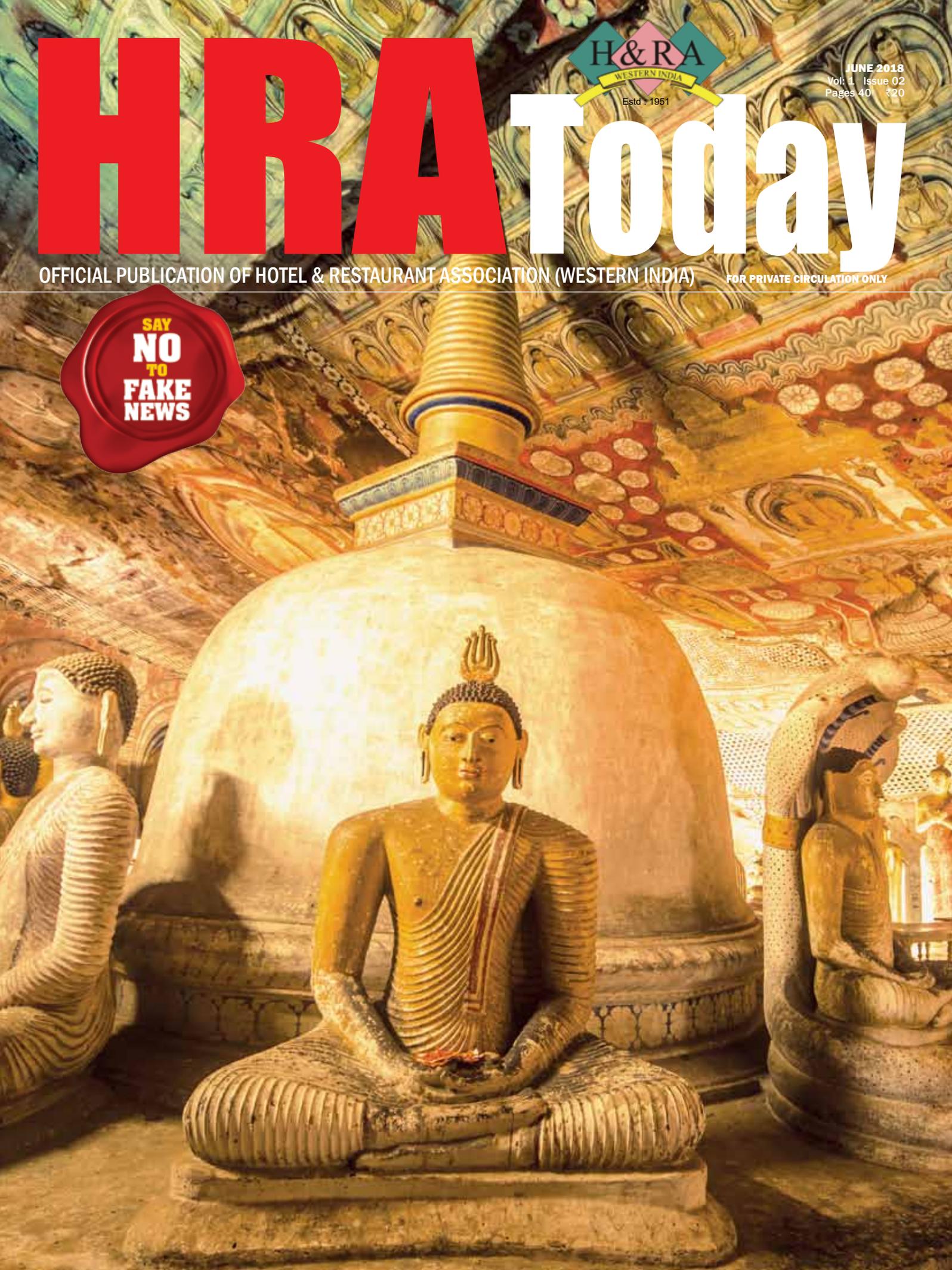


HRA Today



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Dear fellow members,

We recently celebrated World Environment Day that prompts us to be more aware of our actions that may be damaging the environment – something that our future generations will thank us for. Sustainability in all areas and protecting our environment should be everyone's concern. Apart from every tree one plants, which offsets 20 kilograms of carbon dioxide annually upon reaching maturity, it is important that adopting solutions utilising minimal natural resources like energy and water be everyone's priority.

The sustainability initiative goes beyond ideas like reusing guest linen, recycling waste materials, and changing to compact fluorescent lamps. The strategy also includes community involvement, like buying locally, supporting charities, and encouraging employees to volunteer in the community, as well as participating in global award and certification programmes. New hotels often incorporate eco-friendly concepts at the design stage, but older structures can also become more eco-friendly by researching ways to reduce waste and reuse or recycle items.

The internet has enabled trade organisations and individual consumers to research a hotel's environmental and sustainable policies, and then decide whether to stay there or not, providing a clear competitive advantage to hotels that can appeal to guests. Certification as an eco-friendly hotel can help ensure that guests are aware of a hotel's commitment to environmental principles.

Our industry has a very important role to play in championing the cause of saving the environment and saving nature for future generations. Friends, I am sure

you are aware that globally, tourism to a large extent is witnessing an upswing and is creating an opportunity for all players in the game.

Interestingly, our destination for the 18th Regional Convention, which HRAWI is celebrating for the very first time overseas, is Colombo, Sri Lanka. You will be happy to note that India continues to be the top source market for

“
Our industry has a very important role to play in championing the cause of saving the environment and saving nature for future generations
”

arrivals to Sri Lanka. The Sri Lankan hospitality industry is certainly growing. The luxury brand Sheraton is set to open two new properties here. There are few more brands whose presence will be shortly seen in Sri Lanka, which shows that it is a land of opportunities to be tapped by our industry.

I welcome you all not only to Sri Lanka's palm-fringed beaches, treasured heritage, exotic landscape and wildlife, but also to its warm and gracious people, who continue to keep travellers returning to this beautiful country.

Ayubowan! Colombo beckons!

With kind regards,
Dilip Datwani
President, HRAWI

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June 2018

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Cover Image
Buddha statues in Dambulla Cave Temple, Sri Lanka

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COLOMBO PLAYS HOST TO 18TH REGIONAL CONVENTION

HRAWI is all geared up to host its first regional convention out of India, with Sri Lanka setting the tone for a perfect venue. The association recently held a press conference in Mumbai to share the details of its 18th Regional Convention.

Shahzad Bagwan

The Hotel and Restaurant Association of Western India (HRAWI) is hosting its 18th Regional Convention in Sri Lanka from June 27-30, 2018. This will be the association's first regional convention to be held outside the country. It will see participation from key policy-makers, international government representatives, investors, and industry stalwarts. The convention will serve as an ideal platform for industry players to learn and adapt to the evolving market trends. Themed 'Surfing the Wave of Global Tourism', the convention's objective is to explore new avenues in the global culinary world, including emerging restaurant trends

in Sri Lankan cuisine, and the influence of food and travel bloggers in hospitality.

Speaking about the convention, **Dilip Datwani**, President, HRAWI, said, "This is our 18th Regional Convention and also the first time we are having the convention out of India. The reason for hosting the convention out of the country is because it is more of a cultural exchange. At the FHRAI level, we have already tied up with Bhutan and Nepal and are now looking to tie up with Sri Lanka, Malaysia, Thailand, and other neighbouring countries. This will help our members get the benefit of discounts and incentives when setting up projects, while at

the same time investors from Sri Lanka may come here and invest in our country. We are expecting more than 200 members, being a regional convention. This year's convention will be held at the Hilton hotel."

The association also revealed names of some of the people who would be attending the convention, including **Kumar De Silva**, Chairman, Sri Lanka Convention Bureau; **Sanath Ukwatte**, President of Hotel Association of Sri Lanka; **Aravinda De Silva**, Deputy Chairman, Ideal Motors; **John Amaratunga**, Minister of Tourism Development and Christian Religious Affairs; and **Taranjit Singh Sandhu**,



Hon'ble High Commissioner, High Commission of India.

"The second day will begin with a city tour paired with a lunch at a local restaurant and will be followed by a traditional performance and rendition of both national anthems later in the evening at the Hilton Grand Ballroom. The third day will be dedicated to business and

networking, with four different sessions on various aspects of hotel operations, food and travel bloggers, hotel interior trends, emerging restaurant trends, and emerging trends in Sri Lankan cuisine. The Hilton has also designed a special Spouses Programme, which involves a tea session with pairing of Sri Lankan food. The third morning will be dedicated to shopping

at the famous Odel Shopping Mall," said **Dinesh Advani**, Convention Chairman & past President, HRAWI. Post the convention, the association has designed two tour options – for two nights, three days and for three nights, four days. The tour choices include visiting Kandy, Peradeniya and Bentota, and will also include a visit to the Sacred Tooth Relic Temple.

“At the FHRAI level, we have already tied up with Bhutan and Nepal and are now looking to tie up with Sri Lanka, Malaysia, Thailand, and other countries”

“We are expecting more than 200 members, being a regional convention”

APPEAL

HRAWI requests MCGM to permit temporary sheds during monsoon

With the rains expected to arrive earlier than usual this year, F&B outlets in the city have applied to the Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai (MCGM) for permission to build temporary sheds for smooth operation of business. A number of establishments though are facing difficulties and have not been able to obtain the same. The Hotel and Restaurant Association of Western India (HRAWI), on behalf of its members, in a letter to the Municipal Commissioner has requested to instruct all MCGM

wards to grant such permission to hotels and restaurants in the city. The Association has assured the authorities of complete compliance and promised to abide by all relevant conditions as stipulated by the law. "The permission for sheds during the monsoon has been customarily granted by the MCGM every year. However, this year, many of our members have brought it to our attention that they are facing difficulties in obtaining the required permission. The sheds are essential for avoiding rainwater

seepage in the properties and for conveniently carrying out the daily operations at hotels and restaurants," says **Dilip Datwani**, President, HRAWI.

The letter specifically points out to areas that need to be covered in the monsoon. It states that overhead tanks, cooling towers, and other services installed in these areas need maintenance, especially during the rains. "We fully understand if there is any apprehension of misuse of the temporary sheds. For this, HRAWI assures



the MCGM of its commitment to the law and agrees to follow the statutory guidelines. We also humbly request the concerned authorities to look into the online process of licence renewals and applications, which has not yet taken effect at ward levels," adds Datwani.

CSR

Sofitel Mumbai BKC Hotel makes wishes come true

Sofitel Mumbai BKC Hotel has made a conscious contribution by fulfilling the wish of a 14-year-old child suffering from Thalassaemia Major. Kulbhushan Parkar, the only child in the family, aspires to have a career in hotel management and it has been his wish to meet a chef of a five-star hotel, learn to make at least one dish, and share it with his parents. Sofitel Mumbai BKC granted this wish in collaboration with Make-A-Wish India Foundation by organising a session in the kitchens of the luxury property with Executive Chef **Neeraj Rawoot** to make Spanish Flautas. Parkar has always been curious to try different cuisines from all across the globe. Growing up, he explored his interests in preparing new dishes with his mother. His dream came true as he curated a dish with Rawoot at the luxury hotel. Make-A-Wish India is a foundation known to arrange experiences for children aged 3 to 17 with life-threatening medical conditions.

Previously, the property has also done several initiatives that involved the hotel's ambassadors to encourage guests to make a conscious contribution towards the well-being of our world. Other initiatives by Sofitel Mumbai BKC include celebrating international disability day, frequent blood donation drives, planting for the planet and more.





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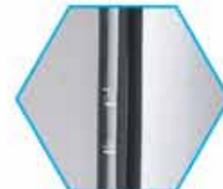
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ENVIRONMENT

Taj Wellington Mews celebrates World Environment Day



Taj Wellington Mews Luxury Residences understands its responsibilities towards mother earth and is always doing its bit such as celebrating the World Environment Day on June 5. Like every year, it organised activities for guests and associates on the occasion of World Environment Day in order to create awareness of the environment and empower people to grow to be active agents of sustainable and equitable development. To commemorate the event, Taj Wellington Mews planned a series of events spreading over a week. It started with a plantation drive and planted hundreds of flowering shrubs of different varieties in the garden space, complete with verdant vegetation in the hotel premises. It also distributed saplings to all residents, spa guests, and associates.

Anmol Ahluwalia, General Manager, Taj Wellington Mews, said, "We understand the importance of protecting the environment and hence, through the year, orchestrate activities

and initiatives that help protect nature. World Environment Day is a day to highlight and amplify our efforts towards a greener planet. This year, our staff spearheaded a plantation drive adding lush greenery to our verdant gardens. We also distributed saplings to spread awareness on creating a cleaner environment. These were the key initiatives along with a well-thought-out strategy to make an impact."

EVENT

Hoteliers come together for the differently-abled cricket team

The Disabled Sporting Society came together with Big Brother to help the physically-disabled Indian cricket team on their tour of Singapore. The team headed to Singapore for a three-day tournament from May 25-27, 2018, to participate in the Alan Border Cup for the physically disabled. **Rashid Khan**, CEO, Disabled Sporting Society; **Haroon Rasheed**, Secretary, Disabled Sporting Society; **Suvro Joarder**, Captain of the Physically Disabled Indian Cricket Team; **Mohinder Amarnath** (ex-Indian cricketer), and **Sachiin Joshi** attended the event that announced this venture, held at Sofitel Mumbai BKC Hotel.

Speaking at the occasion, **Biswajit Chakraborty**, General Manager, Sofitel Mumbai BKC Hotel, said, "The hotel is honoured to host this event in association with Big Brother and we wish the team luck in their endeavour of winning the upcoming Alan Border Cup in Singapore. Sofitel Mumbai BKC's alliance with the differently abled is to enunciate support to the community and talent, in addition to spreading joy and smiles to the members present. We have always believed in a communal way of living by supporting all members of society through various initiatives and encouraging the differently abled to showcase their talent across all platforms." Adding to the GM's address, **Rohit Chopra**, Regional Director of Sales - India, AccorHotels, said, "We are delighted to support the team and be part of this initiative. At AccorHotels, we firmly believe in enabling the lives of the locals and this is one such commitment."



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THE LEGACY MAN

Puneet Chhatwal, Managing Director and CEO, Indian Hotels Company, has a clear vision for the growth of the group, evident in the way the financial year 2017-18 concluded for them.

Hazel Jain

When **Puneet Chhatwal** was completing his course at IHM Pusa, he had no idea that he would find himself at the helm of one of the leading homegrown brands of Indian hospitality. He makes it sound easy though. "Hospitality is a business of common sense. It's as simple as that. The best part of joining Taj is coming home after spending 30 years in Europe. It feels very nice to be back and it's a matter of honour to be associated with a brand like Taj," he says.

When asked why Taj had decided to go back on its decision and continue having a multi-brand strategy from a single-brand strategy last year, he says, "I wasn't there when that decision was taken, but if I think about it, I would say that firstly, there is a lot of action happening in the midscale and maybe even in the economy segment. The second reason is that India is a very heterogeneous market. We have maybe 10 key cities and other source markets are in the rural areas. We want to be more and more global, but I don't think many cities can take the quality and positioning of

“As real estate keeps getting more expensive, it makes sense to work around the residential component and actually evolve the company to the next level”

Taj even though they are good markets and we have a role to play in those markets. Thirdly, it's our strategy. If it is about getting scaled, getting scaled with luxury is not very easy. Why give up some wonderful

brands that we have created that have latent potential? Something like Ginger is huge and there are more than 40 hotels when nobody in this country has 40 hotels in this segment. Also, Vivanta has



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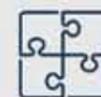


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great positioning. Why give up something that is working well? Why fix something that does not need fixing?"

Chhatwal is clear and precise about his vision for the growth of IHCL. He feels that common sense dictates that one remains in this business and explores opportunities of other brands because the idea that 'one size fits all' doesn't work. "As real estate keeps getting more expensive, it makes sense to work around the residential component and actually evolve the company to the next level," he says.

So, will Taj get into more residential projects, aka Taj Wellington Mews or a hotel cum residential? "Both. In fact, we are already doing it. Wellington Mews is one of the best examples in terms of how well a residential can be done, especially given our underutilised land banks and



The growth in margins will come mainly from the Taj brand because we will benefit very strongly from the volatility in the market



FSI being used going forward," Chhatwal adds.

GROWTH AREAS

Indicating his thought process about what growth really means, he asks why every hotel in India is talking about the number of rooms they are going to add to their portfolio.

"You can't take rooms to your bank account. It is important, of course, but it's not a true indication of growth. When it comes to growth, you have to take a 360-degree view of growing your people, growing talent, growing the inventory, growing the profit margins. I

have not heard anybody talk about how they are going to expand margins," he adds.

Chhatwal adds, "We are going to grow our margins by eight per cent in the next five years." He says that increasing margins is more important than increasing the number of hotels. "For me, the growth in margins will come mainly from the Taj brand because we will benefit very strongly from the volatility in the market. The occupancies are moving, so the flow-through will be great. The brands that will lead our growth will be Vivanta and Ginger in terms of scale."



The Leela widens WESTERN REACH

The Leela Palaces, Hotels and Resorts has won the competitive bid and management contract to operate Mahatma Mandir Convention Center. The group will also launch Gujarat state capital's largest hotel — The Leela Gandhinagar, a 300-key property slated to open by January 2019.

Kanchan Nath

With the latest addition of Mahatma Mandir and The Leela Gandhinagar to the group's portfolio, The Leela Palaces, Hotels and Resorts has reinforced its plan to expand into the international conferences and events space, underscoring its asset-light growth strategy. Elaborating on the same, **Vivek Nair**, Chairman and Managing Director, The Leela Palaces, Hotels and Resorts,

said, "The Mahatma Mandir Convention and Exhibition Center is a facility for 6,000 persons and has about 10,000 square feet of exhibition space. The location of Mahatma Mandir is also very important. This was set up about four years ago and run by the Gujarat government. It was felt that the standard of excellence was not maintained at the property. Therefore, the facility needed to be run professionally. Top hotel operators in the country and

abroad were invited for bids. We were the ones who won the bid in September last year. We started operation of the facility from April this year. Now, with our 130-member sales force throughout the country, we are marketing it."

The convention centre as well as the hotel have been funded by a joint venture of the Ministry of Railways and the Gujarat government. Leela Gandhinagar is the first

luxury hotel in the country to be constructed at the airspace of a railway station and will be built 25 metres above ground. The logistics issue of bringing people, especially if there was a conference of 6,000 people, was realised. "It was felt that delegates who went to the convention centre had to stay at hotels in Ahmedabad, which is at least a 45-minute drive. The honourable Prime Minister realised that a hotel needed to be built right there. The projects combine space and global standards of service, and cater to the growing demand for world-class venues. Together with the government of Gujarat, our endeavour is to help transform Gandhinagar into the convention capital of India."

International projects

Elaborating on the brand's foray into the international market, Nair said, "A number of dignitaries and royals from



the Middle East have stayed with us, especially at our Chanakyapuri property. One of the dignitaries from the royal family asked us if we could give our name to a property coming up at the Creek in Abu Dhabi, facing the Ministry of Finance, a very good location. So, we plan to have an 80-room Leela Palace there and two other service apartments. The construction of that has just begun. We want to take that on a fast-track basis and it should be ready in two years. Then we have a project in Dubai itself on the Jumeirah beach, very close to the Four Season's hotel and one in Business Bay, which is in Burj Khalifa. We have recently entered a contract to develop a property in Nha Trang, Vietnam. Vietnam is fast emerging as an exciting new destination for tourism. This is going to be the destination's finest hotel, a large property which is currently under development. There remain several other projects in the pipeline."

Domestic plans

Rajiv Kaul, President, The Leela Palaces, Hotels and Resorts, said, "We have been keen on having a significant presence in the MICE market. We started our journey with a convention hotel in Shahdara, and now we have moved forward." He

added, "We have our existing portfolio of nine hotels and the 10th property is going to be The Leela Gandhinagar." Talking about other Indian projects in the pipeline, he said, "Presently, we have construction going on for The Leela Hyderabad, which is in Banjara Hills. There is also a property in Jaipur, very close to Amer Fort on the Jaipur-Ajmer highway; also another in Agra. Therefore, there are four hotels which are under construction and we have several other hotels which are under development."

Amit Samson, the General Manager of Mahatma Mandir, concluded, "This hotel is the first of its kind, the only one to be built on railway tracks and the tallest in the city of Gandhinagar. The convention centre is built on 34 acres of land, it has a convention hall which is approximately 63,700 square metres, the largest in the country. This convention hall can equally be partitioned into three halls. It can seat about 6,000 people in theatre-style. Apart from this, it has three huge exhibition halls. It has got four seminar rooms, 12 conference rooms, one amphitheatre, and two food courts. Overall, it's a great destination for MICE."

“
The projects combine space and global standards of service, and cater to the growing demand for world-class venues. Together with the government of Gujarat, our endeavour is to help transform Gandhinagar into the convention capital of India
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Suite Room, Manali



Bedroom, Manali



Hotel Manali



Suite Room, Manali



Bedroom, Manali

Distinctive Designs

HS Ahuja & Associates continues to expand its diaspora of clients and locations. With a number of projects currently under progress, the interior design firm is surging towards a greater excellence.



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Restaurant, Manali

“HSAA offers turnkey services that ensure all aspects of creation and development are dealt with”

HS Ahuja & Associates (HSAA) has gained reputation for exciting and stimulating designs. Interior designer **Hema**, the Vice President at HSAA, ensures that clients get just the design they're looking for. Her understanding of space combined with a unique aesthetic sense make designs look more beautiful and allow them to fit perfectly with the aspirations of those who desire them.

“I like to work in line with the preferences of clients and so, I do a lot of different styles. I really don't have one particular design style. I love all things simple and elegant; I am a believer that interiors shouldn't look staged, something that you often see nowadays. I prefer the place to look loved and

lived in, with its own timeless personality and that little touch of fantastic,” says Hema.

HSAA offers a seamless turnkey service to clients and investors, ensuring that every aspect of creation and development is dealt with in synergy. Some of its ongoing projects are a resort in Manali, a hotel in Indore, one in Bhopal, and another in Dehradun, as well as residences and offices in Delhi.

Changing needs and changing geographical locations are a major deterrent in defining the services and ambience required to suit a particular location. With the definition of luxury being very subjective and changing with individuals and locations, getting the design

right may be a challenge, but not one that HSAA cannot overcome. “When you look around our work, you can immediately see the superior design and architectural edge softened with the soothing tones of luxury furniture and materials. Interior remodelling and refurbishment provide the opportunity to create a space that reflects your lifestyle,” concludes **Subhash Ahuja**, Managing Director, HSAA.

HSAA's designs are a melange of traditionalism and modernity. With roots that go back more than two decades, the spirit of presence has guided HSAA quite well. The company believes in adhering to the principles and values of a rich cultural heritage.



“Each project begins with an in-depth personality study with the client before design options are explored. This helps to learn about Client's taste, lifestyle and aspiration. From here a unique design combined with our signature style will evolve, with us working together to achieve a space the client will adore.”

Says Mr. Ahuja

“Experimentation is our basic principle on which new designs trends are built as well as developed. Complete flexibility in design is what we usually work with”

Says Ms. Hema



1/116 Subhash Sadan, W.H.S. Kirti nagar, Adjacent to NAWABS & Khasra No. 350 M.G. Road Near Sultanpur Metro Station

CEO: Subhash Ahuja: 09717097418 | Vice President: Ms. Hema: 09810004777

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HR practices need AN UPGRADE

Gurmeet Singh, Senior Area Director of HR - South Asia, Marriott International, pens down contemporary problems faced by the Human Resources department while hiring people for hotels.

The changing face of Indian hospitality presents a great paradox of our times, where industry practices and work dynamics are trying to play catch-up with the expectations and mindset of potential next-generation talent. We speak endlessly about the millennial workforce and how they prioritise in making a choice between abundantly available career options, yet the hotel industry is falling short in being agile and receptive to those expectations.

Too many demands, little compensation

The contemporary HR and acquisition team in the industry is constantly coming across hospitality students not willing to make hotels their number-one choice. The reason is quite straightforward: long working hours, labour-intensive work, a six-day work week (still widely practised), and a comparatively less-competitive pay range.

The hotel industry's need for candidates with excellent communication skills, presentation skills, and high aspirations for



career progression is undeniable. When we couple these attributes and equate them with the starting compensation and other work demands, we observe that these potential employees are drifting further from their aspiration to join the industry.

Dated processes

Although it is heartening to see that the industry has

“When it comes to recruitment, we still find a less-progressive approach being employed”

made considerable progress, we still have a long road ahead. However, when it comes to the recruitment process, we still find a less-progressive approach employed by many of the current players to manage this process, such as lengthy technical rounds, unilateral decision making, classical interviewing techniques, etc.

An innovative approach

Marriott has made tremendous leap in attracting the right talent at the right time by introducing a mobile-friendly App for the application process, chatbots to engage potential talent, use of behavioural interviewing tools, interviewer's training, Marriotternship (the group's internship programme), and PIE (Partner in Excellence) college relationship activities that are aligned with new-age talent acquisition trends.

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Eyeing the GREEN

The beauty of a hotel is hardly ever complete without perfectly manicured greens. Gardens are a sight meant to relax the mind of the guest. Some hotel spokespersons provide a clear picture of how landscapes make for a hotel's unique selling point.

Anupriya Bishnoi



SRINIVAS SRIRANGAM
General Manager
Novotel Imagica Khopoli

Novotel Imagica Khopoli is in a greenfield area just off the Mumbai-Pune expressway and is spread over 7.8 acres. The hotel is a perfect combination of tranquillity and thrill, with neatly done landscapes and garden areas. We believe, guests today appreciate ergonomically designed hotel interiors with beautiful exteriors and open spaces to suit dynamic needs for MICE activities. Modern hotel landscapes and gardens provide guests with the



opportunity to relax, party, conduct team-building activities, and open-space conferences. The possibilities are endless!

SUNIL KUMAR
Director of Operations
The Westin Pune
Koregaon Park

These days, hotels have to be pleasing to the eye for guests. While service is the heart of a hotel, the blood that flows in a hotel is its landscape and greenery. Lush green environs, in this concrete jungle, is what guests are looking for these days.

In a hotel like ours, we can provide a fantastic view of the city along with natural landscapes surrounding the property. This creates the feeling of an urban resort,



which definitely helps us attract business. A perfect combination of an outdoor and indoor space is what helps us in attracting more MICE business. With guest demands being so specific and distinctive these days, our venue options are able to cater to them easily and suitably.

TERRANCE MOTHA
General Manager
Lazylagoon Sarovar Portico Suites, Goa



In today's world of concrete jungles, there is nothing better than to see, feel, and smell the green. Landscaping enhances the ambience of any open or enclosed space, and even more so in the hospitality sector.

Resorts thrive on offering the ultimate luxurious experience amidst whispering palms,

beautiful lawns, and verdant greens. In the present time, no hotel or resort is complete without beautiful landscaping and gardens to support the property; they only add to the beauty a property could possess.

The USP of Lazylagoon Sarovar Portico Suites is that we host

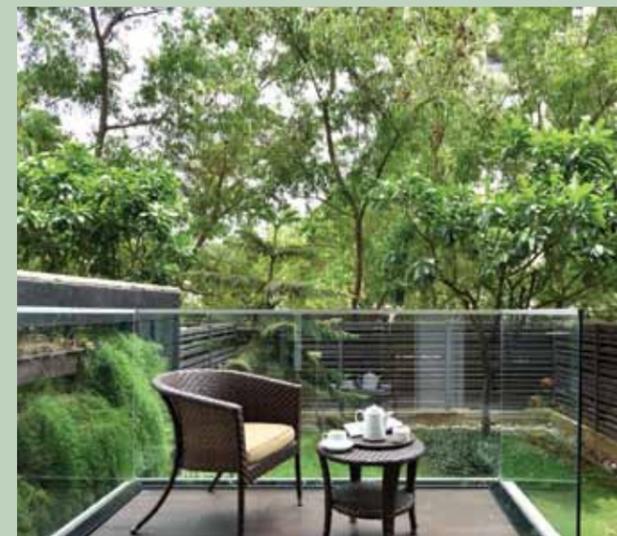
guests in the lap of nature. Ours is a perfect blend of effective, mindful landscaping. Here you will find tall swaying palms and cosy rooms set alongside a lazy lagoon. We create a peaceful escape from the humdrum of the city. It is a perfect environment for guests to relax and indulge in.

VAISHALI GAIKWAD
Housekeeping Manager
Marriott Suites Pune



Marriott Suites Pune is an all-suite concept, where each of the ground floor suites is equipped with a balcony and a garden. We have created beautiful vertical gardens with a big frangipani tree in each garden. Most of our long-stay guests prefer the Garden Suite as it gives them a sense of openness and allows them to connect with nature after a busy day at work. Being a pet-friendly hotel, the Garden Suite is the most opted for choice for those travelling with their furry friends. The USP that it holds for us is that it gives a feeling of space and rejuvenation to our guests.

A garden space also helps attract a lot of MICE business. Most of our business travellers work for long hours. For them, just coming back to the hotel and feeling at home is of utmost importance. The Garden Suite is well-suited for this. The lawns at our hotel are also a preferred destination for intimate evenings of networking and other corporate gatherings.



WILSON D'SOUZA
Executive Housekeeper
Conrad Pune



Hotel landscapes have proven to be an important selling factor in major business or leisure hotels as they provide a sense of calmness to the weary traveller. A landscape promotes a relaxed, clean, and green environment that allows the traveller to detox and forget the clutter of routine life.

It has also been scientifically proven that areas with landscapes allow guests to relax quicker due to a higher level of oxygen. Hotel landscapes also play an important role in attracting MICE business as they offer to organisations a different setup from the conventional boardroom for meetings or events.

Organisations prefer to have outdoor events or themed parties with innovative photo-ops near these landscapes. MNCs also prefer using these landscapes to conduct team-building activities, as they provide a calming and creative environment for the employees to participate in.



RCI forms new ALLIANCES IN INDIA

RCI India has partnered with Clarks Holidays, a unit of Clarks Inn Group of Hotels, and will have 14 properties added to its vacation exchange network. **Sabina Chopra**, Managing Director, RCI India, shares insights from the Indian market and the company's future plans.

Ankita Saxena

Tell us about your operating model.

Since its inception in India in 1992, RCI India has more than 200 affiliated resorts in over 60 destinations across India and more than 4300 resorts across 110 countries globally. In India, timeshare has grown from a single resort hotel to a chain of hotels and resorts providing consumers with the opportunity to buy vacation time in any of our properties worldwide. RCI vacation owners enjoy the peace of mind timeshare provides when travelling each year. The travellers don't have to deal with the stress of planning a vacation and booking accommodations, and there is no ambiguity while planning a timeshare vacation as there is a guaranteed destination. Customers

can trade time and locations with other owners, allowing one to explore new places. Members can choose from spacious accommodation at quality resorts that offer fully-equipped kitchens, living rooms, etc., as compared to hotel rooms. There is also access to on-site amenities such as swimming pool, tennis courts, golf courses, outdoor adventure activities and much more.

Please elaborate on the affiliation with Clarks Holidays.

In the past year, we have added Club Mahindra, Kamat Group, and Sterling Resorts to our exchange network. Our latest affiliation is with Clarks Holidays. We are also focused on the overall expansion strategy in India. We plan on increasing our destinations from 60 in India to a triple digit by 2020. The overall emphasis will be on adding more value to our members.

Affiliation with partners is our core business. Our members are vacation ownership members of our affiliate partners, hence we work very closely with them. Affiliations help in making our offerings wider and giving our members more options. Partners are a key differentiator in developing, communicating, and delivering value to our customers.

Does RCI offer its inventory only to members?

Yes, we offer inventory to our members only. The RCI programme offers affordable luxury and good resorts. Along with this, it also offers assistance through RCI Inventory Analytics Advisory, which provides the customers with additional insight and consulting on the best inventory mix to support their rental, sales, and member needs.

What segment of travellers does the company cater to?

Most of our members are of 35-50 years of age and belong to affluent middle-class families. Going forward, we will also target senior citizens and the millennial segment. We see a lot of potential in the senior citizen segment as there is a growing population which, after retirement, wants to travel and enjoy varied experiences. To attract the millennial segment, we are working on developing short-stay products of less than three days, as millennials prefer several small vacations over long weekends.

What are the promotional plans for this year?

This year, we plan to focus majorly on social media. Through RCI's social media pages, we promote our newest destinations and resorts, and provide travel tips.

“We plan on increasing our destinations from 60 in India to a triple digit by 2020”



Buddhist Spots

need accommodation



There is a need for private players from the hospitality industry to take note of the potential that lies around key Buddhist spots in western India. These are some of the issues and opportunities that were brought forth by bright minds at an exhibition held in Mumbai recently.

Hazel Jain

VIJAY KUMAR GAUTAM
Principal Secretary (Department of Tourism), Government of Maharashtra and Managing Director, MTDC



We are opening a centre where all the stakeholders, including investors, can approach us and get a response. These are the strategies that Maharashtra is adopting in line with our tourism policy of 2016, which is taking heritage and cultural tourism to the forefront. We have large asset in terms of land; we have couple of hundreds of acres of land identified, which we are planning to offer to investors from Buddhist countries.

SUDHANSHU PANDEY
Joint Secretary - Department of Commerce
Ministry of Commerce & Industry, Government of India



How do we enhance the experiential aspect for tourists visiting Buddhist spots? Infrastructure is an issue. We need softer elements around the Buddhist circuits, including different types of accommodation. A tourist's experience should match his/her expectations. The private players, such as those in the hospitality and travel industries, must also play their cards well.

KARAN ANAND
Head - Relationships
Cox & Kings



Why can't we mine this goldmine? Bodh Gaya, for instance, which is a centre for Buddhist tourism, doesn't have hotels. Leave alone all grand plans, just get few five-star hotels there, get camping sites, etc. The hoteliers right now don't get permissions to build hotels in Bodh Gaya. The state government doesn't give permission. Bihar has not given permission for five-star hotels in Patna for a long time. The state and central governments both said they would help with this.

VISHAL KAMAT
Chief Executive Officer
Kamat Hotels India



For tourism to thrive anywhere, it's a step ladder. You can't only cater to the top, and you can't focus only on the bottom. You have to bring something for every budget traveller. We have to be able to appeal to every budget to be able to grow and have more opportunities. Even when we go for a pilgrimage, after visiting the deity, we also want to enjoy the place. First devotion, then relaxation. We need to build a credible India.

Units of green

Chelsea Smith, Senior Designer, Hirsch Bedner Associates (HBA), talks about the need for every process of building a hotel to be sustainable, from selecting the right manufacturer of materials to ensuring that the interiors are as environmentally friendly as can be.



Chelsea Smith

Hotel owners and guests are expressing their concern for the environment, and both are playing a role in making the hospitality industry more sustainable. Sustainability, an all-encompassing term for reducing the carbon footprint and lowering operating costs, has become a key focus. With the help of government organisa-

Choosing well

The major challenge facing owners, architects, designers, and contractors looking to design for sustainability in the hospitality industry is that a hotel operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year, with guests expecting certain luxuries, such as restaurants, fitness centres, and spas. So, how

impact on the environment happens. It becomes increasingly important for designers to research manufacturers that choose more efficient production by reducing the amount of scrap material that accumulates, as well as those that reduce the amount of pollutants that are released during manufacturing. This is why it is important to either reuse or recycle the materials. This goes for both exterior and interior materials of a sustainable hotel. Overall, practising sustainability means being aware of where a product or material comes from, how it is manufactured, and its impact on the environment once it has reached the end of its usable life.

Going all out

Other ways to implement sustainability practices fall across the entire spectrum of the design of the hotel, from the implementation of more efficient HVAC systems, focus on water conservation and management, introducing solar energy where applicable, using appropriate and efficacious lighting for different areas within the hotel, and implementing 'green roofs' in applicable situations that can

“Practising sustainability means being aware of where a product or material comes from, how it is manufactured, and its impact on the environment once it has reached the end of its usable life”

tions, better technology, and green education, environmentally friendly hotels is not just an idea anymore, but is fast becoming a norm. Not a new concept for the industry, the energy crisis in the early 1970s caused concern about utility costs and energy supply, which prompted hoteliers to focus on energy conservation strategies.

can the industry be sustainable but still maintain the level of luxury that guests expect when staying at these hotels? The benefit of a new-build is that sustainable materials can be used from the ground up, however, it is important to acknowledge that the production and delivery of the material up to its installation is where the majority of the negative



also lend themselves to another outdoor space for guests in high-rise buildings in urban cities. These options come at a cost, one that can be hard to swallow for any hotel owner footing the bill.

Sustainable interiors

As consumers have become more environmentally conscious, hoteliers have become more interested in low-impact interiors to create healthy and productive places to stay and work. As mentioned before, sustainable interiors should consist of products where manufacturing has little to no impact on the environment and can be environmentally friendly to dispose. These principles are now much easier to follow thanks to the growing number of commercial 'green' products available for the hospitality industry.

For flooring, bamboo floors have become a popular sustainable flooring option because of their durability and strength compared to a hardwood floor, while also being a highly renewable material. Other natural options include reclaimed wood flooring and cork flooring. Concrete is also a natural material

and it can also be recycled 100 per cent. Today's concrete floors come in many colours, polishes, and designs. Natural slate and stone is another sustainable option and many a time can be obtained locally. Recycled carpet tiles have become a popular choice for sustainable hotels in an effort to increase the amount of recycling and reuse of post-consumer carpet, and reduce the amount of waste carpet going to landfills. Some manufacturers are cradle-to-cradle certified and will reclaim their old carpet for free to then be used to make a new one.

A challenge in hospitality design can be finding fabrics that meet sustainability guidelines while also being durable enough for heavy traffic within a hotel setting. The textile industry consumes large amounts of water in manufacturing and generates a large amount of waste water. Studies have shown that toxic chemicals are used for dyeing, bleaching, and finishing fibres that release volatile organic compounds (VOCs) into the atmosphere, which are dangerous to breathe in and can affect people's health. It would make a compelling argument for con-

sidering to use natural fibres for hotel textiles, which are largely biodegradable and eco-friendly. However, these also come at a cost and don't always prove to withstand constant use in hotel guest rooms.

The obvious sustainable choice for designers is products with low VOCs, which can be found in paints, furniture polishes, adhesives. Many VOCs can be toxic and may affect the eyes, respiratory system, or even the central nervous system. For years, there have been low VOC to zero VOC paint products available, and many manufacturers of furniture and flooring make products that do not use VOCs in their finishes. Using low to no VOC products helps to promote better indoor air quality and a healthy environment for hotel guests.

In all, it takes the coordinated effort of owners, architects, designers, contractors, and manufacturers to create and open a noteworthy and truly sustainable hotel. It is a movement that I do not see going away any time soon, and that is largely to the benefit of future generations.

“It takes the coordinated effort of owners, architects, designers, contractors, and manufacturers to create and open a noteworthy and truly sustainable hotel”

MOVING AHEAD

with technology

Gary Patrick, Chief Executive Officer, Hotel Internet Services, the company that provides the BeyondTV in-room entertainment system in hotels across the world, says that hotels must continuously look to provide more convenience to guests through technology while ensuring that they're doing enough to boost revenue from alternate streams.

As the evolution of entertainment technology continues to place a greater emphasis on consumer demands for personalisation and enhanced convenience, hoteliers have had little choice in needing to adapt their in-room services accordingly. Perhaps nowhere is this more apparent than in the continuously declining video-on-demand sales that are virtually a universal phenomenon experienced by properties around the world. However, when looking at it from the hotel guest's perspective, the idea of purchasing video content from a limited selection makes little sense when simply logging into a personal device provides access to a wide range of online streaming options.

Yet, while the rise of streaming services has undoubtedly decreased the value of video-on-demand, its existence should not be seen as a threat to in-room revenue. Instead, online streaming and smart devices offer a vital new opportunity to interact with guests in a way that enriches their experience while providing a more effective means of boosting

alternative revenues. With this in mind, hoteliers should take note of the growing guest preference for solutions that provide personal smart device to television casting. A feature that has only skyrocketed in popularity with consumers, thanks to the availability of smart televisions, casting is rapidly becoming a mainstream feature in guest rooms around the world as

“

BeyondTV serves to transform existing guest room televisions into all-encompassing hubs for essentially any entertainment, communication, and informational need of the guest

”

guests look to emulate the same entertainment experience that they have become accustomed to at home.

For hotels looking to cater to this demand, industry-leading solutions now exist that not only offer guests casting abilities, but also increasingly satisfy their overall desire for more personalised and instantaneous services. Platforms such as HIS' BeyondTV in fact serve to transform existing guest room televisions into all-encompassing hubs for essentially any entertainment, communica-

tion, and informational need. Alongside providing guests with the ability to effortlessly view streaming subscriptions on a much larger screen, BeyondTV allows users to perform the same action when viewing and posting content on personal social media networks. Going a step further in enhancing guest communication, BeyondTV offers a new and more updated ap-

proach to learning details about hotel services and ordering amenities. By simply clicking a remote-control button, guests using BeyondTV can circumvent the need to call or visit the front desk when wanting to request items, including ordering room service or making restaurant reservations. With many of today's younger guests often preferring newer and faster means of communication over traditional and slower forms, solutions such as BeyondTV provide hoteliers with the ability to communicate with guests in a manner that suits their modern lifestyle.



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BANKING on banquets

The banqueting industry is growing by leaps and bounds, and the kind of requirements customers now have are quite diverse. We find out from experts how hotels are coping with these unusual demands and making a mark for themselves amongst competition.

Anupriya Bishnoi

SOUMODEEP BHATTACHARYA

Director of Sales & Marketing
Le Méridien Goa, Calangute

A venue for every occasion

Le Méridien Goa, Calangute, offers 146 tastefully appointed rooms and the banqueting spaces, including indoor and outdoor venues, are spread over 1037 sqm. Owing to our strategic location, we are a preferred choice for social events, wedding-related events, and corporates planning off-site conferences or incentive tours. Our banqueting spaces are as unique as occasions are varied. For people who prefer an indoor venue for award ceremonies or product showcases, we have the Reis Magos ballroom that is spread over 288 sqm. It features a pre-function area and an outdoor terrace venue that has a large chessboard and life-size chess pieces that make for the perfect backdrop for enviable group photographs or activities. Tiracol, named after one of Goa's

prominent forts, is a 16-seater boardroom with state-of-the-art amenities that are perfect for business meetings.

Since Goa is a sought-after wedding destination, we do have venues that are ideal for weddings and social events. The poolside features a Plunge Bar and a veranda that adds a touch of nostalgia, having been designed as an old Portuguese villa. This is perfect for *sangeet* or cocktail evenings with crafted cocktails, succulent grills, and upbeat music featuring a live band.

Telhado, the open-to-sky terrace venue overlooking the Arabian Sea, is for those who want a beachside wedding without having to wade through sand. It has the sea on one side and the verdant green hills on the other, making it a romantic setting for



couples to take their vows. We understand the requirement of the enquirer and the occasion thoroughly before we recommend or offer venue options.

Dynamic, but successful

Banqueting is a dynamic segment and is subject to change based on seasonal requirements. However, from our catering performance in the last nine months, we are cautiously optimistic that the segment will continue to be successful.

Beneficial tie-ups

We work with several established event management companies based in Goa and other parts of India on lead basis. Based on their expertise, we also refer them to guests who are looking for specialised requirements and do not have an event management resource to help them.



“Banqueting is a dynamic segment and is subject to change based on seasonal requirements”

SANKET THAKUR

Food & Beverage Manager
The Resort Madh-Marve, Mumbai

Paying attention to what is needed

Banquets are very popular because they have the power to effortlessly give an event a focus, whether it's a party, a ceremony, or a dance. The act of sitting and dining brings people together and it also offers a relaxed and natural setting for people to network at ease. It is not a very tough task to handle a guest's banqueting requirements. The most important aspect is that we must listen very carefully to what the guest needs. Whatever the purpose is, it's important that it resonates throughout the entire event. Queries may be varied, but the approach towards the guest must be positive. This helps achieve guest satisfaction and it eases the process of living up to their expectations. If we know our product well, only then can we sell it to our guests.

Planning makes a difference

Juggling the various tasks that come with organising a banquet



can be a serious undertaking. So, there must be careful consideration and planning from the onset of the process. It takes a can-do attitude, real attention to detail, and a desire to make a difference.

So, it can be a bit challenging when we tie-up with some external event management company mainly because we know our property better than anyone else. It is easier for us to sell it to the guest and we can do a better job of it than any other event management company can.

ATISH KUMAR BARAL
Deputy F&B Manager
Signature Club Resort



Equipped for all events

The banqueting industry deals with requirements such as themes, catering, drinks and refreshments, audio and visual requirements, entertainment, decorations, table planning, transportation logistics, etc. The industry is required to customise and cater to all the above needs. It is therefore important that we equip ourselves accordingly. A lot of planning and execution goes into every event that is hosted by us.

Signature Club Resort is an ideal venue for hosting all types of corporate events, formal get-togethers, weddings, and social gatherings. The resort is immersed in the lap of nature providing a green carpet experience and the perfect ambience for all types of banqueting events.

Catering to tech needs

The biggest challenge that we face in the industry is technological requirement of our clients. The world today is moving completely towards a digital phase and it is important that we keep up with current trends in terms of technological facilities that we provide. Signature Club Resort is equipped with a spacious lawn fit for royal weddings. Other indoor banquet

“It is important that we keep up with current trends in terms of technological facilities that we provide”

halls of 2500 sqft and 550 sqft facilitate our guests to conduct their other rituals and functions, which requires air-conditioned facilities so that grand receptions can be planned and organised in our 8,500-sqft lawn. They have massive open space where themed dinners and cocktail stations can be planned, and we have also allotted a separate concrete space for setting up stages of up to 3500 sqft.





SAURABH CHOWDHURY
Director of Sales
The Westin Mumbai Garden City

Quotations meet expectations

The market for catering is very dynamic and there is a lot of competition from hotels of similar stature and stand-alone banqueting setups with quality

infrastructure. Hence, it is critical for a hotel's sales team to ensure that the client's requirement is thoroughly linked to the hotel's benefit in meeting or exceeding the expectations, and ensure that the first

quotation would be in line with their expectations.

Maintaining thresholds

We have a minimum banquet threshold that we maintain. Post analysing the client requirement, past trends, history with the company and competition scenario, we send our quotations while taking into consideration the minimum revenue that we need to drive from the suggested banqueting rooms.

Managing without ties

We do not tie up with event management companies and work on case-to-case basis taking into consideration the demand, size of the requirement, and the month of the requirement.



“ We do not tie up with event management companies and work on a case-to-case basis ”

SM AZMAT
President Sales & Marketing
Jaypee Hotels & Resorts

Providing what the client needs

Banqueting is another name for a customised setup. It is different in every aspect from one event to another, and is dependent on individual choice and requirement. We have multiple venue options like meeting rooms, banquet halls with state-of-the-art facili-

ties, and outdoor event spaces that can cater to the requirements of the guest in terms of corporate or MICE events, social gatherings, weddings, and other such occasions.

Challenges are a blessing

I would say it's not challenging

but interesting to cater to different people with varied needs. The processes and management of events at Jaypee Hotels & Resorts is streamlined as we have a dedicated creative team that keeps a detailed eye on the requirements and needs of the guest, thus making the event memorable.

Empanelled event management teams

We do have empanelled event management teams that work with us on third-party basis and provide guests with multiple options in terms of internal decor. Empanelled companies are reliable and well-versed with the dos and don'ts at the property, which is always easier to handle.



“ Empanelled companies are reliable and well-versed with the dos and don'ts ”



SMART PURCHASES

Benjamin West is one of the world's leading Furniture, Fixtures and Equipment (FF&E) and Operating Supplies and Equipment (OS&E) purchasing firms that has earned an unparalleled reputation for cost effective, industry-leading results. **Alan Benjamin**, President, Benjamin West, talks about the group's strategy to stay relevant in a dynamic industry.

Anupriya Bishnoi

How is Benjamin West achieving the goal of being cost effective?

Achieving cost-effectiveness is one of the key aspects of what we do. Nobody hires a purchasing firm to spend more money. Cost effectiveness can be achieved in a couple of ways; the simplest is if you have a price for a product, we will buy a product like that, of better quality, in less money. We have a great relationship with all the top vendors. We also look at specifications from a design perspective.

Usually, hoteliers want the lowest price for a given quality, but we make sure the product is going to be durable and will stand the entire life in the hospitality environment, which is much harsher than a residential environment. Another key element is that you don't want to deal with a vendor who may have quoted the lowest price, but is not delivering on time. So, whatever you thought you would save, you will lose

in delays because you cannot open the hotel on time. What we do is an overall cost saving, cost avoidance, and cost over life analysis to make sure it's not merely the lowest price on the spreadsheet.

Has a change in demands by hotels been a challenge?

Hoteliers are asking for more services as well as a wider and deeper knowledge about resources. They are trying to be more unique. One of the biggest challenges we have is dealing with schedules and budgets, and to achieve the best within these two aspects. We never work for anyone but the owners. So, we don't have any incentive of picking any furniture company. We will go for a furniture company that's going to provide the best solution for the owner.

Also, sometimes we do accept projects with unrealistic deadlines, but we never let owners buy from a vendor with unrealistic pricing. It's our job to research and analyse pricing and material before the owner

wishes to simply pick the product with the lowest price.

What's your take on going digital in procurement?

We have the best procurement system in the industry. We spent more than USD one million developing our own system. The system itself is great, but there is no 'press a button' for making everything happen on time. A human element still exists in the industry. It makes us efficient in what we do.

The benefit of technology can be a bit overblown. Whenever there is a real-time problem like quality or price negotiation, it's not a computer but a human to the rescue. One of the greatest benefits that owners receive by hiring us is that all major vendors look to us for a six or seven-digit purchase order every week. You can't put that benefit on a spreadsheet and it really doesn't matter if my system talks to the vendor's system. Technology is great, but the final decision is still through human interaction.



“ Hoteliers want the lowest price for a given quality, but we make sure the product is going to be durable as well ”

APPOINTMENTS



Novotel Goa Dona Sylvia Resort has appointed Vishal Khosla as General Manager. He brings over two decades of hospitality and management experience to the role. Khosla will be responsible for spearheading operations at the beach resort and ensuring growth with innovative strategies. His strong team-building skills, expert approach towards business development, comprehensive knowledge of international standard service procedures, and a resilient background in hospitality will provide strategic and tactical depth to the hotel.

Vishal Khosla
General Manager
Novotel Goa Dona Sylvia Resort



Rajneesh Kumar has joined as the General Manager at Courtyard by Marriott Raipur. He brings to the table his vast repertoire of running and managing highly successful hotels and has an extensive experience of almost 14 years in the hospitality industry. In this role, Kumar will be responsible for eliciting performance from associates, culminating fine guest experiences, and working towards achieving the vision of the hotel. Through his strategic leadership, he will ensure effective and efficient management at the hotel.

Rajneesh Kumar
General Manager
Courtyard by Marriott Raipur

Devesh Rawat has been appointed as the General Manager of Indore Marriott Hotel. Rawat has over 18 years of experience in the hospitality industry and has worked with a number of hotel brands such as Taj, The Leela, Sheraton Grand and many more. His new role will require him to oversee and monitor all departments, manage the commercial and operational strategy and performance of the hotel, ensure full compliance to hotel operating controls, SOPs, policies, procedures and service standards, and safeguard the quality of operations.



Devesh Rawat
General Manager
Indore Marriott Hotel

Azaya Beach Resort Goa has appointed Rajesh KR Gupta as the General Manager. An industry veteran with over two decades in the hospitality industry, Gupta brings with him the experience of pre-opening hotels along with an expertise in revenue analysis, yield management, and sales & marketing. In his new role, he will be responsible for offering guests gracious hospitality and intuitive personalised services that Azaya aims for. Prior to joining Azaya Beach Resort Goa, Gupta worked with Orchid Ecotel Hotel Pune in the capacity of General Manager, where he was in charge of overseeing the transformation of the hotel.



Rajesh KR Gupta
General Manager
Azaya Beach Resort Goa



Hyatt Regency Pune has appointed V Prakash as the Director of Sales & Marketing. With a career spanning over 18 years in the hospitality industry, Prakash brings in a wealth of knowledge and experience with him. A post graduate in marketing, he began his career with Taj Mahal Palace and Towers Mumbai in 1995, and has spent maximum time with ITC Hotels in a sales role. In the new role, he will be responsible for improving sales and providing the best of the Hyatt Regency Pune experience to guests along with leading a young and enthusiastic team. Prior to joining Hyatt Regency Pune, Prakash was the Country Director, India and Sri Lanka, for Soneva.

V Prakash
Director of Sales & Marketing
Hyatt Regency Pune

Amit Chawla has been appointed as the Operations Manager at Country Inn & Suites by Radisson, Navi Mumbai. His primary responsibility at the 96-key hotel will be handling the entire operations of the hotel, including sales and finance. He will also ensure that apart from the operational goal, the hotel enhances its recognition in the market with new additions to the property and maintains the standards set by the Radisson brand. Chawla has been working in this industry for over 17 years. Prior to the new assignment, he was working with ITC Hotels as a Food and Beverage Manager. He began his career with the Taj Hotels and Resorts in the F&B arena, and then rose from a supervisory to a managerial level.



Amit Chawla
Operations Manager
Country Inn & Suites by Radisson, Navi Mumbai



The Westin Mumbai Garden City has appointed Saurabh Chowdhury as Director of Sales & Marketing. In the new role, Chowdhury will delve deeper into understanding the client base, devise and implement strategic plans to achieve maximum revenue, promotional coverage, and marketing opportunities for the hotel. He will maintain and promote an environment of teamwork with effective and clear communication amongst the staff. Prior to joining The Westin Mumbai Garden City, Chowdhury worked at The Renaissance Mumbai Convention Centre Hotel and Marriott Executive Apartments, where he led the team in generating FIT and MICE for all 28 pan India properties.

Saurabh Chowdhury
Director of Sales & Marketing
The Westin Mumbai Garden City

AccorHotels has appointed Yojan Das as the Guest Experience Manager for Novotel Hotels & Resorts, Goa. With over seven years of experience in the hospitality industry, Das is a result-oriented professional and will be responsible for team management, business and skill development, as well as overseeing and co-ordinating for various amenities at the group's properties in Goa. She will ensure that guest requests are addressed on time and as required. Das has previously been associated with hotels like Vivanta by Taj, Goa & Bengaluru and ITC Sonar, Kolkata. She will bring dedication and a can-do attitude to the new role, and work enthusiastically to fulfil all her duties.



Yojan Das
Guest Experience Manager
Novotel Hotels & Resorts, Goa

'Oh, live' the oil!

Leonardo Olive Oil, from Cargill India, meets the nutrition and health needs of consumers by creating the perfect blend of health and taste in the premium olive oil category. The brand is breaking the category dynamics by simplifying the nomenclature of its variants for the consumers by renaming them by their usage. The new names of Leonardo's olive oil variants are Cook All, meant for all kinds of Indian cooking, including deep frying; Just Lite for day-to-day Indian cooking excluding deep frying; and Just Drizzle, which is perfect for salad dressings, dips, and condiments. A gold embossing has been added to connote that the brand is imported from Italy.



Iced to the 'Tea'

Positive Food Ventures, through its brand Brewhouse, is eyeing to change the way we consume iced tea by bringing real-brewed iced tea in a bottled format for the first time in India. The iced teas are all-natural with no preservatives and contain 40-70 per cent less sugar than aerated beverages and juice-based drinks. The company sources its tea from the Nilgiris in South India, known to produce some of the finest teas in the world. Real-brewed tea means that the tea is not made from a powder or concentrate formulated in the lab, but from brewing real tea leaves in water. The iced teas are available in Classic Lemon, Classic Peach, and Honey Mint flavours.



Jewelled basins

Vitra introduces its new collection, the Water Jewels washbasins. The collection's seemingly simple form and function are enhanced to incredible effect with PVD coatings, a state-of-the-art process of vaporising and depositing metal powder onto a surface, which remains corrosion-free and scratch-resistant. This series artfully showcases the designs of ceramic washbasins finished with brilliant metallic rim coatings that draw inspiration from traditional Turkish craftsmanship. The Water Jewels washbasins are available with platinum, gold, and copper-coloured rims, and are suitable for bench-mount, semi-inset, and under-counter installation.



Rising above the rest

The White Teak Company has launched a designer floor lamp collection to warm up the overall tone of a living space, both aesthetically and functionally. From classic to bold and trendy designs, each piece of the collection has its own exclusivity. The best way to enhance any space, the light beautifully illuminates dark corners, giving living spaces a touch of luxury. Pick a tall floor lamp today and add style to your interiors.



Lime delight

Pergo Sensation gives you exciting new oak décor to delight! Limed Grey Oak looks and feels like a floor weathered by the sun and sand, adding a maritime touch to any room. Sensational wood-look floors from Pergo retain lustre longer. Taking laminate flooring to a whole new level, Pergo Sensation offers beautiful, authentic, textured flooring that has a truly natural feel. The unmatched durability of the patented TitanX surface protection will make your floors look fresh and elegant always.



Illuminate the laminate

Ply Mahal has launched Glorious Backlight Laminate Panels, a new concept with metallic fusion and backlighting. With designer laminate panels becoming popular not only for their appearance but also for the impact they have on spectators, this collection is the best way to charm guests with delightful interiors.



The world of wicker

Wicker World has curated a bespoke range of 'Comfy' daybeds. Designed by Amit Sawhney, these new daybeds make outdoor living more pleasurable. The collection can blend seamlessly with a garden, patio, or poolside. These daybeds are made in high-quality aluminium frame and woven with all-weather wicker from Germany. Each daybed uses a quick-dry mattress and foam which is upholstered in UV-resistant fabric available in a range of colours. Some of them also have an overlapping canopy that provides filtered sun protection. This collection can resist fading, cracking, or tearing. The modern and sleek style is designed to give maximum comfort.



Premium Roll Away Bed

Fold Away Bed Frame

Budget Roll Away Bed with Foam Mattress 3.5" thick

Premium Roll Away Bed with Off Center Folding Mattress

Premium Roll Away Bed with Folding Mattress

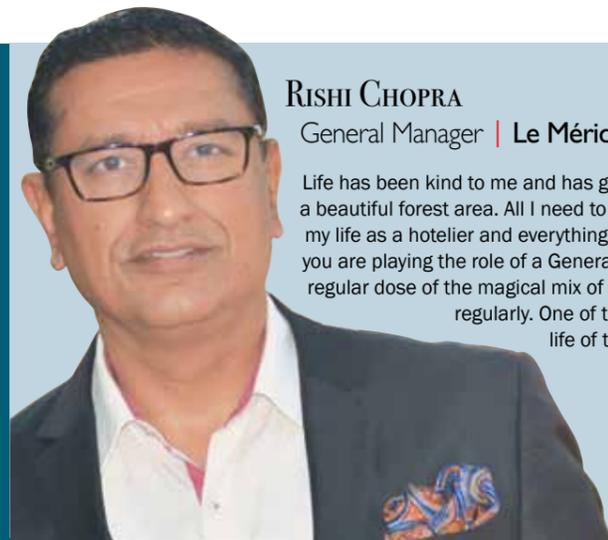
- ▶ Foam Mattress 6" thick
- ▶ Bonnel Spring Mattress 6" thick
- ▶ Pocket Spring Mattress 6" thick

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RISHI CHOPRA

General Manager | Le Méridien Mahabaleshwar Resort & Spa

Life has been kind to me and has given me an opportunity to work at a property nestled amidst a beautiful forest area. All I need to do is take a walk outside to de-stress. I am passionate about my life as a hotelier and everything that surrounds it. It's more like being a jack of all trades when you are playing the role of a General Manager. I am an absolute beach person and need my regular dose of the magical mix of sun, sand, and sea. I am not an avid traveller, but I do travel regularly. One of the unforgettable memories I have is witnessing the marine life of the Maldives.

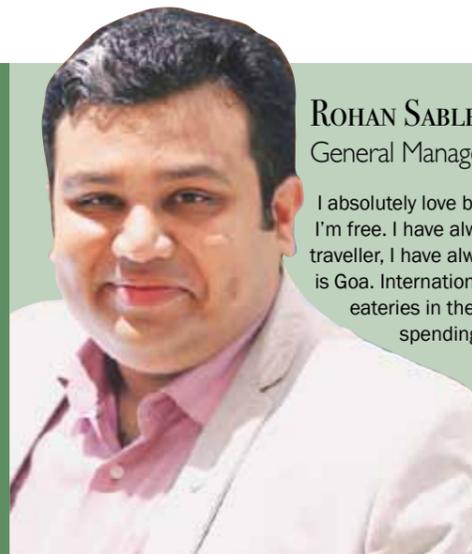
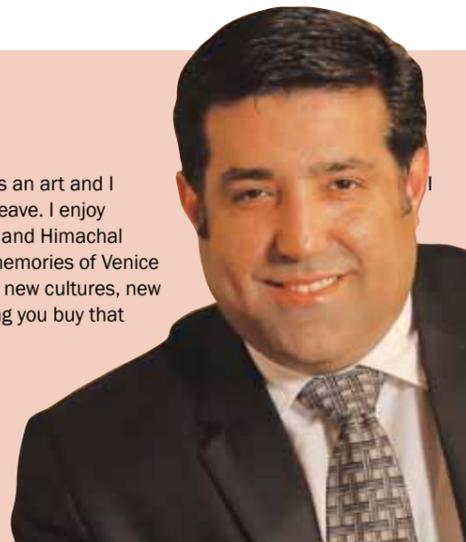
“ I am an absolute beach person and need my regular dose of it ”

BERZIN MASTER

General Manager | Balaji Sarovar Premiere, Solapur

A hotel manager is always switched on, even when on leave. Balancing this is an art and I enjoy myself every moment whether I am involved in hotel operations or on leave. I enjoy exploring natural surroundings. I feel that India has a lot to offer, and Kerala and Himachal Pradesh offer mesmerising, tranquil natural beauty. I also have some fond memories of Venice and sailing in Norway. Apart from spectacular scenery, travel helps me enjoy new cultures, new cuisines, and the entire experience is worth your while. Travel is the only thing you buy that makes you richer.

“ Travel helps me enjoy new cultures and new cuisines, and the experience is worth it ”



ROHAN SABLE

General Manager | Novotel hotels and resorts, Goa

I absolutely love barbecuing and grilling in my free time. I also enjoy listening to podcasts when I'm free. I have always been passionate about music and play the cajón well. Being an avid traveller, I have always enjoyed discovering new places. My favourite holiday destination in India is Goa. Internationally, Thailand and Bali top my favourite holiday destination list. I love exploring eateries in the local markets of these travel destinations. Further, binge-watching shows and spending time with my daughter help me rejuvenate from my hectic schedule.

“ I have always been passionate about music and play the cajón well ”



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3.2 L



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