
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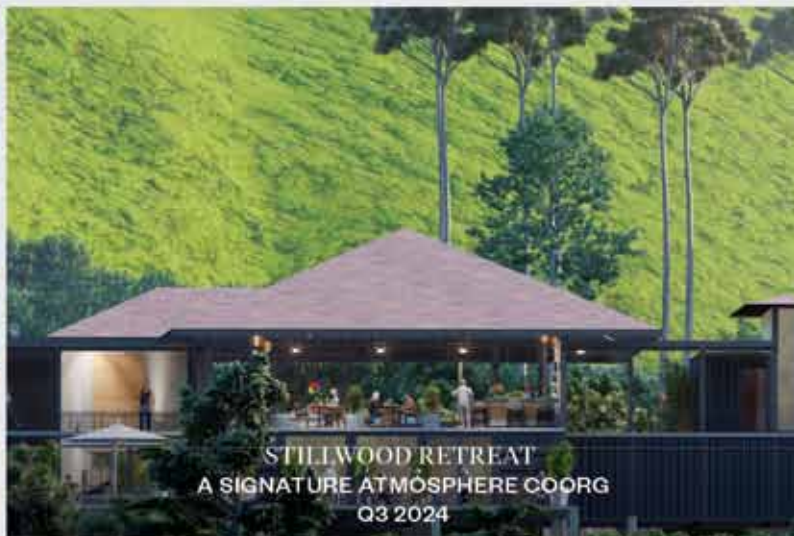
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# Products & Services

## Classic designs with modern twist

Driade's furniture blends elegance with uniqueness, creating classic yet modern pieces filled with energy and excitement. They stand out by using materials such as polycarbonate unexpectedly, making furniture that looks just as good outside as inside. One of Driade's iconic offerings is the Nemo Chair, designed by Italian designer Fabio Novembre. The hollowed-out face of the chair creates an inhabitable space within the head-armchair structure, inviting occupants into a realm of mythic beauty. Novembre's distinctive storytelling style infuses the chair with mystery and allure.



## AI-printed tableware

Clay Craft has launched India's first ceramic digital printed tableware collection, TEXTURES. This innovative product blends tradition with innovation, offering both classic and modern designs. Using Artificial Intelligence, the designers print intricate designs directly onto porcelain plates, creating a unique textured surface. Inspired by textures such as Ground, Aroma, Soil, and Sway, the collection offers a blend of timeless and modern elegance, catering to every taste and occasion.

## Timeless bathroom elegance

VitrA has introduced the VitrA Plural Collection. The collection combines vintage allure and contemporary sophistication, incorporating light and airy furniture that evokes the warmth of a vintage living room. The collection is not just a design statement but a paradigm shift in modern bathroom innovation, offering novel solutions for plumbing components and a diverse array of sizes, harmonious forms, and colours. Crafted from a sophisticated combination of solid wood and ceramic, the collection creates an atmosphere of sensual luxury.







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# MOVEMENTS

## VARGHESE THOMAS

Market Director, Revenue Management,  
Marriott Kochi Cluster



Varghese Thomas has been appointed as the new Market Director, Revenue Management, Marriott Kochi Cluster. Thomas' experience includes boosting market share through

in-depth market analysis, expanding online presence through tactical techniques, and implementing restaurant revenue management. Under his leadership, top market share has been consistently attained and topline performance has improved.

## ANUKAM TIWARY

General Manager  
Radisson Blu Bengaluru Outer Ring Road



Anukam Tiwary has joined as the new General Manager for Radisson Blu Bengaluru Outer Ring Road. With two decades of experience in the hospitality industry, He

has previously held positions as General Manager with Marriott International's Courtyard Raipur and Hotel Manager with Fairfield Amritsar. Tiwari has been instrumental in improving operational efficiency and showcasing strong returns for hotels.

## SYED ZULFIQAR ALI

General Manager  
Hyatt Regency Ludhiana



Syed Zulfiqar Ali has joined Hyatt Regency Ludhiana as General Manager. His career includes leadership roles at Courtyard by Marriott SBR Ahmedabad, Four

Points by Sheraton Srinagar, Fairfield by Marriott Indore, and Westin Pune. Under his leadership, Courtyard by Marriott Ahmedabad SBR secured reputable ranks in South Asia, driving profitability for stakeholders and the brand.

## ANISH SRIVASTAVA

General Manager, Operations  
Sayaji Hotels Mumbai



Sayaji Hotels has appointed Anish Srivastava as the new General Manager, Operations, at its Mumbai corporate office. He will be responsible for

overall operations, optimising business performance, and setting up operational policies. Srivastava will ensure objectives are achieved through executing organisational strategy and implementing the organisation's values, vision, and culture.

## GLEN DSOUZA

General Manager  
Hyatt Centric Ballygunge Kolkata



Hyatt Centric Ballygunge Kolkata has appointed Glen Dsouza as the new General Manager. With expertise in business administration, budgeting, revenue forecasting, and relationship

management, he has held various roles at Marriott International, Fairfield by Marriott, Anjuna, and Marriott Resort & Spa. He has played a pivotal role in navigating pre-opening challenges and ensuring operational excellence in renowned properties.

## VIKAS SHARMA

GM, Moksha Himalaya Spa Resort and  
Timbertrail Heights and Terraces



Vikas Sharma has been appointed as the new General Manager at Moksha Himalaya Spa Resort and Timbertrail Heights and Terraces. He has more than 30 years of experience

in hotel operations. His 31-year-old career includes leadership roles in Radisson Blu Resort Dharamshala and Hard Rock Hotel Goa. Sharma has served as AVP Operations at DLF, leading operations of 11 premium and national DevCo Clubs Pan India. ■



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