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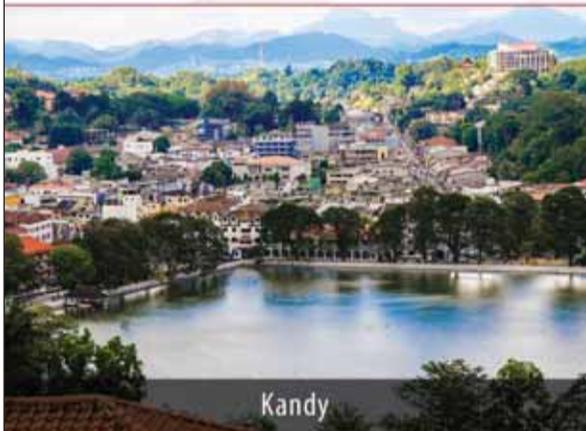
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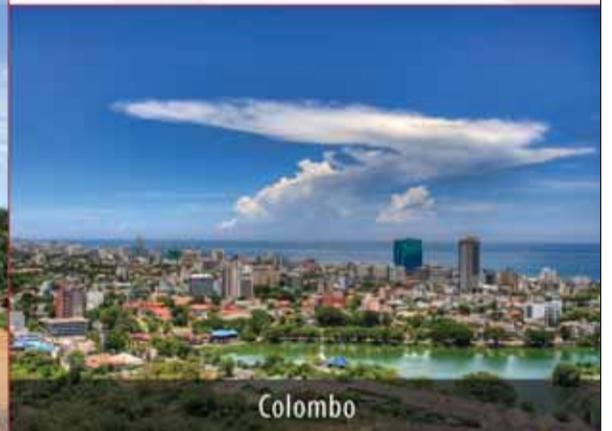
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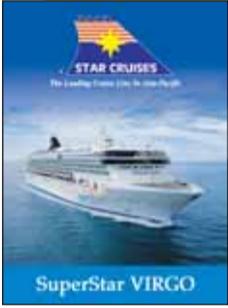
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TravTalk-WTM Global Award 2015

RoomsXML emerges as global leader



(L-R) **Kate Macbeth**, WTM Portfolio Head of Marketing & Communications, Reed Travel Exhibitions, and **James H Chun**, Korea Business Travel & Trade presenting the award to Executive Director of roomsXML, **Ruchir Bang**, and **Anuj Bang**, Director Product Development, roomsXML and **SanJeet**, Publisher, TravTalk India, at the WTM Global Travel Leaders Awards ceremony

This year's prestigious TravTalk-World Travel Market Global Travel Leaders Award was given to RoomsXML.com, in recognition of its innovations in online accommodation distribution. The award gives WTM's official media partner, TRAVTALK, an excellent platform to recognise those companies and individuals who have made the greatest contributions to the travel and tourism industry in their region for that year. As of November 3, 2015, roomsXML offers a single feed to 89,254 global properties (3-star and above) across thousands of destinations around the world at the best available net rates. Sensing the potential of online travel and tourism domain, **Prakash Bang**, Founder, roomsXML, hand-picked a team of software professionals and focused on developing a system for online booking of hotels and apartments, especially for the B2B segment. The roomsXML team worked relentlessly to create the world's first 'multi-supplier-single-feed' system. The product has been introduced with great success in Australia, UK, USA, Middle East, and India with an average year-on-year growth of over 55 per cent. Ruchir was instrumental in developing 11 unique features, many of which are yet to be emulated by other systems in the marketplace. Under their leadership, what started with zero-capital, is today a zero-debt \$50 million company.

Air Canada's Dreamliner in Delhi



Duncan Bureau
 Vice President, Global Sales, Air Canada

Duncan Bureau, VP, Global Sales, Air Canada tells TRAVTALK about the inaugural non-stop flight from Toronto to New Delhi which touched down at IGIA on Nov 2.

KANCHAN NATH AND ANKITA SAXENA

Indian Market

Elaborating on the growth prospects of the Indian market, Bureau says, "India is a tremendous opportunity for us. As there is a diaspora of 1.3 million people in Canada

from Indians and we are adding 30,000 Indians to Canada every single year. There is huge investment that Canada makes in India; there are 600 corporations in Canada that either have an

acuity position or some business relationship here in India."

Talking about their relationship with the travel trade, he says, "We have a 'pay for performance' type of relationship with all our travel trade partners. The travel distribution

network here in India is particularly important as a large percentage of traffic gets booked through travel agencies. We have strong relationships with international TMCs, American Express, HRG, BCD, but we also have strong and close

Contd. on page 15 ▶

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400 expected at HRANI Convention

The Hotel & Restaurant Association of Northern India (HRANI) is organising its 3rd HRANI Convention from Dec 18-19, 2015 at Le Meridien, New Delhi.

KANCHAN NATH

The first convention of HRANI was conceived in the year 2011 from the city of Golden Temple - Amritsar and continued forward to 2013 in Millennium City of Gurgaon. Talking about the theme of the convention, **Luv Malhotra**, President, HRANI, said, "The vision of 3rd HRANI convention: Hospitality -Made in India aims to provide full features on the potential of the Indian hospitality sector and will showcase new stories of successful innovations in the hospitality industry of India." Malhotra added, "This year we are expecting an estimate of 350-400 delegates attending the event. We hope that like our past conventions the 3rd HRANI Convention will also achieve a spectacular success."

Talking about challenges in this industry he said, "The

biggest challenge for hotel industry is to create skills in this competitive scenario. Another vital challenge that the Indian hotel industry is facing



Rajindera Kumar
Former President, HRANI & Senior MC Member, and Chairman, Convention Organising Committee

is the presence of multiple taxation regime. Every state has a different taxation slab and charges different rates. Industry status, ease of doing business, single window clearances are some of the key subjects which states have to

handle. Luxury tax on actual in Delhi has been a long pending demand of the industry. Implementation of Goods & Service Tax (GST) with a



Luv Malhotra
President HRANI

quantum of eight per cent is the need of hour. Moreover, further increase of 0.5 per cent service tax as Swachh Bharat cess has not only increased the effective service tax rate to 14.5 per cent but has further compounded the tariffs."

Talking about the sessions planned, **Rajindera Kumar**, Former President, HRANI & Senior MC Member, and Chairman of the Convention Organising Committee, said, "The first session has been planned as 'Blending New Strategies with proven Brands and their adaptation: Hospitality-Made in India.' Another interesting session has been planned as 'Trends setting Restaurants-Chasing the Millennial.' Other sessions include: 'HR & Skills Development for future Growth'; 'Innovative & creative food for tomorrow,' 'The art of online Dominance or Disruption.'

A session on property owners gradually moving towards management contracts and franchising has also been planned. Lastly it will be on 'Issues and concerns of hospitality industry and way forward.' ↴

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Trends that keep us going

The travel and tourism industry in India, which comprises both domestic (85% of the market) and international inbound travel (15%), is estimated to grow at a CAGR of 12% to \$27.5 bn in 2016 from \$19.7 bn in 2013.

November Diary

As always aviation remains vitally important, for any market looking for economic growth. Regional connectivity has been something the Civil Aviation Ministry has been committed to over the years and it is good to see a foundation to drive this further. The revised draft National Civil Aviation Policy (NCAP 2015) proposes levying of two per cent on all domestic and international tickets on all routes, other than CAT IIA and Regional Connectivity Fund (RCS). The amount collected annually from the cess will be used to provide viability gap funding to operate flights in remote areas.

For this year's World Travel Market, India's largest-ever delegation including representatives from almost all states headed to London with a record attendance of six tourism ministers and over 50 private India-based travel organisations and State Governments.

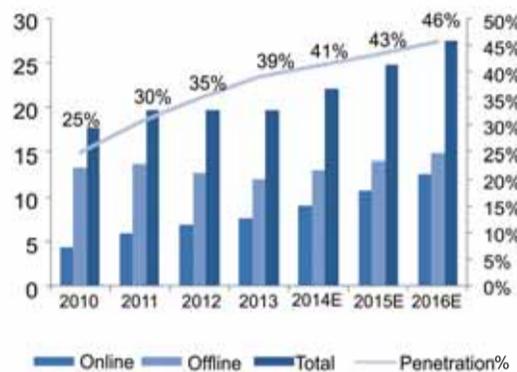
The Tourism Ministry already has proposals in process to extend eTV's validity from 30 days to 180 days in 2016. Proposals are also in place to make it available to 150 countries worldwide (currently 113) ensuring multiple or double entry.

To facilitate travel throughout the Schengen Area and help issue long-term visas more easily, France, in line with all the countries of the Schengen states, is issuing biometric visas to Indian citizens with effect from Nov 2, 2015. In this context, the French Embassy in India will offer a large number of three or five-year circulation visas to frequent visitors to France.

Travel is facilitated with connectivity and in this fast paced world, quick connectivity is essential. While that may mean real-time online connectivity or on the other hand quick air-travel to the remotest of destinations of this country, the Internet tends to be the first place people look to when planning a trip. So it has become more essential to better develop web presence through captivating websites, unique content, and robust SEO strategies. What does this entail for travel agents? The key is to adopt technology wholeheartedly and fully play the role of consultants and experts, become fully aware of the destination they are selling, its activities, visa policies and more. They need to be one step ahead of travellers today, who are savvier than ever before, especially those of the millennial generation.

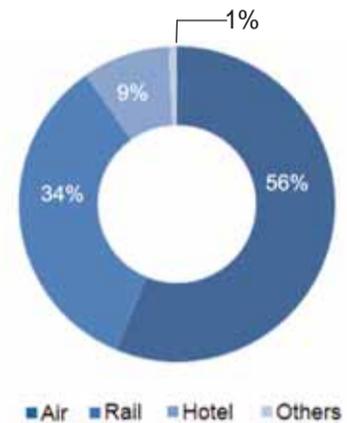
Seasons Greetings!

▶ India's Travel Industry (Size in \$bn)



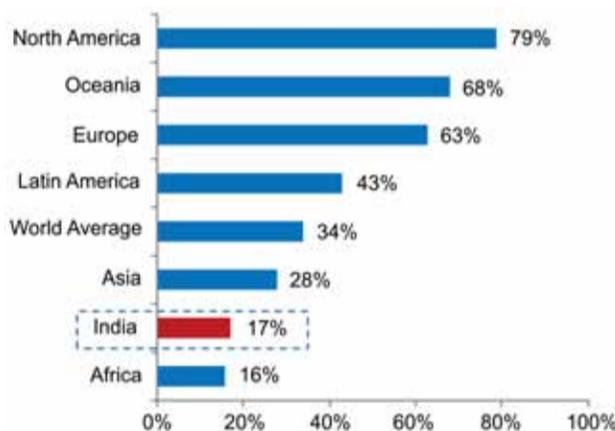
Source: Phocuswright, India Online Travel Overview Seventh Edition, August 2014

▶ Online Travel Industry break-up, 2014E



Online penetration in travel and tourism bookings is estimated to increase from 41% in 2014 to 46% in 2017, according to Phocuswright, a leading travel data aggregator.

▶ Internet penetration still one of the lowest worldwide; indicates strong growth opportunities for online business



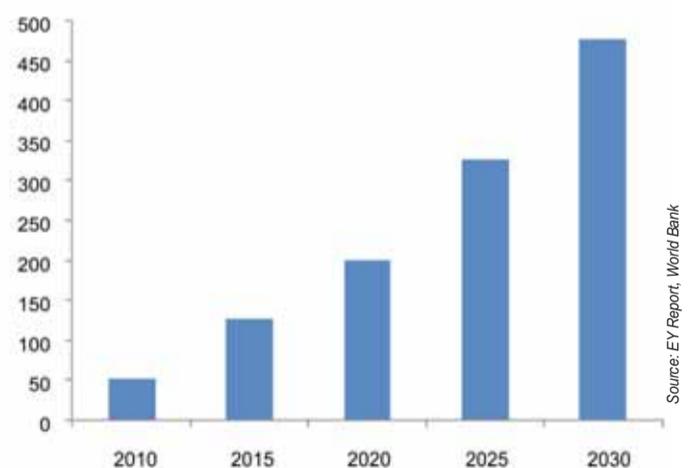
Source: Internet World Stats, BCG analysis

This strong surge in domestic tourism is driven by the following factors:

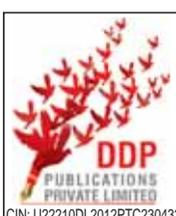
- ❖ Rapidly increasing purchasing power of the middle class
- ❖ Prolific use of the Internet and smartphones, coupled with increasing e-Commerce penetration
- ❖ Better air and rail connectivity between Tier-1 and Tier-2 cities
- ❖ Evolving and improving lifestyles

▶ Rapid growth expected in India's middle class (in mn)

India's middle-class population of nearly 50 mn, or 5% of the overall population (2015 estimated), is expected to grow steadily over the next decade to 200 mn by 2020 and 475 mn by 2030. With better means comes a growing awareness and demand for better work-life balance in the private sector. The increasing disposable income of a growing middle class has led to more families and individuals planning both domestic and international vacations, atleast once a year. The middle-class population grows, the volume of domestic tourists will also increase.



Source: Statistics from Indian Online Travel Industry 'Going Places' report by global research & analytics company, Aranca.



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Maya returns to honour hospitality heroes

As India Hospitality Awards North and East travels to Chandigarh for its second edition to honour the achievers of the hospitality, travel and tourism industry from the region, Holiday Inn Chandigarh, Panchkula is all set to host the mega event.



After the grand success of its first edition in the South and West in 2015, India Hospitality Awards North & East edition is now travelling to Chandigarh. Holiday Inn Chandigarh, Panchkula is hosting the event on November 19, 2015.

The award statuette, Maya celebrates the grandeur of tourism. It imbibes the best representing the power to



SanJeet
Mentor, India Travel Awards

change the industry. Based on an online voting system, the winners will be awarded after a thorough jury analysis of the voting, making the awards fair and unbiased. Nominations are awaited for various categories, which include sectors like hotels and resorts, technology providers, F&B, MICE, etc from the northern and eastern region of the country.

Sharing more details about the event, **SanJeet**, Mentor, India Travel Awards says, "The Indian hospitality industry triumphs over some of the most prestigious hotels in the world. This award ceremony serves as a platform for the leaders of the hospitality industry to come together and recognise the industry's best ideas and success stories. By highlighting the best, India

Hospitality Awards will provide a benchmark for the industry. The winners, who will be felicitated at a black-tie event, will be the people who have achieved brilliance and endeavour to make a difference."

According to **Amit Rana**, General Manager, Holiday Inn

Chandigarh Panchkula, this is a great initiative. "I am really happy that we are the choice for the India Hospitality Awards North & East. This gives many an opportunity to travel to see the hotel and experience our services. Recognition of good work always results in motivation and better performance. With the

expansion and network of DDP Publications increasing every day, I feel this award ceremony is seen in prestigious light for all in the industry and a great way to give back to the hospitality fraternity," he opines.

Setting a new benchmark for the hospitality industry, the

hotel has made preparations galore for the event. Rana points out, "The hotel is ideally located on the Chandigarh Shimla Highway at the foot of the Morni Hills and next to Panchkula Golf Course. Our rooms facing Golf Course & Hills make us stand apart from our competition. Our eight banquet spaces make us



Amit Rana
General Manager
Holiday Inn Chandigarh Panchkula

the first preference for clients for large MICE events."

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Honouring Talent

- This 2nd India Hospitality Awards will honour the achievers of hospitality, travel and tourism industry from the region
- The event will take place on November 19 at Holiday Inn, Chandigarh, Panchkula
- Based on an online voting system, the winners will be awarded after a thorough jury analysis of the voting

Enhancing agents' screens

After bagging clients from over 120 network airlines and low cost carriers since its inception, Travelport Rich Content and Branding, celebrates the success and completion of its first year.



TT BUREAU

Travelport Rich Content and Branding, the industry's solution provider that allows airlines to effectively market and retail their offering to travel agencies around the world, recently completed one whole year. A part of the travel commerce platform Travelport, Rich Content and Branding boasts over 120 network airlines and low cost carriers such as Lufthansa, SWISS, easyJet, Ryanair, Delta, United, Singapore Airlines, Air Canada, Air China and Kenya Airways, to name a few, in its debut year in the market.

Derek Sharp, Travelport's Senior Vice President and Managing Director, Air Commerce, comments, "With Rich Content and Branding, our airline customers are able to sell their products their way, in the intermediary channel, adding real value to their businesses. We

have now achieved critical mass with the number of airlines who share our vision to offer travel agents and trav-



Anil Parashar
President and CEO
InterGlobe Technology Quotient

ellers visually-rich and interactive content and more and more airlines are signing up each week."

Furthermore, **Anil Parashar**, President and CEO, InterGlobe Technology Quotient says, "Designed to empower selling and build an engaging brand experience for airlines, this solution has been

truly appreciated by the airlines world over, due to its interactive and visually-rich content which is proving to be a very effective sales tool for travel agents."

Travelport Rich Content and Branding's services includes the display all of the airlines' fares, ancillaries and brand proposition, giving them the greatest control possible over how their products appear on travel agents' screens. It includes rich product descriptions and graphics, optional or ancillary products for sale, including fares families.

Since its launch last year, Travelport has continued to enhance Rich Content and Branding by adding powerful, new search functionality and increased opportunities for upselling by offering the 'next product/price point up', with a full comparison of associated attributes and ancillaries. ↴

Product training session for travel agents



Ahmedabad recently played host to a one day product training session for travel trade partners which was organised by RezLive.com (a product of Travel Designer Group) and Banyan Tree resorts. The session witnessed the participation of several leading agents from the region who were briefed about the various products and services on offer. Speaking on the occasion, **Jaal Shah**, Group Managing Director, RezLive.com, says, "Platforms like this help us to impart the correct information to travel agents and listen to their queries and give them the best solution. We will be conducting more of such fruitful sessions in other parts of the country, in order to have a better connection with the travel agents."

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Golf Tourism eyes 10% global market

To keep the golf game on, MOT, IGTA and FICCI together organised the second edition of the Golf Summit from October 26 - 27, 2015 in New Delhi. The 3rd edition will be held in September 2016, though the dates are yet to be finalised.

SAMAPTI DAS

The Ministry of Tourism (MOT), Government of India, Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) and India Golf Tourism Association (IGTA) jointly organised the second edition of the FICCI Golf Tourism Summit (FGTS) 2015 from October 26 - 27, 2015 at The Lalit, New Delhi and ITC Grand Bharat, Manesar.

The inauguration of the Summit was held at The Lalit, New Delhi and ITC Grand Bharat, Manesar and was graced by the presence of **Dr. Mahesh Sharma**, Minister of State (Independent Charge) Tourism, Govt of India; **Vinod Zutshi**, Secretary Tourism, Govt of India; **Dr. Jyotsna Suri**, President, FICCI and **Rajan Sehgal**, President, IGTA among other dignitaries.

Sehgal says, "We don't want to lose the continuity so, we have announced that the third edition of FICCI Golf Tourism Summit will be held in September next year. The dates and the venue for the same are yet to be decided."

The Summit witnessed seven hours of structured, pre-scheduled B2B meetings in two days between 20 hosted handpicked new set of leading foreign tour operators from across fifteen countries who specialise in Golf Tourism with the stakeholders from India, besides the interactive conclave pondering over critical issues on the first half of the first day.

IGTA organised a game of golf on October 27 to cheer up the foreign dignitaries and refresh them up after the hectic

business deliberations of the two preceding days. It also organised Fam trips to golf courses for the hosted foreign tour operators.

Rahul Chakravarty, Director Tourism, FICCI, says, "Golf Tourism in India is still

evolving. In India we have golf as a game but not yet that prominent as a tourism sector. So, with this initiative of ours we hope golf to evolve as a tourism sector. Getting even a five or ten per cent of the global market will be a huge inbound flow for us."



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Participant's Profile

- ← Union Ministry of Tourism
- ← Other State Governments of India
- ← International golf tour operators
- ← Indian tour operators who specialise in golf
- ← Hotels, resort and spa owners from India
- ← Signature golf courses from across India

AME 2016 back with new programs

Guests attending the third edition of the ACE of MICE Exhibition scheduled from March 16-18 in Istanbul are in for a treat as the mega event has an interesting lineup, such as Women of MICE and the Pharma Gathering, among many others.



The ACE of MICE Exhibition (AME) will take place for the third time from March 16-18, 2016 in Istanbul Congress Centre and Istanbul Lutfi Kirdar - ICEC. The mega event will host

MICE professionals from all over the world who gather to network, collect information and strengthen business relationships.

The upcoming edition brings forth a host of symposiums, conferences and net-

work activities among which several are new additions. Some of the latest additions to the agenda are the Women of MICE panel, and the Network Party which are lined up for the first day of the exhibition. The Women of MICE panel will host



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women from corporate companies, professionals from the MICE and business sector, and will mainly focus on women's perspective to the sector, address the problems they face and provide solutions. Guests can unwind and let their hair down and be entertained by numerous entertaining performances at the Network Party.

The second day (March 17) will host the Pharma Gathering for which associations and pharmaceutical companies will gather and discuss various topics in detail. Additionally, a question-answer session will be included to allow the panel address queries of the attendees.

The final day (March 18) will witness the Future of Exhibition Industry, Exhibition and Stand Designers' Association Workshop and Summit, wherein three different sessions will be organized. The three sessions will concentrate on three different topics - 'The Future of the Trade Fair Industry', 'Description of Temporary Buildings at Events, Exhibitions and Congresses', and 'Identifying the Criteria of Stand Constructor Companies' - for which important speakers will impart knowledge and information on each area. The University Students Meet MICE Sector program also lined up for the same day will involve Tourism and Marketing Communication students and academicians from 15 of the best universities in Turkey.

Gearing Up

- Women of MICE
March 16
- Network Party
March 16
- Pharma Gathering
March 17
- Future of Exhibition Industry, Exhibition and Stand Designers' Association Workshop and Summit
March 18
- University Students Meet MICE Sector
March 18

Combat credit card fraud

TRAVTALK urges the travel trade fraternity to remain alert about possible fraudulent credit card activities by individuals. Some agencies have been duped, often where details of genuine corporate clients were misused to trick them.

 HAZEL JAIN



We at TAAI advise our members who are operating a website to ensure that they have a proper payment gateway vendor. Now with RBI clamping down on several processes, the chances of a fraud taking place has drastically reduced. TAAI cannot intervene in any commercial deals between our members and their vendors. But we could as a special case speak to the person concerned to reconcile and close the issue.

Marzban Antia

Vice President, Travel Agents Association of India (TAAI) and Managing Director, Avesta Travel & Tours

So far we have been able to be secure. We do taking measures towards this. For large transactions on credit card (for first time clients) we check their reference if possible. We also monitor sudden transactions by new or existing customers – if their bookings are out of pattern. However, there are incidences where people use similar domain names to get tickets booked on credit. All services required by such comen are of instant use. I know of two agents who have been conned this way – one of more than ` 15 lakh and the other for ` 1 crore! These are scams originating from Nigeria/South Africa and all the visits to cyber cells are of no help.



Rajat Bagaria

National Managing Committee Member & Co-Chairman Convention Committee, TAFI, and MD, Shrishti Tours & Travels

Take preventive measures

- ❖ Conduct due diligence for any new corporation soliciting your services in booking airline tickets
- ❖ For a corporate sale, verify that you are contacted by your usual contact person at this corporation
- ❖ Answer only to the email address you have stored in the customer's profile, and not to the one the email was sent from
- ❖ If you are told not to use the lodged corporate card you have on file, but to use a personal card instead, be extra diligent in applying the security measures you deploy for any sale made to unknown parties
- ❖ Remember that Resolution 890 recommends that the agent demands the card security code (CVV2) and verifies that the authorisation approval indicates it is it a CVV2 match.
- ❖ In case of mismatch notice, the agent must consider the transaction as rejected and request another form of payment
- ❖ Remember also that even CVV2 match confirmation is never a guarantee that the transaction is genuine
- ❖ Ticket sales of a non face-to-face transaction shall be undertaken under the sole responsibility and liability of the agent. In the event of a disputed transaction and its subsequent rejection by the card company, the relevant member/airline shall charge back the loss to the agent which issued the traffic document by means of an agent debit memo.



We have not experienced this but it's a serious issue. We confirm with our client in such situations and till we don't get any confirmation from his side, we don't make any bookings. ETAA conducted a training session on cyber crime on 10 July 2015 for our members where well-known lawyer Vicky Shah gave tips on how to prevent this.

Abhijit Khadiolkar

National Joint Secretary, Enterprising Travel Agents Association (ETAA) and Director, Swaraj Travels



Currently we have very limited credit card transactions which happen on EDC at our office. Hence this is not much relevant to us as majority of business is through bank transfers.

Harmandeep Singh Anand

Managing Director, Jagsons Travels



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Fortunately, we have not experienced this yet. We are very particular in ensuring that we don't get stuck in this scam. Firstly, we don't randomly issue tickets for non-reference clients using credit card. Secondly, if at all we are issuing the ticket with credit card, we ensure that we take another photo ID of the person along with a letter to confirm that he is using the card to purchase the tickets with his signature and also ensure that there is a gap of at least four to five days before departure. We do not issue tickets with credit card for very last minute bookings. Agencies who realise they have been duped must immediately call the airline to cancel the ticket if it has not been used already. Once used, the only thing they can do is report to the credit card company about the fraud and hope that they will trace the person. If the amount is very large, then finally knock the doors of the cybercrime cell.



Mahendra Vakharia

Chairman (Western Chapter), OTOAI (Outbound Tour Operators Association of India) and Managing Director, Pathfinders



We haven't experienced any such incident within our organisation. We have a well laid process and controls, probably that's helping us to avoid such incidents.

Haresh Koyande

Founder and Managing Director, World Travel Studio

Presently many cases have come to light for misuse of credit cards in different ways. It is not only for online purchase of air tickets, but also hacking the accounts and transferring of remittances to other accounts in other countries. In wake of fraud and misuse of credit cards details, it is very important for the card holder to be vigilant and prompt in inspection of the credit card transaction. We had faced one major fraud of misuse of credit card details and of transfer of funds illegally in the past. Hence, now we have advised our staff to be more vigilant while using the credit cards.



Om Prakash Sehgal

Director, In ORBIT Tours

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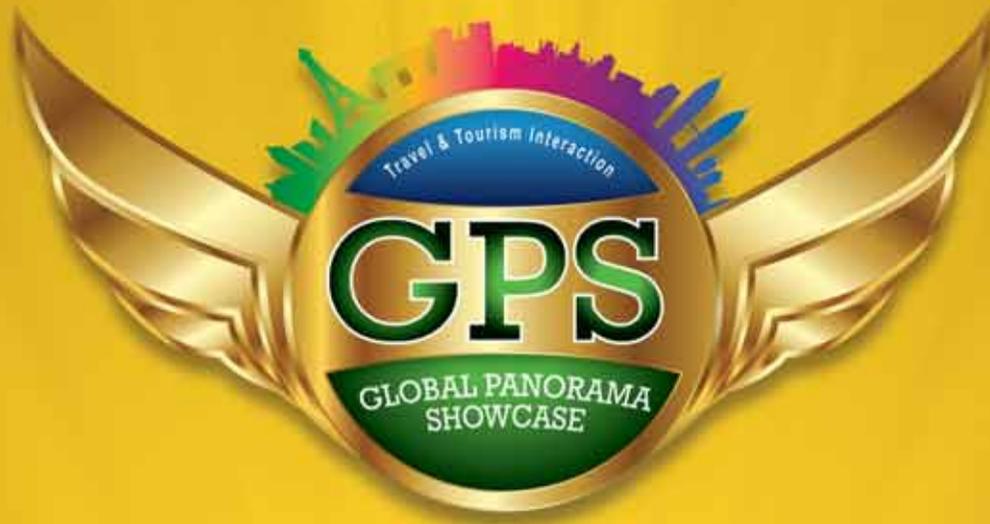
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787: The game changer

► Contd. from page 3

relationship with a number of travel agencies here in India with whom we have worked for many years now."

Air Canada's newest fleet type, the Boeing 787-9, is a state-of-the-art aircraft, he says. "We have waited a long time for this aircraft to start operating in India. There is right economics, right guest experience and definitely the right capability of the aircraft so we are certainly very excited for the service," Bureau adds.

On the airline's marketing and business strategy he says, "We are doing incredibly well. We leverage our distribution partners throughout Canada, India and US as well. We have tremendous distribution network. Our load factor figures in November are well above 85 per cent. The reception has been so strong that we have already decided to increase

number of other acquisitions we have made in narrow-body aircraft," he adds.

Late booking market

Talking about the differential value-ad as far as seats are concerned, **Gary Cross**, Senior Director, International Support Services, Air Canada says, "We offer three services on this aircraft: The Business Class, a brand new Premium Economy Class and the Economy Class. We have been operating on the Delhi route for nearly a year now and we did offer some introductory fares and shall continue to have special offers. Now our flights are generally full so one should check with Air Canada to find out the best fares."

He says Indians are quite a late booking market. "Our flights are booked for the coming couple of months but we have a few seats left to be sold. We call upon the travel trade partners to support us as



Gary Cross
Senior Director, International Support Services, Air Canada

We call upon the travel trade partners to support us as much as possible to help us make this route successful

and travellers who are travelling to Canada or India for the first time. The economy class of course is available with a seat-back TV."

He adds, "The inaugural flight took 12 and half hours and is nonstop. It will take 14 hours from Delhi to Toronto. The schedule is particularly good for business travellers and connects with almost all of our domestic services and the US connections. You pre clear customs and immigrations in Toronto itself and arrive in the US as a domestic traveller just before breakfast."

Competitive advantage

Telling us about the competitive advantage of this flight, he says, "We are the only carrier with a premium economy product on this route. The Business Class

much as possible to help us make this route successful."

Business Travellers

Talking about the advantages for MICE, he says, "Air Canada offers a whole range of products for business travellers. We have the Business

There is a diaspora of 1.3 million people in Canada who are Indians and we are adding 30,000 Indians to Canada every single year

Duncan Bureau

Vice President, Global Sales, Air Canada

Class cabin with Lie Flat Seats, state-of-the-art technology and a small and intimate cabin. For the cost conscious travellers we have the Premium Economy Class which is actually more of a Business Class than an Economy one. The intimate cabin has more leg room, with only 21 seats with its dedicated check in, meal service and is particularly aimed at SME

has state of the art, latest technology and seats. We are the only carrier to have 4 star catering service based in North America. We have appointed The Oberoi to do our food out of India. We have award winning room service, in-flight entertainment, and food. The flight attendants are multilingual and are fluent in all major Indian languages." 🇮🇳



our frequency from four times a week to daily from September 2016."

"Fuel is a big issue. We certainly don't control that aspect and the rates may change with any global geopolitical situation. But we are focused on the fact that our cost structure is in line. We have recently invested USD 9.4 billion worth of aircraft. Those aircraft will start coming into the system very shortly. In fact we already have nine 787s. We ordered 37 of them. It is a tough business to make money in. But we are expanding very quickly at Air Canada. We operate in 195 markets globally and by 2020 we hope to operate in 250 markets. At present we carry about 38 million passengers and by 2020 we want to carry 50 million passengers. For us the 787 is a game changer. We have also ordered 100 of 737 MAX aircraft and we will take delivery of them in 2017. By 2020, Air Canada will have one of the youngest fleet globally combined with our 787 fleet, the Boeing 737 MAX fleet, and a



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FITUR: global business forum

Networking will be the trade show's focal point through initiatives and programmes aimed at favouring trade meetings.



TT BUREAU

From January 20-24, 2016, IFEMA is organising the 36th International Tourism Trade Show, FITUR. With focus on business, the event becomes an indispensable appointment in the agendas of international tourism professionals, one in which they can exchange experiences and knowledge, learn about new strategies for their business and keep abreast of the latest tools for gaining competitiveness and presence in the marketplace.

Once again, the drive and promotion of tourism development will be the hallmark and added value of FITUR as a forum for the international tourism industry; hence the staging of events with a consolidated trajectory such as INVESTOUR Africa, organised jointly by FITUR, the UNWTO and Casa África. This investment and cooperation programme, which is in its seventh edition, has the goal of bringing together on the same stage the businesspeople and invest-



ments from the 165 countries represented at the trade show and both public and private bodies from the African continent, with each year resulting in new proposals for tourism projects that promote a sustainable model for the economic development of Africa, a region that last year welcomed 56 million tourists and generated income amounting to 36.5 billion dollars.

This same format of previously scheduled personal interviews and work meetings will be held in a new staging of FITUR B2B Workshop Hosted Buyer, which last year registered 5,000 pre-scheduled business meetings in B2B encounters between exhibitors and more than 200 internation-

al buyers. This is why the trade show is already working on an intense agenda of appointments between the companies and destinations that participate in FITUR and an important group of international hosted buyers.

Equally, the FITUR SHOPPING and FITUR HEALTH sections will have their own B2B programmes that ensure the attendance of international prescribers, both for shopping tourism and for health tourism. The last staging of FITUR attracted 9,419 companies from 165 countries. It was attended by 222,551 participants both professionals from the tourism industry and the wider public. 

Britain promotes countryside

VisitBritain goes regional as it brings its picturesque British countryside to the attention of the travel agents and tour operators.



HAZEL JAIN

VisitBritain now wants travellers to look outside of London. It has therefore brought its culture and countryside to the travel agents' attention through yet another Bollywood campaign - 'Bollywood is Great' in partnership with Turkish Airlines. This is the first time that the airline is partnering with a national tourist board on a global level.

Sumathi Ramanathan, Regional General Manager (Asia Pacific & Middle East), VisitBritain, explains, "One of our core strategic objectives is regionality as in travel beyond London and exploring the picturesque British countryside. Our core synergies with the film *Shaandaar* are well matched as it has been extensively shot in the English countryside of Yorkshire, Durham and Leeds and in the North of England. We want the Indian traveller to see Britain in a new light and encourage them to visit places within the beautiful countryside."

VisitBritain will conduct a webinar for the travel agents and tour operators in January next year introducing them to the re-launch of BritAgent and the new visa module from



Sumathi Ramanathan
Regional General Manager (Asia Pacific & Middle East), VisitBritain

UKVI. "We will continue with our trade seminars and presentations throughout the year, Explore GreatBritain in February-March 2016 and the Great Tourism Weeks in August-September 2016," Ramanathan adds.

This campaign has a focus across Turkish Airlines'

five regional gateways - Manchester, Birmingham and Edinburgh, as well as London's Heathrow and Gatwick. The 12-month marketing partnership will see VisitBritain and Turkish Airlines develop an international marketing campaign and will initially focus on Indian, Saudi Arabian and other Gulf markets.

Produced by Karan Johar's Dharma Productions, *Shaandaar* is a rom-com starring Bollywood actors Shahid Kapoor and Alia Bhatt. Saif Ali Khan is VisitBritain's spokesperson and is part of the existing ongoing Bollywood Britain campaign since March 2015 which is a much larger campaign. When asked whether VisitBritain would ever consider appointing a Bollywood brand ambassador, she says, "VisitBritain can only consider appointing a Goodwill Ambassador or a spokesperson as we are always working with challenging budgets." 

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Spain takes 11 sellers on 9-city show

Clearly segregating leisure and MICE markets in India, the Tourism Office of Spain managed to rekindle interest from the trade with its nine-city roadshow.



HAZEL JAIN & ANKITA SAXENA

Starting this year with a series of presentations, the Tourism Office of Spain travelled to the cities of Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Chennai, Cochin, Kolkata, Ahmedabad, Pune finally concluding its roadshow in its two most important markets – Mumbai and New Delhi. Spending two days in each city with a dedicated day for leisure and MICE, the tourist office brought with it a huge delegation from Spain – six DMCs and five destinations of – Andalusia, Costa Del Sol, Madrid, Barcelona and World Heritage Cities of Spain.

Ignacio Ducasse Gutierrez, Director, Tourism Office of Spain in Mumbai, said, "There is clear segmentation between leisure and MICE agents within the market and the requirement for groups and individuals are quite different. So we prefer to do separate events for each segment to provide specific information. With this series of events that we did in Mumbai and New

Delhi over four days, we want to send a strong message that Spain is really interested in the Indian market. We see a clear possibility of growth and potential of doing business together. We are extremely happy that 11 sellers travelled all the way from Spain because they share our vision for 2016."

Revealing updated figures from India, Gutierrez says, "In 2014, we had 80,000 tourists from India. For this year, from January to September we are close to 70,000. That means an increase of five per cent from the same period last year. August and September specially were extremely good so we hope that we may close the year at 100,000."

Apart from promoting Spain for both MICE and leisure travel, Spain has been working on niche markets such as luxury, shopping, honeymooners, active holidays, nightlife, fly and drive, etc.



Ignacio Ducasse Gutierrez
Director
Tourism Office of Spain in Mumbai

We see a clear possibility of growth and potential of doing business together

Gutierrez talks about the challenges that Spain experiences, singling out two specific complaints. "There are two obstacles we need to



Lisha Krishnan
Trade Manager
Tourism Office of Spain

We are putting special efforts to market the 15 world heritage cities in Spain

work on: visas and connectivity as we don't have any direct flights. Our Consulate General and VFS Global are confident that the new biomet-

ric data requirement that has been introduced from November 2 this year won't be an obstacle in getting the visas in time. So at this time we are hopeful that it won't be a big problem," he says.

His office is currently planning 2016 and its strategy for the new year. "It will be my second year in India. The first year went in learning. A Fam trip to Barcelona and the Catalonia region for key MICE tour operators is also planned. But we are doing a bit of everything. More than segmentation by age or demographic, we are promoting different products for honeymooners, families and corporates such as fly and drive, nightlife, luxury stays, shopping, and festivals," Gutierrez adds.

Lisha Krishnan, Trade Manager, Tourism Office of Spain, said, "Barcelona, Madrid and Ibiza are already very popular destinations in the Indian market but we are looking at new destinations like Malaga, Seville, Andalusia,

Cordoba, Granada, Ibiza to be showcased in Spain. We are putting special efforts to market the 15 world heritage cities in Spain which are very close to Barcelona and Madrid so that they can become day excursions like Tarragona. It is surprising that travellers going to Ibiza as a party destination are not aware that the city is a heritage site as well. We are also introducing new regions in Spain like the North Spain where a traveller may not be aware of the beauty awaiting them."

Talking about a special contribution to numbers from India to Spain, Gutierrez added, "With the movie, Zindagi Na Milegi Na Dobar, we saw the number of tourists double in 2011-12. We hope that in the future we are able to get some projects to increase interest in Spain." Krishnan adds, "Keeping the impact of the film industry in mind, we are in talks with Bollywood project coordinators to get some big projects to Spain next year."




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ON THE HUNDRED-FOOT JOURNEY TRAIL IN THE MIDI- PYRÉNÉES, FRANCE

The captivating natural beauty of the Midi-Pyrénées has been effortlessly captured on screen in the Hollywood starrer "The Hundred-Foot Journey" starring stalwarts such as Om Puri and Helen Mirren. Create your own "Be There! Do That!" Hundred Foot Journey experience with visits to on-shoot locations to relive the 70 mm experience!

Suggested Experiences

Day 1: Discovering Albi and Cordes-sur-Ciel

Commence your journey from the UNESCO classified Episcopal city of Albi that is at an hour's distance from Toulouse Airport. This fortress of faith has stimulated the imagination of those seeking an epithet to describe its appeal. Discover Albi's many wonders such as the St Cecile Cathedral and the Berbie Palace which houses the museum of the famous artist Toulouse Lautrec. Take on indulgent strolls along its streets replete with half-timbered houses, narrow passageways and cobbled streets for a true feel of the south! A visit to Cordes-sur-Ciel is next on your agenda. Only 20 minutes from Albi, this stunningly gorgeous medieval village has been voted as one of the most preferred villages in France by the French in 2014. Perched on a hilltop, this quaint village invites you to breathtaking

views of its surrounding locales and many opportunities to stroll down its medieval streets lined with artisanal boutiques. Continue your medieval experience with an overnight in Cordes-sur-Ciel.

Day 2: Lights, Camera, Action in Saint Antonin Noble Val and the Aveyron Gorge

An hour's drive from Cordes-sur-Ciel brings you to Saint Antonin Noble Val where most of the movie was filmed. A walk around this charming village acquaints you with many locations that were presented on screen. Its belfry, market square, leafy streets are a rambler's delight. Experience the region's most beautiful Sunday market that takes place in Saint Antonin Noble Val. Take on an excursion to the Aveyron Gorge - a natural paradise - accessible by car or by foot. Wind your way along narrow hilltop perched villages of Penne

and Bruniquel along the way. A canoe ride along the Aveyron river enhances the adventure quotient on your itinerary! Let The Hundred-Foot Journey experience linger with an overnight in Saint Antonin Noble Val.

Day 3: Picture Perfect Memories in St Cirq Lapopie

Complete your "reel" experience with a visit to St Cirq Lapopie located at 50 kms from Saint Antonin Noble Val. En route, make a stop at Caylus for lunch, a lively pleasant town with a fascinating medieval past. St Cirq Lapopie, with its rooftops and facades perched atop a cliff overlooking the Lot river, is a harmonious blend of nature and heritage. Plan discoveries of this village listed as one of the most beautiful villages of France. Spend a night here or say *au revoir* to the region with a return to Toulouse located only 2 hours away.

For more information on the Midi-Pyrénées region, log onto: www.tourisme-midi-pyrenees.com

For more on The Hundred Foot Journey trail in the Midi Pyrénées, email: keshwar.bhargat@atout-france.fr or atoutfranceindia@gmail.com.



Project co-financed by the European Union. Europe is investing in Midi-Pyrénées through the European Regional Development Fund.

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Cordes-sur-Ciel © Dominique-VIET_CRT-Midi-Pyrénées



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Air Canada's Dreamliner inauguration

A dinner reception was held on November 3, 2015 at the Canada House in New Delhi to mark the arrival of the inaugural non-stop Toronto-Delhi Air Canada flight. Here are glimpses from the memorable evening.





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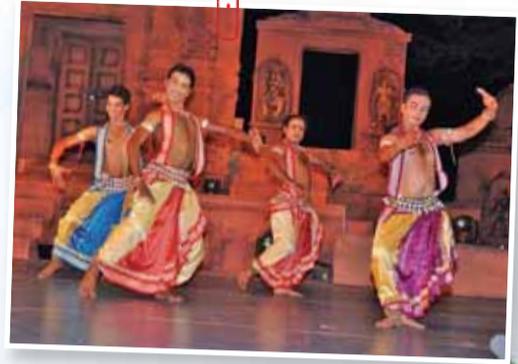
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Sirpur Festival



Sirpur offers an extraordinarily beautiful travel experience that takes one back in time. Abundant in historically rich and ancient legacy; Sirpur is a vortex of spirituality, especially Buddhism, Jainism and Hinduism. The heritage town's culturally rich ambience provides the perfect canvas to the Sirpur International Dance and Music Festival.

The fourth edition of Sirpur Festival, will be organised on an international scale. The event will be called The Sirpur International Dance and Music Festival which will be held from January 29-31, 2016. Conducted by the Chhattisgarh Tourism Board, the festival offers a first-hand experience of a rare union of art and culture in music and dance forms.

The centre stage itself is set into the backdrop of the famous Laxman Temple – an architectural masterpiece which traces its history to the 7th century. The highlight of this holy town is its astonishing monuments including temples and Buddhist viharas, which attract tourists from across the world.

The extravaganza attracts renowned Indian and foreign artists. A galaxy of prominent stars have dazzled the earlier festivals. Padmabhushan Pt. Chhannulal Mishra, Padmashri Madhavi Mudgal, Padmashri Prahlad Singh Tipaniya, Padma Vibhushan Pt.

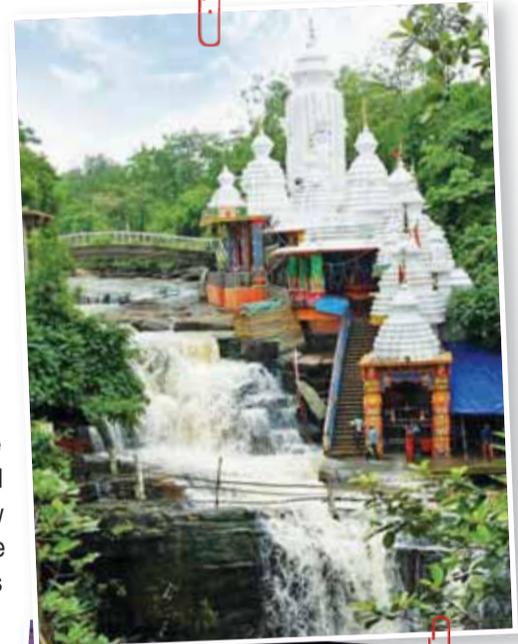
Hariprasad Chaurasia, Padma Vibhushan Pt. Birju Maharaj, Rahul Sharma, Ustad Shujaat Khan, Padmabhushan Teejanbai, Vidwan Vikku Vinayakram and Padmashri Wadali Brothers have visited Sirpur to experience its heritage, dance, music and spirituality.

International artists have equally enthralled audiences. Pete Lockett, George Brooks and Leonard Eto are just a handful few amongst so many others that have featured in Sirpur. The festival has come as a big boon to local artists who are presented with a golden opportunity to showcase their craft on an international stage.

The Sirpur International Dance and Music Festival has been greatly appreciated by international ambassadors and higher officials from the Republic of Korea, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Vietnam and Sri Lanka, who gushingly acknowledged it as a centre of international culture and celebration.

In just three years, the Sirpur Festival has gained global acclaim. It is not difficult to believe and see the future growth and glory of this festival in the years to come. Sirpur boasts of a glorious past and this heritage is being carried forward with this

festival, which is ensuring the culture to be a celebrated present and glorious future as well.



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Swiss webinars, rewards for loyal agents

Urs Eberhard, Executive Vice President, Head - Markets and MICE, Switzerland Tourism tells TRAVTALK why India is one of the four strategic growth markets for Switzerland and talks about their special training and rewards programme for agents.

GUNJAN SABIKI FROM SWITZERLAND

QTravel Agents and tour operators are the backbone of outbound tourism from India. What are you doing to keep this segment interested and keen on selling Switzerland?

We have just introduced webinars to reach even more agents and to educate them so that they are better equipped in selling Switzerland. We publish a sales manual, have an e-learning program, visit and train regularly agents around the country, work together with the largest tour operators in India trying to come up with new experiences, new itineraries. Together with these tour operators we enlarge the Switzerland portfolio with new outdoor packages, new winter packages, add a twist to existing rail products (Grand Train Tour), introduce self driving packages, get new destinations into the programs and relaunch romance and indulgence packages.

Additionally we also conduct workshops in Switzerland as well as in India, have a Switzerland Travel Experience, together with our Swiss partners visiting the most important

“We run a special training and reward programme - the Swiss Travel Pass Superstar program for agents who are top sellers of the Swiss Travel Passes. We also hold Visa-Workshops for tour operators to find ways how we can facilitate the visa application process for the travel trade and their clients.**”**



Urs Eberhard
Vice President, Head - Markets and MICE, Switzerland Tourism

agents and operators on India and conduct several educational trips to our country. We also run a special training and reward program - the Swiss Travel Pass Superstar program for agents who are top sellers of the Swiss Travel Passes. Last but not least we also hold Visa-Workshops for tour operators to find ways how we can facilitate the visa application process for the travel trade and their clients.

QIn your priority promotion markets, where does India figure? What per cent of your marketing budgets have you allocated for this market?

India is one of our 4 Strategic Growth Markets, receiving a marketing budget that is over average compared to the amount of visitors. The growth of India is very promising and we do believe that Switzerland has a special place in the hearts of

Indian travellers (and travel agents). We increased our staff by one person and we also added some extra budget for 2016. In terms of overnights India ranks number 11, in terms of marketing budget number 7. India has a market share of roughly 1.5 per cent of all tourism overnights in Switzerland but gets 5 per cent of the marketing funds.

QSwitzerland has witnessed a stagnant growth from India in the last three years, but 2015 has started on a better note. What are you doing to strengthen your market share from India?

We have seen an upsurge in demand from June 2014 and it is continuing well into this year. We not only increased our staff, we also entered in joint marketing activities with the large tour operators, intensified the promotion and sale of Swiss rail passes, are more active on the Social Media channels, have some fine media cooperations, strengthened our relationship with agents (educations, workshops, Switzerland Travel Experiences and new also with webinars).

Upcoming events and attractions

- Opening of the longest rail tunnel in the world, the 57km long Gotthard Base Tunnel, shortening the travel time between the Ticino (Italian speaking Switzerland) and the North (Zurich, Luzern, Basel) of Switzerland by 1 hour.
- Opening of the Charlie Chaplin museum and hotel in Vevey, where Chaplin family used to live
- Opening of the FIFA World of Football museum in Zurich
- 50 years of Montreux Jazz Festival
- 100 years Dadaismus in Zürich
- Re-opening Museum of Fine Arts in Basel after an extensive renovation
- Swatch Experience World in Biel

Air Cargo Summit- 2015

Towards New Horizons

20th November, 2015; PHD House; New Delhi

Air Cargo Summit- 2015 - "Towards New Horizons"

PHD Air Cargo Summit- 2015 - "Towards New Horizons", brings together all expert stakeholders and end users of the air cargo industry and work as a catalyst in bringing forward sustainable solutions to remove the major procedural bottlenecks & policy hurdles of this industry, moving towards making "Make In India" and "Ease of Doing Business" in India, a reality.

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Chief Guest

Mr. Ashok Gajapathi Raju Pusapati

Hon'ble Minister of Civil Aviation, Government of India

Guest of Honour

Dr. Mahesh Sharma*

Hon'ble Minister of State Ministry of Civil Aviation

Mr. Rajiv Nayan Choubey, IAS*

Secretary, Ministry of Civil Aviation Government of India

*Invited

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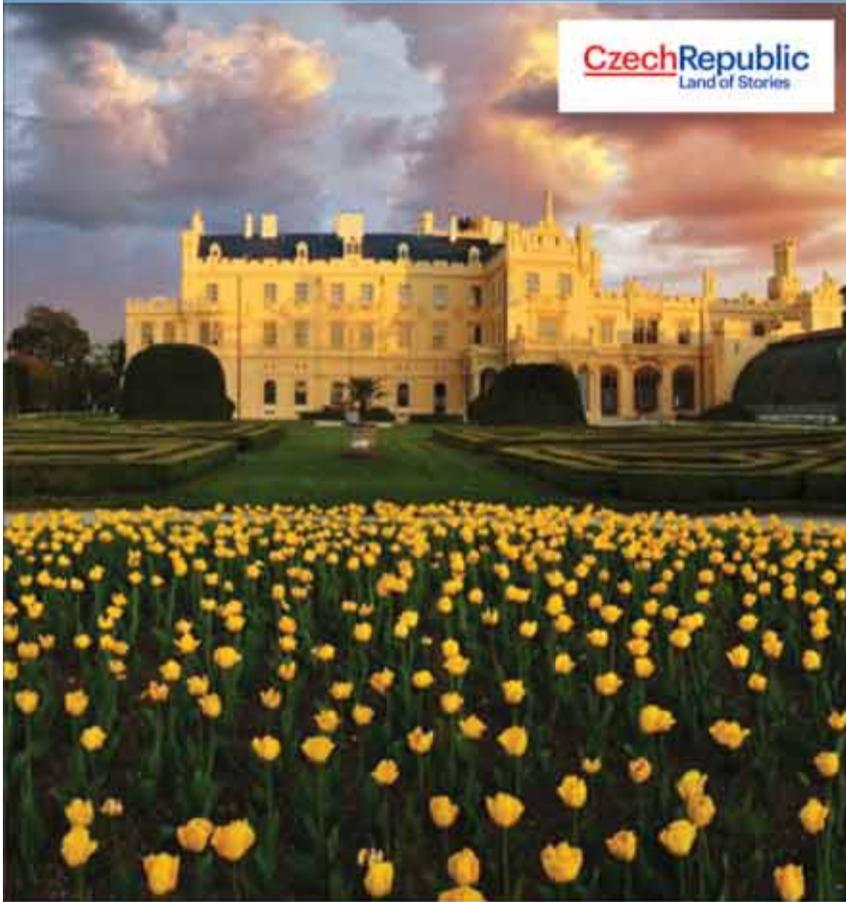
03 Dec'15 - New Delhi

04 Dec'15 - Bangalore

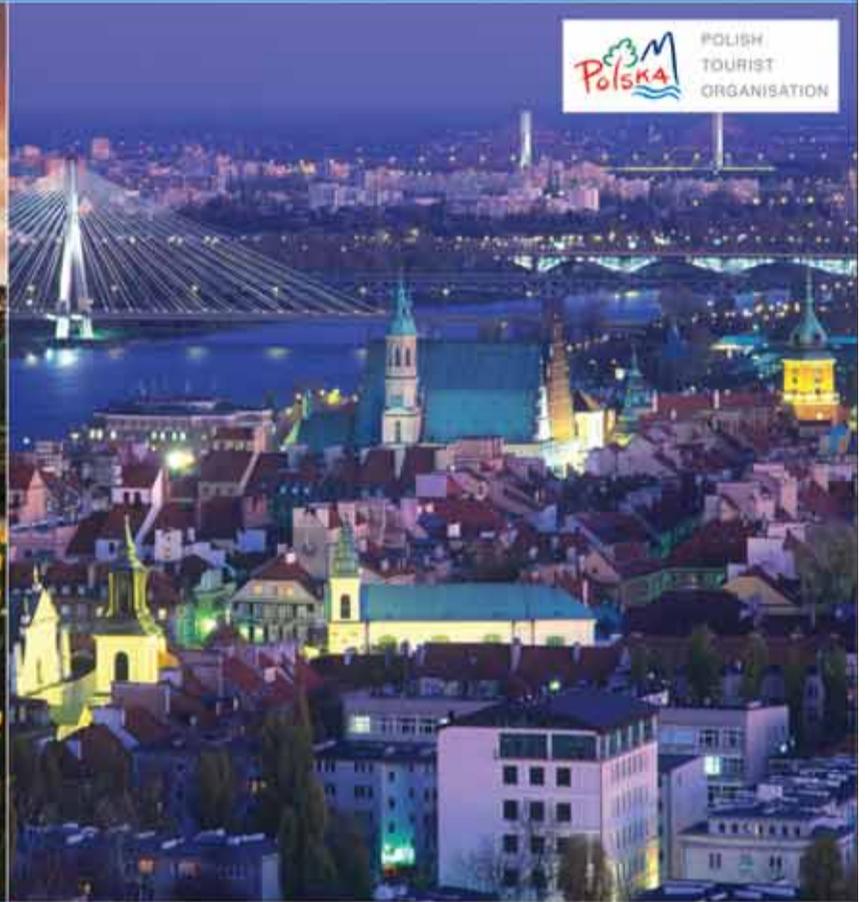
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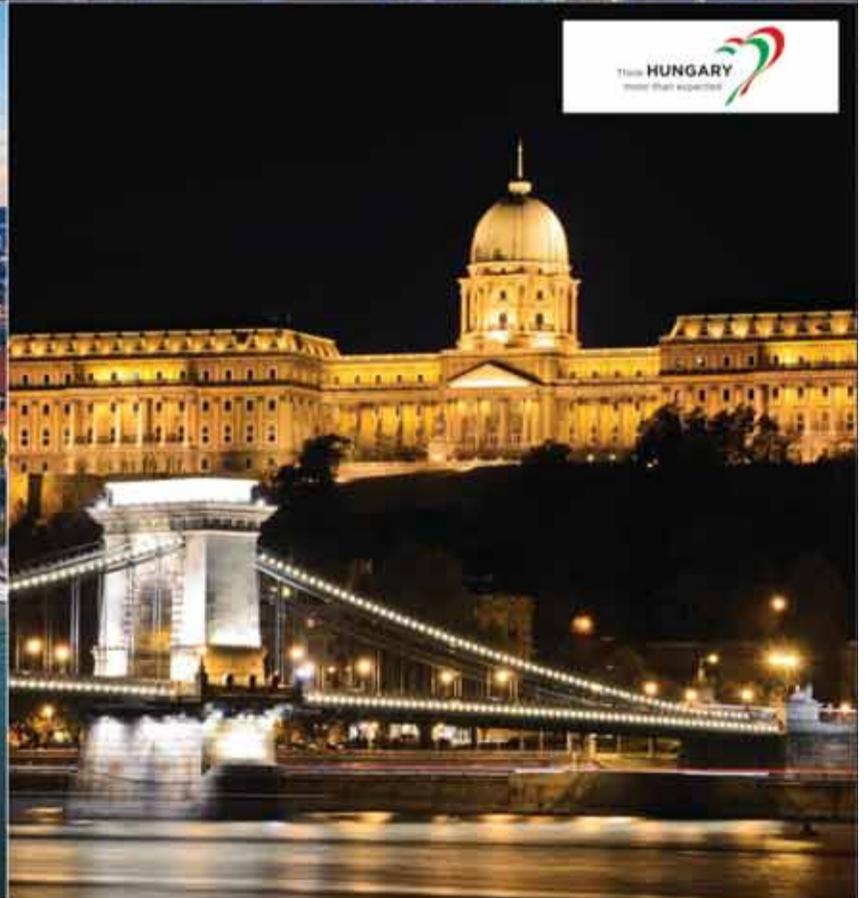
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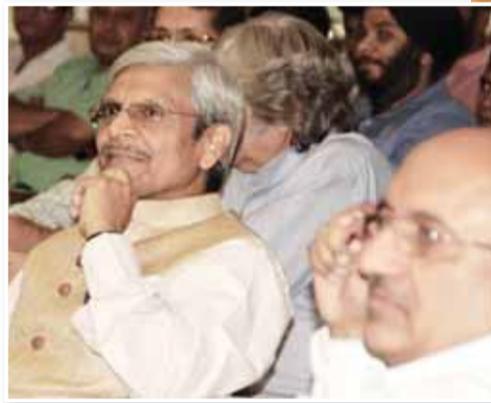
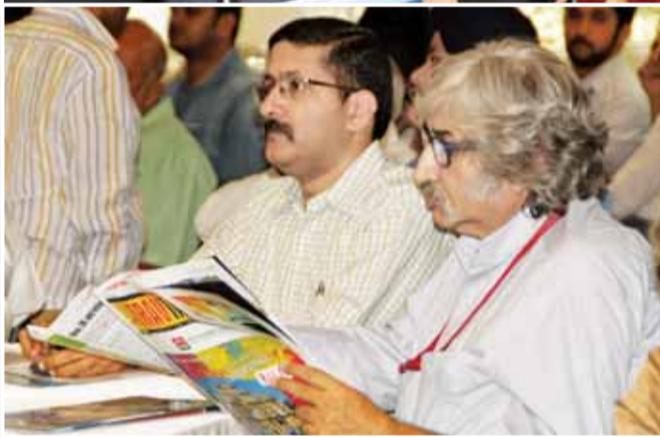
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'Land of Gods' beckons

Analysing the potential of Spiritual Tourism in India at a Conference on "Spiritual Tourism for Sustainable Development – India : the Land of Gods" organised under aegis of PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PHDCCI) a Skill Council was recommended to be set up under jurisdiction of National Skill Development Council (NSDC) so that the branding of spiritual pockets, locations and sites in India could be undertaken effectively to attract tourists for their spiritual upliftment from across the globe.



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ETAA conducts knowledge session in Mumbai



The Enterprising Travel Agents Association (ETAA) organized a knowledge session with corporate trainer, Bhushan Lawande from E4 Development & Coaching on 'Customer Sensitivity and Employees Engagement' in Mumbai.



Thai Airways launches Dreamliner

Thai Airways is giving its customers a whole new inflight experience with cabin enhancements, more seating comfort and almost limitless entertainment options with B787-8 Dreamliner aircraft. The aircraft is flying on international routes from Bangkok to Delhi, Chennai, Seoul, Nagoya, Hong Kong, Singapore, Perth, Brisbane, Denpasar & Kuala Lumpur. From November 25, fly from Delhi or Chennai to Bangkok on the Dreamliner and experience Thai's unique and legendary service with a whole new inflight experience with cabin enhancements, more seating comfort and almost limitless entertainment options. Thai Airways International is the flag carrier of Thailand and flies to 76 destinations in 35 countries using a fleet of 100 aircrafts. Currently Thai is operating 55 flights from 8 cities in India including seasonal flights and carry approximately 1 million passengers and 45000 tons of cargo in a year.





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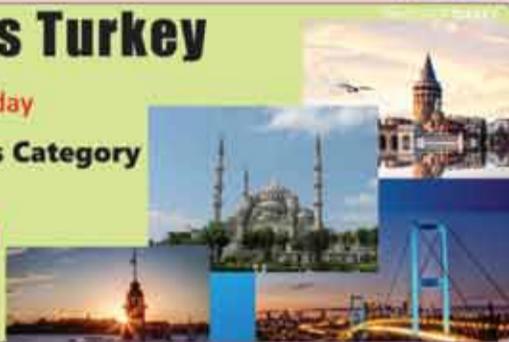


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MICE & Leisure get Spanish touch

Promoting Spain in India, The Tourism Office of Spain organised two day workshops in nine cities. MICE and Leisure products were displayed in a B2B engagement with the travel trade industry to spread awareness and information about the new destinations and incentives to attract Indians to Spain. The two day workshop segregated between MICE and Leisure targeting the travel agents of each segment to ease interaction.



NEW DELHI



MUMBAI

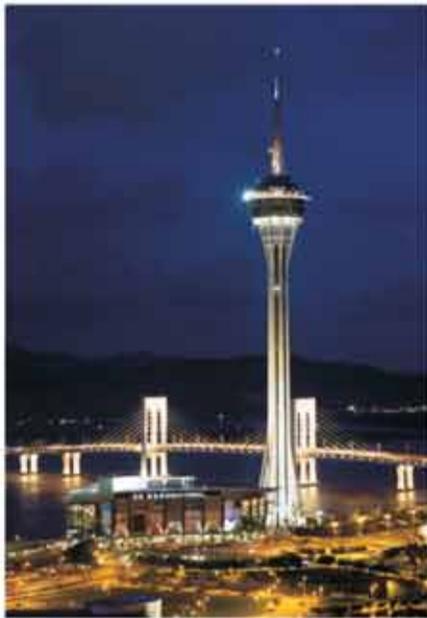
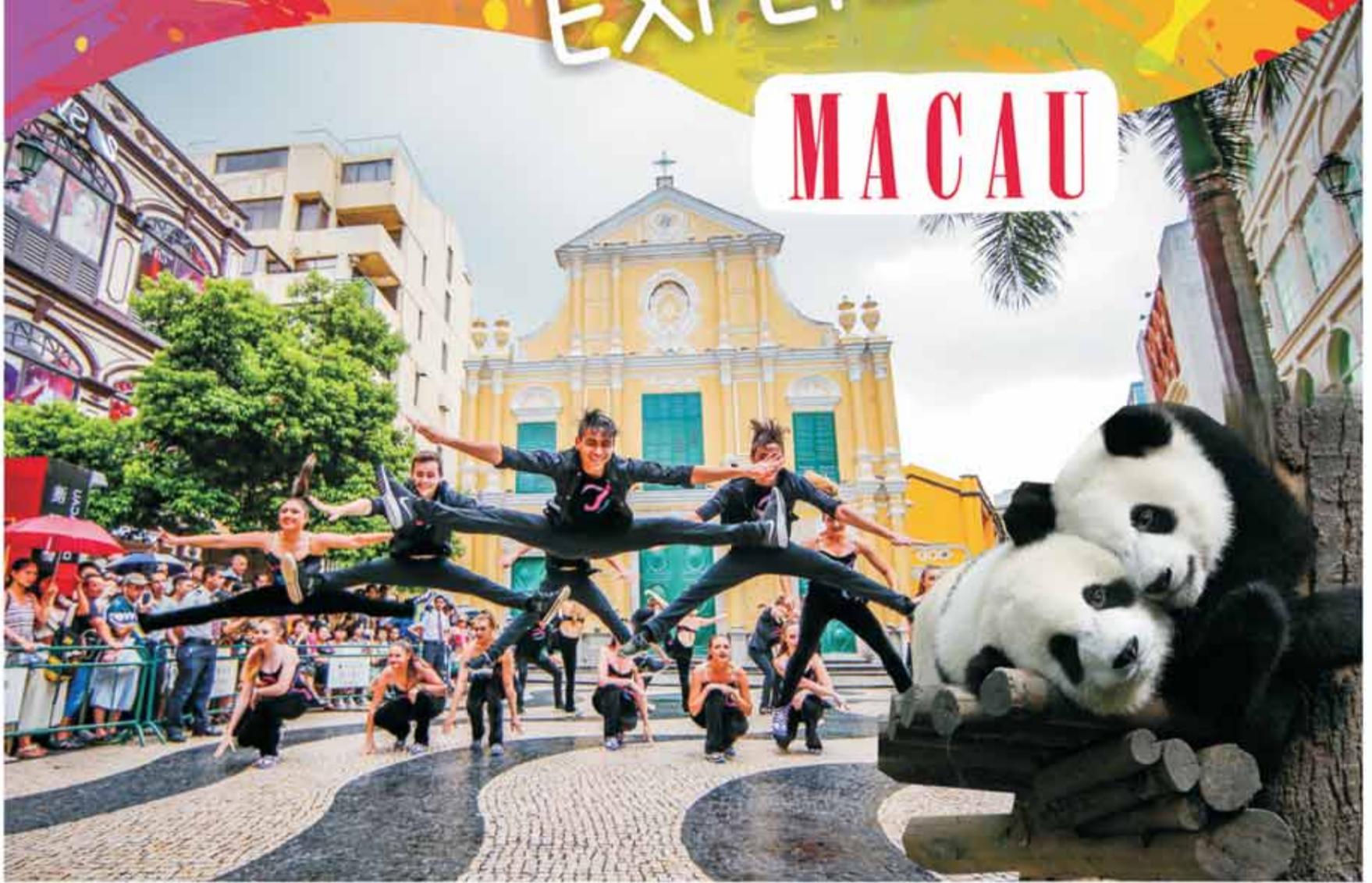


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Luxury redefined @Vkonect

The second edition of Vkonect Luxury was held at The Westin, Gurgaon, where 25 India travel, luxury and hospitality companies participated in the premium B2B meetings platform. The two-day event witnessed networking sessions between luxury buyers and exhibitors, followed by exclusive business sessions in a tabletop and round-robin format. The participant also let their hair down during the cocktails and dinner after the gruelling business sessions.



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City	Date	Time	Venue
Kolkata	18 January, Monday	10:00 - 14:00	The Oberoi
Delhi	19 January, Tuesday	10:00 - 16:00	Le Meridien
Hyderabad	21 January, Thursday	10:00 - 14:00	The Park Hyatt
Mumbai	22 January, Friday	10:00 - 16:00	The Palladium

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► Contd. from page 32



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France offers long-term visas

France will now offer a large number of three or five-year visas to frequent visitors as the Schengen Area implements biometrics in India from November 2, 2015.



TT BUREAU

To facilitate travel throughout the Schengen Area and help issue long-term visas more easily, France, in line with all the countries of the Schengen Area, will issue biometric visas to Indian citizens with effect from November 2, 2015. In this context, the French Embassy in India will offer a large number of three or five-year circulation visas to frequent visitors of France.



once (to have their fingerprints and photograph taken). The visa can be collected either by the applicants themselves, or by a person they have authorised if they wish to avoid making a second trip. Visas issued prior to the introduction of biometrics will remain valid.

What's in the name?

Atout France - France Tourism Development Agency's travel information portal on destination France - www.rendezvousenfrance.com has now been rechristened as www.France.fr. The website is available in 17 languages, with content showcasing various destinations and excellence clusters that are representative of France. By 2016, the tourism board's global branding RendezvousenFrance.com will give way to France.fr.

Eight new VFS centres have been opened across India, bringing up their number to a total of 14 (in Ahmedabad, Bengaluru, Chandigarh, Chennai, Cochin, Delhi, Goa, Hyderabad, Jaipur, Jalandhar, Kolkata, Mumbai, Puducherry, and Pune), to ensure the best possible proximity to the applicants.

All visa applicants will now be asked to come in person at any listed VFS centre of their choice to register their biometric data. Children under the age of 12 years are exempted from this procedure. The recorded biometric data will be stored for a period of 59 months (almost five years), obviating the need for applicants to come in person again for renewing their visa. The biometric data recorded by France will be valid during this period for all Schengen Area countries (similarly, the data recorded by any Schengen Area country will be valid for France during a period of 59 months).

India will thus enter a system already being used by Schengen States almost globally, while other countries, such as the UK and the US, have long been implementing biometrics in India. The transition to biometrics will not impact the visa issuance period, which, for India, is a maximum of 48 hours in keeping with the commitment of the French authorities (in cities where a consular office exists: Delhi, Mumbai, Bengaluru, Kolkata and Puducherry; 72 hours in other cases). Similarly, transition to biometrics will not impact visa fees, which will remain unchanged.

France, the top global tourist destination, welcomes 300,000 Indian visitors every year and wishes to receive them in greater numbers. The transition to biometrics will help ease and secure their travel to France. The applicant is obliged to come in person only

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India Travel Awards honors and rewards the most discerning travel trade professionals. It supports, promotes and develops the Indian travel and tourism industry by identifying excellence in the trade. The winners share with TRAVTALK what it takes to be a champion of the trade.

Guest of Honour

Last season we recorded a growth of around 5 per cent year on year for FTAs, and around 30 per cent for domestic tourists. With the e-visa facility we expect a better response. This year we participated in many trade shows and road-shows. However we are concentrating on FAM trips. This year around 150 travel agents were taken to Goa with support of Air Arabia and 12 media persons on Air Asia. We will be focussing on the Southeast Asian market. UK is a strong market for Goa. The Indian travel trade is high on our list.

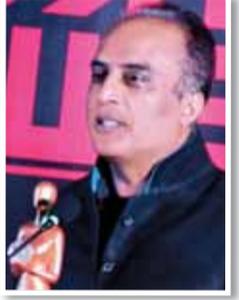
Nikhil Desai
Managing Director, GTDC



Tourism Ambassador

Winning is always a great feeling and thank you for the acknowledgment. I feel the tourism industry in India is at the crossroads. It is now or never. We as an industry need to really get together to impress upon the government that the socio-economic benefits of tourism are too immense to ignore. I wish the Incredible India programme becomes as big as the Make in India programme.

Arjun Sharma
Chairman & Managing Director
The Select Group & Le Passage to India



Gallery of Legends

Today's event has inspired me to work more despite being over 80 years old. The tourism industry is no longer limited to pilgrimage destinations, but has evolved. We need to bring new and innovative ideas in the industry. We introduced My Fair Lady, NASA Tours, Senior Citizen Tours which have become very popular. The accomplishment of Kesari Tours is attributed to the dedicated efforts of the management and the younger, second generation but the biggest power of the company is our tourists.

Kesari Raoji Patil
Founder & Chairman, Kesari Tours



Best Travel Management Company: Travstarz Holiday & Destinations

I think the tourism industry is on the growth path again. With new initiatives like e-visa we can expect a good growth in the near future. There are a few bottlenecks that need to be addressed and with the government support we should be able to come through.

Pankaj Nagpal
Managing Director

Best Airline: SpiceJet

It feels exhilarating, and wonderful to receive this award especially when you get an award for an airline which almost shut down 8 months back and has revived only in the last 6 months under the dynamic leadership of our passionate chairman Ajit Singh. I think it is a wonderful re-beginning for us. Thank you for this honor.

Kamal Hingorani
Senior Vice President & Head of Inflight Services
and Customer Experience, Spicejet



Best Emerging Travel Show: Global Panorama Showcase, Nagpur

In 2016 we will be hosting potential buyers from Tier II and Tier III cities from central India and regions which connect to Nagpur on Indigo. We are reaching out to cities like Coimbatore, Kolkata, Chandigarh and Ahmedabad to host regional agents from around these cities in a closed door B2B event. We are trying to educate the agents to empower them to work better and will also host around 20 overseas buyers to showcase the newly opened wildlife reserves.

Harmandeep Singh Anand
Managing Director, Jagsons Travels



Best Sports Tourism Company: Sports Konnect

Sports Tourism has seen a high demand in the last five years from corporates to bring innovative ideas in the products. Sports products appeal all age groups, MICE, FIT or Group departures. We offer a variety of products in various price ranges starting from ₹ 11,000 which includes a night stay and a ticket to say a football match, Cricket World Cup, Wimbledon, French Open and other sports events. I believe Sports Tourism is big and is here to stay.

Shashank Shekhar Mishra
CEO, Sports Konnect



Best Destination Management Company: Americas: 7M Tours

The Indian outbound market has done well in comparison to last year. We saw a growth of about 30 per cent specially in MICE and Group travel. Travel shows are great events to connect with agents and media to further business ties. At WTM we can capture most of the world markets but for USA, India is a dominant market. The 10 year visa has made it an attractive option. We hope at WTM we can educate buyers about the products and increase the Luxury American experience.

Akarsh Kolapath
Director, 7M Tours

Best Tour Operator- Outbound: World Travel Studio

The visa plays an important role in deciding the destination. Within India, with the Schengen visa, the volume of clients shall increase. We will get affected by the last minute planning. The window will increase and travellers will have to plan their tours earlier in advance. As Indians tend to plan only 15 to 20 days before travelling, that is a challenge we face.

Haresh Koyande
Founder & Managing Director



Best Global Distribution System (GDS): Travelpoint Galileo

Our primary focus has been technology. With the kind of technological products that we are working towards, we are going to make the life of the travel fraternity much easier in the coming years.

Anesh Kavle
Regional Head, West



The winner takes it all...

The West India Travel Awards 2015 celebrated its second edition, this time in India's smallest state of Goa. Held at Grand Mercure Goa Shrem Resort, the glittering awards ceremony identified and rewarded excellence, and inspired its practitioners to continuously raise the standards of their products.



► GALLERY OF LEGENDS

Kesari Raoji Patil, Founder and Chairman, Kesari Tours joins the 'Gallery of Legends'. He is felicitated by **Dilip Parulekar**, Minister of Tourism, Government of Goa, **Nikhil Desai**, Managing Director, Goa Tourism Development Corporation, **Tanushree Pandey**, Mrs India 2015 and **SanJeet**, Director, DDP Group



► DDP GAME CHANGER

Urrshila Kerkar, Executive Director, Cox & Kings joins the 'DDP Game Changer'. She is felicitated by **Dilip Parulekar**, Minister of Tourism, Government of Goa, **Nikhil Desai**, Managing Director, Goa Tourism Development Corporation, **Tanushree Pandey**, Mrs India 2015 and **SanJeet**, Director, DDP Group



► TOURISM AMBASSADOR

Arjun Sharma, Chairman & Managing Director, The Select Group and Le Passage to India joins the 'Tourism Ambassador'. He is felicitated by **Dilip Parulekar**, Minister of Tourism, Government of Goa, **Nikhil Desai**, Managing Director, Goa Tourism Development Corporation, **Tanushree Pandey**, Mrs India 2015 and **SanJeet**, Director, DDP Group



► DDP TRAILBLAZER

Nitan Chhatwal, Chairman & Managing Director, Shrem Group was awarded the 'DDP Trailblazer' and was received by **Krishani Chhatwal**, Director, Shrem Group on his behalf. She accepts the award from **Dilip Parulekar**, Minister of Tourism, Government of Goa, **Nikhil Desai**, Managing Director, Goa Tourism Development Corporation, **Tanushree Pandey**, Mrs India 2015 and **SanJeet**, Director, DDP Group



► FACE OF THE FUTURE

Ruchir Bang, Executive Director, roomsXML Solutions, joins the 'Face of the Future'. He is felicitated by **Dilip Parulekar**, Minister of Tourism, Government of Goa, **Nikhil Desai**, Managing Director, Goa Tourism Development Corporation, **Tanushree Pandey**, Mrs India 2015 and **SanJeet**, Director, DDP Group



► ENTREPRENEUR OF THE YEAR

The award was given to **Aparna Basu Mallik**, CEO, Club7 Holidays and was felicitated by **Dilip Parulekar**, Minister of Tourism, Government of Goa, **Nikhil Desai**, Managing Director, Goa Tourism Development Corporation, **Tanushree Pandey**, Mrs India 2015 and **SanJeet**, Director, DDP Group

EVENT TALK

NOVEMBER 2015

INTERNATIONAL

17-19 Barcelona, Spain IBTM, World

NATIONAL

19	Chandigarh	India Hospitality Awards North and East
20-22	Guwahati	Travel & Tourism Fair
22-24	Amritsar	CII Tourism Fest
22-24	Chandigarh	CII Tourism Fest
23	Delhi	German National Tourist Office B2B Roadshow
24	Bengaluru	German National Tourist Office B2B Roadshow
25	Ahmedabad	German National Tourist Office B2B Roadshow
25	Mumbai	Monaco Government Tourist & Convention Bureau B2B Roadshow
26	Mumbai	German National Tourist Office Networking Event
27	Mumbai	German National Tourist Office B2B Roadshow
27	Delhi	Monaco Government Tourist & Convention Bureau B2B Roadshow
27-29	Pune	India International Travel Mart
27-29	Ahmedabad	India Travel Mart
27-29	Kolkata	Travel East

DECEMBER 2015

INTERNATIONAL

3-5	China	CITE
9-12	Portugal	Connections Meetings

NATIONAL

1-3	Bhuj	Rann Utsav
3	Delhi	European Quartet B2B Workshop
4	Bengaluru	European Quartet B2B Workshop
4-6	Hyderabad	India International Travel Mart
5-7	Jaipur	India Travel Mart
8	Jaipur	North India Travel Awards
5-13	Kolkata	East Himalayan Expo
5	Mumbai	European Quartet B2B Workshop
11-13	Madurai	India International Travel Exhibition
18-20	Siliguri	Tourism Fair
22-24	Mumbai	Travel Tourism Trade Fair – World Travel Trade Mart
23-27	Haridwar	CII Uttarakhand Fair

JANUARY 2016

INTERNATIONAL

20-24	Madrid, Spain	FITUR
11-13	Milan, Italy	BIT

NATIONAL

8-10	Nagpur	Global Panorama Showcase
8-10	Chennai	Travel & Tourism Fair
14-16	Kochi	India International Travel Mart
15	Kolkata	Tourism Fiji Roadshow
15-17	Bengaluru	Travel & Tourism Fair
15-17	Mumbai	India International Travel & Tourism Exhibition
18	Delhi	Tourism Fiji Roadshow
18	Kolkata	South African Tourism B2B Roadshow
19	Ahmedabad	Tourism Fiji Roadshow
19	Delhi	South African Tourism B2B Roadshow
20	Mumbai	Tourism Fiji Roadshow

For more information, contact us at: talk@ddppi.com

Easy visa draw agents to Peru

Apart from workshops and familiarisation trips for travel agents, the Commercial Office of Peru is also compiling a report on the Indian traveller to their destination to share it with the Peruvian suppliers.



HAZEL JAIN

Active in India since March 2014, the Commercial Office of Peru is making steady progress. Its plan is clear – to reach out to potential travel agents and tour operators and educate them about the destination. **Luis M. Cabello**, Economic & Commercial Counsellor, Embassy of Peru, says, “We don’t want to go directly to the consumers. The Indian travel trade is our prime audience and we want to impart destination knowledge and increase destination visibility among them.”

Over the last few months, Cabello has visited cities including Mumbai, New Delhi and Bengaluru to interact with the agents. But he hasn’t dismissed the Tier II cities. “We have conducted workshops in Bhubaneswar, Pune and Indore in the past and have discovered that they offer good opportunities. We will definitely re-visit these and other secondary markets in future. We are also planning to do some workshops in Gujarat,” he adds.

His office is also planning a Fam trip for about 10 agents in May-June 2016. Last



Luis M. Cabello
Economic & Commercial
Counsellor, Embassy, Peru

The travel trade is our prime audience and we want to impart destination knowledge to them

year, it had taken seven agents to Peru. It will also participate in trade shows in India including OTM, SATTE and IITT. There are no plans to bring any of their suppliers to India but the Commercial Office does facilitate communication between them and the Indian travel trade whenever required.



Anne Maeda
Counsellor, Embassy
Peru

The trade needs to know that the visa process for Peru is very easy and prompt

Cabello says, “We have just compiled a report on the profile of Indian travellers that visit Peru – whether they are FITs or groups or business travellers, their travel habits and whether they also go to other Latin American countries. We want to understand the Indian passenger and share our findings with our suppliers.”

Peru is mainly targeting the FIT and MICE segments for now. “That’s enough for us for now as India is a very large market. The number of Indians to Peru is growing by 20 per cent year-on-year. We get a total of 6,000 plus visitors from India at the moment and about 50 per cent of them are business travellers. We are not just looking at numbers but also quality. Indian travellers have time as well as resources; they can spend money when they travel outside India and that’s our target market,” Cabello adds. However, Peru does not have any incentive programmes for big MICE groups as of now.

Anne Maeda, Counsellor, Embassy of Peru, who looks after visas, was also part of the workshop to educate the trade about the visa process. She says, “Until September 2015, we received more than 1,000 applications for tourist visas and 800 for business visas. The trade needs to know that the visa process for Peru is very easy and prompt provided all the documents are in place. We take a maximum of five working days. I am trying to clear any misunderstanding they might have.” She however informed that the embassy does not have any special group visas yet. ↴

Winter sets in Munich

October 25, 2015 also marks the start of the winter period and the launch of many attractive new routes. Airlines are offering 221 destinations, including 192 with scheduled services. Alongside 15 airports in Germany, travelers in Munich can choose from among 128 continental destinations. In the intercontinental segment, 49 routes will be served. Over the winter timetable period, which will end on March 26, 2016, airlines have booked slots for more than 145,000 flights.

The old and the new co-exist here with cherished traditions like Oktoberfest, the world’s largest beer festival, rubbing shoulders with designer shopping, sleek cars and high-powered industry. To increase connectivity to Munich, this winter season, airlines offer new flight.

A few highlights of new routes and flights to be made available this winter in Munich are– Meridiana, an airline making its debut in Munich, will depart twice a day to Linate Airport in Milan with a Boeing

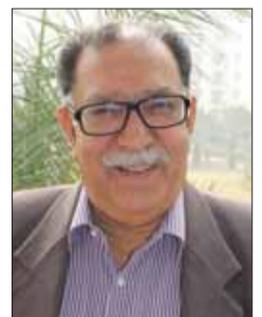
737. Luxair is expanding its Munich to Luxembourg service to 25 flights a week. For the first time, SAS is adding Stockholm to its Munich schedule, with three departures a week for the Swedish capital. Also a twice-weekly service to Iasi in Romania will be operated by Tarom. During the coming winter period Transavia is offering flights to Paris-Orly every day except Saturdays, and starting in February will also be flying to Eindhoven in the Netherlands. Aeroflot is stepping up its service from Munich to Moscow Sheremetyevo Airport to four flights a day.

Emirates, is substantially boosting the capacity on its Dubai route with a third daily flight, starting on February 1, 2016, to be operated with a Boeing 777. This will complement its two existing daily departures with the gigantic Airbus A380. With the addition of two new weekly flights to Capetown this winter, Lufthansa will now operate a daily service to the South African metropolis.

OBITUARY

Nazir Ahmad Bakshi Founder member of Travel Agents Society of Kashmir (TASK)

Prominent businessman and former president of the Kashmir Chamber of Commerce & Industry (KCCI) and founder member of Travel Agents Society of Kashmir (TASK) **Nazir Ahmad Bakshi** passed away after a brief illness in New Delhi on November 1, 2015.



He was 75 and is survived by his wife, son and two daughters.

Bakshi was born on June 28, 1940. He set up Shiraz Travels in late 1968. Besides promoting Kashmir as a tourism destination, Nazir acted as bridge between Kashmir and Bollywood. He was instrumental in making production arrangements for Shah Rukh Khan starrer ‘Jab Tak Hai Jaan’ which was shot in Kashmir. Bakshi was the president of KCCI from 1990-92 and the founder chairman of PILTOF, TAAI– JK Chapter & Founder Member of J&K Tourism Alliance. He was co-founder of Ladakh Safari Tours in 1975 and Partner with SITA World Travel in its Cargo division, Coordinator of Tourism & Hospitality Bodies of Kashmir.

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- Day 6: Gold Coast
- Day 7: Gold Coast
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- Day 11: Sydney – Departure

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Kuoni Group

Dubai

Zubin Karkaria has been appointed Chief Executive Office of Kuoni Group. He is the first Indian to be selected for this top post. Karkaria was appointed as the COO of the Kuoni India Tour Operating Division in 1999, and moved on to become the Deputy CEO and Head Business Development in 2003. He conceptualised and launched VFS Global in 2001, and was appointed as the CEO and MD of Kuoni India and South Asia in 2005. In March 2013, in line with the development of VFS Global as an important Division of Kuoni Group, Karkaria was appointed on the Executive Board of Kuoni Group. He graduated from Mumbai University and completed his Business Management studies from Mumbai.



Vistara

New Delhi

Vistara has appointed **Sanjiv Kapoor** as its Chief Strategy & Commercial Officer. He will be assuming the role in February, 2016. Kapoor joins the airline from SpiceJet where he held the position of Chief Operating Officer. Kapoor has over 19 years of experience in the airline industry, having worked with airlines in Asia, Europe, and the US in leadership and advisory positions. A graduate from Dartmouth College, USA and with a MBA from Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania. His previous employers include Northwest Airlines, Bain and Company, Temasek Holdings (Singapore), and BCG (the Boston Consulting Group).



Travelport

Langley, UK

Travelport (TVPT) announced the appointment of **Stephen Shurrock** as Executive Vice President and Chief Commercial Officer. Shurrock joins Travelport from Telefonica, where he is currently CEO of its Consumer Division, responsible for both the consumer business and digital divisions globally. Shurrock's appointment will become effective on January 4, 2016. As Chief Commercial Officer, Shurrock will lead Travelport's customer-focused teams in Air, Agency, Hospitality and Digital Media around the world, as well as having global responsibility for customer engagement, product strategy, marketing and market research.



TravelBullz Group

Bangkok

TravelBullz has announced the appointment of **Steve Harrop** as Chief Executive Officer of the TravelBullz Group. Commenting on the appointment, TravelBullz Founder and President, **K.D. Singh** said, "After five years at the helm, I am delighted to have Steve join the core team to drive the TravelBullz Group to its next phase of growth, innovation and industry leadership. We could not be more excited about our future together." Harrop is a well accomplished, performance driven leader with a wealth of experience in the commercial, financial, operational and technological aspects of the B2B online travel industry. Harrop's most recent assignments was as Operations Director for CTI, United Kingdom and prior to that he spent seven years with DOTW where initially he lead the company's financial matters in the capacity of Chief Financial Officer and latterly assumed the position of Chief Operating Officer.

Harrop is equally excited to join the group stating: "The vision of TravelBullz is to be the travel partner of choice offering leading edge technology but with the emphasis on the human touch. TravelBullz has many exciting innovations in the pipeline that will bring a more efficient booking process and broader product range at competitive prices to the travel trade throughout Asia and beyond. I am enthralled to be joining TravelBullz at this time of change and I look forward to being part of an excellent team which demonstrates an infinite amount of passion, drive and energy to add value to its customers experience."



MiCar

New Delhi

Ashok Vashist has been appointment of as the CEO of MiCar. Vashist's long association with the car rental industry makes him the perfect fit to lead the growth curve at MiCar. His chief responsibilities at the company will involve Operations Management and Excellence, Marketing, Customer Experience and Overall Strategy. During the course of his career, he has held various senior level positions in Sales, Marketing and Operations with industry bigwigs such as Hertz, Europcar, Easycabs and Wise Travel India (WTI).



Marriott International Inc.

Mumbai

Manish Tolani assumes office as the newly appointed Area Director of Sales & Marketing – South Asia at Marriott International. With the Marriott since 2003, Tolani brings to the table a decade of experience within the hospitality sector. In his new role, he will be leading and overseeing the Sales and Marketing portfolio for the existing 29 Marriott Hotels across India, along with developing core strategies for the upcoming properties across Asia Pacific. He graduated from IIHM Aurangabad in 2001, and began his career with the Oberoi Hotels & Resorts.



Grand Hyatt

Mumbai

Sanjeev Tandon has joined the Hyatt family in India as the Director of Sales and Marketing, Grand Hyatt Mumbai and Area Director – Sales and Marketing, West India, Hyatt Hotel Corporation. He comes with an experience of over two decades with renowned hospitality brands in India, Middle East and recently Thailand, comprising stints at Sheraton, Le Meridien, Taj, Oberoi, DusitThani, Jumeirah International and Moevenpick hotels. Sanjeev is a hotel management graduate of IHM Mumbai and alumni of S. P. Jain Institute of Management, Mumbai, with a Master's degree in Marketing.



Radisson Blu Hotel Kaushambi

Delhi NCR

Rakhee Gupta has been appointed as Manager Marketing at Radisson Blu Hotel Kaushambi Delhi NCR. She comes with over nine years of experience in Marketing, Branding, Product Positioning, ATL & BTL and Business Development. A post graduate from Symbiosis, Gupta hails from Delhi. She started her career with Just Dial and been associated with some of renowned publishing brands like Pearson Education and Encyclopaedia Britannica.



TALKING People

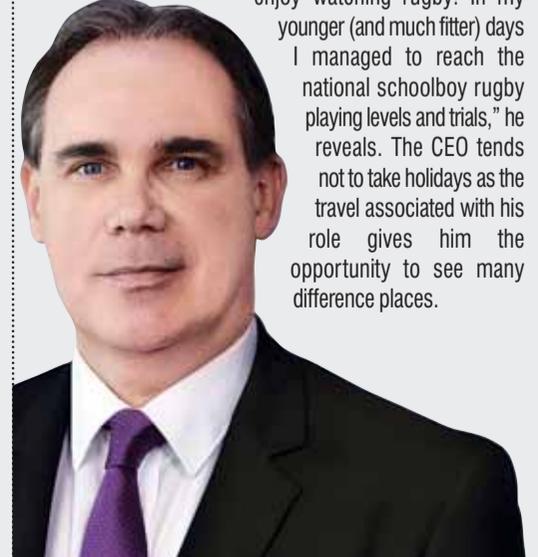
The biggest stress-buster for **Monish B. Shah**, Chairman and MD of TravelLibro after a long day is to go home and give his baby girl his undivided attention. "She has changed my world. When I find a little time away from family I go for a run and focus my thoughts on strategy or plan for the next day," he says. A romantic at heart, stunning picturesque locations strike a chord with him. His favourite destinations are Santorini in Greece and Udaipur in India where they also honeymooned. An outsider to the travel industry, Shah was an investment banker for nearly a decade. "But my love for social networking, travel and a burning desire to be one of the most successful start-up stories of India has led me to my destination called TravelLibro and I am literally living the dream!" he adds.



Sumathi Ramanathan, Regional General Manager (Asia Pacific & Middle East), VisitBritain, is a big fan of the 'holistic spa' concept. "We do it really well in Asia with the Indonesia jamu treatment, the ayurvedic massages and ancient Chinese reflexology practice. It's either that or a good book and a great cup of coffee does it for me," she says. She owns about a thousand books and has read most of them. Her most memorable holiday moment was while watching Swan Lake at the Bolshoi in Moscow. "It was technically a flawless performance. I also fell in love with Rajasthan especially Udaipur."



Roy Kinnear, CEO of Air Seychelles, feels that his profile required putting ones heart and soul into the company and employees. "It is a 24/7 role. Whenever I do find downtime, I like to relax by reading, listening to music or watching an intriguing film with a good plot. I also enjoy watching rugby! In my younger (and much fitter) days I managed to reach the national schoolboy rugby playing levels and trials," he reveals. The CEO tends not to take holidays as the travel associated with his role gives him the opportunity to see many difference places.





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Goa's competitive streak

India's popular state of Goa is ready to launch newer and exciting products for tourists that offer great value for money. Nikhil Desai, Managing Director, Goa Tourism Development Corporation (GTDC), says this makes Goa extremely competitive on the India tourism map.



HAZEL JAIN

Q What kind of growth did Goa see last season?

Things couldn't have been better. Last season we recorded a growth of around five per cent year on year for FTA and close to 30 per cent as far as the domestic tourists are concerned. Last year was a bumper year for Goa because we had the decennial exposition of St Francis Xavier so we had a lot of influx of domestic tourists. But I am sure we will have a much better year now thanks to the e-Tourist Visa facility.

Q What new products is Goa offering agents?

This year we have launched several tourism products so I think this season is going to be very exciting as far as Goa is concerned. Some new properties have also opened up. We are getting very competitive by offering value for money. The Indian travel trade has been supporting Goa for a long time; Goa is very high on their priority list.

Q How do you see Goa evolve as a destination?

We have taken a lot of initiatives and the last couple of years have been indeed path-breaking. A lot of these initiatives will start taking flight by 2016 and Goa in the coming years will definitely be the torchbearer for the Indian tourism industry. Today, there is a very conscious effort to put professionals at the helm to ensure that there is a good master-plan.

Q Are there any challenges you plan to overcome?

Minister Talk

Q What kind of growth are you expecting this year?

Goa used to be seasonal but now it is a 365-day destination. People come down to enjoy Goa even during the monsoons. Last year, we had around 1,223 chartered flights to Goa and the official tourist figures touched 5.5 million. This year, we are expecting more than seven million tourists. I urge all the travel agents and tour operators to extend their support to us for this.

Q How much will eTV contribute to Goa tourism?

The Central government has now issued the eTV for many countries and Goa airport is included in that list. Almost 20,000 people have arrived in Goa on eTV since November 2014. So this year we are expecting almost 50,000 people to come using e-visas.

Q What new products can agents sell this season?

Goa has generally been popular for its beaches but there have been a lot of efforts since the last three years to come up with innovative ideas to develop newer products. We now have international standard infrastructure for tourists. We have provided tourist facilities like toilets, changing rooms, beach cleaning systems, etc along the coastline. We have also women taxi drivers for women tourists. By 2016, Goa will start activities like hot-air ballooning, amphibious vessels, seaplanes, ropeways, scuba diving, heritage boat cruises, and several adventure sports rides.



Dilip Parulekar

Minister for Woman & Child Development
Tourism, Ports, Protocol, Government of Goa

The challenge is during the peak season (Nov-Feb) when the rates really go up. But over a period of time specially now what we saw in the monsoons we did register very good growth in terms of the average occupancies specially in three-four-five star category hotels specially with weddings and MICE events.

In order to maintain our international profile, we do participate in several roadshows like WTM London, ITB Berlin, ITB Asia, FITUR, etc. – about seven or eight trade shows and close to 15 roadshows in different destinations. This year we have started laying emphasis on organising Fam trips for agents and we have brought in about 150 travel agents and tour operators from different countries to Goa in association with Air Arabia. Goa is now well connected to the west through airlines like Qatar, Air Arabia and Air India, as well as the east now with Air Asia's direct flights from Kuala Lumpur. That's the area that we are going to look forward to. We expect great results.

Q What are your plans for the international market?



“We are getting very competitive by offering value for money. The Indian travel trade has been supporting Goa for a very long time; Goa is very high on their priority list. And why not, Goa happens to be one of the hottest destinations in India and it's an easy sell.”

Nikhil Desai

MD, Goa Tourism Development Corporation

Q How was WTM London this year?

This year was especially exciting for us because not only has e-Tourist Visa been introduced to the UK, which has traditionally been a very strong market for us. With the decline in the Russian arrivals especially the charter segment, I think the UK is something the trade of Goa is looking forward to. ↴



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