

## **Minister Piyush Goyal urges FHRAI to come up with new revival ideas, and work with the government to resolve issues faced by the industry**

The Federation of Hotel and Restaurant Association of India (FHRAI) recently had an engaging web-interaction with Piyush Goyal, Minister of Commerce & Industry and Railways, Government of India, on the challenges faced by the hotel and restaurant industry in these trying times, and possible solutions to those challenges.

The minister acknowledged the huge contribution made by the industry to the country's GDP, while appreciating the patience shown by the industry in the face of revenue losses during the pandemic. He asked the industry leaders to keep up the spirit, come up with new revival ideas, and work with the government on those ideas to resolve issues faced by the industry.

Gurbaxish Singh Kohli, Vice President, FHRAI & President, Hotel and Restaurant Association of Western India (HRAWI); Pradeep Shetty, Jt. Hon. Secretary, FHRAI & VP, HRAWI; Vivek Nair, Member of Honor, HRAWI; Surendra Kumar Jaiswal, Vice President, FHRAI; DVS Somaraju, Hon. Treasurer, FHRAI; Nirav Gandhi, EC Member, FHRAI and S P Jain, Ex-officio Member, HRAWI participated in the meeting and put forth concerns to the Minister.

While expressing concern on the problems faced by the industry over the last few months, Gurbaxish Singh Kohli, Vice President, FHRAI & President, Hotel and Restaurant Association of Western India (HRAWI) said, "Hospitality industry needs all the support it can. The industry is already facing a loss of INR 1,40 Lakh crore. The industry is looking at 30-40% closure of establishments, which are going to be shut down permanently. There is a general lack of confidence among patrons and demand is at an all-time low. We are also facing issues such as, cash crunch and shortage of labour. The hospitality industry has never been featured in any budget or economic schemes, and we are feeling like a step child. As an industry, we have always stood with the government whenever needed. 50,000 rooms have been allocated to doctors, and practitioners. 4,000 member hotels are collaborating

with the state and central government for providing quarantine facility. 6,000 restaurants have come forward to donate 3 lakh food packets to the poor and needy. So, there is a need for the government to look at this segment.”

While answering the queries of the industry leaders regarding special measures for five star hotels, Mr. Goyal commented, “It will be really unfortunate, if five-star hotels cannot stand on their feet without government support.” Goyal also expressed concern on the fact that most of the hotels are importing goods, such as, electronic goods, and tiles. He urged the hotels to support Atmanirbhar Bharat by using only Indian goods.

The industry fraternity also urged the minister to regulate OTAs, who are eating away a big share of the hotels by offering rooms at low cost through home stays, and other unlicensed properties listed on their portals. The minister assured to look into the matter and take necessary action.

Goyal also informed that the ministry will try to ease several processes through single window clearance and easy simplified online approvals.