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# Dawn of a new era with ITM

The maiden India Tourism Mart (ITM) held in Delhi recently witnessed dignitaries and veterans of the tourism and hospitality industry in attendance. The event coincided with the launch of Paryatan Parv.



Nisha Verma & Manas Dwivedi

The maiden India Tourism Mart opened at The Ashok New Delhi with the introduction of member association heads of Federation of Associations in Indian Tourism and Hospitality (FAITH). On the same day, MOT also launched the second edition of Paryatan Parv officially inaugurated by Union Home Minister **Rajnath Singh** at

Rajpath Lawns. Also present at the opening of the 12-day celebration were **K J Alphons**, Minister of State (I/C), Ministry of Tourism; **Rashmi Verma**, Secretary, Tourism; **Satyajeet Rajan**, Director General, Tourism; **Meenakshi Sharma**, Additional Director General, Tourism and **Suman Billa**, Joint Secretary, Tourism.

Welcoming the delegates at the event, Alphons said, "With Paryatan Parv, our idea is to convey the incredibility of our country with its diverse offerings. The event gives an opportunity to the foreign buyers to get a taste of India. Our aim is to double the arrival figures, revenue and the generation of foreign exchange by tourism by 2020. One of the biggest achievements for us has been the creation of

14.67 million jobs by tourism in the last four years."

ITM was formally inaugurated by **Piyush Goyal**, Union Minister, Railways, Coal and Corporate Affairs, at The Ashok New Delhi. He said, "The MOT has set very high ambitions for tourism in the country. The best part is that the fundamentals behind this event are right. Unless that is in place, we cannot attract the

number of tourists that other countries are attracting."

Alphons informed that ITM will be an annual event to be held in the third week of September. "We recorded 7 per cent increase in tourist arrivals in 2016, which increased to 14 per cent in 2017. We are now looking to aggressively market India internationally as the land of wonders," he informed.



**K J Alphons**  
Minister of State (I/C)  
Ministry of Tourism

# India is a 'hit' for the Middle East

Not just Dubai, but the entire Middle East is witnessing an increase in the number of visitors from India. To develop this source market, many tourism boards from the region are investing money and efforts to attract more numbers.



**Abdulla Saleh Al Hammadi**  
Director, National Tourism  
Programme, UAE



Hazel Jain

"India is one of the most promising markets for the UAE. According to UAE's tourism department, the number of visitors from India increased from 2.3 million visitors in 2016 to approximately 2.6 million in 2017, indicating a growth rate of up to 12.8 per cent. The UAE delegation looks forward to building relationships and further strengthening ties with the people, especially the tourism industry through our VisitUAE campaign."



**Khalid M Alawar**  
Manager—India & Pakistan,  
International Operations,  
Dubai Tourism

"Dubai's top source markets like India and the UK retained their top positions this year as well. Once again, India brought in the highest number of international guests crossing the one million mark over a six-month period, up by 3 per cent year-on-year. In H1 2018, India again delivered the highest number of international guests. We ran the highly successful #BeMyGuest campaign with Shah Rukh Khan. Looking ahead on the second half of 2018 and additional areas of growth for the tourism sector, the recent move to implement a VAT refund for tourists will ensure the industry's competitiveness."

Contd. on page 8 ▶

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## TAAI Convention now in China

The 65<sup>th</sup> annual convention of Travel Agents Association of India (TAAI) is set to take place in Kunming, China, from November 27-29, 2018.



Manas Dwivedi

The Travel Agents Association of India (TAAI) has announced its 65<sup>th</sup> annual convention in the Kunming city of Yunnan province of China from November 27-29. In association with the Yunnan Provincial Tourism Development Commission (YPTDC), the TAAI Convention in China is set to be at InterContinental Kunming. After signing a memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with YPTDC to conduct the convention, **Sunil Kumar**, President, TAAI, said, "China has a lot to offer in terms of tourism since the outbound numbers from India to China are quite high. The convention is an initiative to promote stronger tourism



Sunil Kumar  
President  
TAAI

prospects in Yunnan as we have been working towards a stronger connect with China."

The theme of the convention will revolve around strengthening friendship and tourism relationship with China. Talking about promoting stronger

development of tourism ties between India and China, Kumar said, "Certain parts of China are not experienced by Indian travellers. TAAI and YPTDC are dedicated to promote tourism and help the industry in both the countries."

Kumar believes that this year's convention in China should be an exclusive event.

**“TAAI Convention is an initiative to promote stronger tourism prospects in Yunnan as well as a stronger connect with China”**

"We are expecting around 450-500 delegates at the convention and looking to make it an exclusive event," he added. TAAI and YPTDC have also planned pre and post Fam

tours around Kunming in locations like Dali City, Shangri-La and Lijiang, among others.

Elated over TAAI's Convention in China, **Shi Lin**, Vice Director General, YPTDC, said that a huge potential drawn from this convention can benefit the industry. "Kunming is a beautiful and green city in the Yunnan Province. Moreover,

it is well-connected with major cities of India. The TAAI Convention will help boost bilateral ties and tourism prospects in both the countries" she concluded.



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## A stepping stone

The entire inbound travel and hospitality industry joined hands recently to organise the flagship travel event of the country — India Tourism Mart (ITM). The event saw everyone coming together to welcome buyers from around 60 countries and showcase products to woo travellers to India. While the excitement was at its peak, the stakeholders looked forward to serious business, as the Ministry of Tourism (MOT) was supporting this industry-led event. The MOT even organised 12-day Paryatan Parv across the country, which was inaugurated alongside ITM, and gave an opportunity to foreign buyers to experience the art, culture, cuisine and handicrafts of every state in India. All the member associations of Federation of Associations in Indian Tourism and Hospitality (FAITH) provided the best facilities to buyers in terms of their stay, transfers, Fam trips and experiences. While this is a huge investment being made by the industry, we still need to see how much it would benefit them in the times to come. And this would be in terms of generating leads, cracking deals and making new connections.

## The dollar dilemma

The rupee, falling to its lowest recently against the dollar, has delivered a major blow to many aspirational travellers. This could cause a big setback for the outbound industry, especially with international travel happening throughout the year in recent times. In fact, the Diwali and Christmas bookings are underway and the outbound operators might feel the pinch soon. While many say that the impact would be temporary, others insist that it might just ruin the business for the remaining year. India is believed to be a growing outbound market and with the connectivity being established for various destinations around the world, it would have been the ideal time to fly to a destination of their choice. However, with the changes in dollar rates, it might be slightly difficult going forward. Let's wait and watch!

TRAVTALK brings to you news and events that made headlines 25 years ago with relevance even today. From the archives, we present the October 1993 issue:

### IATO Agenda for Unity at Khajuraho

- IATO announced its 1993 convention in Khajuraho with the theme Synergy in tourism and were expecting around 150 delegates in attendance.
- Avinash Anand, who was the President of IATO at the time said that the theme reflected IATO's concern over disunity in the travel trade.
- He revealed that he has initiated moves to bring about unity among the various segments and he was hopeful that the efforts would bear fruit by the time delegates assemble at the temple town. "We would like the entire industry to work together in the cause of tourism," he added.
- The 1993 IATO convention was held from December 16-19.



## FROM THE ARCHIVES

### Then



Kul Bhushan Kachru  
Radisson Asia

It was in 1993 that Carlson Hospitality Group entered the India market and granted a master franchise to the newly-formed company Professional Hotels, which in turn was a joint venture incorporated in India by Scotts Holdings of Singapore, Radisson Hotels Asia, the development wing of Carlson group and the partners of a Delhi Firm Alpha Consultants. At the time Kul Bhushan Kachru was part of this deal and was associated with Radisson Asia.

Today, KB Kachru is Chairman Emeritus and Principal Advisor, Radisson Hotel Group, South Asia.

### Now



Kul Bhushan Kachru  
Chairman Emeritus and Principal Advisor,  
Radisson Hotel Group, South Asia

## GFC visits Delhi and Bengaluru



The Globus Family Club (GFC), termed as the Indian travel industry's first loyalty club created exclusively for travel agents, recently travelled to New Delhi and Bengaluru to bring 'local favorites to its local favorites'. GFC members in Delhi joined the Globus team for a tee off at India's most legendary golf course – The Delhi Golf Club. In Bengaluru, the agent partners got a different taste of a unique vineyard and perhaps, the most upcoming and original vineyard built out of the sheer passion of its owner.





# MOCA aspires for billion trips

**Jayant Sinha**, Minister of State, Civil Aviation, claims that with the growing demand for air travel in India, the Ministry of Civil Aviation (MOCA) is planning for 1 billion passenger trips in the next 15-20 years.



Nisha Verma

The Ministry of Civil Aviation (MOCA) has witnessed an extraordinary growth over the last 50 months, claims **Jayant Sinha**, Minister of State (MoS)



for Civil Aviation. "With around 500 million trips in the next 15-20 years, the International Air Transport Association (IATA) has forecasted a humongous growth for Indian aviation. However, we are preparing for a billion trips in this period as we are seeing an extraordinary demand for air travel in India. The challenge lies not in demand but on the necessary supply and infrastructure to cater to the billion trips."

The reason behind this strong demand, according to Sinha, is the extraordinary value proposition for air travel in India. He informs, "The price of flying in India, which is amongst the lowest in the world despite the high cost, is somewhere at ₹4 per km. People are travelling long distances in great comfort and safety but at affordable prices,

and that's precisely why we have unlocked this demand. Now, the challenge is to be able to meet this demand."

## Airport development

Though aviation sector is performing well, Sinha pointed out some challenges that MOCA has identified, out of which one is airport infra-

“We are currently building new terminals at 12-15 airports besides working on a host of new greenfield airports in cities like Jewar, Pune, Navi Mumbai, Patna, etc”

structure. "While planning an airport in the past, a 3-5 year view was considered, but we are contemplating on a 15-20 year view now. Through the highly-progressive NextGen Airports for Bharat (NABH) Nirman programme, we are

also actively planning for a billion trips by making our existing airports more productive. Secondly, we need to expand and upgrade our existing airports by adding more terminals. We are currently building new terminals at 12-15 airports. Apart from that, we are building a host of new greenfield

airports in cities like Jewar, Pune, Navi Mumbai, Patna, etc. We have the consultation underway to figure out what is the best possible way of regulating new greenfield airports. We've proposed a transparent and innovative

approach to do that on a passenger-yield basis. Once we use the new approach, people will be willing to step forward and make large-scale investments in these new greenfield airports," reveals Sinha.

## Regulation

MOCA is also working to ensure that the airline industry dynamics, cost structure and regulation is as competitive and stable as possible. "The top priority is to get ATF under GST, and then we can deal with the anomalies under the tax structure. Furthermore, there are other tax issues we are working on and are trying to ensure that the airline industry has access to the widest range of financing instruments possible," Sinha notifies.

## Technology

This is another area under which MOCA is making moves. "We are introducing 'DigiYatra' to process people's movements efficiently through airports. Another area where we have applied technology is air traffic management, and we believe that as we progress, we will have the most advanced air traffic management systems in the world," he explains.

"He also shares, "We have recently introduced a drone policy which has led to Uber considering India as one of the five countries where they will launch Uber Elevate. We want drones to be made in India, including all the hardware, software and the services that go along with this vast new ecosystem," added Sinha.

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# ME's record figures from India

► Contd. from page 3

“India is one of the biggest international markets in the world for not just the emirate but also the entire UAE. We want to increase the numbers of Indian arrivals further. We are still new to this market but the visits have showed that the numbers from India have been increasing. We will come to India every year to push our products. We also have a plan to open a representative office in India.”



**Omar Bani Hamour**  
Marketing & Exhibitions  
Co-ordinator, Fujairah Tourism  
& Antiquities Authority,  
Government of Fujairah,  
United Arab Emirates

“Oman is gaining popularity among mature and evolved Indian travellers for being an exotic and adventurous country. Over the years, we have witnessed many destination weddings in Oman mainly due to short-flying time, simplified visa process and easy availability of Indian food. To bring momentum to the tourism growth, new e-visa process and short-term tourist visa have been introduced at just 5 Omani Riyal (OMR) for a period of 10 days. Oman is also increasingly being looked at as a long-weekend getaway. Since 2014, Oman has witnessed over 31 per cent growth in Indian arrivals. In 2017 alone, Oman received 321,161 Indian visitors, showcasing growth of over 7 per cent in just one year.”



**Lubaina Sheerazi**  
India Representative  
Ministry of Tourism, Oman

“The first quarter of 2018 saw about 303,770 Indians visit Bahrain and by the end of this year, we expect to get an increase of at least 15 per cent and 25 per cent from India. The Indian market is one of the prime markets for us. It's been just one year of representation and we have already seen a spike in awareness of Bahrain in the Indian market, specially for MiCE and wedding sectors. We have been proactively doing various marketing activities to achieve the target. Our focus is on attracting more tourists from non-traditional markets especially India, which stands second as the source market after the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.”



**Sunil Mathapati**  
Country Manager  
Bahrain Tourism &  
Exhibition Authority



**Hassan Madah**  
Director—India &  
Philippines, Israel Ministry  
of Tourism

“Israel has recorded an 81 per cent growth from January to July 2018 as compared to the same period in 2015. India has been one of the best performing countries in Asia and currently the second-highest Asian source country for us. The visa fee for Indian citizens has been reduced to `1,100 from `1,700 with relaxation in documentation for tourists. Fast track visa processing for Israel was also incorporated earlier this year. With around 44,000 Indian arrivals until July 2018, we are positive to close this year with 1 lakh travellers from India.”



**Hassan Al Ibrahim**  
Chief Tourism Development  
Officer, Qatar Tourism  
Authority

“Notable increases in arrivals in the first half of 2018 compared to the first half of 2017 came from India which was 18 per cent, among other countries. Openness and ease of access are crucial elements of the visitor experience. We have committed to providing a seamless experience to visitors even as they are planning for their journey. We will therefore continue to work with our partners on further facilitating entry to Qatar through additional streamlining of the immigration process at Qatar's ports of entry, as well as ensuring that all visitor visas and visa procedures are electronic.”



**Majed Ishaq**  
Marketing Department,  
Ministry of Tourism & Antiquities,  
State of Palestine

“The Ministry of Tourism & Antiquities of the State of Palestine made its debut in the India market last year at a tourism fair. The numbers from India are increasing very rapidly and this has prompted us to visit India and talk to the trade here. In 2017, India ranked number four for Palestine in terms of tourist arrivals among the international markets and number four in terms of overnights in hotels in Palestine. In 2016, we had more than 70,000 Indians visiting us with about 65,000 overnights.”



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## Tourism Marketing Alliance conducts roadshow in Gujarat



Three B2B travel companies namely RezLive.com, BookonBlueStar.com and Tourism and Leisure Group who are part of Tourism Marketing Alliance (TMA) recently conducted a roadshow in Surat, Vadodara and Ahmedabad. The travel partners in Gujarat were made aware of the latest outbound travel trends, travel technology and diversification within the travel business.

## High on MiCE, weddings

**H Deniz Ersöz**, Culture & Tourism Counsellor, Turkish Culture and Tourism Office in India, feels that India's tourism potential is growing and its tourist traffic to Turkey is poised for great growth.



Inder Raj Ahluwalia

### What are Turkey Tourism's plans to promote the country in India?

Recognising India's tourism potential, the Turkish Culture and Tourism Office in India has a focused work plan. The promotional campaigns for the Indian market will be divided into three parts, namely, FITs and cultural tourism, MiCE and weddings. Turkey has gained popularity as a destination particularly for MiCE and weddings. Istanbul, Antalya and Izmir are known for their good venues and possibilities for MiCE groups.

Weddings are the next vital segment Turkey wants to focus on. The aim is to make Turkey one of the most popular destination wedding venues for Indians.



So far, in 2018, the country hosted more than 10 Indian weddings. This apart, the Turkish Culture and Tourism Office in India will also be doing some joint promotional activities with India's biggest tour operators to attract FITs and leisure groups.

### Are the numbers of Indian tourists visiting Turkey annually increasing?

Yes, there is an increase, especially this year. We recently announced that the number of Indian tourists travelling to Turkey has doubled within the period of January to June 2018 as compared to the previous year. Turkey hosted 70,000 Indian travellers during this period. A growth of 100 per cent has been

Contd. on page 18 ►

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# Morocco on an upswing

Morocco and India are set to sign an agreement in the field of air transport to encourage more travellers to visit both the countries.

 Anupriya Bishnoi

Morocco, in an effort to double its tourist footfalls from India by 2019, has set up a Moroccan National Tourist Office in Delhi as the first step towards promoting Morocco as a desirable destination for Indians. His Excellency Mohammed Sajid, Minister of Tourism, Air Transport, Handicraft and Social Economy, Kingdom of Morocco, talked about his strategies to boost the number of tourists from India. He informed, "In our recent meeting with K J Al-**phons**, Minister of State (I/C) for Tourism, Government of India, we will be signing an MoU to promote tourism in both the countries as they share a lot of similarities in terms of heritage, civilisation, etc. We will also be signing an agreement in the field of air transport with the Civil Aviation. In this trip to India, we have with us the chief of our national air transport Royal Air Maroc. We will



His Excellency Mohammed Sajid  
Minister of Tourism, Air Transport  
Handicraft and Social Economy  
Kingdom of Morocco

“ Our tourist office in Delhi will oversee Morocco promotions in India and help us in planning strategic promotional and awareness programmes to tap Indian tourism ”

be having discussions with Air India and other local carriers to facilitate flights between both the countries.”

Moroccan-Indian relations are getting stronger as Morocco

prepares to implement several measures to welcome more of Indian tourists in 2019. With 7 per cent GDP global growth rate, rising personal income levels and changing lifestyles and a huge middle class with the availability of low-cost airfares and diverse travel packages, India is rapidly becoming one of the fastest growing outbound travel markets in the world. Indian tourists are among the world's highest-spending globetrotters.

Sajid further stated, “We have opened our Tourist Office in Delhi, which will oversee Morocco promotions in India. This office will help us in planning various strategic promotional and awareness programmes to tap the robust tourism sector in India. Morocco is keen to enhance its co-operation with India in the tourism sector, in harmony with its new orientation towards emerging as a preferred destination outside the traditional Asian tourist market.”

The delegation also met the Minister of Foreign Affairs for discussing visa problems and how relaxed norms like that of e-visa can help boost the tourism.

## Strengthening tourism ties

- With the signing of the MoU between ITDC and Government of Kingdom of Morocco, both the organisations will be able to share engineering and tourism products development expertise, new trends and technology in tourism products and innovative tourism product development, apart from sharing of database of potential Indian and Moroccan investors in the tourism sector
- The organisations will also collaborate to promote tourism investment opportunities through participation in tourism investment events, economic missions and co-organisation of promotional investment events which are of mutual benefit

# Multilink grabs 'Excellence Award 2018'






Multilink received the 'Excellence Award 2018' at a three-day event organised by TTF Ahmedabad. The event was attended by the travel fraternity, along with several B2B and B2C icons. Nikhil Shah, Founder Director, Multilink stood in pride holding the trophy accompanied by Nilesh Tanna, Vice President, Multilink and Deepti Badge, Product Head, Multilink.







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# OTOAI expands its footprint

At the 6<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting (AGM) in Delhi, Outbound Tour Operators Association of India (OTOAI) vowed to increase membership as well as organise training and educational programmes for its staff.



Nisha Verma

The Outbound Tour Operators Association of India (OTOAI) held its 6<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting (AGM) in New Delhi recently, where they updated members about the activities held in the last one year and passed accounts for the same period. On the occasion, **Mahendra Vakharia**, President, OTOAI, said, "The aim of our 6<sup>th</sup> AGM was to touch base with all the activities we have done since the time we had taken over in November and pass over the account of the last financial year. Apart from that, we discussed the way forward with members about how and what needs to be done next."

Claiming to have seen a visible growth in membership as well as in earnings for the association, Vakharia mentioned, "In the membership, we have seen a growth of 10 per cent and



Mahendra Vakharia  
President  
OTOAI

in terms of accounts, we are showing a surplus. In fact, there is an increase compared to the last year. However, because it's an advantage, we again want to drive it back to have more meetings and workshops with the members about using the funds effectively."

Talking about the membership drive, he said, "All of us in the executive as well as core committee are effectively

trying to drive the membership by speaking to friends within the industry, requesting them, convincing them, giving them ideas, explaining about OTOAI and outlining the advantage of membership. Interestingly, a lot of agents from Tier II and III cities are becoming members."

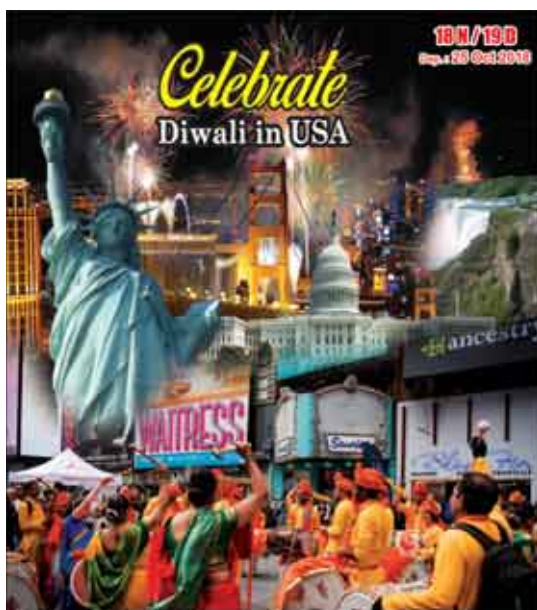
meet in another city, have presentations and workshops, and give back to the members whenever possible," he claimed.

**Himanshu Patil**, Vice President, OTOAI expressed the need to empower members in every way. "It has always

“All of us in the executive as well as core committee are trying to drive the membership. Interestingly, a lot of agents from Tier II and III cities are becoming members”

The association is working towards organising various events and training programmes for the members, especially after a successful convention in South Africa in August. "The members were very happy with the convention as they got to experience the destination first-hand. We will continue to have members'

been our priority, not only to promote outbound tourism, but also to address the various issues that our members are facing. In the AGM, we discussed about organising training programmes for the frontline staff for day-to-day work, right from mails to how to communicate with agents," he asserted.



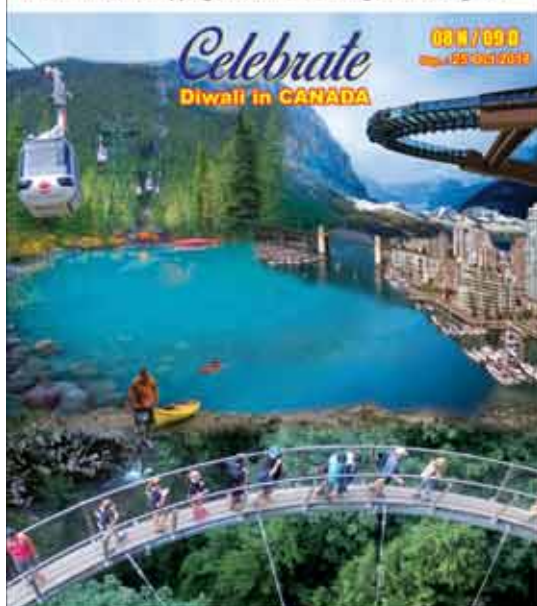
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- Visit to Smithsonian Air & Space Museum, Hershey's Chocolate World, Santa Monica Beach & 17 Mile drive
- Experience Helicopter tour over Strip & Golden Gate Bay Cruise



## Sightseeing Includes :

- Guided city tour of New York, Philadelphia, Washington DC & Los Angeles
- Experience The Ride, Statue of Liberty, One World Observatory, Stratosphere Tower, Universal Studios Hollywood
- Visit Smithsonian Air & Space Museum, Santa Monica Beach
- Las Vegas Strip tour by night, Helicopter tour over Las Vegas Strip with Limo transfers
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## FHRAI Convention in Lucknow

The three-day FHRAI Annual Convention, held recently at Ramada Lucknow Hotel & Convention Centre, witnessed 1150 registrations, over 1400 delegates in attendance and about 65 speakers for panel discussions.



Kanchan Nath from Lucknow

The recently-held 53rd FHRAI Annual Convention brought together many influential voices and iconic thought leaders, among other participants, to deliberate on pressing issues, policies and concerns related to the industry. Elaborating more on the event, **Garish Oberoi**, President, FHRAI said, "This has been one of the biggest conventions so far. The event was well-attended as it recorded 1150 registrations and 1400 people in attendance. This is the second time when the convention has come to Uttar Pradesh with the earlier one being held in Agra in 2010. Further, there were about 65 speakers who participated in the panel discussions."



**Yogi Adityanath**, Chief Minister, Uttar Pradesh, while welcoming the delegates on the inaugural day, said, "Uttar Pradesh provides immense opportunities in the sector of spiritual and wellness tourism. We are promoting the Kumbh Mela, slated to take place at Prayag (Allahabad) from January to March 2019. The Government of Uttar Pradesh is seeking investments of ₹ 5000 crore each year for the tourism segment as stated in our tourism policy."

On the second day of the convention, **K J Alphons**, Minister of State for Tourism (IC), Government of India, said, "Foreign Tourists Arrivals (FTAs) have gone up by 14 per cent and income generated through these rose by 19.2 per cent. In the past 4.5 years, there has been an additional employment of 14.62 million people through tourism. About 84 million people are

employed across India in the tourism industry."

**Surendra Kumar Jaiswal**, Chairman, Convention Organising Committee, made a request to the government on GST. He said, "If we want more tourist footfalls in the country, we need to have a GST of 12 per cent across all hotels. With 28 per cent GST, guests get alarmed with the room rates and look out for options outside India."





Sri. H. D. Kumaraswamy  
Hon'ble Chief Minister



Dr. G. Parameshwara  
Hon'ble Deputy Chief Minister



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# Thailand promotes new products

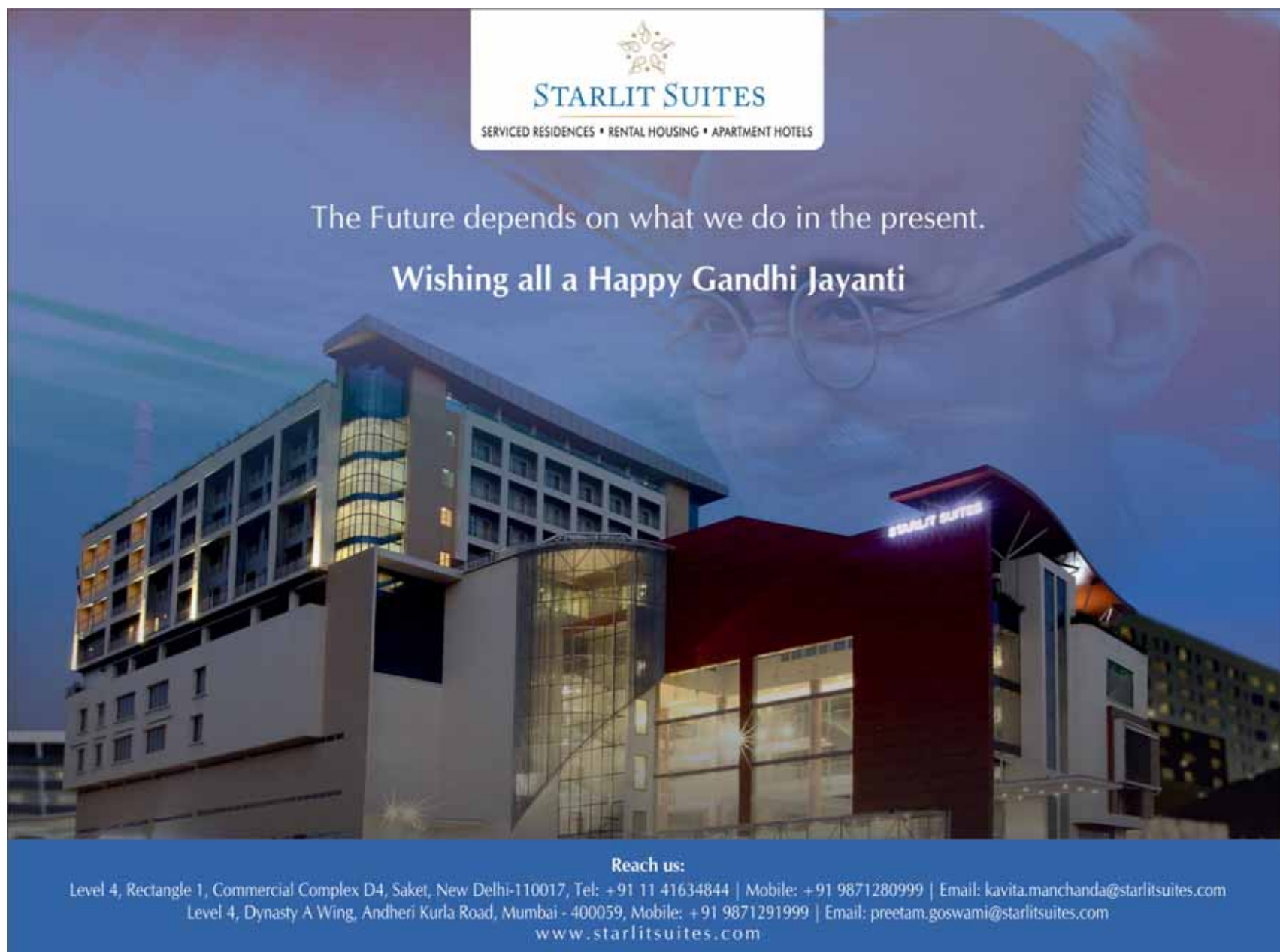
Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) recently organised its annual 'Amazing Thailand' roadshow in Jaipur and Kolkata. Around 30 sellers including representatives of hotels, resorts, attractions, DMCs and airlines from Thailand promoted their products to the trade in both cities. A destination presentation was delivered by **Isra Stapanaseth**, Director, TAT, New Delhi.





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## Champagne sees growth

As per industry projections, Champagne consumption will increase by more than 70% in the next three years, making the region a perfect destination for Indians.



TT Bureau

Champagne is a wine region within the historical province of Champagne in the northeast of France and is easily accessible from Paris and CDG airport in less than an hour. It is a unique destination because Champagne can only be produced here. As per industry projections, Champagne consumption will augment by more than 73 per cent in the next three years, says **Romain Tilly**, Promotion Manager, Champagne-Ardenne Tourisme, who believes that



**Romain Tilly**  
Promotion Manager  
Champagne-Ardenne Tourisme

year. Currently, we do not have official figures from the French

“We see an increasing demand from Bengaluru and Kolkata. As we are an unexplored destination for the Indian market, we have to keep promoting ourselves”

Champagne is a perfect destination for Indians.

“India is a growing market where it is not only important to be present, but more a mistake to be absent. We have been working closely with Atout France for this market since 2011 and we could benefit from their experience and figures to know if France receives more and more Indians year after year. For instance, approximately 6,00,000 Indians visited France last

government (INSEE) concerning our region. But research conducted by Atout France indicates a real interest for our destination and a growth for selling tours in Champagne,” Tilly reveals.

Following Atout France's recommendations, Champagne-Ardenne Tourisme started to showcase its region in Delhi and Mumbai. These two cities have been connected to Paris with Air France for many years, and it sees

the best results from these. “We now see an increasing demand from Bengaluru and Kolkata too after being present in these cities. As we are an unexplored destination for the Indian market, we have to keep promoting ourselves. Nevertheless, we hope to receive more and more Indians and show them that our destination is full of rich discoveries. We would like to convince Indians to enjoy a longer stay in Champagne and also want to position ourselves as a wedding destination. After all, we are the Champagne destination and what is better to drink at a wedding party than Champagne!” Tilly exclaims.

He will be in India in September to meet travel agents at a workshop organised by Atout France in Jaipur. The region has regularly organised dinner evenings in Mumbai, along with Atout France pairing Indian delicacies with several Champagne cuvées from Michel Gonet Champagne House. “Just as the French eat more and more Indian food, Indians are also drinking more and more Champagne. So, Champagne and Indian food are made to be paired and savoured. The Champagne Committee is the partner in charge of the training and formation about Champagne in India,” Tilly adds.

## Now, travel hale and hearty!

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While basking in the joy of meeting their loved ones abroad, people often tend to overlook the safety of a trip, especially when old parents are visiting their children. **Deepali Pendse**, currently settled in Singapore, did not ignore this aspect when her parents planned to visit her there. However, one morning Pendse's 65-year old mother Shobhana Pendse tripped and fell off the bed, leading to a fracture in her leg. She

was immediately rushed to the emergency unit of a hospital, but due to the severity of fracture, she was advised to undergo a surgery at the earliest. Facing distress, the family immediately reached out to TrawellTag Cover-More emergency

assistance team. The specialist team guided them through the entire process, liaised with the hospital in Singapore to track Pendse's progress and provided cashless assistance for hospital expenses. She then flew back to India hale and hearty.

“TrawellTag Cover-More's timely travel assistance proved to be a boon for my mother and such services have made us an eternal patron for the organisation”



# Aitken Spence enters Maldives

**Suresh Dissanayake**, Assistant VP—Sales Marketing, Heritance Aarah & Adaaran Resort in Maldives, shares details on how the 150-key resort, set to open by the end of October, will offer localised experiences to tourists.



Kanchan Nath

With a presence in Sri Lanka already, Aitken Space is now ready to open Heritance Aarah & Adaaran Resort in the Maldives. **Suresh Dissanayake**, Assistant Vice President—Sales Marketing, Heritance Aarah & Adaaran Resort, said, “The DNA of Heritance brand comes from heritage and inheritance. So, wherever a Heritance property is present, we always localise experiences. Our tagline is ‘where tradition is alive.’ After an extensive research with the existing five-star luxury properties in the Maldives, we found out that luxury can be found anywhere in the Maldives, but no one offers authentic local experiences. Hence, we decided to come up with this luxury hotel offering authentic Maldivian experiences.”



**Suresh Dissanayake**  
Assistant Vice President—Sales Marketing,  
Heritance Aarah & Adaaran Resort  
in Maldives

Talking more about its infrastructure, Dissanayake revealed, “We requested a local architect to make the design as localised as he could. In its architectural style, the resort has thatched roofs, open-style bathrooms and sandy floors. It’s completely different since we want to make it a barefoot island.” He added, “In the resort, we have also decided to support the dying arts of Maldives. These are lacquer painting, boat building, weaving or handicrafts. In the cultural centre, clients can make their own souvenirs, while supporting a dying art of the Maldives.”

## One island, one resort

The island is 26 acres in size and the resort offers six restaurants and six bars.

Highlighting the amenities at the resort, he said, “There are 150 rooms in seven different categories starting from beach villas, family beach villas, pool beach villas, family pool beach villas, luxury water villas and

presidential water suite.”

About ADRs, he explained, “With the starting rates ranging from \$750 to \$5,000 per room per night, the rooms come with a premier all-inclusive package, including top-range liquor and

wine. We also offer them excursions free of charge, depending on the category of room booked, such as all non-motorised water sports. Moreover, guests are also entitled for one introductory dive. Comparing with the rest of the Maldives,

what we offer as a price point is reasonable. In the second year, I am expecting the prices to go up to \$950 to \$7,000-\$8,000. We will launch a three-nights package for \$3500 (entry category) which includes seaplane transfer.”

## Seaplane experience

“Seaplane provides you the bird’s eye view of the Maldives. For our resort, we will be chartering the seaplane so that the route becomes point-to-point, starting from the airport to stop at our resort,” he shared. 📌

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# Cozmo goes *glocal*

After an expertise in the UAE visa, global visa and air ticketing market, Cozmo Travel is now looking to aggressively venture into MICE and holidays business.



TT Bureau

Providing a contemporary blend of travel experience to new-age travellers, Cozmo Travel has swiftly established a name for itself within the Indian and international market. Reflecting a perfect blend of global expertise and local knowledge, the firm has succeeded in redefining the role of travel consultant. Recounting the company's success story and future plans, **Praveen Nair**, Chief Operating Officer, Cozmo Travel, says, getting into MICE and holidays business would play a pivotal role for the company to grow in new business areas. He further says that 2019 would be a 360-degree turnaround year, wherein unique projects would be undertaken.

Speaking about the company's expansion plans, Nair says that his company believes in 3Ps-



**Praveen Nair**  
Chief Operating Officer  
Cozmo Travel

professionalism, personalisation and promptness. "We have grown from a mere 51 employees to a strong force of over 200 employees with 21 offices across India. Apart from it, we serve for visa assistance for more than 186 countries and have issued around 2.5 lakh plus visas to every genre of customers. Coming to holiday destinations from the UAE as single destination, we

have now enlarged our reach to the Far East, Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) countries and other major worldly attractions," he adds.

Talking about focusing more on CIS countries in the future, Nair says that Cozmo Travel would also be spreading its presence on the web platform with its B2B portal 'Travtrolley' and B2C portal 'gocozmo.in'. He also informs, "We have also pioneered the online visa application portal for the UAE visas for a seamless process."

Nair also informs that the company has started combining market in Tier-II and III cities with recently-concluded series of specialised fare for high-end travel professionals. He shares that Cozmo Travel is also conducting dedicated holidays training programmes across the Tier-II and III cities. 🇮🇳

# Mishmash of cultures

Indy Old Courthouse marks the first venture of Indy Hospitality in India — specialised in the management of independent resorts and hotels.



TT Bureau

Focusing on enriching guest experience with a world-class service through its premium boutique properties, Indy Hospitality is set to launch two resorts in Goa in the upcoming months. This hospitality is part of a larger brand that is already running five other reputed hotels in the state.

Exemplifying the beauty of the property, **Rachael Albuquerque**, Partner, Indy Hospitality says, "The group has a strong footprint in Kerala. Indy Old Court House, a luxury hotel in Fort Kochi, effortlessly blends history with sophistication. The 200-year old structure has a modern sanctuary in the hotel's striking art deco renovation. The building was constructed as a courthouse and has been a witness to many-a-court proceeding over the last two



**Rachael Albuquerque**  
Partner  
Indy Hospitality

centuries. After its early days as a courthouse, the historical structure took on a new avatar as the first banking office of ANZ Grindlays, post which, it has duly served as a warehouse for spices and teas."

Indy Old Courthouse Fort Kochi strategically lies in its mosaic of cultures with some of them remaining as different as chalk

and cheese. Albuquerque informs that different historic timelines revolve around Fort Kochi. "It is the potpourri of different nationalities — be it a Portuguese settlement with a Dutch palace, a tourist hangout with Chinese fishing nets, a Jew town where Kashmiri handicrafts are sold or an erstwhile trading hub which now morphs into a lively spice market. The antique shops and the art cafes are a blend of tradition and the contemporary times," she adds.

## Looking West

Indy Hospitality will focus on the European market, as it has proved to be a performing market for Kerala

The brand will continue to tap the domestic market as it is a steady source of business throughout the year

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**INDY**  
**OLD COURT HOUSE**  
FORT KOCHI | KERALA

# Culture, nature & cuisine

▶ Contd. from page 10

recorded vis-à-vis the same period last year. By the end of 2018, Turkey is expecting to welcome 200,000 Indian tourists, which means a very impressive growth of 120 per cent in comparison to 2017.

**Q**What are the main segments of the Indian market? Is it leisure travellers, groups, etc?

“Weddings are the next vital segment for Turkey. We aim to make it one of the most popular destination wedding venues for Indians. So far, in 2018, the country hosted more than 10 Indian weddings”

While all segments of the Indian market have potential, we are majorly targeting FITs, MICE and wedding groups. We believe the Indian wedding market can yield very good business for Turkey.

**Q**What, in your opinion, are Turkey's strongest attractions and selling points for Indian tourists?

Turkey offers several attractions, such as nature, culture and a deep-rooted historical and religious background, which is reflected in the country's 18 UNESCO world heritage sites. The country also offers diverse cuisine and entertainment options, along with world-class hotel and transportation sectors. In addition, Turkey is replete with several tourist sites. All these add up to form a very comprehensive and high-



**H Deniz Ersöz**  
Culture & Tourism Counsellor,  
Turkish Culture and Tourism  
Office in India

Bordrum, Pamukkal, Mugla and Çankaya are also noteworthy destinations.

**Q**Is it easy for Indians wanting to visit Turkey to get tourist visas?

Yes, it has now become very easy for Indians to get Turkish tourist visas. For those having a valid Schengen, UK or US visa, e-visa facilities are available, wherein applicants can get visas to Turkey in less than 15-20 minutes. The other visa applicants can contact VFS for the same. For big groups travelling to Turkey, the process of getting visas has become smoother. 🇮🇳

**Q**What are Turkey's three main tourist attractions?

The country's three main tourist attractions are Istanbul, Cappadocia and Antalya. But



# Bringing the best for Indians

Having created a niche for itself in the Indian market, Europamundo Global Tours is on a growth spree in the country and is introducing new products as well as India-specific service and food for travellers.



TT Bureau

For Europamundo Global Tours, the last one year has been quite progressive, agrees **Aparna C Basumalik**, Country Head—India, Europamundo Vacaciones. “The first five months of the year saw us surpassing our sales in 2017. Hence, we are now looking at closing the year on a high note,” she added.

Looking forward, the company has many plans for India. “The support from the trade has encouraged us to introduce new products, and we have launched Israel and Jordan recently. The winter products



**Aparna C Basumalik**  
Country Head—India  
Europamundo Vacaciones

have been well-accepted as we have a good selection of tours during winter months,” she revealed.

They are even pre-launching new products in the market to boost trade. “To give the trade a headstart into the season, we had our pre-launch. This gives a cost benefit too. Further, it’s a great platform for those venturing out into doing small groups. And, specifically for the Indian market, we are increasing the number of tours comprising the option of Indian meals,” informed Basumalik.

In fact, with these offerings, professional service and add-ons by Europamundo, the brand has created a niche for itself in the Indian market. “The surge in the numbers year-on-year is a clear indication that both the travellers and the agents have now begun to understand the concept of the firm. The number of agents who have our login IDs increase every week. Also, it is important to highlight that

although the market knows Europamundo majorly for European coach tours, we also have popular coach tours to Japan, Mexico, Turkey, USA and now Israel and Jordan,” she said.

Basumalik also shared some advantages Indians can enjoy

on choosing Europamundo. She said, “Europamundo has some unique features that are a big plus for the Indian traveller, which include round-the-year guaranteed departures. In fact, families with kids get not just the child price, but also an extra room. There is also sector sale

“Although Europamundo is for European coach tours, we also have tours to Japan, Mexico, Turkey, USA, Israel and Jordan”

and one can start at any city on a rotary programme.”

Currently, Europamundo sells

through its listed distributors, which, in turn appoints sales agents throughout India. Basumalik revealed that this

number is growing. “Our annual sales conference will be in Moscow at the end of October and will be attended by agents from 173 countries. Besides celebrating the success of the team, it’s great to meet the trade that works in tandem globally,” claimed Basumalik.

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# Trade rises above obstacles

From coping with talent crunch to meeting unique demands to dealing with infrastructural concerns, India Travel Award winners share their views on addressing challenges and ways to overcome them.



Manas Dwivedi

★ Best Hospitality Professional —  
**Rajan Malhotra (South 2018)**



“Rajan Malhotra, Director—Sales & Marketing, Shangri-La Hotel Bengaluru, believes in thinking out-of-the-box and maintaining relationship with guests for profitable hotel business. “Faster services and affordable prices keep us in the top position always. We always come up with creative ideas to offer value propositions to the end user without compromising on the quality. I am sure the future of hotels is all about automation,” says Malhotra. He explains, “Travellers have unique demands which may not be cost-effective for a majority of hotels. Guest loyalty and preferences are ever changing with many options available and it becomes difficult to access scope for improvement and develop new products.” ”

★ Best Debut City Hotel —  
**Hyatt Regency Lucknow (North 2017)**



“Briefing about a number of challenges in the hospitality industry, Kumar Shobhan, General Manager, Hyatt Regency Lucknow says, “The current business domain has witnessed a major increase of supply in last one year. The demand has also increased but not in the same ratio. This has dropped the ADR of the city as compared to 2017 and 2016. As the ADRs are dropping the pressure is building up with all the hotels to demand the rates, the OTA market is still performing better in terms of occupancy but not rate.” ”



★ Best Transport Company —  
**South Tourism (South 2018)**



“Pandian, Founder Chairman, South Tourism, has been taking all required measures to overcome challenges that lay ahead. “Any business requires the support of the government and vice versa. We face several challenges on a day-to-day basis. For example, for tour operators like us input credit is not available. We lose a lot of money as we are not eligible for claiming ITC. This needs to be addressed on an urgent basis. Tourism infrastructure is to be developed as some basic facilities like proper toilets are lacking in Tamil Nadu. Even if toilets exist, they are sub-standard, unclean and have zero maintenance,” he said.” ”



★ Best Corporate Hotel —  
**Hyatt Place Gurgaon/Udyog Vihar (North 2017)**



“According to Maulina Gupta, General Manager, Hyatt Place Gurgaon/Udyog Vihar, changes in guest expectations are one of the biggest challenges. She elaborates, “We always try to ensure unique stay experience by providing swift check-in check-out services, approving the valid request of all our guests and assuring the best hotel experience. Technology remains the key to achieve a competitive edge as it continues to impact day-to-day operations. Hotels are forced to re-evaluate their marketing efforts to capture the ever-growing online market.” ”

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# Belgium on a tourism mission

The Wallonia region located in southern Belgium has decided to tap the potential that Indian outbound offers and engaged the travel trade in four cities through the Travel Agents Association of India (TAAI) network.



Hazel Jain

The Wallonia Foreign Trade, along with Wallonia Export-Investment Agency (AWEX) recently took a tourism mission to four metro cities of India — Mumbai, Bengaluru, Chennai and Delhi. The Consulate

General of Belgium, AWEX and Brussels Capital Region (BIE), in association with Travel Agents Association of India (TAAI), organised the event for its members. Nine delegates from different tourism attractions from Brussels and Wallonia (Southern Belgium)

presented their unique tourist attractions to the TAAI members. The delegation also visited top tour operators in Mumbai and New Delhi.

Peter Huyghebaert, Consul General, AWEX Team; Emmanuelle Timmermans, Trade



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and Investment Commissioner and Dominique Andre from Wallonia Belgium Tourism, joined Ellona Pereira, India Director, Visit Brussels, for the roadshow. Also, part of the delegation were Albert Joris from Caves of Han, Catherine Vuidar from Euro Space Center, Rodolphe Brohée from Durbuy, Malati Dasi and Martin Gurvich from Radhadesh Castle, Jérôme Aussems from Ardennes Incoming (DMC) and Steven Truymen from Hey Belgium (DMC).

Dominique Andre, Overseas Markets Manager, Wallonia Belgium Tourism, who is responsible for the Asia market that includes India, China and Japan, said, "India is a new market for us. Most Indian travellers now know Brussels and Antwerp. However, there is potential for nature, activities and more experiences too. Besides, we are witnessing the MICE segment booming in India and it is important to visit towns as well as villages and have activities."

"We hope to return next year with a bigger delegation and more activities. We decided to conduct the roadshow with TAAI because it makes it easier to reach out to the trade. Making the first contact is difficult and it is better to team up with local associations. Our plan this time is to understand the Indian market and its requirements. Next year, we will conduct Fams for agents, and then take a call on whether we need to have a person here in India," adds Andre.

Pereira says, "Brussels has recently entered the Indian market and we are creating awareness on Brussels for foreign independent travellers (FITs), luxury as well as MICE segments. The agents are keen and we hope to get more groups from India."



# 'It is more than just a museum'

About five minutes away from the city of Lucerne, the Swiss Museum of Transport attracts FITs and groups alike because it offers loads of entertainment options as well as shopping!

 TT Bureau

The Swiss Transport Museum or Verkehrshaus der Schweiz in Lucerne opened in July 1959 and exhibits all forms of transport, including locomotive, automobiles, ships, and aircraft as well as communication technology. It is Switzerland's most popular museum and located five minutes from the city centre. **Christian Keil**, Sales Manager, Swiss Museum of Transport, was in India recently to promote this to travel agents. Speaking passionately about his products, he says, "We are more than just a museum. We not only have halls with exhibits of different types of transportation - rail, road, water, aviation and even space. But we also have a film theatre which is an IMAX-sized cinema, a planetarium, simulated



**Christian Keil**  
Sales Manager  
Swiss Museum of Transport

spaceships where you can fly into space, and a walk-in replica of the ISS International Space Station, a conference centre and an exciting chocolate adventure."

Children visiting the museum can move around on bikes inside. The automobiles hall has cars from different eras and the external walls of the

exhibit are made with 344 used Swiss road signs. The museum also has an interactive exhibition called Media World which shows the history of communication and how it has evolved.

Keil adds, "This place is good for families. We started promoting this in India about two years ago and have received a fabulous response for it. We also welcome big leisure and MICE groups. While the con-

ference centre can accommodate about 600 people, we can conduct a group of 1,000 pax as well by splitting them into three groups – guided tours in the museum for 400 pax, a presentation in the theatre for the other 400 pax and the rest can stay in the conference centre or walk around the museum. In fact, we recently received a group of 800 people from India this year for three days. It really depends on the needs of the groups."



### Get transported at Verkehrshaus

The Swiss Museum of Transport has gained a new attraction in the multimedia theme world, the Swiss Chocolate Adventure. Here, guests can sit in a train for a 30-minute ride and at the end of it everyone gets free Lindt chocolates. Apart from the museum, there is an IMAX and a planetarium. It's the perfect place for children and they can spend the whole day there. They also have crash cars and simulated space rides.

Visitors can buy a day pass in which everything is included. It also comprises the Swiss Travel Pass, with which visitors can buy the rides they want to experience. They can also visit the museum shop. "It is more than a museum. It is a place for entertainment. We also get students from around the world and we would love to get students from India too. Vegetarian food can be arranged as well," Keil adds.



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# Over 1400 visitors at PTM 2018

The recently-concluded PATA Travel Mart (PTM) 2018 in Langkawi, Malaysia, had a medley of offerings for buyers and a strong Indian presence. An event graced by many dignitaries, it kept delegates engaged over two days of business and networking sessions alongside the PATA Grand and Gold Awards presentation ceremony.





# Lords in Cyprus by 2019

Not just India, Nepal and Bhutan, but Lords Hotels & Resorts has plans to enter Cyprus with its first property on the Mediterranean. They also plan to increase their footprint in Sikkim, Karnataka, Rajasthan and Himachal Pradesh.



TT Bureau

When P R Bansal, COO, Lords Hotels and Resorts, was recently invited by the Tourism Department of Cyprus for dinner with Cyprus President Nicos Anastasiades, along with President of India Ram Nath Kovind, little did he expect that he would be planning a new property in that country. The group is now creating a roadmap for franchising and managing a property under the Lords banner. Bansal shares, "If all goes well, we should be opening a property by 2019 in Cyprus. Their government is facilitating investments by levying only 5 per cent tax. We still have to sign the treaty. So, we will be making an announcement once that happens."

Lords Hotels and Resorts has already been working on the blueprint to open 40 hotels by 2020 which will be roughly 2,560 rooms. Bansal corrects this and says, "We are already ahead of track so the number may go up to 41 hotels by 2020. This is apart from the Cyprus property."

These hotels will be opening across India, mostly in Tier II, III and even Tier IV towns. Some of them include Rajkot, Jamnagar, Goa, Bharuch and Sikkim. Nepal is also on the radar. While it already has two operational hotels there, it will soon open three new ones - in Birgunj, Sanga and Budhanilkantha. The property in Birgunj will have 72 rooms, a café and three banquet halls. Sanga will be a 60-key property of which 26 will be cottages. Sanga also has the world's tallest Shiva statue. Meanwhile, Budhanilkantha will be a leisure property with 108 rooms.

Speaking about Nepal, Bansal says, "Each property will have its unique characteristic. For instance, the one in Birgunj will have a panoramic view of the Kathmandu valley as it is located on top of a mountain."

East is a key region for Lords and Sikkim is also on the radar. "I am visiting Sikkim in

January 2019 as we have been invited by the owners of a hotel in Kalimpong. The recently-opened airport in Pakyong will work well for us. Our eyes are also on Bhutan and we have already started discussions with our partner there," Bansal adds. 🇮🇳



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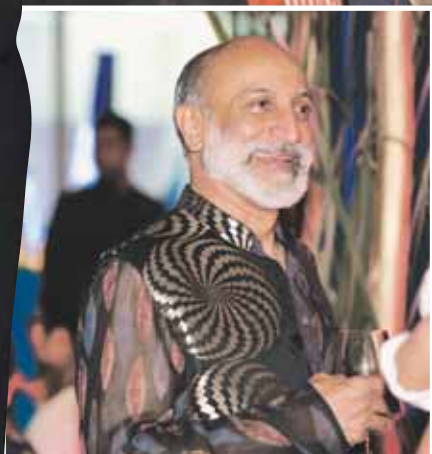
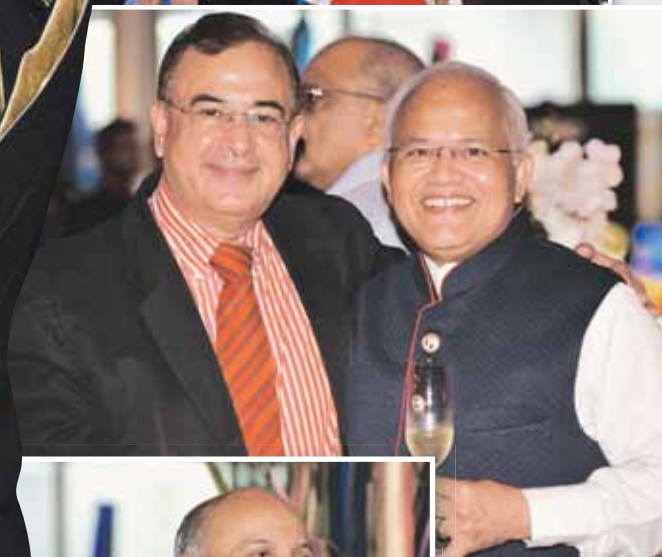
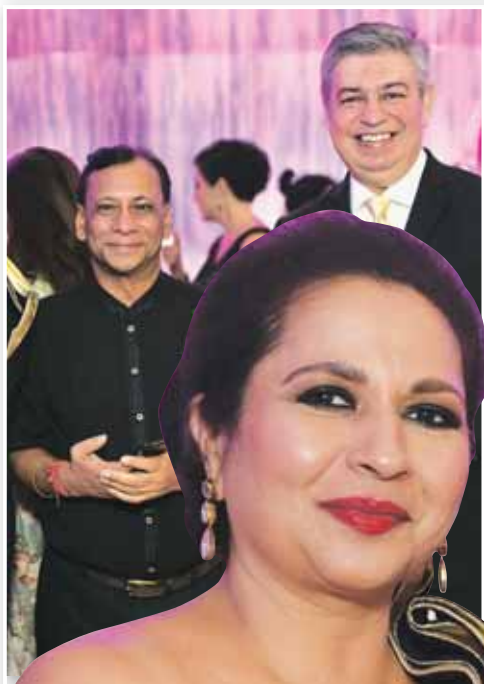
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# The Park grows 50 years young

The Park Hotels' year-long Golden Jubilee celebrations at The Park New Delhi was presided over by **Priya Paul**, Chairperson, Apeejay Surrendra Park Hotels and **Vijay Dewan**, Managing Director, The Park Hotels. The Park Hotels' 50-year celebrations continue across India and will culminate at The Park Vishakhapatnam which also turns 50 in 2018.





# Offering a fresh perspective

Far East Hospitality has rebranded Orchard Parade Hotel to Orchard Rendezvous Hotel, besides introducing a new logo for the Rendezvous brand to reflect a refreshed ideology.



TT Bureau

Far East Hospitality has rebranded the iconic Orchard Parade Hotel to Orchard Rendezvous Hotel. The company has even tied up with the Orchid Society of South East Asia (OSSEA) to commission an orchid for Orchard Rendezvous Hotel, which will be the second property under the Rendezvous brand in Singapore.

"The rebranding of Orchard Rendezvous Hotel is part of Far East Hospitality's continuous efforts to meet the demands of the growing mid-tier market. The Rendezvous brand caters to conventional travellers – those who appreciate a hotel with old-world charms. The property's proximity to the central area makes it an ideal location for the growing number of business travellers to Singapore; while nearby attractions, like the botanical gardens and Orchard shopping district appeal to families," said **Arthur Kiong**, Chief Executive Officer, Far East Hospitality.

Since the original building of the hotel was developed on a plot of old pepper plantation, the interiors of the new Orchard Rendezvous Hotel have also been refurbished to incorporate elements of the pepper plant. These include the delicate pepper leaf chandelier and pepper plant motif in all 388 rooms of the property. The commissioned orchid is on the level 6 at the outdoor swimming pool area and is named Vanda Orchard Rendezvous. "As a home-grown company, we are honoured to house a commissioned national flower at our property. The Vanda Orchard Rendezvous marks a new beginning for the historical landmark as Orchard Rendezvous Hotel. It signifies our belief in creating a Singapore-inspired experience for our guests," said Kiong.

Apart from rebranding of Orchard Rendezvous Hotel, Far East Hospitality has also revamped the

Rendezvous brand, which embraces romance of the past, present and future. To reflect this refreshed ideology, the company has come up with a new personable, yet distinguishable logo. Orchard

Rendezvous Hotel is the first property to reflect the refreshed Rendezvous brand and the new logo. Other properties under the brand such as the Rendezvous Hotel Singapore, Rendezvous Hotel

Melbourne, Rendezvous Hotel Perth Scarborough, Rendezvous Hotel Perth Central, Rendezvous Hotel Sydney The Rocks and Rendezvous Hotel Sydney Central will also be refreshed progressively.



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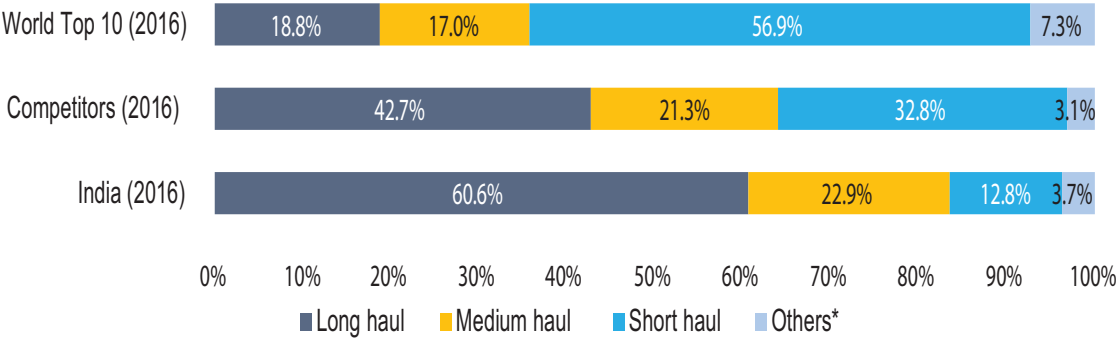
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Eyes on long haul markets

The majority of India's inbound tourists (60.6 per cent) are from long haul source markets, that is, greater than six hours' flights, according to a latest report by CAPA India research and analysis.

Share of long, medium and short-haul source markets in total FTAs – India vs competitors' average vs world's top 10 inbound markets' average



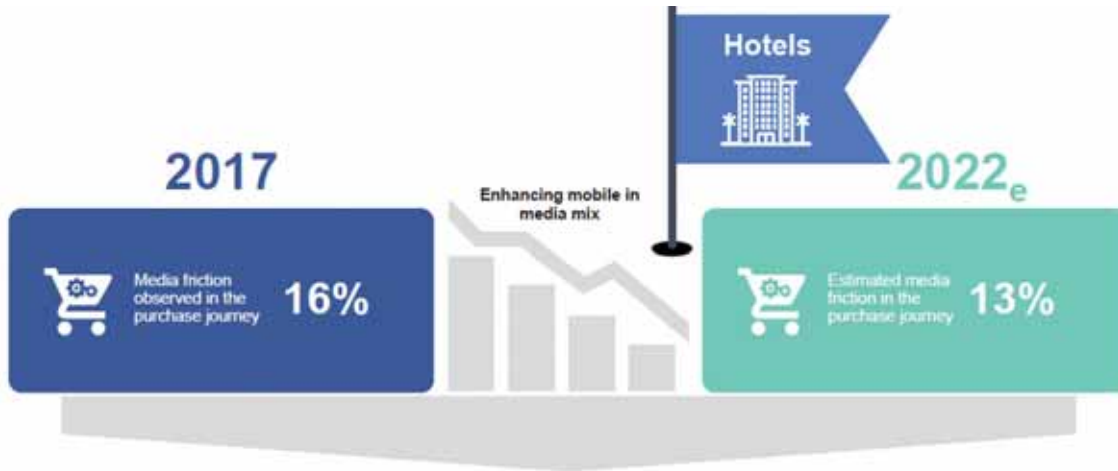
\* World top 10: France, Spain, US, China, Italy, UK, Germany, Mexico, Thailand, Turkey  
Short haul flight: <3 hours; medium haul: 3 to 6 hours; long haul: >6 hours \*Details not available

Most of the world's largest tourism destinations receive the largest proportion of their visitors from short and medium haul markets. This distance puts India at a strategic disadvantage in terms of cost and ease of access and increases the number of potential destinations it competes with, that lie within a similar arc. It is relatively less well-placed to attract travellers planning short, spontaneous breaks.

Source: CAPA India research and analysis; tourism ministry/department of respective countries; UNWTO

Mobiles dominate travel buys

With the app economy gaining prominence and hotels increasingly encouraging consumers to have direct transactions, the role of mobile in hotel bookings is expected to increase. As per a study by KPMG-Facebook, 9 out of 10 bookings in the hotel category are expected to be mobile-influenced by 2022.




The findings by KPMG-Facebook further suggest that in case of hotel bookings, 16 per cent of consumers drop out due to media friction and enhancing the media mix with mobile can reduce this friction by 3 percentage points, leading to a USD2 billion opportunity for the brand within the category by 2022.

A number of factors are considered while selecting a hotel such as proximity to popular locations/market areas, amenities, reviews, pricing and discounts. Consumers expect information on all aspects of the hotel before making a booking. The study suggests that brands do not highlight these factors while communicating with consumers, leading to a dropout of nearly a third of aware decision makers at the awareness stage itself. Most of the friction at the awareness and consideration stages is observed on print, outdoor and radio. As these media fail to engage with consumers, providing detailed and sequential information on property images, cost comparisons, meal inclusions, etc. helps consumers make an informed decision on hotel bookings.


Source: KPMG-Facebook report



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## Renaissance Bengaluru Race Course Hotel Bengaluru

**Subhankar Bose** is the newly-appointed General Manager at Renaissance Bengaluru Race Course Hotel. In his new role, he will spearhead various specialised functions of the hotel and will be responsible for steering the management team. Bose will be leading the executive team with strategic planning and tactical management. With a wealth of over 17 years of operational experience and expertise in hospitality operations and management, Bose has mastered the ability to stay on top of situation and ensure his end of deliverables are completed with adeptness.



## Oakwood Premier Prestige Bangalore Bengaluru

**Wajeed Bagwan** has been appointed the new General Manager of Oakwood Premier Prestige Bangalore. Bagwan will be tasked with overlooking all functions at the property. With over 25 years of hospitality experience in India and the Middle East, he specialises in pre-opening, re-branding and operation setup of properties. Bagwan started his career with The Taj Group of Hotels as a Restaurant Manager and then moved to the Oberoi Group of Hotels. He was then appointed as the Executive Assistant Manager at Radisson Blu Chennai followed by General Manager at Lotus Hospitality and Suba Hotels in Dubai.



## Novotel Hyderabad Convention Centre Hotel & Hyderabad International Convention Centre

### Hyderabad

Novotel Hyderabad Convention Centre Hotel and Hyderabad International Convention Centre (HICC) announced the appointment of **Manish Dayya** as the new General Manager. He brings with him over two decades of experience in the trade and hospitality industry. In his new position, Dayya will be responsible for spearheading operations at this dual property to ensure their growth and expansion through innovative strategies.



## Novotel Mumbai Juhu Beach Hotel Mumbai

Novotel Mumbai Juhu Beach Hotel has designated **Nishant Agarwal** as the General Manager of the property. With 19 years of hospitality experience, Agarwal will be responsible for spearheading operations at the property. He began his career with The Imperial New Delhi, followed by his association with The Oberoi Hotels & Resorts in the Food & Beverage sector. He has also worked with The Westin Mumbai Garden City as Executive Assistant Manager and later moved to The Westin Pune Koregaon Park as the General Manager. Agarwal is an alumni of Institute of Hotel Management, Pusa, New Delhi.



## Hyatt Hyderabad Gachibowli Hyderabad

Hyatt Hyderabad Gachibowli has announced the appointment of **Roshan Rajpal** as its General Manager. With over 20 years' experience, Roshan brings with her excellence in operations, sales and marketing, business development acumen as well as the zeal to create moments not just for guests, but for colleagues too. A graduate in Humanities, Rajpal has worked across global hospitality brands like Crowne Plaza, Carlson Rezidor and AccorHotels in various challenging roles and responsibilities. She brings her expertise and experience as Hotel Manager at Grand Hyatt Mumbai.



## Atlas Travels Online-Hotels Mumbai

**Janhavi Mandpe** is appointed as Head—Operations at Atlas Travels Online-Hotels. Mandpe has more than 13 years of work experience in the B2B and B2C tourism and MICE industry with the last six years extensively involved in B2B contracting, negotiations, operations and business development. She has previously worked with GRNconnect.com, Akbar Holidays, Orbit Tours and Trade Fairs. She holds a Post Graduate Diploma in Tourism and Travel Management.



## The Leela Ambience Gurugram Hotel & Residences

### Delhi-NCR

The Leela Ambience Gurugram Hotel & Residences has designated **Alok Chakravarty** as Director—Sales & Marketing. With over 17 years of acumen in sales and management, Chakravarty has previously worked as Director of Sales at The Leela Palace, New Delhi. He has also worked with leading brands like The Oberoi Group, InterContinental Hotel Group and Carlson Hotel. Chakravarty's expertise lies in balancing the twin goals of customer satisfaction and revenue goals. In the course of his journey, he has been involved in designing and implementing marketing activities and competitive analysis in mapping the latest business trends.



## Kochi Marriott Hotel Kochi

Kochi Marriott Hotel announced the appointment of **Janine Fernandez** as its Director of Operations. Fernandez has over 16 years of experience in managing human resources in the field of hospitality and finance. Prior to her new role, Fernandez was Director of Human Resources at the Renaissance Mumbai Convention Centre Hotel & Marriott Executive Apartments. She commenced her career with the Indian Hotels Company Limited, Taj Group of Hotels, Mumbai as Assistant Manager—Human Resources and went on to qualify as the youngest TBEM Assessor.



Atlas Travels Online-Hotels has appointed **Prasad Gaitonde** as Manager—Operations. Gaitonde brings 12 years of experience and in-depth knowledge of contracting hotels in the domestic and international markets. He has previously worked with Kesari, Kale Consultant, Kuoni Travel India, Ezeego1, to name a few. Gaitonde holds a Master's degree in International Business Administration and Tourism Management from Kuoni Academy of Travel, Mumbai.



The following regular column provides you a brief update on world events and how they impact the tourism sector.

 Nikhil Jeet

WorldTalk

### USA

American Airlines will start charging more for alcoholic beverages from October 1. The carrier is boosting the price of beer, wine and liquor by \$1 each. Sparkling wine is the only drink that won't cost more. It remains \$9 and is only available on select flights.

### South Africa

A swarm of bees flew into the engine of a Mango Airlines plane, forcing a delay in flights at the airport in South Africa's coastal city of Durban.

### Sri Lanka

Sri Lankan police have arrested three men who were among a group who took semi-nude photos of themselves at Pidurangala Rock, an ancient sacred site.

### New Zealand

After Australia, needles have been found in punnet of strawberries on sale in an Auckland supermarket. There have been over 100 reports of needles being found in supermarket fruit in Australia.



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# Beauty in India's diversity

At the recently-concluded PATA Travel Mart in Langkawi, Malaysia, **Mario Hardy**, Chief Executive Officer, PATA, spoke with **TRAVTALK** about the mart and the latest undertakings by the association.



Tripti Mehta from Langkawi

PATA Travel Mart 2018, considered to be one of the biggest tourism platforms in Asia Pacific, was a grand success as the event received over 1400 delegates. The three-day event held at the Mahsuri International Exhibition Centre in Langkawi, Malaysia witnessed a staggering 389 sellers from 208 organisations and 33 destinations meet 252 buyers from 241 organisations and 53 source markets. Speaking at the event, **Mario Hardy**, Chief Executive Officer, PATA, said, "PATA Travel Mart continues to stand tall in the Asia Pacific as the most value-adding network. The event's continued success is due to its ability to strike the right balance between quality and quantity when it comes to buyer and seller appointments. This year's PATA Travel Mart continued that strong tradition. The PATA team has worked hard to ensure that high-quality buyers and sellers network over several appointments."

The Indian contingent, too, was much appreciated by those attending, as it gave them a chance to witness myriad offerings from the country's

widespread reaches. Potential international buyers from across the world met with several Indian sellers that included Odisha Tourism, Maharashtra Tourism, Le Passage to India Journeys, Indian Legends Holidays, ezeego1, Tamil Nadu Tourism, Trans India Holidays, Cox & Kings India and several others.

The Indian market continues to gain momentum as far as tourist arrivals are concerned. However, the tourism industry here hasn't been able to fully tap the

your population to share their own stories about their local villages and historical sites. I think India has plenty to offer," he expressed.

Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA) has left no stone unturned in ensuring that tourism in the Asia Pacific region grow by leaps and bounds, and the mart proved to be just that. PATA also has several new initiatives under its ambit, with India itself playing host to some of them. In the recent past, the association's focus has been on development of human capital for the travel and tourism industry to be

He also spoke about the PATA Adventure Travel and Responsible Tourism Conference and Mart in Uttarakhand, scheduled to be held between February 13 and 15, 2019. "This niche event offers a one-day travel mart and a one-day conference, providing an exceptional platform for travel trade professionals to learn more about this destination. Delegates will have the chance to meet face-to-face with adventure product buyers and sellers," he concluded. ↓

“With a focus on human capital development, our upcoming events include PATA Global Insights Conference and PATA Destination Marketing Forum”

potential that the country holds. The visa situation, said Hardy, has improved considerably, but work still remains to be done. It has now become a secondary issue and this is a big step forward. "The real issue is that the country is so vast. There is so much to offer from the South to the Northeast to the West. Culture is very different, food is very different, and sometimes people only know one part. There is more storytelling than used to be done about the diversity of the country, so that people who visit not only come for a short stay, but also spend three to four weeks and travel from one part of the country to another. I would say that what India really needs to do is tell more stories about the diversity of the country. Enable

responsible, sustainable and inclusive of local communities. "Our focus in recent months has been on human capital development and training programmes. We have a number of events coming up – the PATA Global Insights Conference and PATA Destination Marketing Forum. We also had a successful human capital development programme in Nepal," revealed Hardy.





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## PATA ATRTCM

↓ PATA Adventure Travel and Responsible Tourism Conference and Mart in Uttarakhand is scheduled to be held between February 13 and 15, 2019

↓ Participants will include accommodation providers, tour operators, etc, from emerging markets

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