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A level-playing field for trade

Despite being realistic about inbound flatlining in the year gone by, industry bigwigs who attended the Great Indian Travel Bazaar give a thumbs-up to the trade fair and appreciate the grand stage it offers to showcase their products.

TT BUREAU



Greesh Bindra
Area General Manager, North & West India, IHG

GITB was much better before this year and the year before. This year we had a team of 11 people from IHG. Inbound tourism is definitely growing and the numbers are getting better. I believe we need more hotels and the infrastructure needs improvement. We need to get more competitive with smaller countries as they are doing much better than us. I think that with the effort from the government as well as hotels and tour operators, we will get there sooner than later.



Sowmya Vijaymohan
Partner
RARE India

GITB has been very good for us, considering the fact that we have the largest stall here and thus the number of appointments we have is also big — over 400 odd appointments for 12 hotel partners. This year the agents at GITB have been really good, not only in terms of quality but also in terms of diversity. We've always been looking at the UK, France and Germany markets. I think it's time to move out and concentrate on Australia and the US, which have been growing for us. You can't put your eggs in one basket anymore.



Sunil Sikka
Head - Marketing & Business Development, WelcomHeritage

In the last seven years, nothing has changed at GITB. It's the same. While the event is not bad, in the last two years, the inbound industry has been going down. After the incident on December 16, 2014, things have changed. We don't give any comforts to our incoming guests, but give them more stress. There's something wrong in the marketing and handling people coming into our country. Single woman travellers have stopped coming to India. We hope things will get better in the coming years.



Anshul Bhargava
Corporate General Manager, The Ananta Udaipur

We have been a part of GITB for the last five years and have seen people come back and talk about our property even after the show. There is a good response and the show allows us to build reputation as well as garner business. We have seen a lot of French tourists coming to our properties and Rajasthan as a whole. We are also working with the UK market and targeting the Russia market.



Nikhil Vahi
Senior Vice President, Hospitality Operations & Development, D. S. Group Hospitality

This is the second year we are participating in GITB. We had a fair amount of queries last year. Both our days at GITB were full of appointments this year. And we hope to do good business as well. The trend here and otherwise shows that inbound tourism is growing year by year and it sure will translate into bigger opportunities and employment generation.



Homa Mistry
CEO
Trail Blazer Tours India

We have been associated with GITB from the day it started. This year particularly, the quality of clients is very good. We are very happy. This fair particularly is very good for inbound tourism. Firstly, because it is professionally managed and secondly there are no outsiders and we have great meetings coming. So in a short time you get the opportunity to meet many good quality tour operators.



Rita Shah
Chief Operating Officer, Hans Hotels, New Delhi

GITB was good and even business-wise it was profitable. We met a few clients from big companies and a lot of people from Brazil, despite the country not doing quite well currently. At the moment the inbound market is not that good. We are only hoping it is going to be good. Summer looks pretty good. Spain is going to be picking up this summer, which has been pretty slow in the last couple of years.



Rajnish Sabharwal
Chief Operating Officer, TUTC

GITB and such exhibitions are very essential. In a very controlled environment one can meet the right kind of people for the right kind of product. It makes selling and understanding the client and the overall relationship much better. We have been getting the most support from the US and the European market. Other than that there's a lot of interest coming from Singapore and the Far East market as well.



Zacharia George
General Manager
Ramada, Alleppey

We cater to a number of inbound markets like Germany, France, Israel and we are working on the Scandinavian market as well. The inbound market has been generally low in the last few years, and we've been concentrating more on the domestic market because travel is much higher there. Once you pitch yourself in the domestic market, even the payments are higher. ADRs are much higher compared to what you earn from the inbound market.



Ragini Chopra
Vice President, Corporate Affairs & Public Relations, Jet Airways

We are partner airline for GITB along with Etihad Airways. I think any corporate activity, which is done by a state to promote, attract buyers and bring them to actually see the product and services that the state has to offer, is a fantastic initiative. A huge number of meetings are planned, and even if a small percentage of buyers translate into actual business, it's going to be good for inbound tourism.



Dhananjay Kumar
General Manager, The Suryaa

The platform at GITB gives us an excellent opportunity to meet FTOs. We have received a very good response from all the buyers and hope that it will be a good show. We are majorly focusing on medical tourism as we are in close proximity to the hospitals. We are also targeting the corporate and MICE clients for our hotel.



Rohit Katyal
Head of Sales – Delhi/NCR, Jüsta Hotels & Resorts

We have been participating in GITB for the past seven years, and have seen the show evolving over a period of time. A lot of new players are coming into the market. Thus, somewhere, it's all about creating visibility of the brand. We, specifically as an organisation, have reasonable numbers coming in from Germany, France, and Spanish markets.



Jitendra Singh Rathore
Chairman, Indian Historical Hospitality

This is our eighth year at GITB and I think this is a good platform to come and showcase the product and interact with travel agents and know the international travel agents who visit the exhibition. Such meetings are very relevant in the market, although the instant picture is not clear. The results are not immediate, but it helps in the long run.

New IATO team



Biennial elections at the Indian Association of Tour Operators saw some expected bigwigs return to the helm while some new faces also took charge.

NISHA VERMA

Pronab Sarkar won the IATO elections for the post of the president at the biennial elections held at The Park, New Delhi, on April 23, 2016.

Most of the members of his team also won at various other positions, including **Rajeev Kohli** as the Senior Vice President, **Rajiv Mehra** as Vice President and **Amresh Tiwari** as the Honorary Treasurer. However, a surprising win was the election of **Lally Matthews** as the Honorary Secretary. **Sandeep Jain** also had a close win as Honorary Joint Secretary

with a one-vote victory. **Akshay Kumar**, the Returning Officer, declared the results after a long counting process in the evening.

Elated after the results were announced, Sarkar revealed the three point agenda of his team, "We will take IATO to new heights with the new team. Our new programme will follow the government's motto — 'Sabka Sath, Sabka Vikas'. We want everybody, whether an EC member or not, to contribute towards the welfare of the association and be an integral part in making it stronger so that we can face the challenges we have in our way. We also



want participation of women members to work along with the Executive Committee. The third agenda is to make IATO an all India association, so that all the regions can get the benefits and the

contribution of the association should be spread all over. We want our regional chapters to be stronger, and we will initiate a number of activities in all the regions."

Supporting the election results, **Subhash Goyal**, Immediate Past President, IATO, said, "I am happy that I am handing over the baton to an able candidate. Pronab Sarkar has been my right hand man

during my term as President. I would also like to congratulate Lally Matthews on his inclusion in the team. He is an experienced person and I am sure it will be beneficial to the entire industry."

EC MEMBERS

ACTIVE

1. P.S. Duggal
2. Raj Bajaj
3. Rajnish Kaistha
4. Ramesh Wattal
5. Viney Tyagi

ALLIED

1. N.S. Rathor
3. Sunil Gupta
4. Zia Siddiqui

Rajasthan demands better air connectivity

Rajasthan Tourism is aggressively working towards creating a cleaner, safer, and conducive environment for tourism in the state. **Vasundhara Raje**, Chief Minister, Government of Rajasthan, points out that air connectivity in the state is a major drawback and needs to be addressed at the earliest.

ANKITA SAXENA

According to Travel and Tourism Economic Impact 2016, report by World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTTC), India is expected to become one of the top 10 tourism economies in the world by 2026. "This can only happen if the government and many stakeholders of the travel and hospitality industry work together," comments Raje.

The newly launched promotional campaign shows various facets of Rajasthan. Raje says, "Tourism has been before but is now again, our best face to the world. The campaign aims not only to increase room inventory but is a multi-modal and multi-lingual

campaign for both domestic and international tourists. It will add value to our products and is meant to shock and awe."

In an appeal to the tourism industry, Raje points out that the air connectivity in Rajasthan is a drawback. She says, "Rajasthan with an abundance of tourism products only lacks air connectivity not only within the state but also to other destinations. Cities like Jaipur, Jodhpur, Udaipur, Jaisalmer, Kota, etc., have to be connected for easy and quick travel. The civil enclaves in Bikaner and Jaisalmer airports are ready and it would be a shame to see this investment go waste."

Infrastructure in terms of connectivity is vital for the



"Cities like Jaipur, Jodhpur, Udaipur, Jaisalmer, Kota, etc., have to be connected for easy and quick travel. The civil enclaves in Bikaner and Jaisalmer airports are ready and it would be a shame to see this investment go waste."

Vasundhara Raje
Chief Minister, Government of Rajasthan

tourism industry, and Raje asserts that the government is working to improve the same. "We are improving the road transport to enable faster and safer travel to lesser known destinations which we plan to push to the forefront," she says. The chief minister also identifies the various initiatives taken by the tourism department like improving tourist amenities at

pilgrim sites and temples; providing a platform for the state's craft and art; the expansion of event lists to cater to tastes of different age groups.

Raje informs that the tourism policy 2015, to create new tourism units has been received well and in partnership with Resurgent Rajasthan, as many as 220

Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) were signed for tourism. These units range from luxury to budget travellers and is expected to generate employment for 40,000 citizens. Raje stressed on the fact that though the state has offered products of the variety of palaces, forts, heritage and cultural tourism which

have been very strong pillars of support for the state, but there is a lot more to explore in Rajasthan."

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GITB charts inbound growth story

GITB yet again proved to be an engaging platform for the tourism and hospitality industry to showcase their products and forge new relationships.

TT BUREAU

The 9th edition of GITB, held from April 17-19 in Jaipur, saw 270 foreign buyers from over 53 countries and 280

"GITB has so far successfully travelled a long way since its inception in 2008 and has established itself as an event of international brand. Though started on the lines

which has become the need of the hour.

Jyotsna Suri, Chairperson, Committee on Tourism, FICCI, noted, "Over

S.K. Agarwal, Principal Secretary-Tourism, Rajasthan, revealed that the state government will be organising a domestic travel mart on the lines of GITB, which will host the domestic travel agents and tour operators. "Apart from foreign tourists, domestic tourists also bring lot of business into the state and thus the platform will provide space to the domestic tourism and hospitality stakeholders. The show will be held in July/August, tentatively," he said.

A FICCI-MRSS Knowledge Paper on Inbound Tourism, was released by **Dr Raj Sharma**, Chairman, MRSS, **Dipak Deva**, Co-Chairman, Tourism Committee, FICCI, and other dignitaries present at the inauguration ceremony. The paper details the potential of tourism in Rajasthan and is intended to aid the players of the tourism and hospitality industry.



(L-R) Dipak Deva, Dr. Raj Sharma, Jyotsna Suri, Vasundhara Raje, S. K. Agarwal and Vinod Zutshi at the GITB inauguration

Indian sellers, from the tourism and hospitality industry, interacting in 10,500 pre-fixed B2B meetings over two days. Rajasthan Chief Minister **Vasundhara Raje** was the Chief Guest. **Vinod Zutshi**, Secretary-Tourism, Government of India, said,

of Kerala Travel Mart (KTM) which is held every two years, GITB has emerged as an annual show and we are delighted to support and participate in this mega mart." Zutshi also appealed to all tourism stakeholders to adapt to the digital world

the last editions of GITB, we hosted 75,000 B2B meetings, 2800 buyers. Foreign tourist arrivals last year grew by 4.4 per cent and foreign exchange earnings grew by 2.3 per cent indicating that India is fast moving towards becoming a leading inbound destination."

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Belgium

Grand Place, Mannekin Pis & Atomium.

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Dam Square - the heart of Amsterdam,
Amsterdam Canal Cruise.

Germany - 01 nt

Cologne - Cathedral, Scenic Rhine River Cruise,
Heidelberg Altstadt, Visit Black Forest,
Demonstration of Cuckoo Clock.

Switzerland - 03 nts

Rhine Falls, Mt. Titlis, Orientation tour of Lucerne,
Lake Lucerne Cruise, JungfrauJoch,
Orientation tour of Interlaken.

Liechtenstein

Vaduz : Mini-train ride.

Austria - 01 nt

Orientation tour of Innsbruck, Swarovski Museum.

Italy - 03 nts

Guided City Tour of Rome, Guided City Tour of Florence,
Photostop at Piazzale Michelangelo,
Leaning Tower of Pisa, St. Mark's - Venice with Private Boat,
Murano Glass Showroom, Gondola Ride.

Vatican City

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St. Peter Basilica & Square.

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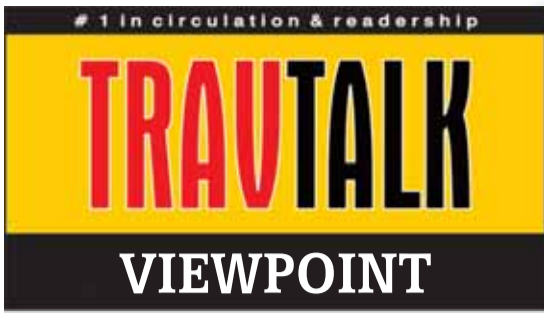


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Then & Now



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Is India welcoming?

The technique to attract international arrivals is not only through simplified visa process and documentation, but also entails seamless connectivity and an overall experience a country offers. As part of the travel industry, we need to ask ourselves: How welcoming is our country to tourists and to what extent do tourists recommend India to others and return themselves?

Key factors support this question. How good are the hotels and how well-maintained are our tourist attractions? How easy is it to travel within India? Are we hospitable enough and do we offer a good experience to visitors?

India manages to tick off some points, but not all. We seek to attract tourists but harassment by beggars, haranguing touts, rip-off merchants; corrupt law enforcement officials and hostile incidents have in the past turned a pleasant experience into a hellish one for many foreign travellers. Of course, some factors remain in the hands of the government and how strong the political will to improve tourism is. But the tourism industry as a unit should be able and willing to collaborate to ensure that the visitors' tourism experience matches the promises we make and the message that DMCs in India send out to their target markets.

IATO MEET AT AGRA TRADE RENEWS DEMANDS

Highlights of the annual IATO conference in Agra in 1991:

- ❖ The meet was attended by Madhav Rao Scindia, the then Tourism and Civil Aviation Minister; Yogesh Chandra and Faarookh Abdullah
- ❖ Scindia announced a flat rate of \$5 for a 30-day tourist visa
- ❖ He chided the members for making it difficult for new entrants to come in travel business
- ❖ The presence of Nagendra Prasad, the then President of TAAI was seen as a step in the direction of unity among trade associations



R.C. Gupta
General Manager, Ashok Hotel
New Delhi (ITDC)

From the archives

R.C. Gupta was the General Manager of Ashok Hotel, New Delhi in 1991 and retired as Senior VP at ITDC in 2008. Today he is the Executive Director of INLEAD, Gurugram.

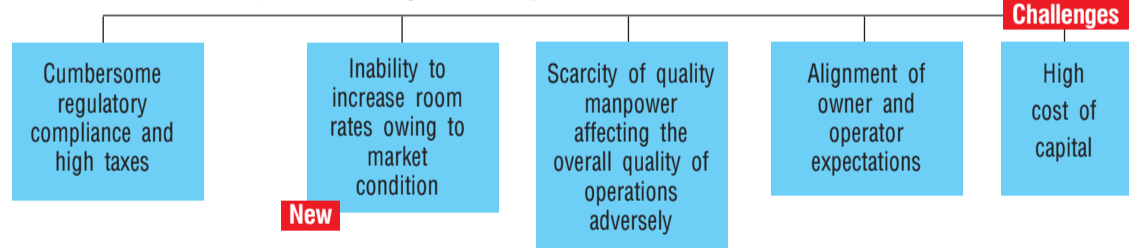


R.C. Gupta
Executive Director
INLEAD, Gurugram

Hoteliers seek lesser licensing

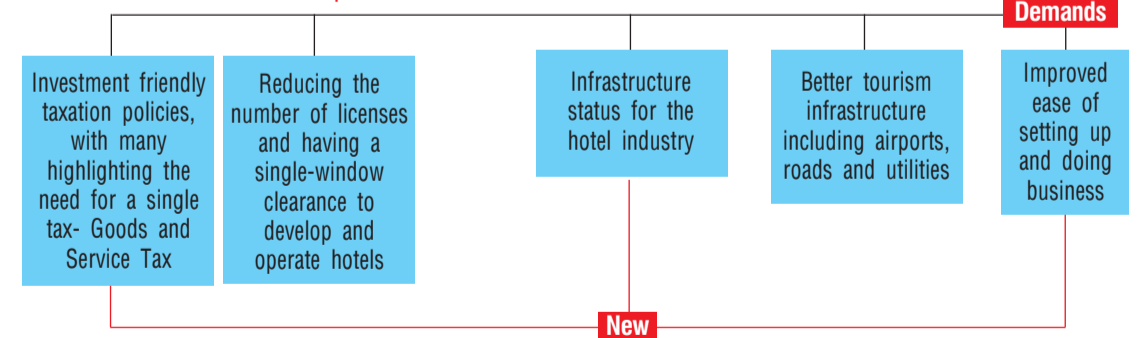
Hoteliers put forth the challenges of working in the Indian business environment and also list their top five demands from the government to ease business.

Top five challenges faced by hotel owners in India



Some respondents highlighted rising operating costs, particularly high electricity tariffs, and unavailability of long-term funding to be challenges

Top five demands from the Indian Government:



Moreover, they have requested for greater governmental focus on promoting tourism and brand "India" abroad to generate higher inbound travel

Source: HVS Stakeholder Sentiment Survey 2016

Letter to the Editor

Dear TravTalk,

Shoba and I wanted to send a heartfelt congratulations to you and your team on the fantastic work that you have been doing over the past few years. It's commendable on what you have achieved. For RARE, DDPPL and its magazines are by far the most recommended and go-to magazines for any travel centric news and any advertising recommendations. Your magazines are by far one of the few, if not the most, balanced in terms of news in the travel trade, alongside being very sensitive to picking up new trends too.

Your active presence in fairs and events, alongside being up to date with everything that's happening contributes big time in the final outcome of the magazines and more importantly to the tremendous brand presence and trust that DDPPL has achieved in the travel trade.

You and team also deserve a big Thank You from RARE for the constant support and belief that you have extended to us.

All the very best.
Warm Regards,
Sowmya R Vijaymohan and Shoba Mohan

Helicopter tours in Tamil Nadu

Har Sahay Meena, Commissioner of Tourism & Managing Director, Tamil Nadu Tourism Development Corporation (TTDC), says that though the state had a rough year, it is resurging fast and holds promise for its partners.

NISHA VERMA

QHow has Tamil Nadu fared in terms of tourism last year?

In 2014, 46.45 lakh foreign tourists and 32.5 crore domestic tourists visited Tamil Nadu. This year the number is increasing. According to our calculations, we had a growth of 1.8 per cent despite heavy floods in Chennai when so many bookings were cancelled. We hope to continue to grow at a better rate this year. Chennai got affected because the airport had closed down.

The plan is already in the pipeline and once a few issues are cleared, we will launch it. We are also using social media, including Facebook and Twitter in a big way. Our website is also very rich in content.

QWhat makes Tamil Nadu different from its neighbouring states for tourism?

We are a destination for all kinds of tourists. We have sufficient infrastructure to meet the needs of every kind of tourist. We provide good facilities, whether it's under private or public sector. Also, Tamil Nadu is very safe.

QWhat does the new tourism policy of Tamil Nadu entail?

We haven't left any aspect untouched in the tourism policy. Some of the highlights include the development of beach tourism. We want to develop a stretch from Chennai to Rameshwaram. An entertainment company called Wonderla, which has adventure parks in Hyderabad and Bengaluru, is creating a Funworld worth `500 crore near Mahabalipuram.

Secondly, at the guide academy in Nellore we will be training guides with the MOT, offering short, medium and long courses. We want every guide to know at least three to four languages so that they can tackle every kind of tourist.

QHow was GITB for you?

It has been good for us and our stakeholders are very

happy. We participate in every tourism mart in and outside the country. We recently participated in the Vibrant Gujarat International Travel Mart and last year we participated in Jammu and Kashmir Travel Mart. It was also our first time at FITUR. TTDC is a profit making organisation and our turnover is around `125 crore per year.



Har Sahay Meena
Commissioner of Tourism & Managing Director, Tamil Nadu Tourism Development Corporation (TTDC)

We will be coming up with adventure tourism products like helicopter services. Right now we are planning these services between Madurai-Rameshwaram, Madurai-Kanyakumari and Madurai-Kodaikanal

And there was a dilemma on when it will open and if flights will be rescheduled. Even TTDC got a huge setback. But we picked up and are doing very well now, and so are our hospitality partners in the private sector.

QWhat are your plans in the coming months?

We want to focus on rural tourism, especially Kumbakonam, Thanjavur, Madurai, Thiruvavur, Nagapattinam, which are less visited areas as compared to other parts of the state. Hopefully, we will be coming up with adventure tourism products like helicopter services. Right now we are planning these services between Madurai-Rameshwaram, Madurai-Kanyakumari and Madurai-Kodaikanal.

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Bringing inbound to the fore

► Contd. from page 2



Asif Hafeez Khan
Deputy General
Manager Sales, Hotel
Clarks Amer, Jaipur

We have been participating in GITB since its inception and have been partners for long. We had a nice discussion with all the FTOs. We introduced our properties, as well as the new hotel in Varanasi, called Brijrama Palace. Speaking on India inbound I must say that there has been a growth of one per cent last year, and even here at GITB, the number of meetings has seen an increase. The enthusiasm showed by the FTOs itself shows that there will be an increase in the inbound tourism in India.



Kiran Joti
Joint Managing
Director, Le Passage
To India

GITB is a very important fair. Not only do we get a chance to meet overseas operators who come to learn about India, but also we can discover smaller, more boutique outfits in Rajasthan. However, the inbound travel in India, from the past few years especially, has moved away from brochure group travel to FIT tailor-made travel. I think that is one of the growing trends for India.



Navneet Maheshwari
Owner Entrepreneur,
Kanha Village Eco
Resorts

GITB is an important platform as we meet all key players of the industry under one roof. We are introducing yoga, meditation and wellness programmes in national parks. Major source markets for inbound business have been Europe and America but China and Australia are upcoming markets for us. Inbound has been slow last year but it is changing and 2016 looks positive.



Kapil Goswamy
Managing Director,
Trans India Holidays

If one does a cost benefit analysis, then GITB is actually a very good show. This year GITB has invited new buyers and not repeated the ones who attended last year. This gives us an opportunity to connect with new people. Based on the buyer's profile, I can see there are some who are not selling India actively but want to and that is a good ground to increase business.



Vikas Abbott
Managing Director,
Vasco Travel

GITB is a good, global platform which brings together key players in the industry and also provides a wide variety of products to the buyers. A lot of clients come from Latin America, which is a big market for us. Other markets include Canada, South America, and even Italy though we have seen a dip in the market from Italy recently.



Davinder Juj
Hotel Manager
Eros Hotel, New
Delhi, Nehru Place

This year there were a lot of new buyers who have come to GITB which is a huge benefit to us. We are coming up with new packages for the corporate clients. Our biggest source markets are the US, UK, Germany, Italy and France though we are also looking at China & Latin America.



Chetan Kapoor
Assistant GM, Sales
& Marketing-Inbound,
Wish Bone India

Travel marts and exhibitions are very important tools in the travel and tourism industry for brand positioning and visibility of the products. We work majorly in the bespoke luxury segment for the French-speaking and other European markets. We are focusing this year on the incentive market as well which I feel is still in the developing stages and has huge potential.

JEWEL IN THE CITY OF TAJ MAHAL

Agra's iconic hotel, **The Clarks Shiraz**, with the distinction of hosting legends like Jackie Kennedy, Neil Armstrong, Mohammed Ali, is recently renovated and become the latest 5 star delux hotel in the city.

A long table banquet at the world famous **Mughal Room**, High Tea or Sun-downer, Bar-b-que at the terrace **Sunset Lounge**, over looking the Taj Mahal & Agra Fort, an AV for the group at **Arjumand hall**, the new **Checkers Buffet**, the refurbished rooms & bathrooms, Gym by the garden, recreation center and signature massage at **Adiba Spa**, enrich the overall holiday experience.

Located in the prestigious Cantonement area, adjoining the Agra Golf Course, Clarks Shiraz offers views of open spaces, greenery and dense trees all around, looking like the greenest part of India to many visitors. A unique campus of serenity, only 2 km from The Taj Mahal.

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Mobile technology thriving in travel

It is no doubt that the mobile era has taken over the whole industry and the world by storm. **TRAVTALK** spoke to some travel technology professionals who elucidate the extent to which the new wave is changing the face of the sector.



AHANA GURUNG



Anil Parashar
President & CEO
InterGlobe
Technology Quotient

Radical shifts in technology have made the travel technology sector advanced and smart. We have moved from age of manual ticket purchase to computer search. And now the travel world has found a way through mobile devices. Surfing, buying and selling through mobile Apps have become an on-the-go job. And just when we thought this cannot get any better a new idea of the Internet of Things (IoT) has come in. This innovation networks physical objects like vehicles, devices etc. that have network connectivity, software or sensors and helps them collect and exchange data automatically, without any human intervention. Its introduction in the travel world is sure to make the sector even 'smarter' in the coming years.



Philip Wolf
Founder
Phocuswright

With an increasing number of travellers getting younger and younger, technology makes it possible for all kinds of buyers and suppliers to connect. Going mobile has made this even easier. Just like the web created waves about 15 years ago, a similar effect has happened with Apps. The mobile wave has become an important part of travel technology and if you want to serve your customers and move forward, go the mobile way.



Deep Kalra
Founder & Group
CEO, MakeMyTrip

The mobile tsunami has changed everything. For us, the hotel business was taking a long time to pick up but has now moved so fast thanks to mobile and aggressive pricing. Today, 70 per cent of our domestic hotel business happens over mobile. It definitely is one of the more prominent trends in the industry that is changing the whole game.



Simon Akeroyd
Vice President (Asia
Pacific) - Corporate
Strategy, Amadeus

I think that shared economy is becoming really big in India and APAC. It is growing quite rapidly and is key for travel. Wearable technology is also gaining momentum and although it is difficult to predict the magnitude of its effect, I think it could be one of the biggest things in the travel technology world.



Lee McCabe
Global Head of Travel
Facebook

The biggest trend by far the industry is seeing is mobile. We adopted this strategy about four years ago when we didn't really have a mobile presence. We decided we couldn't ignore mobile anymore since it is the future. It had a huge impact on our business performance and now, whatever we do, it has been mobile first.



Dhruv Shringi
Co-founder and CEO
Yatra.com

To a great extent, it's moving towards an open and collaborative marketplace platform. Traditionally, we've had players who are focused on selling their own inventory but now it's more about creating those hooks so that others can connect on and vice-versa. The open API structure which is being built out is one big change that is coming through. Today it is happening to a greater extent on flights, holidays, and will happen gradually over hotels also. India has also predominantly become a mobile Internet market and is definitely taking the lead in mobile technology front.

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Starwood Expo goes city-hopping

The 2016 edition of the Starwood Expo commenced in Bengaluru and travelled to Mumbai, Kolkata and Delhi-NCR. Over the four days, close to 2000 customers attended the roadshow. This roadshow was followed by cocktails and dinner as a part of networking in each city.



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Phocuswright India opens to full house

The two-day event held from April 21-22, 2016, witnessed around 345 guests and hosted speakers from major companies with the likes of Amadeus, MakeMyTrip, Facebook, Cox & Kings, Starwood Hotels & Resorts, to name a few.



AHANA GURUNG

The inaugural edition of Phocuswright India kicked off in full swing in New Delhi with guests swarming in and quickly filling up the seats by the hour. Over the two days, the conference welcomed renowned industry professionals from all over the world who addressed the crowd on various topics and trends, and also gave an opportunity to discover more innovative travel technology products through the partner workshops.

Phocuswright's Managing Director **Tony D'Astolfo** says that the response to the summit was phenomenal. "We were hopeful about the outcome of the inaugural edition and by the looks of it, it has exceeded our expectations. About 345 guests registered for this, which has also crossed our target, among which around 40 people registered on the last day. The hall was completely occupied during every session with people even standing in the hallway from the start to finish. That tells us that the content was good and the audience was receptive to it," he enthuses.

He additionally explains that after careful study and research over the past couple of years, the time was right to enter the Indian market. "We've been fairly active in this market from a research perspective and have had people work here for a while now," Astolfo says. "We've always had a base of interest in India. It has such a huge and vibrant industry and with so much technology driving the investments, it's an exciting time for the industry. There's always risk associated when you're doing anything new or for the first time but our team of experts were certain that the event would be received well which turned out to be the case."

Owing to the fact that this was Phocuswright's very first conference in India, Astolfo reveals that there were indeed a few challenges, but not enough to dampen the spirit. He shares, "The venue itself was very new to us which was a big challenge since we are extremely meticulous with our work. These are things that would be of a concern to anyone starting something new, the unfamiliarity. When you are especially

doing something in a new market, one tends to learn on the fly. Now that we've identified the snag areas, things will obviously be much smoother next year."

So what can we expect in the upcoming edition? "We intend to stick to a formula that we have been following for a few years. But in terms of

content, we will have new speakers with fresher content as well as companies and the leaders that are driving the APAC region," Astolfo shares. "There's huge potential for start-ups in India and it being an emerging market is a huge upside that all combine to make it an exciting place where we will absolutely be." 

“About 345 guests registered for this, which has also crossed our target, among which around 40 people registered on the last day. The hall was completely occupied during every session with people even standing in the hallway from the start to the finish.”

Tony D'Astolfo
Managing Director, Phocuswright



Is a travel agent digging his own grave?

By opting to work with Affiliate Programme Owners (let's call them OTAs), the travel agents are actually heading to a dead end.

While the travel agent is doing the hard work, the OTAs are controlling the destiny.

By working on fixed commissions, travel agents lose the ability to earn as per market dynamics. Worst, they expose their customers to OTAs. Moving forward, what would stop the big boys to gobble up the pie?

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RDVF 2016: France in a new light

As part of the Rendez-vous en France trade fair, 46 learning tours were organised for the trade to discover various France offerings. TRAVTALK catches up with a few participants on what sells from France and what's new for tourists.



HARSHAL ASHAR FROM FRANCE



Karan Anand
Head, Relationships
Cox & Kings Ltd.

France is one of the top destinations for foreign tourist arrivals and this is an indication of the popularity of the destination. Indians travelling to France also travel to places such as Nice, Chamonix and Lyon among others. France as a destination caters to all segments of travel. Be it a group holiday or an FIT. The more evolved traveller now opts for culinary vacations and self drive holidays. Spa vacations are also catching up with the Indian traveller. Workshops such as RDVF 2016, provides tour operators the platform to interact with existing partners and help understand trends in the French market. It also opens the door to new suppliers and attractions, which are very vital as the Indian market matures.



Chetan Yallapurkar
CEO
Honeymoon Havens

France Tourism and offer awesome experiences to couples.

We are currently doing around 100 pax FITs; mostly honeymoon couple travel to France. This year we aim to increase it to 300 pax quality FITs with new product inclusions post RDVF 2016. France has always been a perfect honeymoon destination for years now with Paris as its "City of Love." I believe after personally exploring regions like Rhone Alps and Normandy that Indian couples would love more romantic experiences in France and stay longer. Honeymoon Havens is excited to work with



Sushil Shamlal Wadhwa
Founder & CMD, Platinum
World Group

I have new destinations to promote in France, thanks to RDVF!

We've been doing high-end MICE projects in France since close to 10 years now and have used all the iconic & historical venues right from hosting events at Level 1 of the Eiffel Tower to museums, superyacht on the River Seine, Moulin Rouge & Lido to Villa Ephrussi de Rothschild in the French Riviera. RDVF helped me learn about new destinations not exposed but suitable for the Indian luxury MICE market like Picardy & Deauville, which are also easy to access from CDG Paris.



Ravi Subramanyam
Director Sales
Little International

The tourism potential of France is immense because of the culture and diverse options available, the infrastructure has been well updated and therefore has contributed tremendously to the same. We do send a total number of 500 visitors to France annually, but this number could definitely be upped if 'thematic options' are available for families as well as individual FIT travellers.



Alifiya Calcuttawala
Regional Director
The Wanderers

Attending RDVF16 is perhaps the best way to explore the different regions of France, which otherwise you would not even have heard of, including some of the amazing outdoor experiences in the Midi Pyrenees. I am now curating different itineraries which I am going to propose to my clients for the upcoming holiday season; specially to those who are looking for something new. Numbers to France, across all branches, as of now stand at 200-250 pax.

Contd. on page 15 ▶

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Starwood Expo: Focus on MICE

Starwood Hotels and Resorts hosted the 10th edition of the Starwood India Expo, 2016 across four key cities in the country. Over the four days, close to 2000 customers attended the roadshow.

ANUPRIYA BISHNOI

The Starwood India Expo is an annual roadshow which brings together the company's B2B customers from all segments of the industry. It pro-

vides an opportunity for Starwood associates to update their customers across all market segments on the company's developments worldwide, strengthen existing relationships. Speaking about the importance of the roadshow, **Nichlas Maratos**, Vice

President – Sales, Asia Pacific, Starwood Hotels & Resorts says, "It's our 10th year of conducting this roadshow. This is a great opportunity for our hotels across India and abroad to meet with our customers."

The agenda is to talk about our new openings, new markets etc. across the globe."

About upcoming hotels, Maratos says, "Across Asia-Pacific we have 320 hotels. We open a hotel every 10 days and sign a deal roughly every seven days. In India, we have 54 hotels, another 47 are under constructions. We will be launching W in the middle of the year and we have a new hotel opening in Pushkar too."

About the new initiatives Saliankar says, "One of the big initiatives that we would like to continue with is to grow our MICE and group business globally. Today's traveller is looking for multiple destinations and newer destinations to travel and Starwood is equipped with it. With 1,300 hotels across all prime locations, we want to leverage that and bring it to the next level. We also want to focus on our SPG Pro which is a loyalty programme for customers. The third focus is the growth in the regions like India, Maldives, Srilanka, Bhutan and Bangladesh. So we are getting properties everywhere."

Facets of France at RDVF 2016

▶ Contd. from page 12



Bhakti Taunk
Director
Eastern Travels

Rendezvous en France provides a great platform to interact, develop and strengthen commercial relations with new and existing French partners. It also provides an opportunity to learn and explore eclectic experiences for today's discerning traveller. We specialise in handcrafting bespoke experiences for today's discerning traveller. On an average we send 200-250 FITs and if we are doing a wedding/event it could go up to 600 pax a year.



Ruchi Bhatnagar
Founder
DiscoverMore

The tourism potential of France would be immense as Atout France is doing a lot for the agents by including France in its entirety especially with newer experiences. Presenting the conventional destinations with newer activities and opening up horizons for newer destinations like walking tours, 2CV tours and biking tours are sure to garner tremendous interest. RDVF 2016 was a good and beneficial experience.



Nichlas Maratos
Vice President – Sales
Asia Pacific
Starwood Hotels & Resorts



Dhananjay Saliankar
Regional Director - S&M and Starwood
Sales Organisation, South Asia
Starwood Hotels & Resorts



Barun Gupta
Account Director (Global Sales) -
Starwood Sales Organisation
Starwood Hotels & Resorts

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Zones to boost tourism

Maharashtra has included a suggestion from the Maharashtra Tour Organisers' Association in its new tourism policy of dividing the state into zones for better administration.



HAZEL JAIN

The Maharashtra Tour Organisers' Association (MTOA), which focuses on small tour operators based in Maharashtra, has been work-

requested them to make small region-wise tourism boards like they do in foreign countries because Maharashtra is so vast and we have so many different cultures. Different zones will help the government as



Sudhir Patil
President
MTOA



Valsa Nair Singh
Principal Secretary Tourism & Cultural
Affair, Government of Maharashtra

ing very closely with the Maharashtra Government and one of its suggestions on the state's new tourism policy has been accepted by the state. **Sudhir Patil**, President, MTOA, says, "We had submitted some suggestions to MTDC for the tourism policy eight months ago. We had

well as the travel trade to focus on each particular area and work along with private partners." The new policy mentions the state being divided into five divisions.

MTOA has also been working closely with the Maharashtra Tourist

Development Corporation (MTDC) for the tourist guides scheme it has recently introduced. Explaining the scheme, **Valsa Nair Singh**, Principal Secretary Tourism & Cultural Affair, Government of Maharashtra, says, "We have been introducing a lot of products for the domestic tourists. They are our mainstay with almost 80 per cent of tourists visiting Maharashtra. We are working on our own certification for city tourist guides 'Certified Guides' that will be certified by MTDC. After that we will introduce it in five other cities in the state like Aurangabad, Nagpur and Nashik. There is a huge scarcity of trained guides, specially German and Japanese speaking ones. The IITM Gwalior which is the authorized agency to make the syllabus and curriculum has developed this course. We have also roped in IHM Dadar to help us with some logistical issues. We will be able to start this by April 2016."

GBTA re-enters India

The Global Business Travel Association has re-launched its India chapter as a part of the organisation's worldwide expansion plans.



TT BUREAU

From No. 24 in 2000 to the 10th ranked market in the world in 2013, the business travel industry in India has worked its way up the rankings of major global business travel markets according to the Global Business Travel Association (GBTA) Foundation's first GBTA BTI Outlook-India report. What's more, WTTC World Economic Report India 2016 predicts that business travel spending will likely see a growth of 8.7 per cent in 2016 to \$1,302.9 billion, and rise by 7.2 per cent per annum to \$2,610.3 billion in 2026.

To make the most of the gradual but steady growth, GBTA has once again re-established its presence in India, in partnership with business travel management consultancy ProKonsul. Commenting on the decision to re-enter the Indian market, **Gaurav Sundaram**, Regional Director India, GBTA states, "India is the 10th largest global



Gaurav Sundaram
Regional Director India
GBTA

business travel market worldwide and is also the fastest growing market. Despite its size and growth, the country still did not have an industry forum which looks at the issues and challenges of business travel in India which is why GBTA felt the market was right for a re-entry. In the course of the next 12 months, we expect to establish a very sound India chapter and anticipate more than 500 GBTA members based out of India," he shares.

Sundaram informs that GBTA has a focused plan for the next few months which includes establishing a strong member

base, developing quality educational content and events, and reinstating the leadership that GBTA had earlier. He sheds light on some major events in the pipeline and says, "We will be conducting at least two events this year - one is India Education Day in August where we are inviting several speakers with 150-200 buyers who will talk about the best practices in business travel. For the first time, we will also have a trade show floor during the India Education Day targeting business travel buyers and suppliers in the industry. Following this, we will be organising an education day in Singapore on the sidelines of ITB Asia in October. It will involve both Indian hosted buyers as well as local buyers from Singapore and the rest of Asia."

Use of technology, approach of travel managers and implementation of the best practices are some of the ways in which the business travel community can leverage and improve their efficiency, adds Sundaram.


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Surat Thani's 1st mission

Thailand's Surat Thani province made its India debut with its maiden mission to Mumbai and making a quick stop at its namesake Surat in Gujarat.



A 19-member delegation from Thailand's province of Surat Thani visited Mumbai recently as part of its maiden India mission to showcase its tourism products to the travel trade in Mumbai, including a presentation by the Chief of Koh Samui Tourism Coordination Centre. Leading the Thai delegation was **Wongsiri Promchana**, Governor, Surat Thani, who said, "Surat Thani and Surat have the same history and we want to bring travellers from Surat to our province to show them our destination."

The roadshow was part of a larger mission by the Surat Thani Trade & Tourism Association that involved visiting Surat in Gujarat after an MoU was signed between the two cities last year. It is aimed at enhancing cooperation between the two cities in the spheres of tourism, and exchange of information on tourism



Wongsiri Promchana
Governor
Surat Thani



Soraya Homchuen
Director, Tourism Authority of Thailand Mumbai

and culture, apart from trade and business.

Speaking about the Thailand Travel Mart that will take place from June 8-10 in Chiang Mai, **Soraya Homchuen**, Director, Tourism Authority of Thailand - Mumbai, said, "We have received a good number of registrations from Indian travel agents this year. We also have 20 hosted agents from India coming for the travel mart. This year, we are moving from Bangkok to Chiang Mai. Also since this is the first year of the ASEAN

Economic Community (AEC) we will use Thailand as the gateway to the other neighboring countries. After TTM, the agents will get to visit neighboring countries like Myanmar, Laos, Vietnam and Cambodia."

The Surat Thani province boasts a host of attractions but is best known for its idyllic islands of Koh Samui, Koh Phangan and Koh Tao. These islands are also in the process of adding hotel rooms. Koh Samui alone will add 1,385 keys over the next three years across categories.

27% growth in arrivals

After receiving an encouraging growth over the past five years, Vietnam is making its presence felt in the Indian tourism industry by conducting roadshows all over India.



Vietnam received 65,606 Indian tourists in 2015 and registered a growth of 27.27 per cent over 2014, shared **H.E. Ton Sinh Thanh**, Ambassador of Vietnam to India, Nepal & Bhutan, at the country's tourism promotion roadshow held in New Delhi.

"We are hoping for a similar increase, if not more, for this year," he said. "Vietnam has all kinds of services to satisfy the needs of tourists, whether for holidays, shopping, leisure, cuisine, wedding, honeymoon, or MICE. The only area we currently lack is direct connectivity from India, but once that is sorted, we expect a large influx of Indian tourists."

Of late, Vietnam has picked up on promotional activities especially in India and have conducted roadshows in various cities like Mumbai, Ahmedabad, Kolkata, Jaipur, Hyderabad etc. The



H.E. Ton Sinh Thanh
Ambassador of Vietnam to India
Nepal & Bhutan

Ambassador also highlighted that spreading awareness about Vietnam in India is a major priority to attract more visitors.

Also present on the occasion was **Le Tuan Anhm**, Deputy Director General - International Cooperation Department, Vietnam National Administration of Tourism (VNAT), who said, "We have received positive feedback from Indian travel agents and the media. Over the past five years, we have seen an exponential growth in Indian tourist arrivals which is why we are conducting roadshows and participating in trade fairs to impart first-hand information about the country."

The roadshow also witnessed the presence of representatives from ICS Travel Group, Ben Thanh Tourists, Victoria Tours, Melia Hotels International and Vietnam Airlines who spoke about the various products on offer.

Vietnam has all kinds of services to satisfy the needs of tourists, whether for holidays, shopping, leisure, cuisine, wedding, honeymoon, or MICE



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Macao is a true gourmet destination and the "Scrumptious Macao Getaway" hotel package allowed me to indulge my passion for great food.

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Enticing Culinary Journey

As a food enthusiast, I was stunned by what was on offer at Sands Resorts with over 125 restaurants featuring cuisines from across the world. Even for a short trip, I still had time to explore the 13 signature restaurants where I could enjoy a free meal offered in my package!

Chinese food is amazingly varied and each regional cuisine has its own identity. So I treated myself to a little culinary tour of Canton, North, Yum Cha, Rice Empire and Southern Kitchen. From the fiery spices of Sichuan and the filling noodles of Dongbei to the gorgeous diversity of Dim Sum, it was not easy to choose from among these delicacies.

To open myself up to the blend of cultures from East and West in Macao, I whetted my appetite with exotic flavours. My tastebuds fell in love with the authentic Italian dishes at Portofino and the Michelin-starred Indian delights of The Golden Peacock. The vast selection of Asian and Western cuisines offered by the buffets at Bambu, Grand Orbit and Café Deco enriched my gourmet journey across the globe.

To add a touch of elegance to my holiday, I also joined my friends at Portofino, The Golden Peacock, The Lounge, Conrad Macao and Holiday Inn Lobby Lounge for a relaxing afternoon tea.

Shrekfast Character Breakfast with The DreamWorks Gang was a great reason to jump out of bed with excitement. This was an impressive start to the day. It wasn't just the creativity of the menu that I enjoyed, but also the unique stage performances. And I definitely didn't want to miss out on the chance to take photos at Shrekfast and capture these memorable moments with the favourite characters.



Tantalizing Shopping And Entertainment Experience

I was overwhelmed by the choice of world-class shopping with over 650 luxury duty-free outlets. Even better, with the "Shop and Dine Specials" discount booklet in hand, I enjoyed exclusive discounts at over 60 selected international designer brand shops, fine dining restaurants, spas and elsewhere.

This great package also offered a choice of a romantic Gondola Ride on the Venice-styled canal, a ferry trip from Macao to Hong Kong, or two entries to Qube Kid's Play Zone if you are travelling with children. Don't miss the series of DreamWorks Experience activities at Sands® Cotai Central. It's such a thrilling experience to meet up with your favourite DreamWorks characters.

This was an amazing getaway and I highly recommend you book one soon!

-Happy Gourmet Traveller



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Malaysia e-visa in 24-48 hrs

Reiterating India's importance as the sixth largest contributor for tourists, Malaysia has recently launched e-visa facilities for Indians travelling to the country for tourism purposes.



TT BUREAU

In a bid to make travelling to Malaysia more convenient for Indians, the Malaysian government has recently launched the Electronic Travel Authorisation Visa (e-visa) for short trips to the country. Currently the e-visa is available to Indian residents and is valid for a single journey stay of 30 days in Malaysia.



Mohd Hafiz
Director
Tourism Malaysia, Mumbai

Commenting on the new development, **Mohd Hafiz**, Director, Tourism Malaysia, Mumbai, said, "We are always trying to make travel to Malaysia as convenient as it can get and the introduction of e-visa is a major step in that direction. We are confident that with this ease in visa process more and more Indians will now consider Malaysia as a destination of choice for their next holiday."

The Malaysia e-visa can be obtained within 24-48 hours with a validity of three

months and a fee of around ₹2710.

This year, one million Indian tourists are expected to visit Malaysia. India is an important contributor to the Malaysian tourism economy and as many as 722,141 tourists from India were registered making it the sixth largest tourism source market for Malaysia. In 2014, the Indian tourist spent an average of RM436.2 per day.

While niche products like self-drive, luxury travel, eco-tourism, sports tourism, business travel etc. will be promoted to reach out to special interest segments of the Indian traveller, Malaysia is also targeting the ardent shopper with a host of yearly sale events. The 1Malaysia Super Sale was held from March 1-31, while the 1Malaysia Mega Sale Carnival will be held from June 15-August 31, and the 1Malaysia Year End Sale from November 1-December 31. 🇲🇾

We are confident that with this ease in visa process more and more Indians will now consider Malaysia as a destination of choice for their next holiday

RezLive.com organises Thailand Fam



RezLive.com recently organised a familiarisation trip to Thailand in partnership with Mövenpick Hotels & Resorts and IndiGo from April 1-4, 2016. The trip was organised in partnership with Mövenpick Hotels & Resorts, wherein the group stayed in Mövenpick Hotel Sukhumvit 15, Bangkok and got a chance to explore the property and city in a much luxurious manner. Furthermore, the group also visited another property of the hotel chain in Pattaya i.e. Mövenpick Siam Hotel, Pattaya.

Greece debuts with roadshow in Mumbai



A four-member delegation comprising the Greece travel trade, including two members of HATTA (Hellenic Association of Travel & Tourist Agencies) visited Mumbai to meet local partners and make presentations to them at the Emirates office.

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Atout France roadshow in Kolkata this year

RDVF 2016, held in Montpellier, France, from April 5-6, 2016, gave visitors an insight into the new offerings from French destinations. TRAVTALK caught up with **Sheetal Munshaw**, Director-India, Atout France, on the sidelines of the event.

HARSHAL ASHAR FROM FRANCE

Q How has been the Indian participation at RDVF 2016? How will this workshop help promote business?

A 23-member delegation attended RDVF this year which included travel agents/tour operators from Bengaluru, Kolkata, Mumbai and Delhi. There was an enhanced contingent from Bengaluru given our focus on this region as a source market. This key B2B platform brings in a large diversity of the French tourism offerings with almost 700 exhibitors under one roof, thus showcasing the tremendous tourism potential of France. This gave the Hosted Buyers an opportunity to gain in-depth and comprehensive knowledge,

as a premier tourist destination. The global perspective of marketing includes highlighting signature brands in France known as the 'Marques Mondiales.'

For India in particular we have enhanced our platforms for the agents; to travel to France on different thematic buyer-seller meets like Grand Ski which is our winter tourism showcase, RDVF 2016 — our largest B2B convention, the first tourism and spirituality summit taking place this year, Destination Vignobles which is a wine tourism showcase and France Meeting Hub - a MICE Buyer-Seller meet. We are keen to tap into different niches like women travellers, sports

agencies from all over the world and French tourism suppliers focusing in the MICE domain under one roof. A delegation from India will also be part of this showcase. Following this event, Atout France India will also be organising a panel discussion in Paris which will include key travel experts from India and eminent representatives from the Paris Tourist Office, Air France and our head office to discuss initiatives and strategies conducive to the Indian market with an eventual focus on driving more business from this segment to France.

Q What are your expectations from the India market in the long-term?

The Indian traveller today is ready to embark on authen-

“RDVF 2016 brings in a large diversity of the French tourism offerings with almost 700 exhibitors under one roof. This gave the Hosted Buyers an opportunity to gain comprehensive knowledge and meet with the right profile of exhibitors.”

Sheetal Munshaw
Director-India, Atout France



meet with the right profile of exhibitors, and to help them better understand France's tourism offerings which in turn would equip them to better showcase the same in their itineraries thereby optimising their efforts in promoting France and enhancing France's market share. This platform also provides an opportunity for agents to experience a variety of regions in France through thematic educational tours and gain first-hand knowledge and prowess of the eclectic tourism experiences that could cater to the needs of the discerning Indian traveller.

Q Elaborate on your marketing initiatives for this year?

A new development on the digital front is the global acquisition of the domain name, France.fr. We believe that this powerful domain name will help us enhance the number of footfalls to our digital platforms with an eventual increase in visibility for France

tourism, and to get more aggressive on enhancing visibility of France to the consumers and generate more awareness through small bespoke events to engage with the clients.

The annual roadshow will see Kolkata being added on as a host city this year for the first time. The roadshows were earlier held at Mumbai and Delhi and Bengaluru was added last year.

Q Give details on the total overnights from India?

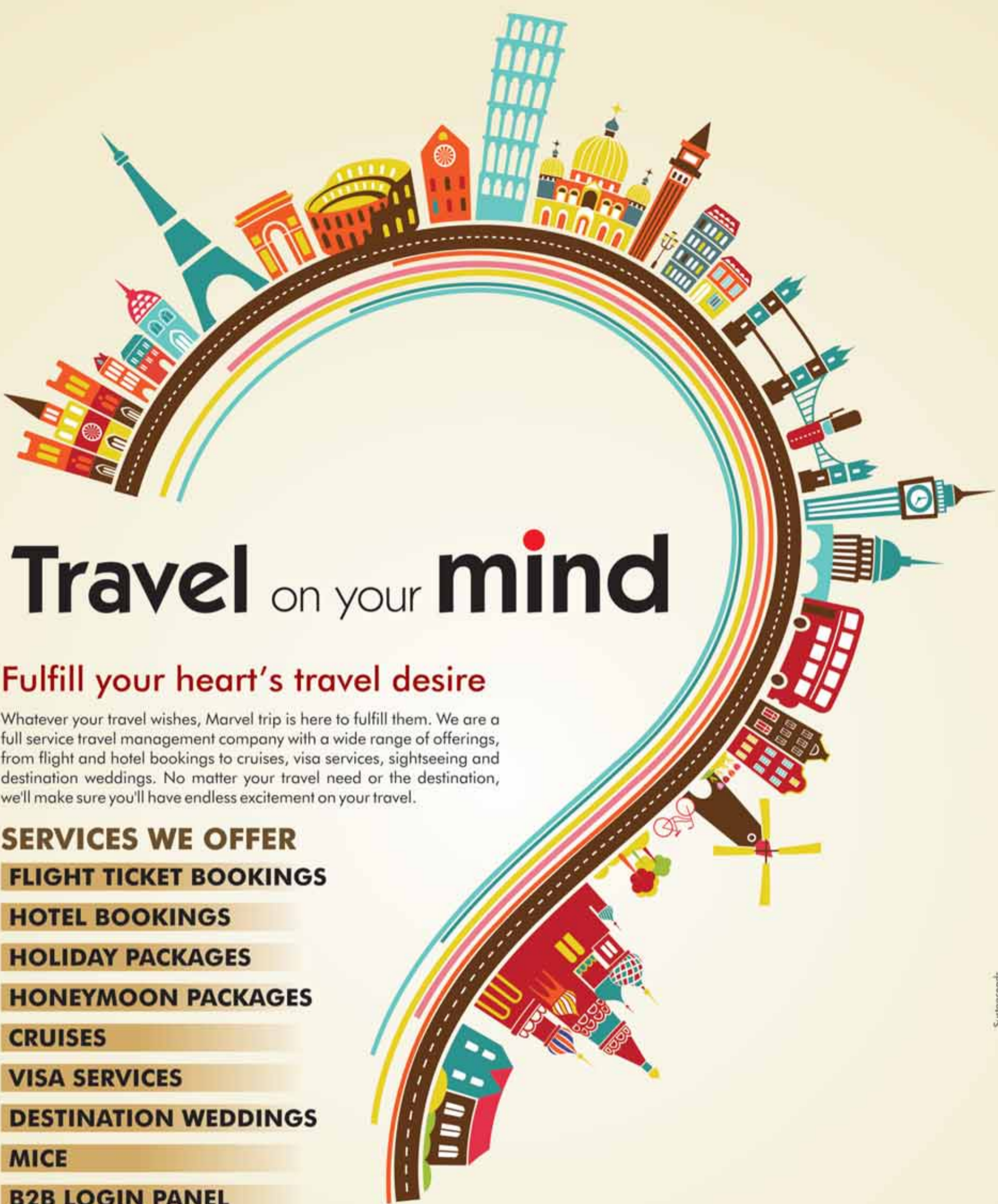
We have been receiving approximately 3,65,000 arrivals annually.

Q How do you plan to encourage MICE tourism from India to France?

A global showcase 'France Meeting Hub' focusing on France as a MICE destination will take place towards the latter half of the year. This platform will bring together travel

tic experiences, experiment with local gastronomy and is interested in thematic holiday experiences such as culinary tours, wine trails, active holidays and self-drive escapades. France's varied array of activities is perfectly attuned to match the needs and requirements of today's aspiring Indian visitor. Other contributing factors such as a seamless visa deliverance process in place, enhanced capacity and frequency of the national carrier Air France through alliances and competitive pricing, and a promising Indian economy, make it an opportune time to envisage growth from India. ↴

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Ras Al Khaimah engages Delhi trade

Ras Al Khaimah Tourism Development Authority (RAK TDA) conducted its second travel trade roadshow in India in New Delhi. One-on-one meetings were held to familiarise the travel trade community with Ras Al Khaimah and build a strong communication process between the emirate and travel trade partners from India.



Chhattisgarh eyes SE Asia

Chhattisgarh Tourism Board is focusing on the booming domestic market along with the market in South East Asia, to grow the number of tourist arrivals in the state.




ANKITA SAXENA

Chhattisgarh is looking to develop its tribal areas to promote ethno tourism. Dr Sanjay Singh, General Manager, Chhattisgarh Tourism Board, elaborates, "Chhattisgarh has 50 per cent forest cover and we are promoting the remotest areas in the state where tourists can stay amidst the wilderness and tribals, the ethnic communities of the region." He also adds, "We have one of the best waterfalls in the country like Chitrakote Falls and Tirathgarh; the Bastar region holds the stalagmite and sta-

Singh points out that the South East Asia market has been gaining popularity due to good connectivity between the region and India. He also says that there has been a boom in the domestic travel market as now the youth aged between 18-35 years have higher spending capacity and are ready to explore newer destinations.

The state is promoting its products through social media, individual interactions with youth and travel and trade shows across the country. Singh elaborates, "The idea to be present at exhibitions and travel shows is to be in the limelight and establish the presence and existence of the state. We participate in 30-35 shows

both in the national and international markets."

The hospitality sector in Chhattisgarh has improved significantly, claims Singh. He explains that the state is upgrading its properties and at present there are 55 properties available out of which 15 are state run and the rest are outsourced to the private sector. 

Sarovar signs 2 new hotels in Delhi & Himachal Pradesh

Sarovar Hotels & Resorts' aggressive growth plan continues with the hotel group announcing the signing of two new hotels in North India. With over 72 operating hotels in its portfolio, the group has now signed an 81-room Sarovar Portico at Kapashera New Delhi and a 43-room Sarovar Portico at Palampur in Kangra Valley, Himachal Pradesh. Both the hotels are expected to be operational by July 2016.

These developments represent the group's focus on both the business and leisure

segments. Focusing on expanding to newer markets this year, further openings are expected in Dehradun, Amritsar, Raipur, Jaisalmer, Ajmer, Bhavnagar, Jalandhar, Greater Noida and Bekal.

Owned by Palm Land Hotels & Resorts LLP, the hotel in Kapashera will be named The Muse Sarovar Portico, New Delhi Kapashera. The resort in Palampur, RS Sarovar Portico, owned by RS Belvedere, offers exciting views of the Dhauladhar mountain range.





Dr Sanjay Singh
General Manager
Chhattisgarh Tourism Board

The idea to be present at exhibitions and travel shows is to be in the limelight and establish the presence and existence of the state. We participate in 30-35 shows both in the national and international markets

lactite rocks; the scenic landscape and abundant wildlife."

The state is also working on introducing various adventure activities and water sports in the state. "We have some large dam sites like Hasdeo Bango, Gangrel, and are working on the activities based on the model of Aamby Valley and Lavasa," adds Singh.

In terms of source markets that the state is targeting, Singh says, "We are looking at tourists from the Middle East, South East Asia, the European markets, but our maximum emphasis is on the domestic tourists both within the state and from across the country."





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Nepal marks Travel Year

The promotional campaign is aimed at enhancing domestic tourism in Nepal and encourages Nepali travellers to discover the restored nation.

AHANA GURUNG

A year after the earthquake shook Nepal, the country has been robustly trying to restore normalcy. Nepal Tourism Board's (NTB) efforts in campaigning and promoting Nepal's tourism potential have so far been fruitful as the industry is picking up on the home front as well as from neighbouring and overseas markets, informs NTB's CEO, **Deepak Raj Joshi**.



Deepak Raj Joshi
CEO
Nepal Tourism Board

The campaign is focused on encouraging domestic tourists to travel in the country and is also expected to create an impact on inbound market

Their latest tourism re-establishment move comes in the form of 'Travel Year' or 'Ghumphir Barsha 2073' which was launched on the eve of Nepali New Year. Elaborating on the promotional campaign, Joshi says, "The campaign is focused on encouraging domestic tourists to travel in the country and is also expected to create an impact on inbound market by creating continuous online presence and visibility and status updates about important tourism sites."

The board has reportedly allocated a certain budget

for the promotional activities to ensure success of the campaign. NTB will also encourage the private sector to create special packages for Nepali tourists. "The private sector must come up with new and innovative packages targeting specific markets. We must venture out of the normal itineraries and include more local and authentic experiences and people-people reach with innovation. From another perspective, I would say, it would be important to keep excellence and quality as the hallmark of all tourism activities. Research and exploring new markets for further prospects are equally important," he adds.

Come monsoon, and the official festival season begins with Bhoto Jatra, Gaijatra festival, Janai Purnima, Indra Jatra, Teej, Dashain, Deepawali and Chhatt, heralding a way back to the hale and hearty state of celebration, an essence of the joyful Nepali culture, conveys Joshi.

1st Taj Safari lodge abroad

Meghauli Serai Jungle Lodge offers guests a truly luxurious and sustainable experience in the midst of Nepal's Chitwan National Park, home to several species of birds and animals.

TT BUREAU

Meghauli Serai Jungle Lodge located in Chitwan National Park, Nepal, a UNESCO World Heritage Site is Taj Safaris' first lodge out of



India which opened its doors to the public very recently. The luxury wildlife lodge offers 13 well-appointed rooms and 16 independent villas and infuses luxury with local traditions.

Commenting on the move, **Rohit Khosla**, Sr. Vice President – Operations, Taj

Hotels Resorts and Palaces, said, "We are delighted to extend the legendary Taj hospitality to guests in Nepal. The Taj group has a pioneering reputation for creating destinations and we are very proud to pres-

ent the latest Taj Safaris' Meghauli Serai Jungle Lodge at Chitwan National Park. We are committed to adding value to the community and the region."

The lodge incorporates sustainability in their ethos which manifests in the Newari and Tharu-inspired front

doors and the use of natural earthy tones that reflect the landscape. They also believe in using locally-sourced ingredients for a truly ethnic experience in a relaxed setting. In terms of activities, guests can discover and enjoy the natural beauty of Nepal through safaris on elephant-back, jeep rides and jungle walks for a whole new experience. Nature walks through local Tharu villages and canoeing on the Rapti River are also other ways to explore the stunning region.

Mridula Tangirala, Director of Operations, Taj Safaris, thinks that the best wildlife experience is interpretive and rooted in the local wildlife and community through a proven sustainable eco-tourism model. She says, "With this exciting opening in Nepal, we are looking forward to welcoming guests for immersive wildlife experiences in the 'heart of the jungle' at our newest destination, Meghauli Serai."

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Indian trade's French connection

Nearly 900 tour operators and journalists from 73 countries took part in the 11th edition of the Rendez-vous en France trade fair that was held from April 5-6, 2016, in Montpellier, in the Languedoc Roussillon Midi Pyrénées region. Over the two days, the B2B trade fair for tourism in France provided an opportunity to meet the 740 French companies exhibiting there. Twenty-minute business meetings between exhibitors and international buyers were scheduled at the Montpellier Exhibition Centre (22,746 appointments are pre-arranged).



Incredible India



Tourism Investors Meet (TIM) 2016

July 28-29, 2016, FICCI, New Delhi



FICCI is organizing the second edition of **Tourism Investors Meet (TIM) on July 28 – 29, 2016** at Federation House, FICCI, 1 Tansen Marg, New Delhi.

The event will again focus on Interactive meetings where by the State Governments will be showcasing their policy and facilities with respect to soliciting investment in Tourism Infrastructure through pre scheduled structured face to face business meetings with the prominent investors.

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Etihad A380 in Mumbai on May 1

Etihad Airways is all set to bring its state-of-the-art Airbus A380 aircraft to India, which will land in Mumbai on May 1, 2016.

TT BUREAU

Upbeat about the big development, **Neerja Bhatia**, Vice President India and Indian Sub-continent, Etihad Airways, said, "We are bringing the A380 to Mumbai on May 1 and I think it's a fantastic product, and it is going to change how high-end travel is perceived. It also has The Residence, which is a 3-bedroom apartment that one can have in the sky."

Speaking at the inauguration of GITB, she said, "We, along with Jet Airways, are very proud of being the official partner of GITB. It's a huge opportunity to bring in guests from around the world into Jaipur and I think it's the right time to show them what Rajasthan and India at large has to offer. We have buyers from the US, Europe, the Middle East, as well as Gulf. It's a great place to network, make



Neerja Bhatia
Vice President India and Indian Sub-continent, Etihad Airways

We are the only premium airline flying into Jaipur and A380 will be the perfect product for this market

contacts, meet friends, get more business and promote Etihad Airways along with Jet Airways. We are the only premium airline, which is flying into Jaipur and A380 will be the perfect product for this market as well since it's not too far from Mumbai as well."

Speaking about the US security clearance in Abu Dhabi, she said, "The time that you spend in transit, you are actually using it to do your immigration clearance and when you arrive at any point in the US that we fly to, you arrive as a domestic passenger. I think it's a fantastic proposition and we have a great response, whether it's VFR traffic, corporate, businessmen, leisure travellers and students. We actually focus on bringing value to our customers in terms of product, connectivity

Jetstar appoints GSA in India

Jetstar Group has appointed InterGlobe Air Transport Group as its GSA in India to offer further connections in Southeast Asia and Australasia.

TT BUREAU

Jetstar Group has taken this step to expand its presence in India, and offer further connections from Southeast Asian countries to multiple points in Australia and New Zealand. Jetstar group consists of Jetstar Airways in Australia and New Zealand, wholly owned by Qantas Group; Jetstar Asia Airways based in Singapore; Jetstar Pacific Airlines based in



Leslie Ng
Sr. Sales & Marketing Manager, India Jetstar

Vietnam and Jetstar Japan. **Leslie Ng**, Sr. Sales & Marketing Manager – India, said, "We know that airline partners and travel agents have been selling our products out of India for a long time. They have been interested and I think we have realised that this market is important and we need to engage with the trade partners here who have been selling for us. Thus, we appointed InterGlobe Air Transport as our

GSA to make sure that we reach our trade partners and that they have the infrastructure in place and have a point of contact for selling our products."

Talking about the Indian market further, he said, "We do not operate from India, but when travellers from the country fly to anywhere in Southeast Asia on any other airline, we can provide further connections to Bali, Australia and New Zealand."

Going vegan with Flamingo

Launched in 1996 from a small set up of three, all-women team members, Flamingo Transworld has emerged as a company of 225 team members with 32 network offices at the threshold of 20 years. The company takes pride in arranging fun-filled holidays with reliable services.

"We believe in the philosophy that travelling brings knowledge. Knowledge opens doors to opportunities galore and thus leads to prosperity. We have been doing this for over 20 years and our motto to provide an experience to our customers has made us who we are today," says **Meeta Shah**, Director, Flamingo Transworld.

Meeta Shah, along with **Sanjay Shah**, Managing Director, Flamingo Transworld, ventured into the tourism and hospitality industry with a concept close to their hearts and a clear vision. Years of relentless service has earned them the title of Gujarati international tour operator.

"Since most of our clients prefer a vegetarian meal wherever they go, we specialise in providing them with vegetarian and Jain meals when travelling. We understand the needs of our customers and make sure to cater to them in the best way possible. Our client base is mainly Gujarat, Maharashtra and now gradually travellers from Bengaluru are

also joining us for an unforgettable holiday," says Meeta.

"When travelling abroad, we have tie-ups with hotels and airlines to provide vegetarian food of the choice of the customers. Our customers are our brand ambassadors and the word of mouth has got prospective clients talking about our services and hospitality," adds Sanjay.

Flamingo as a brand is recognised for reliability and transparency. The employees are completely



Sanjay Shah
Managing Director Flamingo Transworld

"We specialise in providing our customers with vegetarian and Jain meals when travelling. We understand the needs of our customers and make sure to cater to them in the best way possible."

Meeta Shah
Director, Flamingo Transworld



20 and counting...



Staying true to their company's philosophy, Meeta and Sanjay Shah celebrated Flamingo's 20th anniversary by offering a chance to travel to the section of society that otherwise was deprived of this privilege. The company organised a day trip for 500 senior citizens living in old age homes in Ahmedabad. The group was taken to places in and around the city, with arrangements for food and activities for the senior citizens. It gave them a chance to experience the fun of travelling.

determined towards customer satisfaction and the clients are the Flamingo's backbone and biggest advertisers. Flamingo operates a range of group and individual tours to destinations all over the world.

"With the love and trust that the customers have shown for the company, Flamingo has emerged as a leading family travel consultant for tours within India and international holidays," says Meeta.

Flamingo operates a range of international holidays to destinations like South East Asia, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Europe, the US, China, Japan and is soon to venture into the South American market. "Since the inception of the company, we have seen a year-on-year growth of nearly 35-40 per cent and have successfully done holidays for more than 1,25,000 customers.

We have a cent per cent repeat customer ratio and we aspire to become the biggest vegetarian meal tour operator in the world, offering value for money holiday to the patrons seeing the world," Meeta adds.

The company offers all inclusive packages which include airfare, accommodation, visas, food, local sightseeing and transfers. Flamingo works on a franchise model; the company has five offices in India viz., in Ahmedabad, Maisana, Gandhidham, Mumbai and Udaipur. Flamingo offers international and domestic ticketing services, customised and group tour packages for international tours, visa facilitation and is also a player in organising tours within India for domestic segment of tourists.

For becoming a Flamingo partner, please email: shop@flamingotravels.co.in or contact on 079-40001600.



network talk Trade raises

TRAUTALK, in collaboration with ITC Hotels, hosted a networking dinner called 'Network Talk' in Jaipur during GITB 2016. The event at ITC Rajputana in Jaipur was attended by over 450 delegates.



a toast in Jaipur


ITC HOTELS
RESPONSIBLE LUXURY




GITB: Inbound showcase in Jaipur

The 9th edition of GITB, held from April 17-19 in Jaipur, saw 270 foreign buyers from over 53 countries and 280 Indian sellers from the tourism and hospitality industry interacting in 10,500 pre-fixed B2B meetings over the two days.



Mobile biometrics for UK visa

VFS Global's 'On Demand Mobile Visa' service allows travellers to apply for UK visa at a location of their choice. **Paul John Maliekkal**, Deputy CEO (Visa Services), VFS Global, shares more details.



HAZEL JAIN


Q What prompted VFS to offer this service?

HNIs and larger traveller groups like the MICE segment have long been requesting us to create a flexible service where the entire visa application process could be completed at a preferred location. This service is useful for corporate employees, film production crews and student groups as well. In the short time since we have launched, we are already seeing a lot of interest in this service.

Q Is VFS looking to sign agreement with any new countries for visa services?

We recently completed an important milestone of signing our 50th client government. Our partnership with the Government of the Republic of

travel industry to ensure convenience to users. To a great extent, technology-based models are making traditional business models redundant, forcing organisations to realign strategies. We see more opportunities by

investing in technology to develop mobile or online interfaces that focus on customer convenience, while staying within the operating norms and security guidelines prescribed by our clients. 

Home to Home services

In another exclusive service for UK visa applicants, VFS Global has launched Home to Home (H2H) – a personalised service that provides chauffeur services and end-to-end assistance with form-filling and submission. This is specifically aimed at out-of-town applicants. The service is available in Ahmedabad, Bengaluru, Chennai, Hyderabad, Gurugram, Mumbai, and New Delhi.

- ❖ Pick-up and drop-off: This is available anywhere in the city of application, including from airport/train station for out-of-town travellers.
- ❖ Premium Lounge: After express check-in at the VAC, the applicant is guided to the Premium Lounge. Photocopy, photo booth, and SMS services are free of cost. Free courier service also included for return of document.
- ❖ Personalised VFS assistance: Customers can use the 'Digital Assist' service (personalised form-filling assistance) or the 'Get It Right' service (document scrutiny, with an opportunity to send any missing documents to the Embassy within a time-frame) free of charge.
- ❖ Longer working hours: Appointments are available outside of regular work hours from Monday to Friday until 7pm.



Paul John Maliekkal
Deputy CEO (Visa Services)
VFS Global

Turkey makes us their exclusive authorised visa service provider in India, Nepal and Maldives. As far as the 'on demand' service goes, other Schengen countries like Hungary, Denmark, Portugal and Slovenia are also planning to begin offering this service through us.

Q Do you observe any trends in visa applications in India?

The US and the UK continue to be the most visited countries from India. We are also seeing significant outbound travel to other countries in Asia, while from a larger regional perspective the Schengen countries continue to remain quite popular.

Q Would mobile technology be the key focus as far the investments into your business is concerned?

Absolutely! It is important for any organisation to adapt to the digitisation phase in the

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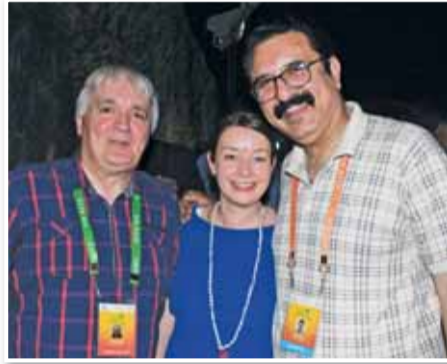
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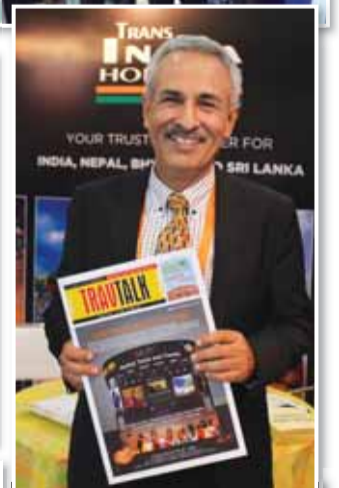
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Record meetings at GITB this year





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In an exclusive service for UK visa applicants, VFS Global offers Home to Home (H2H) visa services. Now experience dedicated pick-up and drop-off chauffeur services and end-to-end assistance with form-filling and submission for utmost comfort and ease when applying for your UK Visa.

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- Dedicated phone line and Email ID for appointment bookings and queries
- Inclusive of Premium Lounge services and faster submission processes
- Inclusive of Digital Assist service (personalised form-filling assistance)
- Safe and secure courier return-delivery of your passport
- Free photocopying, photo booth facilities and automated SMS updates on your visa status
- Inclusive of Get it Right service (personalised document scrutiny, with an opportunity to send any missing documents to the High Commission within a time-frame)
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3 On completion of your visa application submission in the luxury of our Premium Lounge, our chauffeur service will drop you to the location of your choice

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About VFS Global: VFS Global is the world's largest outsourcing and technology services specialist for governments and diplomatic missions worldwide. With **1986 Application Centres**, operations in **123 countries** across five continents and **over 115 million applications processed** as on 31 March 2016, VFS Global serves the interests of **50 client governments**. VFS Global's worldwide operations are certified **ISO 9001:2008** for Quality Management System, **ISO 27001:2013** for Information Security Management System and **ISO 14001:2004** for Environmental Management System. For more information, please visit www.vfsglobal.com

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Pink City hosts travel trade



ITQ sharpening young skills



The third edition of Student of the Year organised by InterGlobe Technology Quotient was held in New Delhi on April 19. Aimed at honing talent and encouraging students to achieve high standards of excellence in the field of travel and tourism, five finalists went through a series of grilling stages after which one ultimately claimed the title of 'Student of the Year'.

Agents on Fam to South Korea



Korean Air in partnership with Korean Tourism Organisation organised a luxury Fam trip for their top business partners to Seoul & Jeju Island from April 14-18, 2016. The group visited Seoul – the capital and largest city of South Korea and Jeju Island – the only visa free island which is ranked amongst the Seven New Natural Wonders of the World.

15% rise in footfalls

The ongoing Grand Funtazia Carnival at Ramoji Film City, which takes place till June 5, 2016, will showcase guest performances as well as night parades.



Ramoji Film City is more than just a venue for films and production houses. **Rajeev Jalnapurkar**, CEO, Ramoji

bid to attract more visitors. The Bird Park houses a large variety of birds to appeal to the nature lover, while adventure lovers can have their fill of activities like ATV rides,

guests. This wholesome family experience will surely appeal to more visitors and we are hoping for a good turn out," he says.

Apart from leisure activities, Ramoji is also a popular venue for MICE events, shares Jalnapurkar. "Our MICE venues have become the preferred choice for numerous corporate events and show robust occupancy. We have hosted several conferences, annual meets/days, sales meets, to name a few, and also provide customised tours for the corporate's families," he adds.

Commenting on the potential of film tourism in the country, Jalnapurkar says, "It is a very good sign that our government is aggressively promoting India as a potential film tourism destination and develop a synergy between tourism and the film industry to provide a platform for enabling partnerships between the Indian and global film industry."



The Grand Funtazia Carnival

Film City, says that it also attracts hordes of tourists from all over the world every year. "This year, we have seen a rise of 15 per cent in tourist footfalls so far. Tourists from the North and North Eastern region have increased incredibly. Overall, the reception looks very encouraging," he shares.

bungee ejection etc, at Sahas - the Adventure Land.

Jalnapurkar informs that their latest initiative is the Grand Funtazia Carnival, which commenced from April 22 and will conclude on June 5, 2016. "The magical carnival includes performances by magician **P.C. Sorcar**, as well as glorious floats and night parades to entertain the

The property has added new and unique features in a

New avenues for business



EVENT TALK

MAY 2016

Digital Travel Summit	Las Vegas	May 2-4
INDABA	Durban	May 7-9
Peru Travel Mart	Lima	May 13-16
WTM Connect Asia	Penang	May 18-20
PATA Annual Summit	Guam	May 18-21
UNWTO World Conference on Tourism for Development	Beijing	May 18-21
Bangladesh International Tourism Fair	Dhaka	May 19-21
World Travel Fair	Shanghai	May 19-22
BITE	Beijing	May 20-22
WTM Connect China	Hainan Island	May 23-25
PATA & MOT roadshow	San Francisco	May 24
PATA & MOT roadshow	Los Angeles	May 25
PATA & MOT roadshow	Seattle	May 26
ILTM Asia	Shanghai	May 30-2
PATA & MOT roadshow	Vancouver	May 31

JUNE 2016

Digital Travel Summit	London	Jun 7-8
Thailand Travel Mart Plus	Chiang Mai	Jun 8-10
KOFTA 2016	Seoul	Jun 11-14
ITE & MICE	Hong Kong	Jun 16-19
Connections Luxury Thailand	Phuket	Jun 19-22
UNWTO Conference on Branding in Tourism	Kiev	Jun 20-21
CITE	Cebu	Jun 30-Jul 2

JULY 2016

Travel and Tourism Fair (TTF)	Kolkata	July 8-10
Travel Wedding Show	Gurgaon	July 9-10
India Travel Awards East	Kolkata	July 15
Travel and Tourism Fair (TTF)	Hyderabad	July 15-17
Tourism Investors Meet	New Delhi	July 28-29
PATA – WWF Bagh Mitra Awards	New Delhi	July 29
India International Travel Mart	Chennai	July 29-31

AUGUST 2016

Hospitality Expo	New Delhi	Aug 4-6
India Travel Awards West	Pune	Aug 5
India International Travel Mart	Bengaluru	Aug 5-7

For more information and free listing, contact us at: talk@ddppl.com

Constant engagement with trade

ITC Rajputana Jaipur, which promises classical heritage with responsible luxury, is aiming to offer its patrons good experiences at value pricing.



TT BUREAU

Tejinder Singh, General Manager, ITC Rajputana Jaipur, claims that the property is offering heritage and responsible luxury at the same time. "ITC Rajputana is a 25-year-old hotel, but has been maintained very well. Built in a very classical style of a haveli with a beautiful courtyard, it has one of the most outstanding pools in the business. The rooms are luxurious; the lobby looks stunning; the restaurants are renovated. ITC Rajputana stands for classical heritage with modern amenities, and that's what people want now—good experiences at value pricing," he claims.

Speaking at GITB, in Jaipur, he said, "It's a place where all the FTOs, and travel agents come. It's a showcase where we can display our product and offer our services first hand. The one to one interactions here offer what no brochure or website provides you."

"For us engagement with the travel agents is not just a dinner activity. We engage with them throughout the year, and there have been many relationships that we have carried for a long time."

Tejinder Singh

General Manager, ITC Rajputana Jaipur



In fact, what is more important for him is to have constant engagements with the travel agents. He said, "For us engagement with the travel agents is not just a dinner activity. We engage with them throughout the year, and there have been many relationships that we have carried for a long time. We have always been a very proudly Indian company with responsible luxury at the heart of it. All this has created such an aura for us in the industry that we get business by sheer

goodwill of the company. We have dedicated sales force that only deals with the travel agent community. It addresses their need to make sure that the end customer, which is common to both of us, is looked after well. It's a mutually symbiotic relationship, and is built over years and nurtured throughout."

Singh also had positive words to say about inbound tourism. "Inbound has always been a very competitive market. There are a lot of new

players and price point matters a lot. But serious players like us, want to expose our product and get the value for it. Hence we spend a lot of time in engaging with our travel agents and the customers quite well. Also, over the years, domestic travel has grown quite a lot. But the relevance of inbound tourism has not dropped, even in smaller cities like Jaipur. Thus, it's a market which continues to grow for quality players and we are riding that wave." ↘

Presence in growth corridors

Vinay Gupta, VP, SAMHI Hotels, says the company will keep exploring opportunities in all Indian cities, be it Tier I or III, and also shares its expansion plans.



ANUPRIYA BISHNOI

Just five years old in the hospitality industry, SAMHI Hotels is seeking the right opportunities to grow. "We

get the right opportunity that promises growth with the right infrastructure, we will take it. From time to time, we evaluate the growth corridors. We have a hotel coming up in Nasik,

pricing with stability will emerge," he adds.

SAMHI Hotels boasts of strong MICE facilities at some of its hotels. Gupta says, "We

"We are present in Tier-II market too. Wherever we will get the right opportunity that promises growth with the right infrastructure, we will take it. From time to time, we evaluate the growth corridors. We have a hotel coming up in Nasik, Navi Mumbai under our Formule1 brand."

Vinay Gupta

Vice President, SAMHI Hotels



don't chase numbers. The mandate from our investors' point of view is primarily growth," says Gupta.

Even as major hotel brands are shifting focus to Tier-II and III markets, Gupta says they will concentrate on key growth cities. "We are present in Tier-II market too. Wherever we will

Navi Mumbai under our Formule1 brand."

Gupta feels the government's vision on 'Make in India' will be of great help. "These are things which will bring depth in the market and once these depths and the inventory balance happens, these kind of fluctuations will subside and the right kind of

have large MICE facilities in Sheraton and Hyatt Regency. Other than that, our economy hotels have no meeting spaces at all, which is Formule1, which is pure Bed & Breakfast at key locations. We have mid-scale hotels which have smaller conferences and meeting spaces, not qualifying as the exhibition and MICE, but spaces for small meetings." ↘

3 new Oberoi hotels in 2016

■ The Oberoi Al Zorah is all set to open in 2016 as one of three new luxury properties for The Oberoi Group this year. The other two properties include The Oberoi Marrakech, Morocco and The Oberoi Sukhvilas, Chandigarh. The Oberoi Al Zorah is a luxury eco-destination resort, only 30 minutes from Dubai International Airport.

The property is nestled amidst the natural surroundings of Al Zorah which boasts a beautiful long beachfront, azure lagoons, lush mangroves and 247 acres of natural forest with exceptional biodiversity. All three of The Oberoi Group's luxury hotel openings this year will be located in stunning natural environments and offer the impeccable standards of luxury and service associated with the group's worldwide portfolio.

At the Al Zorah, each of the 113 villas, suites and penthouse are elegant and modern with an abundance of natural light and breathtaking sea views. The spacious and luxuriously appointed rooms and suites all have private balconies, while the villas offer terraces and temperature-controlled private pools. Earlier this year, the Group announced two new properties in Qatar – a 250 key luxury hotel in the West Bay area of Doha, and a 148 key luxury serviced apartment located in Lusail, Doha.



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Thomas Cook India

Mumbai

Mahesh Iyer has been appointed as the Chief Operating Officer by Thomas Cook (India). Prior to his elevation as COO, Iyer was responsible for the overall strategy for the company, in addition to its Foreign Exchange business. With over 21 years of experience, Iyer would oversee day to day business management of Thomas Cook India in addition to managing visa and foreign exchange business in India, Mauritius & Sri Lanka. He holds a Masters degree in Marketing Management from JBIMS and has successfully completed a Business Management degree from IIM-Calcutta.



Rajeev D. Kale has taken over as President & Country Head - Leisure Travel, MICE, at Thomas Cook (India). Kale began his career as a management trainee at The Taj President Hotel in 1991 and later moved to Cox & Kings in 1993. His 14-year stint witnessed rapid growth, from Jr. Executive to Senior General Manager. Kale joined Thomas Cook (India) Ltd. in 2007 as Head of MICE. He has over 22 years of experience in credit control, accounts, costing, contracting, product management, operations, sales and MICE. Kale completed his graduation in Commerce from MVLU College (Mumbai University).



Preferred Hotels & Resorts

New Delhi

Bringing 15 years of experience to benefit his new role as the Regional Director of South Asia & Middle East at Preferred Hotels & Resorts, **Arpit Pant** will be responsible for driving key development and expansion of the brand's portfolio in the region. Based in New Delhi, he will also manage a portfolio of more than 45 hotels and resorts across the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Oman, Kuwait, the Maldives and India. Prior to joining Preferred Hotels & Resorts in January 2015, Pant served as general manager of The Oberoi Cecil and Suryagarh, a member of the Preferred Hotels & Resorts Lifestyle Collection.



RezLive.com - Travel Designer Group

India

Anand Desai has been appointed as Group CIO for Rezlive.com (Travel Designer Group) - online B2B portal. He comes with more than 18 years of experience in IT industry. In his previous assignments he has played key leadership roles in esteemed organisations like Reuters and Credit Suisse. Desai comes with a rich experience in enterprise application development and has managed large teams of IT professionals. With his proficiency in technology, management and operations he aims to take Rezlive.com platform to the next level by scaling up operations and expanding its technological capabilities.



Homotel Chandigarh

Chandigarh

Sarovar Hotels & Resorts has appointed **Sanjay Grover** as the General Manager of Homotel Chandigarh. Grover brings with him an international experience of over 26 years working with various hotels and food & beverage oriented industries across India, UAE and Oman. Some of his previous assignments include stints with The Oberoi Grand Kolkata, The Oberoi Towers Mumbai, The Kwaliti Inn, Dubai and the Ajman Kempenski, Ajman Beach Hotel and the Ajman Marina in Ajman.



Atmantan Wellness Resort Pune

Pune

Atmantan, a luxury wellness resort in Mulshi (Pune), scheduled for launch in April 2016, has announced the appointment of **Athena Salim** as General Manager. Salim brings a treasure of experience to the position along with operational excellence having served many roles across Front Office, F&B as well as Training & Development. She is a post graduate from The Oberoi Centre of Learning & Development and a graduate from the American Hotel & Lodging Educational Institute in India. She is also a Certified Hospitality Educator from the same institute, post which she spent close to a decade with the Oberoi Hotels.



JW Marriott

Chandigarh

Rubal Chaudhry has joined as the new General Manager for JW Marriott Chandigarh. With a career in the hospitality industry spanning well over 17 years, Chaudhry has worked with various brands. In his last assignment, Chaudhry successfully established Hilton New Delhi/Janakpuri as a leading hotel in West Delhi. After doing his Bachelors' in Economics from DAV College Punjab University, Chaudhry went on to attain his post graduate diploma from International Management Institute, Switzerland followed by his MBA in Hospitality Administration from Johnson & Wales University, Providence, Rhode Island USA.



Le Meridien Gurgaon

Gurgaon

Le Meridien Gurgaon has appointed **Kunal Dewan** as the new Director of Sales & Marketing for its 285-room year old property at MG Road, Delhi-Gurgaon border. He has been associated with Starwood Hotels & Resorts since December 2011 and has over 10 years of experience with leading hospitality brands such as Le Parker Meridien Hotel, New York, US, The Oberoi Group of Hotels & Resorts. He has established his position in the industry with his knowledge, international exposure and passion to drive sales activities & promotions. Prior to being appointed the Director of Sales at Aloft Bengaluru Cessna Park, Dewan was a Manager at Starwood Sales Organisation.



Hyatt Regency Delhi

Delhi

With over 15 years of experience, **Sumit Gogia** joins Hyatt Regency Delhi as Director of Events. He started his career in the year 2000 as a Food & Beverage Attendant at the Grand Hyatt Delhi followed by Imperial, New Delhi as Assistant Manager- Food & Beverage and The Grand, New Delhi as Convention Sales Manager. In 2006, Gogia joined Shangri-La, New Delhi as Manager Events and subsequently got promoted to Assistant Director - Events in July 2007, post that in the April of 2008 he was promoted as Director of Events.

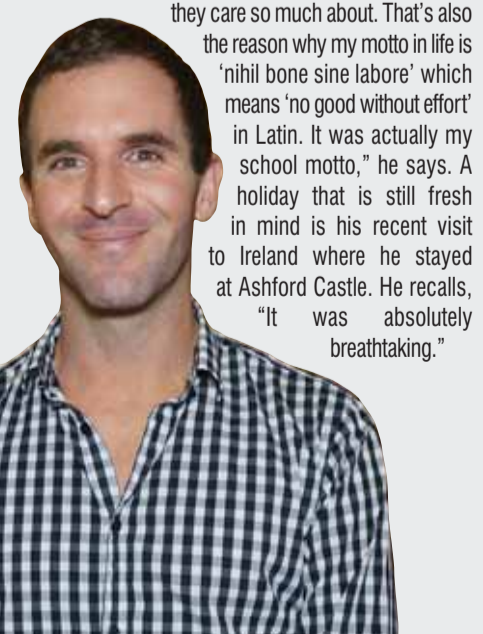


TALKING PEOPLE

Harmandeep Singh Anand, MD, Jagsons Travels, strongly believes in educating and empowering the less fortunate. He says, "Charity work takes a lot of my time. I do this through various ways - helping individuals, working with NGOs and even helping small villages in Nagpur." His inspiration in life remains his grandfather and his father. He is a huge Jungle Book fan and the recently-released movie has him all excited. The first Indian polymer engineer from the UK, Anand enjoys holidaying in the UK with his family.

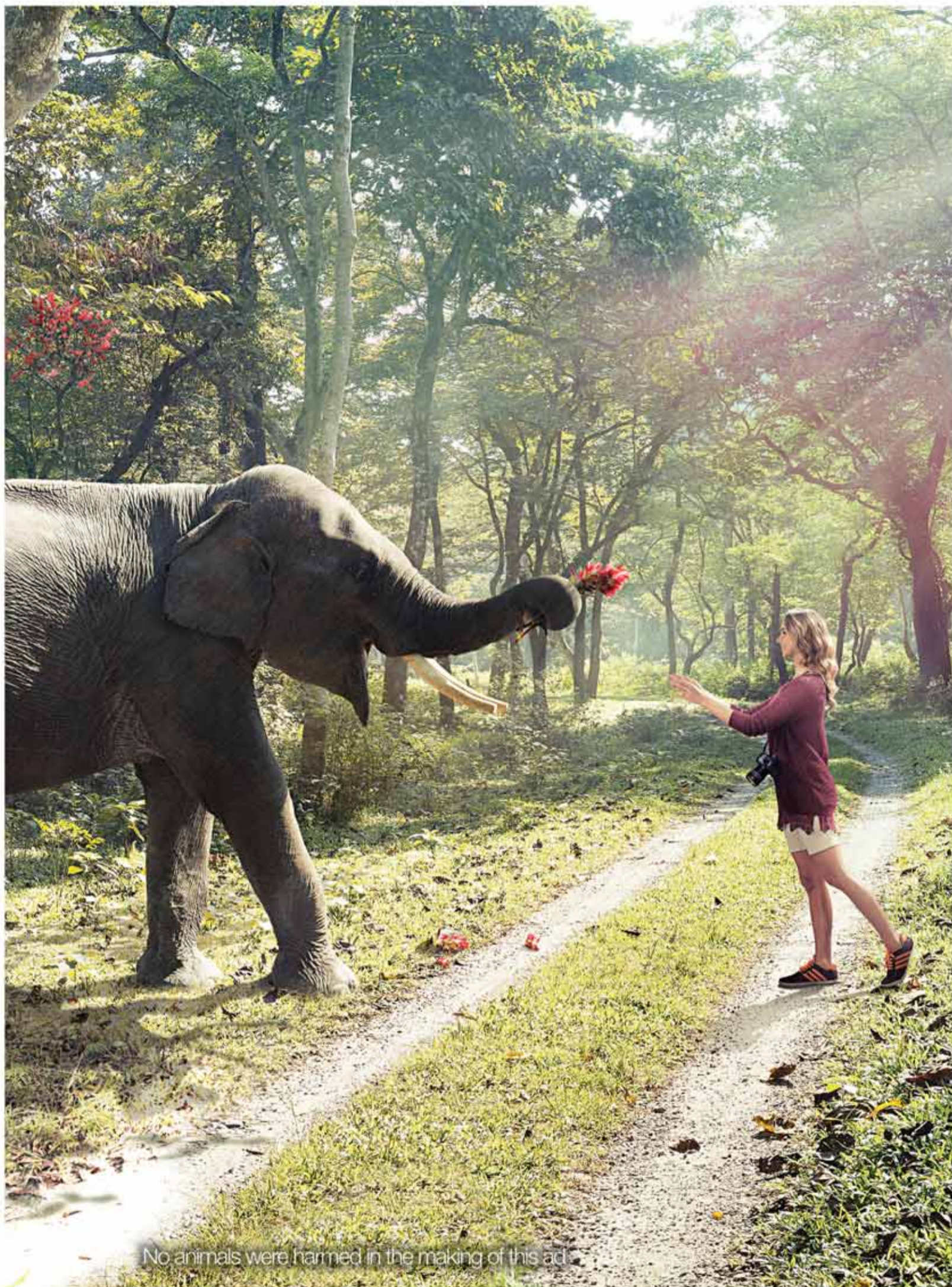


Passion inspires **Sam Morrah**, Director of Sales & Marketing (Asia), Contiki Holiday. "I get inspired when I see others dedicate time and effort towards something they care so much about. That's also the reason why my motto in life is 'nihil bone sine labore' which means 'no good without effort' in Latin. It was actually my school motto," he says. A holiday that is still fresh in mind is his recent visit to Ireland where he stayed at Ashford Castle. He recalls, "It was absolutely breathtaking."



Amruda Nair, JMD and CEO, Aiana Hotels & Resorts, has studied German as a second language and has lived by a phrase by Nietzsche: Was mich nicht umbringt, mach mich stärker. "That which does not kill me makes me stronger," she says. Her grandfather Captain Nair has always been a source of inspiration to her. Nair's favourite holiday memory is a family holiday to Kenya for a safari in the Masai Mara. "I was also fortunate to travel with my grandparents and I will never forget the trip to Paris and the magnificent flower display in the lobby of the George Sanc Hotel. My current favourite is the breathtaking island of Malta which has incredibly well-preserved historic sites, stunning vistas and rich cuisine," Nair reminisces.





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2 lakh+ tourists in J&K this year

Jammu and Kashmir received 2,16,252 tourists from January 1- March 18, 2016, against 82,376 in the corresponding period of 2015. Out of the total tourists, 5,524 were foreigners against 4,494 in the corresponding period of 2015, reveals **Mahmood Ahmad Shah**, Director Tourism, Kashmir.



ANKITA SAXENA

QWhat is agenda of Jammu and Kashmir Tourism in 2016?

We are focusing on metropolitans and big cities in India to promote the state as the best destination in the country. We are pursuing to change the mind-set and perception of intending tourists about J&K, particularly in the aftermath of September 2014 floods. The domestic market is thriving. While a large number of foreign tourists are visiting India, twice those numbers of domestic tourists are going out and we are focusing on this seg-

ment. We have recovered well from the calamity and 2015 was a good season for us. 2016 has also started with a good number. At present there are 34 flights coming to Srinagar and we are in the process of adding more flights by the first week of May. Air Asia will start flights from major metros to Srinagar making it a total of 40 flights.

QHow is the state going to use the funds allotted by the Ministry of Tourism in developing tourism in Jammu & Kashmir?

The funds provided by the Ministry of Tourism are primarily being utilised for

roadshows in different parts of the country were organised and advertisement campaigns were launched through print and electronic media.

QWhat are the latest tourism products on offer?

We are focusing on namely Gulmarg, Pahalgam, Sonamarg, Kokernag, Verinag, Yusmarg, Doodhpathri, Aharbal Water Fall, Lolab-Bangus-Drangyari, Jamia Masjid, World Heritage Sites like Martand Sun Temple, Awantipora and Burzahama. We are also conducting various activities like cable car rides, golf tourism, rafting, skiing, trekking, paragliding, and shikara rides that the tourists can enjoy.

QWhat are your marketing and promotional plans?

We are marketing and promoting the state aggressively. We have gone all out in print and electronic media, held series of roadshows across the country and will continue with much more vigour to showcase J&K as the best destination in the world. The travel trade shows and exhibitions are also instrumental in garnering new clientele and fostering long-term relationships with foreign buyers to increase footfalls in the state.

“We have gone all out in print and electronic media, held series of roadshows across the country and will continue with much more vigour to showcase J&K as the best destination in the world.”

Mahmood Ahmad Shah
Director Tourism, Kashmir



ment. We have recovered well from the calamity and 2015 was a good season for us. 2016 has also started with a good number. At present there are 34 flights coming to Srinagar and we are in the process of adding more flights by the first week of May. Air Asia will start flights from major metros to Srinagar making it a total of 40 flights.

creation of tourism assets at different locations which have tourism potential and also for the development of upcoming tourist destinations.

QWhat were the developments made with regards to tourism in 2015?

During 2015, the state government formulated the Tourism Advisory Board. A mega event —Kashmir Travel Mart — was organised at Sher-i-Kashmir International Convention Centre (SKICC), Srinagar. Comprehensive tourism promotional campaigns in the shape of

QHow many tourists did the state receive in 2015?

The state received more than one crore tourists both foreign and domestic in 2015 out of which 9.5 lakh tourists visited the Kashmir valley. 2016 looks more



Road Ahead

- J&K received 75,000 tourists in January 2016. In 2015, 7.8 million tourists visited Katra, 3.5 lakh tourists visited Amarnath, 9.5 lakh tourists visited Kashmir and 2 lakh tourists visited Ladakh
- A revised plan of ₹ 198.65 crore for up-gradation of roads leading to tourist destinations has been formulated
- A golf course is coming up at Sonmarg which will boost Golf Tourism
- Introducing water transport at Manasbal which is favourable for adventure tourism
- Developing Mantalai in Udhampur district as an International Yoga Centre
- Several areas like Abdullian and Chamliyal to be developed under Border Tourism on the pattern of Suchetgarh

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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

South India is undoubtedly a perfect blend of traditional elegance and modern, preserving its rich culture and heritage besides encouraging contemporary infrastructure development. The region is fast moving towards becoming a tourism puller and we would like to support these efforts!

As a tribute, DDP Group decided to hold India Travel Awards to recognise the achievers of the travel and tourism industry, who have worked steadfastly towards enhancing the environment to allow the growth of this business. These stalwarts need to be acknowledged, appreciated and encouraged in every region, and we have started the journey this year from South India.

Our top-most honour, the Gold Maya, is awarded to those stalwarts who have shaped the industry the way it is today and created innovative ways and products to take the industry a notch higher.

The awards ceremony is brought to life by a charismatic anchor and singer, thrilling the audience. At the black-tie, silver service event, various performers enthral and amuse the audience. This year invitees were mesmerised by a spell-binding, globe balancing act by an artist, as she flipped fire-lit bottles in a tricky juggling act. In all, the 3rd edition of South India Travel Awards was the beginning of a new journey of long term associations.

India Travel Awards will be travelling to various other southern cities in its subsequent editions. Thus we take upon ourselves, in our own small way, to revive and enhance tourism in the southern states of India.

SanJeet



INDIA TRAVEL AWARDS

Vikramajit
CHAIRMAN

SanJeet
EDITOR & PUBLISHER

**EVENT
CO-ORDINATORS**
Gunjan Sabikhi
Amit Bhasin
Seema Datt
Arit Gandhi

EDITORIAL
Devika Jeet
Kanchan Nath
Ruchi J Singh
Shivani Kaul
Ankita Saxena

DESIGNERS
Nityanand Misra
Vikas Mandotia
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Anil Kharbanda

CIRCULATION
Ashok Rana

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504, Marine Chambers, 43, New Marine Lines,
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Ph.: +91-22-22070129; 22070130

MIDDLE EAST:
Durga Das Publications Middle East (FZE)
Z1-02, PO Box: 9348, Saif Zone, Sharjah, UAE
Ph.: +971-6-5528954, Fax: +971-6-5528956

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The winners of South India Travel Awards 2016 with their trophies at Sheraton Hyderabad Hotel

MAYA EMBRACES HYDERABAD at the 3rd South India Travel Awards

The third edition of the South India Travel Awards celebrated the accomplishments of the travel and tourism industry of South India at Sheraton Hyderabad Hotel on April 12. The awards commemorated achievers from different segments of the industry, such as GDS, Hotels and Resorts, Travel Agents, Tour Operators and Technology.

 KANCHAN NATH

Gracing the occasion with their presence were Guests of Honour — **Neerabh Kumar Prasad**, IAS, Principal Secretary (Tourism & Culture), Government of Andhra Pradesh; **B. Venkatesham**, IAS, Secretary Youth Advancement, Tourism & Culture, Government of Telangana; and **Dr. Rajendra Prasad Khajuria**, IAS, Commissioner, Department of Tourism, Government of Andhra Pradesh, Hyderabad, as well as other dignitaries from the travel and tourism industry in South India.

Rajen Habib Khwaja, Former Secretary, Ministry of Tourism, Ministry of Mines, Government of India, New Delhi, was declared The Legend in Public Service. Khwaja joined the Indian Administrative Service (IAS) in 1976. **C. Nagendra Prasad**, Chairman, Travel Express, joined the Gallery of Legends. **Steve Borgia**, Chairman and Managing Director, INDeco Leisure Hotels, was declared DDP Game Changer. He is acknowledged for pioneering the concept of rural tourism. Vinay Gupta received the DDP Trailblazer award on the behalf of **SAMHI Hotels**.

Reiterating the importance of travel industry, Prasad said, "Extensive opportunities exist in the tour and travel industry in each and every nook of the country. This is one sector which can lead to the growth of

employment on a large scale, and I think we have all got to work together on this. Andhra Pradesh has grown by 30 per cent in tourist arrivals this year. Already our hotels go with 90 per cent plus occupancy in Visakhapatnam, in Vijaywada and the opportunities are many. I invite you to come and invest in Andhra Pradesh. India grew at 7.6 per cent this year; Andhra Pradesh topped at 10.98 per cent. I congratulate all the winners of this evening, I am sure they will be able to bring laurels in their respective areas of operation, lead to the growth of tourism in the whole country."


The dignitaries also appreciated DDP Publications for this initiative. "I think DDP has done a great job by going regional. This way they can incentivise a lot of people, who otherwise at the national level may not come out. This is a great concept in itself," added Khajuria.

SanJeet, Mentor, India Travel Awards, said, "These awards signify the growth of the industry which has developed immensely in the last few years. Nominations were received in 81 categories; in fact six new categories were created by the industry themselves. When the voting finally opened, over 2,16,000 votes were received from all over the world. India Travel Awards is a platform which recognises and applauds the true leaders of the fraternity, to acknowledge the emerging

leaders. We are proud to have been instrumental in helping it flourish, and will continue with our endeavors."

Khwaja took the opportunity to stress on the importance of sustainable tourism. He said, "Tourism is not all about figures and footfalls, it's about what we are and how we would like others to perceive us to be. The key to tourism is what was started a few years ago, safe, honourable and sustainable tourism. If we work in that direction, we will be able to really do a lot."

Borgia called upon the trade to curate new venues of tourism within the country. "When PM Modi took office he spoke about niche tourism, we all know if something will change the economy of this country, it will be niche tourism, eco tourism, rural tourism and heritage tourism. That is where our wealth lies. Rural tourism has proved that rural per capita income has gone up by six times through it. I urge stakeholders to participate in niche tourism, keeping in mind the carrying capacity of the area," he added.

Gupta said, "I am very fortunate to be a part of SAMHI Hotels. Today SAMHI has 16 operating hotels across India. 80 per cent of our business hotels are located in South India. Our hotels are there in Hyderabad, Bengaluru, Visakhapatnam and many more to come." 



► **LEGEND IN PUBLIC SERVICE**

Rajen Habib Khwaja, Former Secretary, Ministry of Tourism, Ministry of Mines, Government of India, New Delhi, joins the 'Legend in Public Service'. He is felicitated by **Dr. Tanushree Pandey**, Mrs India 2015, and **SanJeet**, Director, DDP Group

► **GALLERY OF LEGENDS**

C. Nagendra Prasad, Chairman, Travel Express joins the 'Gallery of Legends'. He is felicitated by **Neerabh K. Prasad**, IAS, Principal Secretary-Tourism & Culture, Andhra Pradesh Government, **Dr. Tanushree Pandey**, Mrs India 2015, **B. Venkatesham**, IAS, Secretary Youth Advancement, Tourism & Culture, Government of Telangana, **Dr. Rajendra Prasad Khajuria**, IFS, Commissioner, Department of Tourism, Government of Andhra Pradesh, Hyderabad and **SanJeet**, Director, DDP Group



► **DDP GAME CHANGER**

Steve Borgia, CMD, INDeco Leisure Hotels joins the 'DDP Game Changer'. He is felicitated by **Neerabh K. Prasad**, IAS, Principal Secretary-Tourism & Culture, Andhra Pradesh Government, **Dr. Tanushree Pandey**, Mrs India 2015, **B. Venkatesham**, IAS, Secretary Youth Advancement, Tourism & Culture, Government of Telangana, **Dr. Rajendra Prasad Khajuria**, IFS, Commissioner, Department of Tourism, Government of Andhra Pradesh, Hyderabad and **SanJeet**, Director, DDP Group

► **DDP TRAILBLAZER**

Vinay Gupta, received the 'DDP Trailblazer' award on the behalf of **SAMHI Hotels**. He is felicitated by **Neerabh K. Prasad**, IAS, Principal Secretary-Tourism & Culture, Andhra Pradesh Government, **Dr. Tanushree Pandey**, Mrs India 2015, **B. Venkatesham**, IAS, Secretary Youth Advancement, Tourism & Culture, Government of Telangana, **Dr. Rajendra Prasad Khajuria**, IFS, Commissioner, Department of Tourism, Government of Andhra Pradesh, Hyderabad and **SanJeet**, Director, DDP Group





Chief Guest **Neerabh K Prasad**, IAS, Principal Secretary-Tourism & Culture, Andhra Pradesh Government, being honoured with Pearl Trophy 'Maya'



Chief Guest, **B. Venkatesham**, IAS, Secretary Youth Advancement, Tourism & Culture, Government of Telangana being honoured with Pearl Trophy 'Maya'



Chief Guest **Dr. Rajendra Prasad Khajuria**, IFS, Commissioner, Department of Tourism, Government of Andhra Pradesh, Hyderabad being honoured with Pearl Trophy 'Maya'



Dr. Tanushree Pandey, Mrs India 2015, being honoured with Pearl Trophy 'Maya' for her support to India Travel Awards



▶ **BEST GENERAL MANAGER - FEMALE**

The award was given to **Monica Suri, Le Meridien Kochi**



▶ **BEST GLOBAL DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM (GDS)**

The award was given to **Travelport Galileo** and received by its Chief Commercial Officer, **Sandeep Dwivedi** and Associate Vice President - South India, **K.S. Ganesh**



▶ **BEST AIRPORT**

The award was given to **Kempegowda International Airport Bengaluru** and received by its Vice President, Business Development – Marketing & Strategy, Bangalore International Airport, **Raj Andrade**



▶ **MOST PROMISING AIRLINE**

The award was given to **Air Costa** and received by its Vice President – Marketing, **Kavi Chaurasia** and Manager-Sales, **K Srinivas Rao** and **Swapna Arvind**



▶ **BEST CONVENTION CENTRE**

The award was given to **Hyderabad International Convention Centre** and received by its GM, **Neil Paterson** and Director of Convention, **Vikas Sood**



▶ **BEST DESTINATION MANAGEMENT COMPANY**

The award was given to **Spiceland Holidays, Kerala** and received by its Managing Director, **Riyaz UC**



▶ **BEST DEBUT CITY HOTEL**

The award was given to **Sheraton Hyderabad Hotel** and received by its General Manager, **Shibil Malik**



▶ **BEST DESTINATION MANAGEMENT COMPANY INTERNATIONAL**

The award was given to **STH Holidays India** and received by its Director - Sales & Operations, **Gagan Kumar** and Director, **Monika Arora**





► **BEST INTERNATIONAL AIRLINE**

The award was given to **Oman Air** and received by its Country Manager, **Bhanu Kaila**



► **BEST B2B TRAVEL PORTAL**

The award was given to **Travel Boutique Online** and received by its Vice President – Sales (India), **Aarish Khan**



► **BEST LUXURY WEDDING & MICE RESORT**

The award was given to **Ramoji Film City** and received by its General Manager – Sales & Marketing, **T.R.L. Rao** and General Manager - Sales & Marketing, **Parag Date**



► **BEST LCC INTERNATIONAL**

The award was given to **Tigerair** and received by its Manager – Marketing, **Surya Kuchibotla**



► **BEST TURNAROUND HOTEL**

The award was given to **Radisson Blu Plaza Hotel Hyderabad Banjara Hills** and received by its Director of Sales & Marketing, **Rohan Cholkar** & General Manager, **Rajneesh Malhotra**



► **BEST TOUR OPERATOR INBOUND**

The award was given to **Cholan Tours** and received by its Director, **Pandian**



► **BEST DOMESTIC AIRLINE**

The award was given to **SpiceJet** and received by its General Manager, West & South India, **S. Ramakrishna Reddy** and Station Manager – Hyderabad, **B. Raghunath Singh**



► **BEST ECO-FRIENDLY HOTEL**

The award was given to **Novotel Hyderabad Airport** and received by its Assistant Marketing Manager, **Mukarram Mohiuddin** and Director of Sales & Marketing, **Javed Parvez**



▶ **BEST REGIONAL AIRLINE**

The award was given to **SilkAir** and received by its General Manager, **Jagdish Ram Bhojwan** and Manager Hyderabad, **Caleb Sim**



▶ **BEST LEISURE HOTEL**

The award was given to **Hyatt Place Hampi**



▶ **BEST TRAVEL TECHNOLOGY PROVIDER**

The award was given to **iWeen Software Solutions** and received by its Co-founder, **Rangaprasad Badasheshi** and Co-founder & Director, **Sudheer Reddy**



▶ **BEST GREEN RESORT**

The award was given to **Ramee Guestline Bangalore** and received by its Director Operations & Business Development, **Nihit Srivastava**



▶ **BEST METROPOLITAN HOTEL**

The award was given to **Howard Johnson Bengaluru Hebbal** and received by its General Manager, **Rishi Neoge** and Associate Head of Sales, **Anshul Goswami**



▶ **BEST SPA & WELLNESS RESORT**

The award was given to **Neeleshwar Hermitage** and received by its Managing Director, **Altat Chapri**



▶ **BEST BUSINESS HOTEL**

The award was given to **Aloft Bengaluru Whitefield** and received by its General Manager, **Pankaj Gupta**



▶ **BEST WEDDING AND LEISURE HOTEL**

The award was given to **Radisson Blu Plaza Hotel, Mysore** and received by its General Manager, **Harikumar B**





► **EXCELLENCE IN CUSTOMER SERVICE**

The award was given to **Quality Hotel D V Manor Vijayawada** and received by General Manager, **Vinod M**, Clarion Hotel



► **BEST CONTEMPORARY HOTEL**

The award was given to **Aloft Bengaluru Cessna Business Park** and received by its Complex Director - Sales & Marketing, Westin Hyderabad Mindspace and Sheraton Hyderabad Hotel, **Nitin Marriya**



► **BEST AIRPORT AVIATION MARKETING TEAM**

The award was given to **Bangalore International Airport** and received by its Vice President, Business Development – Marketing & Strategy, Bangalore International Airport, **Raj Andrade** and AGM - Airline Marketing, Passenger Services, **Shikhin Pawar**



► **BEST CORPORATE HOTEL**

The award was given to **Ramada Chennai Egmore** and received by its General Manager, **Animesh Kumar**



► **BEST LUXURY SUITE HOTEL**

The award was given to **Park Hyatt Chennai** and received by Assistant Manager Public Relation, **Aakansha Saxena**, Park Hyatt Hyderabad



► **BEST CITY HOTEL**

The award was given to **Holiday Inn Cochin** and received by its Director Sales, **Soma Mathew**



► **BEST ECONOMY HOTEL**

The award was given to **ibis Bengaluru City Centre** and received by its Hotel Manager, **Firoz Jangaria**



► **BEST BACKWATER LEISURE HOTEL**

The award was given to **Ramada Alleppey** and received by its General Manager, **Zacharia George** and Owner & Chairman, **Reji Cherian**



▶ **BEST DESIGNED HOTEL**

The award was given to **Clarion Hotel Chennai** and received by its General Manager, **Vinod M**



▶ **BEST TOURIST ATTRACTION**

The award was given to **Ramoji Film City** and received by its General Manager - Sales & Marketing, **Parag Date** and General Manager – Sales & Marketing, **T.R.L. Rao**



▶ **BEST LUXURY HOTEL**

The award was given to **Le Meridien Kochi** and received by its General Manager, **Monica Suri**



▶ **BEST MID MARKET BUSINESS HOTEL**

The award was given to **Holiday Inn Express Gachibowli** and received by its General Manager, **Ranganath Budumooru**



▶ **BEST GLOBAL CONSOLIDATION SERVICES**

The award was given to **Mystifly Consulting**



▶ **HOSPITALITY PARTNER**

The award was given to **Sheraton Hyderabad Hotel** and received by its General Manager, **Shibil Malik**



▶ **BEVERAGE PARTNER**

The award was given to **Aspri Spirits** and received by its State Head, **Geetanjali Rajput** and Key Account Manager, **Shiv Nag**





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