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**HOTEL INDUSTRY GETTING DRESSED
UP FOR A POST-COVID SCENARIO**

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President's Message



My Dear Members,

Surely every president of the HRAWI has been humbled by the responsibilities of this leadership position. With that in mind, I must thank all those who have gone before as leaders of HRAWI —the founders, the Past Presidents, the Office Bearers and the EC members till date. The cumulative leadership of HRAWI has consistently moved us to be better- better hoteliers, better restaurateurs, better colleagues, better evaluators, better friends, better people on the whole.

Personally, I spent several years as an enthusiastic EC member at the HRAWI, from the time I was first persuaded to get involved as an executive committee member and then in various positions as an office bearer and finally the President of this august organisation. I am greatly honoured and privileged to have been associated with you and would like to extend my sincere thanks to all the Members, EC members, The Advisory Council, President of Honour, Member of Honour; for your encouragement and confidence reposed in me throughout my tenure as a President. We have accomplished much together in these years that passed too quickly. The years brought immense challenges from everywhere, plus the added responsibility of being nominated to handle the FHRAI as Vice President - In Charge.

Friends, the winds of change have never blown so fiercely, ripping and tearing through our communities, our businesses, and our lives, feeding on disruption in the midst of chaos and leaving millions of people reeling in shock.

All throughout and especially during the pandemic, we have been in constant touch with all echelons of the government, in the form of making various representations or meeting face to face to seek a resolution to the Covid stalemate. In this we have emerged as the true Corona Warriors, relentlessly working and standing tall with the authorities at

the time of need, providing for 3500 rooms across 90 hotels and lakhs of meals daily for the needy.

The industry has appreciated the government's decision to allow hotels to operate with full capacity and is pressing the government to quicken its decision to lift the lockdown and allow restaurants and bars to re-open with dine-in services as well. Hopefully that should happen in the next few days.

Your Association has been continuously and relentlessly following up with the Government on various issues which would bring relief in today's situation. The association has also played a very constructive role in protecting and strengthening the basic structure of our fraternity and I believe that the organization will continue to make it even more responsive to the needs of its members.

While I wish you and your families well, kindly remember that your Association has been instrumental in assisting the authorities in formulating and issuing guidelines and SOPs from various departments and ministries, which have already been circulated and shared. I would request Members to kindly adhere to these.

We are a resilient lot and always manage to bounce back. Keep safe and we shall tide over this predicament together.

With this positive note, I bid you adieu in my last address as your President, as I prepare to hand over the baton of responsibilities to the able hands of the new incoming President very shortly.

Thank you for the opportunity given to me to serve an association that deserves to, and will, grow and prosper with your continued participation.

Thank You

Gurbaxish (Gogi) Singh Kohli

President, HRAWI

president@hrawi.com

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PRINTER, EDITOR & PUBLISHER

Siji Nair*
sijicn@gmail.com

SECRETARY GENERAL

Aspi Nallaseth

EXECUTIVE EDITOR

Prasad M.

ASSOCIATE EDITOR

N. Vijayagopalan

MANAGER-MARKETING

Sreekanth K.S.

ASST MANAGER-MARKETING

Sibu Nair

DESIGN

Naveen A

National Representatives

Mail: today.hra@gmail.com

Mumbai	: Raveendran
Kolkata	: Priya Kundu
Chennai	: Subramaniam
Bangalore	: Hans Injackel

International Representatives

Mail: today.hra@gmail.com

Muscat, Oman	: Dr. Sanjaiyan
Dubai, UAE	: Binoy Syama Krishna
Abu Dhabi, UAE	: Sabari R Nair
London, United Kingdom	: Narendra Shah
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HOW RESTAURANT INDUSTRY IS UNFOLDING IN THE TROUBLED TIMES

N.Vijayagopalan

It is ironic that the Restaurants, Travel and Hotel industry in India is suffering the most due to the crisis created by outbreak of COVID-19 and the benefits they got from the government is far below what is required. Restaurant industry in particular is facing its worst existential crisis following the outbreak of the pandemic. The restaurant industry, with an annual turnover of over Rs 4 lakh crore and a direct employee base of over seven million, is fighting a severe battle for its basic survival amidst the COVID-19 outbreak. The organised restaurant sector accounts for 35 per cent of India's restaurant industry, estimated at Rs 4.2 lakh crore in FY19. Dine-ins are 75 per cent of the organised restaurants, with online delivery or takeaways making up for the rest.

In fact 2019 was a robust year for

the food industry. Metro cities were witnessing the opening of new restaurants almost every week. Eating out in restaurants or some posh lounges in hotels was becoming very common. There were a number of food events. There was a mushrooming of food groups on Facebook. Everywhere people were only talking about entertainment and food. And lo, out of the blue did the COVID pandemic strike bringing distress to the food industry. The lock down imposed a severe blow on the business.

India's food scenario is in for a transformation once the pandemic starts receding significantly. Restaurants have the most urgent task of rebuilding confidence. Their primary focus has shifted to ways and means of implementing hygiene and social distancing protocols. Restaurants will rely far more on

home delivery than before due to the lockdown. Cloud kitchens are also finding it hard to service with food delivery hit hard. Delivery focused food companies like Zomato and Swiggy are facing the loss of sales and market share is dropping. The recent unlocking of restaurants in Delhi NCR has not seen a major cheer amongst restaurant owners.

While quick service restaurants, bakeries and food outlets have slowly started to reopen, bars and clubs are following a wait-and-watch approach due to restrictions like reduced timings, no alcohol permission, 50 per cent occupancy rules and lack of support from authorities.

Many chef-driven, fine dining restaurants which were earlier focused on providing customers a dining-in experience, will now venture into the delivery business. In the long term, this will completely change the landscape of the delivery business in the country. Now ordering your

favourite dish from your favourite hotel has become so easy at the click of a button.

It is refreshing that several celebrity Chefs are transmitting positive vibes during lockdown by sharing new recipes daily and promoting cooking contests on social media apps to help people get creative and showcase their cooking talents. Even luxury hotels have their Chef's do live-cooking and share recipes on social media. Incidentally, the lockdown has ensured that many more members of the family started to enter the kitchen, and cook.

Restaurants and hotels are taking pains to make hygiene focus videos aimed at driving home the fact that customers are safe. Different business models and revenue models are being discussed and their emergence will be crucial to the survival of the industry.

Cost cutting is becoming a

priority area for restaurants. Restaurants with high levels of indebtedness are likely to face pressure to shut unprofitable outlets to save costs and raise money. Though large players with low debt will be able to raise money, business revival remains a big challenge for them. Consumers turning more health-conscious has made it imperative that hygiene protocols at restaurants and supply chains will need to improve materially, which will increase cost.

A significant recovery of the sector from the financial losses is likely to take not less than ten to fifteen months. According to a front-line restaurant chain owner, nearly 50% stand-alone restaurants in Delhi NCR will close down.

The future trends in food are going to undergo a radical change. Deliveries will be the new normal. Vegan and organic food demand are now going to be a lifestyle trend that is there to stay. Many SME's have come up in the product space across the country promoting plant-based products, foods and more.

Contact-less dining is getting strongly established with the emergence of technology as an effective tool in social distancing and contact avoidance. Contactless QR ordering and mobile app facilitated billing and payment are becoming the new normal.

The SOP (Standard Operating Procedure) put in place, which includes hygiene checks, reduction in guest capacity and tech-friendly service has also prompted the restaurant industry to prepare a roadmap for the future in a diligent manner.





HOTEL INDUSTRY GETTING DRESSED UP FOR A POST-COVID SCENARIO

V. N. Nair

The fact that tourism constitutes 10% (\$275 Billion) to India's GDP (Business Line) warrants a joint plan of action by the government and the industry to overcome the mayhem caused by COVID-19 pandemic. The hotel industry faces a loss of Rs. 620 crores (Business Line) owing to the lockdown clamped following the COVID outbreak. While the branded, chain and some luxury standalone hotels in India constitute only 5% (1.4 lakhs rooms) of total rooms available, the balance 95% is comprised of Bed & Breakfast, Guest Houses and unbranded budget hotels. Some market analysts estimate that if the COVID situation improves and business picks up in the second half of the year,

then the pandemic would have caused only 18-20% erosion of national occupancy while there will be a 12-14% drop in the ADR (Average Daily Rate) (Hotelivate Report). This appears to be a slightly an ambitious assumption.

The outlook for India's hotel industry indicates a few transformations and innovations. The face of the hotel operations is poised to undergo a sea change. The prime focus of the hotel industry in a post COVID scenario would undoubtedly be on health and safety which obviously translates into hygiene and sanitation issues of hotels. Providing physical evidence of the hotel's concern for health and safety would be crucial. Just as the terror attack on the Taj Hotel had prompted hotels to

allay security fears by erecting security checks at the gates of the hotel along with self and baggage screening in the portico prior to entering the hotel, now the pandemic has necessitated checks and screening to be put in place for health purposes including checking for fever with a remote thermometer, showering a light sanitizer mist, keeping hand sanitizers at the reception, elevator lobbies and guest rooms. Ensuring the circulation of fresh air in guest rooms and display of indoor air quality would become a new norm. It would become very common for the guest room to have a conspicuous display reading: "You are in a room which has been sanitized for your health and safety".

The strategy of most hotels would

now be to do a soft-opening with fewer people and with only essential facilities and staff including housekeeping, a part of the kitchen, the coffee shop or dining room, bar, front desk and security. The activities would be limited to one floor or two.

When only few staffers are positioned, they should be experienced, multi-skilled and loyal employees. It would take a little while when the full complement of personnel would be required. All staff would have to continue to wear surgical gloves and masks to give confidence to the guests.

Tables in the restaurant will have to be spaced out. Self-service would be encouraged more and more to reduce human contact. Food menus would transform in such a manner as to save the cost of having high food inventories.

The hotel industry could bank more on India's large domestic tourism for its kick start. The low-priced sector like Bed & Breakfast, budget hotels and guest houses will have a greater role to play here, since 95% accommodation lies in this category. The lock down has shown that corporate travel can be limited with technology aided

communication.

Protecting and expanding the clientele base would inevitably be the key, making marketing a thrust area. It would be necessary to keep communicating with loyal guests as well as prospects, particularly in the domestic market, through digital marketing and social media platforms during the lockdown and after.

For hotels, maintaining liquidity for working capital would be an area of great consideration. FAITH (Federation of Associations in Indian and Tourism Industry) has already made an appeal to the PM for certain concessions (Economic Times) which include supporting the payment of employee salaries for twelve months, having a twelve months moratorium on EMIs, advance tax, PF, ESIC, GST, Excise, State levies, bank guarantees, custom duties and security deposits, support for power and water charges and interest free loans for working capital.

As COVID-19 has hastened the need to use technology to allow least contact with humans, hotel industry would have to move more towards AI and other technologies. A code aided self-

“

Tables in the restaurant will have to be spaced out. Self-service would be encouraged more and more to reduce human contact. Food menus would transform in such a manner as to save the cost of having high food inventories.

”

check-in facility for guests and guest mobile apps connecting all buttons and switches in the room to avoid using fingers for touch would become the normal. More hotels will have to go for virtual views on the TV of restaurants, lobby, and bars to see the atmosphere to avoid crowds, digital payments of bills and food and beverage at kiosks which will give out receipts. Self-service room amenities from dispensers in the floor Housekeeping store would fall in place in many hotels.

Hotels will have to fall back upon Revenue Management Software to do the predictions of room occupancy and rates and Big Data analytics to constantly determine the behaviour and attitude of guests to give them customized services. Use of robots for cleaning carpeted and other surfaces and automated dish washing would get established in many hotels.





INDIAN ECONOMY SHOWING SIGNS OF REVIVAL

Finance Desk

Though the nation-wide lockdown following the outbreak of Covid 19 has severely hit India's economy, the easing of lockdown restrictions in June and July has led to a notable uptick in economic activity. There are a few early signs of recovery. Despite growing corona virus cases, areas like agriculture, exports, trade surplus, consumer durables and FMCG have shown growth. Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, during the recently-concluded 2020 India Ideas Summit, said "the green shoots are (visible) based on high-frequency indicators. We will watch them as we go along".

Agriculture sector has performed well on the wings of good Rabi

and Kharif crop harvests, and better than expected monsoon. According to experts, bumper crop this year could even create a surplus in the agricultural markets. Former Reserve Bank Governor D Subbarao, in a webinar organised by economic think-tank NCAER recently, also said the government must build on "some silver linings" in the farm sector to speed up the economic recovery.

The Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy (CMIE) data suggests that India's unemployment rate fell significantly to 10.99 per cent in June compared to 23.48 per cent in May, showing signs of improvement in the job scenario in the country and return to the

pre-lockdown period. The unemployment rate in urban areas for the month stood at 12.02 per cent, while it was recorded at 10.52 per cent in rural areas. It is significant that India's unemployment rate was recorded at the highest since January at 25.52 per cent after the government announced nation-wide lockdown with strict measures on March 25. April saw the unemployment rate of 23.48 per cent as most of the economic activity remained subdued. The employment rate in March was recorded at 8.75 per cent, while it remained 7.22 per cent and 7.76 per cent in January and February.

Another noteworthy feature is that FMCG consumption is

almost back to pre-COVID levels, according to Nielsen's latest edition of 'COVID-19 Consumer Evolving Trends' report. The report says the FMCG value sales index that was at 100 in March, before the lockdown, dipped to 75 during April and May. However, June saw a revival with the index touching 98, just a few points lower than the value in March. The recovery has been faster in rural India, which grew from 84 points in April and May to 109 points in June. Rural markets in June saw higher growth than the pre-COVID days in March (103). FMCG consumption in the urban markets was at 100 pre-COVID, which dipped to 70 during April and May and bounced to 94 in June.

It is pertinent to note that the consumer durable and appliances segment has also shown steadiness in trying times. It is reported that most leaders in the segment, including Panasonic India, Godrej Appliances and Philips India, recorded growth in sales, mainly driven by a surge in demand for home appliances, washing machines, television sets, and personal appliances as people remained locked at their homes. Panasonic India recorded 20 per cent growth in sales of vacuum cleaners; and 44 per cent in microwaves and washing machines sales compared to the pre-COVID-19 levels. Godrej Appliances saw record sales (up to five-fold) in kitchen alliances like microwaves and dishwashers while Philips India and Panasonic India saw significant uptick in personal appliances sale for the month.

Though India's passenger vehicle sales fell 49.59 per cent in June, tractor and two-wheeler sale across hinterland have touched pre-COVID levels, with top manu-

facturers like Hero MotoCorp and Mahindra & Mahindra recording increase in sales. Mahindra's recorded 47 per cent jump in month-on-month sales to 35,844 units in June compared to 8 per cent in the same period last year. Hero, however, sold 450,744 units, four-fold rise in month-on-month sales. Recovery can be attributed to boost in cash flows in the rural areas due to good rabi harvest, expected bumper kharif production, good rainfall and welfare transfers to migrants and farmers by the government.

Another noteworthy feature is the increase in India's food exports by 27 per cent since March, despite COVID-19 restrictions in place. The growth has been primarily attributed to high demand for food-based items. Overall, India emerged as the net exporter in June, recording trade surplus of 0.79 billion compared to \$15.28 billion deficit in the same period last year. As per ASSOCHAM, India's spices recorded 23 per cent growth in June to \$359 million as against \$292 million in the same month last year.

For the first time in the past 18 years, the economy recorded the first-ever trade surplus in June since January 2002. India's merchandise exports for the month fell 12.4 per cent, while imports shrunk 47.6 per cent, showing a cumulative trade surplus of \$790 million, thereby indicating increased employment and economic growth recovery. Comparatively, the trade surplus was \$3.15 billion in May and \$6.8 per cent in April.

According to research firm Canalis, as many as 2.9 million desktops, notebooks, tablets and workstations were shipped during April-June period despite lockdown for most of the period and



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just 45 operational days. Lenovo was the market leader with 818,000 PCs. HP with 629,000 units shipment was at the second spot. However, experts say that the PC industry has been on a decline for the last few years and this recent boost in PC sales may not be enough to change the industry dynamics.

The hospitality sector, particularly hotels, travel and tourism, however, remains the worst hit sector. Any respite in hospitality sector is expected only when the travel restrictions, particularly those imposed on the international travel, are released or at least eased, which can be expected only after the pandemic surrenders to the ongoing efforts to combat it. Only when the hospitality sector starts recovery, a significant growth in the economy can be expected.



THE BUSINESS OF RESTAURANTS

THEN

The restaurant business although seemingly glamorous wasn't in the best place in Pre-COVID times either. The environment was such that any person with disposable income would think of opening a restaurant because it was their "Dream" to do so.

We live in a decade in which restaurants have been opening at breakneck speed. Unfortunately, they have been closing just as fast. The Kamala Mills area in Lower Parel, Mumbai is a living example of this phenomenon. There have been over 10 restaurants that have opened and subsequently shut down in a mere 2 years.

However, what has gone wrong? Well there are many factors, I have listed a few key factors that are responsible for this volatility.

Difference between Gourmet Meals and Fast Food:

The restaurant and bar business is a very personal business, it requires that personal touch of the owner, which makes all the difference.

The manager is only going to be able to do so much and is not going to be as motivated as the owner to keep the restaurant constantly up to date with the latest trends, ensuring effective quality control and maintaining great client relations. (Assuming the owner is truly passionate and knowledgeable about F&B)

Leaving everything to the management is always a bad idea unless of course you have all your systems perfectly in place and have the efficiency as Multi-National Chains such as McDonalds. But most restaurants aren't as scalable models such



Ayush Arora

*Co-founder Hammer & Song,
Co-owner Fountain Hospitality*

as McDonalds, they have a lot of moving parts that require more personal attention.

How tourism impacts the Restaurants Industry in Mumbai:

The Tourist Infrastructure in Mumbai isn't as well developed and efficient as other cities in the world like London, Bangkok or Dubai.

The reasons for the same are as follows:

- Inadequate Tourist Infrastructures like Public Roads, Public Transport, and Toilets.
- Barriers to getting a visa. Believe it or not, it's not easy to get an Indian Tourist Visa.
- Extreme Inequality in the country puts off a lot of tourists.

Some additional pertinent issues to restaurants are:

- The 1:30 am Deadline for Alcohol Consumption, this really prevents Mumbai from becoming a major nightlife destination.
- Women's Safety, although Mumbai is still considered to be safer than most other Indian Cities at night, safety is yet an issue.
- Hygiene standards, the double standards of regulatory authorities is quite evident as they do not apply the same standards of hygiene to street hawkers and unlicensed establishments.

Many restaurants are opening but the number of people in Mumbai who are segmented as the "target audience" is not necessarily increasing. People are spoilt for

choice and as a result exploring new places is more exciting than ever because of the experience of the restaurant as a whole.

Impacts of Aggregators such as Zomato, Swiggy:

I am going to take the example of **Zomato**.

Zomato started off as a search engine for restaurants and I absolutely loved it, but then they tried doing too many things and the core offering of the app got diluted. Aggregators such as Zomato, Swiggy are the ones currently reaping the benefit of having restaurants on their platform. One can argue that they are a cash burning company, but in reality it is their model i.e.-Gain Market Share for future profits. Zomato very "tactfully" takes advantage of the situation. What Zomato does is employ a holistic approach to ensure that all restaurants become dependent on them. They do this in many ways, I am going to list a few methods below:

• **Capturing Customer Data:**

Zomato captures all relevant data from the customer when they order food online and when they make table reservations through zomato. Zomato uses this data for their marketing promotions. The platform informs consumers about their products and even of other restaurants. Restaurants are not aware of who their customers are when it comes to online ordering and cannot appropriately take corrective action to handle customer issues.

• **Zomato Cloud Kitchens:**

Zomato started to invest in its own delivery kitchens

leading to a conflict of interest. Zomato gets to direct demand for their own brands of which they aren't paying any delivery commissions.

• **Zomato Gold & More:**

This Disruptive Discounting Program, started with 1+1 on Food and 2+2 on drinks, stirred up a major uproar in the restaurant industry. Zomato makes customers discount addicts leading to a FOMO (Fear Of Missing Out) to restaurants not subscribed to the Gold program. This was extremely unhealthy for the restaurant business and wiped out a significant chunk of profits. Zomato eventually discontinued the 1+1 offer and started a generic discounting program, now named as Zomato Pro. This is like moving a goldfish from a fish tank at home to an aquarium-Net Result-Its yet trapped!

• **Zomato Pay:**

This was Zomato's latest ploy and they made their intention very clear i.e.- Aim to earn a percentage of revenue from every transaction initiated by a restaurant. Naturally, this too will be initially made on a 0% commission basis from Zomato, until the customer habits of paying through Zomato develop and the restaurant too gets used to it, then Zomato would raise its commissions and make restaurants dependent. This would give Zomato confidential data of the revenue of restaurants, and if a large crowd starts using Zomato pay, Zomato could raise its advertisement costs when restaurants aren't doing well, as they would be privy to

that information.

Now do not get me wrong, some of the measures adopted by zomato are definitely good for industry but the cons outweigh the pros in the long run. Hopefully their policies change in the future and then maybe I could change my mind about them.

Now Enough on Zomato!

NOW

Well, now I guess it is not everyone's "dream" to open a restaurant. People have finally realized that the Restaurant & Bar business is truly very challenging and not as attractive as it may seem.

The Coronavirus hit the restaurant industry like a tsunami. We are now 5 months into lockdown and restaurants and bars are yet not open to the public, many restaurants across India have unfortunately permanently shut down. Restaurants currently are battling a tough fight with their landlords, as that is what is a key to their survival. Luckily though for restaurants food delivery was listed as an essential service, which means restaurants could keep their home delivery operations open while their dine-in operations have been momentarily suspended. Although this was good news, it has its trade-offs and negative externalities.

Restaurants that are not delivery centric such as brewpubs, bars, and fine dining restaurants are facing an unusual trade-off in which they could be better off keeping their operations completely closed or risk of losing their negotiation power with

their landlords while staying open with low sales.

For casual dining restaurants for which delivery incorporated a small chunk of revenue prior to COVID, there was a relatively huge spike due to food deliveries. This made delivery the only form of business for restaurants. Considering the majority of the population was yet wary of ordering from outside, it put regular casual dining restaurants in direct competition with specialized delivery kitchens.

Another important consideration for restaurants staying open for deliveries is that they ran the risk of their staff contracting coronavirus and that would cause a lot of negative publicity for the brand. To combat this hygiene protocols became the need of the hour with restaurants. Restaurants have been incorporating everything they can to ensure the highest levels of hygiene right from daily sanitization and temperature checks to quarantining the staff to reside within the restaurant premise.

I see the following factors playing a big role in determining the future of restaurants.

• **Technology & Restaurants:**

Technology is going to play a crucial role in determining the future of the restaurant industry. Most restaurateurs in the past were either apprehensive or did not feel the need to incorporate technology in their business. Now do not get me wrong, there definitely was a lot of technology involved but restaurateurs did not make it their main focus. If enough emphasis were put on technology, the likes of Zomato

and Swiggy would not have been as big as they are today.

But going forward restaurateurs have realized the value of technology. They are trying to incorporate it in every way possible so that they can reduce costs and increase profits. Restaurant Associations such as the NRAI and FHRAI and others are encouraging the adaptation of technology to make restaurants self-reliant.

Listed below are some ways in which restaurants can use technology:

- Develop their own **online delivery website** that is integrated with logistic partners for last-mile delivery. This reduces dependence on aggregators and keeps valuable data safe.
- Implement a **virtual inventory management software** to efficiently manage purchases leading to a reduction in staff costs and store discrepancies.
- Use **advanced marketing** tools such as Facebook Pixel & Google Analytics for Remarketing purposes i.e. Advertise to a customer who shows an interest in your brand or a similar brand and invest in a SEO strategy for your website to generate organic traffic.
- Implement a **Customer Relationship Management** program to build a proper client database with specific segmentation for targeting to maintain customer loyalty by smart engagement.
- **Staying Afloat in the**

Short Term and Surviving through the competition:

Restaurants must do everything they can to reach out to their existing customer database and reach out to new customers too. They should constantly indulge in branding activities to keep customers engaged. Undertaking substantial social service work and social entrepreneurship models to boost employee morale and improve the society as a whole during a crisis like COvid-19 will add indispensable value to the restaurant as well as benefit the general public.

Formulating short-term revenue models to stay afloat and avoid losses when generic sales are low would be a lucrative idea.

Making capital-intensive long term commitments would not be advisable because of the unpredictable nature of the market. The key would be finding ingenious low risk ideas with minimum investment.

The next year in the restaurant industry is going to be nothing short of a bloodbath. Customer habits could have well changed since they are habitual to being at home. Getting customers back in restaurants is going to be the hardest part, more so on weekdays.

• Shift from Top Lines to Bottom Lines

The focus is going to shift from increasing the sales to increasing the profits. Restaurants and bars are going to downsize surgically and clinically, pretty much similar to the west wherein one person undertakes multiple activities. Restaurants will ask their staff to multi-task and become **“All-Rounders”**.

- Chefs would be required to

do the preparatory work or **“Mise en place”**, clean the dishes and utensils in addition to cooking the food.

- Waiters will be responsible for taking orders, serving food and beverages and executing clearance activities.
- The tech-friendly and well-spoken employees can execute social media marketing activities.
- Self Service Systems and digital ordering even for Dine-in could become the norm.
- Restaurants would also look to cut costs by downsizing staff or reducing salaries. In such a scenario initiating incentive programs to the existing staff will definitely be the way forward.
- Chefs and store keepers could be incentivized to reduce wastage and increase utilization of raw materials.
- Key managers and waiters could be incentivized to increase sales. The incentive could be directly proportional to the amount saved or earned respectively.

Role of Government Aid

Government Aid and packages could play a crucial role in the survival of the hospitality Industry.

- Starting with giving back the much-deserved Input Tax Credit (ITC) to restaurants that was infamously removed when the GST norms were implemented.
- The government could



The next year in the restaurant industry is going to be nothing short of a bloodbath. Customer habits could have well changed since they have become used to being at home.



also help the industry by releasing ESIC (Employee State Insurance Corporation) collections to employees in order to reduce the outgoings of restaurants in terms of salaries.

- Government could fund (wholly/partly) lockdown rents and issue advisories to reduce rents for the future. Although, that is just me being hopeful and myopic.
- The government could publicly announce an advisory that would involve the conversion of certain particulars in Tenant and Landlord contracts from **“Rent Models”** to **“Revenue Share”** models.

The key would be to survive 1 year of low business and wait for the upside in the future. The experience of going out for food and drinks will never get old. In fact, those restaurants that do survive will see businesses bounce back stronger than ever. I would like to conclude by saying, **“When the going gets tough, the tough get going.”**

INDIAN HOTEL MARKET OUTLOOK, 2020-2025: A \$16.8 BILLION OPPORTUNITY ASSESSMENT WITH PROFILES OF THE TOP 10 PLAYERS



According to a study report by Research Markets, Indian hotel market is projected to grow from around \$7.5 billion in 2019 to \$16.8 billion by 2025, exhibiting a CAGR of nearly 15% during the forecast period.

The market is expected to grow on account of rising urbanization, increasing foreign as well as domestic tourist arrivals coupled with growing disposable income in the country. Expanding young & working population coupled with an increasing number of dual-income families is expected to positively affect the market in the coming years.

The country's hotel market is categorized into Mid-market Hotels, Upscale Hotels and Economy Hotels. Mid-market hotels

segment holds the largest market share and the trend is expected to continue in the coming years due to customer-friendly prices, standard amenities and affordable room services offered by Mid-market hotels. Nevertheless, both Upscale as well as Economy segments are also anticipated to witness robust double digit growth during the forecast period.

Additionally, due to the rising investments by international players in the country's hotel industry, more hotels are expected to come up in the coming years. North India dominated the country's hotel market in 2019 and the region is expected to maintain its dominance during the forecast period. South India

is another fast growing region in India hotel industry.

Major players operating in India hotel market include Oravel Stays Private Limited; Indian Hotels Company Limited; ITC Limited; EIH Limited; Bharat Hotels Limited; Lemon Tree Hotels; The Leela Palaces, Hotels and Resorts; Marriott Hospitality Services Private Limited; etc.

Years considered for this report included :

- Historical Years: 2015-2018
- Base Year: 2019
- Estimated Year: 2020
- Forecast Period: 2021-2025

Objectives of the Study were the following:

- To analyze and forecast the market size of the India Hotel Market.
- To classify and forecast India Hotel Market based on Type, Revenue, Booking Type, Region and Cities.
- To identify drivers and challenges for India Hotel Market.
- To examine competitive developments such as expansions, new product launches, mergers & acquisitions, etc., in India Hotel Market.
- To identify and analyze the profile of leading players operating in India Hotel Market.

(Source : Research and Markets Report)

കൊല്ലം

വെളിച്ചെണ്ണ ബ്രാൻഡുകൾക്ക് നിരോധനം

വ്യാജ ബ്രാൻഡുകളിലുള്ള വെളിച്ചെണ്ണകൾക്ക് നിരോധനം ഏർപ്പെടുത്തി. കേര ഫെഡ് കോക്കനട്ട് ഓയിൽ, ആഗ്രോ കോക്കനട്ട് ഓയിൽ, കേര പ്യൂവർ ഗോൾഡ്, കുക്സ് ഡ്രൈഡ് കോക്കനട്ട് ഓയിൽ എന്നീ ബ്രാൻഡുകൾക്കാണ് നിരോധനം. ക്യാൻസറിന് കാരണമാകുന്ന

കൊച്ചി

വെളിച്ചെണ്ണ: നാല് ബ്രാൻഡുകൾക്ക് നിരോധനം

നാല് ബ്രാൻഡുകളിലുള്ള വെളിച്ചെണ്ണയ്ക്ക് നിരോധനം

പെട്ടെന്ന് ഏറ്റെടുത്ത് സേഫ്റ്റി അസുരം നൽകേണ്ടതുമാണ്

ശുദ്ധമായ കേരഫെഡ് കേര

ഉള്ളപ്പോൾ മായം കലർന്ന വെളിച്ചെണ്ണകൾ എന്തിന്?



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CHANGING LANDSCAPE OF FOOD DELIVERY INDUSTRY, POST COVID-19

As the country is on a transition from lockdown to greet what many refer to as the 'new normal', the foodservice and delivery industry, which includes the cloud kitchens or delivery-only kitchens in India, is putting their best foot forward to start operations after a four months' gap.

Throughout the lockdown period, online food and grocery deliveries continued to be the sole lifeline for many. Even after reaching the fifth phase of the nationwide lockdown, many still prefer ordering food online to avert stepping outside for dining altogether. The rising demand for online food delivery has led to the birth of delivery-only restaurants or virtual restaurants. Not surprisingly, this

concept is fast gaining popularity in the F&B space in India. As per Goldstein Research report, the universal cloud kitchen market which was valued at \$700 million in 2018 is currently anticipated to grow at a CAGR of 17.25 percent by 2030.

The F&B market, which was unstable in the lockdown phase, is now taking steps to fall back upon the concept of satellite kitchens since it is considered to be a prudent way of running the restaurant business. These delivery-only restaurants do not have any dining space, and depend only on online orders placed through food apps, which are the next big thing. Diners are now scaling up on takeaways and online food delivery as food

safety and hygiene has become a crucial factor.

Market reports say that there are a few key elements that are going to define the future of the Indian food business once the pandemic vanishes. They are the products, the people who handle them, the production and manufacturing infrastructure and facility, and the essential protection measures while transporting the products from the production facility into the hands of the end-customers.

The emerging situation has prompted most restaurants and food aggregators to implement several safety strategies to augment the safety standards and to gain back customer trust. For instance, many food delivery joints are making use of double-layered packaging, one-time-use utensils and cutlery, ensuring delivery persons are equipped with gloves and masks, and most importantly, cashless payments.

Thanks to these initiatives, the cloud kitchen segment is not seeing any significant impact of the pandemic. With a strategic increase in the ticket-size, it is a clear indication that foodservice and delivery are slated to be a



long-standing trend in the coming years and are here to stay.

Cloud kitchens are also taking other essential steps to curb the spread of the virus and to mitigate the risks and to make virtual food delivery during the pandemic a hassle-free experience. The food delivery platforms have started an operative outreach programme to reassure their customers about the safety involved in ordering food online. These programmes have been designed to inform customers about the optimum practices that are being followed in order to enable them to order food without being wary.

One of the major concerns for customers while ordering food is the health status of the delivery partner. To address this concern, food delivery apps are making use of a temperature tracker on their app in order to inform customers about the body temperatures of all the stakeholders - right from the cook to the delivery boy.

For maintaining social distancing and avoiding contact with the delivery person, many platforms are offering services like no-contact delivery options while ordering food, to their customers. The feature ensures that you do not come in contact with the delivery partner in any way. Customers can choose from any of the digital payment methods for contactless deliveries. Since the delivery workers are particularly vulnerable to the virus, delivery agents are being provided with safety equipment like gloves and masks.

Customers are mostly concerned about the hygiene condition of places where the food is made and packed. Food delivery apps are taking measures to dehumidify and sanitise all the surfaces,



The emerging situation has prompted most restaurants and food aggregators to implement several safety strategies to augment the safety standards and to gain back customer trust.



thus preventing the growth of the virus.

The ecommerce segment is poised for a massive growth in the coming quarters, with activities like fundraising, and mergers and acquisitions. In order to get freed from the clutches of the pandemic victoriously, the existing players will consider expanding their portfolios. This would see new partnerships and associations emerging and new companies springing up, thus escalating the ecommerce penetration.

Due to the complexity of factors surrounding the pandemic, in the current situation, dining out will be less even after the restaurants open totally. Increased emphasis is bound to be on home deliveries. It is an accepted fact that almost no business can be conducted as done in the pre-COVID era. At the same time the proven resilience of our country gives strong hopes of bounce backing with the new rules of customer engagement being drawn by restaurants.



CLEANLINESS, HYGIENE AND SAFETY TO DRIVE BUSINESS, POST COVID

Hotel industry is one of the sectors worst affected by the COVID pandemic. This is an industry where the landscape and the rules of the game are drastically transforming. The very face of the hotel industry is changing in an unprecedented manner.

Mr. Devendra Sharma, Executive Vice President, The Oberoi Group speaks to HRA Today on the scenario.

On the changing landscape of hotel industry

The current COVID pandemic has led the hospitality industry to reinvent and move forward with bold, innovative ideas that are future forward. One of them is the adoption of technology. The digitalisation of processes such as check-in and check-out processes and QR code enabled menus has become highly relevant. As safe distancing protocols are well in place, the advantages of this

technology are invaluable.

Hotels will cater to more domestic travellers in the post-pandemic world, till certain flights normalise and confidence builds amongst travellers. Guests will choose hotels where they can experience a genuine effort being made to maintain safety and sanitised conditions.

On the preparations afoot on the part of Oberoi Group to face the post COVID challenges

The Oberoi Group has always prioritised the health and wellbeing of guests and team members with exacting standards of cleanliness and hygiene. As we enter a new era post COVID, we have implemented even more detailed and stringent measures as per WHO and Ministry of Tourism guidelines.

We have also partnered with Bureau Veritas, the world leader in testing, inspection and certification services, to validate

and review our safety and hygiene measures.

At our hotels, the fleet of hotel owned and operated cars are thoroughly sanitised before and after each trip. The accompanying chauffeurs, like all, have guest wellbeing as their highest priority. Our team members at the hotels are meticulously sanitising their hands, and wearing disposable gloves and face masks at all times. They also have their body temperatures checked daily before starting work and also during their shifts. We have implemented contactless check-in and check-out procedures with contactless payment options to ensure guests' safety.

Apart from this, we have also introduced QR code accessible menus and offer guests a wide spread of immunity-boosting dishes made with farm-fresh ingredients.

APPOINTMENTS



Anjali Mehra
Vice President
Marketing
The Leela Palaces,
Hotels and Resorts

In her role, Anjali Mehra will provide strategic counsel to the company's senior executive leadership team and be responsible for developing and implementing a comprehensive and integrated Marketing and Communication roadmap and an ongoing strategy to strengthen the positioning of The Leela brand as an embodiment of true Indian luxury. Mehra brings with her over two decades of rich and varied experience in hospitality Brand Marketing and Communications. She started her career in aviation where she held key leadership positions before finding her true calling in hotels.



Ravi Shankar
Senior Vice President
Finance
The Leela Palaces, Hotels
and Resorts

In his new role, Ravi Shankar will oversee the finance operational strategies and initiatives for the brand. In his career spanning over 20 years, his previous posting was as Chief Financial Officer at MH Lifestyle Hotels LLC Dubai. Shankar comes with extensive experience both within India and internationally. His career includes several noteworthy assignments with top corporate houses and hotels, such as RSM & Co., New Delhi (now PricewaterhouseCoopers), Le Meridien, Starwood Hotels and Resorts and Marriott International. Shankar is a qualified Chartered Accountant and also holds a Bachelor's degree in law and Commerce.



Amandeep Sarna
Vice President
- Information
Technology.
The Leela Palaces,
Hotels and Resorts

Amandeep brings with him over two decades of extensive experience in Information Systems & Technology. His last assignment was with Kerzner International – Dubai, where he was leading the technology function in the capacity of Vice President – Global, Application Development. Prior to this he has worked with many international brands including Marriott International, Starwood Hotels and Resorts, Interstate Hotels and Onyx Hospitality.



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

With more than 20 years of experience in talent development, Satish in his new role will handle India hotel operations management teams. He will be responsible for driving the team of 9500 employees in 50 hotels. In the past, Ashwin has contributed to the growth of the organisation. During his tenure he successfully spearheaded many pathbreaking employee and CSR campaigns which has helped the company nurture its talent.



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BRANDS

ORGANIC COCONUT WATER PHALADA PURE AND SURETE



Phalada Pure and Sure, India's leading organic food brand, has launched an organic coconut water beverage. According to the manufacturers, this energiser is packed with vital nutrients, and high concentrations of electrolytes, potassium, calcium, and magnesium and is the cleanest organic coconut water free of pesticides, additives, or artificial ingredients. According to them all the products under the brand portfolio are 100% certified organic products in an endeavour to provide clean food that guarantee purity and wholesomeness. They say that the product is made with organically grown coconuts and fruits and available in three flavours. It is available in three flavours.

EAT.FIT FOOD PRODUCTS CURE.FIT



India's integrated health and wellness platform, cure.fit, has announced the launch of its ready-to-eat products under its healthy food delivery vertical—eat.fit. According to the manufacturers, this range of products includes an offering of healthy easy-to-prepare food options that are 100% safe and free of chemicals, highly affordable and most importantly, delicious and authentic in taste. The ready-to-eat products, priced between Rs 100 and Rs 150, are available for ordering in Bangalore, Delhi and Hyderabad via the cure.fit app or on Swiggy and Zomato. Currently available in two variants, eat.fit plans to expand its range in the next six to nine months to include around 13 varieties. These products have been manufactured in conjunction with Tasty Bites—a major player in the ready-to-eat category.

PRAWN SPREAD LICIOUS



Licious, a meat, seafood & meat products brand, has expanded its range in the ready-to-eat (RTE) category with the launch of prawn spreads. The product according to the manufacturers, is made from all-natural ingredients, with no artificial preservatives, colour or flavouring and zero trans-fat. A blend of freshly cooked juicy and succulent prawns and a creamy base, the product is available in two zestful flavours – Chunky Butter Garlic Prawn and Chunky Sriracha Prawn. Chunky is the operative word here. According to the manufacturers, every 100 gram of the spread contains 30 gm of freshly cooked prawn chunks. It is meant for breakfast, lunch, dinner and snack menus. The product will be available on the company's app and website and select modern retail outlets across Bangalore, Delhi-NCR, Mumbai, Pune, Chandigarh, Chennai and Hyderabad.

EPIPHANY SNACKS SHIKHAR EXIM LLP



Shikhar Exim LLP has introduced Epiphany Snacks to India. This plant-based snacking range consists of four variants. According to the manufacturers, the product range is free of gluten, preservatives and cholesterol and has no added sugar, and also caters to vegans. The variants comprise of blueberry almond crisps, cranberry almond crisps, California pistachio crunch and almond vanilla crunch, and are made using authentic and healthy gems of nature, consisting of California almonds, wild hand-plucked cranberries, flavourful blueberries, California pistachios, and brown rice syrup. All four variants of the product are available at Nature's Basket, PayTM Mall, Amazon India and Zomato in Mumbai. The consumers can place an order directly on the company's website as well.

ROCKET ICE CREAM MOTHER DAIRY



Making an entry into the new category of ice cream - chocolates, Mother Dairy, a leading dairy player in India, introduced brand 'Rocket', with two flavours of French vanilla and Belgian chocolate. The company, with this launch, has also created a brand mascot named Neila, that is synonymous to the company house colour Blue.

PROTEIN DOSA MIX MYPROTEIN



Myprotein, the sports and nutrition brand has announced their latest launch – the Protein Dosa Mix. According to the manufacturers, identifying accurately that Indian households by the millions turn to the humble dosa as a quick and easy breakfast fix, they have given it the added benefit of a protein boost. This is the first introduction in their product range to be manufactured locally. The company will be working closely with Indian manufacturers for production of the Dosa Mix. According to the company, made using Soy Protein Isolate, each container contributes 26g of muscle-building protein to your family meal, serving up to eight dosas of about 35g each, with no sugar whatsoever.

DISH- AND VEGGIE-WASH CONCENTRATES WONDERCHEF



Wonderchef, one of the kitchenware brands in the country, has forayed into the kitchen hygiene category with the launch of Dish Wash Concentrate and Veggie Wash Concentrate under the sub-brand Health-Gear. With an aim to aid and strengthen the country's fight against the Covid-19 pandemic, the company is diversifying its portfolio in the hygiene segment. According to the company, addressing an industry gap and with hygiene at the core, these newest introductions offer a unique mix of ingredients. They say the product is a powerful formula that kills bacteria and deactivates virus and eliminates stubborn stains, oil and odour from utensils and leaves them smelling fresh. This is a formula made with neem extracts and removes 99.5% of germs, chemicals, fertilisers, pesticides and wax from fresh fruits and vegetables without leaving any residue, colour or smell, claims the company. These products are available across leading retail stores, e-commerce and the company's own website. It will also be sold through the company's DTH network of thousands of women entrepreneurs across India.

CADBURY CHOCOBAKES CHOC LAYERED CAKES



Mondelez India, the makers of Cadbury Dairy Milk, Cadbury Bournvita, Oreo and so on, on Tuesday announced the launch of Cadbury Chocobakes Choc Layered Cakes. This is the company's second launch under the chocobakery sub-category, in less than a year, after the successful launch of Cadbury Chocobakes Choco-filled Cookies. The company hopes the new product will acquire interesting avenues in the snacking space.

JERSEY PROTEIN PLUS MILK CREAMLINE DAIRY



Creamline Dairy Products, a subsidiary of Godrej Agrovet, has launched Jersey Protein Plus Milk, with 30% more protein than regular toned milk. The company said the product is positioned in the market to address the related deficiency in the country. According to the company, along with higher protein content, the product is also fortified with Vitamins A & D, making its consumption suitable not only for growth and development of children but also for boosting immunity of the entire family. They claim the product contains 100% milk protein with no preservatives and is manufactured in a highly hygienic and sanitised environment at the dairy's state-of-art plant near Hyderabad.

TRADITIONAL MILK-BASED SWEETS - MOTHER DAIRY



Mother Dairy, India's leading milk and milk products brand, has expanded its range of traditional milk-based sweets, offering consumers the option to opt for packaged sweets. The company's range of traditional milk-based sweets now comprises five products, available in close vicinity. The portfolio comprising of the famed milk cake and orange mawa barfi, has been strengthened with the introduction of frozen rasmalai during the lockdown period. In addition, the company has re-launched hygienically packaged gulab jamun and rasgulla, solely driven by public demand.



The Hotel and Restaurant Association of Western India (HRAWI) continues to expand its membership base across the western reaches of India. In the recent past, the Association has added hotels, restaurants, and other affiliates from Goa, Maharashtra, Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh among other states. The Association's continued efforts and support for the hospitality industry in the regions under its ambit have helped its membership base grow exponentially.

HOTELS

Name of the Establishmet	Address
Nilaya Resort & Spa	33/1, 34, 36/1 Bahukheda, Indore, Bhopal Expressway, Jawar Sehore, Madhya Pradesh - 466221
Hotel Sadanand Regency	S. No. 9/2, Mahalunge, Off Hinjewadi IT Park, Balewadi Soprts Complex, NH-4, Mahalunge, Pune-45
Doves Inn	Plot No.7, B1/2, Rachana Chaitraban, Ashiyana Park 2, Aundh, Pune - 411007

RESTAURANTS

Name of the Establishmet	Address
Inox Insignia Metro Mall	Dhobi Talao Junction, MG Road, Mumbai - 400020

ASSOCIATES

Name Of The Establishmet	Address
Zeba at Zeba Design Centre	Senapati Bapat Marg, Lower Parel, Mumbai - 400013



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The No Pre-washing Concept™ from Granuldisk launched in India.



Soaking and scrubbing endless piles of pots and pans can finally be history for Indian HoReCa companies. The NoPre-washing Concept™ from GRANULDISK has been officially launched in the Indian market on August 19th. The new Indian subsidiary of GRANULDISK was officially opened for business. The company is an associate member of FHRAI – WR.

GRANULDISK is a Swedish Granule pot washing expert for commercial kitchens and has been on the European market for more than 30 years. Besides Europe, the company also operates in

East Asia and in the Middle East. Typical customers are commercial kitchens cooking and serving meals for 500 to 5000 people daily.

According to a press release issued by the company, GRANULDISK is on a mission to eliminate the hassles involved in pre-washing and washing of dirty pots and pans at the same time providing a highly performing and sustainable ware washing solution. GRANULDISK pot washing machines use PowerGranules®, water and a small amount of detergent to mechanically scrub pots and

pans clean. The blasting power combined with high temperatures washes hygienically clean in a few minutes, using in average 70% less water, energy, and chemicals than any other pot washing method according to the release. The new Indian entity GRANULDISK India, with sales and service network in place, is now ready to serve customers in segments like star hotels, catering companies, industrial and staff canteens.

The inaugural ceremony was streamed virtually and joined by customers, sales partners, and consultants. Chief guest for the program was Mr Sumant Vikas, General Manager, Culinary Operations & Innovations, Cremica Food Industries Limited. Event was also attended by other guest of honours: Mr Anders Wickberg, Trade Commissioner of Sweden to India, Mr Ludvig Lindström, Country Manager India, Swedish Energy Agency, and Mr Martin Jonsson, President & CEO, Sandberg Development AB, parent company of GRANULDISK.

Zurich based F&B veteran launches support fund for Indian hospitality employees

Considering the limited support available for hospitality workers in India following the Covid 19 pandemic, Zurich based Michael Butler, former corporate director of food and beverage for Europe and India at Hyatt Hotels Corporation has decided to start a fund to support hospitality employees living in India. Butler is asking for support from anyone across the globe who would like to contribute by donating what they can afford. Starting from July 20, spread across several days, Butler

will also walk 265 kms from Zurich to Geneva, wearing a chef coat to show solidarity and support for the hospitality colleagues. He believes this will help raise more awareness and generate contributions for those who are in need. He said India has been very close to his heart for many reasons and he has been fortunate to have been able to work with great minds in the field of hospitality in the country. The fund has been set up online and the process will entail the requesting employee sub-

mitting an email with attachment of their relieving letters from past employers. Preference would be given to non-management workers and those who were laid off the earliest. Butler said he will also validate the claims with local support teams to ensure the most needy and deserving ones get support at the earliest. The fund has been created in late June, and Butler will officially launch it through the walk on July 20. The status of the fund collection can be seen real time.

Majority of hotel operators expect up to two-year revenue recovery period: JLL



Real estate consultancy firm JLL conducted a survey with 15 leading hotel operators in India having adequate presence across hotel segments in both business and leisure markets to understand the effects of the pandemic on development and opening of new hotels, as well as the support required for the sustenance of the sector. According to the survey, only 20% of the operators believe that their hotels could bounce back to 2019 Revenue Per

Available Room (RevPAR) levels within 6 to 12 months. Whilst 60% believe that their portfolio should be back on 2019 levels between 13 and 24 months from now. Luxury hotel operators are expected to ramp-up much slower with some expecting that their portfolio may take more than 2 years to reach 2019 performance levels. Qualitatively, the survey also indicated that business travel is expected to reduce in the post COVID-19 world as companies

will rationalize spending on travel, which could, in a way, benefit branded economy and midscale hotels. The firm observed that the standard operating procedures will be significantly transformed to promote enhanced hygiene standards and to adopt technology to support social distancing policies. However, with the slowdown of hotel developments, capital assistance is needed to help hotels sustain until demand returns.

As the sector continues to build contingency plans to alleviate the fallout of the crisis, hotel operators are extending the hand of solidarity to their owners by providing certain relief measures. 67% of the operators surveyed confirmed that they are being approached by the hotel owners for financial assistance or relief, for example, deferring management fee, fixed system charges etc. providing the much needed relief to hotel owners.

Sterling Holiday Resorts, Apollo Clinics come together to cater safe holidays



Sterling Holiday Resorts announced its coalition with Apollo Clinics to reassure its promise of safe and hygienic holidays through its 'Sterling Cares' program. The announcement of this association comes at the time when Sterling



Holiday Resorts has re-opened its 13 resorts across Jaipur, Puri, Sariska, Mount Abu, Lonavala, Mussoorie, Thekkady, Rajakkad (Kerala) Wayanad, Karwar, Palakollu (Andhra Pradesh) and its Nature Trails resorts in Sajan

and Durshet; with more to be opened soon. A survey made by them among their customers had revealed that hygiene and safety will be their most important consideration when taking a holiday. This prompted their move to tie up with Apollo Clinics. Considering the norms of social distancing, safety and hygiene, Sterling Holiday Resorts has introduced Holiday Insurance, Tech innovations such as QR code menus and has designed a new set of games and holiday activities

FHRAI Hosts Web Meeting With Hon' Minister of Commerce & Industry And Railways - Piyush Goyal



The Federation of Hotel & Restaurant Associations

of India (FHRAI) held an online meeting with Piyush Goyal, Minister of Commerce & Industry and Railways, Government of India to share and discuss key impending issues of the hospitality industry. Gurbaxish Singh Kohli, Vice President, FHRAI & President, Hotel and Restaurant Association of Western India (HRAWI); Pradeep Shetty, Jt. Hon. Secretary, FHRAI & VP, HRAWI; Vivek Nair, Member of 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.

The members highlighted issues related to Ease of Doing Business (EoDB), Copyrights, Service Export of India Scheme (SEIS) and other pertinent concerns faced by the Hospitality Industry. The Minister was apprised about the tremendous setback and consequently the loss suffered by the industry over the last four months. The Association informed the Minister that the industry is already staring at a whopping Rs.1.40 lakh crore loss which is increasing if the Government does not urgently intervene and rescue the sector.

“At a time when we need the Government’s support the most, the Hospitality and Tourism industry which contributes 10 per cent of the GDP has largely



been ignored. The industry has not received any kind of stimulus or support throughout this phase of the lockdown. Hospitality deals with most perishable commodities like room inventory and restaurant table bookings which once lost is irreplaceable and which is why the service sector cannot be measured with the same yardstick as the manufacturing sector. At present, we are in dire need of working capital to survive and then only can we revive. Across the country, approximately 50,000 rooms have been allocated for the health care workers and 4000 of our member hotels have joined hands with the State and Central authorities for letting their hotels as quarantine facilities. Restaurants too have been doing their bit by distributing food packets to the needy. The 1.10 hour interaction was most fruitful and we thank the Hon. Minister for this meeting and his suggestions. As suggested, FHRAI will be presenting a document of issues and their probable solutions to the Hon. Minister for his perusal,” says Gurbaxish Singh Kohli.

The Minister, on behalf of the Union Government acknowledged, appreciated and

thanked the Hotel and Restaurant industry for its immense contribution during the pandemic and as warriors against the pandemic.

Pradeep Shetty highlighted the need for the hospitality industry’s inclusion in the consultation for e-commerce policy. The Minister has agreed to investigate the conduct of the OTAs regarding market distortion and dominance on the back of international funding which has severely affected several small hotels across India.

The Federation has requested for the Minister to look into (1) Increasing the investment cap from the present Rs.50 Cr to Rs.150 Cr; (2) Acknowledging the industry Forex earnings from all foreign guests as Deemed exports; (3) Opening Suburban railways to operate for labour to travel to work; (4) Waiver of electricity duties and charges and / or removal of tariff based on Fixed charges and instead to be based on actual consumption; (5) Increasing the number of people attending social functions at hotels from 50 to 50 per cent depending on the size of the facility; (6) Allowing serving liquor in hotels; (7) Introduction of one-time and one window licencing for hospitality industry; (8) Quick and immediate release of funds from SEIS licenses to cover the overhead expenses; (9) Finding a regulatory mechanism for streamlining the issue of music copyrights for playing at hotels; and (10) Ordering de-listing of all illegal properties from OTAs and bringing all such properties under the regulation.

The Leela Voted as World's Best Hotel Brand



The Leela Palaces, Hotels and Resorts has been voted the World's Best Hotel Brand by Travel + Leisure, USA World's Best Awards Survey, 2020. The Leela hospitality brand is owned by Brookfield Asset Management.

The accolade is a recognition of the brand's consistency in pursuing excellence and an affirmation of its commitment towards curating authentic luxury experiences with the graciousness of Indian hospitality. In the same survey, The Leela Palace Udaipur gained top honours as the #1 Resort in India and The Leela Palace New Delhi has bagged #2 City Hotel in Asia. Both hotels have been recognized for their unique location, exquisite architecture and personalised

experiences that connect guests with the city's rich cultural heritage. Travel + Leisure USA World's Best Award Survey is a renowned benchmark of excellence for travel and hospitality companies globally. It honours the finest travel experiences in the world selected by Travel + Leisure's global readership of discerning travellers. Readers rate their experiences and evaluate hotels across the world on characteristics such as rooms, location, service, cuisine and value.

Hilton introduces 'CleanStay' program, redefines Cleanliness Standards



Hilton's Event Ready proposes to introduce its 'CleanStay' program for the corporate, entertainment, wedding meetings and events and ready to shower its bountiful services with the ensured safety and cleanliness. Hilton's Team is working hand in hand to fulfill all the guidelines that are set within the program. According to Hilton sources, the program is molded with extensive research and feedback handling all the challenges that it has come across with hospitality and generosity. Hilton EventReady has kept a clear check on focused points of staygiene and

touchless that includes room seals for guest and meeting rooms, sanitizing stations in public areas and meeting spaces and an EventReady checklist, conciliatory efforts from booking to billing with the objective of gratification of customers through flexible pricing, space options and contract terms and responsive offers to meet the need of customers, like simplified agreements for small meetings. According to Hilton sources, Hilton has kept the expectancy and commitment towards corporate sectors, regardless of the size or scale of the meetings.

Cornitos takes a new journey to E-commerce

Cornitos inaugurated their e-commerce website, with an endeavour to provide convenient and secure accessibility to its customers. The website enables consumers to choose from products ranging from Nachos Crisps, Taco Shells, Dips, Tortilla Wraps, Nuts & Seeds and Combo Packs. The decision has come at a point when businesses across verticals are witnessing a plunge in the sales as manufacturing and distribution were hindered due to Covid-19 crisis. Along with offering the regular flavours to savour from, the e-store of Cornitos brings with it a few offers. They have rolled out 'Crunchy Rewards' program, wherein customers gain 'Crunchy Points' on every purchase. Cornitos products are also available in Retail, E-Retail and Modern Trade stores and on all e-grocery platforms like Amazon, Flipkart, Grofers, Big Basket, Milkbasket, Scootsy, Suprdaily, Jiomart, dmart and others.

Radisson Hotel Group South Asia enters into strategic tie-up with EazyDiner



Radisson Hotel Group South Asia announced its partnership with EazyDiner – India’s table reservation and food discovery platform. The partnership is a significant step to strengthen the Group’s Food and Beverage (F&B) capabilities in the region. The collaboration will serve all 94 operating hotels of the Group’s portfolio in India and will include table booking and home

delivery services. Radisson Hotel Group South Asia has devised 20 signature dishes for home delivery. Curated by Chef Rakesh Sethi, a known culinary expert in the Indian F&B industry and presently corporate executive chef for Radisson Hotel Group South Asia, these include items like Paan Kulfi with Gulkand Cake and Supari Cigar, Angaar E Jamun (Chocolate stuffed Gulab Jamun

flambeed) and Trio Symphony (Gajar Halwa/Gulab Jamun Terrine/ Kalakand Tart/Kesar Phirni) amongst many others. Guests will be able to order these dishes online along with their favorite cuisines across Radisson Hotel group South Asia’s specialty restaurants through EazyDiner’s EazySafe+ platform that ensures safe takeaways and minimal-contact deliveries. Radisson Hotel Group has rolled out Radisson Hotels Safety Protocol, a new program of cleanliness and disinfection procedures, in partnership with SGS, the world’s leading inspection, verification, testing and certification company. Additionally, exhaustive food safety and hygiene manual and food and beverage protocol guidelines have been laid out for all hotels to ensure safe and secure F&B experience.

Indian Hotels Company announces 100% acquisition of Sea Rock hotel site



The Indian Hotels Company (IHCL) signed a binding agreement for the acquisition of the balance 14.28% equity interest in ELEL Hotels and Investments Limited (ELEL) from the Nanda

family, which will make IHCL, the 100% leasehold owner of the Sea Rock hotel site by December 31, 2021. The payment will be structured through multiple instalments staggered over

a period, with full buyout by December 31, 2021. IHCL’s plans to rebuild the hotel site have been stuck after the National Green Tribunal (NGT) stayed clearances given to it last year citing violation of Coastal Zone Regulations (CRZ).

In 2009, IHCL had announced the acquisition of the defunct Sea Rock Hotel for Rs 680 crore by acquiring an 85.72% stake in owner ELEL. At the time, IHCL had said it planned to build a hospitality cum convention complex on the hotel site and integrate it with the nearby Taj Land’s End.

HRAWI's Khadya gruha Wachva campaign to voice restaurant industry needs

Hotel and Restaurant Association of Western India (HRAWI) launched a public campaign in July 2020 to highlight the looming collapse of restaurants in Maharashtra. Launched as KhadyagruhaWachva (SaveRestaurants), the campaign will act as the voice of the industry, especially the small and medium sized eateries that serve the everyday working class of Maharashtra.

“The Government needs to act not today or tomorrow, but as of yesterday. We are talking about the Tourism industry that is responsible for 10% of the GDP.

More than 100,000 estimated small and medium sized eateries serve the everyday working class of Maharashtra. Our assessment is that at least 50 per cent of restaurants in Maharashtra will be unable to reopen. Of those that reopen, a majority will find it difficult to sustain and may end up closing down within six to eight months. The situation is dire, and with each passing day, it gets graver and graver. We understand that these are challenging times, but at times like these leaders need to show spunk and imagination. Nudges and pushes will do nothing. We are talking of more than 100,000 restaurants, small, big, QSRs and bars, among others across Maharashtra closing down. The smallest of restaurants employ eight individuals, so on an average 5 lac residents of Maharashtra are going to be jobless. Add the loss of indirect jobs and closure of vendor businesses, and we are staring at a disaster,” says Dr. Suhas Awchat,

Chairman PR and Liaisoning Sub Committee, HRAWI.

The HRAWI has warned that a majority of the restaurants across Maharashtra are on the brink of closing down and that massive number of people employed by the industry will be rendered jobless. While restaurants all across India opened on June 8 with restrictions, in Maharashtra they continue to remain closed. It has one of the highest statutory fees and taxes, and these have to be paid in advance.

“In normal times these levies were exorbitant, but at times like these it is simply unaffordable. For instance, the Excise license fee was increased this year by 15 per cent when businesses were shut! INR 8 lakhs is a significant sum for a small establishment even in the normal course of business yet businesses are expected to pay this sum upfront for the coming year. On electricity we pay 21 per cent surcharge which again is exorbitant and in contrast, our neighbouring State - Goa has abolished duties on electricity and water way back in 1999. We also have to pay electricity charges based on the contracted demand rather than the actual consumption. Establishments also are burdened by the property tax in Mumbai which is the highest taxed among all cities in the country,” says Gurbaxish Singh Kohli, President, HRAWI.

“An average restaurant employs 20 heads which include waiters, cleaners and cooks, accountants, managers, delivery boys, security and gardeners. The average monthly outgoings are around

INR 3 to 4 lacs which include maintenance bills, utility bills, electricity and salaries. A business closed for three months translates to on-going expenses plus zero revenue,” says Pradeep Shetty, Vice President, HRAWI.

“Restaurants and small eateries are a part of Mumbai's infrastructure. Access to food - hygienic food to all classes of society - is one of the important features of Mumbai and one that helped the city become the financial capital of India. If the food industry collapses it will pose a new set of challenges for both the residents and industries of Mumbai when lockdown ends,” Shetty.

“We are the highest employers of unskilled and skilled youths in Maharashtra. However, we are the ones who pay the highest rentals and power bills in all of Asia. Although the Government calls us as the hospitality industry, no benefits, reliefs, sops or subsidies are given to us. Electricity charges are levied on the very high commercial rates when ideally it should be on industrial rates. The Government gets maximum revenue from restobars in spite of unwarranted discriminatory Dry Days causing revenue loss to restaurant owners. Tourism is directly proportional to the number of good restaurants serving hygienic authentic Indian regional food in traditional ambience with music. Restaurants are capital intensive, energy intensive and labour intensive but the Government remains insensitive,” concludes Dr. Awchat.

FHRAI, Eureka Forbes join hands to offer temporary jobs to hospitality professionals

In an effort to provide assistance to the jobless hospitality professionals in the country, the Federation of Hotel & Restaurant Associations of India (FHRAI) has collaborated with Eureka Forbes to work out temporary arrangements of employment.

Launched as the 'Work For Our Staff' campaign, FHRAI said it will lend support to its members by way of providing temporary employment to hotel and restaurant staff who may have lost jobs lately. The association said the campaign aims to provide support to around 4500 hospitality professionals in more than a dozen cities. It said the professionals will have to qualify to receive on the job training to re-skill and then will be provided work related to the service and repair of Aquaguard and other Eureka Forbes branded appliances at customer homes.

With direct 100% compensation being provided to staff by the

business partners of Eureka Forbes, FHRAI and regional member establishments will be able to help staff survive this crisis.

Gurbaxish Singh Kohli, vice president, FHRAI and president, Hotel and Restaurant Association of Western India (HRAWI) said that "Our objective is to give them an opportunity to earn and return back to work once this enforced and sustained lockdown is over. Eureka Forbes will benefit from a rather disciplined hospitality workforce that is used to dealing with guests and whose soft skills will help them visit customers at their residence and provide high quality service."

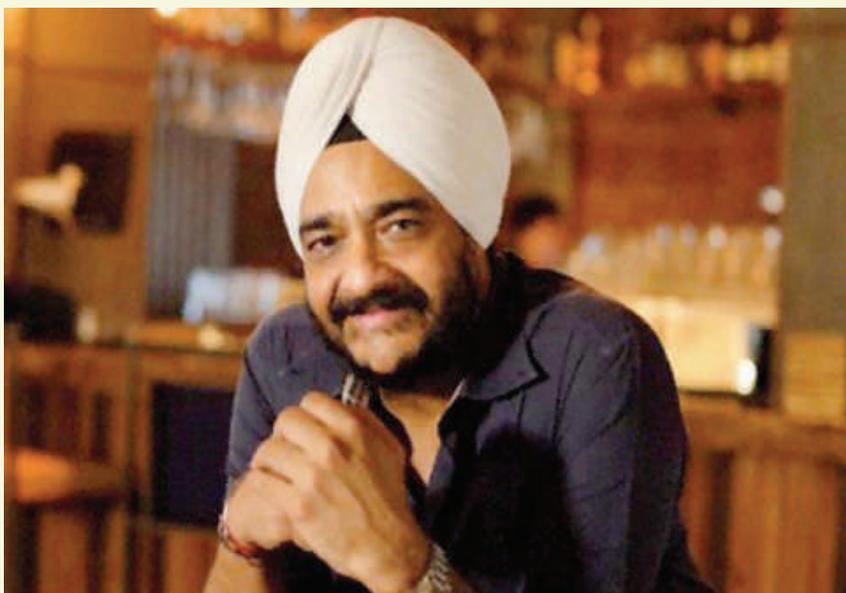
Covid 19 outbreak and resulting lockdowns have severely impacted various industries but the hospitality industry has been among the hardest hit.

Speaking on the association, Marzin R Shroff, MD and CEO Eureka Forbes said: "As a result of this pandemic, employees



across business sectors in India have witnessed economic hardship that has rarely been seen before. It is heartening to see Industries coming together and joining hands in wake of the Covid19 pandemic. Many of our trained service technicians have gone back to their home towns resulting in a shortage of manpower. This association will result in a win-win situation for the unemployed who will benefit economically due to the collaboration, it would also help Eureka Forbes by training new personnel and honing their skills."

Pradeep Shetty, joint honorary secretary, FHRAI and vice president, HRAWI said many of the association members including both hotels and restaurants are at a stage of bankruptcy. "There have been no bookings in hotels and no footfall at restaurants since the last four months. Forward bookings and re-opening, which could have helped, seems difficult with the news of disease spreading globally and further extensions of the lockdown. With this campaign we hope to provide our people, who unfortunately lost jobs during the pandemic, a means to survive."





Hotel Industry Eagerly Awaits Recovery

Hotels report 82% drop in occupancy; recovery unlikely before September. The other key parameter ADR (average daily rate) has come down sharply as well. For instance, the average room rate for a branded hotel in April was Rs 4,113 per night, which was 27 per cent lower than the ADR in the same month last year.

Reports indicate that the Indian hotel sector is one of the worst hit in the Asia region. There is a drastic drop in room rates and occupancies ever since the lockdown was clamped and in spite of its easing. It is reported that among the large Asian markets, India reported the second-largest drop in occupancies just behind Thailand where the occupancies dropped 90 per cent. At the same time, countries like Malaysia, China and Singapore have performed better than India with lower drops in occupancies.

Since the lockdown which came into force from March 25, the demand for travel and tourism services has dropped considerably. It is reported that most hotel chains operate just a small percentage of their hotels for stranded guests, and corporate clients who want to offer their critical staff a safe accommodation while supporting business continuity.

Reports reveal that the general expectation of the top brass of most hotels is that things would improve from September onwards which is in line with the government's internal assessments. But even after September, the revival is likely to be slow-paced.

It's also believed that once the demand picks up, the branded hotels would be in a better position to recover as they are likely to follow high level of service protocols and hygiene standards that would give guests a sense of safety while staying in them. The need of the hour is fastest recovery of all classes of hotels, which is absolutely essential for the hospitality sector to start looking upwards.



SIJI NAIR
Managing Editor

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