

Hotel chains open hiring doors to all

Aashin Moitra, now transitioning as a transwoman, rejoins The Lalit Suri Hospitality Group as the general manager of Kitty Su, its chain of nightclubs spanning Mumbai, Bengaluru, and Chandigarh. Previously, Moitra served as the director of sales and marketing in Mumbai under a different identity.

"I am returning to the group because I sought a company that values my contributions," Moitra stated.

In a bid to embrace diversity, equity, and inclusion, both listed and private hotel chains are taking significant strides. From establishing all-women-operated hotels to supporting cafes managed by acid attack survivors, and incorporating individuals with neurodivergence or disabilities, the industry is expanding its horizons.

"For us, diversity extends beyond gender inclusivity, which is fundamental. Half of our senior leadership comprises women. We actively engage with communities like the LGBTQ+ and neurodivergent communities, as well as support acid attack survivors within our workforce," explained Keshav Suri, executive director at The Lalit Suri Hospitality Group.

Chalet Hotels made headlines by launching the country's inaugural all-women-run hotel, the 168-key Westin Hyderabad HITEC City, with MD and CEO Sanjay Sethi expressing satisfaction with the positive reception. "Our diversity metrics have risen from 13% to 22% in recent years, with concerted efforts to amplify representation from various backgrounds including women, LGBTQ+, individuals with disabilities, and those from underprivileged backgrounds," Sethi added.

Lemon Tree Hotels' longstanding commitment to diversity and inclusion, now in its 17th year, has seen a renewed focus on recruiting Employees with Disability (EWD) and those from Economically and Socially marginalised segments (EcoSoc) post-pandemic, as highlighted by Aradhana Lal, senior VP

of Sustainability and ESG. Lal noted, "Currently, our workforce of 8,350 comprises 5% EWD and 9% EcoSoc employees, totaling a 14% diversity rate. Our aim is to achieve 30% Opportunity Deprived Indians (ODIs) and 15% women representation by the financial year 2026."

Arif Khan, regional VP of HR for India and Southwest Asia at Hyatt India Consultancy, detailed partnerships with local NGOs to support differently abled and LGBTQIA+ colleagues.

Similarly, Sabu Raghavan, VP of HR-India at Hilton, shared that in 2023, the company hired over 40 employees under its DEI agenda.