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# India rides high at ITB Berlin

Having bagged the first prize for India pavilion, ITB Berlin proved to be successful for the Ministry of Tourism. **KJ Alphons**, Union Minister of State (I/C), Tourism, shares responses from the event, record-breaking arrivals and plans to develop night tourism activities around the country.



Nisha Verma

## ITB success

The India pavilion won the first prize in the region at ITB Berlin. K J Alphons, received the award and shared that the response at the exhibition was overwhelming for India. Speaking at a press conference in New Delhi, he said, "We won the first prize at ITB Berlin for the India pavilion in the Asia, Oceania, Australia region. We had fruitful interactions with the media and other ministers of participating countries."

Another highlight was the release of a new advertisement on yoga released by MOT at ITB. "Called 'Yogi on the race-track', the 60-second promotional video received 7 million views in just four days. This ad

depicts a motorcycle racer who found solace in Yoga to calm himself, and realised that this ancient practice was needed to be successful even in motorcycle racing. It's a new approach of conveying that peace of mind is required in every aspect. Six such ads will be released in a couple of months and will be played in specific countries and regions," he added.

## Record arrivals

Alphons announced that they have crossed 10 million foreign tourist arrivals last year. "We recorded 10.2 million foreign tourist arrivals in 2017, bringing in income of US\$27 billion last year, which is equivalent to about 1,80,000 crores and constitutes about 6.88 per cent of the GDP. We are providing jobs to approximately 43

million people which is about 12.3 per cent of total employment. Our international tourist arrivals, which also includes NRIs, is about 16.5 million. This

**"We recorded 10.2 million foreign tourist arrivals in 2017, bringing in income of US\$27 billion last year, which is equivalent to about 1,80,000 crores and constitutes about 6.88 per cent of the GDP"**

means our country has done extremely well," he informed.

## Domestic in focus

Talking about domestic tourism, he shared, "The number of trips booked by Indians has gone up to 1.8 million in 2017 compared to 1.6 million in 2016. We believe that it's

not just FTAs which will bring jobs in India, but Indians seeing India also generates plenty of business. We will also be putting ads for domestic tour-

ists. We have 23 million Indians going abroad. We are running a campaign in electronic media for domestic tourists and NRIs to visit India. Our dedicated campaign, 'Dekho Apna Desh' runs in countries like Canada, USA, etc. We want to double the numbers and generate huge revenues in the next three years.

## Night tourism

The Ministry is also considering to develop night tourism around various monuments in the country. "We plan to illuminate all our monuments for night visits and are in talks with ASI to make such visits possible by stretching the opening hours till 9-10pm. Spic Macay is doing cultural evenings for us at various locations including Red Fort, Humayun's Tomb, as well as on Varanasi Ghats. These are initiatives to create life around our rich cultural heritage to have tourists to indulge in activities in the evening."



# Technology to personalise travel

The third edition of Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) Digital Travel, Hospitality & Innovation Summit held recently in New Delhi saw stalwarts of the travel technology industry speak about the trends that will change the landscape of the travel industry in the future.



TT Bureau

Attended by frontrunners of the industry, the FICCI Digital Summit started with a welcome address by **Ashish Kumar**, Co Chairman, FICCI Travel Technology Committee & Partner, Agnitio Consulting. Talking about the industry's need to stay updated, he said, "Major digital platforms are now vying for a slice of the industry's pie. However, the

industry would have to reach out to the hinterland where the use of internet is pervasive. No other industry has changed the way the travel industry has due to the impact of technology."

**Dhruv Shringi**, Chairman, FICCI Travel Technology Committee and CEO and Co-Founder, Yatra Online, shared that the travel technology world will be guided by some key innova-



**Dhruv Shringi**  
Chairman, FICCI Travel Technology Committee & CEO, Yatra Online

**"Virtual Reality is going to be adopted in many realms, particularly hospitality where hotels can offer a more immersive experience of the property"**

tions. "Today the Indian government, Ministry of Civil Aviation and AAI is testing the facial recognition system at airports, where travellers are scanned at the gate itself, without having

to carry any ID through a process called DigiYatra," he said. Listing the key trends that will emerge in 2018, Shringi added, "Voice is going to be a key driver, especially in travel. Virtual

Reality is going to be adopted in many realms, particularly hospitality where hotels can offer an immersive experience of the property. Voice and personalisation will be big differentiators in the competitive market."

The event also saw the launch of FICCI & KPMG India jointly unveiling the Knowledge Paper 'Expedition 3.0 - Travel & Hospitality Gone Digital'.





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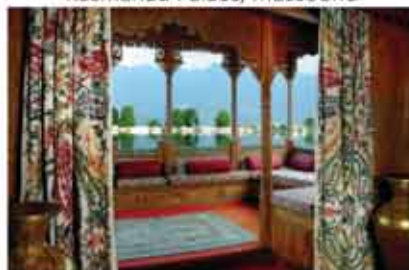
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## Officially outbound

Post a great winter season, the outbound market is all pepped up for the summer season. While bookings are underway, travel agents, along with destinations and airlines are coming up with innovative packages and discounts to lure customers to long and short-haul destinations. Travellers, on the other hand, are spoilt for choice and are not shying away from booking the best of properties at the most exotic destinations, if it comes to getting the right price and experience. While budget travellers are wanting to taste luxury by opting for one or two nights' stay in a luxury property, luxury travellers are spending on experiences, curated specific to their needs. Adventure tourism is also seeing destinations taking out special packages and listing adventure activities not just in major cities, but also in smaller towns. In fact, our country is considered such a huge outbound market that right from NTOs to international hotel chains, boutique hotels and activity providers, everyone wants a bite of the big Indian outbound pie. We wish outbound operators and agents a great season ahead with lots of selling across sectors!

## Talking tech seriously

The last few years have witnessed a great push towards travel technology, with both new and old companies working on innovations in the sector. Such new innovations are acting as enablers in taking the experience of the actual travel a notch higher. Right from OTAs and GDSes, technology today has entered the realm of virtual reality, artificial intelligence and blockchain. Companies are embracing products based on these innovations to enhance productivity and experience of the client. Smartphones have turned out to be the biggest innovation of the century wherein the future would be guided by voice commands. Companies are increasingly investing in bots, which not only could cater to specific needs of customers but can also speak to them in their native language. What is going to set one business apart from another is content and how it is presented. India is witnessing a great shift towards technology in both the bigger cities as well as in Tier-II and Tier-III cities. It's time for travel companies to take firm decisions on specialisation and then jump on to the technology bandwagon.

### ADVENTURE TOURISM PROMOTION

- Looking at the range of natural assets that India has, and recognising the potential of this diverse tourism resource, the National Action Plan made for tourism in 1993 incorporated adventure as a major product for diversification. Under the action plan, five key areas were marked that merit attention in the scenario of opportunities.
- These include quality of adventure tourism product, environmental safeguards, marketing in both domestic and foreign markets, operational norms and visitor convenience. Adventure tourists are very knowledgeable and therefore, also hard-nosed about the product or destination he wishes to consider.

### FRANKLY SAID ...



'But how can you have blisters already? We've only walked down the garden path'

## FROM THE ARCHIVES

Then (1993)



Capt Swadesh Kumar  
MD  
Shikhar Travels

Now (2018)



Capt Swadesh Kumar  
President, Adventure Tour Operators' Association of India (ATOAI)

Then (1993)



Vikram Madhok  
Director - Sales & Marketing  
Oberoi Group of Hotels, Corporate Office

Now (2018)



Vikram Madhok  
Managing Director  
Abercrombie & Kent

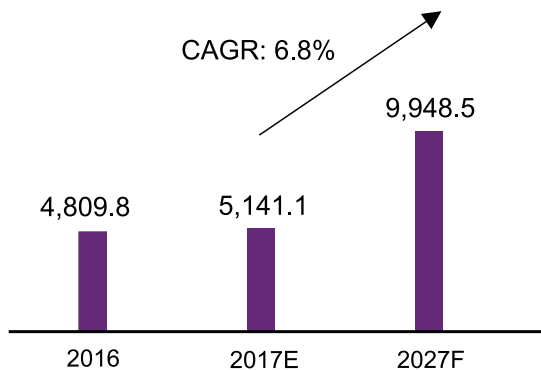
**Captain Swadesh Kumar**, MD, Shikhar Travels has come a long way in the last 25 years, by creating a niche for his company and taking adventure tourism to new heights in the country. Currently, he is President of Adventure Tour Operators Association of India (ATOAI).

**Vikram Madhok**, Managing Director, Abercrombie & Kent, used to work with the Oberoi Chain of Hotels, now known as Oberoi Hotels & Resorts. Right from working in the hospitality business to heading one of the biggest inbound companies in India, Madhok has come a long way.

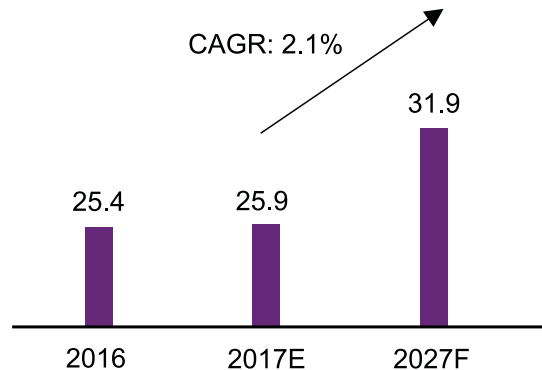
# Meet the tech-friendly traveller

Indian travellers are displaying high affinity towards technology usage in travel with the rising adoption of various tools and digital platforms.

Direct contribution of travel and tourism to GDP (INR billion)



Direct contribution of travel and tourism to employment (INR billion)



The Indian travel and tourism sector also contributes significantly to the country's GDP and employment

Source: Travel and Tourism Economic Impact 2017 India, World Travel & Tourism Council, March 2017



# India ready for Peruvian call?

The Commercial Office of Peru in India is undertaking a host of marketing and promotional activities in Indian cities to apprise the travel trade of various tourism opportunities in Peru.



Ankita Saxena

In 2017, more than 7000 Indian tourists visited Peru, registering a growth of 20 per cent over 2016, informs Luis Miguel Cabello, Economic and Commercial Counsellor, Commercial Office of Peru in India. He points out that the popular travel segment visiting the destination is usually the high-end leisure travellers who have both time and money to spend in Latin America. "Peru can cater to every traveller. As one of the world's best culinary destinations, we have abundant experiences to offer



Luis Miguel Cabello  
Economic and Commercial  
Counsellor, Commercial Office of  
Peru in India

to the Indian clientele. I feel with our aggressive efforts to engage with the trade, we can expect a growth of 25 per cent or at least 8000 Indian visitors to Peru," Cabello said.

The average length of stay at the destination is about 15 days but some travellers spend over 21 days as well. "Earlier, travellers would travel to Latin America and visit three countries but since they were mostly stuck in long flights and at airports for transit than spend time in various cities, there is a shift in interest. Peru is now seen as a stand-alone destination," explains Cabello. He further adds that some of the popular destinations visited by Indian travellers are Cusco, Lima and Machu Picchu. However, the Indian tourists also look out for unconventional places like the north of Peru.

Cabello points out that there are daily flights available from various European destinations and the US to Peru but currently no direct flights are available between the two countries. He says, "India and Peru are amidst their negotiations of trade agreement and

this means that an increased number of business travellers from India will travel to Peru and vice versa. We are hopeful that direct flights will soon be operational between the two destinations to boost traffic."

Cabello notes that the Indian travel trade has been

“As one of the world's best culinary destinations, we have abundant experiences to offer to the Indian clientele. With our efforts to engage with the trade, we can expect a growth of 25 per cent or at least 8000 Indian visitors to Peru”

doing business with South America and Peru too but the destination will do its own promotions to increase engagement with the trade. "We are visiting key Indian cities to find the desired customers and travel agents with whom we can work. We will then offer

Fam trips to help them get a first-hand experience of the destination." The turnaround time to get a Peruvian visa is about 3-4 working days, believes Cabello. He adds, "Indians who have a valid Schengen, UK, Canadian, the US or Australian Visa do not need a visa to enter Peru."

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<p>ISHLARA VALLEY IN CAPADOCIA</p>	<p>APOLLO'S TEMPLE IN SIDE</p>	<p>NIGHT OUTING IN TAKSIM</p> <p>THE MODERN DISTRICT OF ISTANBUL.</p>

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# Networking rules the roost at ITB

Team India showed up with great strength at ITB Berlin, held from March 7-11. While the India pavilion was a melting pot of cultural shows and activities, participants from India rued about dipping footfalls.

 Peden Doma Bhutia from Berlin



**Nitin Jawale**  
Director, Tourism & Managing  
Director, Odisha Tourism  
Development Corporation

“The first day was very productive as we were busy with appointments. Since we finished most of our engagements on the first day, the second day was relatively more relaxed with meetings scheduled for the day. We had pre-booked meetings on tour operators and people who could help us with driving in more tourists to the state. We have also been meeting the media and promotional agencies. ITB is one of the most important markets that we look forward to participating in every year.”



**Venkatesh B**  
Executive Director  
Jungle Lodges and Resorts  
Government of Karnataka

“We’ve been participating at ITB Berlin for the last seven to eight years and it’s a good experience to be here. We hope to get some good response from the buyers here. Karnataka has an abundance of natural resources and our heritage and wildlife tourism are great attractions for tourists, we also want to promote our beaches. Right now we want to promote Karnataka all over Europe, so we aren’t focusing on a particular region. We do not expect an immediate result from this fair, but it will gradually start percolating.”



**Ravi Gosain**  
Managing Director  
Erco Travels

“ITB was fruitful for networking with our existing clients and promoting products to European tour operators. We have been attending ITB for over a decade. However, the organisers must now rethink their approach and bring in more buyers to the fair, else it will lose its charm. The exhibitors spend time and money with the expectation that they get opportunity for new business as well as gain knowledge on global travel trends. The way we were doing business before is not the same as the business environment is now fast changing. Therefore, traditional travel fairs like ITB should work to retain its importance.”

“Trans India Holidays has been a regular exhibitor at ITB Berlin, and as in the past, this year too we had a successful ITB. With increased interest in India amongst travellers and FTOs, we were able to meet several new operators looking to include the Indian subcontinent amongst the list of destinations that they promote. Being the largest show in Europe, it serves as an important meeting ground with both old and new agents, not only from Germany and Western Europe, but also for establishing relationships with agents from Eastern, Central European and other emerging markets.”



**Kapil Goswamy**  
Managing Director  
Trans India Holidays

“ITB Berlin is one of the most important shows for us to meet our clients and various trade partners. The show provides us with a great exposure in the European market and also helps to generate substantial number of leads for us. In my opinion, India is increasingly becoming one of the top destinations for European customers and this show in turn helps the Indian travel trade to showcase our heritage and culture to the global audience. This is how we promote the destination and welcome more travellers to our country.”



**Gaurav Chiripal**  
Chief Executive Officer  
QuadLabs

“Things picked up only on the second day. Usually, most buyers come to us with pre-fixed appointments, but we expected footfalls from other visitors as well. What I’ve noticed is that this year, the footfall from around the entire Asia area has been very less. Destinations like Europe or even the Middle East are a lot more in demand. Only Sri Lanka has been doing fairly well in the entire Asian region. ITB is helpful for our business as it is a common platform to meet our partners and agents, and help us plan for the future. Beyond that we haven’t really been able to expect much.”



**Riyaaz UC**  
Managing Director  
Spiceland Holidays



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**Bharat Bhushan Atree**  
Managing Director  
Caper Travel Company

“Set up over two decades ago, Caper has evolved geographically during the last decade. We neither have any foreign shareholding or venture capitalist as is much the inclination today nor are we under the umbrella of any foreign brand or travel inheritance history. This makes marketing one of the foremost activities for us. Participating in tourism fairs around the world provides us with a platform to make our presence felt in the industry, network with stakeholders, establish new leads and, launch new products and brochures. At ITB 2018, we have had many fruitful meetings with partners and suppliers, and secured new contacts. The global mart also helps us understand the new trends, markets, forecasts of demand and new technologies in the tourism industry. We intend to put in place all that we have set in motion at ITB and thus derive value from our participation.”

“With many FTOs working with us, it always feels great to meet them to get a feel of the market, get new itineraries and understand the overall business from Europe. We also need to update them about the new products in our portfolio. India tourism should make sure that we get to meet the relevant people during such large-scale exhibitions. With the right contacts, they can ensure that at least 15-20 good buyers can come and meet us. So far, whatever leads we receive is through what we ourselves do. It is important for us to know about any new buyer or operator who have entered the field. There should be some form of appointment system where we can go and book our appointments.”



**Shubhangi N**  
General Manager—Sales & Marketing, GRT Hotels & Resorts



**Ashish Phookan**  
Managing Director  
JTI Group

“ITB helps us to meet tour operators who assess the previous year’s programmes and discuss future business. A lot of travel agents and operators are looking for new products, and we offer river cruises. Similarly, we also get introduced to new clients. Northeast is generating a good amount of interest since the last couple of years and we observe that the graph is only going up. A lot of people even today have little or no knowledge about the region, and we are trying to educate them about the same. Hopefully, we can expect to witness good results in the next few years.”





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# Travel undeterred by hindrances

For India Travel Award Winner — **EM Najeed**, MD, Air Travel Enterprises India, India inbound is on a growth path despite small setbacks, but he's optimistic that these hindrances will not remain for long.



Nisha Verma

Talking about growth in tourism in the country, EM Najeed said, "Tourism in India is on a growth path despite setbacks owing to policy changes. People will travel despite these issues. They can, at the most, postpone trips to other places, but they will not cease to travel. The major changes in the last couple of years like GST and demonetisation will not bring about long-term changes. However, we need to find out a way to tackle these issues."

Claiming that his outbound travel company, AT&E India, has recorded 10-15 per cent growth for both topline and bottomline, he said, "A similar trend is seen in our inbound travel company Great India Tour Company. We have been very active in the field of medical tourism for the last 10-15 years and have a chain of hospitals which cater

to people from different countries, including Maldives, Middle East and West Africa. In terms of hospitality, we have one hotel each in Trivandrum and Munnar in Kerala. We will soon be opening a new property in Bekal."

## Inbound concerns

According to Najeed, while GST is an old issue, it has created a negative impact for India tourism. "Owing to this, India has become an expensive destination as compared to its competitors. We have taken the issues to all higher authorities, state governments, as well as the Ministry of Tourism, but we are yet to see a positive change come about in the policy. All the associations have been pushing for a change. The solution to this problem is to move away from the GST regime and the government roll back the tax regime. I hope they do it soon, because the foreign tourist arrivals



EM Najeed  
India Travel Award Winner  
Managing Director  
Air Travel Enterprises India

would increase only if the packages to India would be made more affordable," said Najeed.

Najeed believes that the increased allocation of funds for tourism both by the state and the centre reflects the importance of tourism today. "States have not just sanctioned a huge amount of funds for promotion and development of

tourism, but have also devised tourism-friendly policies to encourage tourism infrastructure. We have a very dynamic minis-

GST what is seen is that tourist transport vehicles and commercial carriages are treated under one category, and this

strengthen their relationship with various industry leaders," said Najeed. He insisted that tourism products around the country, be it monuments, temples, mosques and tourist attractions, need to be of on a par with international standards. "The information facilities at the destinations should be of world-class level and have to be made completely hassle-free. There is a lot of improvement in this regard, but a lot of work still needs to be done to present it before international tourists," he claimed.

Najeed believes that domestic tourism has great potential for growth. "Owing to the government's recent UDAN scheme and looking at the growth in the aviation sector, there will definitely be growth in domestic tourism. The aviation infrastructure improvements have supported the increase of domestic tourism."

**“There is an urgent need for partnerships and consultation between the state governments and the central government. Even associations need to strengthen their relationship with various industry leaders”**

ter at the centre who has significant knowledge and wants to work in favour of the industry," he added.

Najeed further shares that with GST, the tourist transport business between states has also suffered a lot. "We were promised that with the implementation of GST, travelling between the states would be made easy. However, post

is increasing the cost of packages of travel agents. Agents should work with hotels and transport operators to bring down the cost of packages," he added.

## Need for partnerships

"There is an urgent need for partnerships and consultation between the state governments and central government. Even associations need to

## WTS to inspire travel

World Travel Studio is celebrating its 5<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The company is introducing its video content to bring together tourism boards and travel agents to help agents make informed choices about destinations.



TT Bureau

The company's focus lies on customised vacations due to its freshness in the designing aspect of a holiday unlike group

travellers are getting smarter, to hold your ground and grow has been a journey worth its time and effort. While successful completion of five years calls for celebration, we desist from running any offers as the market's take on schemes of any

will carry interviews with tourism board heads where they unfold knowledge and suggestions about the destination they represent. We will soon launch the first episode on Australia followed by shows on other countries of tourist interest.

**“Project V (vacation) will carry interviews with tourism board heads where they unfold knowledge and suggestions about the destination they represent”**

kind or for any reason is generally one of circumspection."

Viewers can benefit from itinerary suggestions and choices covered in the show."

Produced as a Youtube based show, Project V is the new initiative of the company. Mohan informs that the 15-30 minute video content will focus on bringing representatives of tourism boards closer to the trade fraternity to learn about their next holiday destinations. He adds, "Project V (vacation)

Mohan points out that the company's innovative product offerings, superlative marketing campaigns on social media, seamless service delivery, and excellent relations with trade associates can be counted as some of the major achievements.



S Mohan  
Director - Products & Services  
World Travel Studio

tours, explains S Mohan, Director-Products & Services, World Travel Studio. Talking about the journey so far, he says, "In a competitive market where predatory pricing is the norm and



# Sterling goes in for a makeover

Having unveiled its new brand identity, Sterling Holidays is looking at expansion through management contracts. **Ramesh Ramanathan**, MD, Sterling Holidays, reveals the plan ahead.



TT Bureau

## Q How has the holiday industry transformed over the years?

The holiday landscape has changed tremendously, especially with low cost airlines and new routes on offer. We have also changed with time. Earlier we used to look for regular holiday locations such as Ooty, Shimla or Darjeeling. We then realised that people don't mind driving for an hour and a half for a quick getaway, and thus we moved there as well. So, everything from location, nature of hotels, type of holidays as well as duration of vacations have changed.

we are selling to everybody and have people come for two-three nights because we have built inventory like that. The experience and discoveries that we have are for everybody now.

## Q What does the new branding entail?

The brand has evolved

based on what we want to do. It is very contemporary. It is for those who are young and those who are young at heart. Hence, the colours are different and have a certain element of intrigue. The idea to deliver discoveries which intrigue travellers.

## Q What are your expectations in 2018? What would be your growth strategy in this year?

This year, we will be looking at the management contract route, because with that option we can grow faster. We already own a lot of land, which we will

develop, but the idea is to do it with management contract. We will also add around 400 rooms, and the overall idea is to add around 20-25 destinations over the next four-five years, which should double the number of rooms from the current 2200.

## Q How is your partnership with MakeMyTrip?

MakeMyTrip has supported us and we continued to grow with them. Today, we are offering one of the largest leisure room nights to them. Across all the OTAs, we do 20-25 per cent of our overall business. ↴



Ramesh Ramanathan  
MD, Sterling Holidays

“The brand has evolved based on what we want to do. It is very contemporary. It is for those who are young and those who are young at heart”

## Q How has 2017 fared for you?

It has been good as it was the first full year when we finished all our refurbishments. From April-June, across our 2200 rooms, we did almost 82 per cent occupancy with almost 35 per cent increase in ARRs.

## Q You now follow an open-to-all chain form of membership model. What brought about the change?

We have always been giving our members holiday experiences, but we were only having members and were selling memberships. It was a vacation ownership model. Now

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# C&K's 'Grand Celebration Offer'

Cox & Kings has launched a series of year-long events and offers curated for clients to mark its 260<sup>th</sup> anniversary in the travel business. The company recently hosted a glitzy evening to thank partners.



TT Bureau

The event was graced by **KJ Alphons**, Minister of State (I/C) for Tourism amongst many other key stakeholders and who's who of the travel and hospitality fraternity. Alphons commented, "Cox & Kings has done

an amazing job for the country by bringing international guests into India and taking Indians to destinations across the globe."

Under the '260<sup>th</sup> Grand Celebration Offer', customers can book any *Duniya Dekho*, Gaurav Yatra, Aamhi Travelkar, Instant

Holidays tours, enter exciting contests and win 260 free holidays to Dubai, Thailand, Oman; Optional tours, 260 gift vouchers of ₹26,000 and ₹5,000 each.

**Anthony B M Good**, Global Chairman, Cox & Kings, attributes the success of the com-

pany to its foresight to changing trends. He said, "Progress only comes to those who keep their eyes and ears open and I hope we'd never be accused of not listening to the market feedback."

With a legacy dating back to 1758, when Cox & Kings was



appointed as general agents to the regiment of Foot Guard in India, **Peter Kerkar**, Group CEO, Cox & Kings believes the company has shared not only the

nation's history but also world history, making it relevant even today. "One of the significant milestones was when we went public. It was ironic that the Anglo-Indian company became an Indo-British company because we did a reverse merger, taking over our parent company. Another major milestone was when we did a 780 million buyout of a London FTSE 250 company—Holiday Break which was the market leader in education, camping and long-haul tours. It gave us a global scale in terms of operation," added Kerkar.

Commenting on future trends, **Karan Anand**, Head—Relationships, Cox & Kings, sees demonetisation and GST as major economic changes in India. "This has resulted in more compliance among businesses. In travel, the immediate impact is the shift of business from the disorganised sector to the organised sector. Small family running businesses will also do well if they concentrate on

**"Progress only comes to those who keep their eyes and ears open and I hope we would never be accused of not listening to the market feedback"**

**Anthony B M Good**

segmentation. Technology companies are going to continue to disrupt but the hybrid model of marrying the offline with online is relevant today especially for complex packages."

Kerkar opines that the travel agents need to skill themselves in terms of destination knowledge. Once they become destination experts, clients will pay for their expertise and not the commoditised products like hotels and airlines. He further adds, "Our franchise partners are critical to growth. Our future investments will be putting in lot of money in marketing and driving clients to the franchise partners."

# Wedding

# Planners







The show was instrumental in bringing us together. It is a unique event that is educative, network-oriented, and a platform to exhibit all products.

**Vinod Bhandari\***  
Wedding Xtraordinaire

This is our second time at the show and the format of the show in particular is its highlight. Well-timed meetings allow us to interact with every exhibitor without missing anyone.

**Rajeew Jain\***  
Rashi Entertainment

This show acts as a bridge between the wedding, travel, and hospitality industries. I feel this is the only show that has adopted the format of offering one-to-one interactions.

**Serrao Francis Socorro\***  
Cross Craft

It is an important platform for us to meet key players in the industry, and learn about new products, destinations, deals, and packages. Enthusiasm amongst participants is encouraging.

**Santosh Kumar Chunduru\***  
Kakatiya Events

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# Kempinski partners with Nijhawan

Kempinski Hotels recently conducted its roadshow in New Delhi, where **Theo Ocks**, Vice President—Sales, Kempinski Hotels, spoke about India as a potential market and the group's strategies towards the trade.



Anupriya Bishnoi

**Q**What was the agenda for the roadshow? How beneficial was it for the group?

This is the first time we have come to India. We have a presence of 12 hotels in the roadshow and 14 representations. The agenda is to meet with the key leadership of travel agencies and tour operators, and to talk about Kempinski and understand the needs of Indian travellers, as well as determine what exactly their expectations are from us in terms of services in our hotels, popular locations, and how we can best serve them.

**Q**When exactly will India see a Kempinski?

We would love to get a new Kempinski in India. We used to have a partnership with Leela which, unfortunately, we don't have anymore. That said,

we are fully committed to the Indian market and I feel it would be fantastic to have properties here. Our development team is pursuing leads in the Indian market, especially in Mumbai, Delhi and Bengaluru, but we would also like to look into secondary and tertiary cities.



**Q**Which are the top markets for Kempinski and how important is India as a market for you?

Globally, our top markets are the US, UK, and Germany, which is our home market. China is coming up very fast for

us. We have a large number of hotels in China, about 25 hotels, not only in primary and secondary cities but also in tertiary ones. In China, we have a good presence. India, at the moment, is still a very modest market for us. We see several hotels beginning a great success in hosting

Indian weddings, like Çırağan Palace in Istanbul and Emirates Palace in Abu Dhabi. We would like to see more of that. We have an amazing hotel in Venice, which is a great venue for weddings and where you can rent out the entire island. It



is also good for honeymooners who are looking for spending some time in Venice.

**Q**How supportive are travel agents in the Indian market and what are your strategies towards the trade?

We have good support from India, but you really have to be in the market for visibility. This is why we have partnered with the Nijhawan Group. We looked into the market for partnership and to us, Nijhawan Group came out to be one of the top repre-

sentation groups. During our roadshow in Delhi, Bengaluru and Mumbai, we will constantly be talking to agents to make sure their needs are met and that they get answers and quotations quickly to close business deals.

**Q**According to you, what makes the Indian market different?

The Indian market is unique. One of the reasons we are here is so that we can get in-depth knowledge of the market. Our general managers should observe and learn

about unique requirements of Indians- what is it that they need when they are in a hotel. For instance, we need to make sure that we have proper Indian food. In several of our hotels, we also have Indian chefs.

**Q**Globally, where would you place the Indian hospitality market?

I think India is just nudging towards our top 10 markets, but we think there is more volume to grow; there is a lot of potential for us to grow in this market. ↴

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# India puts up an Incredible show

The India pavilion put up a great show at ITB Berlin and also had more than one reason to cheer for at the event. India's big win as the 'Best Exhibitor' at ITB Berlin was strongly applauded. Another feather on the cap was that the short film - Yogi of the Racetrack - presented by the Ministry of Tourism at ITB, received 3.2 million hits in 60 hours.





# 2.6m Indians visit UAE in 2017

The United Arab Emirates recently conducted a three-city roadshow in India with a plan to surpass the three million tourist arrival mark from India.



Hazel Jain

The National Council of Tourism & Antiquities, United Arab Emirates, recently organised a three-city roadshow in India under the theme 'Visit UAE' starting in Bengaluru, moving on to Ahmedabad and concluding in Mumbai. The UAE delegation included local tourism authorities, national airlines, prominent DMCs, tourist attractions, hotels and the Dubai Police.

HE Dr Ahmed Al Banna, UAE Ambassador to India, said, "Tourism is an important sector for us. It contributes about 18 per cent to our GDP and we want to increase this percentage. More than 55 per cent of Indian travellers are travelling outside India transit through UAE, whether it is Abu Dhabi or Dubai or Sharjah. We are therefore trying to add more air capacity between India and the UAE and look forward to an Open Sky policy between the two countries."

## 'India is a big market for UAE'

Omar Bani Hamour, Marketing & Exhibitions Coordinator, Fujairah Tourism & Antiquities Authority, Government of Fujairah, United Arab Emirates, who was part of delegation said that India



is one of the biggest international markets in the world for not just the emirate but the entire UAE. "We want to increase the numbers of Indian arrivals further. We are still new to this market but the visits have showed that the numbers from India have been increasing. We will come to India every year to push our products. We also have a plan to open a representative office in India." Fujairah has 38 hotels with a total of 3,000 rooms which will go up with new projects in the pipeline.

According to UAE's tourism department, the number of visitors from India increased from 2.3 million visitors in 2016 to approximately 2.6 million in 2017, indicating a growth rate of up to 12.8 per cent. Saleh Mohamed Al Geziry, Director General, Department of Tourism Development, Government of Ajman, said, "UAE received

more than 2.6 million tourists from India in 2017, a 13 per cent growth from the previous year. We want to increase this percentage further." Tourists and visitors from India represent 10 per cent of the total number of visitors to the UAE recorded in 2016, which reached 24.9 million. Both countries are linked via 1,065 flights per week.

## 1<sup>st</sup> ever Telangana Tourism Conclave

The Federation of Telangana Andhra Pradesh Chamber of Commerce (FTAPCCI) in association with Global Panorama Showcase (GPS) is poised to host the first-ever Telangana Tourism Conclave from June 28-30 at Hotel Marriott. FTAPCCI has selected Valmiki Hari Kishan to run the show under his dynamic leadership by forming the Managing Committee for the Conclave 2018 supported by Department of Tourism, Government of Telangana. The mega tourism conclave will be a B2B set-up with an area of 6000 sq

ft, offering an opportunity to the attendees to network and transact business. Post show tours will also be conducted for the hosted buyers. Kishan says, "The local travel agents from Tier-II and Tier-III cities, which have very high tourism potential, are not much exposed to big travel trade fairs. We, therefore decided to showcase Telangana with this conclave. Harmandeep Sing Anand, MD, GPS is working hard to educate travel agents to excel in trade and is keen to promote smaller Indian cities by running GPS roadshows



Valmiki Hari Kishan  
Chairman  
Telangana Tourism Conclave

and educational seminars." Kishan further informs that Andhra Pradesh Tourism Conclave is in the pipeline in 2018 and will be hosted at Vishakapatnam.

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# ITB Berlin: Perfect for networking

► Contd. from page 14



Contd. on page 22 ►



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In India, they will be targeting for small celebrations and family group travel. "The villa works well for exclusive use, like weddings, multi-generation celebrations, which comes from UK, US and Australia. We want to start pushing that into India," Trivelli claims. 






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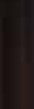
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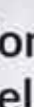
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# Team India puts up a strong show

► Contd. from page 16





# Family travel on Sharjah's radar

In 2017, Sharjah recorded nearly 138,000 Indian overnights. While family travel is one of the most important segments for this emirate, Sharjah is targeting the growing potential of Indian outbound, and seeking new segments and cities in India to market the destination.

 Ankita Saxena

According to Khalid Jasim Al Midfa, Chairman, Sharjah Commerce and Tourism Development Authority, Government of Sharjah, it is difficult to estimate the exact number of Indian tourist arrivals into Sharjah. He says, "UAE is a large country and there are no borders between the emirates. The visitors can drive from Abu Dhabi, Dubai or Ras Al Khaimah to



Khalid Jasim Al Midfa  
Chairman, Sharjah Commerce and Tourism Development Authority, Government of Sharjah

“A notable trend about family travel from India is the demand for edutainment. Indian families educate their children while on a holiday, and Sharjah is well equipped for the same”

Sharjah. However, we calculate the number of guests based on hotel reservations. In 2017, as many as 138,000 Indian guests stayed at various hotels in Sharjah and if this number is multiplied by a factor of 2.3, which is the average duration of stay of an Indian visitor in Sharjah then we can estimate that in 2017, Sharjah recorded as many as 317,400 Indian tourists.”

Midfa believes that the Indian market is huge and also very competitive. The emirate is trying to showcase the destination and its identity in the Indian market while informing customers about various activities and experiences they can enjoy at the destination. He points out that family travel is a major segment from India to Sharjah but

the destination offers a variety of products for other segments too like leisure, solo travellers, etc. He says, “A notable trend about family travel from India is the demand for edutainment. The Indian families hope to educate their children while on a holiday, and Sharjah is

well equipped for the same as all the educational facilities and museums are suited for this segment. Festivals are also an important attraction in Sharjah. Light festival is an anchor event which showcases the destination and its products along with an opportunity to

exchange knowledge and ideas across segments.”

In an effort to tap the potential of the Indian outbound market, Sharjah's local representative office, Outbound Konnections, is responsible for closely monitoring the market

in terms of new segments, well performing cities and other market trends. Midfa further adds, “The United Arab Emirates and India have shared a very close relationship for centuries now in terms of trade, commerce, culture and tourism as well and the two nationals are not strangers.

However, there is scope for further development of these relations. The UAE now offers a visa on arrival facility to Indian nationals who hold a UK, US or Schengen visa which is an important step forward in enhancing the experience of Indians visiting the country.”



## Witness the charm of Historical Landmarks

Providing a glimpse into the rich history spanning several dynasties, Henan province in China is replete with cultural relics, traditions and historic sites.



China is synonymous with the multitude of Bruce Lee and Jackie Chan movies that showcased Shaolin or Kung Fu. But ever wondered where in China did these martial arts originate? Henan province is considered as the cradle of Chinese civilisation due to its location on the Yellow River. Home to five UNESCO World Heritage Sites, China's long history and rich culture have bestowed the region with an array of world-renowned historic and cultural tourist attractions. Here are four key places to visit in Henan:

**Shaolin Temple:** Yes, the original Shaolin Temple is the pilgrimage site for martial art clubs across the globe. Located in Dengfeng, the temple is listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site as part of the Historic Monuments of Dengfeng. The Shaolin Kung Fu performance at the temple is definitely on the must-do list.



**Longmen Grottoes:** Listed as a UNESCO world heritage site, these are one of the finest examples of Chinese Buddhist art. The extraordinary stone carvings were made over a thousand years ago. Located along the Yi River, the Longmen Grottoes comprise more than 2,300 caves and niches carved into the steep limestone cliffs over a 1 km long stretch.

**Yuntaishan Geopark:** As a true-blue heaven for nature lovers and pho-

tographers, the park offers some of the most unique landscapes, ranging from cascading waterfalls, dramatic rocks and mountains, lakes and gorges. You can spend an entire day at the park exploring its wonders. One of the favourite spots is the Red Stone Valley, famous for the cascading waterfalls that freeze in winter.

**White Horse Temple:** This temple in Luoyang boasts of great antique architecture which has remained

intact for over 1,900 years. The site embodies profound influence of cultures between India and China. The Indian-style Buddhist Hall of the temple was inaugurated by former Indian President Pratibha Patil.

A key attraction located close to Henan is the world famous 'Terracotta Warriors' in the ancient city of Xi'an. Located less than two hours from Louyang by train, the Terracotta Army is surely a sight of delight!



## La Vallee Village showcases offerings to trade



La Vallee Village in association with Atout France organised a tete-a-tete with trade at Luxury Lifestyle Weekend in Mumbai recently. Some of the key attendees gracing the occasion were Emmanuel Suissa, Director of Tourism Marketing—Value Retail, La Vallee Village and Patrick Allais, Business Development Manager, La Vallée Village.



## Technology drive at Aamantran

Aamantran Travel is arming itself with technological driven operations to offer higher quality of service in real time to its partners.



TT Bureau

In 2017, Aamantran Travel recorded a fair share of growth keeping in mind that the company is relatively young in

the market, informs Deepak Bhatnagar, Managing Director, Aamantran Travel. He feels that the last season of inbound travel was challenging yet good for the company.

Bhatnagar opines, "In the recent past, we have experienced that getting new business to India has become more difficult due to various reasons. In an effort to ease out the processes, we would



Deepak Bhatnagar  
Managing Director  
Aamantran Travel

“We would like to work along with the travel trade fraternity as well as with MOT to increase the market size of inbound business to India”

like to work along with the travel trade fraternity as well as with the Ministry of Tourism to increase the market size of inbound business to India for all stakeholders.”

Outlining plans in the pipeline for the coming year, Bhatnagar informs that the company is trying to consolidate its position in markets where it already has a strong presence and at the same time is seeking out newer markets and business opportunities to fuel growth. In terms of new strategies, Bhatnagar says, “We are using technology to drive 100 per cent of our operations which ensures that our partners and clients get high quality services in real time. In today's business environment, one must continue to innovate to stay relevant.”

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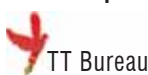
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# Training young SITE aspirants

The SITE India Young Leaders programme in India was unveiled at the Young Leader Coffee Meet Up at Ethiopian Cultural Centre, New Delhi.



Leaders from different quarters of the travel and hospitality industry were in attendance at the Young Leaders programme. Providing opportunities for prospective leaders below the age of 35, the event helps connect with 2,000 members of SITE spread across 88 countries. Speaking at the event, Nitin Sachdeva, Co-Chair for Global Young Leader programme of SITE, said, "This programme builds the next generation of incentive travel leaders by providing education and networking opportunities appealing directly to younger generations. The mission is to focus on bridging the gap between generations and creating a strong group of individuals who will become SITE leaders."

## Programme that connects

Sachdeva added, "Every chapter has a mandate to create a SITE Young Leaders

programme to get the next generation into incentive travel and carry the flag in the future. It helps you grow your connections. Anyone who enters the field needs exposure to what's



Nitin Sachdeva  
Co-Chair for Global Young Leader programme of SITE

happening around. It's the perfect platform for people who want to enter the incentives industry. There is also a separate young leaders conference which speaks of how this programme is of great importance to SITE global. The cost of the membership of regular mem-

bers of SITE above the age of 35 is \$445 and \$200 for young leaders annually. We are looking for best practices among mature chapters of young leaders like Southern California, Great Britain, Ireland, among others to grow."

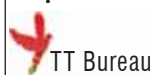
## Objectives

Talking about his objectives in the new position, Sachdeva said, "The key objective is to really have a committee constituted here, create networking and education events, and to have it become sustainable. Someone has to be developed and that's my main aim. Currently, we have three persons and I would want at least 20 people to come on board."

"We want to develop this programme for the coming generation. We plan to do three more Coffee Meet Ups - one in each quarter. We have the committee in place and we will do more in due course," he concluded.

# Spain eyes MiCE from India

Spain tourism recorded 40 per cent growth in Indian arrivals in 2017. The destination has come up with a slew of new products for Indians.



The year 2017 was an extremely successful one for Spanish tourism as the destination recorded a growth of nearly 40 percent in Indian arrivals to Spain, informs Ignacio Ducasse Gutiérrez, Director—Tourism Office of Spain, Mumbai. He says, "Though we have figures only from January to November 2017, but given the trend, the total increase would amount to the above. This is the highest growth we have recorded as compared to the last few years. As we are noticing an increasing demand for the destination in the Indian market, we hope to have a spectacular growth in 2018 as well."

According to Gutiérrez, MiCE is a very important segment for Spain tourism and the market from India is a very dynamic one. He also believes that the Indian travellers have become more sophisticated and are seeking specialised



Ignacio Ducasse Gutiérrez  
Director—Tourism Office of Spain, Mumbai

products like gastronomy, wine tours, cultural tours, active sports, all of which Spain has

in Spain and are encouraging more wedding planners to come to the destination. We also offer luxury products, cater to solo women travellers, active holidays and gastronomy as an essential part of travel to Spain," he adds.

This year's promotional plan for the destination is to visit around 10 cities in the Tier-II and Tier-III market in India like Nagpur, Jaipur, Lucknow among many others. Gutiérrez further points out, "We intend to take travel agents on a Fam trip to Spain while con-

**"We have had some Indian weddings in Spain and are encouraging more wedding planners to visit the destination"**

in plenty. "We have group travel demand almost every week. We calculate that almost 30 percent of the total visits to Spain from India are from the MiCE segment. We have also had some Indian weddings

ducting workshops in cities like Madrid, Málaga and Valencia. We are introducing newer destinations in Spain like Bilbao, Santiago de Compostela, San Sebastián, Balearic Islands, Ibiza for MiCE."

# Members' concerns at the fore

The recent luncheon meeting of Indian Association of Tour Operators (IATO) saw full attendance by members and representation from the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India. **Meenakshi Sharma**, Additional Director General, MOT and **Ashima Mehrotra**, Director, MOT, addressed the members and responded to their queries.





# Outbound shows promising growth

With newer destinations on travellers' radar and increased connectivity, the outbound season for travel shines bright. India Travel Award winners share their observations on key industry components.



TT Bureau

## ► Most Promising Airline—International – Kuwait Airways

### Growth in network with increased inventory

Having received a total of 1.3 million passengers in 2017, Kuwait Airways expects to exceed the 4.5 million mark in 2018, informs **Shorouk Al-Awadi**, Director of Strategic Network Planning, Kuwait Airways. "During 2017, the airline received 10 B777-300ER aircraft with brand new technology. We are planning to induct new Airbus - A320, A321 and A350 aircraft within the next five years to enhance the schedule with more profitable routes and destinations," says Al-Awadi. She also reveals that Kuwait Airways has an Amadeus Booking Engine System integrated with all departments and systems to facilitate its reservation mechanism with new tools and methods for the Holidays and Oasis departments.



“We are planning to induct new Airbus - A320, A321 and A350 aircraft within the next five years to enhance the schedule with more profitable routes and destinations”



“One of the focus areas is to go beyond Cape Town, Durban and Johannesburg to create awareness about new destinations”

## ► Best Adventure Destination – South African Tourism

### More destinations for travellers in 2018

South African Tourism India Office is focused on trade and consumer initiatives aligned towards driving awareness and demand for adventure and wildlife offerings in 2018, reveals **Alpa Jani**, Acting Hub Head MEISEA, South African Tourism India Office.

"One of the focus areas is to go beyond Cape Town, Durban and Johannesburg to create awareness about new destinations such as Oudtshoorn, Knysna, Plettenberg Bay, Port Elizabeth, Drakensberg region and the Panorama Route," explains Jani. She believes that today's travellers are tech-savvy and indulge in more adventurous trips. "We are one of the very few international tourism boards in India to have a stand-alone digital presence in the market," she adds.

## ► Best Foreign Exchange Company – CentrumDirect

### Travel bookings pick up pace; show signs of growth

**Shiram Rajmohan**, CEO and MD, CentrumDirect, is hopeful of the current season for travel, expecting a cent percent growth in business given the slow performance of the previous season. Rajmohan points out that though the current season for travel had started on a slower note due to external actors, the booking trend has grown steadily after January 15. Pointing out a changing trends in business operation, he adds, "Whoever is able to respond to the customer quickly and efficiently end up taking away a major pie of the business. Technology plays a vital role in the travel industry. We cannot expand our network and distribution in today's world without technology."



“Technology plays a vital role in the travel industry. We cannot expand our network and distribution in today's world without technology”

## ► Best Visa Facilitation Company – Udaan India

### VoA eases the process of last minute bookings

With more and more countries offering visa-free entry and visa-on-arrival to Indians, an increased number of last minute travellers can now choose destinations without any hassle, believes **Rajan Dua**, Managing Director and Co-founder, Udaan India. According to Dua, social media has been identified as one of the important competitive tools in terms of tourism and hospitality marketing. "Companies have begun integrating social media with other channels to deliver proactive customer service in order to be successful in this area," he says. The company has also launched its new venture, 'Study with Udaan' which is envisioned to mentor aspiring Indian students towards enriching study programmes being offered in colleges and universities across the globe.



“Companies have begun integrating social media with other channels to deliver proactive customer service in order to be successful in this area”

## ► Best National Tourism Office – Department of Tourism Philippines

### Philippines eyes Tier-II cities to fuel growth

The Department of Tourism Philippines is planning to strengthen its ties with the trade partners. Elaborating on the same, **Seema Datt**, Account Director - Philippines, Buzz Travel Marketing India says, "We are geared to leverage all our marketing and promotional efforts to strengthen our bond with key outbound partners from all over India, especially from the Tier-II cities. Our focus would be to maintain the momentum which will lead us to take Indian outbound arrivals to the Philippines to new records." She further points out that MiCE is one of the strongest travel segments from India followed by leisure and families.



“Our focus would be to maintain the momentum which will lead us to take Indian outbound arrivals to the Philippines to new records”



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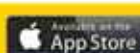
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# Palestine targets India market

An unlikely entrant into India, Palestine is keen on creating a suitable strategy for the market to promote not just the Holy Land, but also attract travellers to leisure and cultural attractions.



Hazel Jain

The presence of the State of Palestine at a travel exhibition in Mumbai recently attracted a lot of interest, and rightly so. This was the first time that Ministry of Tourism & Antiquities of the State of Palestine was making its presence in India. Majed Ishaq, Marketing Department, Ministry of Tourism & Antiquities, State of Palestine, who was leading



Majed Ishaq  
Marketing Department  
Ministry of Tourism & Antiquities

terms of tourist arrivals among the international markets and number four in terms of overnights in hotels in Palestine, Ishaq revealed. "Last year, we had more than 70,000 Indians visiting us with about 65,000 overnights. That is why we have decided to come here and tap this market. After this, we will think about our strategy for India. So next year, you will see that Palestine has a stronger presence in India with a bigger delegation," he added.



**“This is the first time we have showcased in India as a tourist destination. The numbers from India are increasing very rapidly and this has prompted us to visit India and talk to the trade here”**

the Palestinian delegation, confirmed this. "This is the first time we have showcased in India as a tourist destination. The numbers from India are increasing

very rapidly and this has prompted us to visit India and talk to the trade here," he said.

In 2017, India ranked number four for Palestine in

Palestine wants to promote both pilgrim and leisure tourism in India, among which the Holy Land tours stand out for both pilgrim and culture tourism. MiCE is also one of the products Palestine will promote. Ishaq brought to notice the Convention Palace Company in Bethlehem, one of the prime venues for MiCE in Palestine. "The main auditorium can accommodate more than 2,000 pax at one time. We also have star hotels that are ready for

MiCE. I met many travel agents and key tour operators in Mumbai who showed a lot of interest. Palestine may be one of the new destinations that Indian travellers would want to explore. Moreover, we have Indian as well as vegetarian food available at most hotels that work with Indian clients," he adds.

Ishaq and his team will return to India with a strat-

egy for the India market soon. He says, "We don't have direct air connectivity as we are still occupied by Israel. So tourists can arrive via Tel Aviv or Jordan. The best months for Indian travellers are June to July when the weather is good and the rates attractive. We want Indians to know that the Holy Land is not just Israel, but also Palestine and we

have agents who can organise the entire Holy Land tour. I hope the Indian agents will work with us and show solidarity towards us."

## MiCE Crowd

✚ The Convention Palace Company in Bethlehem is one of the prime venues for MiCE in Palestine

# Kempinski's offerings for trade

Kempinski organised a three-city roadshow in India in Delhi, Bengaluru and Mumbai. The Delhi roadshow was conducted at The Imperial recently. This is the first time that Kempinski Hotels has come to India with such a large group of hotels. The agenda was to meet the key leadership of travel agencies, wholesalers and tour operators in the market, and understand their requirements in terms of both services and locations.





# HRANI focuses on food safety

The Hotel and Restaurant Association of Northern India (HRANI) held its conclave recently at The Imperial, New Delhi.

TT Bureau

The Hotel and Restaurant Association of Northern India (HRANI) held its conclave on 'Synergising Food Safety Standards & Regulation in

As per the order dated, October 6, 2017 by FSSAI, it is now mandatory for all food businesses having Central License or State License to have at least one trained and certified Food Safety Supervi-

specially demarcating areas for street food."

Applauding Aggarwal's efforts in addressing concerns of hoteliers, Sanjay Sood, President, HRANI said,

FSSAI of our full cooperation to ensure safe and nutritious food for the nation."

Post the inauguration, plenary sessions were held on 'Simplification of Food



Hospitality Industry', recently in association with Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI). Speaking at the press conference, Pawan Aggarwal, CEO, FSSAI said, "We have moved a long way since last year in building trust with the food businesses. With our focus on trainings, 16-18000 people have been trained and about 850 training sessions have been held. Our focus remains on preventive safety."

sor for every for every 25 food handlers or part thereof on all their premises.

On the upcoming projects he said, "In a few months, we will be launching a new generation of IT platform, Food Safety Compliance System (FSCS), which will provide a history sheet of food permissions and their compliances. We are also trying to establish "clean street food hubs", by

"We are indebted to the CEO for his deep understanding of our concerns which include making license for lifetime, recommendation for penalty reduction, recognising labs as FSSAI notified, acceptance of self-audit by enforcement, and most importantly our representation in the National Advisory Committee. HRANI is privileged to serve as a vibrant interface between FSSAI and industry and We assure

Safety Regulations for ease of doing business' and 'Save Food Share Food Share Joy Initiative'. An awards ceremony was also held to felicitate HRANI member units for implementation of Food Safety Training and Certification(FoSTaC). The event was well attended, with much networking and activity during the Q&A sessions. About 150 members were present for the same.

## EVENT TALK

### APRIL 2018

HICSA	Mumbai	4-5
AITF	Baka, Azerbaijan	5-7
Travel Luxury Show	Jaipur	7-8
Kailash Shankhala Memorial Lecture	Delhi	11
SITT	Novosibirsk, Russia	12-14
COTTM	Beijing, China	16-18
ILTM Africa	Cape Town, South Africa	15-17
Australian Tourism Exchange (ATE)	Adelaide, Australia	15-19
Digital Travel Summit	Singapore	17-19
WTTC Global Summit	Buenos Aires, Argentina	18-19
KITF	Almaty, Kazakhstan	18-20
ILTM Arabia	Dubai	22-23
Great Indian Travel Bazaar (GITB)	Jaipur	22-24
Arabian Travel Mart	Dubai	22-25
Shirui Lily Festival	Ukhrul, Manipur	24-28
Amazing Thailand Wedding Roadshow	Mumbai	27

### MAY 2018

Annual Meetings & Events Industry Conference	Adelaide, Australia	6-8
Germany Travel Mart (GTM)	Dresden, Germany	6-8
TRENZ	Dunedin, NZ	7-10
INDABA	Durban South Africa	8-10
ILTM Latin America	Sao Paulo, Brazil	8-11
Indian Exhibition Industry Association (IEIA) Seminar	Hyderabad	9-11
South India Travel Awards	Bengaluru	14
IMEX	Frankfurt, Germany	15-17
ITB China	Shanghai, China	16-18
PATA Annual Summit 2018	Gangnueng, Korea	17-20
ILTM Asia Pacific	Singapore	21-24

### JUNE 2018

IATA AGM 2018	Sydney, Australia	3-5
International Travel Roadshow (ITR)	Delhi	12
International Travel Roadshow (ITR)	Kolkata	13
International Travel Roadshow (ITR)	Pune	15
BITE	Beijing, China	15-17
International Travel Roadshow (ITR)	Hyderabad	16
International Travel Roadshow (ITR)	Kochi	19
Telangana Tourism Conclave-2018	Hyderabad	28-30

### JULY 2018

Hotel Operations Summit India	Delhi	2
GPS	Ahmedabad	5-7
TTF	Kolkata	6-8
Travel Wedding Show	Jaipur	7-8
Kiwi Link India	Mumbai	9-10
Tourism New Zealand Frontline Training	Bengaluru	12
GPS	Chandigarh	12-14
Tourism New Zealand Frontline Training	Delhi	13
TTF	Hyderabad	13-15
ACTE Global Summit	Singapore	17-18
GPS	Lucknow	19-21
MICE India & Luxury Travel Congress	Mumbai	25-26

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## Vivaan hosts members of ADTOI



The management of The Vivaan Hotel & Resorts, Karnal on NH-1 recently arranged for a Fam trip for the members of Association of Domestic Tour Operators of India (ADTOI) to see the property and experience its hospitality. About 30 ADTOI members were received by Yogesh Gupta, Managing Director of the hotel, who took them on a property tour.



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Experience - 3 to 7 years

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Experience - 5 to 7 years

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## Tourism Fiji

### Mumbai

Tourism Fiji has appointed **Seema Kadam** as Country Manager for India. She will be responsible for Tourism Fiji's activities across India. Kadam brings with her an abundance of knowledge of the travel industry as well as great business development skills. Having excelled at other international tourism companies such as Switzerland Tourism, where she was Area Manager, Kadam is well qualified to lead the team in India for Tourism Fiji. Visitor arrivals from India have grown by 24 per cent over the last three years.



## Fortune Park Hotels

### Gurgaon

Fortune Park Hotels (FPHL) designated **Samir MC** as its Managing Director. With full responsibility for the development of Fortune Hotels, MC will play a key role in meeting the company's growth goals as well as building on the brand's outstanding reputation for providing efficient service to customers and promoters. He brings with him strong knowledge and experience, which will be vital as the brand continues to increase its presence in India. MC would also oversee the functioning of the WelcomHeritage brand.



## Courtyard by Marriott Chennai

### Chennai

**Stephen D'Souza** takes over as General Manager of Courtyard by Marriott, Chennai. Offering 17 years of leadership, D'Souza started his hospitality journey with The Oberoi's Towers Mumbai, held several positions at the Intercontinental hotels and Marriott Hotels, and was with Courtyard by Marriott Mumbai as Director of Operations. D'Souza possesses strong business leadership qualities, an innate understanding of luxury, business hospitality and has commendable knowledge about the F&B industry.



## Crowne Plaza Chennai Adyar Park

### Chennai

Crowne Plaza Chennai Adyar Park has designated **Nalin Mandiratta** as General Manager, Crowne Plaza Chennai Adyar Park. He will also be taking over the role of Area General Manager, South India. Mandiratta has over 25 years of experience in hospitality industry with expertise in hotel operations and marketing. He started his career with Intercontinental Hotels Group in May 2010 as General Manager of the Crowne Plaza New Delhi Rohini and later moved to the Soaltee Crowne Plaza Kathmandu, Nepal in May 2012.



## Taj Aravali Resort & Spa, Udaipur

### Udaipur

Taj Hotels Palaces Resorts Safaris announced the appointment of **Anand Nair** as General Manager of the soon-to-be-opened Taj Aravali Resort & Spa, Udaipur. With more than 16 years in the hospitality business, Nair moves to Udaipur from Gwalior, where he was the General Manager of Taj Usha Kiran Palace. He has worked with the Leela Group after a short stint at Marriott in the United States. A Bachelor of Business Management from Southern Cross University, Sydney, Nair also holds a Diploma in Hotel Management from Sophia Polytechnic, Mumbai.



## Lion Lords Inn, Rajula

### Mumbai

Lion Lords Inn, Rajula in Gujarat has appointed **Suman Kumar Sharma** as its Operations Manager. With more than 16 years of work experience in the hospitality industry, Sharma specialises in Revenue Management and Front Office management. A Diploma in Hotel Management from Pune University, he has served several reputed hotels including Howard Sarovar Portico and The Fern, among others. Sharma's experience in the MiCE and wedding events hosting will be a key asset for the hotel property.



## JW Marriott Hotel Chandigarh

### Chandigarh

With an experience of over 17 years in the hospitality sector, **Pankaj K Chaudhary** has joined JW Marriott Chandigarh as its Director of Sales and Marketing. He will be responsible for maximising hotel revenues across market segments and property offerings. He will also be in charge of overseeing the hotel's yearly business and marketing plans as well as managing the sales and marketing team. He shall play an integral role in working with the hotel personnel to develop new opportunities and attract new business.



## Hilton Jaipur

### Jaipur

Hilton Jaipur named **Namrata Chawla** as Associate Director of Sales. Apart from managing MiCE, Business Transients, Catering Sales and Event Services, Chawla will oversee the business development piece and assist the efforts of Director of Sales at the property. She brings eight years of experience to her new role at Hilton Jaipur. In her former role at JW Marriott Jaipur Resort & Spa, she was responsible for setting up and streamlining the sales processes leading to its successful launch as destination wedding hotel.



## Jaipur Marriott Hotel

### Jaipur

**Rahul Singh** joins Jaipur Marriott Hotel as Director of Human Resources. Singh has 10 years of progressive leadership, human resources, and talent development experience. He was inducted into Marriott family in June 2013 as the Human Resources Manager, JW Marriott Bengaluru. He has been a part of various hotels across India like Hyatt Regency Delhi, Taj Palace New Delhi, The Leela Goa, JW Marriott Bengaluru, Courtyard by Marriott Kochi and Agra. He graduated with honours in Hotel Management from NCHMCT Jaipur.



## TALKing People

**Neeraj Balani**, General Manager, Radisson Blu Marina Hotel Connaught Place truly believes in "A reader lives a thousand lives before he dies, The man who never reads lives only one." He says it is simplest way of gathering knowledge and ideas curated on paper for you. Gardening and spending time with family is how he destresses himself. He likes to pick up any terrain in hills, beach, spiritual or farms to set him free.



**Nasir Shaik**, General Manager, The Westin Pune Koregaon Park, uses stress as a catalyst to achieve his goals. What also helps him remain calm under all circumstances is staying connected to God through prayers and meditation. He cherishes his time with family. "If I have to highlight one such moment, it would be the holiday with my wife, my son and my brother's family last year in London. It was great fun spending time with everyone. Other than that, we do take frequent weekend breaks," Shaik adds.



**Mohamad Taib Ibrahim**, Senior Deputy Director, Malaysia Tourism Promotion Board is an avid golfer. "Golf is my passion and it allows for opportunity to network with corporate figures," says Ibrahim. A beach lover and admirer of crystal clear waters, for Ibrahim, Seychelles, Mauritius and Reunion Island top the bucket list of destinations. In terms of food, he loves all sorts of noodles. His reading list comprises subjects like history, self-help and inspirational texts.





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# Explore three new ways to fly

Virgin Atlantic is making the biggest change to its Economy cabin by introducing three new ways to fly Economy and tailoring bookings without compromising on food, drink, entertainment and service.

 Devika Jeet from London

Recognising that one size does not fit all, Virgin Atlantic unveils three new ways to fly as part of its multimillion pound investment in the Economy cabin. From spring 2018, passengers will be able to choose to fly Economy Delight, Economy Classic or Economy Light. This will allow customers to choose the product that suits their budget and travel style.

Economy delight will feature a 34-inch legroom seat, free advanced seat assignment, and priority boarding and check in. Economy Classic offers free seat assignment, providing extra reassurance for families and groups for them to sit together and Economy Light, the handbag-only fare, will offer Virgin Atlantic's lowest fare, making long haul travel affordable and accessible for millennials, and consumers jetting off on city breaks.

"When I started Virgin Atlantic, I wanted to challenge the status quo and make flying



Economy Light

amazing – regardless of which cabin you're in. We're unveiling a multimillion pound investment to make Virgin Atlantic's Economy cabin the best of



Sir Richard Branson  
Founder  
Virgin Atlantic

“We're setting the bar for others by unveiling a multimillion pound investment to make Virgin Atlantic's Economy cabin the best of any UK airline”

any UK airline and setting the bar for others to follow,” says Sir Richard Branson, Founder, Virgin Atlantic.

The three new ways to travel are part of a wider in-



Craig Kreeger  
Chief Executive  
Virgin Atlantic

“We know that one size doesn't fit all, and from spring our customers can afford to choose, and still travel in UK's leading Economy cabin”

seats onto planes, Virgin Atlantic is investing in extra leg room (for Economy Delight). The airline is retrofitting its fleet to provide up to 36 Economy Delight seats on every flight, offering an even comfortable journey with spacious 34-inch legroom.

“We're bringing about the biggest change to our Economy cabin along with a host of innovations on the ground and in the air as part of a wider £300 million investment in our customers. We know that one size doesn't fit all, and from spring our customers can afford to pick and choose, and still travel in the UK's leading Economy cabin. We always want flying with Virgin Atlantic to be more special than other airlines, and we'll



Economy Delight



Economy Classic

never compromise on excellent service, industry leading food and drink and cutting-edge inflight entertainment – regardless of which economy ticket our customers are travelling on,” says Craig Kreeger, Chief Executive, Virgin Atlantic.

Further discussing this change, Kreeger adds, “From next year, the Economy customers can pre-order their meals choosing from three entrées. The way people fly Economy is changing; customers want more value and more choices. The millennials in particular tell us that they want a cheap entry point product. In short, they want everything you expect on a great flight but at a price that

you wouldn't. We want to set a new higher standard for how customers fly Economy.”

The word Economy will be dropped from the Premium Economy cabin and is only going to be called

Premium. Virgin Atlantic will also have 12 new Airbus A350-1000 aircraft join the fleet from spring 2019. At present, Virgin Atlantic operates a fleet of 39 aircraft serving 26 destinations across four continents.

New fare offerings			
	Economy Delight	Economy Classic	Economy Light
Seat pitch	34"	31"	31"
Free seat selection at any time	✓	✓	Assigned at check in
Meals and drinks	✓	✓	✓
Inflight entertainment	✓	✓	✓
Checked luggage	1 x 23kg	1 x 23kg	X
Hand luggage	✓	✓	✓
Priority check in/ boarding	Via Premium	X	X
Blanket, pillow and headphones	✓	✓	✓
USB charger in seat	✓	✓	✓



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*Locomotive passing Llyn y Gader near  
Rhyd Ddu with Y Garn in background*

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