

HOTELS & RESTAURANTS INDIA fhrai magazine

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A MONTHLY ON HOSPITALITY TRADE
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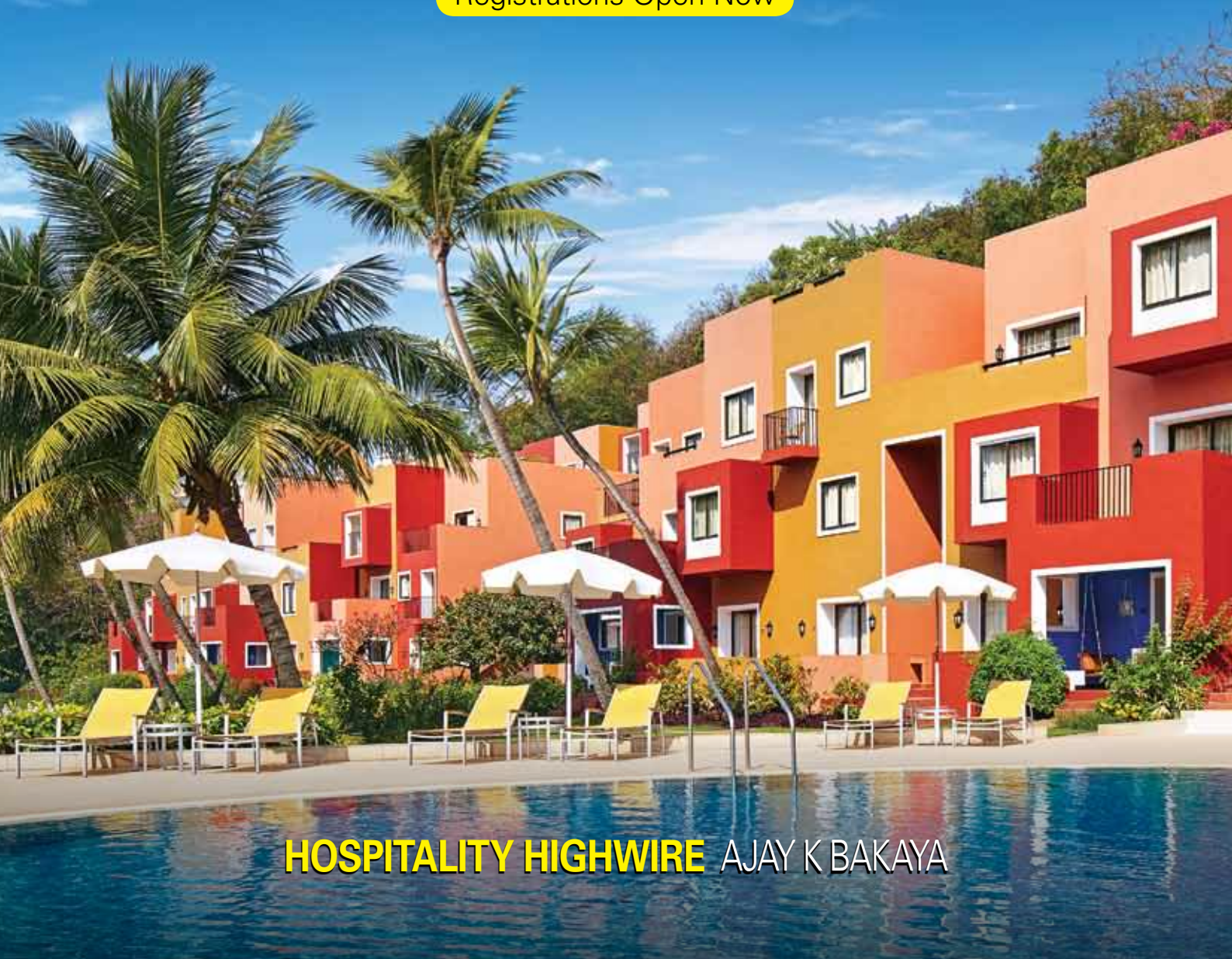
Hospitality's Elite to converge at

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President's Note



Dear esteemed FHRAI Members,

As we welcome a season of festivity, I am delighted to connect with you through this edition of the FHRAI Magazine. Our industry is in a constant state of evolution, and it is through our collective efforts and unwavering dedication that we successfully navigate the numerous opportunities that lies ahead. This festive season brings with it a renewed sense of hope and excitement, and I am confident that together, we will continue to drive innovation and excellence in our field.

India's travel and tourism industry has experienced remarkable and unprecedented growth. This flourishing sector has not only boosted the economy but also created numerous opportunities for employment and cultural exchange. The diverse landscapes, rich heritage, and vibrant culture of India continue to attract tourists from around the globe, making it a key player in the global tourism market.

One of the major challenges we are tackling is the impact of the Goods and Services Tax (GST) on our industry. The imposition of GST on food services provided in hotels, especially when bundled with accommodation, has created significant difficulties. To address this, FHRAI has submitted a comprehensive representation to **Nirmala Sitharaman**, Union Finance Minister, outlining the issues and the inequity of linking GST on restaurant services to room rates. This representation has also been submitted to various state governments, and regional associations are actively pursuing with all state governments to highlight the issues faced by the hotel industry, particularly the clarifications sought by FHRAI. These issues profoundly impact the hotel sector in every state, and their resolution is vital for the growth of tourism. We are hopeful that our concerns will be addressed, paving the way for a more equitable taxation framework.

Our upcoming 54th FHRAI Annual Convention promises to be a landmark event, uniting the brightest minds and most influ-

ential leaders in our industry. We are deeply honoured to confirm the attendance of the Union Minister of State for Tourism, the Chief Minister of Goa, the Tourism Minister of Goa, the Secretary of Tourism, the Additional Secretary, and the Director General of Tourism, Government of India. Their esteemed presence will undoubtedly enrich our convention, which is brimming with insights and innovations that continue to shape our dynamic industry. Also, we are delighted to confirm the presence of **Jonty Rhodes**, South African professional cricket coach for the event.

“

Upcoming 54th FHRAI Annual Convention promises to be a landmark event, uniting the brightest minds and most influential leaders in our industry.

The thematic business sessions at the FHRAI convention will witness a diverse cross-section of influential voices, policymakers, thought leaders, and eminent luminaries from both the government and the hospitality sector. Attendees will have the unique opportunity to network with industry professionals, exchange ideas, and discover new products and services.

I extend my profound gratitude for your steadfast support and unwavering dedication to our esteemed association. I eagerly anticipate our meeting at this grand convention, where together we shall endeavour to shape a future that is both sustainable and prosperous for our industry.

With best regards,
Pradeep Shetty
President, FHRAI



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FHRAI urges Nirmala Sitharaman to revise GST threshold from ₹7,500 to ₹15,000 per day and provide relief for past tax issues in hotels and restaurants.

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Pune, Chennai dominate July occupancy figures

Kolkata, New Delhi register significant occupancy growth, with increases of 6 to 8 percentage points YoY in July, reveals HVS Anarock.

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Embracing planet-friendly practices

Sustainable housekeeping in hospitality industry reduces environmental impact through eco-friendly practices, energy conservation and waste management.



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Ahmedabad welcomes New Ramada by Wyndham

Wyndham launches Ramada by Wyndham Ahmedabad, blending modern luxury with proximity to India's largest cricket stadium.

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Housekeeping is increasingly shifting from periphery to core of hotel strategy, elevating housekeepers to pivotal role in delivering exceptional guest experiences.



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Brands thrive using revenue share model

Revenue share model is gaining popularity as it enables brands to access prime properties and improves financial performance, opines Nikhil Shah.



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Hotel sector demands
immediate GST measures

FHRAI urges Nirmala Sitharaman to revise GST threshold from ₹7,500 to ₹15,000 per day and provide relief for past tax issues in hotels.

FHRAI has urged **Nirmala Sitharaman**, Union Finance Minister, flagging challenges and unfairness in linking GST on food services in restaurants to the room rates charged for accommodation. The Federation requested Sitharaman an increase in the GST threshold from ₹7,500 to ₹15,000 per day, clarity on GST provisions for restaurants, and interim relief for past tax-related issues.

Following are the corrective measures sought by FHRAI:

- GST Council should consider enhancing the threshold for charging GST from restaurants in hotel premises having room tariff of ₹7,500 per day to ₹15,000 per day.
- Due to lack of clarity in the GST provisions, the officials have been issuing notices to the FHRAI members. However, there has been no deliberate attempt by the members to evade any tax. Therefore, government should keep all the notices issued on past dues be kept on abeyance.
- It is a prevalent industry practice in the hospitality industry that sometimes a room is booked through online portal however the booking stands cancelled (as the customer does not turn up) and no payments were made to the hotel
- An interim relief by way of clarification effective from retrospective date may be issued to tackle the issue of “Value of Services Received” and “Declared Tariff”. The Council may issue a clarification that GST rates on restaurant sales be applied in case of a hotel only based on value of services received (actual amount received for room) and services rendered i.e. rooms occupied. This will save the hotel industry from the practice of OTAs and other platforms to accept booking at higher rate than the actual room tariffs on the booking portal without knowledge and consent of the hotel.



Nirmala Sitharaman
Union Finance Minister
Government of India

Due to lack of clarity in the GST provisions, the officials have been issuing notices to FHRAI members

by the customer (like in the case of booking through credit card). In such cases, no supply of services were actually made to the customer. Therefore, it is advisable to issue a circular clarifying that in case of non-supply of services by a hotel, merely booking of accommodation shall not impact the rate of the GST for the supply of services in the restaurant.

- While awaiting the resolution of past period regularisation and consideration, the department should refrain from taking any adverse actions against industry.
- GST on restaurants may be linked with input credit whereat those availing no input be at 5 per cent and those claiming input credit may be put to 12 per cent delinking from rates of hotel rooms. ☐



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FHRAI urges clarification on GST complexities

Federation seeks answers on several points, including how GST rates should be adjusted based on fluctuating room tariffs.

FHRAI has written to **Sanjay Kumar Agarwal**, Chairman, Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs seeking clarification regarding GST charged in hotels.

“Federation wants to inform about the confusions prevailing today regarding charging of GST from restaurants in hotel premises. These confusions and ambiguity in law is paving way for another serious issue of demand notices issued to thousands of hotels across the country by the GST department leading to harass-

ment and extreme hardships to the hotel sector. FHRAI would like to seek your support in providing clarifications on the issue of linking GST on food services to the room rates charged for accommodation for the restaurants operating in hotel premises,” Federation wrote in the letter to Agarwal.

It further stated, “Against this backdrop, FHRAI seek urgent support and intervention to provide clarification on the practical issues of the hospitality sector in their GST compliances.”



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On the following points, Federation sought clarification:

- What is the period for charging GST at 18 per cent for a restaurant in hotel premises in case of a change in the room tariff of the hotel where the restaurant operates, from below ₹7,500 to above ₹7,500 for a day or some days?
- a) Is the period for calculating GST at 18 per cent for F&B will continue for the whole year from the day of change in the room tariff or it will be for those days only when the tariff exceeds ₹7,500?
- b) Is the GST at 18 per cent will be reversed to 5 per cent in case the room tariff of that hotel falls below ₹7,500?
- c) Is the GST rate change at 18 per cent is going to be perpetual for the hotel?
- The FSAs such as Swiggy and Zomato take food delivery from the restaurants and the responsibility of paying GST at 5 per cent for such orders lies with the FSAs. In case, the room rate of a particular hotel goes above ₹7,500, how are the FSAs going to comply with the GST Act? Will they be paying GST at 18 per cent for the subsequent orders?
- Some budget hotels in temple towns and pilgrimage centres offer family

rooms which can accommodate seven to eight people, but the room tariff of that room might be above ₹7,500. How will the common guests staying in that hotel and eating in the restaurant pay GST at 18 per cent, only because one of the rooms of the hotel has a room above ₹7,500?

- The hotel industry is characterised by its dynamic and seasonal nature. With the onset of a season or a particular event, room tariffs of budget hotels may also go up in some locations for a particular period.

case, do the guests who are on a continuous stay with the hotel need to pay two different types of taxes between two consecutive days? Can this be justifiable?

- A hotel charge F&B at 18 per cent for the bookings taken through the OTAs. In such cases, the higher amount charged above ₹7,500 includes the commission of OTAs up to 30 per cent and the hotels end up getting below ₹7,500. However, the hotels are forced to charge GST at 18 per cent in their restaurants and face

Federation seeks interim relief and clarification on “Value of Services Received” and “Declared Tariff” from a retrospective date

- a) Are these hotels required to follow two types of GST compliances for the same month assuming that the room tariff goes above on 15th day of the month?
- b) When will be their F&B rates of that hotel restored to 5 per cent?
- c) What is the basis of charging GST from hotels, seasonal or annual?

- If on any given day, the room tariff of a budget hotel crosses the threshold of ₹7,500, their F&B rates will also shift to 18 per cent from 5 per cent. In that

loss of business, due to this anomaly in law.

- a) Can the rate of GST charged for hotels be exclusive of commission payable to OTAs?

The Federation sought an interim relief by way of clarification effective from retrospective date to tackle the issue of “Value of Services Received” and “Declared Tariff” and regularisation of GST payment for the past period on an ‘as is’ basis. According to FHRAI, this approach would provide a fair resolution for hotels and restaurants. ❑



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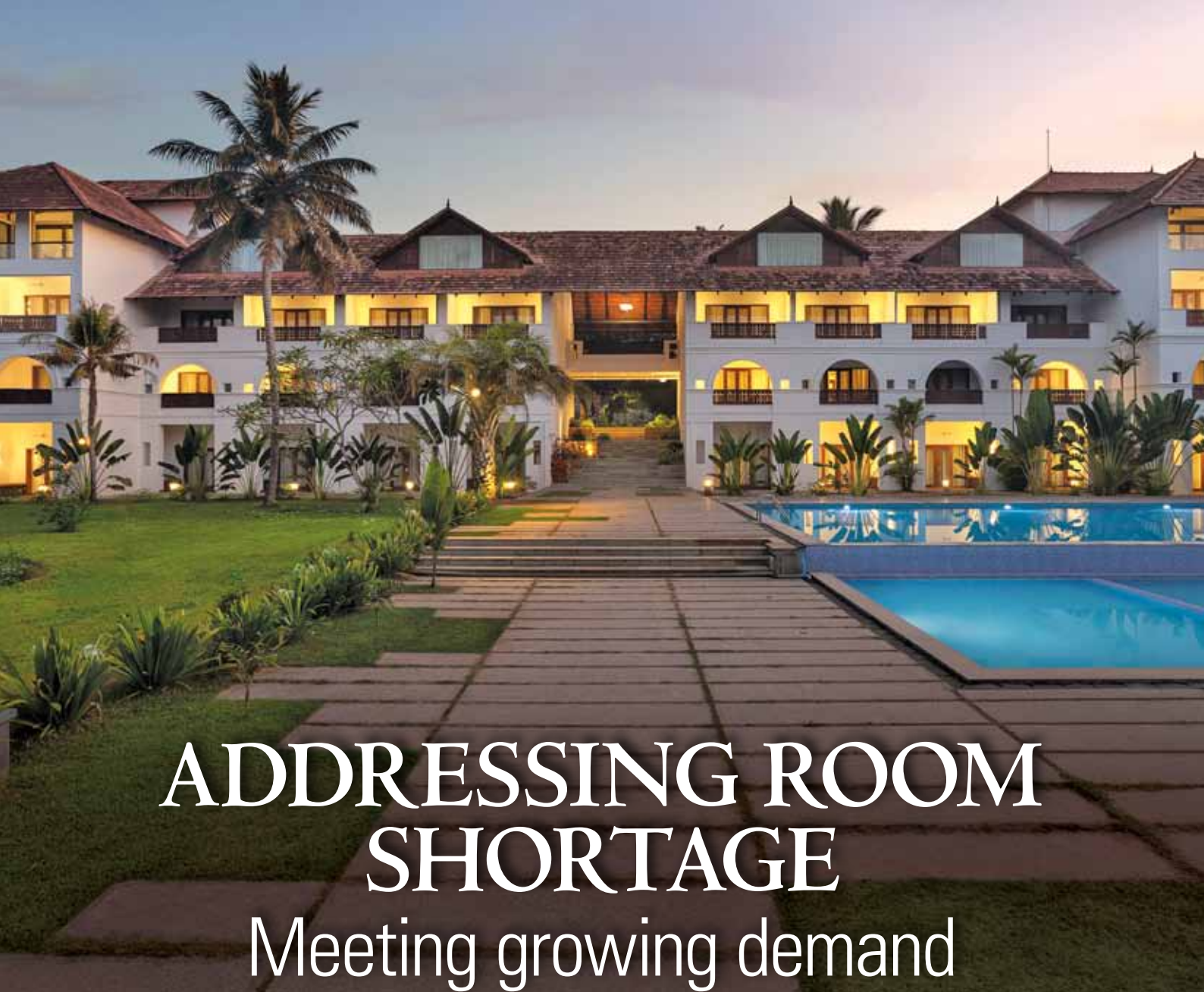
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ADDRESSING ROOM SHORTAGE

Meeting growing demand

In Hospitality Highwire, **Ajay K Bakaya** discusses India's hospitality sector evolution, highlighting its potential and challenges such as high land costs and room shortages.

India took control of its destiny in 1947. Almost eight decades later, when it comes to hotels and hospitality, we have much to celebrate, yet many missed opportunities to reflect on—moments where we wish we had done more. As a country, we have everything to offer a traveller. Few nations present more grandeur, variety, a richer cultural kaleidoscope, diverse cuisine, deep history, hypnotic monuments, and mesmerising landscapes. But are we providing our travellers with end-to-end experiences that are efficient, clean, safe, hassle-free, and truly memorable? Let us take a closer look.

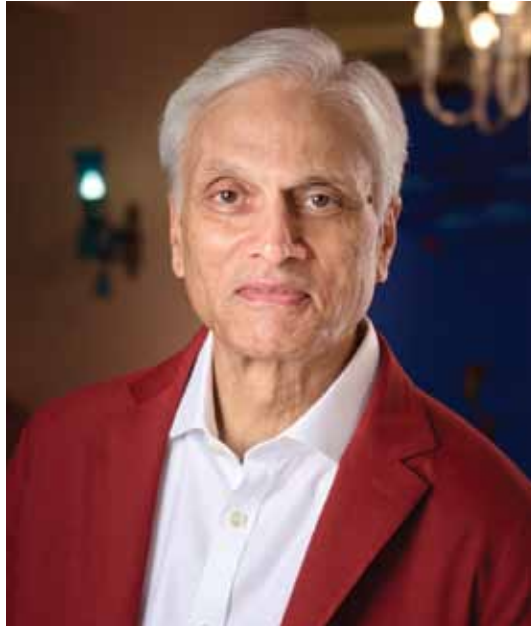
The hits

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on order. We could not have asked for more. Many more airports are under development, ensuring that India will be connected like never before. Envious!

Our road network has expanded significantly over the last few years, and the pace of highway and road development remains rapid. We have much to be proud of and are grateful to our government for it. It is not just air and road; seaports have been added and upgraded as well. A new plan is in place to upgrade our extensive rail network, including rail terminals. Rail travel continues to become faster and more comfortable, with a bullet train in the offing.

We are growing—and how! Not just in patches, but across our wonderful nation.



Ajay K Bakaya

MD, Sarovar Hotels & Resorts & Director,
Louvre Hotels India

Airport experiences are excellent. Security is thorough yet friendly. One can comfortably spend hours in transit. Wi-Fi is fast, and the food, tea, and coffee are excellent. E-visas make travel more convenient for foreign travellers.

The hotel landscape has evolved significantly. We had a slow start—development was sluggish from the 1950s to the 1970s. Hotels were either high-end luxury or forgettable. It took a long time to go beyond iconic properties such as the Taj Mahal Mumbai, The Imperial, The Ashoka, and The Oberoi, New Delhi. However, the late 1980s and 1990s saw expansion, with the emergence of clean, functional, and affordable hotels in the mid-market segment, along with an increase in hotel inventories. Growth gathered momentum, and we now have approximately 180,000 branded hotel rooms. Breathtaking resorts, glamping sites, adventure stays, and homestays continue to mushroom and improve over time. Each of these options continues to evolve and improve.

A state like Uttar Pradesh had over 300 million tourists in 2023 alone. Wow! That is 30 times the number of annual foreign visitors to our shores.

The misses

Hospitality and tourism constitute nearly 10 per cent of India's employment and contribute to almost 10 per cent of the nation's GDP. These are staggering numbers, and the potential for growth in both areas is enormous. Employment opportunities span the entire country, reaching even villages and small towns, and benefit both women and men, especially when combined with skilling programmes. This is India's need today—now!

However, we still face a shortage of hotel rooms. A big wedding, a major sporting event, a cultural festival, or a large conference, and our largest cities struggle to provide sufficient accommodation—every time. We need more rooms.



Nation had slow start—development was sluggish from 1950s to 1970s. Hotels were either high-end luxury or forgettable.”

Why has this not happened? What is the problem?

One issue is that land remains expensive, even in smaller towns. Land costs often account for 40 to 50 per cent of the total project cost, and land acquisition typically does not qualify for loans. Lenders will usually finance only up to 15 per cent of the project cost for land. Additionally, hotel loan repayment periods are short—just 10 years (two years of interest, eight years of principal). With interest rates at 9 to 12 per cent, the cost is high and there is little return on investment. Hotels are long-term assets, meant for future generations. If there is a downturn in business, loan defaults can occur. Many hotel assets are currently facing insolvency and NCLT proceedings. A lot of these were good investors, not wilful defaulters. This landscape must change.

The hospitality and tourism industries have been clamouring for infrastructure status for some years now, through organisations such as FHRAI.

Hospitality industry's guiding star

Ajay K Bakaya is a trailblazer in Indian hospitality, boasting 45 years of experience across India, Africa, Australia, France, and the UK. He has played a pivotal role in Sarovar Hotels & Resorts' remarkable growth, evolving from working at a shared office table to overseeing more than 100 hotels. An MBA alumnus of IMHI (Cornell – ESSEC, France), Bakaya leads with outstanding entrepreneurial zeal.

We have presented our case to the Parliamentary Committee on Tourism and have participated in hearings. Despite our persistent efforts, our voices growing shriller and our throats becoming hoarse, we still await support from the government.

How will this help? To what extent? Will India benefit? The industry needs capital to spur hotel

“

Many hotel assets face insolvency and NCLT proceedings. Many were good investors, not wilful defaulters. This must change.”



and other investments across the country. New highways require hotels and motels, while Tier II, III, and IV cities need billions in fresh capital. Resorts and getaways are increasingly important in today's stressful work and life scenarios. Investors will commit capital when they see returns and viability. Infrastructure status would provide benefits such as lower interest rates and longer repayment terms—3 to 12 years. A fifteen-year repayment period makes sense for such a capital-intensive asset, whereas ten years does not.

State governments are now more proactive. Progressive ones will explore making land parcels available for public-private partnerships. This approach can benefit from increased investment, employment, and tax income.

There is too much concentration of hotels and services in city centres and, at most, in city suburbs. This leads to conflicts between weddings, tourists, and other events. Weddings are lucrative and will continue to dominate. To balance out demand, we should develop numerous hotels and resorts within a three to four hour driving radius from our cities. This would create wedding and Meetings, Incentives, Conferences and Exhibitions venues, decongest cities, generate rural employment, and provide much-needed weekend and holiday getaways for city residents to unwind.

It is a phenomenal opportunity that requires substantial capital. Granting infrastructure status would be beneficial. The same applies to highway hotels, where travellers could choose accommoda-



tion 20 km outside a major city at one-third the cost. They could work in the city all day, presenting another significant opportunity.

Another big miss. Another big opportunity. We can all contribute to a better perception of India. Let all of us, at airports, railway stations, cars, buses, trains, as tour guides, as guides, at monuments, everywhere, welcome all visitors with welcome to our country or welcome to our city, with a beaming smile. It is essential to extend our help to



newcomers, including the elderly and children, to ensure they feel supported.

Our goal should be to position India as the friendliest destination, where every visitor feels valued and appreciated. It only takes a genuine smile and a willingness to help to make this vision a reality. ❑

“
**Resorts and
getaways are
increasingly
important
in today's
stressful
work.
Investors
will commit
capital when
they see
returns and
viability.”**



Goa convention to inspire tourism innovations

FHRAI's 54th Annual Convention in October will focus on shaping future of hospitality sector, featuring industry leaders and innovative programmes.



DDP Bureau

After a six-year hiatus, FHRAI's 54th Annual Convention is set to be held at Goa in Taj Cidade de Goa, Horizon from October 16 to 18. This year's convention will be convened under the theme "Tourism @2047: Incredible to Inevitable India: Driving Growth and Sustainability in a Mission Mode," aligning with India's vision for becoming a developed nation by 2047.

Pradeep Shetty, President, FHRAI, underscored how important the convention is for shaping the future of India's hospitality and tourism industries. "The 54th FHRAI Annual Convention in Goa is positioned to be a landmark event, where leaders from across the industry will converge to strategise, innovate, and collaborate towards steady and sustainable growth of our industry. Aligning with its theme, this convention will mark the beginning of our sector's journey towards 2047, by which time the tourism industry is likely to become a US\$3 trillion powerhouse. The convention aims to showcase our industry's prowess to be the key growth engine of our nation's economy, inspiring new initiatives," Shetty said.

With over 750 hotel and restaurant owners and promoters in attendance, and more than 1,000 delegates from prominent hotels and industry stakeholders, the convention will offer a platform for fostering collaboration, innovation, and collective action within the hospitality industry. The event will be featuring over 50 national and international speakers who will provide valuable insights into industry trends and future directions. The convention will also host a variety of programmes, including Business Sessions,



Pradeep Shetty
President
FHRAI

B2B and B2G Meetings, a Hospitality Exposition, and cultural showcases.

Among the distinguished attendees are **Gajendra Singh Shekhawat**, Union Minister of Tourism & Culture; **Dr. Pramod Sawant**, Chief Minister, Goa; **Dr. Mohan Yadav**, Chief Minister, Madhya Pradesh; **V Vidyavathi**, Secretary, Ministry of Tourism; and **Suman Billa**, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Tourism.

Interestingly, the theme of the convention not only focuses on the aggressive growth of the hospitality industry but also underscores the urgency of implementing sustainable and responsible measures. □



Convention aims to highlight the industry's role in driving economic growth and inspire new initiatives for India's tourism future."



Jonty Rhodes to inspire FHRAI delegates at upcoming convention

54th Annual Convention of FHRAI will have in attendance renowned South African cricketer **Jonty Rhodes** as the Guest of Honour.


FHRAI has announced legendary South African cricketer, **Jonty Rhodes** as the Guest of Honour at its 54th Annual Convention. The event is set to take place from 16 to 18 October 2024, bringing together influential leaders from India and across the globe to discuss the future of the hospitality and tourism industries.

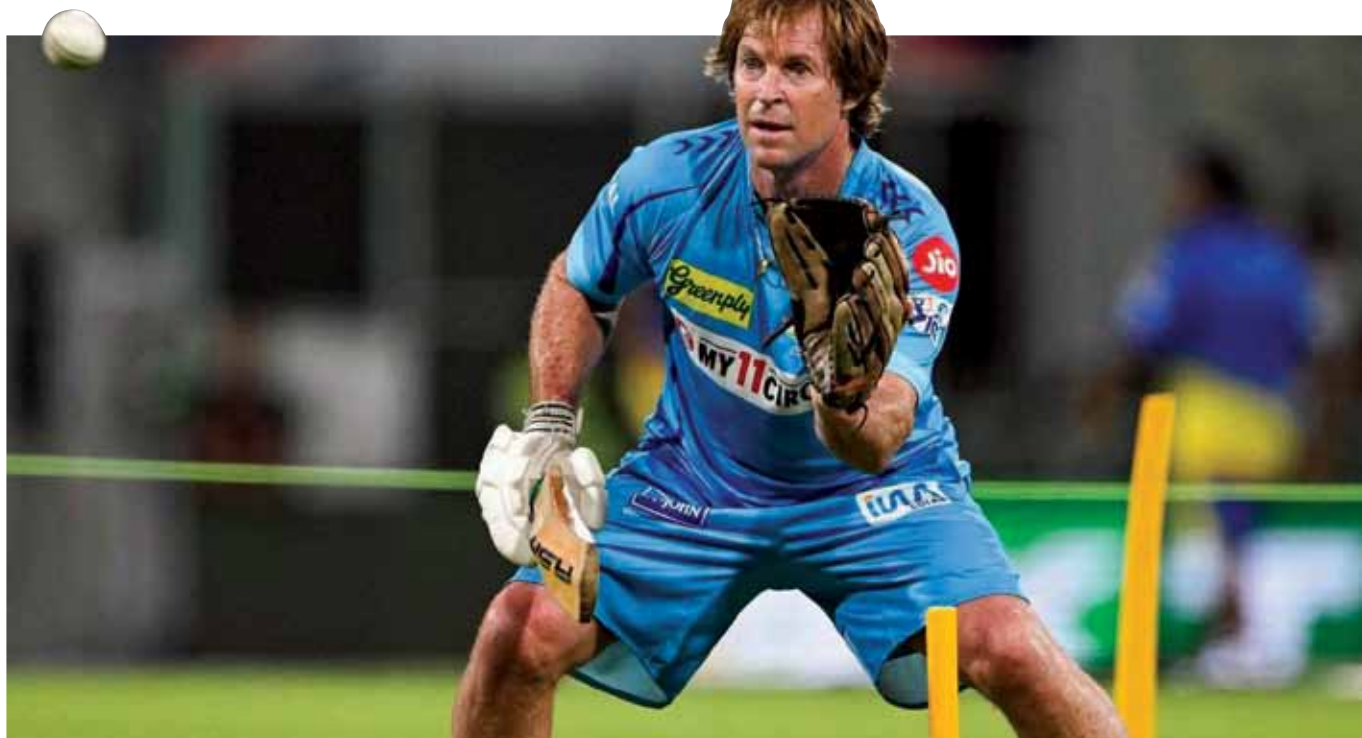
Expressing his thoughts, Rhodes, said, "It is my true honour and pleasure to be a part of such prestigious event of the country which I have truly admired and deeply loved. India with its rich culture, stunning landscapes and warm hospitality holds a unique place on the world tourism map. I am excited to share my thoughts with so many passionate individuals of Indian tourism and hospitality sectors at the convention. I believe

With 1,200 delegates expected, including prominent hoteliers, presence of Jonty Rhodes is set to add significant value to convention

we all will celebrate that spirit at the convention and to dream even bigger for the future of Indian tourism. So I encourage each of you, hoteliers, restaurateurs, policy makers and all tourism stakeholders to harness your collective energy and creativity. Together, let's drive growth and sustainability with purpose and passion and let's work towards a truly inevitable India in the tourism landscape by 2047. So I look forward to seeing you all in Goa and sharing my insights with you. Let's make the FHRAI convention an event to remember. See you soon in Goa!"

Pradeep Shetty, President, FHRAI, expressed his excitement about Rhodes' participation. "We are thrilled to have Rhodes as Guest of Honour at this year's convention. His illustrious career and global influence align perfectly with our theme and objectives. We believe his presence will greatly enrich the conversations and inspire our delegates as we look towards the future of tourism in India," Shetty said.

With 1,200 delegates expected, including prominent hoteliers and tourism stakeholders, the presence of Rhodes is set to add significant value to the convention. 



It's time to step into the spotlight

**FHRAI invites nominations for Hospitality
Excellence Awards 2024, to be presented during
54th Annual Convention in Goa.**



DDP Bureau

FHRAI has invited applications from its members for this year's FHRAI Awards for Hospitality Excellence 2024. The awards will be presented during a grand ceremony on October 18, 2024, as part of the 54th FHRAI Annual Convention. The convention will take place from October 16 to 18, 2024, at the Taj Cidade de Goa, Horizon.

These awards are designed to encourage young industry professionals and recognise outstanding achievements within the hospitality sector. Over the years, they have become some of the most esteemed and sought-after accolades in the industry.

This year's awards are classified into three categories: Individual Entrepreneur Awards, Individual Manager Awards and Institutional Awards. Individual Entrepreneur Awards includes Young


Hotelier of the Year and Restaurant Entrepreneur of the Year. Individual Manager Awards includes Hotel General Manager/Hotel Manager of the Year, Hotel F&B/Manager of the Year, Chef of the Year, Hotel Front Office Manager of the Year, Hotel House Keeper of the Year, Hotel Sales Manager of the Year, Hotel Marketing Manager of the Year,

Hospitality Institute of the Year, Best Hotel Spa of the Year, Best Wellness Resort of the Year and Green Hotel of the Year.

Members will have to visit the https://drive.google.com/file/d/1w97Myyrn8-MfK4mkFOw9MRtUHUwk7BXX/view?usp=drive_link to access the award categories and criteria. The application

**FHRAI Awards for Hospitality Excellence 2024
are designed to encourage young industry
professionals and recognise outstanding
achievements within hospitality sector.**

Restaurant Marketing Manager of the Year, Hotel Revenue Manager of the Year, Restaurant Manager of the Year, Hotel HR Manager of the Year, Security Manager of the Year and Hospitality Journalist of the Year. Institutional Awards includes Best

forms can be downloaded by visiting the awards section on the FHRAI website, at https://www.fhrai.com/award_criteria.aspx. Members will have to submit all duly completed application forms to FHRAI by September 20, 2024. 

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Tourism crucial for economic goals



Gajendra Singh Shekhawat
Minister of Culture and Tourism
Government of India



DDP Bureau

Gajendra Singh Shekhawat underscores tourism's potential to boost India's economy, with initiatives aimed at sustainable development and improved infrastructure.

Gajendra Singh Shekhawat, Union Minister of Culture and Tourism, emphasising the tourism sector's role in driving the country's economy, said, "Tourism has the potential to contribute to India's goal of becoming the third-largest economy by 2031. India has all the resources to present a world-class tourism sector."

He said that tourism as the largest employment generator after agriculture offers diverse opportunities. "We are witnessing diversity and new business opportunities in this sector," he pointed out.

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plays a crucial role, especially in bridging the gaps,” Shekhawat said.

The Ministry of Tourism is advancing its mission to enhance the tourism sector by collaborating with central ministries, states, and industry stakeholders to improve infrastructure, products, and connectivity. Key initiatives include Swadesh Darshan 2.0, which focuses on sustainable tourism across 57 destinations with a budget of ₹644 crore. The ‘Challenge Based Destination Development’ sub-scheme targets 42 destinations in various categories. The



Certification Programme trains local professionals. Additionally, 53 new tourism routes have been added under the RCS-UDAN for improved connectivity.

Lauding the government’s efforts, Shekhawat said, “Our government is committed to promoting the tourism and hospitality sectors, recognising their vital role in our economy. The recent World Heritage Committee meeting was organised just 40 days after the new government took office and was attended by representatives from 170 countries,” he said. 

“

Tourism as the largest employment generator offers diverse opportunities. India has all resources to present a world-class travel sector.”

The minister highlighted that India is on track to become a resolute destination and highlighted the role of Meetings, Incentives, Conferences and Exhibitions (MICE) in achieving the goal. “Progress and development in this field are crucial, and everyone involved

PRASHAD Scheme aims to upgrade pilgrimage site infrastructure, while the Incredible India Tourist Facilitator



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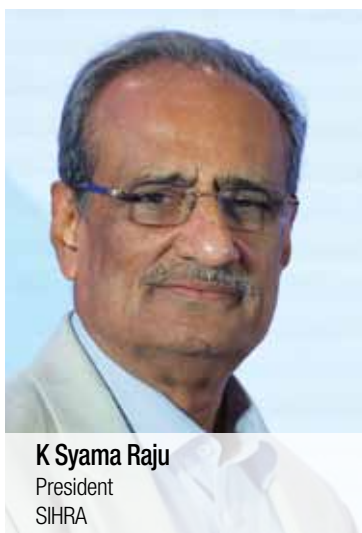
India Travel Awards honours SIHRA's excellence

**INDIA
TRAVEL
AWARDS
WEST & SOUTH**



“Most Promising Regional Association” award underscores SIHRA’s role in promoting best practices and enhancing operational efficiencies.

SIHRA recently received the “Most Promising Regional Association” award at the India Travel Awards 2024, a recognition that highlights the association’s unwavering commitment to the hospitality sector. Expressing gratitude for the honour, **Sundar Singaram**, Director, Operations, SIHRA, remarked, “SIHRA has distinguished itself as a remarkable organisation in the hospitality industry. Under the leadership of **K Syama Raju**, President, SIHRA, we continue to move forward, providing the best possible support to our members and hoteliers in southern India.”



K Syama Raju
President
SIHRA

SIHRA’s dedication to supporting its members and advancing the industry.

TTE 2024 announced

Tamil Nadu Travel Expo 2024 will be organised at the Grand Madurai by GRT Hotels & Resorts in Madurai from September 20 to 22. About 250 people from domestic and international markets are expected to take part in the expo, which aims to bolster Tamil Nadu’s reputation as a top-tier tourist destination. The event will provide networking opportunities and foster collaborations.

Tackling licencing issues

In recent weeks, several hotels in Chennai have expressed their appreciation for SIHRA’s vital support during a licencing crisis. THE Park Chennai, Radisson Blu Hotel Chennai City Centre, and Hyatt Regency Chennai have all acknowledged the significant role played by SIHRA in navigating the complex situation of temporary liquor licence suspensions. ❑

**“Most Promising
Regional Association”
award serves as
testament to SIHRA’s
dedication to
supporting its members**

The association’s initiatives have been instrumental in promoting best practices, enhancing operational efficiencies, and fostering a sense of community among southern India’s hospitality stakeholders. This recognition at the India Travel Awards 2024 serves as a testament to

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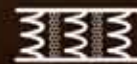
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Trailblazer award celebrates Shetty's industry leadership

Pradeep Shetty receives DDP Trailblazer Award at India Travel Awards 2024 for his transformative role in Indian hospitality.

At the India Travel Awards 2024, **Pradeep Shetty**, President, FHRAI and HRAWI, was honoured with the DDP Trailblazer Award. This accolade recognises his pivotal role in transforming the Indian hospitality landscape and underscores his relentless dedication to industry advancement.

Receiving the award, Shetty expressed gratitude, stating, "This award recognises the collective efforts of the hospitality industry—owners, associations, and supporters. It motivates us to achieve even more and inspires the younger generation to pursue careers in hospitality."

DDP Trailblazer Award is a fitting tribute to Pradeep Shetty's tireless efforts and transformative leadership



In his acceptance speech, Shetty reflected on the industry's current challenges and future opportunities. He advocated for structural reforms, a shift in governmental perspective, and an emphasis on innovation to drive progress. The award, he emphasised, not only celebrates past achievements but also serves as a beacon of inspiration for future talent in the hospitality sector. The DDP Trailblazer Award is a fitting tribute to Shetty's tireless efforts and transformative leadership. ▣

Food safety training focuses on best practices

HRAWI and FSSAI trained 23 professionals in food safety, focusing on handling, hygiene, and waste management.

HRAWI in collaboration with the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI), conducted a Food Safety Supervisor Training in Advance Catering on August 28 at The Grand Bhagwati, Ahmedabad. The session was attended by 23 hospitality professionals and focused on essential aspects of food safety, including proper food handling, preparation, hygiene, sanitation, and waste management.

The training aimed to equip participants with practical skills to implement stringent food safety protocols in their respective workplaces, ensuring higher standards of health and safety. Participants also learned about sanitation practices and waste management strategies, which are critical for ensuring a safe and clean food service environment.

HRAWI has successfully trained and certified 3,106 professionals, demonstrating its commitment to promoting food safety across the hospitality industry. By certifying such a substantial number of professionals, HRAWI is ensuring that food safety is a top priority in every facet of food service operations. ▣



Through its partnership with FSSAI's FoSTaC Training Programme, HRAWI has successfully trained and certified 3,106 professionals



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Hotel Sector

Key Stats (India Average)

		JULY 2024	JULY 2019	JULY 2023	JUNE 2024
 ADR	₹ 6,900 - ₹ 7,100	↑ 31-33%		↑ 8-10%	↑ 1-3%
 Occupancy	62-64%	↓ -1-3 pp		↑ 3-5pp	↑ 1-2 pp
 RevPAR	₹ 4,278 - ₹ 4,544	↑ 28-30%		↑ 15-17%	↑ 3-5%

Change over
(Pre-COVID)Change over
(Post COVID-19)

Source: HVS Research

Pune, Chennai lead July occupancy rates

Kolkata, New Delhi register significant occupancy growth, with increases of 6 to 8 percentage points YoY in July, reveals HVS Anarock.

DDP Bureau

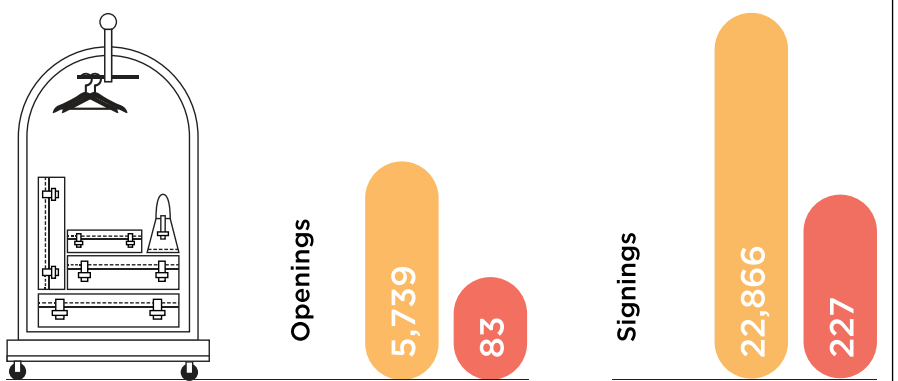
In July 2024, nationwide hotel occupancy rates experienced a steady improvement, rising by 3 to 5 percentage points year-on-year (YoY). However, these rates have yet to fully recover to pre-COVID levels, reflecting the ongoing challenges faced by the industry, according to HVS Anarock's Hotels & Hospitality Overview August 2024 report. Among the cities, Pune and Chennai emerged as frontrunners, boasting the highest occupancy rates for the month, highlighting their strong market performance.

Kolkata, New Delhi, and Chandigarh were notable for their significant contributions to occupancy growth, with each city recording an increase of 6 to 8 percentage points compared to the previous year.

On the pricing front, average rates across the country showed a substantial YoY increase, indicating a robust recovery in market confidence and willingness to pay among travellers. Goa, however, was


Branded Hotels

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



Source: HVS Research; Data collated by HVS from 19 hotel operators and media reports as of 22nd August 2024, all data is for calendar year

an exception to this trend, as the state witnessed a decline in rates by 3 to 5 per cent compared to the previous year. Despite this dip, Goa's average rates remained above ₹8,500, underscoring the destination's continued appeal as a premium travel spot. Mumbai continued to dominate in terms of average rates, maintain-

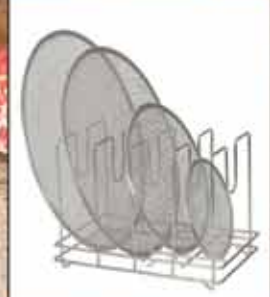
ing its position as the most expensive city for travellers. Despite experiencing only a modest rise in occupancy, Mumbai's average rates exceeded ₹10,500. This performance reflects the city's enduring status as a key business and leisure hub, where demand remains resilient despite broader market fluctuations. 

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Infra imperative to hotel investment

Sudeep Jain outlines IHG's plan to triple its South West Asia portfolio by 2027, expanding luxury brands in India.



Lipla Negi

Echoing Union Tourism Minister **Gajendra Singh Shekhawat's** call for developing new tourist destinations in the country, **Sudeep Jain**, Managing Director, South West Asia, IHG Hotels & Resorts highlights the potential of India's rapidly growing travel market, which is projected to become the third largest in the world by 2027. This confidence is clearly reflected in IHG's expansion plans for its portfolio in the South West region. "Currently, we have 52 hotels in the region and over 60 more under construction," he said.

The industry has experienced a significant turnaround since 2023, fueling IHG's growth and expansion plans. "We aim to double our presence by 2027 and triple it by 2030," he added. Jain is confident that this target is achievable, given IHG's strong brand portfolio in the region. "We have the right brands in the

right locations with the right partners and financial returns. Moreover, our hotels are predominantly occupied by domestic tourists, and I believe we have the ideal product for this region," he further pointed out.

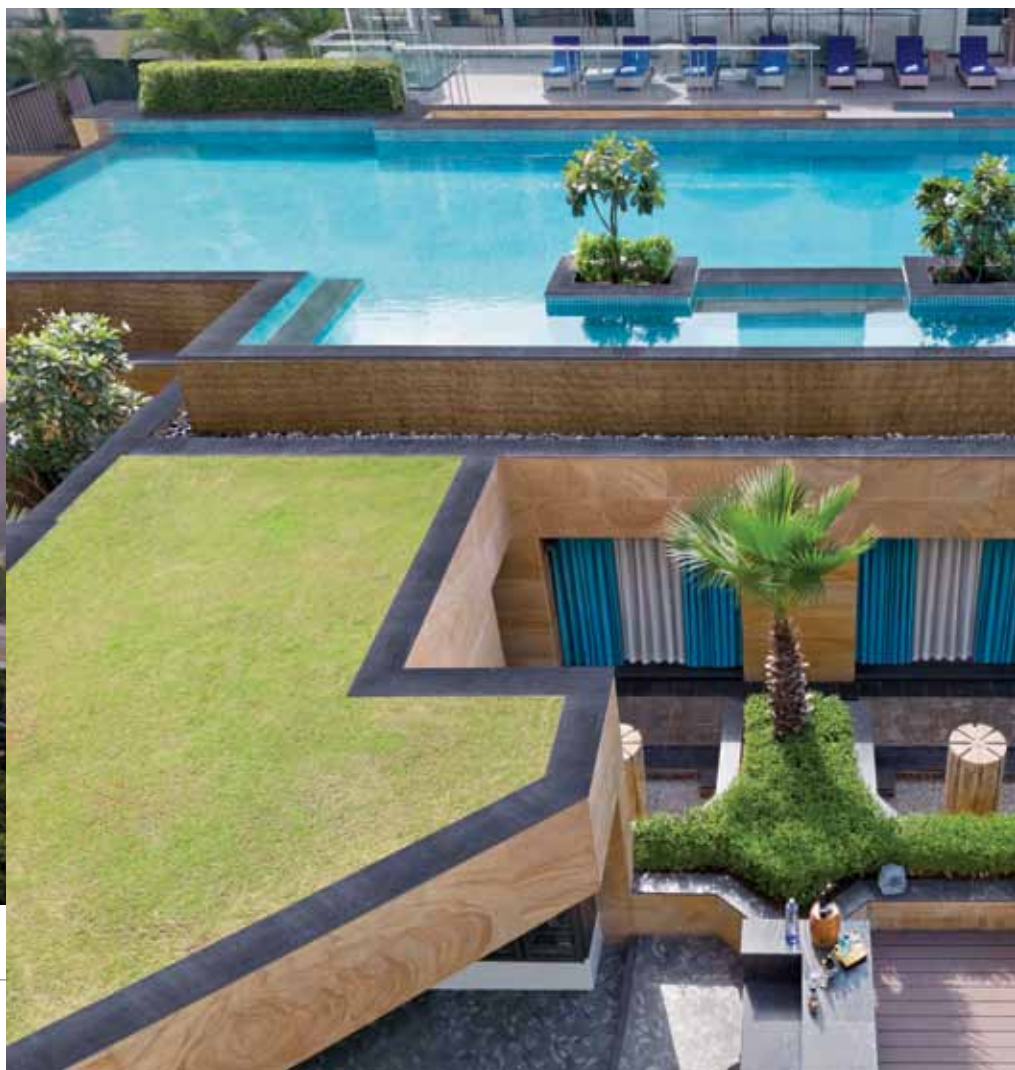
Infrastructure dilemma

For Jain, the challenge of expanding into new markets is a classic "chicken-and-egg" dilemma. "Ideally, we would place hotels in emerging markets that show great potential, but we cannot afford to wait indefinitely for infrastructure development to catch up," he explained. IHG's

model involves operating hotels for owners, and many of these owners are understandably cautious about investing in areas where infrastructure is still under development. Thus, Jain and his team are carefully aligning their expansion plans with existing infrastructure development projects. This strategic alignment helps mitigate risks while positioning IHG to take advantage of new opportunities as they arise.

Matching market needs

IHG's diverse brand portfolio plays a crucial role. "We have brands such as





Holiday Inn, Holiday Inn Express, and InterContinental in the luxury segment. These brands are designed to cater to a wide range of market needs and are well-suited for both established and emerging markets,” Jain revealed. The flexibility and appeal of these brands are key to IHG’s success in new regions, offering something for every type of traveller and location, whether they seek luxury, mid-range, or budget accommodations.

Engagement with policy makers

In recent discussions with the Tourism Ministry, Jain has observed a positive shift toward developing new destinations across India. “There is a clear intent to create new tourist hubs,” he noted. This collaboration with the government is critical for fostering the development of essential infrastructure, which in turn supports IHG’s expansion plans.

Untapped potential

Jain’s focus extends to several promising markets, including pilgrimage destinations, student facilities, eco-friendly locations, and the North East’s ‘Seven Sisters’. Each of these areas presents



Sudeep Jain
MD, South West Asia,
IHG Hotels & Resorts



It is crucial to ensure that the level of service matches the rates that hotels charge.”

unique opportunities for growth. For instance, while IHG’s voco brand made a debut in the country with Jim Corbett and Srinagar, six more are already in the pipeline. Moreover, IHG is also eyeing luxury brands such as Regent, Vignette Collection, and Kimpton for future expansion. While he cannot pinpoint exact timelines for these additions, Jain is confident that the right opportunities will arise.

Managing demand

Addressing one of the current challenges is the demand-supply imbalance, Jain noted, “The demand for domestic travel is robust, while international corporate travel is still

behind the pre-COVID levels.” This mismatch means that while demand spikes quickly, it takes years to build new hotels, perpetuating the imbalance. When asked about ARR’s robust growth across the country, Jain emphasises the importance of balancing ARR with service quality. “As occupancy increases and rates rise, guest expectations also go up. It is crucial to ensure that the level of service matches the rates we charge. Providing less value than what guests pay for can undermine hospitality’s growth. Exceeding the expectations is crucial not only for maintaining guest satisfaction but also for sustaining long-term success and fostering positive reviews,” Jain averred. □





Industry adapts to digital evolution

Technology is transforming tourism and hospitality sectors, reshaping operations, enhancing guest experiences, and driving sustainability.

Digital innovation transforms hospitality, spurs growth: HRANI

“

With a push from advanced technology and Artificial Intelligence, hotels and restaurants can now better anticipate guest requirements and preferences.”



Garish Oberoi
President
HRANI

In recent years, technology has transformed the tourism and hospitality industry, fundamentally changing both business operations and guest experiences. It has become a game-changer, enabling us to offer more personalised and efficient services.

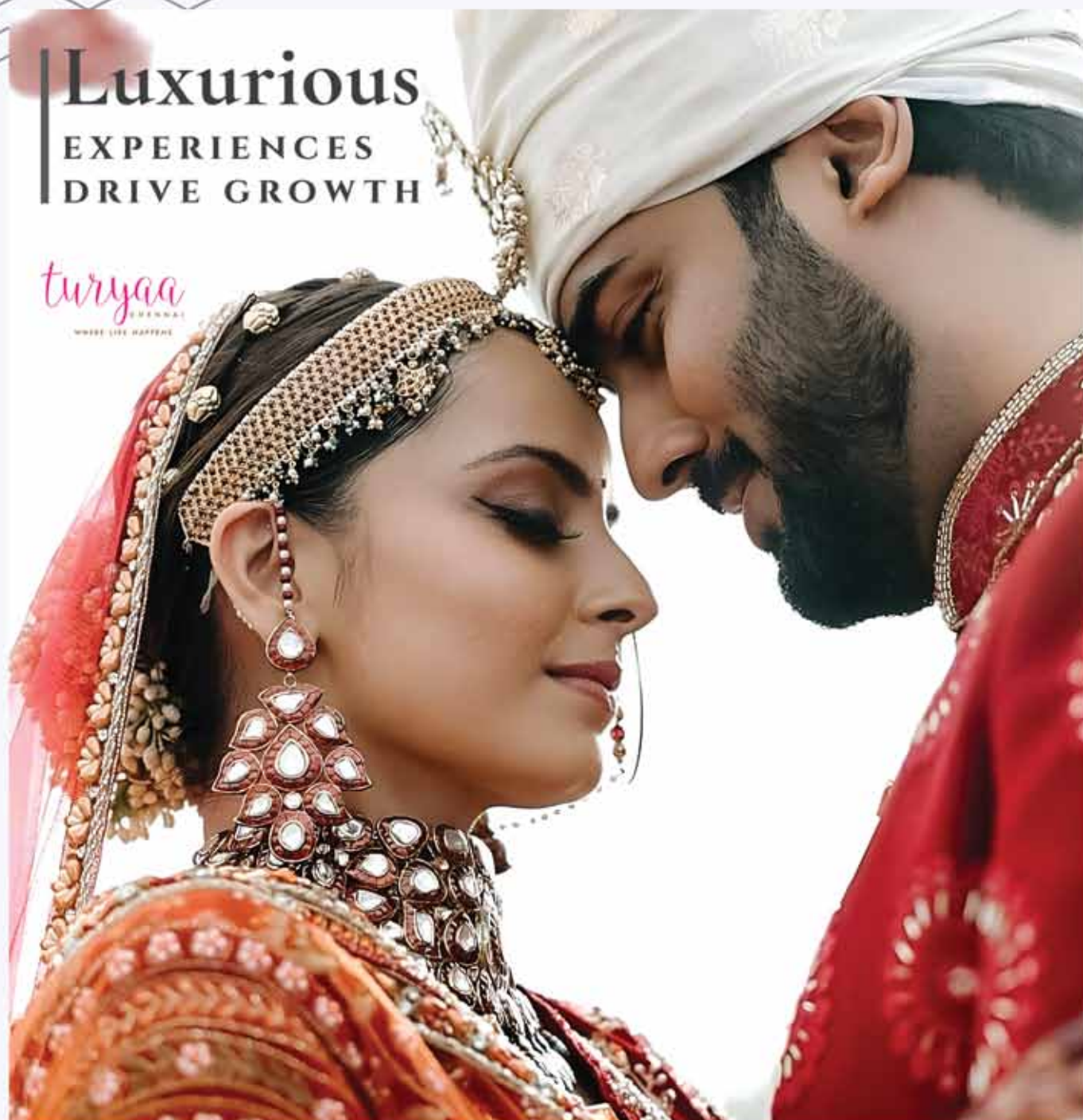
One of the most significant impacts of technology has been the shift towards a more personalised guest experience. With the help of big data and Artificial Intelligence, hotels and restaurants can now anticipate the needs and preferences of their guests like never before. From tailored recommendations to customised amenities, technology has enabled us to create more meaningful and memorable experiences for our customers. This personalisation extends beyond the stay itself, as pre-arrival and post-departure engagements become increasingly sophisticated through automated messaging and CRM systems.

Additionally, mobile technology has revolutionised guest interactions. The convenience of mobile check-ins, keyless room entry, and in-app room service ordering has streamlined operations, reducing the need for physical touchpoints, which is particularly important in the post-COVID era as guests seek both convenience and safety.

Technology has also played a crucial role in sustainability efforts within the industry. Smart energy management systems, waste reduction technologies, and IoT devices for efficient resource management are helping hotels and restaurants reduce their environmental footprint. This is not just a trend but a necessary evolution as travellers prioritise eco-friendly practices when choosing where to stay and dine. However, the rapid advancement of technology also presents challenges. Industry must invest continuously in upgrading infrastructure and training staff to keep pace with new developments. Cybersecurity has become a significant concern as digital transactions and data storage increase, necessitating security measures to protect guest information.

Technology is a double-edged sword in the tourism and hospitality industry—offering immense opportunities for innovation and growth while also demanding vigilant adaptation. As we navigate this digital landscape, it is crucial to balance technological advancements with the timeless essence of hospitality that defines our industry.

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Technology enhances guest experiences: **SIHRA**

“

Today, technology enables seamless online bookings, real-time communication, and personalised service like never before.”



K Syama Raju
President
SIHRA

I have witnessed firsthand the profound impact technology has had on the tourism and hospitality industries. The sector, traditionally reliant on human interaction and personalised service, has evolved dramatically over the years with the integration of digital innovations, transforming how we operate, connect, and serve our guests.

One of the most significant advancements is in the realm of guest experience. Today, technology enables seamless online bookings, real-time communication, and personalised service like never before. Whether it is through AI-driven chatbots assisting guests with reservations or mobile apps allowing contactless check-ins, the convenience technology offers has elevated the overall guest journey. This shift has empowered travellers, providing them immediate access to information, reviews, and the ability to curate their experiences.

From an operational perspective, technology has revolutionised hotel management efficiency. Cloud-based property management systems (PMS) allows for streamlined operations, while automation reduces manual errors, freeing up staff to focus on what truly matters—offering personalised and attentive service. Data analytics, another powerful tool, gives us insights into guest preferences, allowing us to tailor services and anticipate needs, resulting in enhanced customer satisfaction.

Technology also plays a crucial role in sustainability, a growing concern in our industry. Smart energy management systems, eco-friendly operations, and the ability to monitor resource consumption through IoT devices have all contributed to a more sustainable future. This helps the environment and resonates with modern travellers who prioritise eco-conscious practices.

However, this digital transformation is not without its challenges. While technology enhances efficiency and personalisation, it is essential that we maintain the human touch that defines our industry. Hospitality, at its core, is about empathy, warmth, and connection—qualities that technology cannot replicate. As we embrace innovation, we must strike a balance, ensuring that the essence of hospitality is preserved.

Moreover, the rapid pace of technological advancements demands continuous adaptation and learning. Smaller establishments may struggle to keep up with these changes, particularly in rural and less tech-savvy regions. As industry leaders, we are responsible for supporting these businesses, providing the necessary resources and training to help them integrate technology while maintaining their unique charm.

Technology new opportunities for growth, efficiency, and enhanced guest experiences. However, as we embrace these innovations, we must remember that our industry's success lies in the balance between technological advancement and the timeless values of human connection, service, and hospitality.





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Technology drives Indian hospitality transformation: **HRAWI**

“

Cloud-based property management systems, AI-powered chatbots and mobile check-ins have streamlined processes, allowing hotels to operate more efficiently.”



Nirav Gandhi
Senior Vice President
HRAWI

In the rapidly evolving landscape of tourism and hospitality, technology has emerged as a key driver of transformation. The integration of advanced technologies in everyday functions is reshaping how we operate, manage and deliver services, fundamentally altering the guest experience.

One of the most significant impacts of technology in the hospitality industry is the enhancement of operational efficiency. Cloud-based property management systems, AI-powered chatbots and mobile check-ins have streamlined processes, allowing hotels to operate more efficiently and provide seamless services to guests. In India, where the tourism industry is a major contributor to the GDP, these advancements are crucial for staying competitive on the global stage.

Moreover, technology has redefined guest engagement. From virtual tours that allow potential visitors to explore properties remotely, to personalised marketing campaigns driven by data analytics, the ability to connect with guests before, during and after their stay has never been more sophisticated. Indian hoteliers are leveraging these tools to attract both domestic and international travellers, tailoring experiences that cater to diverse preferences.

The rise of smart hotels, equipped with Internet of Things (IoT) devices, has further elevated the guest experience. This trend is gaining traction, with several high-end properties adopting these innovations to differentiate themselves in a crowded market.

Sustainability, a growing focus in the Indian hospitality sector, has also benefitted from technological advancements. Energy management systems, water-saving technologies and waste reduction software are helping hotels minimise their environmental footprint while reducing operational costs.

However, the widespread adoption of technology also presents challenges, particularly in terms of data security and the digital divide. As hotels increasingly rely on data-driven strategies, ensuring the privacy and security of guest information is paramount. Additionally, while urban hotels in India are quick to adopt new technologies, rural and smaller establishments may struggle to keep pace, potentially widening the gap between different segments of the industry.

Technology is not just a tool but a transformative force in the tourism and hospitality industries. As we look to the future, the continued integration of technology will undoubtedly drive growth; enhance guest satisfaction and position India as a leading destination in the global tourism landscape.



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AI key to personalise guest experiences: **HRAEI**

“

Technology in tourism and hospitality sectors simplifies trip planning, enhances guest convenience, and saves time and effort.”



Sudesh Poddar
President
HRAEI

Technology has impacted the tourism and hospitality industries in India in many ways. It has made it easier to plan trips, save time and effort for guests. Online based booking is now more convenient and accessible for most customers. Now travellers can research, compare prices, and book stays in a matter of minutes on their smartphone or other electronic devices, empowering them with unprecedented control over their itineraries. Integration with social media platforms such as Instagram allows potential guests to virtually tour hotels through immersive, user-generated content, providing a more realistic glimpse into the experience.

It has helped to enhance the customer experience before, during, and after their journey. Now travel has become more interactive and engaging with virtual tours and augmented reality experiences.

For hospitality owners, technology helps to reach out to customers directly. For them embracing the latest innovations such as data analytics, artificial intelligence (AI), and machine learning helps to harness vast amounts of data to gain deep insights into guest preferences, market trends, and operational efficiencies. Leveraging these insights allows for personalised guest experiences, dynamic pricing strategies, and predictive maintenance, thereby enhancing overall operational effectiveness and guest satisfaction.

In the past few years, AI has revolutionised the hospitality sector by ushering in an era of hyper-personalisation. Chatbots powered by AI manage seamless transition from virtual receptionist to multilingual concierge, offering 24x7 assistance and tailoring recommendations based on past preferences and real-time data. AI can also analyse guest reviews and social media sentiment to anticipate needs and proactively address potential issues. This, in turn, leads to a more satisfying stay and fosters guest loyalty.

However, technology has also raised some concerns, including data security and privacy. As hospitality companies collect large amounts of personal information for bookings, there is a risk of data breaches or cyber attacks that could expose sensitive information. ❏



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Housekeeping

The big differentiator

Housekeeping is increasingly shifting from periphery to core of hotel strategy, elevating housekeepers to pivotal role in delivering exceptional guest experiences.



 **Lipla Negi**

In the modern hospitality industry, housekeeping is more than just making a bed; it is what distinguishes standard service from luxury and turns a simple check-in into an unforgettable experience. The traditional view of housekeepers, working quietly to clean rooms while avoiding direct contact with guests, is also undergoing significant changes. No more in the background, they are now entrusted with discreetly driving brand recall value and loyalty programmes. At the forefront of creating memorable, sensory experiences for guests, they are now being recognised as leaders in the experience-led economy. From the ever-evolving role of housekeeping to the significance of technology in cutting down workload for staff, the Housekeeping Special issue offers expert insights into the evolving role and increasing importance of housekeeping in the hotel sector.

Cross training can enhance staff skills and versatility

Technology has significantly transformed housekeeping in various ways: automated systems such as Property Management Systems (PMS) now integrate with housekeeping software to streamline room assignments, track cleaning status, and manage inventories. This enhances efficiency and ensures that tasks are completed promptly. In-room technology, such as IoT-enabled devices, allows guests to control lighting, temperature, and even request housekeeping services via mobile apps. This integration provides a seamless experience and helps housekeeping respond more effectively to guest needs.

Robots for tasks such as vacuuming, and floor cleaning are becoming more common. AI-driven tools assist in managing inventory and predicting supply needs, reducing waste and improving resource management. Technology is supporting sustainable housekeeping practices. Innovations in eco-friendly cleaning products and equipment help reduce the environmental footprint while maintaining high standards of cleanliness.

Leveraging technology to streamline tasks can help alleviate the workload and address workforce shortages. Automated systems assist in managing inventory, scheduling, and communication. Flexible schedules and part-time positions can help accommodate diverse needs and attract a broader range of employees. Investing in employee development and cross training can enhance staff skills and versatility, making the workforce more adaptable to changing needs.

Overall, while the role of housekeeping is evolving with technology and changing guest preferences, its core significance in ensuring comfort, cleanliness, and guest satisfaction remains paramount. Balancing

technological advancements with the human touch will be key to the future of housekeeping in the hospitality industry. Ensuring this equilibrium will be key to upholding the high standards of hospitality and achieving continued success in the industry.

“
Automated systems and tools can assist in managing inventory, scheduling, and communication.”



Vaneeta Arora
Corporate Director
Housekeeping, The Park New Delhi



Tech in operational housekeeping is growing



Puja Mehta
General Manager
Jaypee Greens Golf & Spa Resorts

improvisation of daily SOPs and incorporation of sanitisers in our daily schedules. The element of ambience is also seeing a shift as guest comfort and luxury is more about open, no fuss, minimalistic designs, and high in working efficiency.

Technology in operational housekeeping has experienced significant growth. In some strategic SOPs, manpower has been replaced by technological innovations such as robotic cleaning. Innovations such as UV-C light cleaners, mini-bar auto sensors for automated billing upon consumption, efficient fridge usage, and various software options for direct guest communication to complete

When discussing technology, it is impossible to avoid the question of robots potentially replacing humans in certain areas. However, I believe that human efficiency, when applied to exemplary standards, will always surpass robotic efficiency. Skills such as attention to detail and keen observation are timeless attributes. Therefore, while combining human talent with artificial intelligence can achieve remarkable results, neither can fully replace the other.

Addressing the talent gap is a pressing issue today. The interest, dedication, and caliber seen in previous years have notably declined, especially in the post-COVID era. We are witnessing a downward trend, with fewer people choosing this essential function as a career preference. To reinvigorate interest in this field, innovations in training, attractive job structures, competitive benefits, and clearly defined career paths could help highlight the importance of this crucial role. It has often been described as a thankless job, so steps to make it more inclusive and appealing could revitalise this essential role. These improvements would not only address staffing needs but also provide a significant boost for the business.

“

Skills such as attention to detail and keen observation are timeless attributes.”

The role and significance of housekeeping operations has been hugely enhanced post-COVID as the discerning traveller is more conscious of the hygiene factors in the room and public areas. Awareness about air quality and sanitisation of linen and surfaces has increased, resulting in

services are being introduced. Upgrading PMS has also improved the efficiency of housekeeping operations. Interestingly, there is a growing trend toward automating tasks using the latest devices, such as adjusting room temperature based on guest preferences.



Robots to reduce the workload

To enhance the output and efficiency of the housekeeping department despite its limitations, the industry should explore options such as automation, information technology and robotics. The timely and efficient cleaning of guest rooms can be ensured with next-generation technological solutions. Additionally, these systems can guarantee that guest preferences and demands are considered during room cleaning. Without integrated technology, housekeeping personnel often inefficiently between rooms, leading to wasted man-hours.

Robots for housekeeping in hotels have the potential to significantly reduce the workload of housekeeping employees, making them an invaluable tool in the hospitality industry. They enhance the guest experience by increasing accuracy and reducing human error. They can also reduce boring and mundane jobs such as vacuuming large areas. They can free up housekeepers' time to concentrate on tasks that require human intelligence, inventiveness, and creativity. Although robotics technology for housekeeping is still in its early stages, the future promises high-efficiency robots at affordable costs. As advancements in AI, machine learn-

ing, and battery technology continue, robots will become more popular, viable, and affordable in the hospitality industry. However, housekeeping robots are best suited to assist rather than replace staff, as the work is complex and requires significant human intervention.

Time-consuming tasks, such as generating housekeeping schedules, tracking room attendants' progress, and adapting to changing requests in real-time, have become much easier with technology such as housekeeping management systems. Employees use mobile devices that centralise communication and optimise routes in real-time across shifts. Fast




Dr. Sharda Sharma
Director, Operations
The Suryaa New Delhi



Employees use mobile devices, which centralise communications and optimise routes in real-time across shifts."

communication and seamless coordination are essential to efficiently manage a department that requires team members to be deployed throughout the hotel. The ability to communicate and coordinate quickly using technology is a signifi-

cant advantage, especially in an industry focused on delivering exceptional service. When communication and task assignment efficiency improve, it frees up time for staff to focus on providing excellent guest experiences. 



PLANET-FRIENDLY APPROACH TO HOUSEKEEPING

Sustainable housekeeping in hospitality industry reduces environmental impact through eco-friendly practices, energy conservation, waste management, and innovative strategies.

Sustainability in housekeeping involves making mindful choices that protect the environment without compromising guest experience. It is a holistic approach that integrates energy conservation, the use of green transportation options for guests (such as electric vehicles (EVs) or CNG cars), food waste management, water conservation, waste management, hiring local communities, introducing eco-friendly amenities, and using biodegradable housekeeping products. When hotels invest in sustainable housekeeping, they not only contribute to environmental conservation but also build a reputation as a responsible brand that cares for both its guests and the planet.

Sustainable housekeeping refers to the adoption of practices that minimise the environmental footprint of cleaning and maintenance operations. This includes reducing waste, conserving water and energy, and using eco-friendly products. As one of the largest service industries in India, the hospitality sector has a substantial impact on natural resources. By implementing sustainable practices, hotels can significantly reduce their environmental footprint and contribute to national and global sustainability goals.





Critical statistics

Water consumption

- The hospitality sector accounts for about 15 per cent of total water consumption in urban areas
- On average, a hotel room uses between 200 to 300 litres of water per day for housekeeping activities

Energy usage

- Housekeeping operations in hotels contribute to approximately 20 per cent of the total energy consumption, primarily due to lighting, HVAC systems, and laundry operations
- The energy intensity of laundry operations can be reduced by up to 30 per cent through the adoption of energy-efficient appliances and practices

Waste generation

- Hotels generate significant amounts of waste, including plastic, paper, and food waste. An average hotel room generates about 1.5 kg of waste per day
- Effective waste segregation and recycling can reduce landfill waste by up to 50 per cent

Innovative strategies

- Several leading hospitality chains in India are pioneering sustainable housekeeping practices. Here are some notable examples:

IHCL

- **EarthCheck programme:** The Taj EARTH sustainability programme, which is accredited by the globally recognised certification for environmental excellence in the hospitality industry—EarthCheck—is an initiative which reiterates the company's conscious efforts towards sustainability and is aligned with the Tata ethos of keeping communities at the heart of doing business. Currently, 77 IHCL hotels are enrolled in EarthCheck certified and 50 are gold certified.
- **Water conservation:** IHCL hotels have implemented a water-saving initiative known as the "Taj Water Management Programme", which includes installing low-flow fixtures and recycling water in laundry operations. The programme has led to a 25 per cent reduction in water usage across its properties. The Taj Jai Mahal Palace, Jaipur has an organic waste compost recycling system that converts discarded kitchen wet food waste into manure for its 18-acres' Mughal-style landscaped gardens. On a daily basis, approximately three kilograms of manure are generated.



Dr. Niraalee Shah
Managing Director
Dr. Niraalee Shah Travel
Design

“Housekeeping operations in hotels contribute to approximately 20% of the total energy consumption, primarily due to lighting, HVAC systems, and laundry operations.”

- **Paathya glass bottled water:** IHCL hotels have eliminated the single-use plastic drinking water bottles in their luxury rooms by introducing safe, sealed and certified reusable glass bottled drinking water by the name 'Paathya', which encapsulates the luxury chain of hotels initiatives to lead positive change towards sustainability.

ITC Hotels

- **LEED certification:** ITC Hotels, which leads the Indian hospitality industry in terms of sustainability, has standardised the practice of sustainability, having received the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) platinum certification for 22 hotels in its portfolio. ITC Mughal is the first LEED zero water certified hotel across the world.
- **Energy efficiency:** It has adopted energy-efficient LED lighting and smart thermostats in their housekeeping operations. Their "Responsible Luxury" programme has resulted in a 30 per cent reduction in energy consumption.
- **Waste management:** The chain has implemented comprehensive waste segregation and composting programs, reducing landfill waste by 40 per cent. ITC Hotels also engage in "zero waste" initiatives, aiming to recycle or repurpose all waste generated.

The Leela Palaces, Hotels and Resorts

- **Wind and solar energy:** Operating windmill and solar plants in Bengaluru, Chennai, Jaipur, and Udaipur, the hotel chain has achieved a 14,680 MT carbon reduction annually. This is equivalent to planting over 583,000 trees each year and supporting the livelihoods of 75 families.
- **EV boats:** Six new environment-friendly 18-seater boats have been introduced at The Leela Palace Udaipur. Equipped with cutting-edge green technologies, this has led to an annual reduction of 36,500 litres of petrol and 98 tonnes of carbon emissions.
- **Aujasya by The Leela in-house water bottling plants:** Part of wellness programme Aujasya by The Leela, their in-house water bottling plants marks a significant step toward reducing single-use plastic. This initiative is projected to eliminate 3.2 million plastic bottles annually, equivalent to 157 tonnes of carbon emission reduction.
- **Tishya by The Leela:** The hotel chain commitment to sustainability extends to every detail, including exclusive range of bath amenities, Tishya by The Leela. These 100 per cent vegan, paraben and SLS-free products, housed in 100



per cent recyclable packaging, are estimated to save 2.2 million plastic bottles each year, contributing to a significant 108 tonnes of carbon emission reduction.

- **EV charging stations:** Aligning with their commitment to environmental stewardship, the installation of EV charging points across The Leela's properties supports the adoption of sustainable transportation.

Radisson Hotel Group

- **Sustainable stays:** Radisson Hotel Group (RHG) is driven by their responsible business pillars Think People, Think Community, Think Planet. They have committed to the pathway of net positive hospitality, and they offer sustainable stays verified on hotel sustainability basics and certified and recognised by a third-party eco-label. RHG partners with global eco labels, recognised by the Global Sustainable Tourism Council, such as Green Key and EarthCheck, which audit hotel performance.
- **Carbon compensated meetings:** RHG automatically compensates the carbon footprint of every single meeting and event taking place at any of their hotels worldwide, at no cost to the guest. In partnership with First Climate, one of the world's largest carbon compensate organ-

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IHCL's
"Taj Water
Management
Programme"
saves water
through low-
flow fixtures
and recycling
in laundry
operations
across its
hotels.”




isations, and through projects that help reduce emissions and have a positive social impact, Radisson Meetings strives for environmental best practice. All selected projects are Gold Standard or Verified Carbon Standard certified.

- **Reduce, reuse, replace and recycle:** It works to reduce, reuse, replace and recycle and share best practices in this area. They work with suppliers to reduce waste and increase recycling.

Conclusion

Sustainability in housekeeping is not just a trend but a necessary evolution for the hospitality industry in India. By implementing innovative strategies and adopting eco-friendly practices, hospitality chains can significantly reduce their environmental impact. The commitment to sustainability enhances operational efficiency, reduces costs, and aligns with the growing consumer demand for environmentally responsible services. The hospitality industry continues to embrace these practices, it sets a precedent for other sectors, paving the way for a greener and more sustainable future for India.

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

“
Adopting sustainable practices in housekeeping is not just a trend but a necessary evolution for the hospitality industry in India.”



Revved up for expansion in India

Accor expands in India with Ibis Styles Mysuru, enhancing its diverse portfolio and commitment to sustainability.



Nisha Verma

Accor continues its impressive expansion in India with the launch of its 64th property, Ibis Styles Mysuru. This new addition underscores Accor's commitment to catering to the evolving needs of leisure and business travellers.

Growing portfolio

Accor's expansion strategy is deeply rooted in its diverse brand portfolio, designed to appeal to a broad spectrum of travellers, reveals **Pratima Badhwar**, Head of Commercial, India & South Asia, Accor. Pointing out that the group operates luxury brands such as Raffles and Fairmont, as well as more accessible options such as Novotel, Mercure, and Ibis, she explained, "Our diverse brand portfolio allows us to cater to various market segments, ensuring that we meet the needs and preferences of every type of traveller. This flexibility positions Accor as a leader in an increasingly competitive market. By providing tailored experiences that resonate with a broad audience, we continue to set ourselves apart."



Pratima Badhwar
Head, Commercial
India & South Asia, Accor

as Novotel and Ibis, which are well recognised among Indian travellers. This year alone, we are adding new properties such as the Ibis Styles Mysuru and expanding with other key openings in major cities such as Goa, Lucknow, and Mumbai."

MICE offerings

MICE is another domain where Accor is focussing its efforts. With a robust recovery in corporate travel post-COVID, Accor's properties are becoming preferred venues for large-scale events, claims Badhwar. "MICE is a critical segment for us, and we are witnessing a strong recovery in this segment," she added.



With 63 operational hotels, including 23 Ibis and Ibis Styles properties, the Accor network is solidified by established brands."

She further added, "With 63 operational hotels, including 23 Ibis and Ibis Styles properties, the network is solidified by established brands such

Accor's focus extends beyond domestic MICE. The brand is also a strong player in outbound MICE, catering to global destinations. "Through partnerships with organisations such as ICCA, ICPB, and EMAA, it continues to enhance its visibility in this segment. It also offers value-added benefits such as upgraded menus and double reward points for MICE planners under its 'Choice is Yours' programme, further incentivising event organisers to choose Accor," claimed Badhwar.

Sustainability

Sustainability is central to Accor's strategy, emphasised Badhwar. The group implements energy-efficient designs, water conservation, and waste management across its properties. "Sustainability is ingrained in our operations and a key focus as we expand," she noted, reflecting Accor's commitment to reducing environmental impact and promoting responsible tourism. □



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HOTELS REIMAGINED LIVE, WORK, RELAX

Hybrid hotels are evolving in India, blending traditional hotel services with co-working, co-living and lifestyle elements, meeting modern travel demands.



Charmaine Fernz

The concept of hybrid hotels is becoming more popular in India. Both new and established brands are exploring hybrid hospitality, which combines the traditional hotel experience with elements of co-working and co-living spaces, as well as restaurants, wellness, retail, and more. With hybrid hospitality, people can live, stay, eat, drink, work, and socialise, all in one dynamic space.

Carving a niche

Hybrid hospitality redefines the traditional hotel experience by focusing on personalisation and advanced technology. **Gautam Munjal**, Founder and CEO, Minimalist Hotels, explained, “Hybrid

hotels are revolutionising hospitality by merging boutique hotel experiences with the social buzz of hostels and the convenience of short-term rentals. At Minimalist Hotels, we cater to modern travellers, particularly millennials and Gen Z, who prefer culture, community, and minimalism over traditional luxury.”

Munjal further added, “The potential for hybrid hotels in India is immense, with the hospitality sector expected to grow at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of over 10 per cent between 2021 and 2026. With a young population making up over 65 per cent of the demographic, the demand for affordable and unique experiences that cater to their preferences and interests is rising.”



Kahraman Yigit
Co-Founder and CEO
Olive by Embassy



“Hybrid hotels offer private spaces for relaxation and shared areas for networking and work. Many travellers seek accommodations with reliable Wi-Fi, ergonomic workspaces, and amenities that support remote work. In India, hybrid hotels are often a more cost-effective option than traditional hotels or long-term rentals. Technology plays a crucial role in providing seamless booking experiences, smart room features, and personalised guest services. India attracts a diverse range of travellers, including business professionals, tourists, and digital nomads. Hybrid hotels can accommodate this diverse base with versatile spaces and services, including eco-friendly designs, energy-efficient practices, and sustainable amenities. Overall, the concept of hybrid hotels aligns well with the evolving trends and needs in India’s rapidly growing hospitality sector,” noted **Dravya Vijayvargaya**, CEO and Founder, StandOut Hotels.

Kahraman Yigit, Co-Founder and CEO, Olive by Embassy highlights that India’s hospitality sector is currently experiencing a major transforma-

“
Hybrid hotels offer cleanliness, technology, flexibility and remote work-friendly spaces, all in one place.”



tion with the emergence of hybrid hotels. “These hotels offer cleanliness, technology, flexibility, remote work-friendly spaces, and sustainability, all in one place. The sector is expected to grow significantly, with ICRA forecasting a seven to nine per cent revenue increase in FY2025, and occupancy rates expected to reach a ten-year high. This growth trend positions hybrid hotels to capture a significant portion of the expanding market, catering to both business and leisure travellers,” Yigit explained.



Gautam Munjal
Founder and CEO
Minimalist Hotels

Rajan Malhotra, Commercial Director, Conrad Bengaluru, points out that hybrid hotels are becoming popular among millennials and digital nomads because they offer convenience, flexibility, and a lively atmosphere. This emerging concept meets the evolving demands of today’s travellers and signifies a shift in the hospitality industry towards more flexible accommodation options. However, **Deep Preet Bindra**, General Manager, The Westin Hyderabad Mindspace, points out that hybrid hotels are still a new and mostly untapped potential. He mentions that they provide a flexible option in cities and offer affordable rates for guests who need a home-like environment for long stays. Reports also show that

While India’s hybrid hotel market is still in its early stages, it has great potential due to the rapidly growing demand for versatile accommodation options.

Munjal agrees, noting that hybrid hotels are doing well in cities such as New York, Berlin, and Tokyo, attracting different types of travellers from around the world. Even though India’s hybrid hotel market is just starting out, it is growing fast by learning from successes in other countries and adapting to local tastes.

“India’s urban centres are growing rapidly, leading to increasing demand for accommodations that are convenient, comfortable, affordable, and social,” said Vijayvargaya. Hybrid hotels meet these demands by offering properties in central locations with efficient use of space. This concept is popular in major cities such as New Delhi, Gurgaon, Mumbai, Bengaluru, and Hyderabad. Hybrid hotels are also well-established in popular vacation spots such as Goa, Manali, Jaipur, and Udaipur with lots of visitors. Additionally, tier II cities in India are also adopting the concept of hybrid hotels.

Contributing factors

Munjal says that millennials and Gen Z are redefining the meaning of luxury. “They seek experiences—cultural immersion, community vibes, and minimalist living. Hybrid hotels are ideal for meeting these needs and attracting younger travellers. Another key factor is economic diversity. Hybrid hotels cater to different budgets. Cities are becoming cultural melting pots, and hybrid hotels are ideal for travellers who want to experience this urban mix,” he added.

Munjal believes that technology has made it much easier to manage and promote hybrid hotels. Online booking, social media, and digital marketing are all essential for reaching more people and filling up rooms.

“**Hybrid hotels are revolutionising hospitality by merging boutique hotel experiences with social buzz of hostels and convenience of short-term rentals.**”

extended-stay hotels in India have higher occupancy rates, often above 70 per cent, compared to traditional hotels.

Global-view

Yigit observes that hybrid hotels are gaining traction globally, especially in regions such as North America and Europe, where serviced apartments and extended-stay hotels are well-established. These markets have shown the viability and popularity of flexible accommodation solutions.





Dravya Vijayvargaya
CEO and Founder
StandOut Hotels

“
Concept of hybrid hotels aligns well with the evolving trends and needs in India's rapidly growing hospitality sector.”



Bindra highlights that business travel and remote work are increasing the need for places to stay that can accommodate both short and long visits. This increased demand is also influenced by economic growth, urbanisation, and the rise in domestic and international tourism. Major cities such as Mumbai, Bengaluru, New Delhi, Hyderabad, Pune, and Chennai are at the forefront of this trend due to their status as business hubs, the presence of corporate offices, and significant expatriate populations.


Overcoming challenges

Every new idea comes with its own challenges, and hybrid hotels are no exception. The main concerns for the new generation of hybrid hotels include government rules, consumer awareness, and competition, along with other issues.

“Running hybrid hotels in India comes with its own set of challenges. Dealing with complex regulations can be time-consuming and expensive, as we need to follow both local and national rules. It is also important to educate potential guests about the benefits of hybrid hotels. We face strong competition from established hotels and hostels, which means we must carve out our niche. Managing the hybrid model is no small feat either—it is all about balancing different services and amenities to ensure a seamless guest experience. Additionally, we need to adjust our concept to fit local tastes and cultural differences, adapting what works globally to suit Indian travellers,” explained Munjal.

Malhotra emphasises that, despite their growing popularity, hybrid hotels need to strike the right balance by offering a blend of co-living, co-working, and traditional hotel services. This requires substantial investment and targeting the right clientele. Adapting to rapidly changing guest preferences and maintaining operational efficiency amid the com-

plexities demands innovative solutions and a deep understanding of evolving market dynamics.

Bindra explains that dealing with complex zoning regulations, distinguishing between residential and commercial properties, and acquiring the necessary licences and permits are key challenges. Business owners also need to expect a longer return on investment compared to traditional hotel models. Economic downturns and fluctuations in tourism and business travel can impact occupancy rates and revenue. Implementing effective loyalty programmes, which allow guests to earn rewards and access benefits worldwide, can be challenging but is crucial for attracting and retaining customers. 





Maximising returns through revenue share model

Revenue share model is gaining popularity as it enables brands to access prime properties and improves financial performance, opines **Nikhil Shah**.

In the world of hospitality, the revenue share model is gaining traction as a preferred standard to expand a brand's footprint and secure sustainable growth. This approach not only ensures access to prime properties on a long-term basis but also enhances both the top line and bottom line performances, crucial for sustained profitability.

Globally, lease deals are few and their presence is limited to strategic locations. In countries such as USA, UK, Singapore, Hong Kong, it would be significantly lesser than 10 per cent.

In Indian market, the revenue share or lease deals models have existed since the British rule. Most of the prime properties in key locations were owned by the port authorities or the municipality and leased out to domestic brands. IHCL, for instance, was able to build the palace portfolio because royal families were willing to lease them to save on property improvement and maintenance costs.



Nikhil Shah
Senior Director (Hospitality),
Capital Markets & Investment
Services, Colliers India

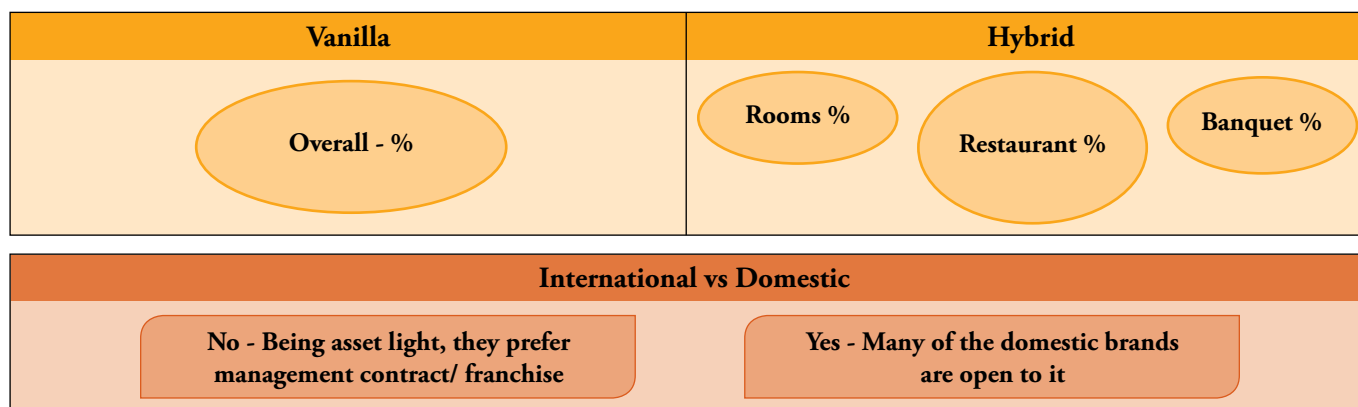
Factors driving revenue share

Financial optimisation

- **Listed companies:** For publicly traded entities, revenue share arrangements can bolster the bottom line, thereby enhancing the company's valuation and market capitalisation. Given that sector price-earning (PE) ratios often exceed 70, and companies trade at a 40x earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation, and amortisation (EBITDA) multiple, increasing profitability through a revenue share model becomes increasingly attractive. This model is more impactful to the top line as it captures the entire value creation or sale, with an increased contribution to the bottom line, almost double that of a management contract



Revenue share model is gaining traction as preferred standard to expand a brand's footprint and secure sustainable growth."



(MC), which has a limited impact on both the top and bottom lines

- **Unlisted companies:** Similarly, unlisted firms can perceive enhanced value through revenue share models, especially when seeking capital infusion or contemplating future public offerings

Evolution among brands

Several brands have traditionally adhered to asset-light models but are now venturing into revenue share agreements, sometimes with performance guarantees. Some brands are also exploring acquisitions or joint ventures with hotel asset owners, broadening their operational scope and market reach.

Structuring revenue share pacts

Usually, hotel brands negotiate for a share of the property's top line revenue, often around 20 per cent. To maximise returns,

“

Several brands have traditionally adhered to asset-light models but are now venturing into revenue share agreements, sometimes with performance guarantees.”

variations in percentage shares might apply to different revenue streams such as rooms, restaurants, and banquet facilities.

International vs domestic

Brands that may consider a revenue share model are Lemon Tree Hotels, Royal Orchid Hotels, The Fern Hotels & Resorts, Mahindra Holidays & Resorts, Sterling Holiday Resorts, Sayaji Hotels, Suba Hotels, Ginger Hotels, Absolute Hotel Services, Pride Hotels, Zone by The Park, jüSTa Hotels & Resorts, Lords Hotels & Resorts and Byke Hotels & Resorts.

Advantages of revenue share

- **Accelerated revenue recognition:** Unlike traditional management contracts, where revenue recognition can be delayed up to three months, revenue share models allow brands to realise earnings promptly each month. This ensures a more consistent flow of revenue
- **Enhanced profitability:** Brands can earn higher returns, ranging from 15 to 20 per cent, compared to the 7 to 10 per cent that is typically expected under management contracts



WHAT MAKES A HOTEL ASSET ATTRACTIVE FOR LEASING?

- Desired location: Mumbai, New Delhi, Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Chennai and Pune
- Established leisure locations: Goa, Rishikesh, Jaipur and Udaipur
- Tier I: Top 2 to 3 cities in each state (metro being inclusive)
- Hotels in brownfield stage which can be operational in six months to 12 months
- Re-flagging of an existing hotel after renovation or upgradation

- **Flexible payment structure:** Since payments are variable and tied to performance, there is no fixed payout burden, aligning financial outcomes closely with operational success

Considerations and challenges

- **Property maintenance responsibility:** Brands assuming revenue share agreements also take on the responsibility of maintaining the property, ensuring upkeep and adherence to brand standards
- **Long-term commitments:** Engaging in revenue share deals necessitates a sustained commitment, involving inherent risks and long-term strategic planning on the part of the brand

Target audience for revenue share

- **First-time hotel owners:** Providing a viable entry into the hospitality sector without the complexities of full ownership
- **Owners residing abroad:** Allowing international property owners to benefit from the local market expertise and brand recognition



- **Succession hoteliers:** Second-generation owners seeking to minimise direct involvement in day-to-day operations while maintaining ownership

Asset-light strategies

Despite the allure of revenue share models, many international brands still prefer asset-light strategies. These approaches allow brands to expand their global presence without assuming direct investment risks or taking on the profit and loss uncertainties associated with property ownership.

“Engaging in revenue share deals necessitates sustained commitment, involving inherent risks and long-term strategic planning on part of the brand.”

In conclusion, revenue share model represents a strategic evolution in the hospitality industry, catering to diverse stakeholder needs from financial optimisation for listed entities to providing entry opportunities for first-time hotel owners in the country.

While challenges such as property maintenance and long-term commitments exist, the benefits of accelerated revenue recognition and enhanced profitability make revenue share an increasingly favoured option among domestic operators across the country. As brands navigate the evolving landscape of hospitality, revenue share model stands out as a flexible and lucrative pathway to sustainable growth and profitability in an increasingly competitive market.

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

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Millennials seek more than standard hospitality



Hotels offering unique experiences and personalised service will thrive as millennials crave these enriching aspects, reckons **Rocky Kalra**.

The significant rise in GDP and foreign direct investment (FDI) has increased the purchasing power of the masses. This economic growth has had a profound impact on both domestic and international travel, particularly among millennials. With more disposable income, this demographic is eager to explore new destinations, fuelling a surge in travel demand. Millennials are leveraging this newfound financial freedom to explore diverse destinations, seeking not just leisure but also enriching experiences. This trend is fostering a robust market for the hospitality sector, with a clear demand for quality services, distinctive ambience, and personalised attention.



Rocky Kalra
Vice President
The Lalit Suri Hospitality Group

struction and conservation of spiritual, cultural, and historical sites. By emphasising the development and preservation of these spiritual destinations, the government is catering to the preferences of millennials, who are interested in experiences that offer personal growth, spiritual fulfillment, and a connection with local

Government initiatives

Government initiatives such as the Swadesh Darshan and PRASHAD schemes have played a vital role in boosting spiritual tourism across the country. These programmes have not only

enhanced connectivity and infrastructure but have also spotlighted India's spiritual heritage. Spiritual destinations such as Vrindavan and Kedarnath are now receiving focused attention, with the Union Ministry of Tourism investing in the con-

“

Millennials are leveraging the newfound financial freedom to explore diverse destinations, seeking not just leisure but also enriching experiences.”



cultures. This approach boosts tourism and strengthens the country's identity as a land of spiritual and cultural significance.

Catering to millennial preferences

Millennials seek unique, empowering experiences that go beyond traditional hospitality offerings. They value exposure to local culture, personalised service, and distinctive ambience. Hotels that can deliver these elements will thrive in the competitive market. Embracing the preferences of millennials, such as providing authentic local experiences and fostering a personalised environment, is important in attracting and retaining this demographic.

One of the primary drivers for millennials is the desire for authentic local experiences. They are drawn to destinations that offer genuine interactions with the local community, whether through guided cultural tours, culinary experiences that feature local cuisine, or opportunities to participate in traditional crafts and activities. Hotels that facilitate these experiences by partnering with local artisans, chefs, and cultural experts can provide guests with memories that are not only enjoyable but also enriching and transformative.

Personalised service is another critical aspect that millennials prioritise. This generation appreciates when hotels go



“Hotels that provide personalised services and create a distinctive ambience reflecting local culture are more likely to attract millennials.”

the extra mile to understand and cater to their individual preferences. Whether it is through tailored room amenities, bespoke travel itineraries, or personalised greetings, the capability to customise experiences and services to meet the specific needs and desires of each guest can enhance their stay. Technology also plays an important role, with features such as mobile check-ins, AI-driven concierge services, and personalised recommendations enhancing the guest experience and streamlining their interactions with the hotel.


Creating a distinctive ambience is equally important. Millennials are attracted to spaces that offer more than just functionality; they seek environments that are visually appealing, culturally rich, and conducive to relaxation and

social interaction. Hotels that incorporate local art, sustainable design elements, and interactive spaces, where guests can gather and connect are more likely to appeal to this demographic.

Quality services and experiences

In the competitive world of hospitality, the success of a hotel hinges on its capability to offer quality services, unique experiences, and employ well-trained staff. Hotels that provide personalised services and create a distinctive ambience that reflects local culture are more likely to attract millennials. This generation values experiences over material possessions and seeks out hotels that can offer something out of the ordinary.

In conclusion, the hospitality industry is transforming to meet the changing demands of millennials. Government initiatives, economic growth, and a focus on quality and unique offerings are driving this transformation. By understanding and catering to the preferences of millennials, particularly their desire for unique and culturally rich experiences, the hospitality sector can ensure sustained growth and success in the years to come.

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



New Ramada Hotel debuts in Ahmedabad



Wyndham Hotels & Resorts launches Ramada by Wyndham Ahmedabad, blending modern luxury with proximity to India's largest cricket stadium.



DDP Bureau

Sankalp Recreation has partnered with Wyndham Hotels & Resorts to unveil an exciting addition to Ahmedabad's hospitality landscape—Ramada by Wyndham Ahmedabad Narendra Modi Stadium Motera, located next to the world's largest cricket stadium.

"This addition marks the second Ramada by Wyndham hotel in the city, under our world-renowned midscale hotel brand and joins the Wyndham Advantage

Hotel offers 55 contemporary rooms and an array of amenities, from an all-day dining restaurant to a wellness spa

with access to innovative technology, our growing loyalty programme and more. With over 60 properties in incredible India, we look forward to welcoming guests to this impressive hotel and delivering memorable stays," said **Dimitris Manikis**, President, EMEA, Wyndham Hotels & Resorts.

The hotel offers 55 contemporary rooms and an array of amenities, from an all-day dining restaurant to a wellness spa, while appealing to sports enthusiasts, corporate travellers, and leisure seekers alike. Guests can also enjoy exclusive access to Olympic-size pool, tennis courts, and a jogging track.

IN MEMORIAM



Hospitality industry mourns Shyam Suri's loss

FHRAI fraternity pays tributes to **Shyam Suri**, former Secretary General, honouring his impactful leadership and contributions to industry.

The FHRAI fraternity mourns the passing of Shyam Suri, a revered figure in the hospitality industry and former Secretary General of FHRAI from 1997 to 2005. Suri, who left for heavenly abode on 24 August 2024, was a retired IAS officer and an advisor at the RIG Institute of Hotel Management, Noida. Throughout his career, Suri made significant contributions to the hospitality sector. His visionary leadership profoundly shaped the industry, leaving an indelible mark on its development and growth.

Beyond his role at FHRAI, Suri was actively involved in community service as a member of the Managing Committee at Kasturba Balika Vidyalaya, demonstrating his commitment to educational and social causes.

The Federation extends heartfelt condolences to Suri's family during this time of sorrow. His legacy will continue to inspire, and his contributions will be remembered with respect and admiration.

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Style meets comfort

Weavecraft's latest collection combines modern innovation with refined elegance, featuring sculptured outdoor lighting, accessories, art objects, retractable roofs, and furniture. The collection is made from materials such as wicker, resin, wood, ropes, straps, terracotta, and concrete. Weavecraft offers customisation options with a wide choice of colours and a new selection of outdoor rugs. With this collection, Weavecraft aims to transform outdoor spaces into a haven of comfort. Their flagship store is a one-stop shop for all outdoor needs, setting new standards in outdoor luxury.



Modern storage meets hieroglyphs

The Masai Collection is a modern and simple storage collection inspired by ancient hieroglyphs. It features a mix of abstract cutouts and wood against wood patterns, ranging from small side tables for space-saving living to larger sideboards for full utility. The collection's dimension and style are enhanced by the contrast of black stain against warm white ash wood. These pieces are conversation starters, perfect for creating a room and adding personality to homes. The collection is perfect for those who appreciate personality.

Timeless handcrafted décor

Peacock Life has unveiled a stunning collection of decors, handcrafted timeless pieces, rich colours and bold furniture. These include Aparajita Glass Top Side Table, Brass Trinket Box, Crouching Lion Garden Décor, Peacock Box, Squatted Monkey Garden Décor, Terracotta Fish Décor, Anar Pot, Aureate Bottle Vase, Baby Croc Garden Décor, Clay Pops Table Décor, Cute Little Piglet, Daisy Duck Décor, Flying Horse Décor, Julie Chair, Ketli, Oscar The Cat, Owl Stool, Panda Stool, Parma Candle Stand, Peter Rabbit, among others.



Refining wellness space


Maruva x Sarita Handa is a pioneering collaboration that redefines luxury and wellness. The partnership combines African botanical skincare expertise with Ayurvedic principles to create a collection that embodies simple, quiet luxury. Maruva, founded by Geeta and Ashish Chaudhary, focuses on the skin-enhancing properties of indigenous African plants such as marula and baobab, which have been revered for centuries in African cultures for their remarkable benefits to skin health. This marks Sarita Handa's first venture into the wellness space.



Creating impressive vibes

The magnificent collection of Tea Light Holders by Frazer and Haws which are crafted in silver are very aesthetically designed and are refreshing additions to your decor. Available in various styles these Tea Light Holders from Frazer and Haws are designed with intricate detailing and fine silver that is bound to add grandeur and elegance to your home. With these Tea Light Holders, you can create a contemporary look to any living space that instantly transforms the vibe of your home.

Transform your memories

Mira Living presents an exquisite collection of luxury photo frames designed to capture and celebrate one's personal journey. These frames are meticulously crafted from the finest materials, transforming them from mere photograph holders into sophisticated pieces of art. Each frame not only enhances the beauty of living spaces but also adds a touch of elegance and refinement. Whether displayed on a mantelpiece, bedside table, or gallery wall, Mira Living's frames elevate cherished memories into timeless treasures. 



MOVEMENTS

SHRIDHAR NAIR

Senior VP & GM, The Leela Ambience Gurugram Hotel & Residences



Shridhar Nair has been appointed as Senior Vice President and General Manager at The Leela Ambience Gurugram Hotel & Residences. He will be based in Gurugram

and will lead the Leela Ambience Gurugram, overseeing other properties such as The Leela Ambience Convention Hotel, The Leela Mumbai, The Leela Gandhinagar, Mahatma Mandir Convention Centre Complex, and The Imperial Club by The Leela.

DR. ANMOL AHLUWALIA

Area Director, Operations and General Manager of Taj Mahal, New Delhi



IHCL has appointed Dr. Anmol Ahluwalia as Area Director, Operations and General Manager of Taj Mahal, New Delhi. With over two decades of experience in luxury hospitality, Ahluwalia

will oversee operations of Ambassador, New Delhi - IHCL SeleQtions, The Connaught, New Delhi - IHCL SeleQtions, and Soulinaire. In his previous role as Area Director, Operations, Goa, he managed a portfolio of IHCL's Hotels under its brands.

PRITAM GUHA

Cluster Director of Sales, Ahmedabad, The Fern Hotels & Resorts



Fern Hotels & Resorts has appointed Pritam Guha as the new Cluster Director of Sales in Ahmedabad. Guha will oversee the sales operations of five Fern Hotels & Resorts

hotels in Gujarat, including Ahmedabad, Gandhinagar, Nani Devati, and Ekta Nagar (Kevadia). With a proven track record, Guha will focus on expanding the corporate market, enhancing MICE movements, and developing new market segments.

RADHIKA TATA

General Manager, Grand Mercure Mysore



Grand Mercure Mysore has appointed Radhika Tata as its new General Manager. With over a decade of experience at Accor Hotels, Radhika brings a wealth of knowledge

to her new role. Tata has held leadership roles at multiple Accor properties across India, including Novotel Convention Centre, Novotel Imagicaa, ibis Navi Mumbai, ibis Bengaluru Hosur Road, and ibis Hyderabad Hitec City.

ABHISHEKH MENON

General Manager, ITC Kakatiya



ITC Kakatiya has appointed Abhishek Menon as the new General Manager, bringing nearly two decades of experience. Menon began his career at ITC Hotels in


2006. His tenure at ITC Maurya was notable, where he managed the Front Office during high-profile events. In 2020, he led a renovation of ITC Grand Goa's rooms and restaurants. Two years later, he transitioned to ITC Royal Bengal.

RANJITHA ALVA

Spa Manager, Four Seasons Hotel Bengaluru



Four Seasons Hotel Bengaluru has appointed Ranjitha Alva as the new Spa Manager. She comes from The Leela Bhartiya City Hotel & Residences, where

she excelled in creating a rejuvenating atmosphere, conducting yoga and meditation sessions, and developing comprehensive spa treatment menus. Alva will oversee comprehensive wellness and spa operations. 



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