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India on a Spanish sojourn

Wrapping up 2017 with new announcements and initiatives including Incredible India 2.0 and Adopt a Heritage, the Ministry of Tourism is all set to participate in international tourism shows including FITUR and BIT Milan. **Rashmi Verma**, Secretary, Ministry of Tourism, tells **TAVALK** more about these initiatives.

VISHA **V**ERMA

FITUR participation

India is the Partner State at FITUR and MOT is all prepped up. "This time we are participating at FITUR in a big way. Being the partner country, we will be building up to the mart. In fact, a lot of publicity campaigns will be run in and around Madrid during that time. We will also be interacting with tour operators and invite the top ones to participate in FITUR as well as the media from these countries. We are giving a lot of importance to FITUR this



Rashmi Verma Secretary, Ministry of Tourism Government of India

time, because we see these countries as big emerging markets for India. Thus, we will be sending a very highlevel delegation comprising three to four delegates from the Ministry as well to participate in FITUR," she informed.

Clearing the air over BIT Milan

Inbound tour operators were in disagreement with MOT's previous decision to not participate in BIT Milan this year. However, Verma informed that they will now be going to Milan with their delegation and thoroughly promote India Tourism. "Initially BIT Milan was not part of our marketing plan, but now since many tour opera-

tors feel that it is an important event, we have revised our marketing plan," she clarified.

New marketing plan for overseas offices

Verma clarifies, "We are not closing down our foreign offices; we are just restructuring our overseas presence in terms of creating some major hubs. The manpower of the existing offices will be transferred to these seven-eight hubs. In fact, we have completely changed our marketing strategy as we are now focusing more on digital and centralised global marketing."

Incredible India website

Speaking about the delay in launch of the new website, which was scheduled for December 25, 2017, Verma said that they have already completed work on the website, but wanted to add more content to the same. "We should be launching the new website by the third week of January. We are thinking of sourcing more material and images, which could take some more time. Otherwise, technologically it is ready," she claimed.

Looking back at 2017

Referring to 2017 as a

great year for India Tourism, Verma said. "We have recorded a 16 per cent growth in terms of Foreign Tourist Arrivals (FTAs) and a growth of about 17 per cent in terms of Foreign Exchange Eearnings (FEEs), which is much higher than the rate in which world tourism is growing. This means that India as a destination is now considered very seriously by foreign travellers. We hope to continue with this rate of growth. If we are able to work on some existing challenges faced by the sector, I believe we will have an even better year in 2018."

Incredible India showcase at FITUR

Ana Larrañaga, Director, FITUR, speaks to TRAVTALK about the highlights of the trade show, scheduled to be held from January 17-21, 2018, and the tourism potential India brings to the platform as Partner State.

Kanchan Nath

What are your expectations from India as Partner State this year at FITUR?

The union of brand India and FITUR strengthens the bilateral relations established between the Governments of India and Spain, which identified common cooperation objectives including tourism. Above all, it represents the reinforcement of both the brands by unifying their synergies globally and in Europe, Asia and the Latin American market in particular.

This association between India and FITUR will translate into multiple promotion and branding initiatives. In fact, this is the third year we've put this initiative into effect, and the experience has been hugely satisfactory. In economic terms, for example, the media

resonance of a FITUR Partner Country is 15 times any investment made in this action.

How important is the India market for FITUR?

Among the Asian countries present at FITUR, India has the greatest presence. The India Hall is in fact registering an overall increase of 35 per cent in participation this year compared to the previous year. The India Hall will also feature greater participation of companies and states, thereby enhancing business possibilities.

What kind of participation is expected at FITUR this year?

Like every year, FITUR will open the international tourism trade fair calendar and will allow professionals to establish the working lines that will set the pattern for the entire year. We closed

the participation figures at the end of December, but everything indicates that we will grow in both destinations and in companies, and exceed last year's number of 9,893 exhibitors. In line with the industry's robust health,



as reflected by the UNWTO's figures of 4-5 per cent growth, we are confident of having a highly dynamic edition and of exceeding the 244,972 trade visitors of the last staging.

More than 200 international hosted buyers, tour operators and travel agencies, will indulge in B2B and B2C pre-scheduled meetings with FITUR exhibitors. These working meetings will be held on January 18 and 19 at Hall 9. Last year, as many as 6,800



Ana Larrañaga Director FITUR

meetings were conducted. We have also developed the PEP (Professional Encounter Point) application through which exhibitors and visitors can freely schedule meetings.

Are there any seminars planned during the conference? If yes, kindly tell us a bit about them?

We will be organising various activities starting January 16, a day before the official

opening of FITUR, such as the Exceltur Forum and the Latin American Conference for Tourism Ministers and Businessmen, CIMET. In addition, during the first three days of the trade fair, which are exclusively devoted to trade visitors, we will have conferences, presentations, knowledge and innovation forums in each of the specialised sections: FITURTechY, FITUR Health; FITUR Know-How & Export, FITUR LGBT, FITUR Shopping and, as a novelty this year, FITUR Festivals.

Moreover, with a focus on trade, FITUR will host different activities organised by UNWTO, Investur Africa, Casa Asia as well as sessions and presentations by various business associations, tour operators, carriers and technology companies.

Over the weekend, when the trade fair opens its doors to

the public, hundreds of entertaining and interactive activities have been scheduled and are being prepared by the exhibitor companies in their stands as well as by FITUR.

How has India contributed to Spain's inbound tourism?

Spain welcomed 75.3 million travellers in 2016, making it one of the three most-visited countries in the world, according to UNWTO. The largest number of tourists received in 2017 came from the European Union, mainly United Kingdom, France and Germany, and this year it expects to break a new visitor record as per forecast by our Ministry of Energy, Tourism and Digital Agenda. According to UN-WTO, Spain registered an increase of 18.42 per cent in tourists from East Asia, and India in particular, in 2016.



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No biometric for e-visa cruisers

Cruise tourists arriving in India with a valid e-visa are exempted from biometric enrolment for a period of three years, that is, till December 31, 2020, according to an official notice.



n order to promote cruise tourism in the country, and make India an attractive cruise tourist destination, the Ministry of Home Affairs has, on request of the Ministry of Shipping, exempted cruise tourists arriving with e-visa from the requirement of biometric enrolment for a period of three years, that is, till December 31, 2020. This will make immigration clearance of such passengers faster, leaving them with more time to spend on shore. This is also an important factor that helps cruise lines decide whether to include a destination in their itinerary.

Satyajeet Rajan, Director General, Ministry of Tourism, said, "The decision to do away with the biometric system for international cruise visitors



Satyajeet Rajan Ministry of Tourism

travelling to India on e-Visa is a very good one. According to international standards, cruise passengers should be able to disembark within half an hour but in India, this process was taking much longer as there are not enough counters to facilitate this service. This issue was taken up by the Ministry of Home in collaboration with MOT and Ministry of Shipping



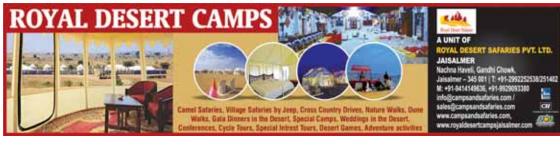
Sanjay Bhatia Chairman Mumbai Port Trust

and it was thus mutually decided to do away with the biometric system entirely until 2021."

Commenting on this development, Sanjay Bhatia, Chairman, Mumbai Port Trust, says, "This will hugely benefit cruise passengers with their quick processing and allow them more time to experience this fabulous

city. The order is effective December 20, 2017."

E-Visa has been in place in the five major ports of Mumbai, Mormugao, New Mangalore, Cochin and Chennai. Till now, biometrics of passengers were required at port of first arrival for immigration clearance. As per the schedule of arrivals of cruise ships for the current cruise season 2017-18 and 2019-20, many of the cruise ships coming to India are mega ships with 2000-4000 passengers on board. Most of these cruise passengers are expected to arrive on e-Visa, and biometric enrolment of all these passengers would slow down immigration clearance; hence the need for the exemption. In November 2017, major ports reduced their tariffs for three years by 42-67 per cent to make it attractive for cruise lines to visit India.





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VIEWPOINT

Tis a year of exhibitions

he New Year has heralded a fresh season of exhibitions and the travel industry is all set for business and networking. FITUR 2018 in Madrid will witness India as a Partner State with many other dedicated events being hosted in the city. Besides, India will also be seen at BIT Milan, even though reports of the Ministry of Tourism cancelling their participation at the Italian trade show had been doing the rounds.

While ITB Berlin and MITT are still a few months away, there are many Indian trade shows on the horizon, which would see travel companies, international destinations, states and hotels promoting their products not only at the exhibitions, but also on the sidelines of their individual events. With so much happening in India and outside, a lot of networking is expected to happen in the coming months. But how much of it gets converted into business is yet to be seen. We hope that most talks turn into leads and the travel business in India flourishes further.

Chartering new routes

mongst many events expected this year Ais the privatisation of Air India. While many big names have shown interest in the national carrier, they all have been mere talks. The decision of divestment by NITI Aayog and Finance Ministry did not really garner much interest despite the initial buzz. There was also a group within the government as well as the industry, which has been against the move and believes that selling of a national carrier would mean the loss of national pride. However, the debt on the airline makes the decision-makers think otherwise. This debt, in fact, is the elephant in the room which has prevented many from coming forward with their interest. Now, the approval of 49 per cent FDI in the national carrier has opened a plethora of opportunities. With India being one of the most flourishing aviation markets in the world, no international airline would let go of this opportunity. But, would a foreign airline at the helm of Air India change the ball game for other airlines? We can only wait

years Trav Ta

TRAVTALK brings to you the news and events that made headlines 25 years ago and are relevant even today. From the archives we bring the 1993 January issue:

Differential

- Jose Dominic of CGH Earth (earlier Casino Hotels) in his special column for the January 1993 issue of TRAVTALK wrote about why it is necessary for hoteliers to quote prices in foreign currency for international guests.
- He claimed that just as exporters quote in the currency of the importer, so hotels and tour operators must quote to foreign tourists in dollars.
- Justifying this practice, he said that the price of a product is largely determined by the ability of the market to bear the price.
- Saying that a hotel room is a product which is sold to different markets both outside the country and within the country, hence they need to price it according to the dictates of the market.



Then (1993)

Domestic tourism forerunner to better

- Chandrashekher, GM, Hotel Vasant Continental, New Delhi in 1993 said that the domestic traveller in any country, particularly in India is going to play a major role towards developing tourism momentum within the country.
- He insisted that the tourism infrastructure should be built around the demands placed on various agencies by domestic tourists.
- Claiming that the destinations, locations, etc. are first identified by domestic market and then only used for international itineraries.

Now (2017)

In a recent interview with TRAVTALK (Nov II issue- 2017), Rashmi Verma, Secretary Tourism, said that they organised Paryatan Parv to put focus on domestic tourism. "We wanted to nudge people to visit India first and visit the tourist sites through Dekho Rashmi Verma Apna Desh campaign, which we launched through this Paryatan Pary," she shared.

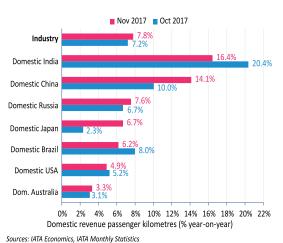


She added, "We are now going to organise some roadshows also within the country where we will be telling different states about tourism sites in other states. There is also a domestic campaign, which we are launching through social media.

India, China top domestic RPKs

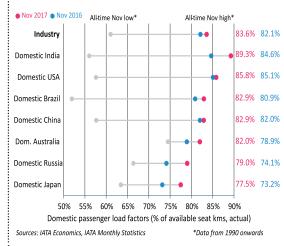
Domestic India RPKs posted their 39th consecutive month of double-digit annual growth in November (16.4%). The upward SA traffic trend remains very strong, supported by sustained increases in living standards and increased options for passengers.

Domestic RPK growth by market



RPK: Revenue Passenger Kilometres

Domestic load factors



Source: IATA's Air Passenger Market Analysis - November 2017

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Tourism for economic growth

The 53rd FHRAI Convention is slated to take place in Lucknow. Rita Bahuguna Joshi, Minister of Tourism, Government of Uttar Pradesh, shares with MAK initiatives and plans to grow tourism in the state.

Kanchan Nath

Stating plans to augment tourism in the state, Rita Bahuguna Joshi, Minister of Tourism, Government of Uttar Pradesh, said, "My government and my chief minister wants heavy investment in UP's tourism sector as it is one big spinner for economic development and employment generation. Spiritual

A first-of-its-kind International Conclave is going to be held in Lucknow from February 20-22, 2018. Joshi added, "The investment meet is an ambitious plan of our Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath. Top industrialists as well as the youth are keen to come and invest in the state. As per the new industrial policy, we will create landbanks. single window clearance and

provide relief in taxes, electricity, etc. To provide protection, the Uttar Pradesh Control of Organised Crime Bill (UPCOCA), 2017 is being set into motion."

Kumbh Mela has been made a part of UNESCO's intangible heritage. Adding on, she says, "The government of UP has launched a logo for Kumbh Mela 2019 and our

Chief Minister is monitoring every activity closely. He has already held several meetings regarding the same."

Heritage keepers

The famous Kumbh Mela has been made a part of UNESCO's intangible heritage and now also has a logo of its own

Stay up to date with MOT's digital calendar

KJ Alphons, Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Tourism, launched the Incredible India digital calendar in Delhi and also released the Incredible India wall and desk calendars for the year. Alphons said, "We want to keep up with technology and thought to do something very innovative. The digital calendar will be a very dynamic one where you will get updated pictures everyday. Therefore, for the first time in the wall calendar, we are showing India at night. Each picture of the key tourist site, displayed in the calendar has been taken at night.

Unique feature of the calendar is that when you hang it in your room, then the monument or the site glows. You get to get a feel of the monument under moonlight. The timing of the picture has also been given in the calendar. Photographs have been enhanced using radium ink."

Elaborating on key features of the digital calendar, Rashmi Verma, Secretary, Ministry of Tourism, said, "It is for the first time we have a digital calendar, and it can be downloaded on your Android and Apple mobile phones."



Rita Bahuguna Joshi Minister of Tourism Government of Uttar Pradesh

We are revising our tourism policy in consonance with the industrial policy and very soon, it will be released after the Cabinet's approval

tourism is our forte because Uttar Pradesh is the land of Krishna, Ram, Buddha and the Jains too, as most of the Tirthankaras were born here. So, we would develop on these lines in a big way. Besides, we will be concentrating on ecotourism as we have rich flora and fauna. While Agra has a lot of heritage, Bundelkhand is neglected and we want to develop it as a heritage and historical tourist spot."

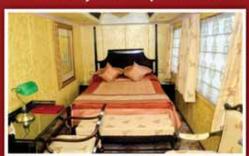
UP has been working on the draft Tourism Policy. Giving details on the same, she said, "We are working on several factors to increase tourism. The government of India is supporting us well with the Swadesh Darshan and Prasad schemes. The state government is also supporting and developing smaller places. We are revising our tourism policy in consonance with the industrial policy and very soon, it will be released after the Cabinet's approval. The industrial policy of the state is in place and under the Tourism Policy of 2017, a lot of incentives have been provided to private players and investors.



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QUICKBYTES

Challenges of domestic tourism

Domestic tourism is said to be the backbone of the tourism industry. However, stakeholders feel that challenges like demonetisation, GST, lack of infrastructure, connectivity and advent of OTAs have stalled growth.





Chief Operating Officer Travel Boutique Online

Challenges in domestic tourism are short-term like GST and demonetisation. The tourism and hospitality industry is gradually coming to terms with the changes and adapting them for the better. We are well aware that domestic tourism is very high, in a double digit growth but this growth has not translated into the growth of our GDP, which is still in single digits. I can see that in another two years' time, domestic tourism will be able to contribute majorly to the growth of GDP and take it higher once the challenges wear off.



Chairman—West Bengal and North East Chapter, ADTOI

Lack of innovation remains a major challenge for domestic tourism in India. It is more important to be an innovator than be a mere seller of a product. We, as an industry, need to identify the right market for our products else the tour operators may not be able to grow their business. Also, as travel agents, we are interme-

diaries in the trade who can bridge the information gap. The challenges can be overcome only if travel agents understand the imminent change in demand and adapt to it.



Member, Andhra Pradesh Tourism Authority, Government of Andhra Pradesh

The MICE industry has been posing a big challenge in terms of pricing. When the Indian MICE segment is compared with foreign countries, it is seen that abroad, the facilities are offered at a much cheaper price in terms of room rates and even the domestic air fares are less for a big group booking

of say 100 pax. If we have to grow the industry, a workable system has to be created where hotels can look into their price patterns for MICE domestically.

The main challenge for domestic destination wedding segment is to find sufficient local support so that wedding planners can deliver the promised to their clients. The most important element of local support is infrastructure for a destination wedding. Considering this, most of the domestic destination weddings are only possible at destinations



Director Weddings by Mercury

like Goa, Kerala and Rajasthan. It is very important for the Tourism Ministry along with the state governments to develop adequate infrastructure and make way for other destinations like Andhra Pradesh, Odisha and Madhya Pradesh.

Post demonetisation, the spending capacity of individuals has gone down. Also, as far as tourism in Kashmir is concerned, we are trying hard to revive the industry. However, the media portrayal of Kashmir is a hindrance to the growth of tourism industry at the destination. Often, when a negative sentiment is created about the destination,



it is important for the media to be more responsible regarding the effects of their content.

The biggest challenge for domestic tourism is the advent of online bookings. Most of the online portals offering products on the internet buy the components of a package at a certain rate and then manage to sell the package at a cost below their purchase cost. This has impacted the travel agents negatively. To add,

need to be maintained.

road connectivity is another issue where major highways connecting states still



Director Sparrow Wing Travels

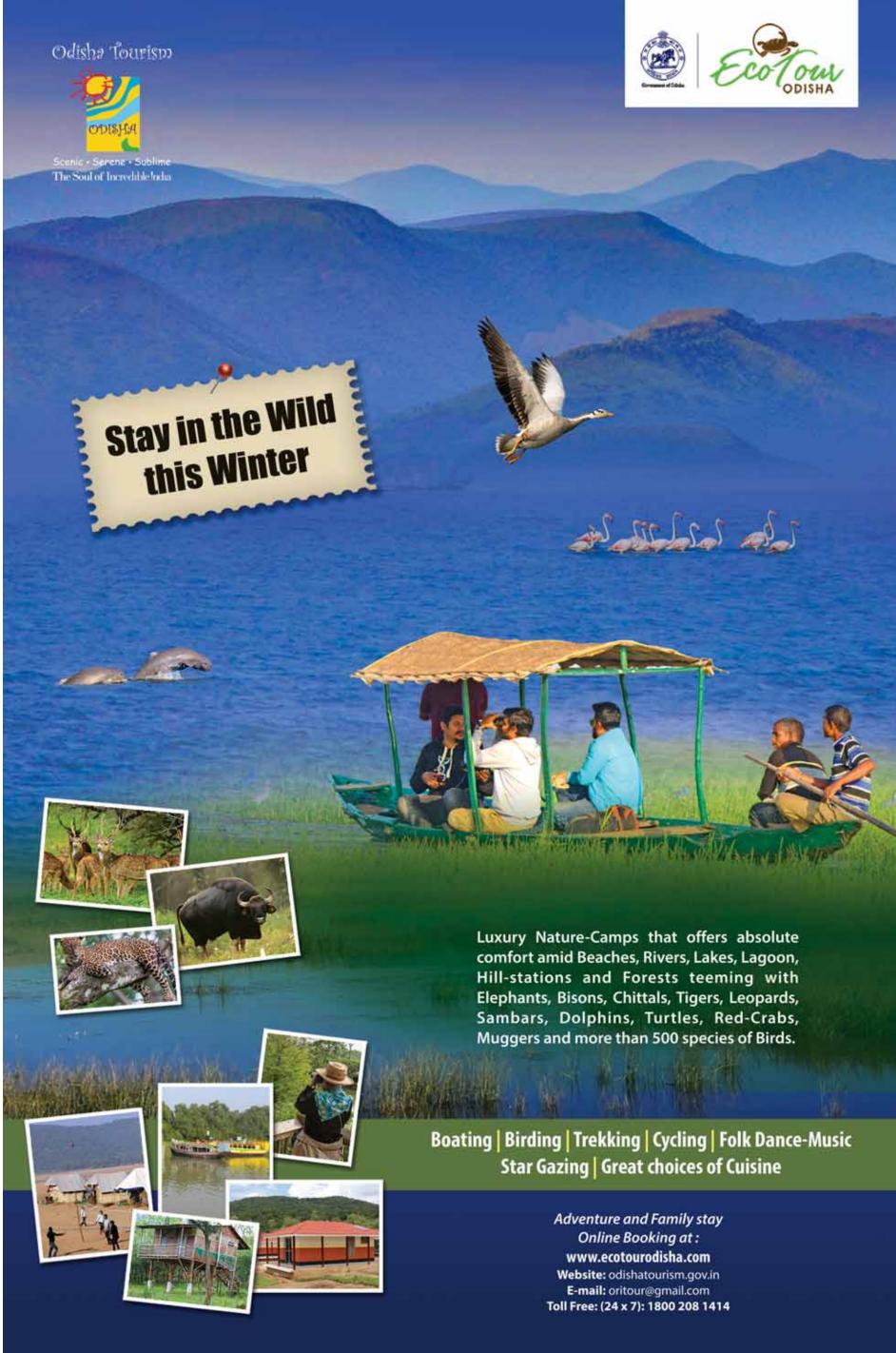
Currently, the tour operators are faced with the challenge of GST. This has posed a compacted format for operators of certain tourism segments. Also, the mushrooming of online travel agents has become a problem for the traditional ones. With the internet, the reach to the consumers has become easy



Managing Director

and direct. The discount offers by OTAs pose a challenge to traditional agents' business.





In line with 'on'line training

Tourism representative offices of various countries in India have been using online training programmes to educate the trade about the destination. Country heads of different NTOs in India share their views...





Country Manager—Tourism, India. VisitBritain

Our online training programme 'BritAgent' was launched in India in 2011 and within a few years, we had over 500 registered BritAgents in India. Currently, we have just over 800 of them. Now, we're targeting to cross 1000 in the next few months. We keep updating existing modules and introducing new ones in line with our product development and distribution strategy. The key to having a successful online destination training programme is to keep it dynamic and ensuring active engagement with the existing database.



Director & Tourism Counsellor, Tourism Office of Spain

recently introduced the im-

proved version of its 100%

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As India is a priority market

for us, it is important for us

to constantly educate our

Our free e-learning Spain 360º Expert programme has recently been upgraded to a new platform. It allows travel trade professionals to get an in-depth analysis about Spain and its diversity. We have attained over 1260 registrations by September 2017 out of which 350 agents have successfully completed the course. Our

platform allows agents to monitor their progress and refer to the lessons that have been completed. With enhanced learning of new destinations through elearning programmes, agents will have specialised knowledge to sell new destinations.



Regional Manager, South & Tourism New Zealand

Indian trade partners with product knowledge and new developments taking place in New Zealand.



Tourism Attaché, Philippines Tourism Marketing Office India

We have an online training programme called Philippines Specialist Programme for agents in India. It is quite successful with the Indian market. It's an 8 to 9 module programme, which gives an insight to the agents on destination's food, places to see, night life, etc. I believe that both online training and traditional training approaches

have their own advantages and their own set of target audience. We are entering into the digital age and everything is just a click away. These online training programmes are a smart way to reach the right target audience at their own convenience.

The Amazing Thailand Online Training Program 2017 conducted from January-April turned out to be a huge success. We received 1417 registrations and 208 travel agents were qualified with 80 per cent marks. Travel trade partners are well educated about the travel assets of Thailand. There were five online training modules



Director of Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT), New Delhi

comprising new products and destinations which might be new to them. These online programmes definitely help us reach to the front-liners. So we are planning to have a similar online training for wedding

planners as well this year.

Our SA Specialist Programme assists travel agents to become experts on South Africa. These programmes are essential to market the diverse offerings of South Africa and cater to all travel seqments and requirements, because a thorough un-Alpa Jani derstanding of the destination and its product offering



allows agents to bring well-tailored packages to the table. Online training is a useful tool as agents can browse and learn at their convenience.

Our Aussie Specialist Programme is meant to build our travel partners' knowledge levels. Once an agent is familiar with the destination, they have the confidence to sell it. Based on the positive word of mouth that they ultimately get from their customers, the agents can keep promoting that destination. It's Tourism Australia all inter-related and hence.



Country Manager

a lot of impetus is on training and education. We are constantly upgrading the programme.





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AGENTS 12 TRAVTALK JANUARY 2¹⁰ FORTNIGHT ISSUE 2018

Udaan India celebrates silver jubilee

Udaan India recently celebrated its silver jubilee in the industry and is set to expand its reach with new additions to its portfolio.



Boasting a strong reputation in the travel fraternity, Udaan India focused on FITs and then evolved by dealing with B2B agents and corporates. Udaan has trained professionals with a dedication to deliver seamless service to clients. Udaan has also seen a rise of 10-15 per cent in its turnover ratio. It handles 68.2 per cent of corporate clients making them a complete B2C corporate player. With its presence in 10 cities, Udaan is planning to expand its footprints further.

Udaan India is dealing with the top 30 MICE companies of India. The company has also been instrumental in promoting Scandinavian and SAARC countries. With their DMC promotion, there has been a substantial increase of tourism in Croatia, Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Cambodia and Vietnam. In future, Udaan is also planning to add a



Managing Director Udaan India

new venture to its basket 'Study with Udaan', envisioned to mentor all the aspiring Indian students towards enriching study programmes offering in pioneering colleges and universities across the globe to equip aspirants effectively for global challenges and skill development. Udaan has also invested in a new project 'Caring India', which is formed to streamline and ease the level of patients and other guests travelling to India specially for treatment purposes.

New approach to new age travel

With 250 senior travel professionals in attendance, the second edition of Thomas Cook's 'The India Travel Summit 2017 - The New Age of Travel' at Le Meridien, New Delhi, was a grand success.

7TT Bureau

The India Travel Summit was conceptualised to offer cutting-edge ideation and dialogue amongst key influencers and decision makers across the travel and tourism ecosystem - focusing on both challenges and opportunities for the sector. India's travel story is one that the world is looking forward to with excitement—a nation that is emerging rapidly as one of the critical markets for tourism - inbound, domestic and outbound.



Chairman & Managing Director, Thomas Cook (India)

The second edition of India Travel Summit was an excellent platform for trade which brought the industry leaders under one roof to get exposed to varied perspectives of all the stakeholders. The idea was to see how we can define the future of this industry, target new age travellers, build businesses and an ecosystem around travel. I think it's an excellent platform and it just got bigger this year. It's a fantastic SOTC Travel opportunity and I thoroughly enjoyed the whole day.



Managing Director



Abraham Alapatt Group Head-Marketing Service Quality, Innovation, and Financial Services. Thomas Cook (India)

The India Travel Summit was created to bring the entire travel ecosystem together. With technology coming in the last few years, a lot of things in the industry have changed. New models are coming up, disaggregation is happening. We felt that the theme, The New Age of Travel was relevant because we wanted all these partners to come together and talk about how the disruptions are both creating opportunities as well as challenges and how we can collaborate to grow the market, grow the value and very

importnantly, serve the customer better.



Dipak Deva Managing Director Travel Corporation (India)

This is the second India Travel Summit that we have organised, after the success of the one last year in Mumbai. The objective of the summit is to have a dialogue and conversation amongst different stakeholders form the industry to look at where the business is today and where are we heading to in the next 5-10 years. That conversation is always an ongoing one an interesting exchange of ideas.

It definitely brings us to some very important thoughts to important questions and also interesting conversations among stakeholders.



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See you in Puglia.







George Tourism adapts to India market

The city in the Western Cape province of South Africa has recently opened up to the India market and is now promoting itself as a destination instead of just catering to travellers in transit.

HAZEL JAIN

ocated halfway between Cape Town and Port Elizabeth, George is a popular holiday centre and the administrative hub of the Garden Route. It is central to all the main attractions from Mossel Bay in the south to Tstitsikamma in the north and Outdshoorn in the west.

many more of these visitors in the near future.

Speaking about the reason that prompted George Tourism to reach out to the Indian traveller, Shaw says, "Since so many Indian tourists already visit the Garden Route through George Airport, and use our excellent accommodation facilities, we



Since many Indians visit the Garden Route through George Airport, and use our accommodation facilities, we thought it was time we showcased all our attractions to them

> "They were so happy with our adventure and food offerings that we realised that George does not just have to be an arrival destination. Groups can stay here in the central town of the Garden Route and explore the entire region without packing and unpack-



ing their bags everyday," Shaw suggests.

Catering to the Indian palate

The team at George Tourism has learned that the Indian market is fun-loving and will take part in a range of different activities. "But the one thing that we find can make or break a trip for Indian visitors is the food. To this end, we try and cater traditional Indian food wherever we can. Where we can't, we take traditional South African food and spice it up for the Indian palate, providing them the best of both worlds," Shaw adds. Sharing information about the kind of budgets

George Tourism has allocated for the India market, Shaw says, "We concentrate mainly on our domestic markets, and then target specific international markets that travel in our off-season, which helps us combat seasonality. For this reason, we are allocating 25 per cent of our total marketing budget to the Indian market. This includes hosting of trade to attend the South African Tourism roadshow and also for digital marketing for specific regions of India."

George's top products

In addition to the scenic beauty and excellent accommodation facilities, George offers a host of family and adventure activities ranging from strawberry picking and family fun at Red Berry Farm to paragliding from the Map of Africa down to Wilderness beach. Visitors can canoe up the Touw River in Wilderness National Park

They can order a 'spicy' picnic from the Wilderness Picnic Company and relax on the banks of the river or on the beach in the national park. From the Outeniqua Transport Museum, they can board the Outeniqua Powervan for a rail experience up the mountain to spectacular views of the area. Nature and historic trails abound here under the watchful peaks of the Outeniqua Mountains that has forests, rivers and streams to make every visitor feel like they have arrived in the Garden of Eden.

Romantic Getaway

George's natural wilderness serves as a perfect destination for honeymoon couples as well



A scenic day trip can be undertaken to visit these town's activities. According to Joan Shaw. Tourism Manager, George Tourism, almost 30,000 Indian tourists visit the Garden Route each year, and George hopes to attract

thought it was time we showcased all our attractions to them and persuade them to stay back."

In September 2017, George hosted a group of tour operators from India.

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Pakyong airport to soar Sikkim tourism

C. Zangpo, Secretary, Tourism and Civil Aviation Department, Government of Sikkim, shares why the upcoming airport at Pakyong and sustainable approach towards tourism is helping the state grow.

NISHA VERMA

Sikkim has emerged as the most popular tourist destination in the North East, owing to its cleanliness and variety of tourism activities and sightseeing options. C. Zangpo, Secretary, Tourism and Civil Aviation Department, lauded the government for development in the state. "Growth of tourism depends on leadership in the state. In

Zangpo stressed that in the past decade growth has been continuous, however, the current financial year hasn't been smooth, "If you look at the arrival figures from January to June, we have received 11.7 lakh tourists, but post June 18, 2017 there was a Iull period because of Gorkhaland protests in Darjeeling, followed by the Doklam issue later. This led to apprehension in tourists' minds, especially

after an advisory was issued that it was not safe to travel to this part of the country. This was despite the fact that the problem was centred in Darjeeling and NH10 was kept open. Now. tourists are slowly coming back," he said.

In this year, Sikkim is planning a big project in Bhaleydhunga. "We are going to have a sky walk coming up in Bhaleydhungha, which is being done by a world-renowned company. It will be a challenging ropeway and by 2019, we should be able to complete the project. In fact, we have already completed around 40 per cent of work. We are focusing on adventure and we have tremendous trekking trails, which appeal to foreigner tourists as well," Zangpo shared.

Talking about their participation in International Tourism Mart 2017, held from December 5-7, he said that they had marketed adventure tourism and ecotourism in the state. "One can go for leisure anywhere, but in Sikkim, one finds clean air and green environment everywhere. Hence, we feel that if you move along with nature, it's going to sustain in the long run. We should soon be operating a greenfield airport at Pakyong, 30

km from Gangtok, which will be another advantage for Sikkim as far as the connectivity is concerned," he concluded.

Number Game

- Sikkim received 11.7 lakh tourists from January-June 2017
- In 2018, the state is focusing on adventure



Secretary Tourism and Civil Aviation Department, Government of Sikkim

We are going to have a sky walk coming up in Bhaleydhungha, which is being done by a world-renowned company. It will be a challenging ropeway and by 2019, we should be able to complete the project

Sikkim, the current government has been in power since the last 23 years and we are very stable. We stand for the development of sustainable and inclusive tourism development in the state. We are advocating adventure and ecotourism in the state, and creating an Environmental Development Committee (EDC) as well as Joint Forest Management Committee (JFMC) to look into the environmental concerns," he said.

Observing that the state has a strong religious tourism potential, Zangpo said, "On the religious tourism front, Sikkim has many monasteries because it used to be a Buddhist kingdom in the past. We have more than 200 Buddhist monasteries in Sikkim and it is the only state where we have five sects of Buddhism. Apart from that, we have representation of 4 Dhaam and 12 Jyotirlinga in Namchi, 78 kms from Gangtok. For Buddhists, Lord Buddha's Chenrezig statue is also coming up."



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Looking at Central India for growth

STHI Group has been driving good amount of business from Tier-II and III markets and looks forward to penetrate deeper into smaller markets.

TT BUREAU

STHI Group recently hosted two roadshows in December 2017 as part of their regular activities for Tier-II markets. The roadshows were held in Raipur and Chhattisgarh. The second roadshow took place in Nagpur at Le Meridian and both cities saw around 45 travel agents in each city. Lalit Singh, COO, STHI Group said, "The response we have been getting in each roadshow from every city is phenomenal. Our hotel partners showcased at the event were Banyan Tree, Sheraton and Shangri La Group of Hotels. Our airline partners for the event were Air Arabia, Air Asia and Qatar Airways. We have showcased both long haul and short haul destinations."

He added, "In 2018, we will be soon opening a new office in Newark, New Jersey for which the setup has



COO STHI Group

already been done and the strategic planning is under process. When it comes to business, we have seen Tier-Il cities contributing heavily to our growth as compared to the metro cities. We are also planning to expand our reach in the India market and will soon have a setup in Raipur and Guwahati." STHI will also be showcasing itself at SATTE by promoting the east and west coast of USA, week holiday packages for Canada east and west coasts.

North top priority for Hotel 6

Located in Chandigarh, Hotel 6 has evolved to cater to all segments including MICE and leisure. While its focus remains pan-India, the business hotel's immediate priority is the northern region.

TT BUREAU

The 175-key note.

tel 6 - has a healthy he 175-key hotel - Homix of guests from all segments which includes banks, pharmaceutical companies, travel agencies, wedding groups, leisure groups, corporate, MICE, leisure and FITs. It's location of being situated on a highway and yet close to the city gives it an edge. It also makes the hotel a perfect spot for conducting business meetings, exhibitions, board meetings and social functions.

Inder Thapa, Vice President - Operations, Auromatrix Hotels, says, "Our hotel is ideal for pre and post-wedding functions as well. We don't want to limit ourselves to any particular market. So we will continue to focus on pan India but with an immediate focus on the northern region."

Thapa adds that the hotel caters well to MICE. "We have multiple spacious banquet halls which can

accommodate from 25 to 300 pax and cater to simultaneous events with spacious parking facilities. Our meeting rooms are ideal for small business conferences and can be interconnected as per the requirement," he says.

The rooms have modular conference tables and other flexible furniture, which makes it quick to configure to whatever arrangement the client needs. The rooms have been outfitted with an A/V set-up, including display options with both laptop hook-up and a DVD player. They also have complimentary Wi-Fi. The Hub, the hotel's grand ballroom has 3,000 sq ft area and a capacity of 300 floating crowd with break-away room and pre function area popular for cocktail parties and similar events.

Other facilities include a multi-cuisine restaurant, bar, swimming pool and gymnasium. Guestrooms include a 'plug n play' connectivity sta-



Inder Thapa Vice President – Operations, Auromatrix Hotels

We understand that Delhi and Mumbai are dominating the travel sector so we cater to these cities through our regional sales offices in Chennai, Bengaluru, Mumbai and Delhi

tion for all electronic gadgets. Thapa claims that their inventory of 175 rooms is currently the biggest and the most spacious ones in the city. The rooms are tastefully done and equipped with 42inch LED TVs, tea and coffee maker, state-of-the-art amenities, a mini bar, laundry service, free high speed Wi-Fi, and ample parking space for buses, RVs and vans.

Hotel 6 participates in all travel trade exhibitions and conventions like IATO, TAAI, SATTE and PATA. "We understand that Delhi and Mumbai are dominating the travel sector so we focus on these cities through our regional sales office representatives in Chennai, Bengaluru, Mumbai and Delhi," Thapa says.

Hotel location

- Hotel 6 Chandigarh Zirakpur is located at 9.3 kilometres away from the international airport
- It is set just south of Chandigarh and minutes away from Rajiv Gandhi Technology Park



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A United stand for India

United Airlines completes a decade of its non-stop daily services from Mumbai to New York/Newark, underlining India as an important market with huge potential.



nited Airlines' decadelong journey in India has been a successful one, says Marcel Fuchs - VP Atlantic and Pacific Sales, United Airlines, who was in India recently to celebrate this milestone with the trade partners. "The Indian market is important to United and we are proud to have offered non-stop services. The popularity of our daily services from Delhi and Mumbai to New York/Newark reflects travellers' demands to fly to the US," he adds.

The airline has carried over three million customers on more than 12,700 flights between India and the US over the past decade. "We expect our non-stop India-US flights to continue to perform well. Load factors on our Indian routes are broadly in line with those for our trans-Atlantic routes as a whole," Fuchs reveals.

When asked whether United is planning to expand its current frequencies, he says that while United moni-



Marcel Fuchs VP Atlantic and Pacific Sales United Airlines

The popularity of our daily services from Delhi and Mumbai to New York/
Newark reflects travellers' demands to fly to the US

tors the demand in all the markets, serves and reviews potential new-route opportunities on an ongoing basis, the airline has no further new-service announcements to make at present in India.

Fuchs also underlines the role of the travel trade

community in its India sales. "Our team in India, led by Harvinder Singh, has longstanding relationships with the community. We continue to engage the travel trade community across India. In my recent visit to India to celebrate our 10th anniversary for our Mumbai-New York service. I met a number of our business partners. It was clear to me that these relationships are vital to us as we build greater success for United in the market," Fuchs adds

Fact File

United Airlines operates up to 500 weekly flights across the Atlantic from 29 cities in 15 countries in Europe, Middle East and India to its hubs in Chicago, Houston, Los Angeles, New York/ Newark, San Francisco and Washington, DC, with onward connections to more than 300 cities throughout the Americas. It operates the Boeing 777-200 aircraft on its Delhi and Mumbai routes

Finnair adds new routes

With its hub in Helsinki, Finnair's expansion will reach all-time high during winter with new routes opening to 20 intercontinental destinations, including Goa and New Delhi.

TT BUREAU

Juha Järvinen, Chief Commercial Officer, Finnair says, "We will fly two weekly flights to Goa till March 21. For the moment, it's only for winter season. We have also added a weekly frequency on our Delhi route, which is a year-round route for us. We will now fly six times a week during the winter season and four times per week in summer schedule. We foresee growth potential in the India market."

He adds, "There is a huge demand for Goa as it is a very interesting destination for Finnish and Nordic travellers. Marketing the new route is part of our normal route launch procedures. We believe there's strong demand from the Nordic market towards Goa. Also, now the Indian travel trade has a good connect to Finland with Finnair and to over 100 destinations that we offer in Europe."

He revealed that the expansion of its winter schedule was Finnair's biggest in



Juha Järvinen Chief Commercial Officer

We will now fly six times a week during the winter season and four times per week in summer schedule. We foresee growth potential in Indian market

the airline's 94-year history. "We are opening several new routes, expanding our network and fleet including our 11 Airbus A350s, adding capacity to Finnish Lapland

and taking important strides in our customer experience. It's a very exciting time to fly Finnair," Järvinen says.

Due to the continued increase in demand for Lapland as a tourist destination, Finnair is increasing its capacity to Lapland by over 20 per cent. The airline has also increased its capacity from Helsinki airport to several Lapland airports for the entire winter season, and offers a total of 430,000 seats to five of Lapland's airports.

Flying High

- Finnair is opening several new destinations, expanding their network and fleet including their 11 Airbus A350s, adding capacity to Finnish Lapland and taking important strides in customer experience
- Finnair offers a total of 430,000 seats to five of Lapland's airports

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Enterprising eye on travel

After adding new destination management companies (DMC) to its product portfolio, Tourism Enterprises will focus on educating travel trade from smaller cities.



ourism Enterprises has grown organically in the last five years with nine DMC partners worldwide, informs Ravi Gosain, Managing Director, Tourism Enterprises. He explains that the company recorded a handsome growth of around 30 per cent over previous years, which is quite encouraging for the company to march forward with some higher projections. He says, "In mid 2017, we added two new DMCs-Bohemia Travel Agency for the Balkan countries-Bulgaria, Serbia and Macedonia and ACE Tours for Italy, France and Poland. We have received a good re-

Managing Director Tourism Enterprises

sponse for these destinations and recorded conversions of a few bookings despite the low Indian outbound season to Europe in winters."

Gosain further informs that the company's regular destinations like Sri Lanka, Dubai, Morocco, Greece, Central Europe and Romania performed well last year, where the company also added some new clients for its DMCs for these countries. "We are quite happy with the overwhelming response from the travel trade for these countries. Our forte is personalised services, prompt replies and competitive pricing offered to the Indian travel agents," he comments.

In 2018, Tourism Enterprises' focus will be on promoting unconventional products for its destinations. offering experiences rather than regular holidays. Gosain expects a steady demand for outbound tourism from India in 2018. He adds that the major attractions will be lesser known places with affordable holidays. "We are also looking at increasing our destinations and hopefully, in 2018, plan to bring in two-three new DMCs with exotic destinations under our portfolio, However, our major thrust is on educating travel

agents and tour operators for our destinations and products. We have participated in travel marts, personal meetings with outgoing tour operators and organised roadshows, Fam trips and will continue it in this year too. We want to establish confidence among our Indian partners in the DMCs we promote. Our promotional mailers on products and offers will help travel agents to sell our destinations," explains Gosain. The company has dedicated sales teams based in Delhi and Mumbai. This year, the company plans to increase its sales force to reach out to travel agents based in smaller cities. "Travel trade shows and marts are one of the important sources of spreading our product information to the B2B market," adds Gosain.

15 per cent rise in Indian arrivals to Australia by October 2017

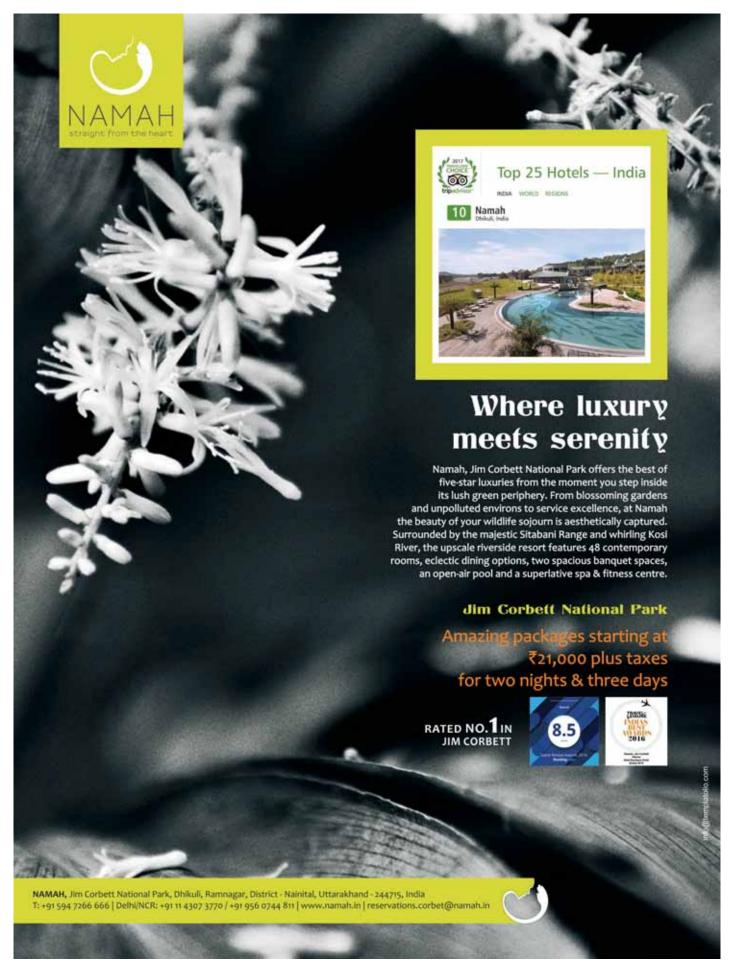
tralia grew by 15 per cent for the year ended October 2017, with an influx of 294,000 visitors, compared to the same period last year. This makes India the ninth largest inbound market for Australia, and inches it closer towards achieving its Tourism 2020 goal of 300,000 visitors annually, three years ahead of target. With an impressive doubledigit growth in arrivals and spend for the fourth consecutive year, India has emerged as Australia's fastest growing inbound market.

Tania Gerlach,

Migration Officer, Department of Immigration and Border Protection (DIBP) commented, "We are extremely pleased with the success of the e-lodament process. with over 60 per cent of the total tourist visa applications now received online. The month of November 2017 has witnessed the highest-ever tourist visa lodgments. Online lodament offers benefits such as 24/7 accessibility, electronic payment of the visa application charge and the ability to check the status of applications lodged online. Processing times for these visas will now

be faster, as both applications and supporting documentation are immediately available to the processing office."

To encourage travellers from India, Tourism Australia will continue to focus on promoting nature and wildlife, alongside aquatic and coastal experiences, under its global campaign - There's Nothing like Australia. Targeting the high value traveller, Tourism Australia will also focus on promoting new products and destinations, through a variety of digital marketing initiatives, and leverage the power of advocacy.



Scotland goes Bollywood

VisitScotland will be celebrating the 20th anniversary of *Kuch Kuch Hota Hai* in 2018. In 2017, Scotland recorded 8 per cent YOY growth in Indian arrivals to the destination.

Ankita Saxena

n line with the rapid growth in interest for Scotland among Indian travellers, the destination has recorded an average growth of 37 per cent over three years in trips taken by Indian travellers to Scotland, informed Kirsten Spence, Senior Market Manager-Emerging Markets, VisitScotland. The tourism board recently conducted its three-city roadshow in New Delhi, Bengaluru and Mumbai in partnership with Etihad Airways.

"We are estimating a very conservative 40,000 Indian visitors coming to Scotland in 2017 but we know it is more than that. The International Passenger Survey calculates the number of arrivals through the airports but we understand that people are travelling from the likes of London, whether through rails or driving themselves and thus, we know there are more people coming into Scotland than just through the airports," says Spence.



Kirsten Spence Senior Market Manager—Emerging Markets, VisitScotland

We find that with a huge growth in Indian economy on an international level, there has been an increase in luxury travel from India

Elaborating on the evolution of the Indian traveller to Scotland, Spence explains five years ago, Indian travellers visited the cities like Edinburgh and Glasgow to see the most popular sights but overtime, they have started to spread out of these cities to visit the Highlands such as Inverness, the Isle

of Skye and other areas in the West Coast as well. She says, "Whiskey trails and golf has always been popular but travellers are now also spending few days outside of London to go shopping in Scotland. Also, we find that with the huge growth in the Indian economy spectrum on an international level, there has been an increase in the luxury travel segment from India. Indians are now seeking unique experiences which Scotland has in bucket loads." She further identifies that the length of stay of Indian travellers has increased from 1-2 nights to 4-5 nights in Scotland which could also be combined with the UK.

According to Spence, the Indian travel trade is very proactive and thus, the tourism boards would like to be present in India more than other markets. "The travel trade is already packaging Scotland as a bucket-list destination. We would offer them maximum amount of content and experiences to sell," she said.

Portugal is closer home

Serene Experiences has recently tied-up with an upscale DMC from Portugal—Tours For You, to bring the destination closer to the luxury segment in India.

TT BUREAU

he USP of Serene Experiences lies in the kind of unique hotels and destinations which it represents; these are all luxury hotels in some of the most exotic locations, believes Naresh Chandnani, Founder & CEO, Serene Experiences. He says, "We have identified our niche in representing luxury hotels in exotic locations, thus offering some of the most amazing travel experiences for Indian travellers." He further elaborates that the main objective of the company is to acquaint Indian travellers with unique travel experiences across the globe.

Talking about the collaboration, Chandnani explains, "Our newest client this year is the upscale DMC from Portugal—Tours For You which is the only Virtuoso On-Site to Portugal, a natural recognition of their exceptional style of working. Besides catering to the FIT leisure markets, the company has separate divisions for events and weddings.



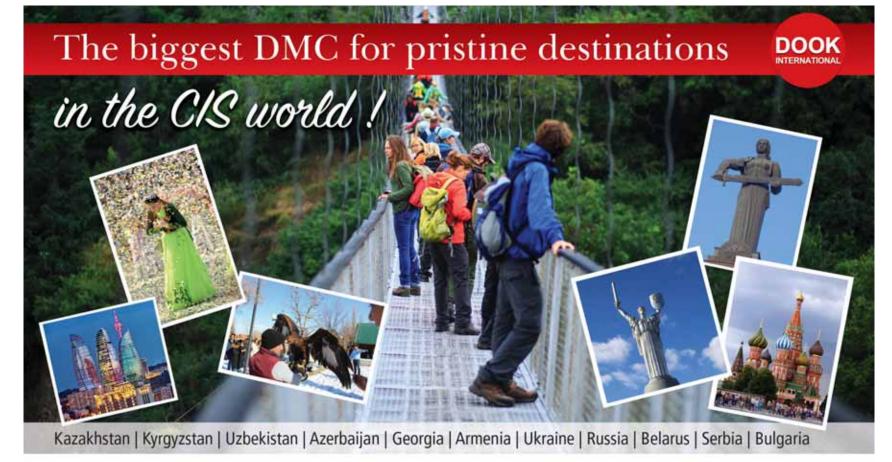
Naresh Chandnani Founder & CEO Serene Experiences

At Serene Experiences, we would be showcasing Portugal to the high net-worth Individuals and experienced travellers through various marketing activities, to acquaint the Indian luxury traveller, destination weddings planners and MICE organisers with some of the most amazing experiences of Portugal."

In terms of success, all clients of Serene Experiences remain very bullish on the Indian market, points out Chandnani. "A majority of our clients are pleasantly surprised to have already started receiving guests from India within the first few

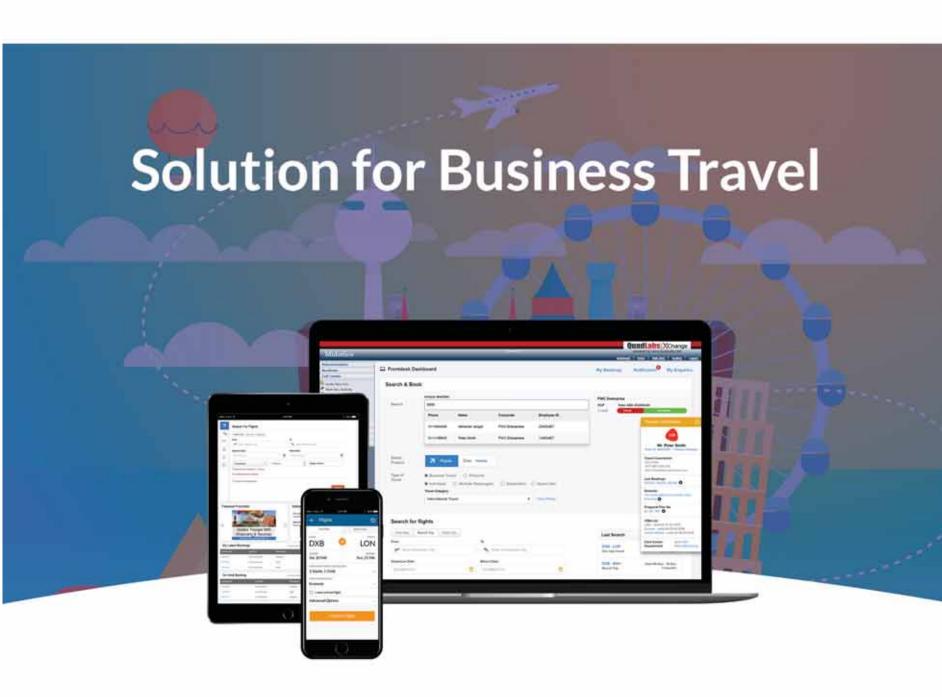
months of our partnership. Some of our older clients like the Grand Hotel Suisse Majestic in Montreux have seen their room nights jump up by almost 50 per cent over the previous year and thus, hitting the 500 room night mark in 2017. We are in talks with several luxury hotels from Italy, Switzerland, the UAE and Mykonos (Greece)," he adds.

Utilising strategic methods, the company specialises in adeptly positioning the hotels and destinations through an array of services, explains Chandnani. "With our client's specific needs and goals in mind, we create both integrated and comprehensive full service sales and marketing programme to maximise revenue potential within new or existing markets," he adds. Besides doing product training and familiarising the travel agents, tour operators, conference organisers and wedding planners with our portfolio, the company also invests in direct marketing to consumers.



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UN honours Dharampura

Haveli Dharampura, Delhi has been honoured by UNESCO for cultural heritage conservation in the Asia-Pacific region.



Property restorer Vijay Goel, Minister of State for Statistics and Programme Implementation & Parliamentary Affairs, Government of India insisted that governshould encourage such initiatives, so that more such properties can come up around the country. "I am very happy as the restorer as well as the President of Heritage India Foundation that the 200-year-old Haveli Dharampura in Chandni Chowk, near Jama Masjid has been honoured by UNESCO. With this, our hard work of six years has reaped fruit. This is the first heritage building in Delhi, which has been honoured with this recognition and I believe that after getting this award, more people would come forward with such projects and more such heritage properties would be restored," he asserted.

Talking about the hardships they faced while conserving the Haveli, Goel said, "Haveli Dharampura has got this international recognition



Vijay Goel Minister of State for Statistics and Programme Implementation & Parliamentary Affairs, Government of India

because we have restored it in the authentic way and it has been conserved the same way it was constructed in older times. After restoring this Haveli, I think Heritage India Foundation will try and encourage everyone who wants to restore their heritage properties in the same way."

However, he said that despite so many heritage properties in Delhi, not much is being done by the authorities to take care of them. "If the central government, state government, Shahjahanabad Development Board and MCD come together to save these monuments, they can

be restored in the right manner. Chandni Chowk should be declared as a world heritage city, and the deterioration of this part of Delhi at the hands of greedy builders needs to stop. There is a dire need to stop the illegal construction here so that heritage havelis can be saved. Shahjahanabad Development Board has passed many resolutions for the conservation of these havelis, like waiver in stamp duty, VAT, GST, property tax, circle rate, etc., but the impact of the same is not visible as yet," suggested Goel.

He believes that those who conserve such properties should be given an incentive. "A lot of money is spent in such an initiative, and hence it requires the help of the government. The government should take such initiatives seriously and help people to restore their old buildings. The number of such properties is decreasing. There should be a big plan in reviving these structures and central government should take it in the HRIDAY scheme," he said.

Balinese escapade for agents

NEWS





U&I Holidays took around 15 agents from Mumbai and Gujarat on a four-night, five-day tour to Bali recently. The familiarisation tour was organised by U&I Holidays and partner airline AirAsia Indonesia. The agents experienced five-star properties combined with a villa stay in Ubud along with excursions to Uluwatu and Kintamani. They also enjoyed the traditional Balinese massage and nightlife.

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Tussauds now in Delhi

Adding to the attractions' spectrum in the national capital, Madame Tussauds is now open at Connaught Place. The attraction expects a footfall of 2000-2500 visitors per day.

TT BUREAU

Meeting the stars comes with a cost! The entry fee for adults at Madame Tussauds is `960 while for children above 12 years is 760, informs Anshul Jain, General Manager-India, Merlin Entertainments. The online ticket bookings at the attraction offer a discount of 100 and a special package price is available for a family of four for `2600. "If we compare these prices globally, the entry fee for the Delhi attraction is one third of the international prices. However, the experience offered is truly of an international standard," says Jain. He further informs that the wax museum can accommodate 400 visitors at a time and will be open from 10 am to 7:30 pm. There will be special packages for school groups and travel groups from outside Delhi who visit the museum through travel agents.

The attraction in Delhi has five zones—Films, Sports, History and Leaders,



Anshul Jain General Manager— India, Merlin Entertainments

At Madame Tussauds Bangkok, 40% of the visitors are Indians; 50% visitors in Singapore are Indians while more than 20% visitors at Madam Tussauds London are Indians

Music and Party. The ratio of local and international celebrities at the wax museum is 60:40. "We will be adding and subtracting figures every year so that each year the visitors have something

new to look forward to. Globally, Madame Tussauds receives 550 million visitors across the network. At Madame Tussauds Bangkok, 40 per cent of the visitors are Indians; 50 per cent visitors in Singapore are Indians while more than 20 per cent visitors at Madam Tussauds London are Indians. At the Delhi attraction, we are expecting a footfall of at least 2000-2500 visitors every day," adds Jain.

Discussing the incentives for travel trade, Jain explains that they would offer special programmes to travel agents after Merlin Entertainments is aligned with their business model. Madame Tussauds Delhi was heavily promoted through outdoor marketing campaigns and multiple media platforms.

Expected Footfall

At the Delhi attraction, they are expecting a footfall of at least 2000-2500 visitors every day

Gurugram hosts 2nd Travel Business Show

The 2nd edition of Travel Business Show, an exclusive MICE event, was held at the Le Méridien Gurgaon. Ma. Teresita C. Daza, Ambassador of Philippines to India, the chief guest for the evening, inaugurated the show and spoke about the enormous tourism opportunities between the two countries.



1800 meetings & more

The second edition of Travel Business Show witnessed productive meetings taking place from December 2-3, 2017, at the Le Meridien Gurgaon. Serious B2B meetings between 30 exhibitors and 30 corporate buyers were held during the afternoon session of the first day. On the second day, one-on-one B2B meetings took place between 30 exhibitors and 30 MICE agents.



Ma. Teresita C. Daza Philippines to India

Philippines Airlines is assessing the possibility of establishing direct flights to India. We hope this pushes through so that we can provide huge tourism benefits for India & Philippines

Engaging discussions

The inauguration was followed by an engrossing panel discussion on Meetings Incentives Conferences and Events (MICE), moderated by Priti Khanna, Director, DDP Publications. The discussion involved different stakeholders of the MICE industry to share key inputs on experiential MICE. The eminent panelists included Tekla Maira, Director Luxury Sales -India, AccorHotels; Homa Mistry, CEO, Trail Blazer Tours; Kiran Thomas, AVP, Administration and Global Travel, Sutherland Global Services and Ismail A Hamid Amer, Regional Director, Egyptian Tourism Counsellor.

MICE in Philippines

Tourism and MICE continue to be great contributors to every nation's economy, said Ma. Teresita C. Daza. "In the third guarter of 2017, the Philippines' economy grew by 6.9 per cent. Travel and tourism contributed about 8.6 per cent to the

country's GDP in 2016. The top source markets for the Philippines from Asia include China. Japan, South Korea and Taiwan. Currently. India is the 12th largest source market for the Philippines. Many Indians visit Manila, Cebu, Palawan, Angeles and Boracay," she informed. "In 2016, the record of Indian arrivals in the Philippines was 90,000, which is an average of

about 246 Indian passengers per day. This number of Indian arrivals is very encouraging, despite visa requirements for Indians travelling to the Philippines," she added. Giving a synopsis of mega MICE events in the Philippines, Daza said, "Aside leisure travel, the Philippines has also been witnessing an immense contribution of MICE segment into the

growth of the Philippines tourism industry. The Philippines successfully conducted the 'Miss Universe Contest' earlier this year. More importantly in November, the Philippines hosted the 31st ASEAN Summit and related conferences in Manila. During the whole swing of these events, delegates from ASEAN and its partners were shuffled to various destinations

in world class infrastructure, while being pampered with Filipino hospitality."

To provide better visa services to Indians, the Philippines has already instituted a 14-day free visa for Indians, who are holders of visas for USA, Japan, Australia, Canada, Schengen, Singapore and the UK, from all international airports

and seaports of the country. Mulling prospects to enhance connectivity between the destinations, Daza added, "Further, the Philippines Airlines is also assessing the possibility of establishing direct flights to India. We are hoping this plan will soon push through so that we can provide huge tourism and economic benefits for both the Philippines and India."



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Korean Air's first anniversary in Delhi

Korean Air completed a year of its successful operations in Delhi recently. The airline celebrated the occasion with its travel trade partners over an evening of cocktails and dinner.

TT BUREAU

Raising a toast to one year of Korean Air's operations in New Delhi, Pukhraj Singh Chug, Managing Director, Acumen Overseas, GSA for Korean Air in India, claimed that it has been a very successful year for them. "While Korean Air has completed one looking forward to many more such years to follow. We are focusing on establishing this network further," he added.

Commenting on the challenges they faced, Sang Wook Han, Regional Manager Delhi, India. Korean Air. said. "It was a very challenging job to establish the new branch office our promotions online as well. We are seeing an increasing demand for Korea year on year, and depending on the market dynamics we will align Korean Air's marketing strategy accordingly."

Chug agreed that the Delhi market is more competitive than their much es-



Managing Directo Acumen Overseas

The last year has been successful and we look forward to many more such years. We are focusing on establishing this network further

much more effective in our promotions and sales efforts as compared to our competitors. Currently, the route between Delhi and Korea is clocking over 80 per cent load factor," he shared.



Sang Wook Han Regional Manager Delhi India, Korean Air

We are seeing an increasing demand for Korea and depending on the market dynamics, we will align Korean Air's marketing strategy accordingly

"There is an increased interest by Korean corporates in India. India as a destination is also high on priority for investment by Korean companies. The bulk of travellers on our flights are Koreans trav-

2018, roadshows in

Mumbai and Jaipur.

tering deeper travel

trade relationships,

STB is also focusing

on consumer en-

gagement to show-

as a destination

not just for family

holidays but also

for working millen-

nials. A consumer

travel fair will be

held at a popular

mall in Bengaluru

from January 20-

21, where visitors

will get a glimpse

into the myriad pos-

sibilities that Sin-

gapore offers as

a holiday destina-

tion. On the events

calendar, 2018 is

dotted with exciting

events in Singapore

like the Art Walk in

Little India during

January-February,

Digital Light Canvas

at Marina Bay Sands which

Singapore

case

Apart from fos-

elling back home from India. New segments of travel have emerged from India to Korea like MICE. An increased number of corporate travellers are flying between India and Korea. Leisure has been an added advantage as some of the destinations like Jeju Island have done well in India. Our focus is to bring Korea as a destination to the India diaspora," added Chug.

Even the travel trade has shown their support to Korean Air, asserted Chug. "We have received a very warm response from the travel trade fraternity. There is zero tolerance for pending issues and the same are resolved at the earliest," he insisted. Currently, Korean Air operates five weekly flights between Delhi and Korea, and three weekly flights from Mumbai to the destination. Commenting on adding more flights in the future, he said, "Depending on various factors like bilateral relations and business development, we will expand the services to other cities. We are currently focusing on the market in Delhi."



year since we launched its services to Delhi, the Mumbai connection has been servicing the route for 22 years now. The last one year has been very successful and we are in Delhi as the market here is more competitive than Mumbai. Since e-commerce is on growing trajectory in India. we plan to focus more on online travel agents and conduct tablished Mumbai market. However, he said that the last one year has been very positive. "The first year of service in Delhi has been very promising. We are

SINGAPORE TOURISM

Forging possibilities with passion

With a record high of Indian visitors, new brand campaign and passion to outperform in 2018, Singapore Tourism Board shares its plans for the New Year.

he year 2017, on many counts, was a great year for the Singapore Tourism Board (STB). A new, unified brand 'Passion Made Possible' was unveiled in September 2017. Apart from being a top family destination, Singapore gained popularity among the working millennials as a lifestyle and entertainment destination. The citystate also welcomed a record number of Indian visitors. In October 2017, the number stood at 1.1 million Indian visitors with a year-on-year increase of 17 per cent, making India the third largest visitor source market for Singapore.

Mural of Rajinikanth at Little India Artwalk



The past year witnessed STB extending its partnership networks and embarking on several innovative marketlywood movie 'Badrinath Ki Dulhania' collaboration, launch of a vegetarian food guide and showcasing Singaporean talents in India over a Singapore Weekender in Mumbai, in partnerships with St+art Foundation and Impresario Group's Social chain of outlets.

GB Srithar, Regional Director, South Asia, Middle East & Africa, STB said, "2017 was a successful year for Singapore tourism. We thank all the travel agent partners, Singapore stakeholders, marketing collaborations and media fraternity for supporting our initiatives in reaching out to the Indian audience. Our theme for 2018 is 'With Passion, Forging New Possibilities'. We seek to deepen and expand our partnerships across India, effectively promote our new brand 'Passion Made Possible' and continue to present Singapore's diverse offerings to the audience segments like families, working millennials, cruise and incentive travellers. While enticing more visitors from key metro cities, we also aim to bring more travellers from Tier-II cities to Singapore to live up their passions." In January, together with about 30 Singapore tourism stakeholders. STB is undertaking an intensive travel trade outreach with participation in SATTE

is a permanent attraction, Art from the Streets at Art Science Museum tracing 40 years of Street Art across the world, second edition of the Michelin Street Food Festival from March 29 to April 1 and



Gardens By The Bay Sound and Light Show



Chef cooking up delectable mod-Sin cuisine at Vasco, a cocktail bar at Hong Kong street



AJ Hackett, Singapore's first bungy jump tower at Siloso beach, Sentosa

22nd edition of the World Gourmet Summit from April 2-29 across the island.

With so many holiday possibilities in store and opportunities to indulge in one's passions, Singapore is set to continue attracting . varied travel audience from India in 2018.



Vespa tours in Joo Chiat, Singapore's Peranakan neighbourhood Early Careers partying at Haji Lane's Blu Jaz Café



HOTELS

JANUARY 2^m FORTINIGHT ISSUE 2018 TRAVTALK 25

Going beyond the usual experiences

Jaswinder Narang, Complex General Manager, Sheraton Grand Pune Bund Garden Hotel and Le Méridien Mahabaleshwar Resort & Spa, gives his take on the hospitality industry in Pune and how the group is making its mark with new hotels popping up every now and then.

HARSHAL ASHAR FROM PUNE

Tell us about the 'Go Beyond' initiative.

The core of 'Go Bevond' is celebrating global hospitality offered across all continents spanning 450 hotels in 70 countries. Sheraton is a very old brand and therefore, when we rebranded, we chose Sheraton. Marriott is a 90-year-old chain and Sheraton is 80, making it a key brand. At the core, we put people together and 'Go Beyond' signifies the pursuit of excellence, integrity among associates and the will to embrace change. A very important aspect is also the facet of serving the world and society by taking initiatives for CSR, associating with charities at the property and corporate level, and engaging with NGOs.

Pune has recently seen massive evolution in hospitality. What, according to you, could have prompted this?

Initially, there were hardly 600 rooms in Pune;



Jaswinder Narang Complex General Manager, Sheraton Grand Pune Bund Garden Hotel and Le Méridien Mahabaleshwar Resort & Spa

Our advantage lies in our presence for 19 years now; the loyalty factor has been humungous. In spite of new hotels being launched recently, we continue to do well as our loyal patrons keep coming back to us

this was way back in 2000. Today, Pune has about 4500 rooms. As demand grew, everyone felt supply was not enough. The surge in manufacturing and IT industries prompted this growth. As IT grew in a massive way, IT parks mushroomed everywhere, creating a significant demand. Around three to four years ago, there was a sudden spurt in hotels that resulted in supply exceeding demand. We have gone through a cycle where at first, the scenario was that demand was more than supply, then supply exceeded demand, and now we are at a curve where demand and supply are almost equal and hotels are filling up frequently. Supply will still continue to grow with a couple of hotels yet to enter the city.

Pune is blessed with big hospitality chains. How, then do you plan to carve a niche for yourself?

Our advantage lies in our presence for 19 years now; the loyalty factor has been humungous. In spite of new hotels being launched



recently, we continue to do well as our loyal patrons keep coming back to us. The beauty of our hotel, advantage of our location, exemplary services and quality of food have always weaved wonders. In the Starwood days in Asia Pacific, we were number one for three consecutive years in the Guest Satisfaction Survey (GSS). With Marriott again, in the 'Intend to Recommend' or ITR index, we are at the fifth position out of 129 Sheraton hotels in Asia Pacific and are number one in South Asia.

How has 2017 fared for you? What challenges did you face?

Last year started with a bang for us. The first quarter was fantastic and we were on target. Come April, we were hit by the liquor ban and five months on, we incurred some serious losses affecting our room business as well as conference and banqueting business. We lost wedding groups as well. We were allowed to start selling liquor only after September 5, 2017, and business has picked up again.

What are your expectations in terms of business?

I am an optimist and I think we are moving in the right direction with efforts to improve the infrastructure in the city and the advent of new companies in Pune. The year 2018 should be a very good year for all of us.

Our client mix is made up of almost 96 per cent corporates and three to four per cent of leisure travellers.



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India lifts anchor

Having seen its greatest leap in sales and numbers in 2017, Global Anchor Cruises hopes that travellers will now start to see cruising as the next best way to roam the world.



ruising is set to evolve ✓ dramatically in coming years, feels lan Banerjee, Director, Global Anchor Cruises, "Cruising as a travel option is definitely going to be the new wave in India. Along with the popular routes, we are observing an increasing appetite for expedition and adventure cruises. I also foresee a strong growth in the MICE sector for cruises. It seems like 2018 is going to be the benchmark of the cruising era in India," he says.

When asked if Mumbai-Goa-Mumbai cruise would affect business, Banerjee said, "Domestic cruises have always been a booster to the outbound cruise market by building an appetite for the customer. India is predominantly a very attractive travel market. Thanks to all the stakeholders of the cruise industry and their initiative, cruise as a travel option is growing in popularity. My opinion is



lan Banerjee Director Global Anchor Cruises

that India has just produced 7-10 per cent of its potential or as we say in the cruise lingo, 'We have just lifted up the anchor'."

Global Anchor Cruises is excited for the year ahead. While 2017, as per Banerjee, has been its best year yet, 2018 is expected to be even bigger. "We saw our greatest leap in sales and numbers, being the highest seller for one of the most luxury cruise brands in the country. We have built a perfect blend of premium to luxury brands, giving exciting voyages from the popu-

lar to the unchartered giving options for cruising on the oceans, rivers and the Polars," he adds.

He has seen progress

in terms of awareness among the travel fraternity beyond popular cruising regions of the Mediterranean such as Alaska, the Caribbean, offbeat destinations of South America and Antarctica. River cruises have also gained popularity on Mekong River, European rivers and of course, the Amazon. "We thank our travel partners for their continued support in our journey of promoting cruise travel. With cruises gaining its popularity, we believe that passengers now understand that cruising is the next best way to see the world. We are amazed to see bookings for 2018 as guests have selected offers for their travel already. Also, the myth that only elderly guests travel on cruises is now busted as Gen-X is increasingly booking premium cruise liners," Banerjee adds.

Luxury ferry in Goa

Travel agents can make bulk bookings for their clients in advance through a separate login access to book and pay for seats on the new luxury ferry by Drishti Marine.

HAZEL JAIN

Goa's Drishti Marine has recently launched premium passenger ferry services within Goa for tourists as well as locals on two luxurious 40-seater, high-speed catamarans. In the first phase, Drishti Marine commenced operations between the Airport Ferry Terminal (AFT) Vasco, Panaji and Old Goa. Phase two included Baga and Fort Aquada.

Savio Mathias, Vice President - Business Development, Drishti Marine, shares details about how they have worked with travel agents for this. "Drishti Ferry is an exciting experience that travel agents can suggest to their clients. We are jointly working with several travel agencies in Goa and other cities to provide the best packages to tourists and corporates who plan on visiting Goa," he says. The company is also working closely with Goa Tourism Development Corporation. "The tourism board sees us as their long-term associate in their of-



Savio Mathias Vice President – Business Development, Drishti Marine

fer to promote tourism in Goa. We believe that Goa will continue to see an explosive rise in tourism, and providing an alternate water-based transportation will share the load of the additional traffic. The full effectiveness of our service will be felt only once all the floating jetties and routes are operational. We will also have special services catering only to the MICE market," Mathias says.

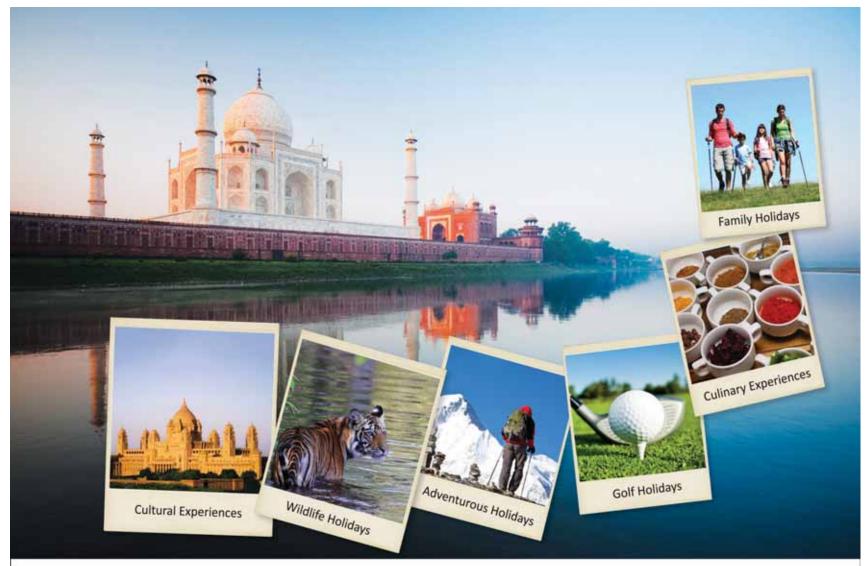
The ferries have plush seating, bathrooms, charging points and safety belts. Air conditioned passenger lounge and waiting areas, onboard baggage assistance

with free Wi-Fi and packaged F&B are available on-board. The crew on-board include trained lifeguards. Tickets can be booked online and can also be purchased at the time of boarding at the terminals. The services will be shut from June to September.

Mathias adds, "Drishti intends to set up Temporary Floating Jetties across Goa's beautiful waterfronts. The units for these jetties have already been procured and are in Goa. A key component of our vision is to ensure that everything we do is in harmony with the environment."

Routes and rates

- Panjim (Captain of Ports) to Old Goa: `100 (non AC) and `150 (AC)
- Airport Ferry Terminal to Panaji: `500 (non AC) and `800 (AC)
- Old Goa to Airport Ferry Terminal: `550 (non AC) and `850 (AC)





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Punjabi flavours aplenty at Ranjitvilas

Ranjitvilas offers a distinct flavour of world-class hospitality while remaining deeply rooted to its Indian Punjabi heritage. Sanjeev K Nayar, General Manager, WelcomHeritage Hotels, tells TRAVTALK about this unique farm stay and their focus on attracting domestic tourists to the property.



QWhat distinguishes Ranjitvilas from other hotels in the region?

WelcomHeritage Ranjitvilas is a unique property developed and approved by the Punjab Heritage & Tourism Promotion Board under its Farm Tourism scheme. The property features 20 exquisitely-designed Executive Rooms each with a personal courtyard and two well-appointed Suite Rooms. These 22 themed bedrooms provide an experience within themselves. Each suit features a



Sanjeev K Nayar WelcomHeritage Hotels

WelcomHeritage Ranjitvilas is different from other branded hotels as it offers its guests a great experience, the taste of rich Punjabi heritage and culture situated away from the city

king size bed with character furniture and beautifully appointed bathrooms. In addition all rooms have their own patio to relax. All the furniture used here is carved and created by the best in the trade. The live preparation of evening snacks and tea in the open courtyard adds to the ambience as does the availability of 'theka' (temporary bar setup) and also a villagetype paddle pool.

QWhat is the ideal clientele for the property?

The property is suited for both leisure as well as corporate clientele. The property has a lounge which can be converted into a meeting room for off-shore corporate meetings. Further, it provides an ambience of being in a village and offers fascinating tours of the village on a tractor. These activities are fun and engaging for leisure travellers and can act as a stress buster for corporate executives.

What were the aesthetics kept in mind for the design and concept of the property?

The owners of Ranjitvilas spent about a year in conceptualising and developing this property. The concept was to develop it as a farm house property, giving guest an insight and to bring alive the richness of Punjab's her-

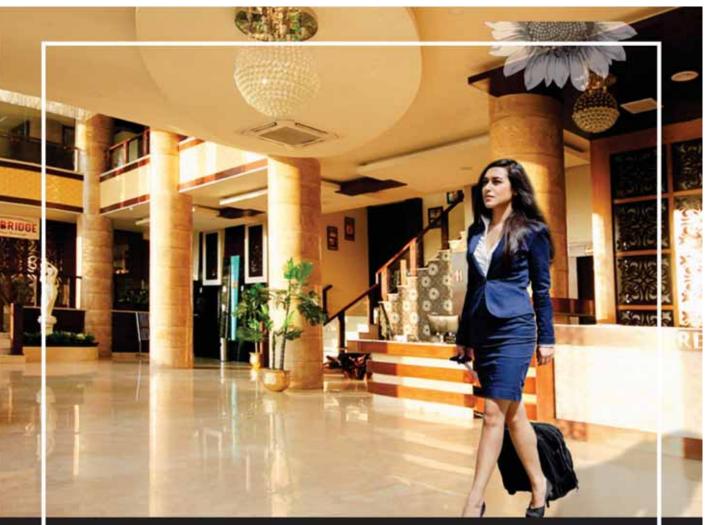
itage and 'Punjabiyat'. After completion, the property was registered with the Punjab Heritage & Tourism Promotion Board in February 2017. The property has now been flagged with WelcomHeritage brand under its Nature Resort category. The concept is to make the guest familiar with Puniab's culture by offering various activities like -

nature walks, village tour on tractor, turban tying, etc. WelcomHeritage Ranjitvilas is different from other branded hotels as it offers guests the taste of rich Punjabi heritage and culture situated away from the city's hustle bustle yet near the city centre. With the unique product offerings, farm stay, backed with efficient and quality service.

How do you engage with the travel agents for boosting sales?

We specialise in providing experience and showcase heritage. We are in the process of promoting all our hotels in prominent geographical regions like the US, UK, Scandinavian countries and the Oriental through publishing our destination in allied brochures

and tour itineraries marketed by tour operators in these regions through local DMCs. We are also focusing on the vast opportunity of domestic tourism by tying up with key wholesale operators specialising in promoting local destinations by offering them incentives and also participating in marts and roadshows in Tier II and Tier III cities with a vast potential.



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STHI targets Tier-II markets

STHI Group hosted roadshows in Raipur, Chattisgarh and Nagpur in December 2017 and looks to tap the growing needs and demands from Tier-II markets. Agents from both the cities share their views on the roadshow.



The roadshow in Nagpur was well organised by STHI Group and I have been working with them since five years. I have organised a few group tours through STHI to Malaysia and Indonesia and I've had a very good experience working with them. We are thankful to them for hosting a roadshow in Nagpur. I am mostly into conducting group tours, FITs and conferences. The information and destinations showcased at the roadshow were very informative and useful for us.



Mangalam Tours & Travels

I appreciate STHI Holidays' decision to host a roadshow in Tier-II cities of Nagpur and Raipur. This has really given a big opportunity to travel agents in Nagpur to learn about different destinations, and hotels and resorts across the country and abroad. I have been working with STHI Group since the past six years and have had a good professional experience with them. I have come from Amravati especially for the roadshow along with other mem-

ber of our association. We majorly organise tours to Dubai and Singapore.



President, Amravati Tours & Travels Association

This roadshow organised by STHI Group was very informative and helpful as it provided details about major destinations and hotels which we cater to. We have been promoting Thailand and Singapore recently to our clients in the region. The format for the roadshow was nice and I appreciate their efforts for hosting a roadshow in Nagpur. This roadshow has really assisted travel agents in a Tier-II city such as btpyatra.com

Nagpur to learn about hotels, resort

properties and destinations other

than the known ones.



Chief Executive Office



Pankai Bansal UNIGLOBE Star India Travel

fil really appreciate the efforts put in by STHI Group for organsing a roadshow here in Raipur. The roadshow was very informative and helped us get more information about hotels and destinations. We have been promoting Banyan Tree Hotels and got to know more about the brand here. We are mostly dealing in MICE business, working with STHI Group. We would want them to organise more such roadshows in Raipur. I think they should also focus

more on Australia as it is growing in popularity and has a lot to offer.



Ritech Mundhra Director Choice Holidays

The roadshow organised here by STHI Group was fantastic and for the first time, we had a variety of products showcased at one place in Raipur. We have been working closely with STHI Group and look forward to doing more business with them. The roadshows are a good platform for getting information about new products, hotels and resorts and details about destinations other than the ones we sell.

We look forward to more such informative roadshows next vear as well.



Aanchal Lunkad Operation Head Ajay Travels

The roadshow was excellent as we got to know more about new destinations promoted by STHI Group, which we will be able to sell across Chhattisgarh. We have been selling a lot of destinations through STHI Group. Bringing a roadshow of this magnitude has really opened up a universe of opportunities for travel agents in a Tier-II city like Raipur. STHI Group has also been catering to most of our business needs in the city. We look forward

to attending more such roadshows as they help us enhance our knowledge of destinations and hotel properties and help them sell better.



A SEA OF GREEN OVERLOOKING THE AGRA FORT & TAJ MAHAL



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HOTELS TRAVTALK JANUARY 2¹¹⁰ FORTNIGHT ISSUE 2018

ITDC bullish on travel and training

Piyush Tiwari, Director (Commercial & Marketing), India Tourism Development Corporation (ITDC), speaks with MVALK on the PSU's focus on The Ashok Hotel and how they are planning to develop and promote other divisions under its wings.



MICE being a big part of ITDC's success, how are you working towards promoting the same?

MICE is one of the major focus areas for our hotel business and continues to generate large revenue and bring laurels to The Ashok. Hotel contribution from MICE business is about 12 per cent. The Ashok has a collection of superbly equipped meeting and banquet venues that provide high flexibility and cater to a diverse range of convention and banquet requirements.

The Ashok is well equipped to host 300 to 3000 delegates at any point in time. Currently, we are working on providing competitive prices to our clients with no compromise on MICE facilities. We are also in the process of building a holistic environment to become a one-stop destination for MICE needs of national and international travellers, tour operators and event organisers.

QWhat are the other divisions of ITDC that you are focusing on?

ITDC is working hard to improve its overall performance by focusing on each vertical and various initiatives have been taken in this regard. A big push is being given to connect ITDC with new customers especially with younger generation through digital and social media. Steps are being taken to make ITDC website more attractive and user friendly. ITDC has already taken to digital marketing in a big way to connect with new generation of prospective clients as well as to increase its reach through very effective social media like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, etc. ITDC is introducing special packages/promotions for hotels and ATT division. We have also appointed a digital agency to ensure brand presence and engagement on all important platforms.

Another establishment on which we are keenly working is Ashok Travels and Tours

66We are also in the process of building a holistic environment to become a one-stop destination for MICE needs of national and international travellers, tour operators and event organisers. Our focus is on improving the entire experience by enhancing our venues, sound facilities as well as by providing more experienced and efficient manpower. ***

> Piyush Tiwari Director (Commercial & Marketing) India Tourism Development Corporation (ITDC)

(ATT), an IATA approved travel wing of ITDC, which is also a Ministry of Finance-authorised travel agency for booking air tickets for the officials of Government of India. We have strategic plans in the pipeline to expand the services of ATT. ITDC through ATT has recently signed an MoU with Controller General of Defence Accounts (CGDA), under which ATT will conduct the complete procedure for CGDA to create an e-ticketing platform to ensure smooth functioning of air travel needs on pan-India basis. ATT

division is also making its entry into cargo business. Ashok Institute of Hospitality and Tourism Management (AIHTM) AIHTM conducts many skill development courses under Hunar Se Rozgar (HSR) and DONER schemes.

Another establishment in limelight is 'Son et Lumiere (SEL)', Sound and Light Show Wing under ITDC. In addition to owning two sound and light shows at Purana Quila and Red Fort at New Delhi, SEL division takes up assignment of mount-

ing sound and light shows and monument lighting for various state government departments/ ASI monuments. Recently, the much-awaited light and sound show at the Sun Temple in Konark was inaugurated in collaboration with the State Tourism Department of Orissa. SEL expects to complete the implementation of SEL shows at Dal Lake in J&K, Tilyar Lake in Rohtak. Harvana and Diu Fort at Daman during the financial year. Ashok International Trade Division has opened two more Duty Free Shops i.e. one

in Krishnapatnam and other in Kakinada, taking total number of Duty Free Shops at seaport to 11. Efforts are on to open some more outlets during current financial year. AITD intends to have duty free shops in most of the major sea ports by 2018. The Ashok Events Division handled substantial number of major events/ conferences/ exhibitions in India during the year 2016-17 including National Voters' Day 2017, National Tourism Awards 2014-15, International Buddhist Conclave, International Tourism Mart - 2016 at Imphal, as well as Bharat Parv at Rajpath.

Are you also focusing on promotion of other properties under ITDC?

At present, we are focused on development of The Ashok Hotel and Hotel Samrat. Hotel Samrat is another star property under ITDC which is undergoing infrastructural developments. Renovation is underway for both the properties. Recently. Hotel Samrat re-launched its renovated swimming pool to add to guest experience.



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Cygnett Lite now in Katra

Sarbendra Sarkar, Managing Director & Founder, Cygnett Hotels & Resorts, talks about the challenges, profits and expansion plans of the hotel.

TT BUREAU

rying to cater the right product to the right audience, Sarbendra Sarkar, Managing Director Founder, Cygnett Hotels & Resorts shares his plans on expanding the business. Speaking about the kind of relationship the company shares with agents, he says, "Online travel agencies (OTA) are a major challenge for physical agents to beat the digital price. Majorly, we are interacting with OTAs but we still try to maintain a healthy and long-term relationships with physical travel agents across the globe." Providing customised offers based on the demand and supply of local market, Cygnett tries to create a winwin situation at both ends, for the company as well as the agents. However, it tries to use different performing strategies for different hotels as each hotel has its own type of audience.

Cygnett Lite, Katra will be an exciting addition to the Cygnett Hotels portfolio,



Sarbendra Sarkar Managing Director & Founder Cygnett Hotels & Resorts

The best time for our properties is from October to March as we enjoy the highest profitable growth during this period

believes Sarkar. He opines that the city of Jammu has vast potential for both business and hospitality growth, making it an obvious choice for the Cygnett Hotels brand. He says, "Cygnett always tries to provide response to its agents at the earliest and offer lucrative rates. We are trying to give different offers based on local market demands, location and dates, besides promoting our F&B outlets with good offers."

"The best time for us is from October to March as we enjoy the highest profitable growth during this period," adds Sarkar. "Having a room for every type of guest (economy to upscale), Cygnett efficiently caters to travel agents who are successfully able to cross sell our rooms for different cities."

New Additions

- 🖊 Cygnett Lite, Katra will be an exciting addition to the Cygnett Hotels' portfolio
- Cygnett Hotels Group has also signed a new hotel in Itanagar, Arunachal Pradesh under the Cygnett Inn brand
- Cygnett caters to travel agents who are able to cross sell their rooms for different cities



Showcasing Holland in totality

The Netherlands Board of Tourism & Convention (NBTC) in partnership with Jet Airways organised a six-day familiarisation trip for 13 travel agents from India to showcase not just Amsterdam but also new destinations in Holland like Zaandam, Hague, Rotterdam, Delft, Kaatsheuvel and Ermelo.





Director

familiar considered myself rather familiar with Holland after having travelled to Amsterdam for more than 10 times. But this familiarisation trip did exactly what they set out to achieve - to show that the Netherlands is so much more than Amsterdam. From the traditional town of ZaanseSchaans, to the breathtaking painting by Mesdag and the modern city of Rotterdam, the Netherlands has so much

Revel Travel Links more to offer than just the city of Amsterdam. We look forward to sending many more of our guests to this beautiful country.



Holland is a great destination for any kind of holiday, especially honeymoons. It is a small, well-connected and affordable destination. The people are friendly, straightforward and honest. Offering an outstanding gourmet experience, The Netherlands is a cheese lover's paradise, fun for vacationing and a great destination for senior citizens as it is very easy to navigate and move around. I look forward to selling it to many of my discerning clients



Director



Wanderers

Holland is a land of warm people, delicious gastronomy, colourful landscapes, cuttingedge technology and unique experiences. We visited world-class cities like Amsterdam, Rotterdam and Hague. They are all fabulous tourism destinations and at a relatively cheaper cost. My Netherlands tour was arranged professionally with a personal touch. Even the workshop where we met

some key suppliers was very well-planned. Overall, I had a great experience and enjoyed the destination a lot.

The itinerary was well designed

and it tried to cover as much as pos-

sible within a short time. This was my

first trip to Holland and a few things

stood out for me - the canal cruise.

cruise; that too with an Indian meal!

Some new attractions in Amsterdam

tination for MICE, corporate events,



existing itineraries. It is a great des- Director N Chirag Travels

family holidays, and honeymoons and a great opportunity to see beyond Amsterdam.



Director Bevond Borders

The Netherlands is a place where tradition and innovation intertwine. Cycling is an integral part of life and locals live on their bicycles. An interesting new experience 'This is Holland' is the latest attraction where guests can experience a thrilling eight-minute flight over Holland. It was a wellcurated trip where we experienced canal cruising during the day and dinner at night. The country's sec-

ond-largest metropolis, Rotterdam's nightlife makes it one of Europe's most exhilarating cities. The Dutch are the friendliest people in Europe who welcome every guest with equal enthusiasm.

Holland is not just about Amsterdam, fondly called 'The City at the Centre of the World' with many charming city spots to explore. The beauty is in its little towns away from the big city like Hague, Zaanse Sache and Delft; it is the countryside that can capture our hearts with its canals, villages, windmills, cattle and tulip farms, all in the raw. What was also nice was visiting the Scheveningen beach area. It will be amazing to see it in its true colours



Managing Partner

during the summer. On the other hand, Rotterdam is a modern harbour city which we also got to explore.







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32 TRAVTALK JANUARY 2110 FORTNIGHT ISSUE 2018

Creating a platform for growth and

At the beginning of another year, infrastructure and connectivity problems continue to plague the tourism industry. India Travel Award winners ponder upon the challenges faced by tourism stakeholders in the two regions of East and West India and suggest the way forward for tourism growth.



▶ DDP Game Changer—Mahesh Shirodkar

Demonetisation & GST slowdown tourism growth

At Tamarind Global, the company looks at problems as exciting challenges which they must overcome to reach its goals, points out **Mahesh Shirodkar**, Managing Director, Tamarid Global. He says, "Be it infrastructure, manpower, competition or technology, we have always met our problems head on and worked towards getting sustainable long-term solutions. It is this attitude that has been one of our key motivators to reach higher and aspire to be the best in the industry." Shirodkar further explains, "There has been a marked slowdown in inbound travellers due to both international and domestic factors. The domestic market has also seen some volatility. However, we look forward to a positive 2018."





In Tier-I markets, it is quite obvious to get full support from our partners in adapting these solutions, but Tier-II and III cities pose challenges at times.

▶ Best Global Distribution System–Travelport Galileo

Tap the limitless potential of the North East

The rugged landscapes and rich tribal heritage of the northeastern region remain vastly unexplored, according to **Sandeep Dwivedi**, Chief Operating Officer, InterGlobe Technology Quotient. "As a leading technology provider, our aim is to make

day-to-day business operations at a travel agency more efficient and less strenuous. To continue this approach, we ensure that our customers from travel agents to travel management companies must be technologically sound to embrace the change we are bringing to the industry. In Tier-I markets, it is quite obvious to get full support from our partners in adapting these solutions, but Tier-II and III cities pose challenges at times," says Dwivedi.

▶ Best Travel Management Company—Choice Holidays India

Needs a proper development plan for East

The year 2017 was a good year for tourism business overall but in the later half, after the introduction of GST, tourism growth slowed down from its usual 10-15 per cent to 5-7 per cent, informs **Ritesh Mundhera**, Chief Executive Officer, Choice Holidays India. He further points out that the local strikes in the region have also hampered tourism. "The government needs a proper step by step strategy to develop tourism in the East. There is a need to improve tourist infrastructure, and work on connectivity through rail, roads and air. Taxi permit in the region also needs to be sorted out where the taxis of one state cannot operate in another and thus, the passengers have to pay double charges," says Mundhera.



The government needs a proper step by step strategy to develop tourism in the East.



We have seen a shifting trend where clients are no longer visiting Malaysia or Singapore. However, Bangkok and Pattaya remain hot favourites.

▶ Best Destination Management Company-International— Jet Setters

Exotic destinations in demand over sea

In 2017, Jet Setters' introduction of new destinations like the Galápagos Islands and the Amazon to its market in the east was well received, informs **Tarakeshwar Singh**, Director, Jet Setters. "In 2017, the volume of business reduced while the

profits increased because we stopped catering to the masses and have focused on destinations that have high luxury quotient. We have seen a shifting trend where clients are no longer visiting Malaysia or Singapore. However, Bangkok and Pattaya remain hot favourites. Turkey and Egypt have picked up really well amongst travellers from the east," Singh says, adding that there is a need for travel associations to address the problems of travel agents.

▶ Best Boutique Tour Operator—Nexus Travels

Evolve to stay relevant today

Vicky Ray, Director, Nexus Travels, elaborates that in a world of instant gratification, customers expect instant customer service and on the other hand, can take to the internet to share their displeasure at less than satisfactory service just as quickly. He says, "These are hard times for small-sized travel agencies as well as for those looking to break into the travel industry. The traditional reasons you would approach an agency are growing less meaningful every year. The use of technology to gratify the need of information is one of the challenges that the travel agencies need to face and thus need to evolve to stay relevant."



The traditional reasons you would approach an agency are growing less meaningful every year.

relevance in the age of technology

▶ Best Experiential Tour Operator—Cox & Kings

Self-drive vacations driving high on popularity

Western India is a key source market when it comes to travel, believes **Karan Anand**, Head—Relationships, Cox & Kings. He points out that people, particularly from Gujarat and Maharashtra, have high disposable incomes and as they are avid travellers, the market in the region is growing in higher double digits. Since experiential travel is on the rise, Anand explains, "Self-driven vacations are one of the popular forms of experiential travel. Gourmet holidays, engaging with local communities at the destination and learning different cultures and traditions have come up high on the traveller's priority list."



Since experiential travel is on the rise, self-driven vacations are one of the popular forms of experiential travel.



The world is bullish on India. With the advent of technology, the world has become one and everything is transparent.

Most Trending Personality—Nagsri Prasad Sashidhar

Correct portrayal of tourism industry essential for growth

The tourism industry has to be taken seriously and it is the responsibility of travel industry professionals to portray it correctly to provide it impetus to grow, believes, **Nagsri Prasad Sashidhar**, Head-Outbound Holidays, Mercury Travels. She points out that the industry has grown and changed both in terms of technology and market trends. She says, "If I have been nominated as a trendsetter in the industry, I am responsible to ensure that we march ahead in the right direction. Earlier, there were fewer travel agents in comparison to today where travel agents are mushrooming everywhere. The world is bullish on India. With the advent of technology, the world has become one and everything is transparent."

▶ Best General Manager—Sanjay Kaushik

Conflict within the industry brings down business

The hospitality industry has fared exceptionally well this year because of the government's support in various initiatives, points out **Sanjay Kaushik**, General Manager, Crowne Plaza Ahmedabad City Centre. He says, "Conventional hoteliers stick to textbook ways of working but in today's competitive market, a lot of innovation is required. Leaders should expand their horizons." Kaushik further identifies the issues in the hospitality industry and explains, "The hotels, in panic, have started undercutting the rates and offering more benefits at a lower cost without proper probing. Even if the customer has a propensity to spend, they end up spending less due to competition among brands."



Conventional hoteliers stick to textbook ways of working but in today's competitive market, a lot of innovation is required.



Many of the tourism websites are foreign based and their tax/GST structure is different, thereby posing a challenge to the Indian traditional travel agent.

▶ Best Tour Operator—Napolitan Travel Agency

Booking pattern of travellers shifts from offline to online

With access to a pool of information on the internet, the buying behaviour of the travellers has changed over the years, points out **Bahram Pashutanizadeh**, Managing Director, Napolitan Travel Agency. He says, "Travel agents find that tourists are either very well informed prior to approaching them or use them merely as a source for detailed information, following which they make bookings online themselves. Many of the tourism websites are foreign based and their tax/GST structure is different because of which the customers have to pay less, thereby posing a challenge to the Indian traditional travel agent."

▶ Best Customised Tour Operator—Ice Cubes Holidays

Decentralise services to boost tourism in East

East India is in need of better branding and focus in order to re-position itself prominently on the tourism map, believes **Jaspreet Singh Bhatia**, Director, Ice Cubes Holidays. He says, "There is a need of decentralisation of services to boost the eastern region for tourism. There is a lack of opportunity for travel agents in the east. If we look deeper, infrastructure and air connectivity remain a challenge. Unfortunately, while the limelight is garnered by north and west India, the tourism potential of the east is lost." He points out, "We are building infrastructure with a planning of only five years which actually has to done with a foresight of at least 50 years," he adds.



We are building infrastructure with a planning of only five years which actually has to done with a foresight of at least 50 years.

STHI Group celebrates with agents The STHI Group recently hosted roadshows for travel agents in Raipur, Chhattisgarh and Nagpur, Maharashtra. The roadshow saw many travel

agents in attendance who had come together to generate leads and learn more about the products on showcase, destinations, and hotels and resorts. With these roadshows, the STHI Group looks to tap the growing needs and demands from Tier-II markets.

















Al chatbots now at your service

Deep Kalra, Founder & CEO, MakeMyTrip, talks about their new chatbots powered by Artificial Intelligence offering multilingual support to their customers.



he invention of new technologies is a requisite for today's companies, especially for OTAs to keep up with the demands of the industry. Deep Kalra, Founder & CEO, MakeMyTrip says, "Several new things are going on, but we are most excited about our technology as we have launched new chatbots.

now contributes 57 per cent of revenue, while air is 33 per cent. It is very important because that is how we acquire our customers, but hotel and package is where the market is moving. Buses are the third segment, and this is where you would see the growth. We also keep looking at opportunities in travel and tourism, especially technology-enabled ones." claimed Kalra.

Talking on the sidelines of CII's Annual Tourism Summit, which focused on sustainability, he said, "I think it is the need of the hour. If you don't look at tourism through a sustainability lens, we are going to ruin every tourist spot. We have to make sure that the footprint, which is caused by tourism, is totally taken care of. While the primary responsibility lies with Ministry of Tourism, but as

a private player, we need to reiterate our support wherever required."

Quick Facts

- MakeMyTrip, Goibibo and RedBus integration is now complete
- Their hotel segment, now contributes 57 per cent of revenue, while air is 33 per cent.

Reviving the lost glory of Uttarakhand tourism

■ The fifth official meet of Uttarakhand Tourism Professionals Association (UTPA) was conducted at Garhwal Bhawan, Jhandewala,

Ravi Gosain, President, UTPA inaugurated the event while rest of the office bearers shared the dice. The organisation is a group of hospitality professionals who migrated from Uttarakhand for earnings but never went back. While this migration ruined many villages, UTPA emerged as a hope for every Uttrakhandi native who in hospitality sector can regain

the old glory, save its culture, charm and villages. As per the Initiative taken by the core committee, the body now has over 160 registered members who wish to contribute in the hospitality sector in Uttarakhand.

UTPA also initiated the liaison with Uttarakhand Tourism Development Board (UTDB). There is a lot more to be done in the future to strengthen the organisation as well as in the field of hospitality in the state. The event turned out to be a huge success.



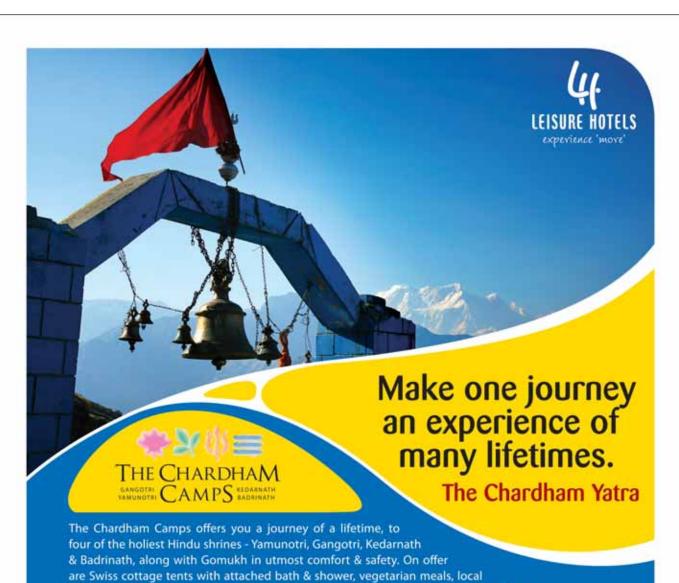
MakeMyTrip

The GIA chatbot, which is Goibibo assistant. serves clients when they are talking to them and parametrise the typical issues that people have after they have made a booking

These will be artificial intelligence enabled bots online. It would mean that now our post sell queries are being serviced by chatbots. There is a chatbot called GIA, which is Goibibo assistant, which will serve clients when they are talking to them and parametrise the typical issues that people have after they have made a booking."

He claimed that they are going to see a lot of growth in this segment. "We also want to take this from chat post sales to the voice post sales and even chat commerce. Thus, the future is all about artificial intelligence. The chatbot has already been live for three months," informed Kalra.

Calling 2017 as a landmark vear for them. Kalra said, "We did a large M&A with Goibibo on RedBus, which was owned by Nass Bus. Now, it is entirely in the same family-MakeMyTrip, Goibibo and RedBus all leading brands that happened early last year. The integration is now complete and growth has continued. Our hotel segment, which is the most valuable segment,





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guides and private transport. Stay in the century old Haveli Hari Ganga, Ganga Lahari

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MULTI-CUISINE VEGETARIAN RESTAURANT - ARTI ON THE GANGES - BHAJAN & KIRTAN - MEDITATION - ESCORTED SHRINE VISITS

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Bahrain targets growth from India

Bahrain Tourism recently hosted roadshows in Mumbai and Delhi with plans to increase its activities in India in 2018 and woo more Indian tourists.

TT BUREAU

Bahrain Tourism & Exhibitions Authority hosted twocity roadshow in Mumbai and Delhi. Around 18 partners from Bahrain including DMCs and hotels assembled to meet the travel agents in India. Speaking at the roadshow, Yousef Mohammed AlKhan, Director of Tourism Marketing & Promotion, Bahrain Tourism & Exhibitions Authority said, "With these roadshows, we would want to bring more numbers from the Indian market to Bahrain. In Bahrain we are working on new products like pro-diving activity, water sports, adrenaline sports, indoor sky diving. etc. We believe we have a bit of everything for the Indian market in terms of culture, history and new attractions coming out for the millennial. We are concentrating more on family groups, weddings segment and MICE travellers. We have a dedicated team focused on the wedding sector as this seg-



Yousef Mohammed AlKhan Director of Tourism Marketing & Promotion Rahrain Tourism & Exhibitions Authority

ment has been growing from the India market."

Bahrain looks forward to welcoming more Indian weddings to the country. "We have had a good growth from India in 2017 as compared to 2016. We will be marketing Bahrain aggressively in 2018. Initially, we will be looking at cities from India where we have direct flights. We have also eased the visa process for Indian passport holders which can be applied online too."

Indonesia to add new hotspots

Visit Indonesia Tourism Office in India recently concluded its Sales Mission in New Delhi to thank travel partners for their support. In 2018, the tourism board is introducing newer destinations beyond Bali.

TT BUREAU

Till October 2017, sia recorded 396,000 Indian visitors to the destination, registering a 25 per cent YOY growth in 2017, informs Saniav Sondhi, Country Manager, Visit Indonesia Tourism Office-India. He points out that even though the airport at Bali was closed briefly due to volcanic activities, the confidence is back among travellers as the destination has started receiving tourists. "We want to thank our travel partners for their continued support through the times of crisis and in building the confidence to travel to Bali. We hope to reach our target of 460,000 Indian tourists by the end of season. We are hoping to add on newer segments like Bollywood tourism in the coming year. The MICE travel segment also did very well and we hope to continue the same trend in 2018," he says.

Sondhi further points out that there has been an increase in the length of stay of Indian guests from five nights to six nights and more. "With the in-



Sanjay Sondhi Country Manager, Visit Indonesia Tourism Office—India

The MICE travel segment also did very well and we hope to continue the same trend in 2018

troduction of more destinations beyond Bali, we are hoping to extend the duration of stay to up to 8-9 nights. Bali remains to be the most sought after destination amongst Indians where a 3-4 nights package is common. However, in 2018, we are hoping that travel agents can introduce 3-4 additional nights to newer destinations like Lom-



Pradeep Chauhan Assistant General Managei Garuda Indonesia

In 2018, we will be the first carrier to offer a direct service to Indonesia from Mumbai

bok. Flores. Komodo Dragon Island, Jakarta, etc. in their itineraries," he adds.

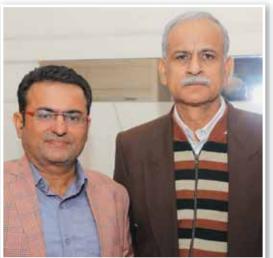
Visit Indonesia's marketing strategy for 2018 is to go digital to drive the demand through consumer activities. The tourism board also conducted a consumer promotion activity at the Select City Walk Mall in New Delhi to increase visibility of the destination in the consumer market. Talking about connectivity, Sondhi comments, "At the moment, there is no direct connectivity between India and Indonesia though technical hauls exist through Kuala Lumpur and Bangkok. However, Garuda Indonesia has recently announced the induction of a new aircraft to their fleet and may put it into service on Mumbai-Denpasar direct connection in the first quarter of 2018."

Garuda Indonesia has big plans for the Indian market in 2018. The airline is planning to introduce a direct service between the two countries to cater to the demand and also increase the number of Indian tourist arrivals to the destination. Pradeep Chauhan, Assistant GM. Garuda Indonesia. says, "Subject to government approval, in 2018, we will be the first carrier to offer a direct service to Indonesia from Mumbai in India and hopefully at a later stage, we'll also consider flights from Delhi to Indonesian sectors."

Indonesia thanks trade for support

The Ministry of Tourism, Republic of Indonesia concluded its Sales Mission in New Delhi, thanking its travel trade partners in India for their continued support to the destination. Visit Indonesia Tourism Office in India also apprised the trade about what's new in 2018 from Indonesia for India.





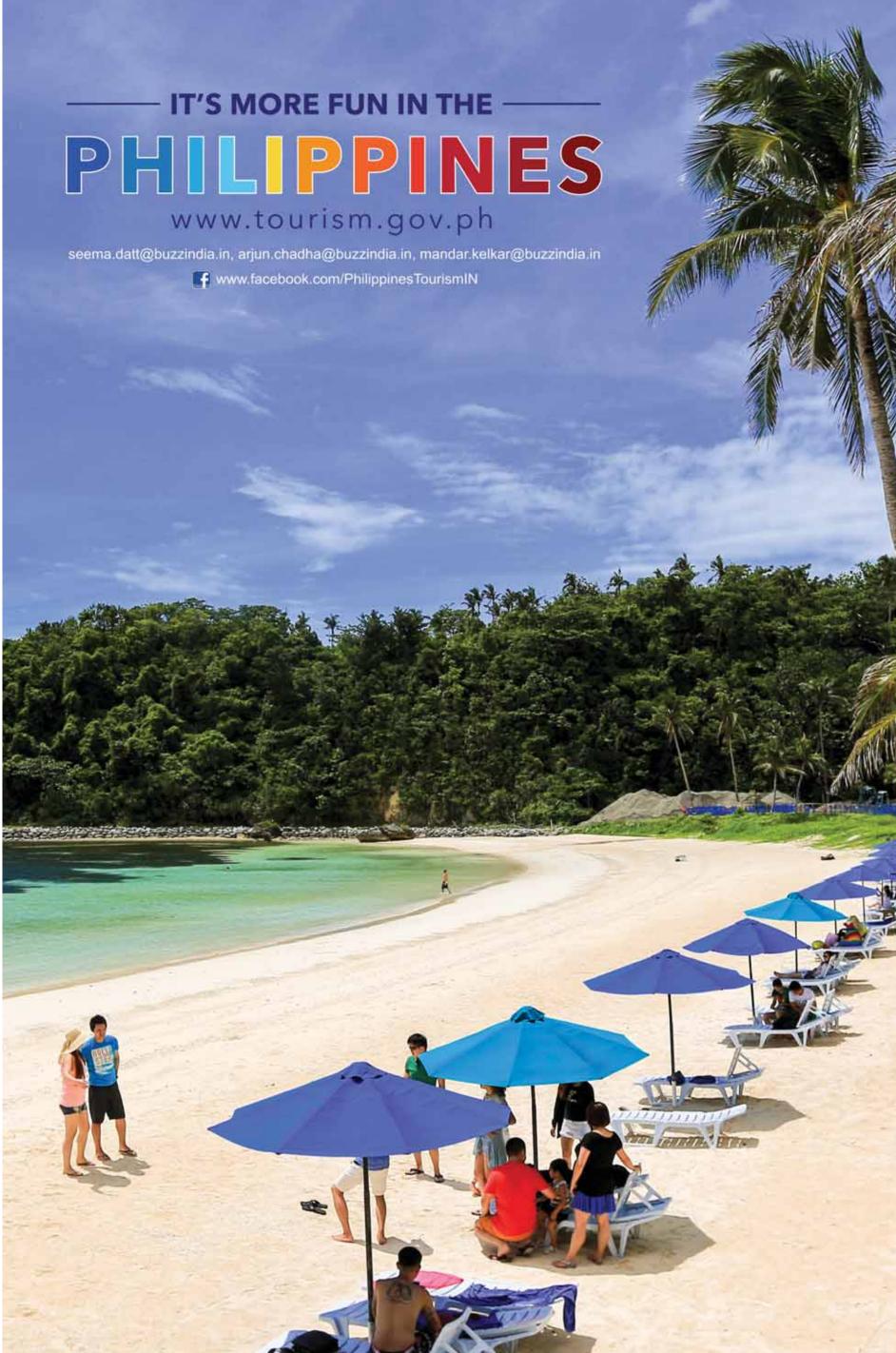












Jet enters historic tie-up | Training gets interactive

The agreement involving four airlines has an annual incremental revenue potential of over \$1 billion for the Indian airline with seamless connectivity between India and Europe.



fter beginning a three-way Apartnership in 2014 and then expanding it in 2016, the Jet Airways, Air France-KLM trio has once again enhanced its co-operation to include terms that has no precedent in the Indian aviation yet. Apart from offering an annual incremental revenue potential of over \$1 billion for the Indian airline, this four-sided, metalneutral agreement opens up 106 destinations in Europe, 44 cities in India and more than 200 connections in North America for the Indian traveller.

Explaining this is Jean-Marc Janaillac, Chairman and CEO, Air France-KLM, who said, "For the first time, this innovative agreement will offer connections between two partnerships- the enhanced cooperation agreement for India-Europe between us and Jet Airways, and Air France-KLM and Delta Air Lines' Europe-North American joint venture." Jet Airways, Air France, KLM and Delta Air Lines will thus connect India



vast transatlantic network via the Paris-Charles de Gaulle and Amsterdam-Schiphol hubs.

Speaking about the benefits India will reap through this, Naresh Goyal, Chairman, Jet Airways, added, "This partnership will be very good for our Indian customers, whether it is the travel trade or the direct traveller. We will, of course, continue to have a great relationship with our partner Etihad Airways. That partnership will remain undisturbed. I don't know of any other country that has a more liberal aviation policy than India." This metal-neu-

trality implies that a passenger

can travel to one gateway and

return from another gateway

on any of the four airlines.

London frequency to third daily, Jet Airways is now looking for a Delhi-London slot.

What this tie-up offers

- Increased capacity between Paris, Amsterdam and India and improved connecting opportunities through adapted flight times via Paris-Charles de Gaulle, Amsterdam-Schiphol as well as Mumbai, Delhi, Bengaluru and Chennai
- A seamless experience between the networks of Jet Airways, Air France and KLM

Globus & Cosmos has changed the way it interacts with its travel partners by training them through educational guizzes and talk shows.

TT BUREAU

he Globus Family of Brands (India) recently conducted its annual training programme for the frontline staff of travel agencies across 19 cities. But it was not just a regular PowerPoint presentation. In its effort to do something different, the company transformed its product presentation to a quiz!

Conducting these sessions was Abira Sinha, Re-

gional Sales Manager - India, Globus Family of Brands (India). Explaining the new technique that the company has adopted, she says, "To be able to sell any product or to even understand it. training is imperative. We have been training agents for the last 10 years where the format was typically like a presentation. This year, we wanted to do something totally different because everyone switches off after a PowerPoint presentation. That is why we did



Abira Sinha Regional Sales Manager – India, Globus Family of Brands (India)

the entire format in a quiz this time with teams competing against it each."

However, the company has had variations in the way the presentations were done. One year, it concentrated only on selling skills. Another year, it had a mega quiz where it conducted a competition among agents across India with a grand prize of `1 lakh for the winning team. The cities included Mumbai with two sessions, Kolkata, Delhi, Pune, Ahmedabad, Hyderabad, Coimbatore, Kochi, Jaipur and Lucknow.

Five cities witness 'Banter with Big Ben'



The Globus Family of Brands's interactive session in the format of a talk show was held with one of its most senior tour directors, Benjamin Deham. Titled 'Banter with Big Ben' the event featured the Belgian tour director who spoke about what happens behind the scenes during every tour. Sinha explains, "We took this show to five cities across India that included Mumbai, New Delhi, Chennai, Bengaluru and Kolkata. The tour director can make a significant difference to the quality of the tour. He can really make or break it.'

Residence opens doors to agents

The Residence recently hosted an exclusive cocktail and dinner for a few travel agents in Mumbai to thank them for their support. Anjum Lokhandwala, Founder & Director, Outbound Konnections, was the host for the evening that welcomed about 10 trade partners from the industry.















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Tourists are, by far, heterogenous

Going by travel agents' and tour operators' jargon, it seems the tourism industry has become unwieldy in terms of 'real time earnings'. Has the time come when travel agents should concentrate on special client segments?





Former Secretary & Permanent

One of the mega trends in the tourism industry today is 'specialisation' to meet the specific needs of discerning new-age travellers. The tourism industry, it was said, has become a market of one. However, it is not an 'either', 'or' situation. The huge segment of mass tourism still depends on conventional operators to service their demands. Ultimately, survival will depend on the quality of service and innovations of the service providers. That is the key.



Subhash Goyal Chairman STIC Travel Group

Segmentation of tourism clients is essential today. The Indian tourism industry is facing enormous challenges with the emergence of online travel agents. With customers now able to book their tickets and packages online, only those travel agents and tour operators will survive who adapt themselves to change and specialise in different aspects of tourism like adventure tourism, religious tourism, medical tourism,

Meetings Incentives Conferences & Events (MICE), etc. This is the reason why we are seeing increasing segmentation in the tourism industry.



Sarab Jit Singh MD

The internet has dramatically changed the travel industry's work scenario. It has ensured that today's travellers have quick access to all their travel-related information. This includes services earlier provided by agents and tour operators. This situation makes agents somewhat redundant, so to stay afloat they need to focus on clients' special needs for all sorts of holidays. Today's tourists seek more 'experiences' rather than

just seeing monuments and other routine tourist attractions. So it's important to segment them, identity their needs and provide quality inputs to cater to those needs.

Since today's clients are well aware of what they want from their holidays, agents and tour operators should use this as their work-plan and act accordingly. They have to focus on clients individually and ensure they fulfil their individual needs. General work systems won't serve the purpose in the current scenario. There's a need to be specific in terms of services provided. The emphasis should be on providing exactly what



Past President, Indian Association of Tour Operators

clients want as per their taste, interest and budget. The industry has to focus on special client segments to have an edge over competition.

Today's competitive scenario makes it essential for agents and tour operators to focus on special client segments. While segmenting and segregating clients isn't easy, it is essential. An organisation can then use its resources to the optimum level, both for generating business and profitability. The time has come when agents should seriously consider introducing the practice of implementing 'commitment deposits' to test clients' seriousness. The amounts could be adjusted

against services provided. General 'client-servicing' is no longer going to yield optimal dividends.



Neptune Travco

and this is especially true of the travel industry which has been evolving for the last decade. The advent of the worldwide web, easy online access, shrinking boundaries, B2B specialists and dynamic pricing have all combined to give the industry clients a distinct edge in terms of information, pricing and quality. Agents who have adapted Punam Singh and focused on their strengths have Associate progressed. One has to specialise in certain categories, destinations,

"Nothing is constant except change"



segments and products, and have a robust online selling mechanism, as that's the current trend.

Agents revel in UAE's cultural hub

Travel agents from across India recently travelled to Sharjah on a Fam trip to experience the cultural hub of the Middle East. Hosted by Outbound Konnections in collaboration with Sharjah Commerce and Tourism Development Authority, the agents indulged in local flavours of this emirate.

















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GST remains a top concern for IATO members, informs Pronab Sarkar, President, IATO, and hopes to get all such issues resolved by this year.



Speaking at the IATO Luncheon organised for members, Pronab Sarkar said that they have not only met the Ministry of Tourism but also Ministry of Finance regarding issues related to GST. "We have briefed that there are two points still pending under GST. First, with agent to agent, there has to be a waiver to avoid double taxation. Secondly, the government has proposed to give us ITC in place of CENVAT credit, and IATO is looking for ITC to be given with other states as well. Only then the benefit that comes to tour operators will be justified. For small tour operators registering in each state and having their offices there as well to apply for ITC, will be a cumbersome job," he detailed.

Rajiv Mehra, Vice President. IATO, added that their agenda this time was to discuss problems that IATO members were facing like GST, security, roadshows and



Pronab Sarkai

closure of MOT's overseas offices. "We will be taking up some of these issues with the government and hopefully, something will be happening on that shortly," he assured.

Sarkar further applauded the Directorate General of Foreign Trade's Service Exports from India Scheme (SEIS), under which tour operators could get the benefit for earning foreign exchange like many other service sectors. The rate of reward under SEIS for tour operators increased from 5 per cent to 7 per cent, while for ho-



Rajiv Mehra

tels it has changed from 3 per cent to 5 per cent. Sarkar said, "With this scheme, the government has acknowledged that tourism is a prime body, which earns a valuable foreign exchange. To encourage them, they have given this benefit, which was earlier 5 per cent, used to be given in form of scrips. These scrips can be sold in the market to importers, allowing tour operators to make some money. We are happy that it has now increased to 7 per cent and operators can apply for it by March 31, 2018."

IATO's plans for members | 'Delhi most tourist-friendly'

World Travel & Tourism Council-India Initiative (WTTC-II) in association with Hotelivate acknowledged representatives from top states in its recently released survey.

TT BUREAU

elhi emerged as the consolidated winner in the WTTC-II and Hotelivate's fifth edition of State Ranking Survey 2017 and was named Destination Leader at the launch event held at The Park. New Delhi. All the Indian states were rated on 11 key parameters including state expenditure on tourism, tourist visits, presence of branded hotel rooms, GSDP per capita, effectiveness of marketing campaign, urbanisation, road and railway infrastructure, aircraft movement, ease of doing business and intangible aspects.

The event was attended by Rashmi Verma, Secretary, Ministry of Tourism and Satyajeet Rajan, Director General, Ministry of Tourism. Also present at the evening were senior representatives from the tourism departments. Since the North East did not fare well as compared to other states owing to limited road and air connectivity, there was a separate list of these states, in which Sikkim was



Rashmi Verma Secretary, Ministry of Tourism Government of India

declared the winner in terms of overall performance.

Rajiv Bansal, Chairman, WTTC-II, said, "This event is the culmination of two years of hard work in which we have assessed and ranked states on various metrics of their performance in promoting travel and tourism. We've looked at a variety of factors such as literacy, infrastructure, policy initiatives, allocation in the budgets, social programmes, and tried to rank the states in terms of how they fared earlier, what they



WTTC-II

did earlier and how they look today in comparison."

Verma said, "It's a very good initiative as it brings out a sense of competition amongst the states, bringing to fore the strengths and weaknesses of states in the tourism sector. All the states should do a lot of introspection, so that they know which parameters they need to work on. There is a need to give more budget allocation by the states to the tourism sector, so that world-class infrastructure could be developed in all the states."

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NTO

Cuddling with the koalas

Actor-couple Anusha Dandekar and Karan Kundra were recently holidaying in South Australia's capital Adeliaide where they indulged in exciting activities like wine tasting and cuddling with the koalas, Aus-



tralia's native mammal. They also tried dirt quad biking at Vivonne
Bay on Kangaroo Island, spotted wildlife
at a national park and even
scaled the island's landmark Remarkable Rocks.
The couple were hosted
on a week-long holiday
by the South Australian

Tourism Commission.



From place to people

Shifting its focus from products to people, Singapore Tourism Board's campaign 'Passion Made Possible' is now set to revolve around the interests of Indian travellers.

HAZEL JAIN

For a destination as evolved as Singapore, this seems like the next logical step. Singapore Tourism Board (STB) recently underwent a change of brand identity with 'Passion Made Possible' as its new tagline. Lionel Yeo, Chief Executive, STB, says, "This was done because of our shift in focus to go beyond tourism from products to people, especially con-

sidering how familiar the Indian traveller is with Singapore. We wanted to talk about the spirit of people which allows us to tell a richer, fuller story. The Indian traveller is more evolved now and there is a shift from merely doing things to focusing on their interests and passions."

Singapore received 16.4 million international visitors in 2016. Of this, about 1.1 million were from India. This



Lionel Yeo Chief Executive Singapore Tourism Board

India is our number one source market for cruise tourism. In 2016, we recorded a growth of 29 per cent in Indians visiting Singapore just for cruising

makes India one of the top five source markets for Singapore. These figures show positive growth in 2017. In the first eight months, from January until August, the numbers were up by 14 per cent for the Indian market, which indicates that India has been outperforming the rest of Singapore's source markets.

Yeo elaborates, "India is our number one source market for cruise tourism. In 2016, we recorded a growth of 29 per cent in Indians visiting Singapore just for cruising. But targeting major events remains our strategy since it can be a huge tourism driver. We want to host more sporting and musical events. We are also seeing immense growth in the incentive seament from India, Of course, wedding is a lucrative market. But we are stepping in for pre and post wedding plans, and not the actual wedding event."

STB recently conducted a city-wide cultural and gastronomy festival bringing the flavour of Singapore to Mumbai. It plans to continue with activities that involve the direct consumer in accordance with the new branding. This implies an increase in budgets for the India market, as confirmed by **GB Srithar**, Regional Director – SAMEA, STB.







EVENT TALK

JANUARY 2018

Akquasun Roadshow	Kolkata	15
GPS	Nagpur	15-17
U&I Roadshow	Mumbai	16
Akquasun Roadshow	Delhi	16
Penang Roadshow	Kolkata	17
JNTO B2B Trade Seminar	Mumbai	17
Akquasun Roadshow	Ahmedabad	17
FITUR	Madrid, Spain	17-21
Akquasun Roadshow	Chennai	18
OTM	Mumbai	18-20
Destination East	Kolkata	18-19
Penang Roadshow	Delhi	19
Tourism & Hospitality Skill Council Mega Job Fair	Delhi	19
Jharkhand Travel Mart	Ranchi	19-21
Penang Roadshow	Mumbai	22
Singapore Tourism Roadshow	Mumbai	23
Penang Roadshow	Bengaluru	24
Singapore Tourism Roadshow	Jaipur	25
EMITT	Istanbul, Turkey	25-28
India International Travel Exhibition (IITE)	Nagpur	27-29
Adventure Sports Expo Asia	Delhi	27-29
Dusit International India Office Roadshow	Mumbai	29
Philippines Business Mission	Chennai	29
Dusit International India Office Roadshow	Bengaluru	30
Tourism Events Queensland B2B Workshop	Chennai	30
JNTO B2B Trade Seminar	Delhi	30
CAPA India Aviation Summit	Mumbai	30-Feb 1
Tourism Events Queensland	Bengaluru	31
SATTE	Delhi	31-Feb 2

FEBRUARY 2018

Tourism Events Queensland B2B Workshop	Hyderabad	2
India Travel Mart (ITM)	Chennai	3-5
ANTO B2B workshop	Mumbai	5-6
IBTM	Abu Dhabi, UAE	5-7
VisitBritain Networking Dinner	Mumbai	6
ANTO B2B workshop	Bengaluru	7
ANTO B2B workshop	Delhi	8-9
Mysore Travel Mart	Mysore	9-12
BIT	Milan, Italy	11-13
South African Tourism Roadshow	Mumbai	12-13
South African Tourism Roadshow	Kolkata	14
South African Tourism Roadshow	Bengaluru	15
South African Tourism Roadshow	Delhi	16
TTF	Chennai	16-18
South African Tourism Roadshow	Ahmedabad	19
Tourism Events Queensland B2B Workshop	Pune	20
AIME 2018	Melbourne, Australia	20-21
TTE	London, UK	21-22
BTS	London, UK	21-22
ACE of M.I.C.E.	Istanbul, Turkey	21-23
PATA Adventure Travel & Responsible Tourism Conference & Mart	Abu Dhabi, UAE	21-23
ENIT Italy B2B Roadshow	Mumbai	21
Tourism Events Queensland B2B Workshop	Ahmedabad	22
ENIT Italy B2B Roadshow	Kolkata	23
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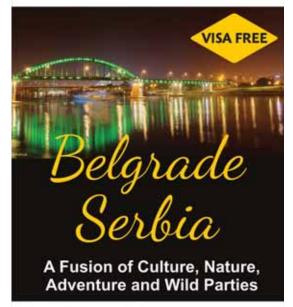
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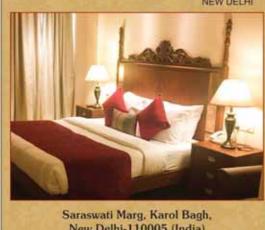
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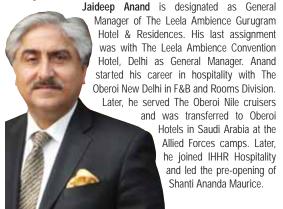
Delhi-NCR

dnata Travel India has appointed **Preetham Kiron** as Managing Director, based at the company's headquarters in Delhi-NCR.



The Leela Ambience Gurugram Hotel & Residences

Gurugram



Courtyard by Marriott

Agra

Gagandeep Singh has been appointed as the General Manager of Courtyard by Marriott Hotel, Agra. Besides, focusing on parameters that drive revenue and profitability, he puts serving

community and people first. Additionally, he works toward reducing carbon footprints of an organisation. Singh has over 15 years of experience in the core hospitality and customer oriented operations with hotel chains like InterContinental Hotel Group, Sarovar Hotel & Resorts and AccorHotels.

Prior to joining Marriott International,

o joining Marriott International, he held the role of General Manager at Holiday Inn Jaipur City Centre.

India Expo Centre

Delhi-NCR

Subhash Rana joins India Expo Centre as Additional General Manager—Marketing. An alumnus of Indian Institute of Foreign



Hyatt Regency Delhi

New Delhi

Hyatt Regency Delhi has appointed **Mohit Kanwal** as Director of Sales and Marketing. He brings more than 18 years of experience



The Westin Kolkata Rajarhat

Kolkata

Suman Julka has joined The Westin Kolkata Rajarhat as Director of Sales and Marketing. Armed with over 18 years of experience

across various sectors, Julka began her career as Guest Service Officer at Grand Hyatt Delhi, after completing her graduation from Delhi University. Over the years, she's worked at Hyatt Regency Kathmandu, Hyatt Regency Delhi, Hotel Soul Vacation, Goa, The Grand New Delhi, The Westin Gurgaon and Hyatt Regency Gurgaon before joining The Westin Kolkata Rajarhat. In addition to sales, Julka is responsible for managing the business at the hotel.

The Westin Pune Koregaon Park

Pune

Kunal Dewan has been appointed as Director of Sales & Marketing at The Westin Pune Koregaon Park. Dewan is known for his in-depth

understanding of international sales and marketing and changing business dynamics. Prior to this, he was heading the Sales & Marketing function at Le Meridien Gurgaon Delhi NCR. With a certificate of honour, Dewan holds a post graduate degree in International Hospitality Management from Les Roches, School of Hotel Management, Crans-Montana, Switzerland and has collected multiple awards both internal and external for his initiatives and excellent financial results year on year.

The Westin Gurgaon

New Delhi

Anoop Pandey joins The Westin Gurgaon, New Delhi as Resident Manager. In his new role, Pandey will be responsible for developing

business plans and implementing new ideas to improve guest satisfaction and profitability. He oversees the daily Rooms Operations encompassing Front Office, Housekeeping, SPA and Food & Beverage. With an experience of more than 11 years in hospitality, Pandey is a seasoned professional with recognition. He had been a part of the pre-opening phase at the hotel in 2010 and has worked here for four years as Manager – Front Office.

Just Click Travels

Delhi

Anikesh Patel has been designated as Senior Manager—Contracting & Sales of Just Click Travels. He will be responsible in retaining

existing customers along with the addition of new customers on board. With already a good number of potential clients, the organisation is simply planning to create awareness of all products among them. Patel plans to include unexplored destinations to their portfolio, so that we can take first mover advantage. His focus will be to maximise new users from metro cities, especially holiday packages along with other products. Prior to this, he has worked with MakeMyTrip, Yatra, Sahibji Travels, etc.

Inspired by creativity, **Guldeep Singh Sahni**, Director, Weldon Tours & Travels, says that the motto of his life is "Integrity, commitment and self-expression." He was greatly motivated by Robin Sharma's 'The Monk who sold his Ferrari'. Australia is

who sold his Ferrari'. Australia is his most favourite international destination. "Australia has a great sense of acceptance for every culture and offers a bounty of natural beauty, food and tourist locations. In India, I like going to the mountains, as I am fond of admiring natural beauty a lot," he shares.

Chandrakant Shetty, CEO, VITS Luxury Hotels Worldwide, prefers spending time with his daughter. "She is my source of energy. When I am travelling, I head for a jog or go for a swim. I am passionate about



Jyoti Kapur, Chairman, Vietrade Tours & Travels, lives by the motto 'Never give up and never give in'. Kapur says that his loved ones always drive him to perform better. The past president of ADTOI has propagated





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12-Feb	Monday	Mumbai	11:00 - 16:00	Trident Hotel, Nariman Point
14-Feb	Wednesday	Kolkata	10:00 - 14:00	The Oberoi Grand
15-Feb	Thursday	Bangalore	10:00 - 14:00	Taj Vivanta, MG Road
16-Feb	Friday	Delhi	14:00 - 17:00	Le Meridien
19-Feb	Monday	Ahmedabad	10:00 - 15:00	Hyatt Regency

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An invite to be Philippines specialists

After a round of roadshows across four key secondary markets in India - Chandigarh, Jaipur, Hyderabad, Lucknow, the Department of Tourism, Philippines shared insights on the development of the Indian market for the archipelago. Here's what **Glen Agustin**, Officer-in-Charge – Office of Product and Market Development had to share with **TAVTALK**...



QWhat growth has Philippines witnessed from the Indian market in 2017?

We recently crossed the 100,000 milestone from the market here, at a growth rate of 20-22 per cent. We received over 74,000 Indian visitors at an annual growth rate of around 20 per cent in 2016. This is a substantial figure and we are hoping that the airlines take notice so that we can get direct flights between the two countries started. In addition to the airlines, we are hoping this rings bells with the Embassy of the Philippines and the Bureau of Immigration so that the visa norms can be further relaxed to facilitate influx of Indian tourists.

Please shed some light on the recently concluded PHILINDEX

Based on the recommendation of our market representatives in India, we chose Hyderabad, Jaipur, Chandigarh and Lucknow as the target markets for our sales mission-cum-road-show. They represent feeder market for our major hubs in India and we see great potential in them to further accelerate the growth from India. The reception we re-

Fact File

- The Philippines has recently crossed the 100,000 milestone from the India market, at a growth rate of 20-22%
- The archipelago received over 74,000 Indian visitors at an annual growth rate of around 20% in 2016
- Hyderabad, Chandigarh, Jaipur and Lucknow were chosen to host PHILINDEX 2017

ceived across all the four cities was incredibly over-whelming and went beyond the expected numbers. This was symbol enough for us to understand the needs and desires of the Indian travel agents and tourists to get more information about other destinations, particularly the Philippines.

Does the move to Tier-II and Tier-III markets indicate that you have saturated the Tier-I market?

Not at all! The Tier-1 market have been and will always remain our major hub. One of the reasons why we are moving into the feeder cities as well is that in the main cities, you are competing directly with about 40 NTOs. Through PHILINDEX, we have created a mega event where first, Philippines can be the main focus and we don't have to compete with other destinations and secondly, we were able to provide information directly and let the travel trade from these markets realise that we are supporting them by holding programmes like this in their own cities.

On the current global scenario, how important is the Indian market for you?

In 2016, India overtook Germany - a traditional long haul-high spending market for us and has now jumped into the list of top 12 source markets for the Philippines. India with its sheer size, with an excess of 400 million middle and upper class people who can travel is sure to move further up the ladder in the years to come. We believe we have the potential to tap this market and even get it at par with the likes of China; all we need are direct flights. We have always enjoyed a positive feedback from the travel trade in India and are working hard I would suggest that the agents become Philippines specialists, identify the market, know the geographical dynamics of the destination and then capitalise on their strengths - be it weddings, incentives, family travels, honeymoon travels, etc to ensure a greater yield from the market.

Glen Agustin
Officer-in-Charge,
Office of Product and Market Development
Department of Tourism, Philippines

to strengthen relations between the travel trade of the two countries and of course, the people to people linkages as well.

Qow far along are we from getting a direct flight between India and Philippines?

We have not stopped trying to convince Philippine Airlines or Cebu Pacific for direct connectivity between the two countries, ever since we took over India in 2007. Our airline industry

is slightly different from the rest of the world where the nation's government plays a big role in this sector; hence delays in realising direct flights. However, our strategy has remained to focus on growing the arrivals from India. Now with the arrivals poised to cross the 100,000 mark for the first time with an excellent growth rate, the authorities are bound to take notice of the investment opportunity at hand. We are confident of direct flights between our countries materi-

alising very soon.

Which is the most high performing travel segment for Philippines? Has your marketing strategy undergone any change?

The market for incentive travel is really keeping us up there now. We're averaging a little more than 8000 a month in terms of arrivals and this is generated largely by incentive travel groups coming into the Philippines. We continue to tap the leisure

market; we continue to have weddings in the Philippines from India and will carry on with our efforts to tap the group segment in terms of incentive, family and leisure. We will just highlight from time to time those segments with higher potential during the certain periods over the year.

Any advice for Indian agents to sell the destinations better?

I feel that product knowledge holds the key to achieve that. A good sense of what you're selling is an important step towards achieving revenue and tapping into the business potential of the market. If I may, I would suggest that the agents become Philippines specialists, know the market, know the geographical dynamics of the destination and then capitalise on their strengths be it weddings, incentives, family travels, honeymoon travels, etc to ensure a greater yield from the market.

SIA-Philippines join hands for India



The Department of Tourism (DOT), Philippines signed a Memorandum of Agreement with Singapore International Airlines (SIA) to undertake joint marketing initiatives to promote the Philippines to the Indian market through social media, familiarisation tours, roadshows, among others.

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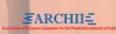
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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

▼rom the snow-clad mountains of the Himalayas, the folklores of ◀ Himachal, the holy banks of the Ganges, the city lights of Delhi, the wonder of Taj Mahal and the colours of Punjab to the royalty of Rajasthan—North India's diversity has its own charm and charisma that attracts tourists from around the globe. Today, North India is not just about the Golden Triangle, the experiences and beautiful vistas here are also well celebrated.

Recognising these miscellaneous offerings, India Travel Awards acknowledges 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 identified, appreciated and encouraged in every region of the country - North, South, East and West.

Our highest honour, the Gold Maya, is awarded to 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 earlier editions of North India Travel Awards have set the beginning of a journey of long-term associations for some and a renewal of the bond with many others.

India Travel Awards will have a new season this year with equally thrilling editions. With these awards, we take upon ourselves, in our own small way, the responsibility to revive and enhance tourism in the northern part of the country.

SanJeet

India Travel Awards

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Maya weaves her magic in



In its fourth edition, India Travel Awards honoured the best of the best from the travel and tourism industry of North India at a glittering ceremony at The Lalit, New Delhi. The evening saw in attendance the most prolific stakeholders from every segment of the industry under one roof.

NISHA VERMA

coveted platform to acknowledge the hard work of tourism professionals in the region, India Travel Awards brought together the who's who of the industry under one roof. Vijay Goel, Minister

of State for Statistics and Programme Implementation & Parliamentary Affairs, Government of India, and the Chief Guest for the event, said, "I am happy to be present for the 4th North India Travel Awards. These awards bring a new enthusiasm among people and encourages them to do new work,

while pushing them to move forward. I want to congratulate the India Travel Awards team and the winners for a great show. I am not here as a Minister or Member of Parliament, but as one of the biggest heritage lovers. If I ever get a choice to work as a minister or to work for heritage, I would always

choose the latter. In the changing times, we all love heritage and consider it as a status symbol, but not many work for the same, and we need to think about it."

Shivdular Singh Dhillon, IAS, Special Secretary-cum-Director,



(L-R) SanJeet, Sham Nijhawan, Runeep Sangha, Shivdular Singh Dhillon, Vijay Goel, Dr. Marisha Kaul, Sujit Banerjee, Sarab Jit Singh



North India for the 4th time



at the Awards night. Taking the glamour quotient of the evening a notch higher was Dr. Marisha Kaul, Gladrags Mrs. India - North, who presented the awards alongside the dignitaries.

A total of 150 people from the travel and tourism industry attended the glitzy ceremony. SanJeet, Mentor, India Travel Awards, said, "Through

The awards acknowledge the consolidated effort of trade partners from the northern region, owing to whom the travel industry has achieved a benchmark."

He asserted that tourism is synonymous with progress and development. "The regional awards recognises establishments, which may not be able to see the light of



the day at a national level," added SanJeet. Thanking everyone for their efforts, he said, "The industry is growing by leaps and bounds, and everybody's efforts together are making the big difference. This recognition that we bestow on the regional players has helped make India Travel Awards the leading travel awards within a short period of time."

In the Personal Awards category, the Gold Maya was awarded to Krishan Kumar Amla, Chairman and Managing Director of Broadway

Enterprises, who entered the Gallery of Legends. Sujit Banerjee, Secretary General, WTTC India Initiative, was named the Legend in Public Service, while Pankaj Srivastava, Commercial Director and Board Member of Air India, took home the DDP Trailblazer trophy. It was Hanneli Slabber, Regional General Manager, Asia, Australasia, Middle East for South African Tourism, who was named the DDP Game Changer for the 4th North India Travel Awards while Amit Sankhala, Managing Director of Encounters Asia was declared the Face of the Future.



















Chief Guest VIJAY GOEL

pplauding India Travel Awards, **Vijay Goel**, Minister of State for Statistics and Programme Implementation & Parliamentary Affairs, Government of India, said, "These awards help in promoting the tourism and hospitality industry. It will encourage not only the winners, but other people also. At present, in India there are only 14 million foreign tourists and we want to convert it to 40 million FTAs. Incredible India is unique in itself. The biggest thing is that India is the only country where one can find everything from desert to sea, mountains and land. There are humongous possibilities for tourism in our country, we only have to see how we can include a common man in it. If we want to promote tourism, we should first ensure cleanliness, proper infrastructure and good connectivity."

▶ Vijay Goel, Minister of State for Statistics and Programme Implementation & Parliamentary Affairs, Government of India, received the award for Chief Guest

Guest of Honour | SHIVDULAR SINGH DHILLON

alling India Travel Awards the perfect platform to network and promote their products, **Shivdular Singh Dhillon**, Special Secretary-cum-Director, Department of Tourism, Cultural Affairs, Archaeology, Museums & Archives, Punjab and CEO, Punjab Heritage & Tourism Promotion Board, said, "Tourism is about creating a value to the place, and platforms where you get stakeholders to come and network are good for tourism stakeholders to not only boost their business but also increase the tourism potential of India, which is not only tremendous but the best, because we have it all. So we need these forums so that we can take tourism to the next level." He insisted that with the help of such forums, one can further promote their product around the world as well.

➤ Shivdular Singh Dhillon, IAS, Special Secretary-cum-Director, Department of Tourism, Cultural Affairs, Archaeology, Museums & Archives, Punjab and CEO, Punjab Heritage & Tourism Promotion Board, received the award for Guest of Honour





Guest of Honour

DR. MARISHA KAUL

r. Marisha Kaul, Gladrags Mrs. India–North 2017, believes India Travel Awards is a wonderful platform to recognise all the achievers from the travel industry. "It's good to encourage and motivate people all around India for their successes. The best part is the fact that it is being organised region wise. This allows people from all parts of India to have equal chance to participate and get nominated and work harder," she said.

▶ Dr. Marisha Kaul, Gladrags Mrs. India–North 2017, being honoured with Pearl Trophy 'Maya' for her support to India Travel Awards



Best Business Professional of the Year | BHARAT BHUSHAN ATREE

ndia Travel Awards is a great motivation to work harder, said **Bharat Bhushan Atree**, MD, Caper Travel Company. "It's a great achievement for any individual to be recognised on this platform. As far as I am concerned, it's great motivation for me to work harder to get these awards year on year. I would like to thank the trade and fellow colleagues for making this happen and their support in my journey," he added.

▶ Bharat Bhushan Atree, Managing Director, Caper Travel Company, received the award for the Best Business Professional of the Year

Most Enterprising Business Couple SUCHETA NAGPAL & PANKAJ NAGPAL

elebrating their joint victory, Pankaj Nagpal, MD, Travstarz Global Group, said, "We have been associated with India Travel Awards for quite a while now and it's a great platform, where they recognise the deserving people of the industry and it's a great encouragement for everybody who works in the trade. It's an excellent event, and something which we always wait for." Sucheta Nagpal, Director & CEO, Travstarz Global Group, added, "Getting an award means that our responsibility grows higher because the expectations of the trade and fellow workers also increases. Thus, we are here to contribute whatever best we can."

➤ Sucheta Nagpal, Director and CEO, Travstarz Global Group and Pankaj Nagpal, MD, Travstarz Global Group, received the award for Most Enterprising Business Couple





Entrepreneur of the year KD SINGH

rediting his team for the achievement, **KD Singh**, Founder & President, TravelBullz, said, "I congratulate SanJeet and team for doing such a fabulous event. India Travel Awards has now become the Oscars of the travel industry. It has been a humbling experience. I'd like to thank my team for this award as I am here because of a team that does an amazing job back in office. I would also like to thank my family who stood beside me like a rock for seven years, which is why we are here. It's an amazing event and I am very happy to be a part of it."

▶ KD Singh, Founder & President, TravelBullz received the award for Entrepreneur of the Year

Distinguished Travel Technology Professional | ANIL PARASHAR

renowned name in the travel technology segment, Anil Parashar, President & CEO, InterGlobe Technology Quotient, said, "TravTalk is a leader in the business of travel publication and travel coverage for decades, ever since I have been in the trade, which goes back four decades. A recognition from an agency like them means a lot to the individual and the organisation and I think it's a great motivating factor. It's awesome and one of the best platforms to be at."

▶ Anil Parashar, President & CEO, InteGlobe Technology Quotient, received the award for Distinguished Travel Technology Professional







Excellence in Association Leadership | RUNEEP SANGHA

aving been at the helm of PATA India Chapter for quite some time now, Runeep Sangha, Executive Director, PATA India Chapter, appreciated being honoured at the India Travel Awards. "It's a great honour to be recognised and I think DDP does a wonderful job at identifying people who contribute to the business from all parts of the land. There are gems and nuggets studded all over our country, both in terms of places to visit, as well as in terms of people who help the tourist understand what India is all about. It was a privilege being here," he said.

▶ Runeep Sangha, Executive Director, PATA India Chapter, received the award for Excellence in Association Leadership

Best Global Distribution System

TRAVELPORT GALILEO

andeep Dwivedi, COO, InterGlobe Technology Quotient, said, "Any award or recognition brings more responsibility to the overall trade. At ITQ, we keep on coming up with a lot of innovations in the brand. Last year, we introduced IndiGo content on GDS, which was the first LCC content that came on a GDS. It strengthened the brand further. We also introduced a new product called ITQ financial, which is based on Tally, and offers further support to the overall trade. Today, we are seen as a solution to the whole travel trade, instead of a simple GDS company."

► The award was given to **Travelport Galileo** and received by **Taruna Soni**, Head - Marketing and **Arun Chopra**, Regional Head-North





Best Representation Company

NIJHAWAN GROUP

epresenting some of the major hospitality brands as well as destinations, Nijhawan Group-Representations, is one of the leading travel representation companies. A preferred choice for travel, tourism and hospitality representation in India that provides sales, marketing, research, PR and media solutions, the company offers a cost-effective approach to increase market share, maximise revenue and build new markets for its clients. Speaking on winning the award, **Priyanka Nijhawan**, Director-Representations, Nijhawan Group, said, "It's an absolute honour. These awards are the most prestigious awards in the travel industry. The award ceremony is absolutely classy and flawless."

► The award was given to **Nijhawan Group** and received by **Priyanka Nijhawan**, Director-Representations

Most Innovative Tourist Attraction HERITAGE TRANSPORT MUSEUM

or Tarun Thukral, Founder & Managing Trustee, Heritage Transport Museum, the museum is a labour of love. "The Heritage Transport Museum is now four years old. When we started in December 2013, we never anticipated how a private museum would fair because India does not have a museum culture. However, we are shocked and surprised with the number of visitors and we have actually seen a growth of 100 per cent year on year. Not only have we received support from the tour operators, we have seen the support of schools, colleges, universities and a lot of family groups who visit us over the weekend. In fact, we are the only museum in the country which is making a little bit of money these days," he shared.

▶ The award was given to Heritage Transport Museum and received by Tarun Thukral, Founder & Managing Trustee









Best Debut City Hotel HYATT REGENCY LUCKNOW

ccording to **Kumar Shobhan**, General Manager, Hyatt Regency Lucknow, the award is a testament to their dedicated service throughout the period since their opening. "Hyatt Regency Lucknow was launched with a vision to render unmatched hospitality, unique events and delightful experiences. Our commitment to this vision shines through this award. It is an acknowledgement of our consistent efforts and has also motivated us to perform even better in future. With us, winning this prestigious award, expectations of premium hospitality service has soared even higher and we are all set to live up to these expectations and fulfil the responsibility of being the leading name in hospitality industry of Lucknow," he claimed.

► The award was given to **Hyatt Regency Lucknow** and received by **Kumar Shobhan**, General Manager

Best Destination Management Company | STHI HOLIDAYS INDIA

Being in the industry for long, STHI Holidays have created a niche for themselves in India. Lalit Singh, COO, STHI Holidays, said, "I am really overwhelmed with the award and appreciate that audience found us worthy of this award. Going forward, we will ensure that they keep their faith in us. It's an excellent platform for us to be recognised and we will keep up the work that we are doing."

► The award was given to STHI Holidays India and received by Lalit Singh, COO and Vinil Kumar, IT Head





Best Airline - Domestic SPICEJET

ne of the biggest success stories in the aviation industry, SpiceJet was revived a couple of years ago when it was about to be closed down. However, now it is one of the leading low cost airlines in the country and is showing a load factor of more than 90 per cent consistently. SpiceJet's aim is to deliver the lowest air fares with the highest consumer value, to price sensitive consumers.

▶ The award was given to **SpiceJet** and received by **Henry Moses**, Vice President - International Sales, **Rajesh Sekhar**, General Manager - Sales (India)

Best Tour Operator - Inbound A-LA-CARTE TOURS

Starting their company in 2001, A-La-Carte tours have come a long way with winning accolades, both from government and trade. Mohinder Khanna, Director, A-La-Carte Tours, said, "Thank God, we have been able to bring this company up and this award means a lot to me. I am really honoured to have received the Maya for the first time, and would like to thank people who have voted for us, which is a big achievement for us. I would like to share the credit for this award with my overseas tour operators who have shown their interest and trust in our company. An award like this is a big responsibility, and we will work towards maintaining the commitment we have made to our clients."

► The award was given to A-La-Carte Tours and received by Mohinder Khanna, Director, Atul Khanna. General Manager - Operations





Best Corporate Hotel

HYATT PLACE GURGAON/UDYOG VIHAR

aulina Gupta, General Manager, Hyatt Place Gurgaon/Udyog Vihar, said, "Thank you for recognising us as the Best Corporate Hotel in the North India Travel Awards 2017. It is a great feeling when your team effort gets acknowledged by stalwarts of the industry. My team and I thank India Travel Awards for the recognition. This sense of accomplishment comes along with immense gratitude towards all our stakeholders who have supported us in our endeavours. We promise to continue learning and delivering to the best of our abilities."

► The award was given to Hyatt Place Gurgaon/Udyog Vihar

Most Promising Airlines-International KUWAIT AIRWAYS

stablished in 1954, Kuwait Airways is the national carrier of Kuwait. It is a leading airline operating scheduled international services throughout the Middle East, to the Indian subcontinent, Europe, Southeast Asia and North America, and is based out of Kuwait International Airport. Kuwait Airways aims at setting the standard for customer orientation and become an admired airline to fly, to invest in, and to work for. It aims to provide customer-oriented services that meet the individual needs and preferences of its clients.

► The award was given to **Kuwait Airways** and received by **Ashish Malhotra**, Sales Manager





Best Heritage Hotel WELCOMHERITAGE HAVELI DHARAMPURA

Situated in the bylanes of Chandni Chowk, Haveli Dharampura brings forth the beauty of old havelis to the modern traveller. Restorer of the property, Vijay Goel, Minister of State for Statistics and Programme Implementation & Parliamentary Affairs, Government of India, said, "The number of heritage properties in India is much more than all the heritage properties taken together around the world. Right from havelis to forts, you can't find as many such structures in the entire world, as you can in India. It is necessary that the young should come forward to adopt these monuments and take care of them."

▶ The award was given to WelcomHeritage Haveli Dharampura and received by Sanjeev K Nayar, General Manager and Siddhant Goel, Owner/Promoter of the property

Best Luxury Car Rental Company KTC INDIA

ongratulating the team behind India Travel Awards, **Sarab Jit Singh**, MD, Travelite (India) & KTC India, said, "I think this is a good initiative taken by DDPPL and I congratulate the entire team to take up this step to recognise smaller players and regional players who are not yet known in the market. It is a wonderful event, properly organised, which is a great thing to achieve in the Indian scenario."

▶ The award was given to KTC India and received by Sarab Jit Singh, Managing Director







Best Adventure Destination

SOUTH AFRICAN TOURISM

n ecstatic **Hanneli Slabber**, Regional General Manager, Asia, Australasia and Middle East, South African Tourism, claimed that they made a clean sweep this year in the adventure tourism category in all the regions. "Adventure is quite a new activity, and hence we are absolutely thrilled. We feel very happy the way we have done in this market. Awards like these do carry a sense of responsibility. For us, specifically in the adventure category, it's vital how safe and accessible do we make it for everybody," she insisted.

▶ The award was given to **South African Tourism** and received by **Hanneli Slabber**, Regional General Manager, Asia, Australasia, Middle East

Best Luxury Wedding Hotel

RADISSON BLU UDAIPUR PALACE, RESORT AND SPA

ituated in the City of Lakes- Udaipur, the property offers a picturesque escape for getaways and vacations. It provides a beautiful overview of Fateh Sagar Lake and is close to the city centre and numerous cultural attractions, such as the City Palace and Saheliyon Ki Bari, and is within an hour's drive of the airport. With 245 rooms and suites, the properties boasts plush amenities as well as many on-site restaurants. They have a beautiful two-tier outdoor pool as well as a soothing spa, a helpful travel desk and superb event facilities.

► The award was given to Radisson Blu Udaipur Palace, Resort and Spa and received by Justin Johnson, Sales Manager, Piiyush Kapoor, General Manager, Poonam Nair, Regional Director of Sales





Best Foreign Exchange Aggregator

FXKART.COM

bdul Hadi Shaikh, Co-founder & CEO, FxKart.com, thanked India Travel Awards for recognising young talent like them. "It's been an absolute pleasure being here. It gives massive boost to the people like us who have been trying to do things little differently in the industry and bring digitisation to this segement, which I believe is going to be the number one industry and employment generator in India," he said about the ceremony.

► The award was given to FxKart.com and received by Abdul Hadi Shaikh, Co-founder & CEO, Adnan Khan, Regional Business Development Manager-North

Best Leisure & MICE Resort

CLARKS SHIRAZ, AGRA

eceiving the award second time in a row, **Debasish Bhowmik**, Senior Vice President, Hotel Clarks Shiraz Agra, was visibly ecstatic. "We are extremely pleased to get this award, second time in a row at the India Travel Awards. It is good to be recognised. It is a great effort by DDP. We are very happy as we have been acknowledged for our services. It's a fantastic platform and we wish India Travel Awards all the best," he said.

▶ The award was given to Clarks Shiraz, Agra and received by Debasish Bhowmik, Sr. Vice President, Geetha Subramanian, General Manager Marketing & Sales





Best Emerging Boutique Tour Operator

LE MAGNIFIOUE TRAVEL

perating in the bespoke travel industry, Le Magnifique Travel excel in tailor-made holidays for its clients. **Neeraj Kumar**, Founder & CEO, Le Magnifique Travel, said, "It is an absolute delight to receive an award and we are looking forward to work to improve tourism in India and also take it to the next level. On a personal and a broader level, this award is going to be very impactful,"

▶ The award was given to **Le Magnifique Travel** and received by **Neeraj Kumar**, Founder & CEO



Best Visa Facilitation Company

UDAAN INDIA

ounak Dua, CEO, Study with Udaan, collected the award on behalf of Rajan Dua, MD & Co-founder, Udaan India and said that she was happy to represent the company at the platform. She said, "The company has been in existence since 25 years and today I am representing my dad Rajan Dua. He works with the same passion and the same zeal since the time he has started the company. It has been a great experience to be at the ceremony and I have only one word to say about it—superb!"

▶ The award was given to **Udaan India** and received by **Rounak Dua**, CEO, Study with Udaan and **Jatin Sethi**, Head-Client Relationship

Best Tour Operator CICLO TOURISM

mpressed by North India Travel Awards, Jaydeep Patel, Director, Ciclo Tourism, said that the event is an achievement for the entire industry to grow and push forward. The ceremony acted as a platform for travel agents to meet and network. "It will be interesting to work together and we would be able to tell the industry what we are doing. Receiving this award is a proud moment for us, and it inspires us to work harder," he said.

▶ The award was given to Ciclo Tourism and received by Jaydeep Patel, Director





Best Luxury Camp

THE ULTIMATE TRAVELLING CAMP

UTC brings unique experiences for clients, said **Rajnish Sabharwal**, COO, TUTC. "Our camps in Ladakh, Nagaland and the latest one that we have opened in Dudhwa, which marks our entry in wildlife, are excellent products. These camps are very different from what exists in the country currently. We are very excited to launch a new camp in Hampi," he shared. Congratulating India Travel Awards team, he said, "We are honoured to receive this award. It is an exciting event and we wish India Travel Awards all the best in future."

► The award was given to **The Ultimate Travelling Camp** and received by **Rajnish Sabharwal**, Chief Operating Officer

Best Air Charters

FORESEE AVIATION

mmensely honoured to receive the award, **Santosh Kumar Sharma**, Co-founder & CEO, Foresee Aviation, said, "This award speaks about the volume of services we render to our clients. This will encourage our team members to do better. This recognition comes with a lot of responsibility and we have to carry this by doing a good job." **Ajuka Mahajan**, Co-founder, Foresee Aviation, added, "This event was very well organised and is a great platform."

► The award was given to Foresee Aviation and received by Santosh Kumar Sharma, Co-founder & CEO and Ajuka Mahajan, Co-founder





Best Experiential Travel App

TRAVELEXIC

S Chauhan, Co-founder, Travelexic, said, "Today, travel trade is in a flux because of the online on slaught and hence we need technology to bring up things which would help experiential travel and travel management. And India Travel Awards are doing a good job in trying to promote these initiatives," he said. Agreed Neehar Ranjan, Co-founder & Lead Technology, "Getting encouragement from such a respectable forum is a tremendous honour for us. Being awarded by the fraternity means a lot to us."

► The award was given to Travelexic and received by Co-founders Neehar Ranjan and VS Chauhan





Best Foreign Exchange Company

CENTRUMDIRECT

alling it an amazing experience, **Ripudaman Singh**, Senior Vice President, CentrumDirect, said, "It always feels good to be recognised for your efforts. What makes us stand apart from competition is that we have a monopoly at the airports, where we can service customers the moment they land into the country and become the first point of contact for them, which in turn gives us much more responsibility, not only towards our organisation, but also towards the country."

▶ The award was given to **CentrumDirect** and received by **Sanam Sharma**, Senior Manager Sales, **Ripudaman Singh**, Senior Vice President and **Neeraj Bagla**, Assistant Vice President

Best National Tourism Office | DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM PHILIPPINES

rjun Kant Chadha, Manager - Sales, Philippines Tourism Marketing Office India, claimed that it was good to be recognised at this platform. "It's great to be a part of such a well organised, structured event dedicated to the travel industry. We are glad to be a part of this event, which acknowledges the effort made by travel industry and thank you for acknowledging the work done by the Department of Tourism, Philippines," he said.

► The award was given to **Department of Tourism Philippines** and received by **Nandini Arora**, Manager - Media and **Arjun Kant Chadha**, Manager - Sales





Best Mid-Market Leisure Hotel Brand

MANSINGH HOTELS & RESORTS

rediting their win to his team, **Bharat Kumar Aggarwal**, Managing Director, Mansingh Hotels & Resorts, said that success always comes with teamwork. "Awards like these definitely motivates one's efforts. My team has been really working hard and they deserve further motivation. This award certainly would give a big boost to the team and will inspire us to continue working hard in serving our clients," he added.

▶ The award was given to Mansingh Hotels & Resorts and received by Bharat Kumar Aggarwal, MD

Best All Seasons Destination

PUNJAB HERITAGE AND TOURISM PROMOTION BOARD

ccording to **Shivdular Singh Dhillon**, Special Secretary-cum-Director, Department of Tourism, Cultural Affairs, Archaeology, Museums & Archives, Punjab and CEO, Punjab Heritage & Tourism Promotion Board, the Golden Temple in Amritsar is a jewel in the crown of Punjab. "It is the USP of the state and has been acknowledged globally. Hence, we have built a marketing campaign around that and have radiated out to the Punjabi diaspora across the globe, and to the NRI population to come back to their roots. We have signed a few MoUs with various travel portals, which would allow anyone, anywhere in the world to book a farmstay in Punjab," he said.

► The award was given to **Punjab Heritage And Tourism Promotion Board** and received by **Anmol Nidhi**, Deputy Manager - Marketing





Best B2B Travel Company

DNATA INDIA

heeraj Rastogi, Country Head, dnata India, revealed that dnata has one of the largest corporate travel companies in association with HRG. Apart from doing B2B segment, dnata is also into outbound and inbound activities. "The aim is to focus more towards the multiline business rather on one line of business. Not only are we the biggest B2B travel company, but also a leading B2B corporate travel company," Rastogi said.

▶ The award was given to **dnata India** and received by **Dheeraj Rastogi**, Country Head and **Vineet Kumar**, Business Head- Strategic Markets Destination Management Indian Sub Continent



Best Tour Operator- Outbound

FLAG HOLIDAYS

aving been in the business for the last 30 years, Vinay Arora, Managing Director, Flag Holidays, said that he really appreciated the recognition he got with the award. "We specialise in outbound business and we are promoting outbound tourism from India. It's an excellent platform for us and this kind of recognition gives encouragement to do more business for travel industry," he said.

► The award was given to Flag Holidays and received by Vansh Arora, Executive Director, Neerja Arora, Director, Vinay Arora, Managing Director

Fastest Growing MICE Operator

TAPPAS MICE

n arm of SDU Travels, Tappas MICE caters to the needs of corporate travellers. With an enthusiastic and young at heart team, the company works towards converting ideas to reality. Boasting a strong network across India, Tappas MICE aims to achieve customer satisfaction and offers innovative solutions to meet their needs, ensuring best hotel, transport and guides for them. Apart from there, they take care of safety and are socially responsible.

▶ The award was given to Tappas MICE and received by Priya Saighal, General Manager, MICE, Lokesh Sharma Senior Manager, MICE



Best Emerging MICE Operator

T4 INITIATIVES

unish Sekhri, MD, T4 Initiatives, revealed that they are known for their brand Tra.vl 360, and excel in MICE. Calling India Travel Awards as a great opportunity to network, he said, "It's a very good opportunity to be here and meet the industry people. It is a platform where you can showcase what you do and what you have done in the industry. This is going to help us in future because DDPPL has its reach in everywhere in the industry, right from travel agents, MICE agents, as well as corporate market. Our forte is corporate MICE, which would be beneficial for us," he claimed.

► The award was given to T4 Initiatives and received by Preeti Sekhri, Director and Munish Sekhri, Managing Director

Best Travel CRM

DE BOX GLOBAL

yed A. Asim, Director, De Box Global, believes that India Travel Awards are for the industry. "It's a very prestigious award show, and when one is part of this event, it takes the excitement to another level. Getting this award means that one has to up their benchmark. Getting recognised at this platform means being recognised by the travel industry. Currently, it is one award which is professional and is meant for the industry," he said.

▶ The award was given to De Box Global and received by Dinesh Khari, Vice President





Best Educational Tour Operator

MY TRAVEL BOX

auding the fact that a platform recognises the educational tour segments, Rishi Kapoor, Director, My Travel Box, said, "It's a great feeling that some organisation honours the great segment of industry, which is Education Tour Operators. The time when we started this organisation in 2009, we believed that we had a great scope in this product. Today is the day when some organisation has acknowledged us. It's a great feeling. It was an amazing event, very well organised and every single person was involved in the activity."

The award was given to My Travel Box and received by Rishi Kapoor, Director





Best Boutique Tour Operator

EXPLORE INDIA JOURNEY

xplore India Journey is one of the young tour operators, delivering inspiring premier travel experiences, designing boutique customised luxury holidays in India, Bhutan, Sri Lanka, Nepal & Maldives. EIJ creates itineraries that make use of highly-skilled specialist guides and experts to offer authentic local experiences focused on the natural and cultural highlights of each region.

▶ The award was given to Explore India Journey and received by Kailash Pathak, Business Head

Best Serviced Residency Provider

HOTEL WHITE PEARL SERVICED APARTMENTS AND RESIDENCIES

rediting their background of hospitality industry, **Ankit Sethi**, Managing Director & Founder, White Pearl Services Apartments & Residences, said that customer service remain their priority. "We have been taking care of our guests for a very long time. Our guests are from various nationalities, and we have been doing a good job in catering to their needs. Also, we have been growing ever since we started, and have got good feedback from all our clients," he said.

► The award was given to Hotel White Pearl Serviced Apartments and Residencies and received by Priya Bhanol Sethi, Director, and Ankit Sethi, Managing Director & Founder





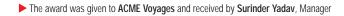
Best Luxury Farm Stay MAA ASHAPURA FARM STAY - RANTHAMBORE

ikram Singh Chauhan, Maa Ashapura Farm Stay, appreciated the awards and revealed that their property is a boutique farm stay, which is situated in Ranthambore, Rajastan. "We have different segments of rooms available at the property. We have our own farm, perches, and all amenities for our guests. Awards like these bring a lot of responsibility with them, because all the major players are on this platform, which matters a lot for this industry," he shared.

► The award was given to Maa Ashapura Farm Stay - Ranthambore and received by Vikram Singh Chauhan, Director

Best Inbound Tour Operator - Western Europe ACME VOYAGES

wards like these are very important, claimed **CK Bhatia**, Director, ACME Voyages, saying, "I think we deserve this award because we have been working with Western Europe for the last 40 years and we have been bringing in clients from Europe, France, Spain, Portugal, Belgium, Switzerland, etc., because of which we have a strong base in these countries. Talking about the awards, he said that it was an excellent platform for them and he hopes to attend more such ceremonies in future.





Partner State

PUNJAB HERITAGE AND TOURISM PROMOTION BOARD



The award was given to Punjab Heritage And Tourism Promotion Board and received by Shivdular Singh Dhillon, Special Secretary-cum-Director, Department of Tourism, Cultural Affairs, Archaeology, Museums & Archives, Punjab and CEO, Punjab Heritage & Tourism Promotion Board and Anmol Nidhi, Deputy Manager - Marketing

The Punjab Heritage & Tourism Promotion Board was set up under Government of Punjab, and works towards development of tourism products around the state. Guest of Honour Shivdular Singh Dhillon, Special Secretary-cum-Director, Department of Tourism, Cultural Affairs, Archaeology, Museums & Archives, Punjab and CEO, Punjab Heritage & Tourism Promotion Board, represented the body at the event and said that it is imperative to work towards the promotion of tourism and India Travel Awards offers an opportunity for all to work towards the same goal.

Airline Partner KUWAIT AIRWAYS



► The award was given to Kuwait Airways and received by Ashish Malhotra

stablished in 1954, Kuwait Airways is the national carrier of Kuwait. It is a leading airline operating scheduled international services throughout the Middle East, to the Indian subcontinent, Europe, Southeast Asia and North America, and is based out of Kuwait International Airport. Kuwait Airways aims at setting the standard for customer orientation and become an admired airline to fly, to invest in, and to work for. It aims to provide customer-oriented services that meet the individual needs and preferences

Beverage Partner PEAUR, HIELO BEVERAGES INDIA



The award was given to PEAUR, Hielo Beverages India and received by Piyush Mathur, Founder & CEO

ppreciating the effort behind the awards, Piyush Mathur, Founder/CEO, PEAUR, Hielo Beverages, said, "It's great thought and a great experience in all possible aspects. It is the right platform for travel and tourism industry and one gets to exhibit your own interest and creativity in all possible ways. It's a great integration for us and a good initiative by DDPPL—Truly magical!"

Hospitality Partner THE LALIT, NEW DELHI



The award was given to The LaLit, New Delhi

ocated in central Delhi, The LaLit, New Delhi is in close proximity to key commercial and business locations. The hotel operates 461 rooms and suites and offers over 39,000 square feet of conference and banqueting space. It also includes an art gallery and a variety of shops. The LaLit, New Delhi operates restaurants offering various cuisines and a number of other dining options.

Gold Partner ASPRI SPIRITS



► The award was given to Aspri Spirits and received by Tanmay Garg, Marketing Representative

spri Spirits today represents some of the finest brands in the world of wines, beer, cider and spirits, and has emerged as the top player in the alcoholic beverage segment. The company with its commitment to ensure higest quality standards focuses on sales, marketing, and distribution. It is dedicated to building premium international brands in travel retail and domestic markets across the Indian subcontinent

Premier Partner MYSTIFLY CONSULTING (INDIA)



ystifly is a global airfare consolidator with incorporation in USA, UK, Singapore, India, Brazil and Australia. The company's flagship air ticketing platform - MyfareBox and technology variants are used in more than 60 countries. It is one of the biggest B2B global airfare consolidators that empowers travel business by providing travel technology solutions to tour operators, travel agents, online travel agents, corporate, hotels and travel management companies across the globe.





A Dazzling New Look



Recognises hard work and applauds the true leaders of the industry for their commitment and dedication

Rewarding the Legends, Game Changers, Trailblazers and the Face of the Future

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