

## **Hotel And Restaurant Association Advocates for Stability and Growth in Hospitality with Gajendra Singh Shekhawat as Minister of Tourism & Culture**

The Hotel And Restaurant Association (Western India) – HRAWI has extended congratulations to Shri Gajendra Singh Shekhawat on his appointment as the new Union Minister of Tourism & Culture. Expressing optimism about the future of hospitality under his leadership, HRAWI emphasized the need for continuity and stability from the newly elected Government, which is crucial for the tourism and hospitality industries. The Association looks forward to collaborative efforts aimed at strengthening these sectors and addressing long-standing issues. Key priorities include the implementation of Industry Status and granting Infrastructure Status for the hospitality sector, among others.

“We welcome Shri Gajendra Singh Shekhawat ji and his appointment brings a wave of optimism and we are confident that under his guidance, the tourism and hospitality sectors will flourish. We request the Hon’ble Minister to expedite the implementation of our longest standing demands for Industry and Infrastructure statuses for the sector. We also urge him to streamline regulatory processes to facilitate Ease of Doing business. With the right focus and policies, India can be transformed into a tourism haven for both domestic and international travellers, contributing significantly to the economic growth and development of the country,” says Mr Pradeep Shetty, President, HRAWI.

Granting infrastructure status to the hospitality sector stands as a critical priority. This designation would streamline access to long-term loans with competitive interest rates, thereby fostering accelerated growth and development within the industry. HRAWI has additionally called upon the Tourism Minister to review the current GST structure applicable to food and beverages served in hotel restaurants. Currently tied to room rates exceeding Rs.7500/-, the Association suggests separating GST rates from room charges to encourage equitable competition and ensure the sustainability of the industry.

“Infrastructure Status is crucial for achieving the ambitious target of welcoming 100 million international tourists by 2047 and contributing to a USD 3 trillion hospitality tourism economy. Also, the industry needs to have uniform GST

rates for all restaurants, whether inside hotels or standalone. We appeal to Shri Gajendra Singh Shekhawat ji to consider our request to de-link the GST rates from room charges to eliminate unfairness and unpredictability,” adds Mr Shetty.

It is crucial to invest in the development of tourist circuits, heritage sites, and transportation networks. Strong infrastructure not only draws tourists but also generates employment and boosts local economies. By prioritizing these initiatives, accessibility and the overall visitor experience can be significantly enhanced.

“HRAWI remains committed to working closely with the new MoT to realize the full potential of India’s tourism and hospitality industries. By addressing our immediate concerns and promoting a conducive environment for growth, we can collectively work towards positioning India as one of the top global tourism destinations. Together, we can create a thriving, vibrant and inclusive economic landscape that benefits all,” concludes Mr Shetty.