

HRA Today



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Meluha The Fern stands out for its single-minded focus on sustainability, shares Punish B Sharma, VP (Operations), The Fern Hotels & Resorts



Dear fellow members,

I would like to begin by expressing how privileged I feel to have had the opportunity to have served this association. I would also like to thank all the members for their never-ending encouragement and confidence reposed in me throughout my tenure as a President. I truly feel the last two years of being the President of our association have been fulfilling, fruitful and knowledgeable.

As you all must be aware that on July 1, 2018, the historic Goods and Service Tax (GST) completed one year of implementation. The representation put forth by the association ensured that at the 28th Meeting of the GST Council, it was decided to bring changes in the GST applicable on room tariff in hotels from Declared Tariff to the Actual Tariff being charged by hotels from guests. As the hotel room rates are dynamic and decided on the basis of market demand and supply on a given day, the hotel industry's demand to keep GST on the Actual Tariff rather than the Declared Tariff was accepted.

Moreover, through various communications, we have let it known that HRAWI's prime goal in collaboration with FSSAI (Food Safety & Standards Authority of India) is to create awareness amongst the fraternity about 'Ensuring Safe & Nutritious Food' which is going to be the way forward. Being training partners of FSSAI, HRAWI has imparted training to around 1,000 members of our association across the western region. We have also informed you that FSSAI has now made training mandatory for the food service sector. For all food businesses having central or state license, it is now a must to have at least one trained and certified Food Safety Supervisor for every 25 employees in their establishment.

The association has played a very constructive role in protecting and strengthening the basic structure of our fraternity and I believe that the organisation will continue to make it even more responsive to the needs of its members.

I would also like to thank our secretary general and the entire team in the association office for their devotion and hard work in being a big help in achieving our goals.



Being training partners of FSSAI, HRAWI has imparted training to around 1,000 members of our association across the Western region



Also, I take this opportunity to acknowledge the whole-hearted support and advice I received from our esteemed member of honour **Vivek Nair**, along with our past president **Kamlesh Barot**, during my stint as a President and of course, to of all my friends for instilling their faith and patience in me.

I will always be available to serve my association as and when required.

With kind regards,
Dilip Datwani
President, HRAWI

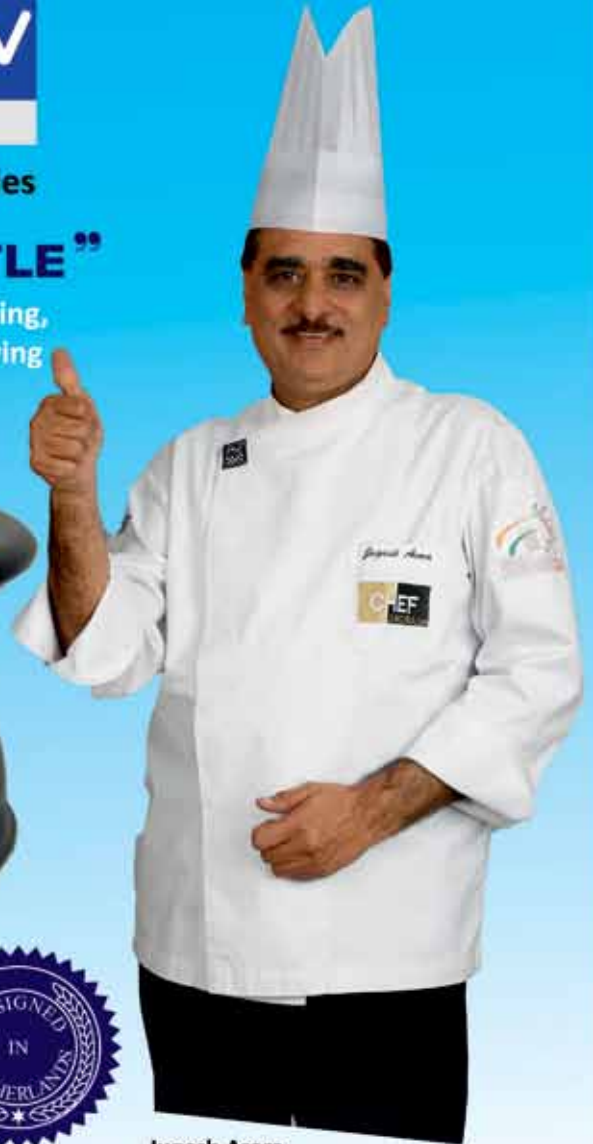


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Since 1970

HRAWI adds more members

The Hotel and Restaurant Association of Western India 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 the Union Territory of Daman & Diu, and states of Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh among others, from March 2018 till June 2018.

HOTELS

Acacia Palms Beach Resort	Goa
The One Hotel	Diu UT, Daman and Diu
7 Seasons Resort & Spa	Surat, Gujarat
Dariya Darshan Hotel	Gandhidam, Gujarat
Hotel Sai Krupa	Chhatarpur, Madhya Pradesh
Jamtara Wilderness Camp	Pune, Maharashtra
Hotel Apaar	Diu UT, Daman and Diu
Courtyard by Marriott – Surat	Diu UT, Daman and Diu
Lords Eco Inn	Rajnandgaon, Chhattisgarh
Hotel Golden Tulip	Indore, Madhya Pradesh
Amanora The Fern Pune (a unit of city)	Indore, Madhya Pradesh
Hotel The Grand Highness	Indore, Madhya Pradesh
Krishna Beach Resorts	Diu UT, Daman and Diu
Hotel Awana	Rajnandgaon, Chhattisgarh
Fairfield By Marriott Indore	Indore, Madhya Pradesh
The Grand Bhagwati Palace Hotel	Indore, Madhya Pradesh
Hotel WOW (World of Winway)	Indore, Madhya Pradesh

RESTAURANTS

Shizusan	Mumbai, Maharashtra
Wazwaan	Mumbai, Maharashtra

Wok Express	Mumbai, Maharashtra
Hotel Ajit	Pune, Maharashtra
Publiq	Pune, Maharashtra
Publiq Hinjewadi	Pune, Maharashtra
Hotel Popular	Mumbai, Maharashtra
Cream Centre	Mumbai, Maharashtra
Botanica Café and Diner	Mumbai, Maharashtra
TGI Fridays	Mumbai, Maharashtra
TGI Fridays	Pune, Maharashtra
Brew House Café	Navi Mumbai, Maharashtra

ASSOCIATES

Sweetish House Bakery	Mumbai, Maharashtra
BF Advisory Services India	Mumbai, Maharashtra
Laxmi Uniform Works	Mumbai, Maharashtra
Southern Leaf	Diu UT, Daman & Diu
Diu Hotel Association	Mumbai, Maharashtra
Veena World	Mumbai, Maharashtra

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Grand Hyatt Mumbai steps towards waste management

Taking forward the nation's commitment for a better and greener tomorrow, Grand Hyatt Mumbai on the occasion of Independence Day, introduced an Organic Waste Composting machine (OWC) at the hotel. It was inaugurated by **Puneet Singh**, General Manager, Grand Hyatt Mumbai.

The Organic Waste Composting machine operates on a completely natural and biological process to help in reducing and recycling in-house waste. The machine holds the capacity to handle upto two tonnes of waste per day. It will manage the bio-waste generated thereby reducing the hotel's contribution to municipal solid waste. It is a fully automatic composting machine which uses special microorganisms that break down bio-degradable waste



into simpler forms and convert it into compost within 24 hours.

Speaking at the inauguration, Singh said, "In the age of green economy, recycling will benefit not only the

environment but also the industry. Going by Hyatt philosophy, at Grand Hyatt Mumbai we believe care is at the heart of our business and work towards creating an environment in which people thrive. We understand it is

essential for a hotel to have an effective waste management systems and are proud of this initiative by our team, which focuses on reducing waste and moving towards a safer environment and cleaner India."

AccorHotels signs agreement with sbe Entertainment Group

AccorHotels and sbe Entertainment Group have signed a Letter of Intent and entered into exclusive negotiations for AccorHotels to acquire a 50 per cent stake in sbe,

further illustrating AccorHotels' strategy to expand its offering in the luxury lifestyle hospitality segment. This partnership will combine the expertise and savoir-faire of the two groups;



AccorHotels will acquire 50 per cent of sbe's common equity held in part by Cain International for \$125 million. Sam Nazarian will continue to own the remaining 50 per cent of sbe. In addition, AccorHotels will invest \$194

million in a new preferred debt instrument that will be used to redeem all existing preferred units, also held in part by Cain International. AccorHotels' total investment in sbe will be \$319 million.

Conrad Pune celebrates Global Week of Service

Conrad Pune celebrated its Annual Global Week of Service on July 25, 2018. On this occasion, the hotel associated with the Cancer Patients Aid Association in Pune to invite 15 child patients along with their parents for an afternoon of fun and frolic with team members. Post arrival, the children and parents participated in a fun pastry workshop with 14 chefs representing various Hilton hotels, who interacted with the kids and helped them with cake decorations. After the event, the children along with their parents were served a scrumptious meal of healthy Indian cuisine specially curated by the F&B team. At the end of the day, every child was given the cake decorated by them along with



a special souvenir from Conrad Pune.

Globally, Hilton Worldwide has been celebrating the Annual Global Week of Service with

team members and hotels across 93 countries. Each year, the teams volunteer and participate in various activities in a bid to make a small difference to give back to the society. Conrad

Pune is a representative of one of the 93 countries participating in the programme as an effort to educate and empower without removing the element of fun.

Ginger signs new hotel in Bharuch, Gujarat

Ginger has signed a new hotel in Bharuch, Gujarat. The brand is present in six cities in the state, namely Ahmedabad, Surat,

Vadodara and Vapi, with hotels under development in Surat and Sanand. With this new addition, Ginger will have 10 hotels with

a combined inventory of close to 800 rooms in Gujarat. **Deepika Rao**, Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer, Ginger,

says, "We are delighted to expand our presence in Gujarat and enter Bharuch by partnering Hotel Sethna Plaza Annexe. The modern-day Bharuch is one of the biggest industrial areas in the state. The hotel will be ideally located to cater to business guests."



With 55 rooms, an all-day diner, a banquet hall and a fitness centre, the new Ginger is located a few minutes from the railway station in a commercial hub catering to chemical, textile, and pharmaceutical companies. The hotel is a management contract and is slated to commence operations in 2019. Bharuch is the oldest city of Gujarat which was a ship building centre and sea port in ancient times.

Mumbai leads in terms of hotel occupancy in India: HVS

Mumbai is leading in terms of hotel occupancy (74.2%) as per a report by HVS Global Hospitality Services. According to the report as expected in the second year of the up-cycle, all major markets tracked witnessed an increase in Revenue per available room (RevPAR) except for Agra. Interesting to note, Noida saw the highest year-on-year growth in RevPAR (16.0%), followed by Hyderabad (11.4%) and Ahmedabad (10.7%). Noida displayed the lowest occupancy (56.9%) and Ahmedabad, the lowest average rate (3,840), the study said. All 13 hotel markets depicted an increase in occupancy leaving Pune (-0.7%), even as some markets saw a lower growth (Bengaluru and Mumbai at 0.4% and



0.6%, respectively) compared to others (Ahmedabad and Noida at 12.0% and 11.7%, respectively).

In 2016/17, only two cities showed a decline in average rates – Agra, which witnessed a steep decline of 8.9% over 2015/16 and, Ahmedabad, which witnessed a minor

decline of 1.1%. Goa registered the highest year-on-year increase of 7.3% in average rate, followed by Pune (5.7%).

New hotels averaged 45.9% occupancy

Hotels that opened in 2015-16 in India averaged 42.7 per cent and, new openings of 2016-17 averaged 45.9 per

cent occupancy in their very first year, according to a report by HVS Global Hospitality Services. Similarly, while first year ARR were successively lower than their preceding years from 2012-13 to 2014-15, the ARR for hotels that opened in 2015-16 and 2016-17 have seen an increase in comparison to their preceding year, the report said. Both these figures, coupled with the demand-supply outlook for the next sixty-months, further corroborate our view that most markets in India are at a point where both occupancy and ARRs can substantially improve. The question is whether the sector's stakeholders will truly manage to capitalise on the evident opportunity, or do we still need to live by the adage, the report said.

VITS Hotels launches VITS Sharanam, Thane

VITS Hotels has launched VITS Sharanam Hotel, Thane, a luxury corporate hotel located at a 10-minute drive from the Thane railway station. The property offers an array of facilities that include deluxe rooms and suites, a multi-cuisine restaurant, a travel desk, 24-hour room service, a business centre, and conference room and banquet hall. Announcing the launch, **Chandrakant Shetty**, CEO, VITS Hotels, said, "This is our sixth property in Maharashtra and we are extremely upbeat on the exponential growth prospect in this region. We are pleased to welcome guests with refined elegance, finest services and contemporary amenities, thereby setting a new benchmark in hospitality



services. We believe VITS Sharanam Thane will provide a wonderful amalgam of exquisite facilities for the guests to experience the perfect stay in the city."

As part of its domestic expansion plans, VITS Hotels will unveil the VITS hospitality experience in Mumbai (Colaba), Dahej, Ahmedabad and Mangaluru, shortly. The group

presently operates properties in Mumbai, Thane, Pune, Aurangabad, Bhubaneswar, Ankleshwar, Agra, Dwarka, Gurugram, Latur, Nanded, and Silvassa.

AccorHotels launches customised stay through MyRoom

Travellers today are looking for travel and stay experiences that are distinctive, innovative, customised, local, and exciting. Now guests can check into select AccorHotels properties in Delhi, Bengaluru, Hyderabad, and Goa to enjoy MyRoom by AccorHotels – a

unique concept that offers customised rooms which are curated to reflect various themes and passions, allowing guests to connect with their stay and feel welcomed. Going beyond standardised rooms, MyRoom offers 15 vibrant and creatively inspired rooms

for both adults and children, livening their stay.

To bridge the gap between the hotel staff and guests, the MyRoom themes have been designed by the hotel staff itself. The staff brainstormed on themes they are passionate

about, while keeping their guests in mind. Following internal discussions, three winners were shortlisted, where each winner was given charge to decorate and plan the room as per their identified theme. These personalised rooms are available at five AccorHotels properties in India - Novotel New Delhi Aerocity, Novotel Bengaluru Techpark, Mercure Hyderabad KCP, ibis Styles Goa Calangute, and ibis New Delhi Aerocity. "With much success during our pilot project, we have expanded the concept now to five hotels and hope to continue to offer these unique rooms across India," says **Jean-Michel Cassé**, Chief Operating Officer, India & South Asia, AccorHotels.



OYO acquires Mumbai-based AblePlus for hotels and assets

OYO has acquired AblePlus, a Mumbai-based Internet of Things (IoT) technology company, in order to enhance and strengthen its technology portfolio. With this partnership, OYO aims to create a sustainable ecosystem powered by technology and Artificial Intelligence, for managing hotels and assets. With the implementation of IoT-enabled operations, customers will be able to experience highlights such as self-check-ins, self KYC with Aadhar, and IoT server-managed smart locks. The rollout of technology-enabled operations will ensure better tracking of assets across properties and reduction in wastage of electricity, further minimising the company's



carbon footprint. The forthcoming years will witness OYO introducing voice-based assistance in rooms enabling

automation of controlling appliances and lights among other services. Going forward, OYO also plans to implement

a comprehensive guest entertainment programme that will include fitness, gaming, and augmented experiences.

Renaissance Mumbai opens all-day dining Lake View Café



Renaissance Mumbai is all set with the stylish, smart and contemporary all-day dining Lake View Café (LVC). The preview event for the same was hosted with an uber-

stylish, select guest list. The host **Nicholas Dumbell**, GM for Renaissance Mumbai, was overwhelmed with the response as the swish set of Mumbai thronged to experience the new

café that satiates all desires for a variety of foods, moods, and brews including interactive live cooking stations offering authentic Indian, inspired Asian, Western grills, Antipasti, and

fantastic desserts. It has an alfresco seating and contemporary yet un-intimidating set-up at the edge of the lake. The view is one of the key highlights apart from its core of F&B and service.

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HRAWI helps members understand plastic ban better

The association roped in Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai's (MCGM) top brass for an interactive session with hoteliers and restaurateurs to clarify their doubts about the kind of products that are banned under the new rule.



“
The use of materials that disturb the ecology, has to be abandoned”

The recent ban on plastic in the State of Maharashtra, while a very progressive and necessary measure, has had a disruptive effect on the restaurant business in the state. The ban disrupts not only the revenues, but impacts as much as 65 per cent of consumers who avail home delivery services, especially in cities like Mumbai.

The Hotel and Restaurant Association of Western India (HRAWI) in the interest of its members and the industry, has been exploring options and has sought advice from experts on the subject. While the restaurants have adapted to the use of non-plastic materials for

dry food, delivering liquid food continues to remain a challenge. To address these issues and come out with practical solutions that will benefit the hoteliers as well as its patrons, the HRAWI recently hosted a seminar on the subject. It persuaded **Dr Sangita Hasnale**, Assistant Municipal Commissioner (AMC), Nodal Officer of Plastic Ban, MCGM, to share her insights with the members.

Dilip Datwani, President, HRAWI, says, “The industry is in agreement with the decision to do away with the use of plastic. The use of materials that disturb the ecology and which eventually may cause irrepa-

vable damage to our ecosystem has to be abandoned. The urgency in implementing this ban is understandable but it has repercussions for businesses. We organised a special seminar on the subject.”

The seminar was kept interactive and Dr. Hasnale offered insights on the various options for the industry to migrate to recyclable materials. Specifically, the seminar helped hospitality players to voice out about the hit on the home delivery services without the availability of spill-proof packing materials.

She said, “The municipal corporation too, has planned

Hotels worldwide to eliminate plastic straws

In February, more than 60 hotels in the United Kingdom eliminated plastic straws and began offering consumers alternate straws upon request. Many individual properties –

ranging from urban boutique hotels to oceanfront resorts – have also been on the forefront of this initiative. This includes Marriott International which has announced that it has adopted a plan to remove disposable plastic straws and plastic stirrers from its more than 6,500 properties across 30 brands around the world. Once fully implemented in one year, the company could eliminate the use of more than 1 billion plastic straws per year and about a quarter billion stirrers.

Marriott International's plastic straw initiative will take full effect at both managed and franchised properties by July 2019, giving hotel owners and

franchisees time to deplete their existing supply of plastic straws, identify sources of alternate straws and educate staff to modify customer service. As part of the initiative, hotels will offer alternative straws upon request.

Indian hotels aren't far behind. The Indian Hotels Company Limited (IHCL) has also announced the elimination of plastic straws from all its hotels. This decision comes close on the heels of a move to phase out single-use plastics on the occasion of Earth Hour. Earlier this year, the company had also launched its first ever 'Zero Single Use Plastic Hotel', Taj Exotica Resort & Spa, Andamans.

Speaking on the initiative, **Puneet Chhatwal**, Managing

Director and Chief Executive Officer at The Indian Hotels Company Limited (IHCL), said, "This decision of eliminating plastic straws is in line with our ethos of weaving in sustainable and responsible practices in business operations."

Plastic straws are amongst the smallest plastic items used in the industry and they alone contribute to over four per cent of plastic pollution in the oceans. IHCL's hotels across its brands – Taj, Vivanta and Ginger will phase out the use of plastic straws in the next hundred days. All hotels in Maharashtra have already replaced the plastic straws with those made of paper and other bio-degradable material.



on organising similar seminars and road-shows for enterprises to participate and understand the several aspects behind the plastic ban move. The MCGM has placed multiple segregation points across the city for F&B operators to dispose-off any plastic they may possess. We look forward to receiving your cooperation and support in making our city plastic free." Other than being an exponent on the ban of plastic, Dr Hasnale is also part of a women's cell that helps in creating alternative products for plastic on a large scale.

Speaking about the impact of this development on the members, Datwani adds, "One of the more significant consequences of the ban has been the disruption in managing



food deliveries. While budgeting expenses, hoteliers and restaurateurs take into account all its revenue sources. A sudden and unanticipated break in the revenue stream affects operations and consequently billings. Additionally, adopting

eco-friendly materials has cost implications which will raise the prices on the menu and may not be appreciated by the customer. While most restaurants have adapted to the use of non-plastic materials for dry food, delivering liquid food continues

to remain a challenge. It should be a matter of time before the industry finds the ideal alternate material to replace plastic and in the meanwhile, we will hope for the government to give us leeway where there is no present solution."



Renaissance Mumbai Convention Centre Hotel & Lakeside Chalet, Mumbai - Marriott Executive Apartments

Cleaning up to make guests feel 'at home'

Creating a home away from home for guests isn't easy which is why the role of the housekeeping department is crucial in ensuring that the guest makes the property and the brand a preferred option. Here's how two hotels have put best practices in place to make sure that there is no spot on the property that goes overlooked.

Kanchan Nath

Most of the revenue comes from the rooms in a hotel so it's critical to have an efficient housekeeping team in place. It is also good to remember that the priority of a guest staying in a hotel will always be a clean room and a comfortable bed. This makes the job of the housekeeping staff one of utmost importance. Through this feature we explore how new technologies, manpower allocation per room, and guest data and feedback are combined with the housekeeping staff's care and perfection to create exceptional experiences for guests.



Smita Rathod, Director of Services, Renaissance Mumbai Convention Centre Hotel & Lakeside Chalet, Mumbai - Marriott Executive Apartments, feels that automation is useful to ease housekeeping processes. "Technology and automation help in improving efficiency and productivity so we try and incorporate technology wherever possible. We utilise noise-free, battery-operated vacuum cleaners at night so our guests are not disturbed. Instead of traditional laundry for curtains, which is extremely time-consuming, we use steam cleaners to clean and press them, which saves a lot of time. Utilisation of flippers on the main porch and

its periphery, which sweeps and collects garbage and comes in handy at the same time, helps in saving additional manpower and cost," she says.

At Renaissance Mumbai, her team still follows a physical occupancy check thrice a day in order to track room status. There may be chances of discrepancies and in order to avoid that, they use Opera. An ideal turn-around time for a room is approximately 35 minutes and 15 rooms are allocated to every housekeeping staff. For the sterilising process, the bathrooms are scrubbed every day with hot water and Ecolab cleaners. Pest control is scheduled every month along with a WC pipe treatment and

dehumidifiers and ozonisers are used in rooms on a regular basis.

The staff is also well-trained to report anything they may find suspicious. Rathod adds, "Guest safety is top priority for us and we take measures to ensure that there is no compromise on this parameter. Door belts are used while servicing rooms to keep the room semi-open. Rooms showing DND sign on the doors are recorded and communicated daily to the department head and front office. Daily checks on fire exits are made by security and housekeeping executives. We do not have an 'Only Women' floor however, to give a sense of comfort to single lady travellers, we allot them rooms near elevators and cameras. Female executives interact with these guests regularly during their stay."

While booking at the hotel, her guests have the option of sharing their preferences, which are then stored in the hotel's software for future reference. There are even occasions where the in-room furniture is rearranged as per the preference of the guest. "In the past, we have had guests who have stayed with the hotel for almost a year and on their request, we converted the powder room of the suite into a small kitchen. When there are kids accompanying the family, we provide child-friendly rooms wherein there are no sharp furniture items or glass vases that can possibly be hazardous for children," Rathod says.

Clear information lines

Meanwhile, the WelcomHeritage Group relies on information shared by the guests to ensure that they are comfortable during their stay. **Sanjeev K Nayar**, General Manager, WelcomHeritage, says, "Communication is becoming cheaper and more effective. That is why

one of the strategies we use in our hotels is that when a guest is checking out or informs the reception for a clean-up, the reception sends this message to the housekeeping staff on that particular floor or wing. Rooms are already assigned to different staff members and as soon as they see the request, they acknowledge it and start the cleaning. When the process is over, the staff dials a code from the telephone provided in the room that lets the reception know that the room has been cleaned and thus ready to be allocated to a new arrival."

For a regular-sized room, WelcomHeritage maintains a ratio of 5:1 (where five rooms are allotted to one staff member) and 10:1 for the supervisor. Each of its rooms is pest-free, wherein it follows a regular pest control system through professional agencies. Since most of its properties are located in far-flung destinations, it also provides mosquito repellent machines in every room.

Safety and security takes a priority. "In the event of suspicious activity, the same is reported to the immediate next level of cognizance. Being in heritage tourism, most of our properties are leisure properties that attract lots of families and friends. Thus, we do not have floors dedicated exclusively to women. In some hotels we have special rooms for female travellers, which have the interiors befitting the colours and moods of a lady traveller. These rooms, besides having normal amenities, have special women amenities and also an adequate number of trained lady staff to take care of their needs," Nayar adds.

For WelcomHeritage, Nayar says, guest relation is very important. "Why shouldn't it be? We always try to do whatever we can

for the comfort of our guests. For instance, around two months ago a guest was planning a romantic trip with his wife and he told us to make it special for them. So we decorated their room and presented a complimentary cake. Also, once a group staying with us had booked a double room but they wanted separate beds. So we removed the attachment and converted a double bed into two single beds," he shares.

Being mindful of the environment

The new wave of being plastic-free and taking steps towards being more environmental-friendly has also brought a few changes in the way the housekeeping staff operates. Rathod says, "We are proud to say that we have completely stopped using plastic. In order to enhance segregation, we have recycle bins with inbuilt dry and wet garbage separators. Environment cards on change of linen every alternate day are placed in rooms with guests who are staying for several days at the hotel. Information cards on practices that help save water are placed in bathrooms. Recycled water is used in all the guest rooms. The used soaps are also recycled. They are gathered and given away to an NGO to make liquid floor cleaners."

Meanwhile, WelcomHeritage has also ensured that all its properties adhere to eco-friendly processes. "It is important to contribute to the environment. Recycling of water, use of energy-efficient equipment in the kitchen and lighting in the rooms and public areas are some of the measures which are taken. Being heritage properties, most of these hotels are in the open with wide corridors and a good amount of natural lighting," he says.



“

In some hotels there are special rooms for female travellers, which have the interiors befitting the colours and moods of a lady traveller

”

No 'single' window of opportunity?

Senior members of regional associations give insights on the challenges that have been plaguing the Single Window Clearance (SWC) policy. The hiccup in the policy has also affected hotel projects through delayed permissions.



★ **Dilip Datwani**
President
HRAWI

Proactive government

The Gujarat state has set up an investor facilitation portal that provides details and timelines for various services across government departments. In Chhattisgarh, construction permits implementing an online mechanism to assess building plans and updating the status of the permissions has been established. In Madhya Pradesh, MPTRIFAC has been constituted as the nodal agency of the SWC. In Maharashtra, the government has been very proactive. As part of the initiative, there has been a significant reduction in the number of permissions, approvals, and NOCs, thereby the corresponding number of applications to be made for licences by tourism units.

The steps carried out for this purpose involved removal of duplicate permissions, discontinuation of redundant licences and approvals, and merging of permissions where possible. The previous 70 permissions needed have now been reduced to eight applications for 18 permissions. The number of departments issuing permissions related to hospitality has also been reduced from the previous 13 to only seven. The state government has also mandated a single joint inspection by various departments. Though there are still many glitches to overcome, the hospitality and tourism sector needs a sympathetic approach from the government, which we expect will be forthcoming.



★ **Garish Oberoi**
President
FHRAI

Need for a planned strategy

The provisions of the Single Window Clearance system for permissions to set up hotels and restaurants was granted by Mumbai Government last year. The Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) took this decision after prolonged complaints about delays in hotel projects.

The process has added to the ease of initiating a business in the state. Businessmen wanting to set up a new hotel in Mumbai can apply online through the civic body's website. Under the SWC system, the BMC officials have been given a time period of 27 working days to issue the licence once all the conditions are complied with, and therein lies the catch. Undoubtedly, the provision has made a positive impact in Mumbai, but the catch of gathering a lengthy list of compliances proves to be a tedious process (if not in Mumbai then surely in other states). To establish a hotel in the northern region, one has to go through roughly four stages (from the initial formation to final operation), which include a completion of about 60 compliances, NOCs, etc. This not only makes the task of starting operations a tedious one, but is also extremely time-consuming and causes unnecessary delays as the hotel operator has to continuously be on his toes to acquire the requisite licences and permits. The necessary licences include building permit, fire safety permits, police licence, service tax registration, bar licence, FSSAI food business licence, health trade licence, etc. Many of the licences and registrations which are acquired prior to starting the hotel need renewal while the hotel is operational. More than 30 licences are to be taken once the hotel is operational. Various licence requirements depend upon the type of hotel, star rating, amenities, and the location of the hotel. Obtaining all the necessary authorisations and NOCs can be a difficult task for someone who is new to the industry. A determined, planned, and strategic approach must be applied, otherwise the smooth operation of the hotel may get hampered due to incomplete compliances. Such an approach will bring huge relief to new and existing hospitality players who are wanting to set shop in India. Also, a convenient and friendly policy as such will make the industry more attractive for prospective investors.



★ **Sanjay Sood**
President
HRANI

Awareness among new hoteliers

Single Window Clearance for hotel projects is granted in some states, but it seldom meets its true purpose - to increase the ease of doing business. Essentially, the system should be such that a new hotel owner or hotelier

should have a sole issuing authority, a single point of contact for the approval of all licences. In states where Single Window Clearance is granted, there indeed is less hassle for new hotel owners to get the required licences, but the procedure is not as effective as it should be. The issuing authority may differ from state to state. For instance, the licence issuing authority in Delhi is the DCP; in other states it may be a judicial officer (AJM or CJM).

A total of more than 60 licences, permits, and NOCs are required to be submitted for approval if one wants to lay foundation of a new hotel. One should not make the mistake of thinking that acquiring the required NOCs is a cakewalk. New projects are often delayed or even left unfinished because of incomplete compliances. Acquiring the mandatory licences such as fire safety permits and building permits themselves necessitate completion of various other compliances. We can say that Single Window Clearance may be effective only in terms of submitting the first application and having the final licence handed to you.



★ **Sudesh Poddar**
President
HRAEI

Lip service won't do

Single Window Clearance is not really effective at the ground level in most states of India. There are online portals, shiny offices and the paraphernalia, but in most cases, nothing works properly. Everything is in the books, nothing in

reality. There are too many licences required to operate a hotel in the region. There are nearly two dozen licences or certificates needed to start a hotel. Despite repeated appeals by our association, the governments are yet to change their ways. It is essential for the government to understand how a simple policy, that is also as simple in reality, can be a game changer for the industry, in return being a bigger contributor to the economy.

Such a decision would have encouraged more entrepreneurs to invest in the hotel business. Almost in all the states it takes too long to issue bar licences. There is total prohibition in Bihar. The highway liquor ban has affected the hospitality industry across the region. Moreover, our appeals to offer incentives to help start small hotels in big and small cities have not been effective. Most of our members and many new entrants face a whole lot of problems. Even big or international brands cannot complete projects in time. Governments, both at the state and central level, should make the policies work at the ground level. Just lip service won't do.



★ **K. Syama Raju**
President
SIHRA

An aid to boost tourism

Though the southern states in principle have conveyed to have SWC to hotels at project level, it becomes impossible as various government departments connected with licences raise questions and make the operator to complete on time. At every stage, SIHRA has to intervene to get it cleared. At present in the southern states, at project stages 14 to 18, clearances are required from various departments and 22 clearances are needed at the time of commissioning the hotel.

Due to the encouragement given by the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, and introduction of UDAN by the civil aviation department, quite a few projects have come up in lesser-known tourist places, but have been held up for want of clearance on time. This makes the task difficult, yet entrepreneurs continue to build the hotel due to heavy borrowing from banks and other financial institutions. This forces them to convert the hotel into serviced apartments or lodges that have fewer facilities as the licences required are less. SIHRA, through various meetings with governments, has brought to their notice the need for Single Window Clearance to have more room to facilitate greater tourist arrivals in the South and make it the most sought-after destination. This has become the subject matter at every business meeting and forum.



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Procuring sustainability as a way of life

Sustainability in the food industry is a critical task and is a bit challenging. The process of farming to packaging involves the support of stakeholders in the supply chain segment. Industry experts elucidate on filling the gap of this industry, while highlighting the usage of the produce to their benefit.

★ **Rohit Pushpavanam**
Executive Chef
Alila Diwa Goa

Huge volumes demand sustainability

Sustainability as a way of life and business is of paramount importance in hospitality, especially in relation to F&B because of the sheer volume of production. As chefs, we constantly try to find ways to cut waste, source fresh ingredients, prepare food judiciously and manage the expectations of our guests at the same time.

Being local helps

At Alila Diwa Goa, we support the farmers and local communities by sourcing ingredients locally. We avoid the use of tins

and cans for storage by preparing more than 90 per cent of the sauces and other items in the menu in-house, thereby reducing content wastage and garbage. Our menus are not very elaborate and include few but a good variety of choices and cuisines.

Food Produce Matrix

With the help of a Food Produce Matrix we produce the food depending on the occupancy of the hotel. We also adopt the nose-to-tail cooking to ensure we get the best out of every part of the vegetable or meat. We use the stems of the vegetables like the florets of a broccoli to make stocks, sauces or dressings rather than disposing it off. This way we can reduce the general waste or landfill.

Good network is key

Being a chef focused on sustainability, it's my responsibility to find ways to conduct my business in a way that it doesn't harm the environment. To be able to do this on a daily basis, it is important to partner with the right people who share your vision as well – from the suppliers, the farmers, my team in the kitchen and other department as well. We make sure they understand and follow the guidelines. To make it a regular practice, government institutions should be formed to monitor with proper incentives. Certifications must be implemented to recognise the effort of the industry and motivate further. Fish and animal farming must be monitored and guided to be sustainable.





★ **Noel D'souza**
General Manager
Gaylord Restaurant, Mumbai

Involve the guests

At Gaylord, we try not only to implement the environmental conservation methods at our restaurant, but also encourage our guests to follow the same. We have minimised excess usage of electricity and water. We follow a regular pattern of taking a headcount of our staff before we prepare their meals for that day, to avoid wastage. In case of excess food that is prepared for the day, we do not dispose it, we donate it.

Cutting down on packing

Cooking is done on a day-to-day basis. We do not stock the food and prepare only based on guest request and a-la carte order to avoid wastage. In today's style of cooking, presentation is given a lot of importance; presentation leads to extra add-ons that are added apart from the main dish served. We have minimised on packing with the drastic reduction in the usage of paper trays and paper napkins as well.

Even with our new menu, we are conscious of not divulging in a lot of presentation where the add-ons are not consumed by most of the guests. In certain cases, we also exclude add-ons. We are conscious that even through the presentation we use only edible items for the arrangements of the dishes that will be consumed by the guests. This has also led to us specifying in our menu that 'in order to save the environment we are minimising the use of disposables and carry bags which will now attract a charge'.



★ **Michael Swamy**
Chef Patron & Food Media Specialist

Learning and imparting

Sustainability is challenging, and bringing about change can be daunting at times. The vegetables we grow are still plentiful, but not up to the mark. The quality of local vegetables compared to the ones produced by organised farming by large conglomerates is very different.

Urban farming, hydroponics, and aquaponics are the trend these days. The re-introduction of organic food to one's system and lesser use of pesticides that kill insects required for pollination and the entire growth process is the need of the hour. At the end of the day, it comes down to education. If one segment gets the education, it is not passed down, thus hindering the process of sustainability.



A mass movement

Printed media, visual and audible media needs to be used effectively to reach the smaller cities. Japan uses many techniques that replenish the soil so that crops benefit; we need to learn from them in many ways. Masanobu Fukuoka is a famous farmer who wrote books and created a worldwide following for his techniques of organic and sustainable farming. We need such movements here as well and someone who needs to take on that responsibility.



★ **Ashish Bhasin**
Executive Chef
Trident, Bandra-Kurla

Challenging, not impossible

Nothing comes for free in this world. Yes, sustainability is challenging due to globalisation, but not impossible. We need to use local produce, reduce food miles, save energy, and prevent climate change. We must follow organic practices and protect soil quality.

Educating and training farmers about best practices is also a must.

Other produce to the rescue

India being one of the largest producers of milk and vegetables in the world can use this to its advantage. We need to increase dairy and milk products in our diet. We still haven't optimised our dairy usage. Local produce of cheese and reduction in import is also important.



News

MP Tourism selects DJUBO to drive online bookings

In line with its stated objectives of driving higher online revenues and tech adoption in its 68 properties, Madhya Pradesh Tourism has chosen DJUBO as its hotel technology ERP partner providing them an all-in-one offering including cloud-based property management system, online channel management, direct booking engine, point of sale and accounting back end integrations.

Speaking on the occasion of the launch of this partnership, **Sankalp Goel**, Co-Founder,

DJUBO,s stated, "It is an honour that DJUBO has been chosen by MP Tourism after a thorough examination of various national and international technology product companies. It is a great testament to the all-in-one hotel technology solution that DJUBO has been building for 3 years and gaining rapid traction for."

Vijay Kumar, Chief Corporate Marketing Executive, Madhya Pradesh Tourism, said, "DJUBO offers state-of-the-



Hotel Satya Ashoka



Syna Tiger Resort Bandhavgarh National Park

art capabilities coupled with new age integrations and an extremely user-friendly interface to ensure quick and widespread adoption across all our hotel staff members. DJUBO will help MP Tourism increase its revenues through online platforms both domestic and international through its channel management capabilities. At the same time, we will be using DJUBO's

Property Management and Point of Sale capabilities to manage their front office, restaurant and travel desk." MP Tourism and DJUBO have also worked together to launch a new product called DJUBO AgentConnekt which will connect hundreds of MP Tourism travel agents across the country to the Centralised Reservation System offered by DJUBO.

Hilton sets the growth bar high

Hilton has a portfolio of 14 brands comprising more than 5,100 properties and nearly 838,000 rooms in 103 countries. The group is only soaring high with its optimal growth strategy. **Jatin Khanna**, Vice President, Operations - India, Hilton, talks about the importance of the Indian market, while divulging details on their growth plans.

Anupriya Bishnoi

What is your strategy for the Indian market?

We have a two-pronged strategy plan for India. One is for big cities like Delhi, Mumbai, and Hyderabad, where we want to bring some of our iconic brands like Conrad and Waldorf Astoria Hotels & Resorts. The second is for Tier-II and Tier-III cities that we don't want to lose out on. There is a lot of expansion happening in these areas.



“
We have a two-pronged strategy plan for India: one is for big cities and the second is for Tier-II and III cities”

So, we have a robust plan for the country where we are not going to overlook smaller cities; it will be a uniform growth. We have a plan where we do not want to miss out on any of the brands or any other positioning in any city.

Which of Hilton's brands is the biggest revenue generator?

We run 17 hotels in India; some of them are extremely successful. Conrad Pune and Hilton Chennai are iconic hotels in their respective cities. Also, when we talk about the most successful brand or hotel, it's more about how successful the F&B business is in that hotel. Over the years, we have seen F&B coming back to hotels and the ones which do well



have great F&B outlets and loyal patronage.

How important is India as a market for you?

India is an extremely important market for us. This year, we have made a few corrections and we have made a few announcements in the India structure. I think it's very important that we put a lot of local resources closer to the market, which shows how important India is for us. In the coming months, we are going to add a few positions that will reflect the growth potential of this market.

Do you think mergers and acquisitions are shaping the future of the global hospitality industry?

You can say that, that's the

flavour of the season. Not just in hospitality but in other sectors as well, mergers and acquisitions have become a trend. The world has changed; it's all about partnerships and consolidations. I think that's the way forward for a business like ours.

India is an evolving hospitality market. What are your views?

Today, India is not just about four metros or big cities. Also, different brands in different segments have found more acceptability in comparison to the scenario that existed seven or 10 years ago. People have started identifying brands of various segments. So, the evolution will be on a par with other top hospitality markets.

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Members deliberate before a soirée

HRAWI recently held its Executive Committee meeting on August 3, 2018, at ITC Hotel Maratha, where pertinent issues were discussed and ideas were exchanged. The round-table meeting was followed by cocktails and dinner, where the committee members were joined by their spouses.







Are hotels geared up for eventualities?

The hotel industry is subjected to a lot of unseen threats that pose a concern for safety protocol. A separate team ensures smooth functioning of procedures for the well-being of guests. We talk to a few spokespersons who run around throughout the day to manage these issues effectively.



★ **Raj Shetty**
General Manager
The Fern Residency, Chembur, Mumbai

Several risks posed

With the advent of technology, there has also been an increase in the nature of notorious threats to security systems in hotels. Some prevalent ones are cyber crime, identity theft, terrorism, pre-employment screening checks, etc. Hotels have to constantly deal with social engineering attacks such as phishing, and nowadays, APT (Advanced Persistent Threats), too. APT bypasses and weakens the defenses in the hotel network. Identity theft and credit card fraud is the new form of pick pocketing, but on a much larger scale. Terrorism presents a major threat to global security. Unfortunately, hotels along with restaurants, theme parks, cruise ships, tourist attractions, and public transportation are classified as high risk and soft targets. Within an organisation, nowadays a large percentage of incidents occur due to the actions or inactions of current employees. This happens if you hire a person with a questionable past.



★ **Amit Kadam**
Security Manager
Meluha The
Fern Hotel



Train the staff

Our hotel devises a plan for the possibilities one may face, and tailors reactions for specific operations, as we can't plan for every eventuality. We encompass training to be a vital terrain for optimal analysis. We also encourage a third-party review to garner positive results.



Secondly, the security of a hotel can be easily hampered if the involved fraudster is well aware of the accessibility to the exit and entry points, and has knowledge of the surveillance systems. As a hotel, one must foresee this and choose to adopt ways to upgrade the network within through acknowledgment of the strengths and weaknesses wired in the hotel.

Thirdly, we encourage our staff to meet and greet every guest. Every guest or vendor is greeted with a smile and a question, "May I help you?" These are opportunities to not only attract the attention of the guest, but to also ensure thorough surveillance within the building.



The daily safety measures undertaken by Novotel Imagica are:

- Securing the access point with physical security.
- Scanning luggage through X-ray machines and guests through metal detectors and verifying the guest's ID upon check-in.
- Suspicious movement is monitored through CCTVs.
- Contractors, visitors, and employees are given temporary IDs that they are required to adorn until check-out.

★ **Ranjit Naik**
Safety & Security Manager
Novotel Imagica Khopoli

Preparedness is the key

The major concerns in terms of security and surveillance in hotels around the world include terror threats, theft and frauds, and breaches to cyber security, among others. An emerging threat that can wreak havoc is that of hackers. Theft of confidential data by hackers is a major threat to business. In a recent hotel breach, the hackers did not go after confidential data, but sought a ransom payment after taking control of the hotel's technology. Hoteliers have to address cyber security from a number of angles, including technical, legal, law enforcement, insurance, and payment systems.

Preparedness has to be an integral part of day-to-day operations. It is vital for each organisation to devise a security plan and get it reviewed every year. Since hotels can't plan for every eventuality, a rapid recovery plan has to be in place. Second is training. At Novotel Imagica Khopoli, we train our entire staff on the importance of security at regular intervals and not just the security personnel. We also run a background check on potential hires which helps us in establishing good contact with government authorities.

The Fern goes green

Among the earliest hotels in Mumbai to be sensitive to the environment, not just in motto but also in action, Meluha The Fern stands out for its unique and single-minded focus that is appreciated by guests who understand its importance. **Punish B Sharma**, Vice President (Operations), The Fern Hotels & Resorts, speaks about what sets the hotel apart.

Hazel Jain

What makes Meluha The Fern stand out of the crowd today?

Meluha The Fern contributes dedicatedly in its own way by stringently following procedures to adhere to the five Globes of Ecotel

a passionate minority, is an emerging movement. These leaders have demonstrated that sustainability is a viable and profitable option, other corporations are beginning to follow suit. After years of it being perceived as cost-centric, the industry has now realised the true

stringent policies of greening the supply chain, encouraging fair trade practices, and protecting the culture and heritage of each individual place. We also ensure equal employment opportunities for women and local communities and empower them in their roles at the organisation.



“
We create a paradigm shift towards sustainable thinking through educational programmes”



practices – Environment Commitment, Water Management, Energy Management, Waste Management, as well as Employee Education and Community Involvement.

What measures are you taking to ensure your hotel stays sustainable and eco-friendly?

Sustainable and responsible practices in the hotel industry were emerging trends two decades ago. Today, that trend, under the leadership of

value-addition made by implementation of sustainable initiatives and is committed to implementing holistic measures in hotels across the country.

Tell us about your Green Team.

Our hotel has a Green Team headed by the Environment Officer who ensures that all departments are working in consonance with the hotel’s mission of environmental responsibility. We also have

How does the hotel manage involving local communities?

In our endeavour to conserve our planet, we strive to create a paradigm shift towards sustainable thinking by transfer of knowledge and delivering significant societal value through education programmes and community activities. We hire individuals who inculcate our environment philosophy through a dynamic and interactive training programme.



Radisson Blu celebrates joy of giving

Radisson Blu Pune Hinjawadi recently celebrated the Community Action Month by adopting the theme of 'Food, Shelter and Future' in honour of the joy of giving.

One of the core values of Radisson Blu Pune Hinjawadi is serving the community and uplifting the needy. The hotel's team recently celebrated the joy of giving through their Community Action Month 2018 with the theme of 'Food, Shelter and Future'. The entire team came together with much gusto for a number of impactful activities over the course of the entire month. As part of the association with several NGOs, they provided necessary items like food, notebooks, stationery, clothes, and other essentials to the underprivileged.

A blood donation camp was also organised, where employees volunteered to donate the gift of life and hope. The blood was collected by the Serological Institute at Pimpri. This institute provides blood free of cost to kids suffering from thalassemia

and haemophilia, and whose families are unable to obtain blood units or pay the cost of blood for their child's treatment.

The Annadanam Donation revolved around the concept of food being the essence of all well-being. The team worked with great enthusiasm to donate food grains like rice and pulses to the Madhur Bhav old age home. The team also participated in a food donation drive that fed poor people living in Pimple Saudagar's slum area, with Robin Hood Food Army. The motive behind this experience was to provide hygienic, nutritious food to the needy.

A collection drive was organised for notebooks and stationery kits for the children. They were distributed to Door Step School in the area and will be used by kids who cannot afford school

supplies. Drawing books and sketch pens were given to kids in the age group of three to five years whereas notebooks and stationery were distributed to kids in the age group of six to 14 years. About 75 buckets and mugs were donated to the Poona School & Home for the Blind in Kothrud that will benefit 150 girls staying and studying at the school.

Commenting on the success and impact of the activities, **Pankaj Saxena**, General Manager at Radisson Blu Pune Hinjawadi, said, "Our primary aim through these activities is to help the community and create a positive impact in the city and ultimately, the world." Apart from this, all the employees came together to donate old clothes, footwear, and books to the slum area at Kokane Chowk.



Pankaj Saxena



Carving out a potential from India's tourism pot

The second edition of the InfraConclave in New Delhi witnessed esteemed presence of august panellists and experts from the Indian hospitality industry. The experts deliberated on the unused potential of the tourism sector, while sharing some tips to revive the segment.

Anupriya Bishnoi

Tourism contributes nearly 9.4 per cent to our country's GDP and the sector is expected

to create 100 million jobs over the next few years. Somehow, we don't seem to be getting it right when it comes to increasing domestic and international

tourist influx in the country. Also, the masses in India have a constant notion to compare luxury to as something that cannot be attained. To garner a optimal

progress, there is a need to shed the idiosyncrasies. The country has immense tourism potential which can help it pave its way among global competitors.



★ **Dilip Puri**
Founder & CEO
Indian School of Hospitality

A tourism infrastructure strategy which does not include the critical human capital requirements is never going to succeed and that has been the bane of this industry in India. Even where we see infrastructure such as new airports, toll expressways, or rehabilitated monuments, the experience is still very ordinary because we have not invested in the human capital required to manage and sustain this infrastructure. Skill development seems to be about numbers and not quality. The tourism industry itself has been seen to be a lightweight ministry politically, and so has never had the budget or the aggression in its leadership to push through the benefits of the enormous contribution it makes to employment and GDP.



★ **Bhupesh Kumar**
Managing Consultant
Tourism and Hospitality

I have repeatedly been hearing that 'India is a country with huge tourism potential', but its potential has still not been realised. There are some misconceptions around the word 'tourism'. It is always considered something for the rich and that's why tourism hasn't

flourished the way it should have. The perception is changing for sure, but not at the speed it should.

Having worked with some of the international tourism boards, I feel the formation of tourism boards as such is very critical. They have the involvement of private sectors in a big way. India is a huge country with its own set of challenges and dealing with all of them in one go is not possible. So, I feel, if we take one city and involve the entire spectrum of safety, environment, etc., then there is a possibility of immense growth and that model of that city can inspire others; there will be a cascading effect.



★ **Mandeep Lamba**
Managing Director
Hotels Hospitality
JLL India

Despite the status of tourism and hospitality in the country being termed as 'luxury', the government enjoys the revenue it gets out of these two sectors. Yet, in every budget, I sit with a

magnifying glass to find the word 'tourism'. There is a dire need for the government to do something more concrete for the tourism and hospitality industry rather than just provide it a mention every now and then.

There was just one time where the Prime Minister mentioned it as one of the pillars of the economy and everyone in the industry was jumping with joy, but much hasn't happened post that. Also, we must get safety and security in place; the last six to seven years have been a disaster on that front.



★ **Rattan Keswani**
Deputy Managing Director
Lemon Tree Hotels

Everything in the ecosystem is about doing business and getting the result. We keep hearing that we must have economy and midscale hotels, or why do cities like Varanasi and Agra not have them yet? But, if in the right location, the land cost is going to be 60 per cent of what you want to do, it's never

going to happen. There is a huge market in Tier-I and Tier-II cities. We have been searching for an opportunity in Varanasi for a decade, but we haven't found it.



★ **Aashish Gupta**
Founder, Strategy Pluto and
Consulting CEO, FAITH

Around five years ago, India ranked 58th in the world in tourism; today it's ranked around 40. This is despite India having one of the best natural assets in the world.

We have not been able to monetise our natural assets like a lot of other countries. We are the world's third largest domestic tourism market and therein lies immense potential.



★ **Raj Rana**
Chief Executive Officer - South Asia
Radisson Hotel Group

In India, we have almost everything. We have mountains, beaches, heritage, spiritual tourism, etc., but you cannot enjoy all this sitting at home. You must move from point A to point B and that's where infrastructure comes into play. For me, infrastructure is about convenience and cost. If you cannot travel fast from one point to another at a reasonable cost, the entire purpose of the word 'infrastructure' collapses. The point I am making is, when we build a hotel, we look at the infrastructure very closely. However, a lot of cities in the country are still grappling with the connectivity issue. There are still places in the country where we do not get telephone signals, let alone infrastructure, and we talk about a 'Digital Age'. If you look at the West, most families travel by road because it's the cheapest. The connectivity of the highways to the hub of attraction is efficient and highways have inexpensive

hotels. You must get away from the city centre or downtown areas and start building subsidised hotels or motels on the highways, so that more people can travel by road and stay at affordable hotels and experience what our country has to offer.



Goa gets new taxi service App for tourists

With an aim to procure ease of travel for tourists arriving in the state, Goa has unveiled a first and exclusive mobile App-based taxi service, GOAMILES. The service was launched by Chief Minister **Manohar Parrikar** at the Secretariat Complex, Porvorim, recently.

The launch of GOAMILES will bring about a revolutionary change in travel in and around Goa for both tourists and locals and provide benefits to taxi drivers serving under the new initiative. GOAMILES will provide the convenience of booking a taxi immediately upon arrival in the state at reasonable, government approved rates. The GOAMILES app can be downloaded from Google Play Store and Apple Store.

Minister for Tourism, **Manohar Ajaonkar** along with Chairman of Goa Tourism Development Corporation (GTDC), **Nilesh Cabral**; Chief Secretary of Goa, **Dharmen-**

dra Sharma; Secretary for Tourism, **Sheo Pratap Singh**, **Menino D'Souza**, Director, Dept. of Tourism along with other dignitaries, marked their presence at the launch. The GOAMILES App can be downloaded from Google Play Store and Apple Store. Parrikar said, "Goa can now take tourists for miles through the new app based taxi service which will be affordable and give travellers a comfortable journey from the time they arrive till they leave."

Ajaonkar stated, "I am confident that tourist taxi drivers across Goa will join this digital system so that Goa does not lag behind other states."

Book a cab in just a few taps. Here's how it works:

- Set your pickup location (e.g. home, office, airport, railway station, current location, etc.)
- Set your drop location (e.g. home, office, airport, railway station, to be dropped), etc.
- See all available cabs/taxis near your location being displayed on the map
- Multiple ways to pay: Pay in cash or via multiple cashless options online like debit card, credit card, BHIM, UPI
- Pick the type of vehicle you want and tap 'CONFIRM'
- You will be able to see the type of vehicle along with the rates for your easy selection and opt for the one best suited for you
- Get instant confirmation with trip details like driver name, vehicle number, type of vehicle. The OTP to be given to the driver in the App itself
- Track your cab in real time with arrival time and drop time when you give the OTP to your driver
- Invoices history can be seen immediately in "MY RIDES" after you finish your trip and previous trips would be stored below the current one
- Know fares and ride features: Check fares and various features of a ride category before booking
- Share: Share the ride details with your near and dear ones

Mechanising the new-age hearth

Celebrity chef **Amrita Raichand**, unravels the importance of technology in contemporary time and how the segment has evolved the dynamics of a kitchen in the hotels. She elaborates on the role of carving technological advancement in hotel kitchens, equipping them with necessary tools.

Could you elaborate on the role technology plays in a hotel kitchen?

Without a doubt, technology has been a great simplifier in every sphere of human life. It has actively captured the imagination of chefs who are using technology to make food more interesting and imaginative. From liquid nitrogen ice-creams and ovens that cook food all on their own to cooking *dal makhani* in combination ovens, technology has stretched boundaries. It also makes the process of cooking more precise and removes human error. For instance, for cooking a shank of lamb, where there are chances of it getting overcooked or undercooked using conventional methods, sous vide provides a perfect tech-enabled solution. It is the technique to cook food which has been tightly sealed in a water bath where the temperature is monitored and regulated closely. This process adds another layer of accuracy that is irreplaceable when one is aiming for perfection of taste.

How has this technology evolved over the years?

The 21st century has been a boon when it comes to improvement in kitchen technology. The demands and requirements of chefs today are not the same as they were a centu-



ry ago. No wonder, technology kept evolving to fit the bill. An incredible number of changes have been witnessed from the time when pressure cookers were considered the height of technology. Equipment like Emerson circulators for sous vide cooking, dehydrators for producing candy-like fruits and vegetables, powders that turn a salad dressing into flavoursome dust, and centrifugal machines for filtration have turned the grandma's kitchen into a lab den for some - a fantasy land for the technoholics!

Truly, I believe that the kitchen space is an inspiration for an innovator. There is simply no dearth of ideas on how one can improve this or that to enhance the cooking process. After all, changing lifestyles offer little

time for domestic purposes necessitate these changes today.

Being a chef, what is your favourite equipment and why?

My favourite gizmo as a chef is the humble kitchen knife. From high-carbon Japanese knives that come in various sizes and shapes to a sword-sized tuna knife or a European paring knife that is used for performing the finest work on a vegetable, there is not a variation that I cannot create today by reaching into my knife bag to rustle up some magical innovations. These novelties along with the help of some modern tech are laying the basis for tomorrow's innovations. I look forward to what great kitchen products the world will be filled with in the near future.



“

The 21st century has been a boon when it comes to improvement in kitchen technology. It is evolving... ”

APPOINTMENTS



★ **Sanjay Kaushik**
Chief Operating Officer
Raviz Hotels & Resorts

Raviz Hotels & Resorts has appointed Sanjay Kaushik as their Chief Operating Officer. He brings with him 22 years of experience in the hotel industry and has a proven track record in business turnarounds. In his career in the industry, Kaushik has worked with the ITC Maurya Sheraton, Carlson, and IHG. In the new role, he will be responsible for designing and implementing business strategies, plans, and procedures as well as establishing policies that promote the vision of the company. He will also participate in expansion activities of the group.



★ **Cajetan Araujo**
General Manager
W Goa

W Hotels has appointed Cajetan Araujo as the General Manager for W Goa. Araujo is a global luxury hotelier who began his journey in hospitality as a Front Desk Executive in Geneva, Switzerland and since then has been a culinarian, an entrepreneur and an icon leading some of the finest restaurant and food and beverage operations in New York, Miami, Bermuda, Ireland, Dubai and Qatar. His remarkable journey with St. Regis Doha, Qatar and The St. Regis Bal Harbour in Miami, saw him bring his passion and excitement to Mumbai to launch the now iconic 'Best Address' in Mumbai – The St. Regis Mumbai as Hotel Manager.



★ **Bjorn DeNiese**
Vice President –
Business Development
Mayfair Hotels & Resorts

Mayfair Hotels & Resorts has appointed Bjorn DeNiese as Vice President, Business Development. In his new role, he will be responsible for spearheading the group's future plans as it aims to deploy a new sub-brand into the market. The new vertical will be responsible for the development and expansion of the group, which will establish itself through lease, management, and franchise models. DeNiese, has headed the sales, marketing, and revenue for the group with key contributions in the setup of central reservations, the restructuring of the sales network, and various other technological developments.



★ **Pradipta Mohapatra**
Assistant Vice President - Sales
& Marketing
Mayfair Hotels & Resorts

MAYFAIR Hotels & Resorts has appointed Pradipta Mohapatra as the Assistant Vice President to head the sales and marketing division of the group. He will be responsible for the entire sales and marketing operation of the group, including financial budgets, sales office operation pan India, marketing, brand building, central reservation, and revenue management. Mohapatra began his career with Oberoi Group and has been associated with MAYFAIR since 2008 in various positions.





★ **Apoorva Maheshwari**
Director of Marketing
AccorHotels India



AccorHotels has appointed Apoorva Maheshwari as the Director of Marketing for AccorHotels India. In this role, Maheshwari will be responsible for leading the marketing activities of the growing portfolio of brands in the country. With a post-graduate

diploma in communication management specialising in brand management, her strengths are building effective teams, driving brand strategy and innovation, and creating compelling marketing communication. Her knowledge around both conventional and unconventional ways of brand building has contributed to some of the most disruptive and fastest growing brands in the country.

★ **Sneha Jha**
Director of Sales
JW Marriott Mumbai Juhu



The flagship property of JW Marriott Hotels in India has appointed Sneha Jha as the Director of Sales, having commenced July, 2018 onwards. With over a decade of experience in the hospitality industry, Jha brings to the table proficient expertise and immense knowledge across Sales and Market-

ing, Hotel Operations, Customer Service and Business Development. Before joining the JW Marriott Mumbai Juhu, she spearheaded a team as the Director of Sales and Marketing at Holiday Inn Mumbai wherein she was responsible for exploring revenue, generating opportunities and securing successful positioning for the hospitality brand. She also played a key role in mentoring her teammates, which further helped them in achieving goals defined for the hotel brand.

★ **Rohit Pushpavanam**
Executive Chef
Alila Diwa Goa



Alila Diwa Goa has appointed Rohit Pushpavanam as Executive Chef. In his new capacity, he will showcase his extensive knowledge of F&B at Alila Diwa Goa's signature contemporary menu. He has polished his expertise under Michelin & Celebrity Chefs from across the globe including Chef Qureshi, Chef Laurent Chancel from Yannick Alleno Group, Chef Ingo Moeller of Eckart Witzigmann, to name a few. The highlight of his career has been his stint to serve the Royal Families, Head of State from various parts of the World including Duke of Cambridge, Prince William & Kate Middleton. Chef Pushpavanam brings along over 16 years of experience in the luxury hotel and restaurant space. Prior to joining the team at Alila Diwa Goa, he served as the Sous Chef at Taj Exotica, Maldives.

★ **Vijay Rajiwade**
Loss Prevention Manager
Courtyard by Marriott Pune Chakan



Courtyard by Marriott Pune Chakan has appointed Vijay Rajiwade as the Loss Prevention Manager. With more than 17 years of experience in the hospitality sector, his career has so far been associated with Marriott only, with his earlier assignments being at JW Marriott Mumbai Juhu and Renaissance Mumbai Convention Centre Hotel. His expertise in the domain of loss prevention will define his role at the property, including safety and security of guests and associates, implementation of guidelines on loss prevention consistency review, brand standard audit, etc. Rajiwade will also have the responsibility of developing an annual loss prevention master training plan, developing and administering safety programmes, among others.

As good as gold

Enjoy a gold standard of health with Zespri's nutritionally dense SunGold variety of kiwi fruit, available seasonally between May to mid-October. This is a juicy, golden-coloured kiwi fruit that offers a refreshing sweet taste. A superior source of vitamin C, dietary fibre, folate, and other minerals and antioxidants make it one of the most nutrient-rich fruits available. Scoring 11.4 per 100 grams on the nutrient adequacy score, Zespri SunGold Kiwifruit is proven to be 10 times as nutritious as apples (1.8 per 100 grams) and contains three times the amount of vitamin

C as oranges, providing 161.3 per cent of the recommended daily allowance per 100 grams, in comparison to the 53.2 per cent in oranges.



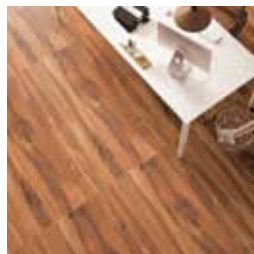
Sprawl in style



Loom Crafts has introduced its latest lounge sitting collection to infuse an elite and invitingly cosy feel to modern outdoor spaces. The collection includes state-of-the-art furniture pieces that are made of high-grade aluminium for frames and UV synthetic wicker for weaving. These loungers are available with a variety of fabric designs, patterns, and textures to lend a fantastic look to a garden or poolside. The upholstery in neutral or vibrant hues of black, grey, white, green, and cream can very well adjust and match with any kind of exterior décor.

All eyes on the floor

Antica Ceramica has launched its exquisite collection of nut brown-coloured tiles to add a visual interest and contemporary designer solution for luxurious flooring needs. The tiles, of a wooden and granite look, are artistically designed by skilled craftsmen. They have a safety glazed porcelain coating which makes them non-slippery and scratch-resistant. To infuse harmony and utmost perfection in a living space, the tiles artfully create a modern space that is stylish and has an absolute distinctive flair.



A 'chilling' tale

ELANPRO has launched a range of wine dispensers – Wine for You. The product is designed to chill, dispense, and preserve a dazzling array of red and white wines. The wine dispenser boasts of a more powerful cooling capacity than thermoelectric versions, and can better adapt to varying temperatures and added heat loads. It also features an innovative, compressor-based dispenser to keep a stable internal temperature despite environmental conditions. It uses nitrogen to displace incoming air to avoid any change in flavour or colour, and is equipped with a display for cabinet temperature control regulating between 6 and 22 degree Celsius.



Stamp of a lamp

Table lamps have always added to the appeal and charm of the décor of a room and in line with this thought, Ficus has unveiled its latest range of gorgeous driftwood lamps. These rustic driftwood lamps add elegance, sophistication, and natural beauty to any space. The lamps in the collection have organic linen shades that are quite sensational to look at.



In safe arms

IDUS introduces the latest collection of armchairs, which comprises beautiful seating design options and vibrant colours while being comfortable and durable. This designer range supports stainless steel base, foam, woven rattan core and jute, and premium use of leather. The collection has sofas, couches, chaise lounges, easy chairs, and ottomans. With this, IDUS to bring style and give a space Each



promises comfort together to a glamorous look. masterpiece is unique and fresh, with exceptional features that make it a favourite for comfort seekers and lounge lovers.



Of lines and curves

IOTA, a high-end luxury furniture store known to host the best of international furniture, has introduced Ploum and Prado sofas by Ligne Roset. The recent collaboration between IOTA and Ligne Roset is all set to showcase utmost luxury in design spaces. The Ploum seating is the fruit of much research into comfort, designed by R&E Bouroullec. The result is a special combination of two materials - a stretchable covering and ultra-soft foam. This combination, along with the Ploum sofas' truly ample dimensions, provides extreme comfort and accommodates different ways of sitting, stretching, or even lying down. The large settee is asymmetrical in construction. The seat of the sofa can accommodate up to four people. The Prado sofa is a perfect definition of contemporary living.



Cast in the best

World Bazaar, a premium store of imported outdoor furniture, has introduced the new range of German brand SaVeri. The collection has furniture designed using the cast out of cement, sand and granite, and then reinforced with natural fibre. SaVeri is globally known for its aesthetically designed centre tables, fire tables, planters, dining tables and chairs. The range requires absolutely no maintenance. The extent of cleaning involves a mere wiping down with a damp washcloth to remove any dust or debris.





GAURAV REGE

General Manager | Jehan Numa Palace Hotel, Bhopal

I love to run and workout, and have participated in the yearly half marathons for the past three years. The workouts that form part of the preparation process are a wonderful stress-reliever for me. Another favourite and the most precious time of the

day is reading out stories to my six-year-old daughter. Places like Dapoli and Ratnagiri are my favourite. The simplicity of life, the peaceful calm atmosphere, and the authentic and varied seafood here make them my favourite. Mauritius, too, holds a special place.

“ I love to run and workout, and have participated in marathons ”

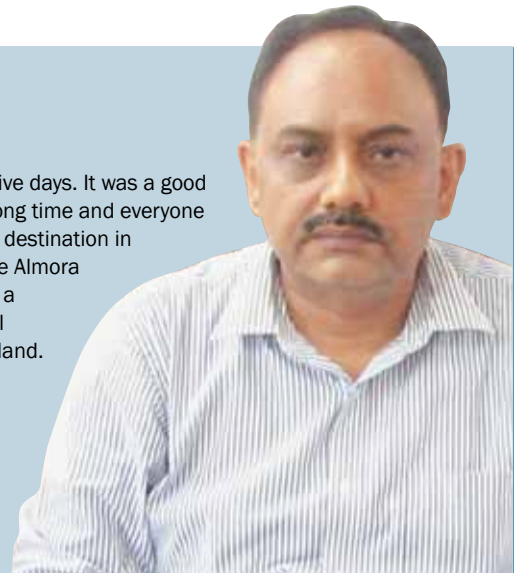
AK SINGH

Principal | Institute of Hotel Management, Mumbai

I stay positive, meditate, and try to disconnect with any negative situation. This helps me remain stress-free. I also try and spend as much time with my family as possible. I am passionate about reading and travelling. One of my most memorable holiday moments was when my entire family had gone to Dubai for a

vacation in 2017 for five days. It was a good family break after a long time and everyone enjoyed it. A favourite destination in India would have to be Almora in Uttarakhand, while a favourite international destination is Switzerland.

“ A favourite destination in India would have to be Almora in Uttarakhand ”



BHUVAN GM

Professor & Principal | Apeejay Institute of Hospitality, Navi Mumbai

I enjoy going to the vegetable market on Sundays to pick up fresh produce. At home, I enjoy cooking for my family and I like to eat good food and try different cuisines. Going for morning walks followed by yoga and meditation energises me. I also love to read and update myself on diverse fields. My

most memorable holiday was a road trip that I took with my family last year to South India, covering various places in Kerala and Tamil Nadu. The best part of the trip was the drive from Rameswaram to Dhanushkodi, surrounded by the Bay of Bengal and the Indian Ocean.

“ My most memorable trip was the drive from Rameswaram to Dhanushkodi ”

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