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PTM 2016 to host 67 nations

PATA Travel Mart 2016, hosted by the Ministry of Tourism, Republic of Indonesia, with the support of the PATA Indonesia Chapter, will take place in Jakarta from September 7-9. **Puangthip Chotipantawanon**, Director – Events, PATA, says there are 10,000 business-matching appointments for the delegates.

AHANA GURUNG

QWhere does the participation currently stand at?

A total of 67 countries are participating in this year's PATA Travel Mart. In terms of sellers, PTM has registered 237 companies from 35 countries among which 33 per cent are new sellers and new participating destination/countries like the State of Palestine, Zimbabwe, Uzbekistan,

and Russia. For buyers, we have 257 companies from 55 countries. 30 per cent are attending PTM for the very first time.

QTell us about some of the highlights that participants can look forward to.

We will be conducting more than 10,000 business-matching appointments for our registered delegates. The two-day event will witness

a total of four speaker sessions on topics by notable personalities from the tourism industry. We will be hosting a PATA Travel Innovation Forum in partnership with Phocuswright and Connecting Travel, and a Blogger Forum in collaboration with the Professional Travel Bloggers Association (PBTA). This year for the first time, we will also have a Digital Hub, an exhibition platform dedicated to innovative technology impacting the

travel and tourism business. The Digital Hub provides online, tech and digital marketing companies the opportunity to showcase their business, and is an exciting addition to the Mart.

QWhat is PTM 2016's ultimate agenda?

Through the travel mart, we aim to promote the host destination, Indonesia, to a global audience, provide a platform for business discus-

sions and generate contracts for our delegates at the event. Through our forums and PTM Talks, we hope to impart insightful knowledge and industry updates. To show our support to the younger generation, the half-day forum, PATA Youth Symposium will allow students and young professionals to engage with industry professionals during plenary talks and roundtable discussions on various topics relevant to the destination.



Puangthip Chotipantawanon
 Director – Events, PATA

Turn great expectations into reality

Ahead of the 32nd Annual Convention, the Indian Association of Tour Operators (IATO) is engaged in various initiatives for the well-being of its members and the trade. In a candid interview to **TRAVTALK**, **Pronab Sarkar**, President, IATO, shares the association's plans.



Pronab Sarkar
 President, IATO

SAMAPTI DAS

IATO's 32nd Annual Convention will be held in Chennai from September 18-21. **Pronab Sarkar**, President, IATO, revealed the theme as 'Expectations and reality bridging the gap.' He said,

"We hope that this will revolve around all the points that we are trying to highlight with the government and the industry."

Sarkar is hopeful that there will be participation not only from South India but pan India. He confirmed the presence of

the Secretary Tourism and the Joint Secretary Tourism.

About the upcoming collaboration with MOT, Sarkar said, "We are an active part of the BRICS Convention that is happening in Khajuraho. There will a B2B meeting with

our members and IATO is also hosting the post conference tours. These countries are emerging markets and I am sure that we will generate extra business from them."

IATO President said that the association is also a part

of MOT's Investors' Summit as well as the Global Travel Mart to be held from February 1-4, 2017. He informed that they have proposed the Ministry to extend e-Tourist Visa (eTV) to 60 days instead of 30 days.

Contd. on page 29 ▶

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Convention from Oct 14-16

The luxurious Emirates Palace in Abu Dhabi has been shortlisted as the venue for TAAI's 63rd convention which will focus on both inbound and outbound tourism.



The Travel Agents Association of India (TAAI) has finally frozen on the venue and dates for its 63rd Annual Convention & Exhibition, also known as the Indian Travel Congress. Abu Dhabi's luxurious Emirates Palace has been shortlisted as an important venue. **Sunil Kumar**, President, TAAI, reveals, "We have decided on Abu Dhabi as the destination for our next convention that will be held from October 14-16, 2016. We are in the process of blocking air seats now. It is one of the strongest destinations in the Middle East region and also an easy place to reach from India.

"We want a strong convention this year with a strong focus, for our members as well as our partners. We will focus on both inbound as well as outbound. We are amidst signing

contracts for this right now and have blocked rooms and convention space at the grandiose Emirates Palace," he says.

The Managing Committee that had met in Mumbai

sengers from India who visited Dubai, it revealed that only about five per cent visit Abu Dhabi, which is quite shocking. One prime reason is the inadequate awareness on the growing strengths of Abu

Culture Authority (TCA Abu Dhabi) that has assured its support to TAAI for this event. Speaking about the convention, Kumar says that it will be rich in content as well as experience for the delegates. The content will focus on the importance of a fast changing 'today' and the urgent need for members to rise beyond the routine. According to Kumar, this convention is designed to be a limited edition one. The exhibition – Indian Travel Congress – will offer exhibitors and vendors from the region an opportunity to connect with the Indian outbound industry. TAAI will also promote 'Inbound into India' as an important topic at the convention.



"We will focus on both inbound as well as outbound. We have blocked rooms and convention space at the Emirates Palace."

Sunil Kumar
President, TAAI

on August 16 to discuss this is now working on the convention theme, logistics and other details. Kumar says that Abu Dhabi has grown into a "masterpiece" among cities of the world. "When a survey was done on 100 outbound pas-

sengers from India who visited Dubai, it revealed that only about five per cent visit Abu Dhabi, which is quite shocking. One prime reason is the inadequate awareness on the growing strengths of Abu

Dhabi, particularly in the areas of tourism and MICE," he adds. The TAAI team has had meetings with several airlines to offer delegates attractive airfares.

Exclusive Affair
TAAI's Convention this year is designed to be a limited edition one

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Sustainability to support tourism

On September 27 we celebrate World Tourism Day. The event seeks to “raise awareness among the international community of the importance of tourism and its social, cultural, political and economic value.” While on the topic of the importance of tourism, what needs to be discussed, and perhaps more emphatically, is the impact of it on natural resources and social systems. International tourist arrivals have increased from 527 million globally in 1995 to 1.1 billion in 2015. They are expected to reach 1.8 billion by 2030. With the exponential increase in tourist arrivals, sustainability has to be at the top of our priority list. We need to understand that the very resources we promote through tourism are in danger of degradation and think long term. Let’s focus on the key areas and adapt accordingly to bring about a significant change. Let sustainability be the mantra this World Tourism Day.

Dial D for Digital

Our phones have now become a window to the world. Who would’ve thought that when Sir Alexander Graham Bell invented the first telephone, the machine would be so much more than just a device to say ‘hello’! And as our lives get more and more driven by the digital world, phones are now substituting every other gadget at home. At such a robust time when digital platforms have almost taken over every other industry, tourism players also need to rethink their working model and get connected, quite literally. They need to explore the full potential of the World Wide Web and make it a means to further revenue. India being a traditional market is still very much dependent on brick and mortar companies, but we also need digital footprint so that we are not trailing behind other countries and that we cater to a wider client base. Going digital shortens the waiting period and brings things on the fast lane. The idea is to innovate in such a way that companies become more relevant to the current times and share their expertise on a wide range of topics.

Tourism sun shining in India

The success of tourism should not be measured in terms of number of visitors but by the impression that our international guests leave with.

With the global meltdown, all tourists are now looking to travel to India. Inbound tourism is a major generator of foreign exchange income for our country. India has it all at par with global standards: adventure, MICE, beaches, mountains, seas, lakes, rivers, wildlife, heritage, yoga, World Heritage Sites, festivals and fairs, Bollywood, and much, much more...

With eTV the prospects for enhancement of tourism to India has grown multifold. The brand ‘Incredible India’ says it all. We in India solemnly swear and treat our tourist as *Athithi Devo Bhava*.

Many of our states are larger and offer more experiences than some of the countries. The diversity in India is so big that tourist needs to revisit again and again. We have facilities and accommodations

from homestays, farm-stays to star category spa’s hotels, resorts and places – accommodation for all budgets. With the assistance of the government, tourism circuits are being redesigned to cater to international tourist as per needs to today.

Today the members of Travel Agents Association of India (TAAI) promote tourism be it domestic, inbound, MICE, medical, cultural, Bollywood, etc. Their connect with the state as well as Union Ministries of Tourism and Civil Aviation is ongoing. The inbound tourism market in India is growing, but we need to improve it. India has moved out of being a third-world country and politically too, we are on the global interactive consultative group everywhere. The government too understands the need and potential of enhancing growth through tourism. Tourism is the only industry where every

Indian can participate actively. If we take a look at the various aspects of tourism, we will see that India has worked hard to bring the industry on par:

Economic growth: Tourism is a multi-billion industry in India and is sure to mature faster than any other industry.

Infrastructure: This shall not only help in creating new accommodations, roads, railways, but shall also impact the affordability for every traveller.

Education: UGC has recently started degree programs in tourism and hospitality. This shall enhance our GenNext to understand and take over the reins in tourism.

Social values: Foreigners shall export the rich values and cultures we have in India to their land which shall further enhance our potential

for growth in inbound tourism. Hence, let us not measure the success of tourism in terms of number of visitors but by the impact we have on our international guests.

(The views expressed are solely of the author. The publication may or may not subscribe to the same.)

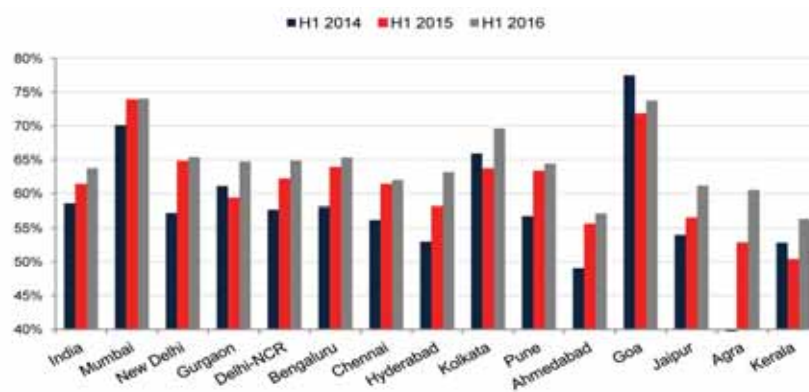


Jay Bhatia
Hon. National Treasurer & Chairman - Tourism Council, TAAI Board Member (Global Tourism Council), UFTAA

India occupancy at 64% in H1 2016

Occupancy in India has touched 63.7 per cent at H1 2016 trumping H1 2015 and H1 2014 which saw 61.4 per cent and 58.6 per cent occupancy, respectively.

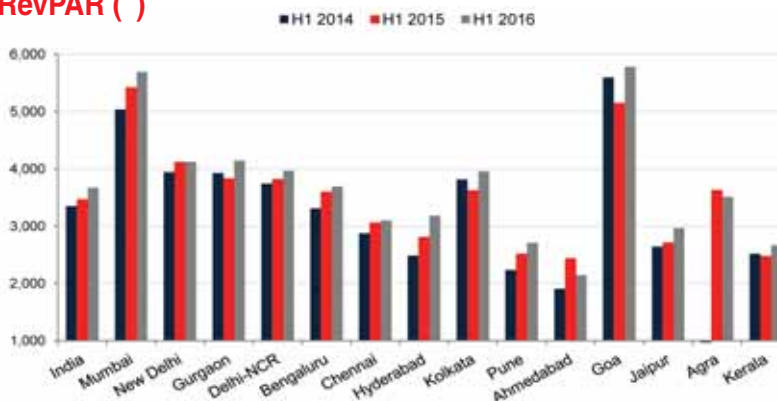
Occupancy



❖ Hotel occupancy in H1 2016 trumped H1-14 and H1-15 levels in all markets except Goa, which had higher occupancy in H1-14.

Gurgaon, Kolkata, Kerala and Hyderabad achieved 5 to 6 points YoY occupancy growth and Jaipur moved up by +4.6 pts.

RevPAR (₹)



❖ RevPAR is positive across all key markets, except Ahmedabad – double digit growth for Hyderabad and Goa; Kolkata, Jaipur, Gurgaon, Pune and Kerala were up by between 7.8% to 9%. Chennai and Bangaluru

	H1-2016	H1-2015	H1-2014
Occupancy	63.7%	61.4%	58.6%
RevPAR	₹3,671	₹3,472	₹3,352

Source: India Hotel Market Review – H1 2016 by Horwath HTL- India



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What investment brings in for tourism

As the country ranks number one for foreign direct investment in 2016 and boasts of being one of the fastest growing economies, **Vinod Zutshi**, Secretary – Tourism, Govt. of India, explains why it's the right time to invest in tourism and gives details of the upcoming Incredible India Tourism Investors' Summit.



The Incredible India Tourism Investors' Summit 2016 (IITIS), to be held from Sept 21-23, is the first of its kind organised by the Ministry of Tourism, along with the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) and Tourism Finance Corporation of India. To be held in New Delhi, the three-day event will gather state governments, global investors, hoteliers, tour and travel operators and the

is 12.36 per cent, which includes direct and indirect contribution and has contributed 6.3 per cent to India's GDP in 2015. Foreign Tourist Arrivals (FTAs) have been growing at about 9 per cent this year while domestic tourism growing at 12 per cent. Never has the atmosphere been as positive for investment and we urge interested bodies to

make use of the most open economy." The country also ranks 130 this year for Ease of Doing Business, four places higher than last year.

Core infrastructure revamp

Zutshi reveals that MOT is also working hand in hand with other ministries to tackle and develop core infrastructure – road, rail, air and water.

To simplify matters, a taskforce of officials will also be formed from road, railways, airlines and MOT to increase connectivity and access between the destinations.

While the new Civil Aviation Policy addresses the need for addition of more airports and the revival of existing ones, Zutshi informs, "We

have requested our suggestions to be included regarding the first batch of 50 air strips that will be upgraded."

Along with the Ministry of Railways, 24 railways stations will be renovated with state-of-the-art facilities along with the addition of a glass coach on one sector that is looking at an Oct-Nov launch. "Five

trains that link two important destinations will have tourist coaches which will be jointly funded," he informs.

With regards to roads, ample work such as the addition of signs on national highways, are in pipeline. "We have created a list of names that National Highway should target for the first instance of projects."



Vinod Zutshi
Secretary – Tourism
Government of India

The state governments will make presentations encompassing all investible properties and there will also be a session on 'Why Invest in India'

likes, and aims to fuel tourism investments around the country.

Agenda

The much-awaited event will be held in the Make in India pattern with the exhibition being held over two days, reveals Zutshi. He adds, "The event will be hosting a lot of notable speakers to talk about India's potential for investment. The state governments will make presentations encompassing all investible properties and there will also be a session on 'Why Invest in India.'"

Furthermore, a selective panel will discuss what India means to them, along with a valedictory session titled 'How to boost investment in the tourism sector.'

In preparation, MOT had organised roadshows in various countries all over the world to sensitise prospective investors and draw them in. Zutshi states, "Tourism's share in employment in this country, as per our record,

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Accor to launch India's 1st ibis Styles in Goa this September

■ AccorHotels hotel brand will soon launch India's first ibis Styles in Calangute, Goa this September. It is inviting the trade to experience the property from September 19-21, 2016. The room rates start from ₹ 5000.

Located in the heart of Calangute and 750 steps from Tivai beach, ibis Styles is an



economy brand from the AccorHotels stable and will be the first in the country. The heart of ibis Styles Goa Calangute is encapsulated in the statement 'Happy Mood Makers'. From pop, pep and personality to designer colours, multiple styles and unique comfort at all-inclusive rates, the hotel is designed to elevate your mood with each aspect of its design, cultural integrations and gastronomy.

A home away from home in NE

The search for authentic experiences and economical accommodation has drawn travellers to homestays in the culturally rich states of the North East, with Stayzilla clocking around 20 per cent of the total homestay bookings in the region.

AHANA GURUNG

Homestays are becoming a favoured accommodation option as travellers seek an authentic experience and become increasingly open to new things. As per a report by HolidayIQ, the share of travellers choosing to stay in homestays has increased from under 10 per cent in 2013 to 18 per cent in 2015 and is slated to grow to more than 20 per cent by the end of this year.

Integration

North East India, in particular, has turned out to be a hotbed owing to the undersupply of accommodation options in the region, especially in the remote areas. Guests are given an opportunity to delve into the culture and day-to-day activities of the locals, leaving an authentic and rich experience for the guests to cherish. The alternate accommodation, in turn, has also benefitted the locals by empowering many with employment and encourages ecotourism.



Ankit Rastogi
Vice President - Marketplaces
Stayzilla

The secret here is to find a balance between not just the right home but also the right person

Ankit Rastogi, Vice President - Marketplaces, Stayzilla, informs, "Around 20 per cent of the total bookings have been for homestays based in the East and North East with the demand increasing as more travellers seek out enriching travel ex-



Lionel Nongkhlaw
Owner
Pine Hall Homestay

We get a large number of tourists mainly from West Bengal and Assam aged roughly between 30-50 years

periences and are eager to learn about the culture of the land." The homestays range between a reasonable ₹ 300 to ₹ 7000, with an average stay of about three nights.

The key to delivering a fulfilling experience, Rastogi

explains, is to be able to meet the expectations of both the guest and the supplier. "The secret here is to find a balance between not just the right home but also the right person. Finding the right match over shared interests can connect hosts and guests to spend hours chatting over a simple meal!"

Hit with domestic tourists

Lionel Nongkhlaw, owner of Pine Hall Homestay based in Shillong, comments that it is mostly domestic tourists who are frequent guests at the property. "We get a large number of tourists mainly from neighbouring states like West Bengal and Assam aged roughly between 30-50 years," he adds. Since Pine Hall started operations three years ago, Nongkhlaw has seen the demand grow visibly especially during May-July and October-December as more travellers seek a 'home away from home' experience. Home-cooked food, complimentary breakfast and

arrangements, are some of the facilities that are offered here.

Easing regulations

The Ministry of Tourism is also working on easing rules to encourage people to offer their homes. Presently, homestays have to be licensed by the state government which needs to be renewed annually or biannually. Additionally, the property is expected to pay taxes at commercial rates. The revised proposal exempts homestays from such taxes, as well as electricity and water charges, and initiates easier certification process.

Culture Trail

- ↳ Kurseong (Darjeeling): See the process of tea production and be hosted by tea-pluckers
- ↳ Ziro (Arunachal Pradesh): Stay with the Apatani Tribes
- ↳ Mawlynnong (Shillong, Meghalaya): Learn the ways of the Khasi tribe




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GST has all *eyes* from hoteliers

While states are still debating on the GST Bill, and many in the travel and tourism industry are wary of it, the hotel industry is already buoyant on it. The bigwigs from the hospitality industry speak to TRAVTALK on GST's impact.

NISHA VERMA & KANCHAN NATH

A good move



K.B. Kachru
Chairman Emeritus & Principal Advisor, Carlson Rezidor Hotel Group, South Asia

“It's really fantastic that GST has finally happened. We will see positive side of it, particularly for the rooms. However, in terms of restaurants, we are still awaiting certain clarifications. While we don't know which way it will go, it would really be good for the industry and the country at large.”

Eliminate tax on tax

“I think it's a great move to have a single tax across the country. This would mean that there will be no disparity in taxes in Tamil Nadu and Kashmir or Bhubaneswar and Mumbai. It will also eliminate the tax on tax, which we pass on to the consumer. However, the quantum of GST and the level at which it is pegged will in itself have a major impact. Thus, anything between 18-19 per cent is great, but if it goes above 20 per cent, it won't be very positive. However, overall, it's a fantastic move.”



Ajay Bakaya
Executive Director Sarovar Hotels

Ease of doing business

“I think GST is one of the best things that have happened in the country. I hope that the constructive tone prevalent in the country will get it done. GST will make it easier to do business in India. The success of GST has been proven so many times in many countries in the last 50 years.”



Rakesh Sarna
Managing Director & CEO, Indian Hotels Company Limited

No pain, no gain

“In the short term there could be a little pain. However, in the long term there is only gain. It means a lot more transparency and clearer pricing. All the successful economies in the world have GST. While I think 18 per cent is quite steep, but at the moment all the Indian taxes together would be steeper than 18 per cent. Thus, in the long term, it's a great thing.”



Michel Koopman
General Manager, Leela Ambience, Gurgaon

Time saver

“Life will just become simpler with GST. Imagine there will be no calculation of a plethora of taxes to arrive at the gross figure. This would be so much easier for our finance and operations teams to deal with billing and would avoid short changing of guests. It would just get a lot of clarity and ultimately the guest will win.”



Rohan Sable
General Manager, Novotel Goa Resorts & Spa and Novotel Goa Shrem Hotel

Customer, biggest gainer

“It will majorly have a positive impact on the industry. When industry gets a benefit, it stokes more manufacturing and activity, and hospitality is an automatic gainer. Also, owing to the variables and taxations in multiple states and multiple cities, the common tax would be a great benefit for our customers. Thus, overall, it would benefit us and our customers. It's a great move and I hope it comes together quickly.”



Rattan Keswani
Deputy Managing Director, Lemon Tree Hotel Company

Check the GST rate

“The effect of GST will depend on the rate announced by the government. If the rates announced are more than the current rates, it will adversely affect the industry due to the additional burden it will cause on the guests.”



Saeid Heidari
General Manager JW Marriot Mumbai Sahar



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EXHIBITIONS

Stage for medical tourism

International India Medical Tourism Congress, being held in Hyderabad from Sept 3-4, will provide a platform for national and international players from wellness and medical tourism to discuss policies and transact business.



ANKITA SAXENA

Evolved to be India's first and only platform for delegates from the health sector from across the globe over the last three years, IIMTC will bring together key stakeholders under one umbrella to meet and greet, discuss the policies and procedures, legal framework, latest trends, competitors and stakeholders, medical tour business acumen etc. With a vision to help India become a preferred medical tourism destination in the world, the Congress is organised by International Indian Wellness and Medical Tourism Association (IIWMTA) and Society of Critical Care Emergency Medicine (SCCEM), which aims to streamline, promote, and propagate 'Brand India,' in the arena of medical tourism.

Dr. H.N. Garg, President, SCCEM, says, "Calling hosted buyers from different countries on a single platform to India to promote medical tourism is a unique feature of the Congress. The platform will facilitate a stage to show new technology in medical science, hospitals and health centres would be showcasing their technologies and facilities to



Dr. H.N. Garg
President
SCCEM

Around 100 delegates from nearly 50 countries are expected at the Congress

everyone. Around 100 delegates from nearly 50 countries are expected at the Congress." Garg also points out that lack of awareness has been the basic problem in medical tourism. According to him, because this segment of tourism has been relegated to the niche tourism segment, there is little support extended. "Our suggestion is that government should encourage and give all possible support to

the organisation of such events to promote medical tourism industry in India," he adds.

The Congress in its third edition will focus upon various factors ranging from the impact of the National Medical and Wellness Tourism Promotion Board on Indian medical tourism; challenges and the way forward; alternative therapies in India; health insurance policies where medical tourism can be a solution to the increasing load on the organisations profitability; medical service's outsourcing to India; dental tourism, emerging trends and a host of other topics in this segment of tourism.

The event's hosted buyer programme provides a preset number of discounts in registrations, accommodation and flights to medical travel organisations, government bodies, insurance agents and other qualified buyers. "Travel agents can learn how to build business models from industry experts and partner with medical providers, hotels, spas and wellness centers. The conference also allows a breeding ground for business and knowledge sharing between the key stakeholders of the industry," says Garg.

Over 140 nations expected at JATA Tourism Expo Japan

Tokyo is set to host this year's JATA Tourism Expo Japan from September 22-25 that will bring over 140 countries together.



TT BUREAU

The last edition of JATA Tourism Expo Japan attracted a total of 173,602 visitors and represented over 1,000 businesses and organizations from 141 countries and regions. This year, JATA aims to be bigger and better with increased scale, more substance and improved brand value.

The Tourism EXPO consists of four main programs this year. The Travel Showcase with exhibitors from over 140 countries and regions, all 47 prefectures in Japan and

many tourism-related industries will get an opportunity to build or grow business and directly interact with the gen-



eral public to attract more tourists to the destination.

Through the International Tourism Forum, experts will give insights to the latest travel trends and discuss issues pertaining to the travel industry. What's more, the

exclusive Business Meeting will enable domestic overseas suppliers to meet with travel agencies and as part of the four-day event, the Visit Japan Travel and MICE Mart, an inbound business talk session, is slated to take place from September 21 to 23. The last two days have been dedicated for B2C interactions.

Finally, the Commendation Program will recognise outstanding travel products and companies, organizations, and individuals that contribute to the growth of tourism.



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Visa power to destination weddings

With a steady rise in Indian destination weddings, many tourism boards are trying to attract agents for this lucrative market by offering a range of incentives from assistance in visa procedures to wedding planning at the venue.

ANKITA SAXENA

In Thailand, over 300 Indian weddings were held during 2015 and nearly 180 Indian weddings have taken place in the first half of 2016, informed **Soraya Homchuen**, Director, Tourism Authority of Thailand-Mumbai Office. "There are many new locations to tie the knot at apart from Bangkok and Phuket like Chiang Mai, Hua Hin, Krabi, Rayong and Trang, which are opening up for Indian weddings," says Homchuen.

In France however, Indian weddings is still a niche segment but is catching up according to **Sheetal Munshaw**, Director-India, Atout France. "The most-sought after locations include Paris and cities in the French Riviera, Cannes and Monaco. We are also currently preparing for some forthcoming weddings and believe that France will find favour as a popular overseas destination for upscale Indian weddings," says Munshaw. South Africa is also gaining

popularity for this segment of travel, offering varieties of stunning locations for Indian



Soraya Homchuen
Director, Tourism Authority of Thailand-Mumbai Office

weddings and honeymoon as well. "We see a lot of destination weddings going to Cape Town and the Garden Route. There are a variety of options available like a Bush Wedding or wedding at wildlife destinations like the Kruger National Park or the game lodges at Eastern Cape; and Vineyard Wedding in wine estates of Stellenbosch, Franschoek, Somerset West and the Klein

Karoo," says **Hanneli Slabber**, Country Manager-India, South African Tourism.



Sheetal Munshaw
Director-India
Atout France

Group Size and Average Stay

In France, the average group size is approximately over 100-200 guests and choice of hotel category is five-star and mostly iconic properties. In South Africa, the bigger weddings typically host between 200-800 guests while intimate wedding parties in up-market venues usually feature 80 pax and less. In Thailand average stay is

four nights five days and the average size of the group is 250-280 guests though



Hanneli Slabber
Country Manager-India
South African Tourism

the group size varies from 150 guests to 600 guests in some cases.

NTO Assistance

Atout France works in close association with the French Embassy and the French Consulates pan India to facilitate visas for closed groups alongside the travel agents involved. "We play a proactive role in facilitation of interaction between travel

and wedding professionals in France from florists and chefs to entertainers, DMCs, transfer companies as well as caterers, decorators and a slew of allied professionals. Moreover our counsel is sought to hand pick signature venues for different functions and events as well as unusual travel experiences and locales in France for those who want to extend their stay pre or post the celebrations sojourning in France," says Munshaw.

Slabber adds that South African Tourism assists to make the visa facilitation process simple and seamless. "The Consulate and High Commission treat every group visa application individually. We can assist by facilitating a meeting with the consular staff prior to applications so that they can work out the most seamless way of completing the required procedures. We offer support at various levels including provision of letters of sup-

port, provision of destination collateral, site inspection, familiarisation trips, pre and post-wedding tours and venue selection assistance," she says.

TAT however does not assist with the visas. "We take a large number of wedding planners to Thailand every year and work closely with the community so that they have the expertise to plan weddings. We now offer vintage cars or other kind of chic vehicle such as decorated TukTuk, Tricycle or Thai cultural performance at the wedding. We also help the agents with suggestions on suppliers etc. if needed," says Homchuen.

She also suggests that the wedding planners should know about the custom formalities and process and have a Thai counterpart or shipping management to assist in case of big amount and value of the accessories being taken into Thailand to avoid problems.

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Travstarz enters Mauritius

Travstarz Global Group continues its growth spree after India and Thailand offices with the opening of its DMC office in Mauritius.



TT BUREAU

Sucheta Nagpal, Director & CEO, Travstarz, announced this at their maiden participation at the 5 city Mauritius Tourism roadshow with MTPA that started with Mumbai followed by Ahmedabad, Delhi, Bengaluru and Chennai till August 27, 2016 along with their Mauritius Director.



Sucheta Nagpal
Director & CEO
Travstarz



Pankaj Nagpal
Managing Director
Travstarz Global Group

“As we look to spread our wings further, we are always looking for strategic partnerships and acquisitions with established local DMCs across the world to bring them under the Travstarz banner. Travstarz Mauritius is another step in the direction. The Mauritius office will not only be an inbound DMC for Mauritius but will also look after the Sales & Marketing of our online portal www.travelrezoneonline.com for Mauritius and other African Markets,” Nagpal added.

Fardeen Ebrahimsaib, Director, Travstarz Mauritius,

says, “We have had a strong presence in Mauritius for the past several years with our own fleet of Vehicles, Permanent Airport Representatives and almost all major contracted hotels and we are very glad to be a part of Travstarz Global Group now, which in recent years has been the fastest growing Travel Wholesaler & DMC in India.”

“We are of course looking at growing our numbers for Mauritius with the setting up of our own office there but I personally wish to develop some unique and innovative

products for a beautiful destination like Mauritius which according to me needs to be positioned better to utilise its full potential. The destination can be much better sold to the young and experimental traveller of today provided they are well educated on the destination by travel professional like us and we will work strongly in that direction. With this office we also aim to tap the African markets for our online portal, the upgraded version for which will be launched very soon,” says **Pankaj Nagpal**, MD, Travstarz Global Group.

Leveraging film tourism

In an attempt to develop and promote film tourism in India, PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industry is organising a conference on film tourism on September 16.



TT BUREAU

The conference will showcase the tourism potential of India as a destination for film tourism and also encourage Indian as well as foreign film makers to shoot at Indian destinations. “Film tourism is a growing phenomenon worldwide fueled by both the growth of the entertainment industry and the increase in international travel. The objective of organising this conference is to create a platform to bring together all relevant stakeholders with diverse experience to put forward different perspectives and bring to light the different innovative ideas to promote this segment of tourism,” says **Yogesh Srivastav**, Director, PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industry.



Yogesh Srivastav
Director, PHD Chamber of
Commerce and Industry

This segment is rapidly gaining popularity in India with Indian films reaching out to different untapped locations across the country

tourism destinations on the global map.

Film tourism in India is at a nascent stage which is expected to grow in the coming years. “This segment is rapidly gaining popularity in India with Indian films reaching out to different untapped locations across the country which

have great potential to be the next hotspot tourism destination. The conference is an excellent opportunity to explore new ways to actively penetrate in this segment and attract more tourists from the new emerging markets as well as discuss actions aimed to promote India as one of the favourable and upcoming film tourism destination,” says Srivastav.

He further informed that a good number of states are expected to be on board for the programme to promote their respective states as an upcoming and viable film tourism destination. Many embassies have also shown interest which would be sharing the best practices implemented in their country to promote film tourism as a niche sector.

Take Away

- ➔ Discussion on policies with government leaders
- ➔ B2B and professional networking
- ➔ Investment opportunities

Srivastav stresses on the importance of this segment of tourism and hopes the Ministry of Tourism and Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, will jointly promote India as one of the prominent film

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Awards augment efforts to innovate

The National Tourism Awards 2014-15 recognised key players from the travel and tourism industry who have shaped this sector to what it is today. TRAVTALK finds out how this recognition helps the awardees in their endeavour to better the industry and their plans for its future growth.



Best Standalone Convention Centre

“HICC has played a leading role in establishing Hyderabad in the global MICE market alongside Novotel Hyderabad Convention Centre. We were the first to recognise the vast potential of this segment and set up facilities that matched leading international convention centres. The combination of state-of-the-art infrastructure and world class services provided by us has made HICC a deserving winner for the national tourism award. This recognition will further augment our efforts to market Hyderabad to the world, and bring the world to this glorious city.”



Neil Paterson
General Manager, Novotel Hyderabad Convention Centre and HICC

Best Inbound Tour Operator/Travel Agent, Cat III: 2nd prize

“The reason behind winning the National Award is our continuous effort to provide quality services to our clients. The value added quality services increased our business, resulting in more foreign exchange into the country and we have been trying to get into different countries to increase our base. Niche marketing as per the demand of each country or region in any country will be our focus which will enable us to be more focused and creative. We have to be more creative in showcasing and making India an interesting, safe and 365 days destination and for that we need to have a two year marketing plan which should be further divided into a fortnightly mode.”



Ravinder Kumar
Director
Indian Legends Holidays

Best Domestic Tour Operator: promoting and selling tourism products of Rest of India- 1st prize

“It is a very humbling feeling to have been recognised for our work in promoting India as a top tourist destination and this can only motivate us to work harder and attract more travellers to explore the nation and its wonderful and diverse tourist experiences with us.”



Sharat Dhall
President
Yatra.com

Best Inbound Tour Operator/Travel Agent, Cat I: 2nd prize



Mario Habig
Managing Director
Le Passage to India
Tours & Travels

“We are delighted and immensely honoured to have won the prestigious Award. We are grateful to the Ministry of Tourism for this recognition of our efforts. Our accomplishment is no mean feat, but certainly well deserved – it stands testament to our team’s hard work and unstinting commitment to making Le Passage the leading DMC in the travel and tourism industry in India. The launch of our new brand identity and a new positioning statement for the company reinforces our enduring philosophy by creating new ways of enhanced customer engagement.”

Best Inbound Tour Operator/Travel Agent, Cat II: 3rd prize



Homa Mistry
Chief Executive Officer
Trail Blazer Tours

“It is a matter of pride that we are the recipients of a National Award and it is a great achievement for the whole team. This only encourages us to do better and enhance our services and contribution a notch higher. This year we will continue to improvise and come up with newer ways for more unforgettable experiences.”

Best Heritage City



Dr. Christina Z Chongthu
Managing Director
Telangana State Tourism
Development Corporation

“It is a great thing that the Central Government is encouraging the efforts of the state and the private sector in tourism and this is certainly an encouragement for us. We have a perfectly cosmopolitan atmosphere, an illustrious heritage and a confluence of cultures. With the variety of tourism products in the state, we are very confident that we will be able to attract a higher footfall this year.”

Best Inbound Tour Operator/Travel Agent, Cat III: 3rd prize



Sunirmol Ghosh
Director, Indo Asia
Leisure Services

“We have won this award because of our consistent efforts and regular product innovations. We have invested a lot in training our manpower and enhancing their destination knowledge. Our innovative instinct has always prompted us to open up new destinations and routes for regular travellers. We have already started promoting and operating trips to Northeast India and use the border crossing at Moreh to travel to Myanmar which will also open up the possibility of tourists from SAARC countries to come and visit India.”

Best Adventure Tour Operator



Ravi Tickoo
Managing Director
Active India Holidays

“This award is indeed a great honour for team Active India. It is dedicated to their hard work, dedication and commitment to quality and service standards that is the secret of Active India’s success, recognition and accolades. Adventure being a central element of our products however is a departure from the traditional definitions which mostly concern with hard and challenging treks, climbing expeditions etc. We operate in the areas where normal tourists don’t go enabling us to generate employment for the local people who live in the remote of remotest places. We will continue to market its products across these emerging destinations and support and participate in the ongoing and new initiatives by our government and/or fraternity.”



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100,000 Indians by 2017

Encouraged by the growth it saw last year – a 20 per cent increase in Indian arrivals – the Mauritius Tourism Promotion Authority sets its goals for 2017.



TT BUREAU

In an effort to promote Mauritius in India, the Mauritius Tourism Promotion Authority (MTPA) recently organised a travel trade show in five cities enabling their suppliers to meet and interact with local buyers from these cities. The five-city roadshow started from Mumbai on August 22 and reached Ahmedabad on August 23, went on to New Delhi on August 25, Bengaluru on August 26 and finally to Chennai on August 27. Wedding planners were also part of the buyer delegation. MPTA India will be looking to target Tier I and Tier II cities.

Leading a 30-member delegation from Mauritius was **Kevin Ramkaloan**, Director, MTPA, said, "The Indian market is extremely important for Mauritius. We have, over the years, seen an increase in tourist numbers from India. But recently, as of last year, we have seen a 20 per cent increase, we hope to reach the 100,000 mark by 2017 with the



Kevin Ramkaloan
Director
MTPA

We currently see around 5,000 arrivals for MICE from India so we can easily double and even treble this number

help of MPTA India. We would like to see Mauritius move from a hotel-based tourism industry to an attraction-based tourism industry. Apart from honeymooners, we are targeting the MICE segment as well as

cruise tourism. We currently see around 5,000 arrivals for MICE from India so we can easily double and even treble this number."

Revealing some important statistics, he added that year 2014-15 saw growth of more than 11 per cent in the number of tourist arrivals, and close to eight to nine per cent in terms of tourist earnings. Ramkaloan added, "Our total international arrivals have seen a spurt too. We received a total of 1.15 million tourists last year that grew to 1.2 million, of which India represents 1,72,000 tourists per year. Last year we received 72,000 tourists from India which translated to a 20 per cent increase in numbers. For the first half from January to July 2016, we garnered a 12 per cent increase in figures. In fact, just in July we saw a 43 per cent increase in arrivals over the same period last year. So by 2017, we should be able to hit the 100,000-mark for Indian arrivals."

More funds for India market

Indian visitors to South Australia have now crossed the 10,000 mark, prompting the tourism board to allocate a budget of close to `5cr for the market.



HAZEL JAIN

With an aim to build awareness about the region and grow arrivals from India and corresponding spends on their visits, the South Australian Tourism Commission (SATC) has earmarked a budget of AUD 1 million or close to `5 crore for the India market for 2016-2017. **Dana Urmonas**, Regional Director, Southeast Asia & India, SATC, says, "Previously, we had no budget for India. But this has been our first year of having a significant one that we can spend on marketing activities."

Part of this will go towards co-op agreements with key travel agents to ensure that South Australia is part of their itineraries. With July as its new Financial Year, SATC has just been reviewing its agreements and has renewed partnerships with Thomas Cook, Flight Shop and Mercury Travels for B2C market and Ottila for its B2B market. "They are key to us as they hit smaller agents and this helps us spread out. Our main



Dana Urmonas
Regional Director
Southeast Asia & India, SATC

Our main focus remains Mumbai, Delhi, Bengaluru and Chennai. We want to be focused on major markets for now as we are still new

focus remains Mumbai, Delhi, Bengaluru and Chennai. We want to be focused on major markets for now as we are still new," she adds.

SATC is mainly targeting students and the VFR segments followed by affluent families, DINK couples and, of course, honeymooners. Urmonas adds, "We had a bit of a blip in numbers but that was because of the India-Pakistan cricket match that saw a huge spike. But a quick scan of figures over three years shows that we have been growing. We recorded 10,000 Indians visitors for the year ending March 2016 who spent close to AU\$18 million during their stay." With the announcement of the three-year multiple-entry visa for Indians, the number of visitors to Australia is expected to go up significantly.

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Air India Express adds more routes to Sharjah

■ Air India Express will connect Sharjah with Chandigarh and Tiruchirapalli (in Tamil Nadu) from September. The airline will introduce three non-stop flights per week each from Chandigarh (IXC) and Tiruchirapalli (TRZ), to add Sharjah International Airport, bringing the total number of its routes between Sharjah and Indian destinations up to seven. Air India Express has been expanding its services to destinations in the UAE, including daily Mumbai-Dubai, Mumbai-Sharjah, New Delhi-Dubai and New Delhi-Abu Dhabi routes, which it added earlier this year. According to the airline, the number of its weekly flights between India and the UAE increased from 107 flights to 146 flights per week before the summer. Air India Express now flies direct to Sharjah from Kochi, Kozhikode, Mumbai, New Delhi, Thiruvananthapuram and Varanasi. India is well connected to Sharjah, with Sharjah-headquartered Air Arabia operating flights between Sharjah and 13 Indian destinations. Jet Airways operates direct daily flights on Sharjah-Kochi and Sharjah-Mangaluru (IXE) routes.

Breaking down Big Data

While Big Data helps to secure personalised services, predict country specific trends and price patterns, breach of privacy and hacking prevent it from realising its full potential.

<p>Travel management company</p>  <p>Raja Natesan CEO, Uniglobe Travel, (South Asia)</p>	<p>OTA</p>  <p>Sharat Dhall President, Yatra Online</p>
<p>Its role in the travel industry</p>	
<p>Big Data can give you trends across the world and can also tell us where to invest time and resources so that we are not caught off guard when major changes occur. It can also help travel companies position their pitch and reveal country specific trends, industry specific growth, price patterns, demographic and psychographic profiles linked to buyer behaviour, airline and GDS trends, public opinion and if we can analyse smartly, we can identify opportunities ahead of the others.</p>	<p>Big Data not only empowers us to enhance efficiency at the business end but also helps us provide a more personalised experience to visitors to the site. We map a large number of data points for every user, enabling us to get real insights and helps us throw up highly personalised options for the user. Based on the analytics and big data work, we are able to show recommendations that match the needs of different kinds of users.</p>
<p>Pros and cons</p>	
<p>There will be disadvantages for those who cannot use results that Big Data can provide so they may end up investing in the wrong technology or wrong skills in staff or even going after a geography that may not have scope.</p>	<p>There is certainly no shortage of competition in the OTA space in the market today and using big data functionality can become a key differentiator. All online agents have access to almost identical fare inventory and hence the one that finds the right flight combination for a particular user is the one that is likely to come out on top in this competitive battle.</p>
<p>Privacy Issue</p>	
<p>One of the reasons why Big Data has not been a roaring success is the fear of privacy breach and unethical data sharing. In India, we do not have strong laws and regulations on data piracy, unethical data sharing, confidentiality etc so the issue gets compounded.</p>	<p>Ethical guidelines and data security require regular attention and reinforcement, and we have been uncompromising about this. At Yatra, data security and customer privacy is key and we have a number of tools that ensure that there are no loopholes in this regard.</p>

INPUTS BY TT BUREAU

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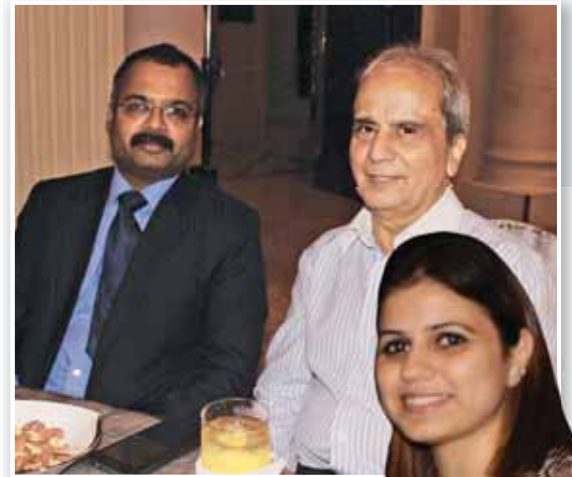


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Sneak peek into Address Boulevard Dubai

The Address Hotels and Resorts introduced its latest property — The Address Boulevard Dubai — to its trade partners during an evening of cocktails and dinner at The Leela Palace, New Delhi. Addressing the gathering was **Abdulkarim Safwan**, Director of Business Development, The Address Boulevard Dubai.



Delivering Sri Lankan luxury

For **Tamir Kobrin**, General Manager, Anantara Peace Haven Tangalle Resort, the first property of the brand is dedicated to offer a quintessential Sri Lankan experience.

NISHA VERMA

“When we set out to launch the Anantara brand in Sri Lanka, the idea was to bring a high-end international luxury resort in the country for the first time. The Anantara brand is known, not only to Indian, but international travellers as well. Also, Sri Lanka is one of the most popular destinations in the region today. According to me, it’s the right

momentum for us to come up with something unique, which concentrates on excellent service experience, coupled with spa and exceptional culinary experiences,” says Kobrin.

Sri Lanka is seeing a sudden mushrooming of international brands including ITC, Hyatt and Shangri-La, but Kobrin says there’s no competition. “It’s an investment of \$100 million in the country, a

commitment that the owners have made to ensure that we bring excellence and concentrate on delivering service and develop local staff and talent. We believe that a brand like Anantara sets the tone for any future brand that’s coming in. The property will be a stepping stone to set up standards of excellence and quality, which everyone can follow and elevate the overall standard of hospitality on the island.”

He informed that Anantara’s next property — Anantara Kalutara will open in Sri Lanka very soon. Also, he added that Indian market holds prime importance for them.

“India is one of our top four markets. We have positioned ourselves at the top end of the market and we are basically looking at FIT travellers. We did a roadshow in

India in order to tap into the relationships and the opportunities that we have with the travel trade, and specially with the DMCs which are doing inbound and outbound in Sri Lanka. We want to offer the Anantara hospitality coupled with the Sri Lankan luxury experience to our guests, right from their welcome to the various indigenous elements we have woven from the destination for them,” he said.



Tamir Kobrin
General Manager
Anantara Peace Haven Tangalle Resort

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Turkey educational tour postponed

The Outbound Tour Operators Association of India (OTOAI) has decided to postpone its educational tour to Turkey in view of the unrest in the country.



TT BUREAU

Looking at the recent attacks and unrest in Turkey, OTOAI has postponed its educational tour to the destination. The association had planned to take a

happening despite emergency," he added.

However, he insisted that they are not cancelling the trip, but will rework on the plan as and when it's safer to go. "While some members were still willing

to go, we could not take a risk. It's a beautiful country, and we would like to promote tourism from India to Turkey. We will re-assess the situation and will take the call in some time to see when we can organise it again," assured Sahni.



Guldeep Singh Sahni
President
OTOAI

Owing to the present situation in Turkey, we have decided to postpone the tour. There is an emergency in Turkey and we do not want to risk taking our members in such unsafe conditions

big delegation of its members for the tour where they were to meet B2B sellers and attend workshops for selling the destination. The tour was scheduled for the month of September. However, now the association has decided not to risk the safety of its members. **Guldeep Singh Sahni**, President, OTOAI, said, "Owing to the present situation in Turkey, we have decided to postpone the tour. There is an emergency in Turkey and we do not want to risk taking our members in such unsafe conditions."

He said that the educational tour was aimed at promoting tourism to the country. "We planned the educational tour to Turkey to boost the number of Indians going into the country. However, the current situation is not favourable to visit the country, as attacks are still

Lego brick Taj Mahal at Dubai Parks



To commemorate India's 70th Independence Day, a model of Taj Mahal made out of Lego bricks was unveiled by Dubai Parks and Resorts at Legoland Dubai, one of the three integrated theme parks set to open on Oct 31. The model is made from 280,741 Lego bricks and weighs more than 645 kilograms. While the real-life Taj Mahal took approximately 20 years to build, Legoland Dubai's tribute was built in 2,019 hours using white Lego bricks with accents of gold, black and red throughout.



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Philippines targets group VoA

The Department of Tourism, Philippines has set the ball rolling for group visas on arrival for the islands and continues to develop the India market further.

TT BUREAU

The Department of Tourism, Philippines received overwhelming response for its 'Mumbai Business Mission' that it conducted for its travel trade partners in the four cities of Kolkata, Chennai, Bengaluru and Mumbai. Leading the 16-member delegation was Director **Verna C Buensuceso**, Officer in Charge (Market Development Group), DOT Philippines. She said, "We received more than 100 agents and operators in each city. The Indian market has grown by 22 per cent since last year and in January 2016 we grew by 40 per cent. Our 2015-16 numbers show that close to 75,000 Indians visited us. We expect to see growth of about 25 per cent this year. India is the 13th biggest market in the world for us right now."

She added that the DOT is now trying to ease visa norms. "We have already instituted the 14-day free visa for AJACSSUK visas. But since we are targeting MICE market, sometimes it's not relevant for



Verna C Buensuceso
Director, Officer in Charge
(Market Development Group)
DOT Philippines

them because they are first-time travellers. So we are now talking to the Bureau of Immigration and the Department of Foreign Affairs about the possibility of having group visa on arrival for MICE and leisure," Buensuceso revealed.

Thirteen suppliers (five tour operators, four hotels and four carriers) participated in the roadshow. Outlining the main consumer segments the DOT is focusing on, she adds, "We get a lot of MICE and leisure traffic, which remains our mainstay. Aside from the key



Raymond Glen A. Agustin
Chief Tourism Operation Officer (Market Development Group - Russia, India & the Middle East), DOT Philippines

metro cities, we are looking at secondary cities like Nagpur, Chandigarh, Hyderabad, Ahmedabad and Lucknow."

Raymond Glen A. Agustin, Chief Tourism Operation Officer (Market Development Group - Russia, India & the Middle East), DOT Philippines, added, "We are looking for more groups, MICE in particular but also weddings. Hotels can now cater to Indians with food, horse-drawn carriages, flower arrangements, etc. Shangri-La is popular with Indians for this reason." ↴

Oz blaze in Mumbai, Delhi

Delegates from the two states of Australia were present in all their glory during the joint roadshow that show an overwhelming response from the trade in these two cities.

HAZEL JAIN

Tourism and Events Queensland, along with Tourism Victoria, recently showcased its products to the Indian travel trade in Mumbai and New Delhi in a bid to increase numbers as well as length of stay and expenditure by Indian tourists. While Queensland was present with 17 suppliers, Tourism Victoria was leading a delegation of 14 suppliers. The two states had chosen to travel to Mumbai and New Delhi after a successful India Trade Mission 2016 in Chennai recently.

Lim Mui Khim, International Director (South & South East Asia), Tourism and Events Queensland, said, "We had 90 appointments in Chennai and that tells us how important India is as a market. It has good length of stay with an average of nine nights that includes Cairns, Whitsunday Islands and Gold Coast." She expects numbers to increase with the fourth Singapore-Cairns service that SilkAir will launch from November 23 for the peak season. It



Lim Mui Khim
International Director (South & South East Asia), Tourism and Events Queensland

will take off from Singapore at 8.30 am so that they can meet the Indian connections.

"In the last 12 months, we have seen arrivals in Cairns jump over 40 per cent. For the rest of Queensland it has shown double-digit increase. The main cities remain Mumbai, New Delhi and Bengaluru with Chennai as a potential market," Khim added.

ITM Chennai was also fruitful for Victoria with zero free appointment throughout the three days. **Celia Ho**, Regional Manager (South and South East Asia), Tourism Victoria,



Celia Ho
Regional Manager (South and South East Asia), Tourism Victoria

was present along with some new products like Yarra Valley and Philip Island. She said, "We saw 103,000 visitors from India during FY March 2016 which represents an increase of 9.5 per cent. We started at ITM with five operators and today we are at 14. Due to our strong VFR market, our number of nights has increased with an average length of 18 nights. In fact, about 70 per cent of 103,000 belong to the leisure segment, which breaks into pure holiday and VFR. Of this 70 per cent, 40 per cent are pure holiday-makers and their average stay is about four to six nights." ↴



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IATO members explore Orchha Palace

The Indian Association of Tour Operators (IATO) organised a Fam for its active members to Orchha Palace and Convention Centre from August 13-15. The members experienced the various facilities of the five-star property and even did sightseeing in and around the historical city of Orchha.



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Film Tourism is a growing phenomenon worldwide, fueled by both the growth of the entertainment industry and the increase in international travel. Sometimes called movie-induced or film-induced tourism, film tourism is defined here as tourist visits to a destination or attraction as a result of the destination's being featured on television, video, or the cinema screen. The benefits of film tourism are becoming increasingly apparent. Appealing to wide and diverse markets, film tourism offers something for everyone, just like the films themselves.

India offers a much decorated platter to the international film fraternity with its rich archaic structure, exotic palaces, dense centuries, aesthetic nature, vibrant cities, beautiful beaches, snowy mountains and many more matching the diverse requirements of different lines of film interest. Recently, Indian cities have been gaining popularity among various foreign directors who have selected the sub urban and rural sites and locations for their film artworks.

Film Tourism in India: Film Tourism in India is still in nascent stage. In a bid to give a fillip to the 'Incredible India' campaign and cinema as a sub-brand of Incredible India at various international film festivals and markets abroad to develop synergy between tourism and the film industry and to provide a platform for enabling partnerships between the Indian and global film industry. Furthermore, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India through its platform 'India Pavilion' at Film Festivals such as Cannes and other film festivals aims to utilize the tourism with a motive of promoting Film Tourism and India as a filming destination.

India as an upcoming international filming destination: Bollywood has become an integral part of Indian culture and touches the life of every Indian. Tourism industry has reaped benefits from movies showcasing the beauty of the lesser known tourist destinations of the country. The influence of Bollywood in tourism industry is prominent and will surely increase in the coming years.

This Opens Wide Avenues Of Exploring And Developing The Regional Diversities Of India To Present A Decorated Set Of Locations To Not Only Indian Film Fraternity But Also To International Experts Of The Segment.

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- Film Artists
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- Corporate Groups with investments in infrastructure
- Indian and Foreign Tour Operators
- Vacation Planners and Hotel industry
- Archeological Survey of India (ASI)
- Institutes imparting Film Tourism related Education
- Line Producers
- Airlines
- TV Producers
- State Government Representatives
- Embassies
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- Association of Film Commission International (AFCI)
- All other relevant stakeholders.

Take Aways

- Latest thinking from senior industry and poltrots from government leaders
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Instant Bookings online

TripAdvisor's Instant Bookings helps travellers and trade partners to not only search for accommodation, attractions and restaurants but also book them online.

TT BUREAU

According to **Nikhil Ganju**, Country Manager-India, TripAdvisor, the travel trade has been a big focus for TripAdvisor as per their business model even though the consumers form a large segment of the clients but the fact that the trade also engages with the product is what makes it so popular. The trade and business partners of TripAdvisor consist of three segments — hotels (which form the largest and most important partners); attractions of all kinds listed on TripAdvisor and restaurants.



Nikhil Ganju
Country Manager-India
TripAdvisor

Earlier this year we launched Instant Bookings which is a significantly new functionality and feature on the website

functionality and feature on the website and application where travellers can now not only search for their travel needs but also book it instantly after looking at reviews and comparing prices which have been sourced from more than 200 sites globally," says Ganju. He adds that this year the primary goal of the company is to educate the vast clientele about the enhancements and availability of instant bookings.

Trends
For TripAdvisor, FIT and leisure segments are big growth drivers whereas luxury is a fairly small segment. Amongst the hotels, as price is a sensitive and deciding factor for many travellers, the lower and mid-priced segment hotels are enjoying maximum traction. "Our endeavour is to provide the best price in the market. An increasing shift to mobile bookings has been seen. Earlier in destinations, bookings were popular for restaurants and attractions but now the hotel bookings traffic is also shifting to in destination mobile bookings," add Ganju.

Benefits
Ganju says, "Given the fact that TripAdvisor is world's largest travel website and attracts more than 320 million visitors on a monthly basis, it becomes an important and lucrative platform for the hotels to be listed." He adds that hotels across the world have also recognised the power of the platform, have been deeply engaged for online reputation on the portal, have used the customer reviews

to add and improve services and value-add offers and also made use of the free marketing tools just by registering on the platform.

What's New
"Earlier this year we launched Instant Bookings which is a significantly new



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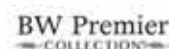
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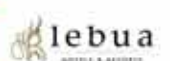
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Tech the road to travel training

The travel industry needs to adapt to new-age methods of training such as e-learning courses and webinars to increase training outcomes.



TT BUREAU

The culture of skills enhancement exists among travel professionals but the travel industry does not have enough avenues to reach out to. The dependency is mainly on roadshows which happen once or twice a year and does not guarantee invitation. Online trainings have a bigger shelf life – 90 days at its minimum. TravelGyaan.com offers free product and destination training to the travel trade through e-learning courses and webinars. **Nikita Rawtani**, Co-founder,

on the course content. This helps its clients gauge the level of engagement and helps them choose the attendees eligible for a lucky draw. Rawtani adds, “We are trying to reach out to more and more agents by participating in roadshows and regular email campaigns. In early 2016, we were invited to participate in two roadshows (IITT and OTM) and deliver offline training. We

received an overwhelming response that reflected their inclination to learn about new destinations and products. We constantly update our data and keep a track of industry movements.”

Online training programme, she says, is economical when compared with a physical roadshow. However, she adds that a physical roadshow is equally important in

the marketing mix. Speaking about the benefits her portal offers to clients, she says, “The most important task is to identify a deserving candidate who is eligible for a Fam trip or a gift voucher rather than leaving it to a lucky draw. The reports we provide clients capture attendee movements such as attendance in terms of time spent, pass score, number of attempts, and attendee details.”

German Tourism & AccorHotels Workshop



The German National Tourist Office, India and AccorHotels recently conducted sales workshops in Kochi and Bengaluru. The workshops saw enthusiastic participation from the operators in both cities aimed at promoting Destination Germany and AccorHotels' portfolio across the country.



Nikita Rawtani
Co-founder
TravelGyaan.com

We reach out to tourism boards, cruise liners, hotels, attractions and others to conduct the courses on our platform

TravelGyaan.com, says, “Through this medium, travel professionals can learn at their own time and pace to upgrade their skill sets. We reach out to stakeholders such as tourism boards, cruise liners, hotels, attractions and other travel products to conduct the courses on our platform.”

TravelGyaan claims to be user-friendly and has features such as online quiz, instant certification and also offers a chance to win prizes, Fam trips, vouchers, and invitation to attend exclusive tourism events. It also has a special feature where attendees can submit itineraries based

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Cox & Kings launches Dubai guidebook



Cox & Kings recently unveiled its travel guidebook in Mumbai titled 'Dubai: An Experience' which highlights explored and unexplored facets of Dubai that will appeal to the Indian travellers.

30 hotels in 3 years in Lanka: HLL

Hospitality & Healthcare Lanka (HLL) has opened its first property in Sri Lanka and has an aggressive expansion plan in place to expand in the island nation.



Hotel management company Hospitality & Healthcare Lanka (HLL) is looking at expansion in the Sri Lankan market. **Riyaz UC**, Chairman and MD, HLL, says, "The vision is to create a true local brand of hotels and resorts in the wellness, leisure and business segment."

The brand has already opened its first Ayurvedic retreat — Purple Coot at Bolgoda Lake, Sri Lanka.

Talking about the property, he says, "It is a boutique wellness resort on the Bolgoda river and offers truly traditional Sri Lankan style of design and cuisines. The property boasts a fully set Kerala Ayurveda

centre with a team of doctors and therapists." Purple Coot is targeted at wellness seekers and those seeking Ayurvedic cure. Situated 10 kms away from Kalutara, the property offers an amalgamation of wellness and luxury. The wellness programmes also include tailor-made diets as well as regular yoga and meditation sessions.

Riyaz further reveals that they are planning to expand the brand across the island nation. "We are targeting to set up to 30 hotels in three years across Sri Lanka, and the locations would be Colombo, Bentota, Kalutara, Hikkaduva, Kandy, Ella, Nuwara Eliya, Negombo, Dambulla and Passikudah."

India being the largest source market for Sri Lanka, Riyaz says that they would



Riyaz UC
Chairman and MD
HLL

We are targeting to set up to 30 hotels in three years across Sri Lanka, and the locations would be Colombo, Bentota, Kalutara, Hikkaduva, Kandy, Ella, Nuwara Eliya, Negombo, Dambulla and Passikudah

mainly target leisure and corporate travellers. "In fact, we would launch exclusive airline packages in future as well. Our core strategy would be to engage with the travel trade to boost the sales of the property," he asserts.

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Philippines mixes fun with work

The Department of Tourism (DOT), Philippines received overwhelming response during its four-city roadshow that commenced from Kolkata and travelled to Chennai, Bengaluru and finally to Mumbai. DOT Director, **Verna Buensuceso**, led a delegation of 16 members from the Philippines that included officials from DOT Philippines, DMCs and hotels.

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AirAsia connects 3 cities

Announcing plans to expand its fleet as well as route, AirAsia India's seventh A320 will connect Hyderabad with Bengaluru and Goa as well as Bengaluru with Guwahati on a daily basis.



AirAsia India has announced its fleet and route expansion plan in its hub, Bengaluru. The airline's seventh A320, 180-seater one-class aircraft will be op-

Bookings for all the new sectors have been opened for sale as of 17 August 2016. Passengers can avail fares from as low as ₹1,499, ₹2,499 and ₹5,499 for flights from BLR – HYD, HYD – GOI & BLR – GAU. Speak-

has been extremely promising and we continue to witness a growing demand for air travel. AirAsia as a group strongly believes in enhancing connectivity and making air travel affordable to one & all. We're thrilled



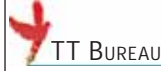
erational from September 22, 2016. As a part of its continued expansion, AirAsia India will connect Hyderabad with Bengaluru and Goa on a daily basis. Keeping in mind the Government of India's vision of improving regional connectivity and increasing the airlines footprint in the North East region, AirAsia India will also connect Bengaluru to Guwahati with a daily service.

ing about these plans, **Amar Abrol**, CEO, AirAsia India, said, "The AirAsia family is immensely happy to announce the addition of another A320 to our existing fleet. That makes it a total of 7 aircraft for our domestic operations and also marks the start of AirAsia's growth phase in India. Our loads and on time performance over the last quarter

to be connecting Hyderabad, yet another beautiful city & supportive airport. The North East region is another important segment that AirAsia India is committed to. We look forward to continued support from the local State Governments, Central Government and our valued guests in taking AirAsia to greater heights in India." 🇮🇳

A bit of Paris in Macao

Representatives from Sands Resorts Cotai Strip Macao introduced their latest property — The Parisian Macao, which will open mid-September this year.



Ruth Boston, Vice President – Destination Marketing & Sales, Sands China, said, "The Parisian Macao will be the seventh hotel in our portfolio and the jewel in the crown for Sands Resorts. It's the dream of our chairman and is finally being realised with this property, which is modelled on the city of Paris in France. The Venetian Macao is already very popular in the Indian market and we believe that the new property would emulate the success."



Ruth Boston
Vice President – Destination Marketing & Sales, Sands China

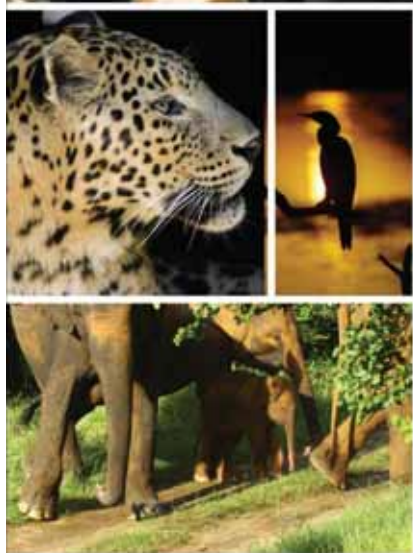
We share a good relationship with the agents in India and do a lot of cooperative marketing with travel agents

Revealing the various highlights of the property, she said, "The Parisian Macao will have 3000 guest rooms and suites and will have meeting spaces that can be shared with the Venetian Macao, allowing the guests to stay in one of the properties and have their meetings in either. The Parisian Macao also has 150 shops including some French brands, which will be coming to Macao for the first time. In fact, with these, we will have 850 stores throughout

mark of the property is a half-scale recreation of the famed Eiffel Tower, with two observation decks both on the seventh and 37th floor. It also has a restaurant which sits around 200 people as well. Also, every night there will be a light show at the Eiffel Tower at the Parisian Macao. There will also be a plethora of entertainment options at the property, as well as a number of family facilities like Aqua World, the outdoor pool deck featuring an adult pool as well as children's facilities. There are so many other things for kids, including the Qube Kingdom."

Speaking on the expectation from the travel trade, she said, "We have been connecting with the travel trade on our visits from India and we share a good relationship with the agents in India for a long time. We do a lot of cooperative marketing with travel agents and would be continuing to do that. In June, India was the fourth largest source market for us after Mainland China, Hong Kong and Taiwan." 🇮🇳

Sands Resorts, which is larger than any other shopping centre in Hong Kong. We also have 20 restaurants and the key land-



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 Joseph Xia Shanghai Jin Jiang International E-Commerce Co., Ltd. Vice President	 Morton Huang Yiqifei Travel Founder & CEO	 Alex Thanopoulos MasterCard Enterprise Partnerships Asia Pacific Vice President

Official Partner Country: Official Partner Hotel: Official Medical & Travel Security Partner: Official Partner Airline: Media Partner:

IATO push to India's marketing agenda

► Contd. from page 1

IATO is willing to take upon itself to push global marketing of India tourism as many of the regional offices abroad don't have heads and the marketing efforts have reduced. IATO plans to organise promotional activities for the whole of India in Delhi itself targeting global players.

Sarkar informed about issues taken up with Railways like group reservations, tourist insurance enhancement of the amount, facilities at the railway stations for differently abled people and rupee tariff on luxury trains.

Touching upon a contentious issue which is GST, Sarkar said, "I see GST differently for the tourism indus-

try. The industry already pays multiple taxes but don't benefit from it. As per various studies by the Ministry and private bodies, tourism is paying 25-27 per cent taxes. With GST it will definitely reduce. We have approached the Ministry of Finance through FAITH that GST should be considered at a lower rate like 6-8 per cent. We have also given the comparison of European and Far East countries where tourism is considered at an almost half and almost nil rate respectively. ↴

ITQ initiates educational sessions



InterGlobe Technology Quotient recently held an informative session with interactive activities like role-play, quizzes and a live Travelport Smartpoint demo, to give the media a firsthand explanation of travel technology, namely the global distribution system (GDS). The event was a fresh take on educational meetings and allowed a better understanding of how travel technology has advanced. While ITQ COO Sandeep Dwivedi shed light on the intricacies of GDS and answered several questions, ITQ President & CEO Anil Parashar informed that more such educational events are in the pipeline.

AHS has Vietnam DMC in its fold

Destination Management Company Sen Travel Group has appointed Absolute Hospitality Services as its sales office in India and looks forward to servicing the Indian clients. Sen Travel Group specialises in tailor-made travel itineraries for both individual and group of travellers seeking to provide authentic experiences in Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia and Myanmar.

Tran Thi Xuan Nguyen, Founder, Sen Travel Group, said, "In reality Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos are blessed with fascinating natural beauty; tranquil village life, ravishing coastline, emerald-green mountains, breathtaking national parks, dynamic cities, outstanding cultural interest and above all the world's best cuisines."

AHS Directors Anuradha Singh and Randhir Narayan welcomed Sen Travel Group to the portfolio of International DMCs. Singh commented, "We are always excited to introduce new destination & new experiences to Indian travel trade."

Sen Travel Group will be marketed extensively by AHS India & UAE and will be focused on: i) Leisure traveller through tour operators ii) Incentives through MICE organisers and iii) family gateway or short vacationers through boutique travel houses. Narayan believes that time is right for India to "Experience the variety of Vietnam." AHS team is hopeful of generating 5000 happy Indian travellers in the first year of operation.






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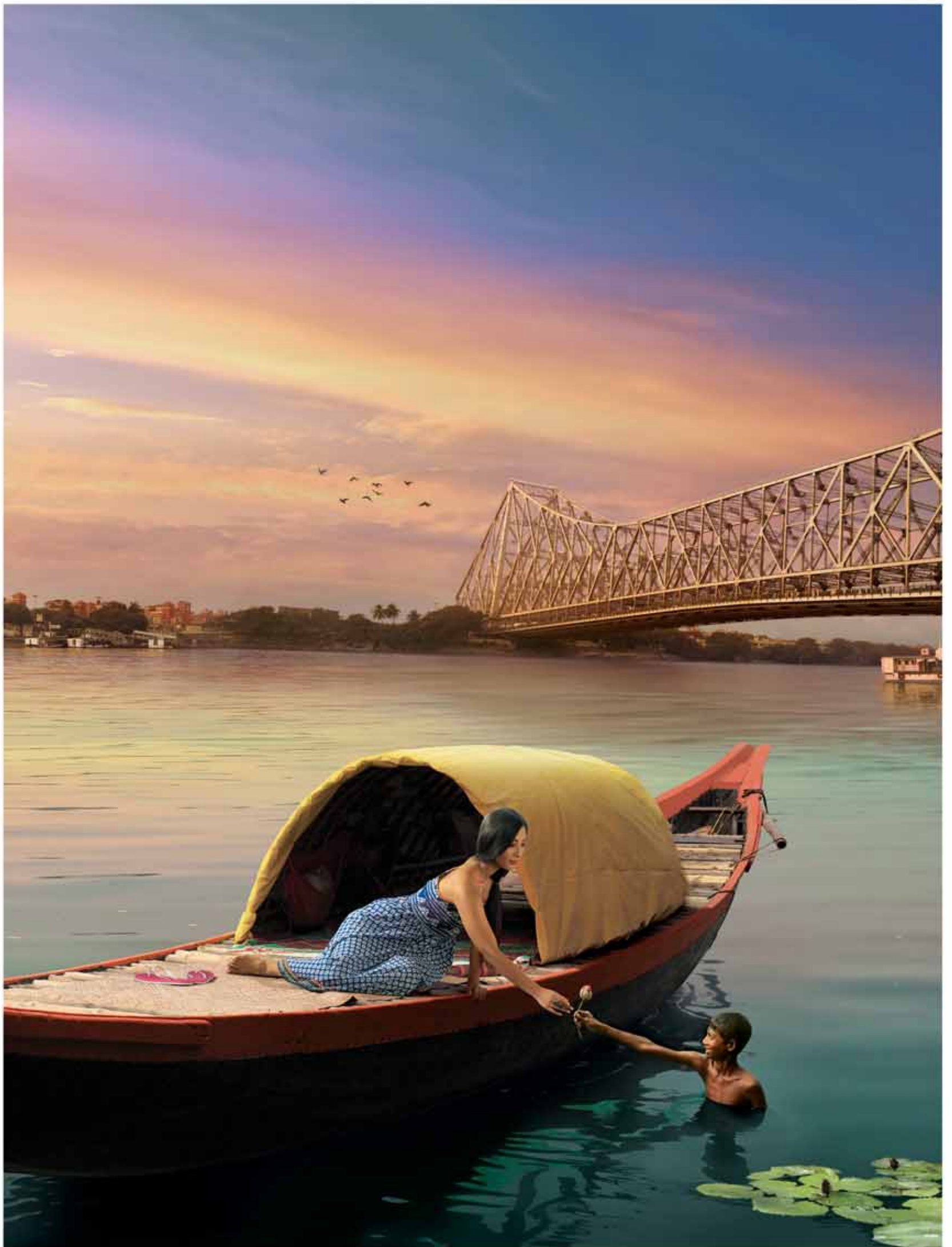
The recently concluded 14th edition India Travel Mission (ITM) 2016 organised by Tourism Australia in Chennai saw a record number of new suppliers from Australia with at least 17 first-time participants like Scoot, Visit Canberra, Tourism Barossa, Australian Wine Tour Company, Featherdale Wildlife Park, Sand Dune Adventures, Fire Truck Tours, and Wildlife Coast Cruises.



Agents let their hair down

Pradeep Saboo, Partner, Guideline Travels, along with Star Cruises organised a thanksgiving outdoor event for its travel partners. The two-day event held at Noor Mahal Karnal from August 20-23, 2016, brought together 225 travel agents from across India for 24 hours of celebrations. They also organised a cricket match for agents on August 21.









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MORE THAN 38 TRAVEL INDUSTRY SECTORS represented at WTM London

REGISTER FOR WTM LONDON 2016

World Travel Market London, the leading global event for the travel industry, has opened registration to the new-look three-day WTM London 2016.

WTM London 2016, which takes place between Monday 7 – Wednesday 9 November, is poised to be the most successful yet. The new-look three-day format has been universally well received from all participant groups. Delegates will be able to conduct even more business than last year's record £2.5 billion and save on the ancillary cost with WTM London being one day shorter. Opening hours have been extended from 10am to 7pm on all three days of the event, to increase the business opportunities available. The WTM Inspire Theatre, a new 300-seater amphitheatre, will be added to the exhibition floor in the North Hall of ExCeL, while the WTM International Press Centre has been moved on to the exhibition floor for the first time (in the South Hall). More than 80 seminars will take place

throughout the three days covering all the key sectors including aviation, hotels, sports tourism, responsible tourism, blogging, social media and travel technology. Monday 7 November will remain an exhibitor invite-only day, allowing exhibitors to conduct business meetings with key contacts. The event will kick off with the WTM Speed Networking in the WTM Global Stage at 9am – before the exhibition floor opens at 10am. A taste of ILTM at WTM returns for the fifth year across the Monday and Tuesday.

Tuesday 8 November is the new day for World Responsible Tourism Day, keeping sustainability at the heart of the event. Wednesday 9 November is the new day for the UNWTO & WTM Ministers' Summit, which is this year celebrating its tenth edition. WTM London 2016 will conclude with the WTM Festivals, which will see a number of exhibitors hosting parties showcasing their culture, music and cuisine.

WTM London 2015 saw almost 50,000 participants, including 9,100 buyers conducting business worth more than £2.5 billion with almost 5,000 exhibitors from 182 countries and regions.



To pre-register visit

www.wtmlondon.com/register



SAVE ON FLIGHTS AND ACCOMODATION FOR WTM LONDON

World Travel Market London delegates can take advantage of discounted air fares and accommodation thanks to two ground-breaking deals.

Discounted flights with oneworld airlines can be made via a dedicated channel on the oneworld web site – oneworld.com/events – by using the unique code – OW24D15. Flights must arrive in London no earlier than one week before the event begins and depart no later than one week after WTM London. Visit wtmlondon.com/discounts.

Furthermore, HotelMap.com is offering unique prices and an array of special offers on accommodation in London for WTM London. Visit wtmlondon.com/visit/hotelmap/

Participants will be able to make reservations via HotelMap.com's unique 'map' which connects to each hotel's reservation system showing live availability.

The prices shown on HotelMap.com are per room and users can either pay when booking or when checking out of the hotel. Hotel bookings can be cancelled free of charge up to 24 hours before checking in. Find out more at: <http://www.wtmlondon.com/visit/hotelmap/>

FROM ECUADOR TO SOUTH KOREA, WTM LONDON ATTRACTS NEW EXHIBITORS

The world's largest hotels search site, an aircraft charter specialist and the fourth largest city in Ecuador are among the new exhibitors already signed up for World Travel Market London 2016.

The highest profile first-time exhibitor is Trivago, a price comparison site focused on hotels which is part of Expedia Inc. It will be present in the Global Village region, where it will be joined by other first-time exhibitors including Autoclick Rent a Car, a car hire business based in Spain.

Visitors to the Travel Technology region will have the chance to do deals with a range of WTM London debutants, including some businesses based in Asia such as Rish Iyagi, a South

Korean marketing agency with branches in Shanghai and Tokyo. Making a shorter journey is German hotels software business Booklogic. Airlines are a vital part of the global travel industry and WTM London continues to attract new carriers to the event. Atlas Global, a Turkish airline operating domestic and international flights into Istanbul from many European, Middle Eastern and Asian destinations, is another first time exhibitor. Coach travel is also an important player in the industry, and DJ Coaches from Kent is taking a stand in the UK and Ireland region for the first time.

Finally, the Americas region will welcome for the first time representatives from the city of Machala in southern Ecuador.



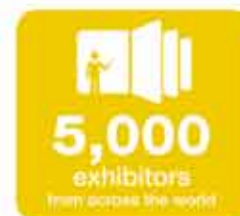
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Got US visa? Head for Mexico

Her Excellency Melba Pría, Ambassador of Mexico to India, feels tourism can be an ideal platform for not just economic gain, but also boosting ties between countries.



INDER RAJ AHLUWALIA

Q How important is tourism for Mexico?

The importance of tourism to Mexico is unquestionable. It represents 8.5 per cent of GDP and is one of the fastest growing industries in the country. In 2015, a record amount of over 32 million international tourists visited Mexico by air and generated revenue of over \$17 billion. Mexico is the world's

8th most-visited country, 12th in terms of tourism foreign revenue earnings, and number one in Latin America.

Q What are Mexico's greatest attractions for foreign tourists?

Mexico's broad range of tourist attractions includes the heritage of pre-Columbian civilisations; archaeological sites that are symbols of national identity; some of the world's

most beautiful beaches; and the combination of millenary cultures with major cities. Mexico is a perfect destination for family travel, as it offers something for all ages.

We are proud to be home to 34 UNESCO World Heritage Sites, and to one of the modern wonders of the world: the Mayan pyramid of Chichén Itzá. There are also breathtaking ancient ruins from great

civilisations like the Aztecs, Toltecs or Zapotecs.

Food is another essential element in the Mexican experience. It is so important that in 2010, the United Nations declared Mexican Cuisine as 'Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity'.

Qs Mexico keen on getting Indian tourists and conventions?

Our proximity to the United States, which is a traditional destination for Indians, as well as the warm weather and historical sites, attracts Indian travellers. Last year, Mexico received over 50,000 Indian visitors, and the numbers will increase. It is now easier for Indians to travel to Mexico, given that a Mexican visa is not necessary when they present a valid American visa. This has facilitated tourism to the point

that last year 90 per cent of Indian tourists entered Mexico in this manner. 'Convention and events tourism' is an area in which Mexico has been remarkably successful. In 2015, Mexico hosted 206 international conferences, representing an increase of 41 events with respect to 2014. In 2014, this



Melba Pría
Ambassador of
Mexico to India

India and Mexico will also convene a meeting of their tour operators and hoteliers on the sidelines of WTM London 2016

segment of tourism generated 13.6 million tourists.

Q Do you feel tourism would boost bi-lateral ties between Mexico and India?

Definitely! We want more Indians to come to Mexico because we are sure that they'll fall in love with the country and feel at home. During a recent meeting of the bilateral High Level Group (HLG) on Trade, Investment and Economic Cooperation in Mexico, discussions were held on ways to boost cooperation in tourism. India and Mexico will also convene a meeting of their tour operators and hoteliers on the sidelines of the World Travel Market in London this November. Both nations have decided to hold meetings of the government-level 'joint working group' on tourism regularly, and plans are also on to conduct training programmes on Indian and Mexican cuisines.

Mexico connect

- Last year, Mexico received over 50,000 Indian visitors
- Also in 2015, 90 per cent of Indian tourists entered Mexico using a valid US visa
- In 2015, Mexico hosted 206 international conferences, representing an increase of 41 events



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EVENT TALK

SEPTEMBER 2016

BRICS Tourism Convention	Khajuraho	1-2
Switzerland Tourism roadshow	New Delhi	1
Switzerland Tourism roadshow	Jaipur	2
TTF	Ahmedabad	2-4
Philippines Travel Mart	Pasay	2-4
International India Medical Tourism Congress	Hyderabad	3-4
GBTA India Business Travel Symposium	New Delhi	6
PATA Travel Mart	Greater Jakarta	7-9
TTF	Surat	9-11
Busan International Travel Fair (BITEF)	Busan	9-12
Atout France workshop	Mumbai	12
Atout France workshop	Kolkata	14
Australia workshop	Amritsar	14
Atout France workshop	New Delhi	15
Australia workshop	Bhopal	16
PHDCCI Film Tourism Conference	New Delhi	16
TTF	Mumbai	16-18
IATO Convention	Chennai	18-21
Incredible India Tourism Investors Summit	New Delhi	21-23
Astana Leisure	Kazakhstan	21-23
Manila International Travel Expo (MITE)	Philippines	22-24
JATA Tourism Expo	Tokyo	22-25
IITM	Mumbai	23-25
TTF	Pune	23-25
ILTM Americas	Mexico	26-29
Kerala Travel Mart	Kochi	27-30
Tourism Ireland roadshow	Mumbai	28
Tourism Ireland roadshow	New Delhi	29
European Quartet roadshow	Mumbai	30
India International Travel Mart	Gurugram	Sept 30 - Oct 02

OCTOBER 2016

European Quartet roadshow	New Delhi	1
Buddhist Conclave	Sarnath	2-4
Australia workshop	Coimbatore	4
Scandinavia roadshow	New Delhi	4
Scandinavia Tourism roadshow	Bengaluru	5
Australia workshop	Kochi	6
Scandinavia Tourism roadshow	Mumbai	6
World Travel Expo	Manila	7-9
Arabian Travel Awards	Gurugram	12
Tourism office of Spain workshop	Mumbai	13
ICPB Convention	New Delhi	13-15
Tourism office of Spain workshop	Bengaluru	14
Madhya Pradesh Travel Mart	Bhopal	14-16
Connections Luxury	Brazil	16-19
Tourism office of Spain workshop	Kolkata	17
World Tourism Conference	Penang, Malaysia	17-19
Amazing Thailand Luxury roadshow	New Delhi	19
India Hospitality Awards –North & East	New Delhi	20
India Travel Awards – North	New Delhi	21

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

ASSOCIATION TALK

IATO resolves guide issue in Mumbai

While Mumbai was reeling under a major guide shortage, IATO was busy liaising with the Ministry of Tourism and IIITM Gwalior to bring the course closer home.



HAZEL JAIN

After a long spell of experiencing acute scarcity of qualified and authorised guides in Mumbai city, the Maharashtra Chapter of IATO vowed to resolve this issue and successfully did so too. Since all guide courses took place in IIITM's (Indian Institute of Information Technology and Management) Gwalior campus, it was difficult for applicants to travel and stay away from home for six months, especially women.

N.S. Rathor, Chairman,



N.S. Rathor
Region IATO and Regional Chapter Chairman

Western Region IATO and Regional Chapter Chairman, says, "We have a big problem as far as guides in Mumbai is concerned. The previous three

to four guide courses that the Ministry of Tourism (MOT) conducts happened in IIITM's Gwalior campus. But this time, we didn't have much numbers from Mumbai – just 13 from Mumbai and the rest from Goa. So we requested IIITM Gwalior and the MOT to shift the course to their Goa campus and they have obliged. Most applicants for this course are women and it is very difficult for them to stay away from home six months in a row."

The problem started when none of the students passing out of IIITM Gwalior came to

Mumbai. Old guides are now unable to climb Elephanta Caves anymore. "The new six-month course will be starting from August-end in Goa for the first time and they will be completed by February 2017. The Goa campus also has an institute for scuba diving. It is an achievement for us," he adds.

Historically, the majority of guides – almost 90 per cent – in Mumbai have been women. "Only now have men started to join the industry. Some women do it as a hobby, some for the love of travel and some for money," he says.

TAFI-WI calls for robust participation

The new committee members of the Western India Chapter of the Travel Agents Federation of India met for the first time to discuss its plan of action for the term, including a CSR activity.



TT BUREAU

The new Managing Committee of the Travel Agents Federation of India – Western India Chapter, met for the first time in Mumbai after the new committee took charge in June this year to discuss various issues troubling their members and their plan of action for the term. Chapter Chairman **Abbas Moiz**, said, "My first and last issue is to get as many members into our meetings as possible, listen to their problems and views, to add as much value to our members as possible."

Speaking about the plan devised for this year, he added, "We want to conduct workshops with IATA and have already approached them for this. They will be changing their procedures soon and the entire reporting system will change, so we would like to give a glimpse of it to our members. Currently, the pilot run is going on in Mumbai and Delhi and they will roll it out pan-India by early 2017."

The team has also initiated a conversation on the impending GST. "It may be good or may be bad for the industry.



Abbas Moiz
Chapter Chairman
TAFI-Western India

We will know only when the industry starts to adopt it. We are going straight from the 15-16 per cent Service Tax to 18 per

cent and the whole reporting is on the reverse. I think GST is the ideal thing to do. We will take a cue from the national team," he said. Meanwhile, TAFI National MC is talking to one of the top consultants in India to understand GST.

The team will meet again in September, which will probably coincide with International Tourism Day in Mumbai. "We have earmarked something for CSR activity as well where we want to sponsor two gifted students per year who cannot afford a course fees in the travel industry," he said.

8 years: Fight for commission still on

A fight that started in June 2008 for the IATA Agents Association of India continues even today. The case has been reopened for hearing in Kochi.



TT BUREAU

The IATA Agents Association of India (IAAI) continues to fight the battle between agents and airlines over commission in the courts even after eight long years. IAAI's Writ Appeal in the Kerala High Court in the matter of commission against the DGCA that had been reserved for judgment on Sept 29, 2015, has been now reopened and posted for re-hearing in the Chambers of the High Judges in Kochi soon.

Biji Eapen, National President, IAAI, says, "IAAI



Biji Eapen
National President
IAAI

is the only travel agents representative body relentlessly fighting for agency commission since June 2008 and still keen to see that our national law pertaining to the payment

of commission is implemented and executed. Since the Indian Aircraft Rules 1937 and the DGCA and MoCA orders of March 5, 2010, and September 16, 2013, affirm the travel agents' remuneration as the legal compensation, we expect justice to prevail."

With the airlines denying them the same, the travel agents have been forced to mark up the costs to cover their remunerations. This goes against the Supreme Court order that prohibits the collection of any additional charges over and above the ticket fare from the passengers.

Eapen adds, "Once we have achieved this goal in implementing our National Law effectively through the case in the Hon'ble Kerala High Court, sooner rather than later, the disparity in fares will disappear. Whether it is the consolidator, OTA or offline travel agent, every travel agent will have equality. We sincerely hope that a healthy business environment will soon be established for the co-existence for all stakeholders in the Indian travel industry."

IAAI has formed Action Committees covering all segments of travel and tourism as a link to the travel fraternity.

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Commune Hotels and Resorts

Goa

Siddharth Savkur has been appointed Regional General Manager-India at Commune Hotels & Resorts. He will perform this function in addition to his existing role as General Manager of Alila Diwa Goa. Savkur will be responsible for strategic management of all Commune properties in India, as well as stimulate development activities in the country. He hopes to recreate Alila's brand DNA at its upcoming locations in India, starting with the Alila Fort Bishangarh, slated to open this December.



Crowne Plaza Kochi

Kochi

Shuvendu Banerjee has been appointed as General Manager, Crowne Plaza Kochi. He was previously Executive Assistant Manager of Crowne Plaza Gurgaon. Astute and results-driven professional equipped with experience in managing all aspects of a hotel, he comes with over 15 years of experience spanning the entire gamut of hospitality industry. Previously he has performed diverse roles in Radisson, ITC, IHG Group etc. His contribution has led to optimisation of output, delivery and service.



Sarovar Hotels

Palampur

Sarovar Hotels has appointed Neeraj Mishra as the General Manager of RS Sarovar Portico, Palampur. Mishra has 15 years of industry experience with expertise in operational management, sales & marketing, project launches, F&B operations and quality control. He has also worked at The Fern Residency Rajkot, The Hype Saiva Continental Dehradun, Four Points by Sheraton Dehradun, Radisson Hotel Kandla Gujarat, ITC Welcom Heritage Agra and Holiday Inn, Royal Caribbean Cruises, Miami, USA and Crowne Plaza, Dubai. He holds a Diploma in Hotel Management and Catering Technology from Indian Institute of Hotel Management in Patna.



Shree Ram International Jodhpur

Jodhpur

Shree Ram International Jodhpur has appointed Rakesh Chauhan as the new General Manager. His last assignment was with Hotel GenX Jodhpur as General Manager. Chauhan is a hotel management graduate from IHM Chandigarh with over 17 years of experience and he specialises in hotel operations, revenue management, performance enhancement, best practices implementation, setting up process and implementation, quality compliance, organization development, human resource and training.



Mercure Hyderabad KCP

Hyderabad

Sudipto Mukherjee has been appointed as the Director of Sales & Marketing at Mercure Hyderabad KCP. Mukherjee has over 13 years of experience in the hospitality industry. He has worked with Novotel Hyderabad Convention Centre, Ellaa Hotels and Lindsay Hotel Kolkata in various leadership roles and has handled various portfolios ranging from marketing, sales, business management, revenue management and operations. He holds a Bachelors degree in Arts from South City College, University of Calcutta.



Park Hyatt Hyderabad

Hyderabad

Anshuman Appanna joins Park Hyatt Hyderabad as the Director of Sales & Marketing. Starting his hospitality journey with Taj Group of Hotels, Appanna has worked across different locations like Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai, Bengaluru and Goa after he completed his degree of M.Sc. in International Business from Scotland. He carried out a significant role in the pre-launch and subsequently opening of Vivanta by Taj Club House in Chennai and other Taj properties across India.



Novotel Goa Resorts & Spa

Goa

Atul Nagarkar has been appointed as the Learning & Development Manager for Novotel Goa Resorts & Spa and Novotel Goa Shrem Hotel. With over 12 years of cross-functional and academic knowledge in hotel and restaurant operations, Nagarkar comes with extensive experience and domain expertise in the hospitality industry. Having worked with companies like The Taj Group, Fairmont Hotel Canada & Jaipur, Hilton Shillim Estate & Resort, he has strong operational understanding which is critical to his role at Novotel Goa. He will focus to discreetly align the L&D activities with strategic organisational direction at both the Novotel properties in Goa.



Humble Hotels Amritsar

Amritsar

Humble UNA Smart Amritsar has appointed Rajeev Ranjan as Business Development Manager. He worked as a Revenue and Sales Manager and is now set for his new role. With 11 years of overall experience and being a part of Humble Hotels for more than four years, Ranjan will be spearheading the sales activities for Humble Hotels. Prior to joining Humble Hotels, he worked with some of the reputed organisations Like ShawMan, Mudra and Delphinium.



DoubleTree by Hilton Pune-Chinchwad

Pune

Ashutosh Garg is the new Food & Beverage Manager at DoubleTree by Hilton Pune-Chinchwad. With more than 11 year of experience, Garg has been associated with some of the best hotel brands in the country, including Le Meridien, Jay Pee Palace Agra, IHG Delhi, Radisson Noida, Four Points by Sheraton. In his new role, Garg will be responsible for the overall operation & management of the entire specialty restaurant, bar and banquet events. His operational duties will involve revenue generation, customer satisfaction, employee engagement and corporate compliance.



TALKING PEOPLE

Bharath Mahadevan, Country Head (India), Scoot, believes in living each day like it's the last. "One day you'll get it right that way! I don't believe in having any external inspiration in life. I compete with myself and set my own benchmarks," he says. He enjoys reading and his favourite book is *The Art of Thinking Clearly* by Rolf Dobelli. Travel is another indulgence. "UK and Scotland are heaven on earth. Maldives on the other hand is heaven on water. But my favourite holiday memory is flying the Singapore Airlines suites. It was heaven in the air," Mahadevan adds.



Sumit Kumar, General Manager, Hyatt Pune, believes in spreading happiness and positivity wherever he goes. He is inspired by self-made people. "I am motivated by individuals who achieve great heights purely through their own hard work and perseverance – go-getters like MS Dhoni," he says. Kumar enjoys travelling and his favourite holiday destination is Vietnam for its beaches, pagodas, rivers, abundant natural beauty and cuisine. His favourite book is *The Secret* by Rhonda Byrne.



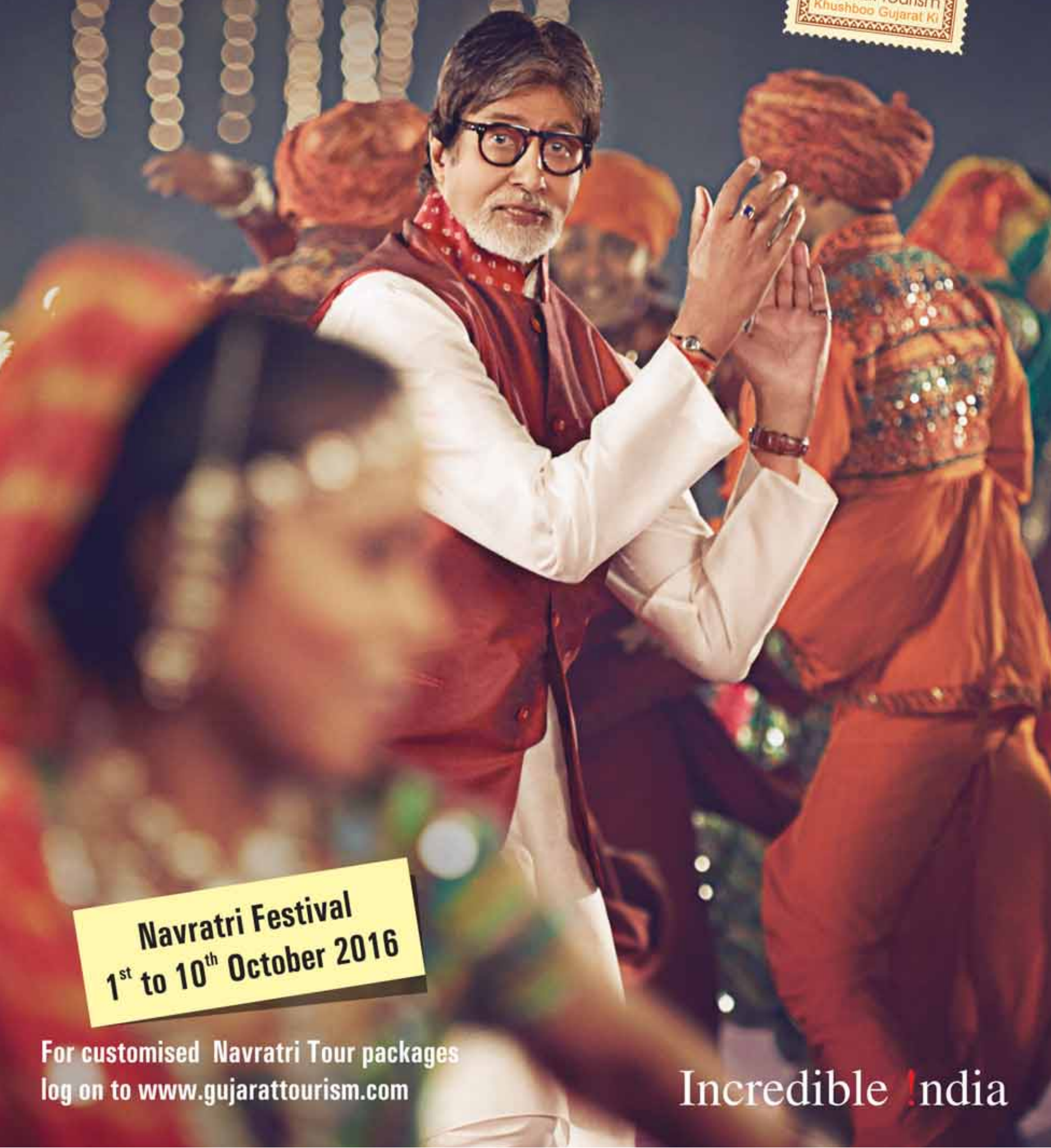
It's only been two months since **Namita Khatri** took charge as the High Commissioner of Fiji to India. Khatri hasn't travelled in India much but she has been to many places around the world. "All the places I have travelled to have been lovely and each of them have their own charm," she says. Khatri loves to read, but hasn't been able to catch up on it as she spends most of her free time with her two year old son. The last book she read was *The Forty Rules of Love* by Turkish writer Elif Safak.



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Bengal eyes south & east markets

With a revamped brand identity and having ranked sixth in the foreign tourist arrivals (FTAs) list and eighth in the domestic market in 2015, West Bengal is eyeing new markets to boost tourist footfall in the state, informs **Surajit Bose**, Additional Director & Ex-Officio Joint Secretary – Tourism, WB.



AHANA GURUNG

Q How has the past year fared for tourist footfall in the state?

The year 2015 was a good year for us. We welcomed 14.9 lakh foreign tourists in 2015, up from 13.75 lakh in 2014 and now rank sixth for highest FTAs. In domestic tourism, we've recorded the highest increase (2014-2015) of over 43 per cent in number of domestic tourist with a total of 4.9 per cent share in total domestic tourist visits. Our ranking here, has also improved to eighth position. West Bengal receives maximum of its tourists from west and north India namely Gujarat and Maharashtra. Through continued efforts, we hope to make it to the top three states for tourism.

Q What are some of the international markets that West Bengal aims to tap?

China is one of the major markets we want to tap with its proximity and direct flight connectivity with Kunming. We

Sri Lanka is also a developing market and since direct flights to Colombo on Mihin Lanka have commenced, it has become more convenient to bring in Sri Lankan tourists. Connectivity is always a major factor when tapping any new market. Very soon, international roadshows will also commence in various markets where we want our products to be well-known.

Q Which domestic markets are you targeting?

Since we receive a very small number of tourists from South India, we plan to start promotional activities there. We are looking at organising roadshows in South India to increase footfall and also understand what would appeal to the tourists from there.

Q Tell us about some of the major tourism projects?

With assistance from the Central Government, a Coastal Circuit is being developed under the Swadesh

Q The Gajoldaba project has been on for quite a while. Have there been any challenges?

Yes, several projects have been delayed due to objections by National Green Tribunal. We are working it out and they have asked us to prepare an Impact assessment study. Once it is ready and approved, it will take lesser time. But the project is on and work continues.

Q What is the state doing to boost investments?

The Incentive Scheme 2015 applies to investors who want to empower in properties in WB. For mega projects above ₹100 cr investment, they will be getting 75 per cent VAT refund for five years. Several private hotel chains have already shown keen interest in setting up branches in Bengal. Lemon Tree has recently started operations in Purulia while Marriott is coming up with a branch in Darjeeling. ITC is also expanding in a big way in Kolkata. Ambuja Group has invested in Makai Bari Tea Estate for tea-tourism and is also working on a project in Digha. We need renowned branded names to create a ripple effect especially in areas where there is a lack of accommodation.

Q What efforts have been made in the digital segment?

Since digital is so powerful these days, we are also trying to improve our online presence. Recently, the West Bengal Tourism mobile app was launched so that travellers can find information in the convenience of their phones and while on the go. Our official website is also looking at a complete revamp and will be re-launched in the coming days. Apart from this, we have also become extremely active on social media like Facebook, Twitter, and the likes. Plans of tying up with Google for promotion are also in the pipeline.



“Sri Lanka is also a developing market and since direct flights to Colombo on Mihin Lanka have commenced, it has become more convenient to bring in Sri Lankan tourists. Connectivity is always a major factor when tapping any new market.”

Surajit Bose
Additional Director & Ex-Officio
Joint Secretary – Tourism
Govt. of West Bengal

organised a Fam trip earlier this year and hosted around 17-20 Chinese agents to show them Bengal's tourism products and have another one in October. China poses some challenges as it is a restricted market and promotion is tougher. For this venture to be successful, the first necessity is to provide Mandarin speaking tour guides for which we are tying up with the Institute of Chinese Language. We will be promoting the state on local magazines & newspapers and various other mediums. Additionally, we took part in a few expos in Kunming to understand the market.

Darshan scheme. The coastal circuit will comprise Udaipur – Digha – Shankarpur – Tajpur – Mandarmani – Fraserganj – Bakkhlai – Henry Island for which funds to the tune of around ₹85.3 crore have been sanctioned. Once it is ready, it will immensely help boost tourism. Apart from this, an eco-village in Gajoldaba (North Bengal) is being worked on while we also intend on developing Purulia as an upcoming destination. The budgetary allocation for Tourism Department has increased manifold over the years, from a meagre ₹44 crore in 2011-12 to ₹257 crore in 2015-16.

Booming Bengal

- West Bengal Tourism will be organising a Fam tour for Chinese operators in October
- The state is working on a policy that will categorise and officially legalise homestays
- Budgetary allocation for WB Tourism has increased from a meagre ₹44 cr in 2011-12 to ₹257 cr in 2015-16

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Western India is a perfect amalgamation of several cultures, influenced by a rich history. In spite of its diverse languages, music, architecture, food and customs, several communities continue to thrive in harmony in this region. This diversity makes western India a major attraction for tourists all over the world and within the country. As a tribute, India Travel Awards recognises the achievers of the travel and tourism industry, who have worked steadfastly towards enhancing the environment to allow the growth of tourism in the region.

These stalwarts need to be acknowledged, appreciated and encouraged in every region of the country – North, South, East and West.

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 who makes everyone dance and sing to her beats. At the black-tie, Silver Service event, various performers enthral and amuse the audience. The 3rd edition of West India Travel Awards in Pune was the beginning of a new journey of long-term associations for some and a renewal of the bond that we share with many others.

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

SanJeet

India Travel Awards

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Pune welcomes Maya

The bigwigs of the travel and tourism industry descended at Novotel Pune Nagar Road on August 5, 2016, to celebrate the excellence of the travel fraternity of the region at the third West India Travel Awards.



(L-R): Gunjan Sabikhi, Sandeep Dwivedi, Dattaram Sawant, Pandurang Taware, Saudamini Naik, SanJeet and Bandish Mehta



The winners of West India Travel Awards 2016 with their trophies at Novotel Pune Nagar Road

with thunderous applause

 NISHA VERMA

The glittering ceremony saw the who's who of the travel industry from West India in presence and gracing the occasion was **Pandurang Taware**, Founder and Managing Director, Agri Tourism Development Corporation (ATDC) as the Guest of Honour, while **Dattaram Sawant**, General Manager-Finance, Goa Tourism Development Corporation (GTDC), was the Chief Guest. The black-tie event had over 100 guests who came together to celebrate excellence in tourism.

Taware is considered to be the father of ATDC and he believes that agritourism has helped Indian rural social economy to flourish and has also aided the youth to get respectable life in villages. He said, "Tourism in western India, mainly MP, Gujarat and Maharashtra, is growing. 2017 has been declared as Visit Maharashtra Year and I believe that these kinds of events will definitely help us to get more tourists." Talking of agritourism he added, "Agritourism is a niche product and slowly it is growing. We started in Maharashtra and now it is expanding all over India. If the tourists want to get an authentic experience of the villages, they have to come to the farms. Maharashtra received more than 10 per cent international tourists for agritourism from 27 different countries."

Sawant applauded the gathering and said, "Awards like West India Travel Awards recognise the talent at a regional level and encourage the achievers to excel further." Speaking on how

Goa enjoys a distinct place on the tourism map of India, he said, "Everyone wants to visit Goa, not only because of its beaches but also for casinos, backwater, cruises, boating sites and now hinterland tourism. Goa received over 5 lakh foreign tourists and more than 35 lakh from India last year."

The top honours of the ceremony were received by **Harmandeep Singh Anand**, MD, Jagsons Travels and Founder, Global Panorama Showcase (GPS) and **Rajiv Duggal**, CEO, Lavasa, who were named the Face of Innovative Tourism and Best Marketing Professional of the year respectively.

Sanjeet, Mentor, India Travel Awards, said, "The travel and tourism industry has many awards on a national and global level, but none on a regional platform. We believe that the real heroes of

the industry come from different regions and the far corners of the country. The West India Travel Awards recognises the excellent services provided by the best establishments and honour the finest in the travel and tourism sector." Informing about the voting process of the awards, he said that a non-biased online nomination and voting system was adopted, allowing the industry to create new categories, choose and nominate themselves and then vote. "We received 278 nominations in 65 different categories. Over 340,320 votes were received from 21 countries. The maximum votes were received from Russia, Singapore, USA, UK and the UAE," he added.

While the winners were handed over the trophies on stage, the guests were also entertained by professional dancers who set the stage on fire and enthralled the audience.





Face of Innovative Tourism | HARMANDEEP SINGH ANAND

India Travel Awards is one of the most-sought after awards ceremony in the country; it is the best platform for getting recognised for our efforts, says **Harmandeep Singh Anand**, MD, Jagsons Travels and Co-founder, Global Panorama Showcase (GPS). Speaking on why GPS has carved a niche for itself, he adds, "At GPS our motto is — innovate, involve, engage and excel. Hence we are innovating and involving the agencies across India and engaging them in the field of tourism. I believe we have to start thinking out of the box and evolve."

"At GPS, we are working with a lot of NGOs in the Vidharbh region and have started, what we call— Voluntourism. There are substantial funds going into this initiative and GPS is supporting by way of contributing five per cent of our revenue into these NGOs. We have got a huge response from Tier II and Tier III cities," he adds.

► **Harmandeep Singh Anand**, Co-founder, Global Panorama Showcase, received the award for **Face of Innovative Tourism**. He is felicitated by **SanJeet**, Director, DDP Group; **Pandurang Taware**, Founder & MD, Agri Tourism; **Dattaram Sawant**, General Manager-Finance, Goa Tourism Development Corporation and **Saudamini Naik**, Gladrags Mrs. India



Best Marketing Professional | RAJIV DUGGAL

Lavasa is one of the biggest marketing stories in the last few years. It is the first private city in the country, built from scratch and a tourism destination as well. The biggest USP of Lavasa is its location, and the way it's been built, and the man behind it all is — **Rajiv Duggal**, CEO, Lavasa Corporation Ltd. "I must thank India Travel Awards for the recognition. This was my third time here and I really appreciate the platform. Lavasa was a unique promotion. For the last four years, we've promoted it well. What has changed drastically is the number of tourists coming to Lavasa.

"Earlier we were only getting about three lakh tourists and we clocked 14 lakh tourists in 2015. What proved to be the biggest advantage for us was that we went to the travel trade. I must mention that from a 20 per cent travel trade contribution to Lavasa earlier, we get 80 per cent travel trade contribution today," he says.

► **Rajiv Duggal**, Chief Executive Officer, Lavasa Corporation Limited being felicitated by **SanJeet**, Director, DDP Group; **Pandurang Taware**, Founder Agri Tourism; **Dattaram Sawant**, General Manager-Finance, GTDC, and **Saudamini Naik**, Gladrags Mrs. India





Entrepreneur of the Year | ANUJ BANG, roomsXML

Anuj Bang, Director-Product Development, roomsXML, asserts that their biggest USP is their focus on only accommodation. “We are accommodation wholesalers for travel agents and tour operators, and because we are specialist only in accommodation, it proves to be advantageous. Technology is our backbone and we are a hundred per cent online company. Travel agents and tour operators really like the simplicity of our product, the range of the inventory and the pricing,” he says.

► Anuj Bang, Director-Product Development, roomsXML, received the award for Entrepreneur of the Year

Most Trending Personality | AJAY CHHABRIA

According to Ajay Chhabria, MD, In-time Travels, “I think a large part of the industry was reclusive and held back and somewhere deep down we’ve got them to open up. There is great power in communication and social media. Our main business comes from high-end and luxury and Bollywood industry as well as the media industry.” He says that his USP is PR and personalised service, which is giving them a lot of good work.

► Ajay Chhabria, Managing Director, In-time Travels was named the Most Trending Personality. He is accompanied by Hema Chabbaria, Managing Director, In-time Travels



Best Hospitality Professional | ROHIT CHOPRA

Rohit Chopra, Executive Assistant Manager- Rooms, Sales and Marketing, Novotel Pune Nagar Road, dedicates his award to his team. “I think sales is a very critical area in any industry. Today, there is competition not only within the hotels, but even e-commerce and other online tools are competing very strongly. I was part of the pre-opening team of this property and the numbers that I’ve got from my team says a lot of its growth in the last three years,” he says.

► Rohit Chopra, Executive Assistant Manager-Rooms, Sales and Marketing, Novotel Pune Nagar Road was given the Best Hospitality Professional award

Best Global Distribution System (GDS) | TRAVELPORT GALILEO

“India Travel Award is one of the biggest awards because it comes from one of the most reputed media companies in the travel trade. I must thank DDP Publications and the entire travel fraternity who voted for us. The award is for our support and the developments, which we do for our customers. We as a company, always try to portray ourselves as a solution provider and it is nice to be acknowledged for that,” said Sandeep Dwivedi, COO, Travelport Galileo.

► The award was given to Travelport Galileo and received by its Chief Commercial Officer Sandeep Dwivedi, and Business Manager-Pune, Maharashtra, David Solanki





Best NTO | SOUTH AFRICA TOURISM

Hanneli Slabber, Country Manager, South Africa Tourism, claims that she has the easiest job amongst all the tourism board representations in India, all thanks to their product offerings. “We have a total of 60,000 registered products that talk to the Indian market. South Africa is a beautiful country to sell and it’s a must for every Indian. We do about 70 per cent of our business from the West and South,” she says.

► The award was given to **South Africa Tourism** and received by its Country Manager **Hanneli Slabber**

Best Luxury Tour Operator – Outbound | MERCURY TRAVELS

“We are very happy getting this award. We owe it to the innovation in products which we do; the kind of luxury products which we have on offer, and the kind of services we have. We believe that the product is the main thing which differentiates rather than price,” says **Ashish Chitnis**, Associate Vice President – Leisure, Mercury Travels. He claims that the kind of luxury segment they offer has helped them get this recognition.

► The award was given to **Mercury Travels** and received by its Associate Vice President **Ashish Chitnis** and Sr. Manager **Aditya Patankar**



Best Airline – Domestic | SPICEJET

S. Ramakrishna Reddy, General Manager, West & South India, SpiceJet, claims that SpiceJet is the biggest success story for Indian aviation. “The airline has completely turned around. Last year people thought that it was almost out of the industry, but with due diligence and with the support of our leader Ajay Singh, we are back on track. In fact, today we have become a very strong competitor for the entire industry,” he says.

► The award was given to **SpiceJet** and received by its Corporate Sales Head, **Orian D. Cunha** and General Manager, West & South India, **S. Ramakrishna Reddy**

Best Business Hotel | NOVOTEL PUNE NAGAR ROAD

Bandish Mehta, General Manager, Novotel Pune Nagar Road, says that his global experience has made him bring an innovative take on hospitality at the property. “Whatever we have done in Novotel Pune Nagar Road is new and innovative, both from the MICE and customer satisfaction point of view. The award belongs to my entire staff. The service provided at our property is out of the box. We are very flexible in what we think and what we approach,” he says.

► The award was given to **Novotel Pune Nagar Road** and received by its General Manager **Bandish Mehta**





Best DMC – International | STHI HOLIDAYS INDIA

STHI Holidays has been in existence since October 2008 and has offices in 19 countries. **Gagan Kumar**, Director, STHI Holidays, says, “We are a team of skilled professionals, who value quality over quantity. Our key objective is to offer broad range of travel-related services. We offer 24/7 support system to our customers and B2B travel agents. Another major factor that contributes to this is our team of experienced professionals who’ve made what we are today.”

► The award was given to **STHI Holidays India** and received by its Director **Gagan Kumar**

Best Tour Operator – Outbound | WORLD TRAVEL STUDIO

Haresh Koyande, MD, World Travel Studio, says, “At World Travel Studio, we specialise in offering customised vacations as per the clients requirement, likings and budget.” Dedicating the success to all its stakeholders, he says, “Thanks to the support and blessings of our trade partners, clients and hardworking, dedicated team members, this award recognises our ‘customer as well as employee first’ approach, wherein the service delivery process is defined around customer delight and ease of execution for our team members.”

► The award was given to **World Travel Studio** and received by its Managing Director **Haresh Koyande**



Best Luxury Wedding and MICE Hotel | CROWNE PLAZA AHMEDABAD CITY CENTRE

Mayuresh Deodhar, Director Sales & Marketing, Crowne Plaza Ahmedabad City Centre, says, “The hotel has the largest MICE facility in Ahmedabad with choice of both outdoor and indoor banqueting venues. The hotel is strategically located on the SG Highway with easy accessibility from the international airport and is the closest hotel to major wedding lawns and exhibition and convention centres like YMCA and Gujarat University convention centre. It is only 25 minutes from Mahatma Mandir Convention Centre, the venue for Vibrant Gujarat.”

► The award was given to **Crowne Plaza Ahmedabad City Centre** and received by its Director Sales & Marketing **Mayuresh Deodhar**



Best Business Travel Agency | NEXTOURISM

Saurabh S. Sanghvi, Director, NexTourism, says that their company is only four years old and they have seen a huge growth. “We are not very old in the industry. I am very happy to receive this award. But this entirely goes to my team. With NexTourism, we are redefining the tourism. We have a DMC based in Dubai as well, and we are looking forward for more business announcements,” he adds.

► The award was given to **NexTourism** and received by its Director **Saurabh S. Sanghvi**





Best Debut

Hotel | **HYATT PLACE GOA, CANDOLIM**

Being the first Hyatt Place in a resort destination, the property had quite a challenging task at hand, says **Soumodeep Bhattacharya**, Director Sales & Marketing, Hyatt Place Goa, Candolim. However, he says, "The way we have marketed our hotel and the way we have got into the segment of 'a different place'- that's what we call ourselves, is quite innovative in the market. I think we stand out among our peers," he says.

► The award was given to **Hyatt Place Goa, Candolim** and received by its Director Sales & Marketing **Soumodeep Bhattacharya**

Best Destination Management Company – Americas | **7M TOURS**

According to Sagar Shivaji Phulpagar, Partner, 7M Tours, awards like India Travel Awards not only give recognition but also infuse passion to work harder. He claimed that their expertise in the Americas differentiates them from their peers. "We specialise in MICE, FITs, and we are soon coming up with an online engine for USA. This is going to be our USP very soon," he says.

► The award was given to **7M Tours** and received by its Partner **Sagar Shivaji Phulpagar** and Business Development Specialist **Veena Robinson**



Best Casino | **DELTIN ROYALE**

Floyd Tavares, Manager Marketing, Deltin Royale, says that they run a number of casinos and hotels across India. "We believe that more than focusing on gaming we have created an industry which focuses on the complete experience — right from entertainment, good food, high-end lounges to the best gaming experiences. People step into Goa and want to visit the property, which puts a big smile on our faces. We look forward to giving people experiences beyond what they have experienced in India," he says.

► The award was given to **Deltin Royale** and received by its Manager Marketing **Floyd Tavares**



Best Luxury

Hotel | **ITC GRAND CENTRAL, MUMBAI**

Inspired by British Colonial architecture of old Bombay, ITC Grand Central, Mumbai, is nestled amidst business and recreational centres in Parel. With 242 guest rooms including 19 suites, non-smoking floors and Eva floors for single lady travellers with sophisticated security and building management system, the property offers everything for a luxury guest. Add to this the fabled grandeur of the property, and you have an opulent stay in the middle of the buzzing city.

► The award was given to **ITC Grand Central, Mumbai** and received by its Sales Manager **Vikrant Ghatge**



Glittering stars of travel



trade light up western skies





Best Beach Destination | GOA TOURISM

Goa is the most popular beach destinations in India and is frequented by Indians and foreigners alike. **Dattaram Sawant**, General Manager-Finance, Goa Tourism Development Corporation, says, "Goa must be experienced by going there. Everybody wants to go to Goa, not only because of its beaches but also for casinos. We are also developing hinterland tourism with the support of the government. There are new backwater cruises in Goa and also new boating sites."

► The award was given to **Goa Tourism** and received by **Dattaram Sawant**, General Manager-Finance, Goa Tourism Development Corporation

Best Convention Centre | LAVASA INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION CENTRE

The Lavasa International Convention Centre (LICC) is an architectural masterpiece, which blends well with the exquisite natural surroundings while providing access to flexible facilities that are equipped with state-of-the-art communication equipment. The convention centre is an ideal venue to host meetings, conventions, congresses, launches, seminars, weddings and other events hosting from 20-1500 people. The Centre is spread over 1.5 acres of land offering 34,500 sq. ft. of flexible floor space to cater for variety of events and conventions.

► The award was given to **Lavasa International Convention Centre** and received by **Rajiv Duggal**, Chief Executive Officer, Lavasa Corporation Limited



Best Visa Facilitation Company | UDAAN INDIA

Udaan India has the biggest advantage of being present across the country. "We are present pan India and have our branches in every city with embassies. We don't have to depend on any third party," says **Niranjan Joshi**, Branch Head, Pune, Udaan India. "India Travel Awards is giving us a platform and we want to thank them for nominating us and the industry to have voted for us this year as well," he adds.

► The award was given to **Udaan India** and received by its General Manager-West **Ghanshyam Pawar**, and Branch Head **Niranjan Joshi**



Best Luxury & MICE Hotel | JW MARRIOTT MUMBAI SAHAR

JW Marriott Mumbai Sahar provides the expertise that helps corporates make the best choices across F&B, design and décor, says **Saeid Heidari**, General Manager, JW Marriot Mumbai Sahar. He adds, "The property offers a fascinating amalgam of tradition & culture, beauty & nature, style & splendour, warmth, feelings & courtesies, comfort & convenience. All these factors besides the hard work and determination put in by the team at the property has been the reason we have won this prestigious award."

► The award was given to **JW Marriott Mumbai Sahar** and received by Assistant Front Office Manager **Kumud Joshi**, and LP Manager **Mangesh Gadekar**, Courtyard by Marriott, Pune Chakan





Best Destination Management Company | NEXTOURISM

Since 2008, NexTourism has emerged as India's one of the finest emerging premium travel organisations. Innovation being the keyword, NexTourism is aiming to become a global travel player. Saurabh S. Sanghvi, Director, NexTourism, says, "Our USP is UAE and we can offer anything — right from a small car to a Ferrari or a small meal, which you want anywhere in Dubai. We can offer anything anywhere."

► The award was given to NexTourism and received by its Director, Saurabh S. Sanghavi

Best Boutique Hotel | RAMEE GRAND HOTEL & SPA, PUNE

The third time winner at India Travel Awards, Ramee Grand Hotel & Spa, Pune is making sure that the property looks and feels new for every guest. Nihit Srivastava, Director, Operations & Business Development (India), Ramee Group of Hotels, says, "The brand has its roots in Dubai and the Pune property has been running for the last 4.5 years. However, it looks as new as it was launched and we keep making efforts to keep it to that level."

► The award was given to Ramee Grand Hotel & Spa, Pune and received by its Director Operations & Business Development (India) Nihit Srivastava



Best Global Consolidation Services | MYSTIFLY

Mystifly has a base of over 2500 customers spread across 60+ countries. Joseph Riju Boswell, Sr. Vice President-Sales, Mystifly, says, "Our business rides on two strong wheels — content that is globally comprehensive and cutting-edge technology. That helps us pioneer in not just our content, but all those solutions that can help our customers amplify their business offerings, and optimise the air travel procurement process. Our strong supplier network, our core technologies and the loyalty of our customers have made this success possible for us."

► The award was given to Mystifly and received by its Founder, Managing Director & CEO Rajeev Kumar G



Best Airline-International | OMAN AIR

Bhanu Kaila, Country Manager, Oman Air, says, "I am highly grateful to DDP Group. India Travel Awards has always been a great event and we would like to thank the team for recognising us. We have been present in India for a very long time, and it's still a long way to go." He claims that the aviation industry in India is more open today and that it offers a better opportunity to make the most of this situation.

► The award was given to Oman Air and received by its Country Manager Bhanu Kaila, and District Sales Manager-Mumbai Shailesh Joshi





Best Integrated Travel Practice | MAHINDRA & MAHINDRA

Menezes Ikson, Sr Manager-Admin, Travel Related Services, Mahindra & Mahindra, says that their USP is the while integrated process which offers ease of access and booking. "We've been trying to see which are the best corporate practices available in the country, and being an organisation with various facets involving ticketing, accommodation and ground transport, we've tried to integrate the whole process together. This would make life easier for the officer who is actually going to travel," he says.

► The award was given to **Mahindra & Mahindra** and received by its Sr Manager-Admin, Travel Related Services, **Ikson Menezes**, Vice President, Employee Relations & Administration & CRS, **Vijay Nair** and Deputy General Manager, Area Offices & Travel Related Services, **John D'sa**

Best Travel Agency | SOLANKI HOLIDAYS

Solanki Holidays is the brainchild of **Rafik Solanki**, Director, Solanki Holidays, who started the company in a small town in Maharashtra. Appreciating the awards, he said, "It is a very well-organised event and a first of its kind in India. It is a great platform which brings all the travel industry stakeholders together. I started as a taxi driver and today I own a company and sharing the stage with big corporates. I am highly impressed with the event."

► The award was given to **Solanki Holidays** and received by its Directors **Rahim Rafik Solanki**, **Sanu Rafik Solanki** and **Shah Rukh Rafik Solanki**



Best Foreign Exchange Company | CENTRUM DIRECT

"**W**e are delighted to receive this award from India Travel Awards for the third year in a row. It's good to know that the fraternity and people at large acknowledge that we do service them well, despite not being so much on the front end," says **Anil Menon**, Senior Vice President & Head – Institutional Business, Centrum Direct. He claims that service is the fulcrum of their company, which gets a boost with their presence across 48 cities.

► The award was given to **Centrum Direct** and received by its Senior Vice President & Head – Institutional Business, **Anil Menon**



Fastest Growing MICE Company | TRIP NAVIGATOR

Abhishek Gupta, Director, Trip Navigator, says, "We specialise in MICE and we focus only on that. What makes us stand apart from our peers is that we constantly innovate." **Gavin Dcosta**, Director, Trip Navigator, adds, "I would like to thank DDP Publications. The credit behind the award goes to a team sitting behind that is very passionate about delivering excellent services and researching newer destinations and things to do in MICE. Also the portal we have created is quite comprehensive."

► The award was given to **Trip Navigator** and received by its Directors **Gavin Dcosta**, and **Abhishek Gupta**





Best Cruise Brand | COSTA CRUISES

All set to start a cruise from Indian shores, Costa Cruises is a game-changer in the cruise industry. **Nalini Gupta**, Head, Costa Cruises India, and MD, Lotus Destinations, says, "This is truly a special year for Costa, as we bring cruising to the doorsteps of Indian travellers via our Costa neoClassica. With a decade of experience in developing cruising products around Asia, we are very excited to share our unique 'Italy at Sea' experience to more Indian passengers."

► The award was given to **Costa Cruises** and received by its Head - India, **Nalini Gupta**

Best Travel Portal | ATLASTRAVELSONLINE.COM

Atlastravelsonline.com has won the India Travel Awards for the third time in a row. Celebrating the win, **Taher Adenwala**, Manager – Sales, says, "We are exceptionally proud of what we have done in the last two years and we are extremely delighted for it. This is the hard work of our team and our trade partners who supported us." **Ovais Sharar**, BDM- Hotel Division, adds, "Under the leadership of **Hussain Patel**, we have created a brand which works very well for our customers."

► The award was given to **atlastravelsonline.com** and received by its Sales Manager **Taher Adenwala**, and Business Development Manager **Ovais Sharar**



Best Hotel & Resort Marketing Company | CHUTNEY HOTELS

Chutney Hotels is a hotel marketing company based in Ahmedabad, which takes care of sales, reservations, and marketing of hotels across the country. **Dheeraj Saundh**, Founder, Chutney Hotels, says, "We take care of everything in terms of marketing and sales of the hotel, and that's our biggest strength. We are a new company, and despite that we have managed a huge increase in the occupancy of hotels we are taking care of."

► The award was given to **Chutney Hotels** and received by its Founder **Dheeraj Saundh**



Best Adventure Tour Operator | XTREME DESTINATIONS

Specialising in adventure sports in New Zealand, Xtreme Destinations is a one-stop shop for thrilling sports. **Chintan Kayani**, Director, Xtreme Destinations, says, "It is our first India Travel Award and we are really excited. We do adventure travel focusing only on New Zealand. We are passionate about what we do and have an equally dedicated team. We have grown a lot with the support of our suppliers in New Zealand and we'd like to grow further now."

► The award was given to **Xtreme Destinations** and received by its Directors **Hemant Shah**, **Chintan Kayani**, and Marketing & Financial Advisor **Neelanj Shah**





Best Leisure

Hotel | NOVOTEL GOA RESORT & SPA

Novotel Goa Resort & Spa is North Goa's newest (though 2 years in operation) 5-star resort with a keen focus on family and kids' experiences. **Rohan Sable**, GM, Novotel Goa Resort & Spa, says, "We also have one of the largest tranquillity pools, a stylish Balinese inspired Warren-Tricomi spa and one of the best kids activity centre. These are reasons enough to make the best leisure hotel in West India."

► The award was given to **Novotel Goa Resort & Spa** and received by its General Manager **Rohan Sable**

Best Pilgrimage Tour

Company | AK INTERNATIONAL TOURISM

Dr. Amit Kamle, Director, AK International Tourism, says, "India Travel Awards is a well organised event, and is one of the best awards in the country today." Speaking about the company, he says, "We offer the most cost-effective packages for pilgrims to Israel, Jordan and Palestine. In fact, we have also made the first DVD film called Holy Land Journey in 13 regional languages, which allows people to see these pilgrimage sites from the comfort of their home as well."

► The award was given to **AK International Tourism** and received by its Director **Dr. Amit Kamle**



Best Wedding

Destination | THE DELTIN, DAMAN

According to **Akarsh Mathur**, GM, The Deltin Daman, weddings are special occasions and they try and make this lifetime event memorable for their guests. "We help the client with everything before and after the wedding, making sure that they enjoy the occasion when they are with us. Our biggest USP is the ease of doing a wedding at our property." He adds that the wedding industry has itself undergone a tremendous change through the years, and they have adapted very well to it.

► The award was given to **The Deltin, Daman**, and received by its General Manager **Akarsh Mathur**

Best All Seasons

Destination | LAVASA TOURISM

Lavasa has received a total of 14 lakh tourists this year. **Rajiv Duggal**, CEO, Lavasa, says, "The biggest USP of Lavasa is its location, and the way it's been designed. This is the reason we have had a huge inflow of tourists. With the opening of Novotel and Holiday Inn this year at Lavasa, there would be 600 more rooms coming into the city in 2016-17. Thus we are excited because more rooms would bring in more tourists."

► The award was given to **Lavasa Tourism** and received by its Chief Executive Officer **Rajiv Duggal**





Best Accommodation Specialist | **roomsXML**

Prakash Bang, MD, roomsXML, says that they constantly innovate to suit the demands of the industry and that is why they have won the award in the accommodation category. "We are accommodation specialists and I am very happy our company has been recognised by India Travel Awards. This has really been good encouragement for us. This is the third time we have won the award, and I am sure this won't be the last," he adds.

► The award was given to **roomsXML** and received by its Executive Director **Ruchir Bang**

Best Educational Tour Operator | **ASHISH HOLIDAYS**

Ashish Holidays has carved a niche for themselves in terms of educational tours. **Alpesh Jethwa**, Director, Ashish Holidays, says, "We are educational tour operators for many institutes, MBA colleges, and schools. The award comes as a result of our hard work and with the support of all our support. Our motto is that we want to see smiling faces of our guests, students, and when that is achieved, it proves that they are happy with our services."

► The award was given to **Ashish Holidays** and received by its Directors **Alpesh Jethwa** and **Bhavish Jethwa**



Best Destination Management Company – Domestic | **MOUNTAIN TRAILS ADVENTURES & EXPEDITIONS**

Nitin Lall, MD, Mountain Trails Adventures & Expeditions, says, "We are offering tours in Ladakh for the past 15 years. We are passionate about this destination and we have now become experts in it." He adds that the west region has shown great response for the destination, but the infrastructure in Ladakh still needs to be improved to exploit its potential to the fullest. "We do not have multiple options for flights to Ladakh," he points out as a major concern.

► The award was given to **Mountain Trails Adventures & Expeditions** and received by its Managing Director **Nitin Lall**







Best Mid Market Business

Hotel | **ibis NASHIK**

With 123 modern rooms, ibis Nashik is an ideal choice for business and leisure travellers. **Pramod Dashora**, General Manager, ibis Nashik, says "Ibis Nashik boasts an efficient and friendly team, which takes care of our guests, both internal and external, at their beck and call, day and night. Our USP is tasty and varied breakfast from 4 am till 12 noon; ibis Kitchen; free Wi-Fi and web corners. When you stay with us, a smooth experience is definite with our 15-minute satisfaction guarantee."

► The award was given to **ibis Nashik** and received by its General Manager **Pramod Dashora**

Best Corporate Incentive Tour Operator | **CLUB 7 HOLIDAYS**

Dinesh Barai, Assistant Vice President – West & South India, Club 7 Holidays, says that they excel in good service within the budget of the client. "We have been putting our best efforts in all the tours we do and they are satisfied with our services, which is what the industry and clients need. **Rajesh Bisht**, Vice President – West & South India, says, "We have done remarkable MICE business in West India, right from super luxury MICE destinations in Alaska to even newer destinations we have found for clients."

► The award was given to **Club 7 Holidays** and received by its Asst. Vice President – West & South India, **Dinesh Barai**, and Vice President – West & South India, **Rajesh Bisht**



Best Mid Market

Hotel | **KEYS HOTEL PIMPRI PUNE**

According to **Saket More**, GM, Keys Hotel Pimpri, Pune, "The award is the result of the hard work and effort we have put in for the hotel. We've striven hard and now it's reward time." **Amit Patil**, Senior Sales Manager, Keys Hotel Pimpri, Pune, adds, "Keys Hotels is growing and with its well-defined branding in each segment, it is on the right growth path. I would like to thank my team, Berggruen Hotels and the corporate office team for the award."

► The award was given to **Keys Hotel Pimpri Pune** and received by its General Manager **Saket More**, and Senior Sales Manager **Amit Patil**





Best Customised Tour Operator | **KASHISH HOLIDAYS**

Growing in the customised travel industry for the last seven years, Kashish Holidays has made a name for itself in tailor-made tours. **Ravi Malpani**, MD, Kashish holidays, says, "We are one of the best agencies in Gujarat and have offices in Paris, Zurich and Singapore. We are the only company looking after customised tours in this region. Most companies do group departures or fixed series. People in Gujarat are ready to spend for tours that are made according to their tastes."

► The award was given to **Kashish Holidays** and received by its Managing Director **Ravi Malpani**

Best Economy Hotel | **ibis NAVI MUMBAI**

"I am very happy to receive this award on behalf of my hotel, and it speaks volumes about the hardwork we have put in. The way the hotel has shaped up in existence, we truly deserve the award," says **Ashutosh Ruia**, Director, Sales & Marketing, ibis Navi Mumbai. According to him the property has close to 200 rooms, which is highest in Navi Mumbai. The property is very close to the heart of Mumbai.

► The award was given to **ibis Navi Mumbai** and received by its Director-Sales & Marketing **Ashutosh Ruia**



Public Relations Partner | **INSPIRATIONS PR**

Inspirations PR supported in creating awareness for the India Tourism Awards. **Usha Karnani**, Director, Inspirations PR, says, "It was indeed an honour for Inspirations PR and the team to receive an award at India Travel Awards. It is a great platform to be recognised and only inspires us to work harder and raise the bar. Thanks DDPPL for the recognition."

► The award was given to **Inspirations PR** and received by its Director **Usha Karnani**



Partner State | GOA TOURISM DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

Goa is the land of sun, sand and surf and is one of the most frequented destinations in India both by domestic as well as foreign tourists. **Dattaram Sawant**, General Manager-Finance, Goa Tourism Development Corporation, says, "India Travel Awards is a very well organised event, which felicitates the achievers of the travel and tourism industry."

► The award was given to **Goa Tourism Development Corporation** and received by its General Manager-Finance **Dattaram Sawant**

Hospitality Partner | NOVOTEL PUNE NAGAR ROAD

Novotel Pune Nagar Road became the venue of West India Travel Awards for the second time. **Bandish Mehta**, GM, Novotel Pune Nagar Road, says, "I am thankful to India Travel Awards and DDP Publications for their support. Whatever we have done in Novotel Pune is something new and innovative. It's been a great association with the team of India Travel Awards, and we would like to continue it for years to come."

► The award was given to **Novotel Pune Nagar Road** and received by its General Manager **Bandish Mehta**



Beverage Partner | ASPRI SPIRITS

Emerging as a top player in the alcoholic beverage segment, Aspri Spirits today represents some of the finest brands in the world of wines, beer, cider and spirits. Ensuring highest quality standards, the company focuses on the sales, marketing and distribution. In fact, Aspri has developed one of the largest distribution networks in India that spreads to over 23 key cities. The company is associated with over 55 finest brands and companies from over 20 countries.

► The award was given to **Aspri Spirits** and received by its Asst. Manager - Business Development **Siraj Shaikh**



Chief Guest | DATTARAM SAWANT

Dattaram Sawant, General Manager-Finance, Goa Tourism Development Corporation (GTDC) congratulated the India Travel Awards team, saying, "I am very thankful to India Travel Awards for inviting me. I want to congratulate them for successfully putting up this show year after year. I would like to wish them all the best for the near future as well."

► Chief Guest **Dattaram Sawant**, General Manager-Finance, Goa Tourism Development Corporation, being honoured with **Pearl Trophy, 'Maya'**

Guest of Honour | PANDURANG TAWARE

Pandurang Taware, Founder & MD, Agri Tourism Development Corporation, is the man behind developing Agri Tourism in the country. "The main ethos behind India Travel Awards is to encourage regional tourism and felicitate stakeholders, which is what we also believe in. We want to promote farmers and want people to experience the life at farms. DDP is also promoting tourism for so many years in the same way."

► Guest of Honour, **Pandurang Taware**, Founder & MD, Agri Tourism Development Corporation, being honoured with **Pearl Trophy, 'Maya'**



Guest of Honour | SAUDAMINI NAIK

"Someone has very rightly said that the only thing that you spend on, which makes you richer, is travel. I would like to thank all the stakeholders in the travel industry who have made many wandering souls like me richer, wiser and wealthier. I want to congratulate India Travel Awards for this glittering ceremony to felicitate the achievers of the travel industry," says **Saudamini Naik**, Gladrags Mrs. India.

► **Saudamini Naik**, Gladrags Mrs. India being honoured with **Pearl Trophy 'Maya'** for her support to India Travel Awards





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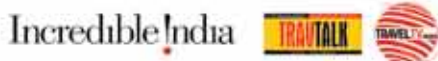
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A HEALTHY HOLIDAY

Being healthy is 'in' today and to no surprise wellness tourism has taken on a new trend with travellers believing health is wealth quite seriously!

It's not surprising if we consider the number of Apps which have surfaced to count the daily calorie intake, number of steps and/or number of hours of sound sleep in a day. Most of us want a wholesome healthy lifestyle but the mundane and stressful routine hinders our attempts at the gym or the healthy food we try to eat. However on a holiday, the ideal time for a wellness cure, travellers are now actively focusing on holistic, healthy experiences to reset and recharge for a new pace and state of mind.

Millions are travelling to destinations that serve their health interests such as detox, healthy lifestyles, exercise, eating healthy and connecting to spirituality. This segment of travel is growing exponentially, globally and no wonder the estimated value of the overall wellness market is put at \$3.4 trillion. Today, the majority of wellness tourists are mature and travellers are likely to become younger with an average age of spa-goers coming down to 35-40 today.

There is more to wellness than just Yoga retreats, spas and fitness camps. In this issue we bring to you some of the world's unique therapies to indulge in, holistic wellness centres that cater to all your health needs, alternative methods of healing and an insight into destinations that have emerged as wellness hubs for your next travel plan. Turn your regular holidays into healthy holidays and return reinvigorated.

ANKITA SAXENA

Cover Picture:
Six Senses Hotels Resorts & Spa

NEWS IN BRIEF



RADISSON BLU'S FIRST RESORT AND SPA OPENS IN KARJAT

Radisson Blu has opened doors for the first phase of its 102-room Radisson Blu Resort and Spa Karjat located in the sub-district of Raigad in Maharashtra. This is Radisson Blu brand's 29th addition within Carlson Rezidor Hotel Group's portfolio in India. To ensure guests have a relaxing and pleasurable stay, the resort offers a state-of-the-art fitness centre, an Olympic-sized swimming pool, a children's pool and an outdoor heated Jacuzzi. Wellness enthusiasts can choose from a range of indulgent spa rituals, administered by expertly trained professionals using international products at Escenza Spa.



New wellness packages on offer at Banyan Tree retreats

Banyan Tree Hotels and Resorts has introduced the 'Sense of Rejuvenation' wellness retreats — a whole new experience for guests to unwind and treat themselves to one to three nights stay at select destinations. The 'Sense of Rejuvenation' features two different itineraries, Detox and Destress, specially created for guests seeking respite from the hustle and bustle of life.



'Incredible India' logo support from MOT

Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, has announced to extend their support to the 3rd International India Medical Tourism Congress (IIMTC) to take place in Hyderabad on September 3-4, 2016. According to the partnership, the 'Incredible India' logo will be the part of the IIMTC 2016, and this is being seen as an endeavour to promote the Indian medical tourism industry.



Yoga at Vancouver Airport

In addition to the health club at Fairmont Vancouver Airport, Vancouver International Airport has launched a pilot programme this summer, trialling Yoga for travellers. The programme provides a designated space for complimentary self-guided Yoga practice. A Yoga instructor is available to suggest poses and stretches that are particularly beneficial during travel. **Kim Halowski**, Manager-Sales and Services, Vancouver Airport Authority, says, "We know that passengers are looking for a variety of wellness options when they travel, and we wanted to add a soothing and tranquil experience. So far we are seeing a positive response from passengers to the programme."

MOT proposes e-visas for medical attendants



The Ministry of Tourism is pushing for e-visa for medical attendants who accompany patients travelling to India for medical purposes, revealed **Suman Billa**, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Tourism, Government of India. "There are several aspects that are being looked into to

develop medical tourism facilities in the country. Currently, the patient has to report to the FRRO within 15 days of entering the country. However, we are trying to empower the hospital to file the FRRO clearance for the patient." Billa added that MOT is also trying to simplify the requirement of providing medical certificates from local doctors – a mandate applied for several African nationalities who travel to India for medical purposes.



RIU's first Asia hotel and spa in Sri Lanka

RIU Hotels and Resorts has launched its first property in the Asian continent with a 5-star hotel in Sri Lanka. The RIU Sri Lanka, located in Ahungalla, offers a 24 hour all inclusive service and is located overlooking the beach and set against a stunning backdrop. The hotel has three large pools and a children's pool, sunbathing terraces, Jacuzzi, gym and the Renova Spa Wellness Centre which includes a hairdresser and massage service. The chain plans to attract European guests, as well as customers from India, China and Australia to its Sri Lanka property.



Sofitel Tamuda Bay Beach and Spa opens on Moroccan Riviera

Sofitel's recently launched 5-star beachfront hotel in Morocco is offering its guests the perfect blend of leisure and well-being. It offers 82 chic light-filled and intensely colorful guestrooms. Guests can unwind at the new SoSPA, which offers authentic hammam rituals, sauna, unique hydrotherapy, beauty and detox treatment.



1st Chopra Healing Centre in India in Puducherry

Deepak Chopra, a renowned Indian American author, public speaker and alternative medicine advocate has opened his first healing centre in India called Deepak Chopra Healing Centre in collaboration with Dune Wellness Group in the Puducherry beach resort, Dune Eco Village and Spa. The centre is offering a vast range of Ayurvedic cures including the famous Perfect Health programme of seven to 14 days. The centre combines the best of western and eastern treatments along with Ayurvedic cure.

New wellness programme at Ananda in the Himalayas

Ananda in the Himalayas has introduced a new seven-night Dhyana programme – a process of self realisation aimed to allow guests to gain more control over their physical and mental faculties, balancing them emotionally as well as spiritually. With this new programme, guests are guided through daily meditation sessions including Yoga Nidra (physic sleep), AjapaJapa (spontaneous mantra chanting), AntarMouna (inner silence) and Trataka (gazing on a candle flame). Each day's guided meditation session is accompanied by a discussion and explanation of the practice and its effects.



MEA spa market to grow by 21.6% until 2019: Euromonitor



The spa market in the Middle East and Africa (MEA) is valued at AED11 billion (\$3 bn) in 2016, according to the leisure market report prepared by Euromonitor International. UAE commands more than 14 per cent of this market with a value of AED1.59 billion (\$435 mn). Euromonitor forecasts that the Middle East and Africa spa market will grow by 21.6 per cent from 2015 until 2019. Spa openings across the region in 2016 include Aurora Spa by Joelle at the Mövenpick Hotel Riyadh; Nikki Spa at the Nikki Beach Resort and Spa Dubai; R Resort and Spa Palm Jumeirah; and The Oberoi, Marrakech.



Aerial Yoga at Six Senses Yao Noi

Six Senses Yao Noi has launched its new wellness pavilion and Yoga platform. The guests can experience aerial Yoga at the brand new wellness pavilion. Aerial Yoga brings together stretching, breathing and meditation with gymnastics and aerial arts, all performed with a hammock of parachute silk. It shares the mind-body connection principles of the traditional Yoga practice, while the weightlessness helps remove compression from the spine and opens up joints, leading to stress and tension release.



Overlooking the pristine Om Beach in Gokarna, SwaSwara offers wellness retreats that rejuvenate tired bodies and minds, even over short stays. Experience the serenity of the space, its spacious Konkani villas and its therapeutic activities with our two new packages.

You can choose from the one-night **SwaSwara Holiday** at Rs 20,000 or the 3-night **SwaSwara De-stress Retreat** at Rs 68,000. Both allow you to experience the essence of SwaSwara - the 26 acres of greenery, Ayurveda, daily yoga and meditation sessions, art classes, organic food and the calming presence of nature through guided nature trails.

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Leveraging Medical Tourism in INDIA

The 3rd International India Medical Tourism Congress (IIMTC) being held in Hyderabad from September 3-4 will provide a platform for national and international players from wellness and medical tourism industry to meet and greet, discuss policies and transact business.

SPEAKERS



“I strongly feel India is the right destination for Dental Tourism considering the availability of international technology, expertise at one fraction of a cost.”

DR. V.S. VENKATESH
Chief Executive Officer
Dr Joy Dental Clinic, Dubai



“Our agenda is to promote medical tourism in India. A hundred delegates from more than 50 countries are expected at the Congress.”

DR. H.N. GARG
President
Society of Critical Care Emergency Medicine (SCCEM)



IIMTC has gradually evolved to be India’s first and only platform for delegates from the health sector from across the globe to discuss the policies and procedures, legal framework, latest trends, competitors and stakeholders and medical business acumen etc. With a vision to help India become a preferred medical tourism destination in the world, the Congress is organised by International Indian Wellness and Medical Tourism Association (IIWMTA) and Society of Critical Care Emergency Medicine (SCCEM), which aims to streamline, promote, and propagate ‘Brand India’ in the arena of medical tourism.

FOR AGENTS

The Hosted Buyer programme provides a preset number of discounts in registrations, accommodation and flights to medical travel organisations, government bodies, insurance agents and other qualified buyers. Travel agents can learn how to build business models from industry experts and partner with medical providers, hotels, spas and wellness centres. The conference also allows a

breeding ground for business and knowledge sharing between the key stakeholders of the industry.

Dr. H.N. Garg, President, SCCEM, says, “Our agenda is to promote medical tourism in India. Calling hosted buyers from different countries on a single platform to India to promote medical tourism is a unique feature of the Congress. The platform will facilitate a stage to show new technology in medical science. A hundred delegates from more than 50 countries are expected at the Congress.”

PERFORMANCE OF INDIAN MEDICAL TOURISM INDUSTRY

India is presently in an unprecedented state of boom as far as the industry is concerned in terms of growth and investor interest in the sector. According to **Dr. V.S. Venkatesh**, Chief Executive Officer, Dr Joy Dental Clinic, Dubai, “We are observing greater quantum on capital inflow in wide array of projects even in the Tier II and Tier III cities. Small nursing homes and small hospitals are raising funds to



“

Thus far, India has done exceedingly well in being a major contributor to the global medical tourism industry worth \$439 billion and it is estimated to grow by 25 per cent annually according to VISA and Oxford Economics report- Mapping the Future of Global Travel and Tourism.”

DR. PREM JAGYASI
Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer
Dr. Prem and Associates

THEME

The Congress in its third edition will focus upon various factors ranging from the impact of the National Medical and Wellness Tourism Promotion Board on Indian medical tourism; challenges and the way forward; alternative therapies in India; health insurance policies where medical tourism can be a solution to the increasing load on the organisation's profitability; medical service's outsourcing to India; dental tourism to emerging trends in this segment of tourism.

Customisation of services will increase, alternate medical systems will proliferate and the focus will shift from illness management to wellness management



India has highly qualified doctors who are reputed worldwide for their academic and clinical acumen and technology on a par with international standards



increase their bed strengths through capital infusion from venture capital funds, private equity, mergers or acquisitions.” He explains that while Apollo has been making steady progress in its national capacity build up, there are many like Birla, Fortis, Global Care, AMRI and Max etc., which are moving beyond their hitherto comfort zone of regional dominance. **Dr. Prem Jagyasi**, Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer, Dr. Prem and Associates, and a renowned author in the field of medical and wellness tourism, adds, “Thus far, India has done exceedingly well in being a major contributor to the global medical tourism industry worth \$439 billion and it is estimated to grow by 25 per cent annually according to VISA and Oxford Economics report- Mapping the Future of Global Travel and Tourism.”



TRENDS

According to Jagyasi, “In the next few years, I can see more medial tourists coming to India for bone-marrow transplants, eye surgeries, cardiac bypass surgeries, alternative medicines, heart surgeries, hip replacements, advanced medicines, hip resurfacing treatments, and dental tourism. Better

healthcare facilities, quality infrastructure, improved transportation, and ease of connectivity are some of the areas that will definitely improve with time.” Venkatesh adds that investments from other countries will increase and more international healthcare players will want a share of Indian healthcare industry. “We have already seen the VPS Healthcare, Aster Group and Thumbay Group start acquisitions in India. Healthcare needs being specialised and ever increasing, there would be more avenues of specialised and niche segment hospitals, clinics and centres. Customisation of services and delivery mechanisms will increase, alternate medical systems will proliferate and focus will shift towards wellness management from illness management.” The experts also point out that a consolidation will happen in terms of offering India as a destination of not just one branch of healthcare services but a wide array of alternate systems of medicine like AYUSH.

INDIA'S USP

“International patients have begun to seek the lowest cost and the highest quality medical treatments in India. Other factors that make India one of the most preferred medical tourism destinations include ease of travel and the fact that people here converse in English in almost all parts of the country,” says Jagyasi. Vekatesh explains that the general concept of medical tourism is widely based on accessibility of care, economics and quality. “India has highly qualified doctors

DENTAL TOURISM IN INDIA

PROCEDURE	India	US	Hungary	Poland	Thailand
Single Implant	\$525 to \$1012	\$2990 to \$5000	\$1000	\$900	\$1700
Veneers	\$220	At least \$800 to \$1200	\$360	\$450	\$240
Root Canal	\$80	\$699 to \$1300	\$60	\$150 to \$200	\$90 to \$200
Crowns	\$80	\$750 to \$1000	\$285	\$280 to \$800	\$210 to \$390
Bonding	\$25 to \$30	\$150 to \$300	\$70	\$60	\$80
Wisdom Tooth Removal	\$90	\$250 to \$500	\$180	\$190	\$144

and security and hygiene standards are high. “Infrastructure development of overall public and civic facilities, taxations of unequal nature across the country, diverse hospital sectors charging abnormal rates are all deterrents,” he says.

DENTAL TOURISM: INDIA’S NEXT CROWN JEWEL?

At present there are five Dental Spas in India and the dental services market is a huge one. According to Venkatesh, Indian entrepreneurs in healthcare sector still lack a world view of the opportunity as most of them are so busy catering to the local needs that they hardly have the vision, appetite or patience to grow the industry to international standards. “I strongly feel India is the right destination for Dental Tourism considering the availability of international technology and expertise at just one fraction of a cost, the huge possibility of experiencing different parts of the country and yet completing the treatment aptly. I find countries like Thailand, Portugal and Jordan are quite ahead in terms of technology as well as initiative to market dental tourism services. They provide facilities for tourists and patients of an uber standard, be it in dentistry, allied cosmetic or well being,” he says.

Source: Apollo White Dental

who are reputed worldwide for their academic and clinical acumen and technology on a par with international standards. People from developing and under-developed countries come for accessibility of healthcare which is unavailable in their countries while travellers from developed countries come for cost advantage.”

CHALLENGES BEING FACED

“As of now, India attracts only three per cent of medical tourism traffic, lacks effective

marketing strategies, and has considerably complicated and lengthy visa processes for medical tourists. Furthermore, the presence of unorganised and unaccredited support system needs to be worked upon at the right earnest,” says Jagyasi. Pointing out other deterrents, Venkatesh adds that apart from the challenge to provide international quality services, the bigger challenge is to draw in patients from affordable developed countries where the demand for high quality transportation, stay for accompanying family members, safety



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THE Wellness ABODE

Thailand's distinctive gentle healing art has evolved over millennia, including both practical and philosophical therapeutic elements. Indulge and pamper yourself in a refreshingly liberating humanistic approach to wellness and open up to new possibilities for a fulfilling life.



Wellness is deeply rooted in Thailand's culture, which makes it a major expectation of all the travellers visiting the country. Massage therapies have been passed down for generations and have been used through the decades for curing many ailments. With a strong connection to healing through touch, treatments have since broadened to a selection of worldwide offerings including western massages such as Swedish and Aromatherapy, and

advanced beauty facials, as well as regional offerings such as Balinese massage, Shiatsu and Ayurvedic options.

Famous for holistic wellness spas where everything from diet to mental state and exercise are taken into consideration over and above spa therapies, everything is delivered with class, and panache. Every part of Thailand offers holistic treatment or wellness resorts. Destinations like Chiang Mai have a high wellness quotient with a concentration

Every part of Thailand offers holistic treatment or wellness resorts. Destinations like Chiang Mai have a high wellness quotient ration of wellness-driven resorts



Photo credit: Anantara Bophut Koh Samui Resort

of wellness-driven resorts. Some resorts are destination spas in themselves like RarinJinda Wellness Spa Resort, Four Seasons Resort and The Dhara Dhevi in Chiang Mai, Chiva-Som, Hyatt Regency (The Barai Spa) and Evason in Hua Hin, Absolute Sanctuary and Kamalaya in Koh Samui, Anantara Mai Khao and JW Marriott, in Phuket etc.

Surrounded by indigenous forests and rugged rock formations, nestled within the inner lagoon of Phulay Bay, a Ritz-Carlton Reserve is a spectacular destination spa. This contemporary split-level masterpiece comprises three traditional Thai pavilions offering 11 luxurious treatment rooms, private spa suites and relaxation pavilion. A range of relaxing holistic treatments and natural spa products, a wellness studio for meditation and Yoga and spa cuisine using organically grown fresh fruit, herbs and vegetables can be enjoyed at this retreat. Treatment rituals inspired by traditional techniques and using indigenous ingredients and practices set this sanctuary apart. The holistic energy balancing ritual uses hot volcanic stones to concentrate on the seven chakras of the body; Thai Herbal infusion ritual uses traditional Thai poultices to warm the muscles and local Prai oil to nourish the skin.



Photo credit: Phulay Bay, A Ritz-Carlton Reserve



Photo credit: Six Senses Yao Noi

Various spa resorts offer different signature services of their own and travellers can meet health consultants to select the course of therapy

Various spa resorts offer different signature services of their own and travellers can meet health consultants to select the course of therapies that suits them which may include spa, meals, Yoga sessions, hydrotherapy, Thai or oil massage, body and facial scrub, and meditation classes.

Six Senses is a spa-focused brand that works all across Thailand. Six Senses Samui is set on a gently sloping headland at the northern tip of Samui island with 66 private villas, many with personal pools, which are landscaped within natural vegetation, and glorious, sweeping panoramas out to the Gulf of Thailand and the surrounding islands. Travellers can get treatments with a tropical sea breeze in private salas. This spa

has some of the best visiting experts in alternative medicine, offering physical and spiritual therapies to help address health concerns and achieve a better state of mind. There is also Yoga, Reiki and Pilates to add to the menu.

Six Senses Yao Noi resort sets the highest benchmark for island resort living in Asia. Located on a small island in Phang Nga Bay, this resort gives a sense of privacy and adventure. The Six Senses Spa village is nestled into the lush tropical hillside. A Long House Suite is modeled on a typical village house from northern Thailand. Using only naturally and ethically produced spa products, the treatment menu promotes traditional Thai healing practices and incorporates the four elements of earth,



The Six Senses Integrated Wellness Programme offered at Six Senses Yao Noi is an innovative approach to wellness



Photo credit: Six Senses Samui

water, fire air, to ensure the senses are balanced. The Six Senses Integrated Wellness Programme offered at Six Senses Yao Noi is an innovative approach to wellness. An in-house expert measures and analyses key physiological biomarkers and provides the guests with lifestyle and nutritional advice, along with personalised programmes of spa treatments, fitness and wellness activities based on the preventative principles of the eastern medicine approach.

Anantara Bophut Koh Samui Resort offers a flexible approach to spa and wellness in a scenic setting like Traditional Thai massage, royal Thai massage, Thai herbal compress, Thai herbal steam, Tok Sen Northern Thai massage therapy, herbal

body scrubs and wraps incorporating medicinal ingredients like the healing ginger herb plai – also known as ‘poo loey’. Muay Thai is Thailand’s traditional martial art, a unique unarmed combat style known as the ‘art of eight limbs’ since fighters use knees, shins, feet and elbows. When practicing this art one can develop coordination, flexibility and stamina. One can visit week-long Muay Thai camps, or fitness boot camps along with Yoga holidays. For aesthetic treatment, Thailand also has a lot of specialised hospitals like Yanhee Hospital, Bangkok Hospital, Bumrungrad, Samitivej, Phyathai Hospital, Central General Hospital, RSU Healthcare, etc. The cost for treatments in spa resorts start from THB 1,200, while a short-time Thai massage or foot massage outside the resorts start from THB 150.



Europe's Spa CITY

Known as 'World Spa Resort in the Black Forest', the 2,000-year-old spa city Baden-Baden in Germany is an oasis for spa, beauty and wellness.





Photo credit: Caracalla Spa

Situated at the foothills of the Black Forest, Baden-Baden is an old spa city in Germany which fascinates its visitors by its special atmosphere and elegant lifestyle. Those who cherish life's pleasures and wish to recharge their batteries have a variety to choose from in Baden-Baden.

The Caracalla Spa embodies the spirit of a thermal bath offering soothing relaxation in curative thermal water with a huge Roman sauna landscape, a rock grotto with hot and cold water pools, water current channels, marble whirlpools,

With its healing springs, qualified clinics, the Salina sea salt grotto and stylish hotels, magnificent parks and abundant leisure and recreational facilities, Baden-Baden has all the ingredients to host an individual health programme. The spring waters carry in it minerals such as lithium, cesium, silica, boric acid, manganese, magnesium, as well as traces of cobalt, zinc and copper which cannot be thanked enough for their curative and healing powers.

A host of wellness therapies are offered like Thalasso-Thermal Therapy which combines

With its healing springs, qualified clinics, the Salina sea salt grotto, hotels, parks and recreational facilities, Baden-Baden has all the ingredients to host an individual health programme

an aroma steam bath as well as the new stylish wellness-lounge. Friedrichsbad is a temple to the art of bathing. Situated at the foot of the Altstadt, Friedrichsbad embodies the combination of traditional Roman bathing with the habit of Irish hot air bathing traditions which have been enjoyed here for the past 125 years. A harmonious bathing sequence to regenerate mind, body and soul in an invigorating 17-step ritual is sheer bliss.

Brenners Park-Hotel and Spa is the town's acknowledged centre of excellence for therapy and medical care. A beautiful space to lighten, revive and cure the mind surrounded by green parkland and the soothing sounds of the flowing river Oos defines recuperation for body and soul in a haven of social splendor.

the range of thermal water remedies with the comprehensive Thalasso therapy; anti-aging therapy; anti-stress therapies; beauty treatments in the Futuressse parlor; Ayurveda facial; bio-lifting; Day Spa Salina sea salt grotto comparable to the Kneipp therapy and holistic medicine of today where salts from Dead Sea and Himalayas, supports a micro-climate to strengthen the immune system while helping treat a number of disorders and natural Fango.

A variety of massage therapies can be enjoyed at Baden-Baden like deep tissue massage; silk glove massage; Ayurvedic massage; and foot reflexology massage are amongst the few on offer. Cosmetic treatments and orthopaedics also can be found at various clinics in Baden-Baden.



Photo credit: Friedrichsbad





Spas with a difference

These international spas let you de-stress with a selection of treatments incorporating unusual ingredients that let you connect with nature, detox and rejuvenate.

HAMMAM at Six Senses Spa, Zighy Bay, Oman

Stretch of sandy beach fringed with dramatic rocky mountains on Oman's Musandam Peninsula sets the tone for Six Senses Spa at Zighy Bay. The setting of the 82 indigenous village-style pool villas is spectacular while the Spa at Zighy Bay combines innovative and ancient holistic treatments for integrated wellness experiences.

A sanctuary of ultimate well-being, the Six Senses Spa offers centuries old massage therapy of hammams in a luxurious and calming ambience. The traditional Moroccan Hammam is a must have experience where treatment is done with warm herbal steam, a coating of black soap with eucalyptus essential oil and gentle exfoliation using a Kese mitt.

Rasoul purifying clay enriched with seven fragrant herbs is then applied to the skin followed by body milk application. The guests can choose from a variety of spa menus apart from hammams like holistic massage, oriental massage, deep tissue massage and detox massage which

can be enjoyed at their personal space in the villa as well. A unique ritual at Six Senses Spas is use of singing bowl before and after a spa treatment as it is believed that the sound from Tibetan singing bowls entrain the mind which the sound frequencies induce deep meditative and peaceful states. The sound vibrations engage relaxation reflex and inhibit stress.

There are nine treatment rooms, a juice bar and two Arabian Hammams along with facilities for steam, sauna treatments, ice caves and a gym with a certified fitness instructor at the Six Senses Spa, Zighy Bay.

The wellness packages are available for three or five days and the travellers can choose from a variety of treatments like Yogic Detox, Yogic Sleep, Sense of De-Stress, Zighy Beauty Programmes with Zighy Signature Massage, Aphrodite Bath and a combination of Hot Stone, scalp massage and Aromatherapy Bath.



HAKI Therapy at Adler Thermae Spa & Relax Resort, Tuscany

Nestled in the very heart of the Val d'Orcia Natural Park, a UNESCO World Heritage Landscape, by the ancient spa village Bagno Vignoni, the Adler Thermae Spa and Relax Resort, Italy, is a five-star spa resort with unique well-being offerings for the body and mind.

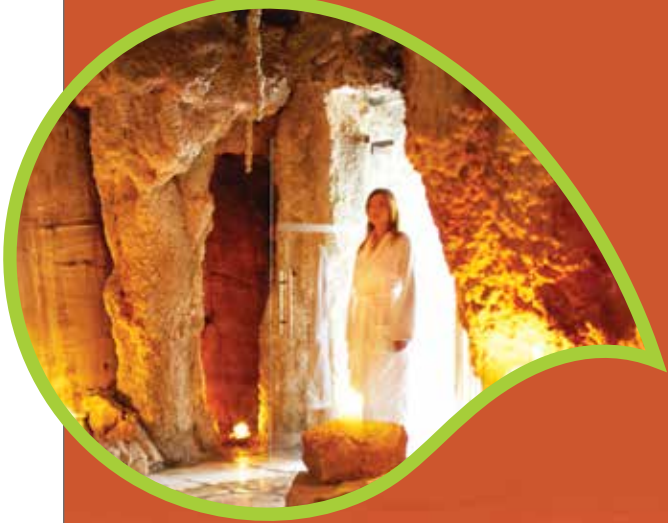
The Resort offers unique organic spa cosmetic treatments, exclusive Adler treatments with bio-cosmetics with pure ingredients from the nature of Tuscany and the Dolomites and Wine Therapy for body and face. The striking Relax Rituals are exclusive to Adler Thermae like a good Brunello bath and a regenerating grape seed oil massage to relax the body but the tasting session at the end of the massage invigorates the senses to complete this unique ritual. HAKI treatments, for people suffering from modern lifestyle, like HAKI Flow in Thermal Water, Ayurveda, Thalasso, special medical programmes for weight loss and detox and body treatments like Fango Bath with volcanic halloysite clay with pronounced draining and cleansing effects are classic examples.

In Adler Spa one can relax in a variety of ways like in an Etruscan steam room, steam sauna in the travertine cave, Finnish sauna on the lake, and the herbal steam room. It

offers a wide range of services for health and beauty like anti-stress programmes, relaxing, firming, anti-cellulite, purifying, regenerating and anti-age treatments. Diagnosis and medical check-ups, baths and packs, massages, physiotherapy, Ayurveda, oriental treatments, Watsu, and natural treatments are additions to the spa menu. An exclusive 'Vital-Aging Spa Programmes' and 'Tuscan Spa' treatments with natural ingredients from the Tuscan countryside like olive oil, red grapes and wine, milk and honey are varieties that one can indulge in.

Adler Aquae or the world of thermal baths is fed with water from the hot spring of Bagno Vignoni. Thermal pools with waterfall, whirlpools and hydro-massage beds, sport pool with wild river water stream, exotic 'Argillae' mud bath, saunas, and the mystic underground 'Saline Grotto' bath with Dead Sea salts are a treat for healing.

Culinary excursions such as truffle hunting and tasting, olive oil production, collecting and tasting wild herbs, engage travellers. In order to create an environment of complete well-being, a bio-climatisation system has been developed which avoids all unhealthy effects of air-conditioning and regulates temperature through irradiations from walls, ceiling and floor.





GEOTHERMAL Spa Therapy- Blue Lagoon, Iceland



Spread over an 800-year-old lava field in the heart of the Reykjanes Peninsula – a UNESCO Geopark in Iceland, Blue Lagoon is a geothermal seawater wonder, offering a luxurious geothermal spa experience. Just 20 minutes from Keflavík International Airport and 50 minutes from Reykjavík, Blue Lagoon is simultaneously remote and easily accessible. It holds nine million litres of geothermal seawater and was named in 2012 as one of National Geographic's '25 Wonders of the World.' The unique properties of its waters provide an enchanting lagoon experience. In addition to the sublime pleasures of geothermal seawater, the lagoon offers a sauna, a steam room, a waterfall, a luxury lounge, a cafe, an in-water silica bar, an in-water beverage bar, and a tantalising selection of in-water massage and treatments. While floating in the soothing warmth of the water, the in-water massage is deep, relaxing, and conducted with Blue Lagoon mineral massage oil. This experience is the foundation of all other Blue Lagoon massages and treatments. A typical Blue Lagoon Massage cleanses and

strengthens the skin, scrubbed and polished with an invigorating combination of the Lagoon's minerals and oils followed by an algae or silica wrap. The final stage of the treatment is a 50-minute, full body, in-water, relaxing massage.

The lagoon is enriched with unique concentrations of silica, algae, and minerals, the primary, rejuvenating components of geothermal seawater. A sanctuary of relaxation and healing, Silica Hotel is just a kilometre away from Blue Lagoon. It comprises 35 bright and spacious double rooms which offer private facilities and a veranda, with breathtaking views of the surrounding lava fields. The hotel caters to a private geothermal lagoon, complete spa facilities, and a clinic for psoriasis treatments. The treatment is focused on maximum effectiveness in the shortest time. It includes daily serum wraps, aquatic massage therapy and a home care kit to take away with you. The intensive treatment is available for a period of one to two weeks, with the possibility of adding extra days.





Photo credit: Oliur Rahman

THE UNANI WAY

Fuelled by an intense and growing affinity towards natural, herbal-based medicine, the healthcare industry in India is leveraging Unani system of medicine as an alternative path.

According to the report — India Alternative Medicine and Herbal Products Market Outlook to 2018—Surging Demand of Herbal Skincare Products to Impel Growth — the Indian alternative medicine and herbal products market will exceed ₹ 504 billion by 2018 due to the increasing demand of natural and herbal products and medicines in the country while a report by Punjab Haryana Delhi (PHD) Chamber of Commerce and Industry suggests that the Indian medical tourism industry will be worth \$ 6 billion by 2018.

FOCUS

It is a comprehensive medical system which provides promotive, preventive, curative and rehabilitative healthcare. Its fundamentals, diagnosis and treatment modalities are based on scientific principles and a holistic approach which considers individual's relation to his/her environment and emphasises on health of body, mind and soul. In Unani there are six basic factors which are considered essential for the maintenance of good health and prevention of diseases which include: air, food and drinks, bodily movements and repose, psychic movement and repose, sleep and wakefulness and evacuation and retention.



UNANI FACTS

- Over 40 undergraduate and postgraduate colleges teaching Unani medicine in India
- Over 250 Unani hospitals with total bed strength of 4,562
- 1200 Unani Dispensaries
- 52,000 practicing Unani physicians spread across 18 states in India
- More than 400 Unani pharmacies

TYPES OF THERAPIES

- Pharmacotherapy aims at rebalancing the body, creating its own defense system to equip the body to fight off diseases naturally.
- Diet-o-therapy is used as a key line of treatment. Food included as part of the diet

is critical, for both its nutritional value and its pharmacological actions.

- Regimental therapy attempts to use simple physical means to cure a disease.

People are moving away from synthetic, chemical based products. “Hamdard, with its lineage and trust factor sits naturally on this positioning. Hamdard Wellness will be the driving force to spread awareness and induct today’s discerning consumers to the healing touch of Unani,” says **Mansoor Ali**, Chief Sales and Marketing Officer, Hamdard India.

HAMDARD WELLNESS CENTRE

There are six operational Hamdard Wellness Centres in India with four in Delhi and one each in Patna and Hyderabad. New centres in Jammu and Kashmir, Kolkata and Kanpur will be opened soon. With three to four consultation rooms per centre, approximately 50 patients can be accommodated at a time. “Unani is inexpensive, therapeutically effective, largely free from adverse effects and easily available. With a wide range of over 500 natural and herbal based products, we offer innovative and natural product solutions. The approximate business volume of Unani treatment in India is ₹400 crore,” adds Ali.



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Holistic Healing

Wellness retreats are designed to address specific ailments through tailored programmes which focus on detox, weight loss, stress reduction, anti-ageing and not just a luxurious massage.



COMO Shambhala Estate, Bali

Travelling alone, as a couple or with families, COMO Shambhala Estate is a Bali health spa retreat that encourages travellers to make real and lasting improvements to their lifestyles while learning to relax completely.

Located in Ubud, a town regarded as the island's cultural hub, meaning medicine in Balinese, COMO Shambhala Estate offers a holistic purpose to help travellers find a sense of peace through the continuous process of learning and rebalancing, aided by special environments, specific knowledge and healing therapies. The Estate's specific site utilises water from The Source, a natural spring locally revered for its healing properties. Every aspect of the Estate, the design, facilities, staff, treatments, cuisine, accommodation and community encourages complete healing.

The Estate offers sophisticated spaces that are at once contemporary and thoroughly traditional. The aesthetics mix Asian and European influences, handmade furniture, Indonesian artifacts and architectural details that exude the spirit of the region. It is the attention to detail that helps make this Bali spa resort stand apart. The property offers nine treatment rooms, four treatment pavilions at Kedara, outdoor hydrotherapy area with vitality pool, Yoga studio and Yoga pavilion, Pilates studio, sauna, consultation rooms, chemical-free spring water pool, outdoor jungle gyms amongst many others. There are 30 rooms, suites and villas, including five Residences, five Retreat Pool Villas and four Private Villas.

In keeping with the holistic approach of the health spa in Bali, COMO Shambhala Estate places a core emphasis on nutrition. While the cuisine at the estate does not stipulate calorie counting, it is organic, sourced locally, and delivered from field to table with minimum delay, fostering balanced eating with delicious menus showcasing strong, deep flavours and many raw foods.

The pampering treatments of a conventional destination spa are woven into a personal Wellness Programme, providing a 360-degree experience closely tailored to the traveller's needs. Expert consultants and therapists with more than eight specialisations — Ayurveda, Acupuncture, hydrotherapy, nutrition, reflexology, Qigong, Yoga, Pilates, oriental medicines are offered. The spa treatments include multiple types of massage, facials for restorative skincare and authentic Ayurvedic programmes like COMO Shambhala Massage; Deep Tissue Massage; Indian head massage; Indonesian massage; Thai massage; Hot River Stone massage; Taksu massage; pre-natal massage; reflexology; Acupuncture; body care; Ayurvedic therapy; facial care; hydrotherapy.

The wellness programmes are available for stays from three to seven nights. Longer programmes are tailored to each individual's requirements and priced accordingly while the Discover Daily Rates allows the traveller to benefit from all the Estate has to offer without making such an involved or lengthy commitment.



Factofile

- One hour drive from Denpasar, Bali's International Airport with direct flights to Singapore, Hong Kong, London, Tokyo, Bangkok and Sidney.
- Over 20 Asian inspired and Western holistic treatments
- Individual treatment by certified in-house consultants



SHA Wellness Clinic, Spain

SHA Wellness Clinic is located at the Mediterranean Sea, surrounded by mountains and parks in Alicante, Spain. The temperature of the region is considered to be one of the most favourable places in the world for health according to the World Health Organisation. SHA Wellness Clinic is a unique concept. It is not just a hotel, spa, or clinic; it is all of these and much more. The SHA method is a perfect mix between the most effective and tested natural therapies, which include a highly therapeutic nutrition, with the latest advances in medical science, especially with regard to preventive, genetic and anti-aging medicine.

The coordinated and supervised fusion of these therapies with fitness activities, healthy eating and a re-education of habits to introduce the guests to a healthy life-style gives a 360 degree approach. The 92 suites are designed to create peaceful and relaxing atmospheres.

SHA's nutrition, based on the healing principles of microbotics but adapted to modern life, offers a simple and natural way to establish health. The SHA food pyramid upholds the recommendations from the World Health Organisation and to a great extent is in line with what the Harvard University of Medicine proposes as being the most suitable diet for humans.

Moreover, the most effective and tested type of natural therapies are administrated by prestigious international experts at SHA, which include Acupuncture, Shiatsu, deep tissue massage, reflexology, Osteopathy, Reiki or moxibustion amongst others.

Guests can also enjoy the most innovative treatments in aesthetic medicine that help them acquire a young, natural and healthy physical appearance that can also improve their self-confidence. World famous specialists can be met at the SHA aesthetic area. More than 80 health treatment cabins and consultation rooms, equipped with the very latest technology are offered. A SHA Academy has also been set up which organises a selection of conferences, classes on healthy cooking, relaxation, meditation, Yoga, breathing, full attention sessions and other group activities that provide guests with the tools and the knowledge to enjoy optimum long-term physical, mental and emotional well-being.



Holistic Wellness

- **Oriental Therapies:** Thai massage; Abhyang fusion massage; Shiatsu massage; Reiki session; Reflexology session; Hot Stones Massage
- **Fitness Activities:** Functional assessment sessions; Personal trainer sessions; electrostimulation; Pilates; Power Plate; Kinesis; Nordic walking

ARO HA Wellness Retreat, New Zealand

Set in New Zealand's Southern Alps near Queenstown, Aro Ha Wellness Retreat is a first of its kind retreat centre, which infuses advanced eco accommodation, permaculture based self-sufficiency and world class results-oriented programming. It is a purpose-built luxury wellness retreat, which aims to refresh, rejuvenate and reignite all those who walk through its doors.

A place where people could embark on a transcendental journey through nutrition, exercise, adventure, alternative health and self-development, Aro Ha offers innovative, all-inclusive Wellness Adventure Programmes based on Yoga, sub-alpine hiking, functional strength training, meditation, therapeutic massage, mindfulness and detoxifying vegetarian cuisine.

There are a total of 20 guest rooms including 12 eco-suites and monastic singles. Each room aims to reflect a Zen-like ambiance with the idea of openness ever-present. Guests at the retreat, usually around 12-15 at a time, are expected to share informal spaces, allowing them to connect with others, as well as themselves. Staff to guest ratio is high allowing guests to be challenged at their own level. The retreat can accommodate up to 80 guests for a one day event while each retreat has an eight person minimum.

A wellness retreat at the property can be done in either five or seven consecutive days. A day at Aro Ha is pre-planned to the minute. It consists of a dawn-wake up and invigorating Vinyasa Yoga session, a lengthy hike into the surrounding sub alpine landscape, mindful-meditation, functional strength training, healing body work and contrast spa therapy. There are different themed retreats to choose from with specially selected local and international guest educators making an appearance.

Aro Ha is not reliant on the grid as it uses New Zealand's largest privately owned photovoltaic array. It was built using the premise of passive haus and permaculture design, mixed with modern technology. It also boasts the first renewable distributed heating system in New Zealand.



Holistic Wellness

- **Body and Mind Exercises:** Yoga Private Lesson; Tai-Chi Private Lesson; Meditation and Pranayam Techniques



Block your DATES



SEPTEMBER 2016

Destination Health:

Medical Tourism Trade Show	Ottawa, Canada	9-11
6th Oman Health Exhibition and Conference	Oman, UAE	20-22
12th International Exposition and Conference for Medical Tourism, Spa and Health	Moscow, Russia	21-24
9th World Medical Tourism & Global Healthcare Congress	Washington D.C.	25-28
Africa Medical Tourism Expo	Agadir, Morocco	29-30
Moscow MedShow	Moscow, Russia	30- Oct 1

OCTOBER 2016

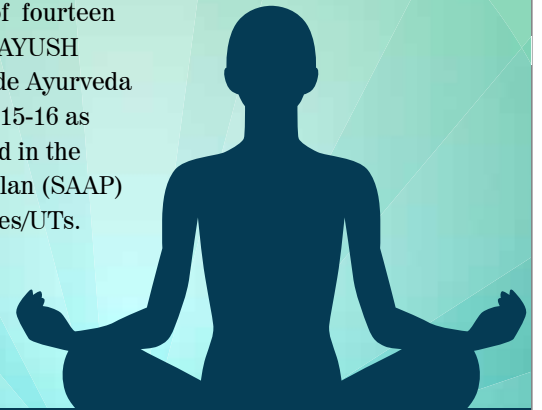
Advantage Healthcare-India	Greater Noida, Delhi	3-5
International Medical Travel Exhibition and Conference	Dubai, UAE	9-10
7th Medical Tourism Congress	Puerto Vallarta, Mexico	13-15
10th Annual Global Wellness Summit	Tyrol, Austria	17-19
Global Health Tourism Summit and Fair Health Sumex	Ankara, Turkey	18-22
7th Global Healthcare & Medical Tourism Conference	Seoul, South Korea	20-22

NOVEMBER 2016

8th SPA-CE Trade Show	Dolenjske Toplice, Slovenia	17-19
5th China International Medical Tourism Fair	Beijing, China	18-20
World Medical Tourism Summit	Abu Dhabi, UAE	22-23

Alternate health plan

Under the centrally-sponsored scheme of National AYUSH Mission (NAM), the Central Government has approved a total of fourteen 50-bedded integrated AYUSH Hospitals which include Ayurveda during 2014-15 and 2015-16 as per proposals reflected in the State Annual Action Plan (SAAP) received from the states/UTs.



State-wise approved projects

STATE/UT APPROVED	PROPOSAL APPROVED	UNITS	AMOUNT DURING 2015-16 (₹ IN LAKHS)
Andhra Pradesh	50-bedded Ayurveda, Homoeopathy, Unani and Yoga & Naturopathy Hospital at Vishakhapatnam.	1	50.00
Bihar	50-bedded Ayurveda, Homoeopathy, Unani and Yoga Hospital at Patna	1	102.695
Goa	50-bedded AYUSH Hospital at North Goa.	1	107.05
	50-bedded AYUSH Hospital at South Goa	1	107.05
Haryana	50-bedded Ayurveda, Homoeopathy, Unani and Yoga & Naturopathy Hospital at Panchakula	1	83.34
Nagaland	50-bedded Ayurveda and Homoeopathy Hospital at Noklak, Tuensang District	1	333.33
Puducherry	50-bedded Ayurveda, Homoeopathy, Unani and Siddha Hospital at Dhanwantari Nagar, Gorimedu	1	70.00
Sikkim	50-bedded Ayurveda and Yoga & Naturopathy Hospital at Kyongsa, Near BhanuShalling Area, Gyalshing, West Sikkim	1	444.44
Uttar Pradesh	50-bedded AYUSH Hospital at Kushi Nagar	1	83.332
	50-bedded AYUSH Hospital at Bilhour, Kanpur	1	83.332
	50-bedded AYUSH Hospital at West Katli, Lucknow	1	83.332
	50-bedded AYUSH Hospital at Badrasi, Varanasi	1	83.332
West Bengal	50-bedded AYUSH Hospital at NawabGanj, Barailly	1	83.332
	50-bedded Ayurveda, Homoeopathy, Unani and Yoga & Naturopathy Hospital at Topsikhata, District Alipurduar.	1	300.00
Total		14	2014.565

Source: Ministry of AYUSH



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The Surya New Delhi, capital's favorite hotel follows the cosmic Surya by creating a warm, vibrant and lively ambience for its guests located in the heart of city and close to the district centre's like Jasola, Mohan Cooperative, Apollo Hospital, Nehru Place and Ashram. The hotel's elegant spread of rooms and suites with spectacular views are bound to take your breath away. A taste of pure contentment is guaranteed with a host of dining options and custom-crafted celebrations.

The medical and wellness tourism is in the right direction and growing every year specially the middle east and African countries are really giving a great amount of business to India. We are very fortunate that we have two of two major hospitals like Apollo and Fortis Escorts right next door which give us an advantage over the other hotels.

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