

1 IN CIRCULATION & READERSHIP SOUTH ASIA'S LEADING TRAVEL TRADE FORTNIGHTLY

TRAVTALK

Published from : ★ India ★ Middle East

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A photograph of the Museum of Islamic Art in Doha, Qatar, featuring its distinctive white, stepped architecture and reflecting in the water.

QATAR

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If united, ministries stand

The Ministry of Tourism (MOT), along with selected industry partners recently attended a meeting called by Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), in which several pressing concerns pertaining to tourism were examined.

Nisha Verma

The MHA for the first time in its history called a meeting of all the stakeholder ministries, including the MOT, along with 20 industry participants. "I believe that for fundamental changes in policy, industry participation is a must and hence, 20 stakeholders from the tourism industry were part of the meeting. Going forward, industry stakeholders' inputs will be considered for each

and every policymaking by MHA, MOT and Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA)," said **Satyajeet Rajan**, Director General, MOT.

He claimed that all the ministries will be working together to boost tourism as a sector going forward. "MoCA with its UDAN scheme has only grown, with UDAN 3 scheme basically for the tourism sector. We have identified more than 30 routes and given it to them on which they will



Satyajeet Rajan
Director General, MOT

be working now. Ministry of Commerce, on the other hand,

is likely to give us money under the champions sector, which the Prime Minister has announced after budget. These two ministries are vital for tourism as far as policies are concerned," he added.

MOT's target of attaining 20 million inbound tourists by 2020 will require a lot of effort and work. "The Minister of Home Affairs said that we are growing at around 8 per cent, but we need to grow at the rate of at least 30 per

cent. The entire MHA is gearing itself up for fundamental changes in policies," he revealed.

Talking about MOT's scheme of achieving the target, Rajan said, "The most important initiative by MOT is thematic publicity. The entire 2018-19 publicity material is lined up and the Incredible India website is also attracting a lot of attention. However, the game changer is going to be our approach of concentrating

on short-haul markets like China, Southeast Asia and the Gulf. While earlier, maximum inbound numbers came from Bangladesh, we now need to look at the Chinese market as these travellers are great spenders. If a fraction of the Chinese outbound of 130 million can be captured, we will be able to achieve our targets."

He added that they are working with the industry to meet those targets by organising roadshows in China.

FHRAI reacts to MMT charge

FHRAI never gets involved in any negotiations with stand-alone vendors but it takes a strong stand when the industry faces external intimidation, states **Gurbaxish Singh Kohli**, VP, FHRAI.

TT Bureau

After MakeMyTrip (MMT) group's chief executive Deep Kalra's recent comment that the Federation of Hotel and Restaurant As-

sociation of India (FHRAI) has no locus standi to determine commercial agreements between MMT and the establishments on its platform, **Gurbaxish Singh Kohli**, VP, FHRAI, says, "Goibibo and

MMT have been exploitative, unethical and adapted divisive business practices, leading to predatory pricing, market distortions and cannibalisation. I fail to see how our letter clearly worded as request-

ing to "resolve" the situation would be misconstrued as trying to "dictate" terms. India has approximately 100,000 establishments which provide accommodation. Approximately, 65,000 are structured

licensed establishments, out of which around 45,000 hotels are stand-alone hotels.

"FHRAI has never got involved all these

Contd on page 8 ▶



Gurbaxish Singh Kohli
Vice President, FHRAI



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NokScoot forays into India

NokScoot, the Thailand-based Low Cost Carrier (LCC), has started operating four times a week between Delhi and Bangkok.

 Nisha Verma

NokScoot, which is a joint venture between Singapore Airlines' Scoot and Thailand's Nok Air, has now started operating in India. The airline launched its non-stop flight between New Delhi's Indra Gandhi International Airport and Bangkok's Don Mueang International Airport from December 19, 2018. Flying four times a week, NokScoot announced its special promotional one-way Economy class fare from ₹7200, inclusive of taxes and surcharges, which were valid on bookings made till December 31, 2018.

Giam Ming Toh, Deputy CEO, NokScoot was present at the launch event along with HE Chutintorn Gongsakdi, Ambassador of Thailand to India and Isra Stapanaseth, Director, Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT). He addressed the media to share how the new airline would offer new connections to Bangkok at very competitive fares.

Speaking about the new airline, Toh said, "We started the quest



Giam Ming Toh
Deputy CEO
NokScoot

to bring this airline to India from February 2017 and applied for the operating permit. We were lucky that both India and Thailand now have additional capacity. There have been challenges along the way including getting slots at Delhi airport, getting the final permit and fairly short notice. We started selling a month ago on low-key basis but officially announced the flight only in December. In fact, the inaugural flight was more than 80 per cent in occupancy with already 350 passengers on board."

Alka Jha, Country Manager, NokScoot Airlines, said, "We



Alka Jha
Country Manager
NokScoot

will be flying Boeing 777-200 on the route with a capacity of 415 seats of which 391 are Economy Class and 24 are ScootBiz Class."

Toh claimed that the flight would find fervour with both leisure and business travel segments. "NokScoot believes these flights will appeal to both leisure and business travellers travelling between Delhi and Bangkok. Following the launch of the Delhi service, NokScoot plans to further spread its wings in India with yet another destination in the first half of 2019."

In fact, he shared that owing to its aggressive international route expansion, NokScoot is forecasting strong growth in FY 2018-19. "According to its latest financial projections for 2018, revenue growth is expected to increase by 83 per cent from the previous year to 10.3 billion baht. NokScoot is targeting 76 per cent more passengers to grow to 1.9 million, while cabin factor is projected to hold steady at 87 per cent, the same level as 2017."

Talking about expansion in India, he said that after Delhi, they will be looking at Mumbai but that depends on bilateral agreement. Toh also mentioned that they will be working with the travel trade closely to promote the airline whilst giving them incentives. ↴

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TRAVELTALK

VIEWPOINT

Experiences are key

The recent Tourism PowerHouse by PATA India Chapter not only brought to fore the aspects working in favour of the Indian tourism industry, but also shed light on things that India needs to do to boost its inbound numbers. Right from focused marketing campaign and tourism products to aviation growth and infrastructure development—everything makes India a favourable destination to host international travellers. In fact, as mentioned by many experts at the Tourism PowerHouse, India is seeing unprecedented growth in arrivals as compared to the world at large. However, the tourism industry needs to work hard to make use of these advantages and also help grow their business. It is known that India's reputation around the world, in terms of safety, is a point of contention. However, experts have said that an image correction is possible by offering something extra to visitors to the country. They insisted that the key to offer something different is giving quintessential experiences to people, which they remember for a lifetime. This would result in word-of-mouth and social media promotion. We hope that the industry has taken these insights well and we see a steady increase in inbound tourism.

Flagging the infra wave

The Prime Minister of India recently inaugurated the country's longest rail-cum-road bridge in Bogibeel, near Dibrugarh in Assam—a major feat in terms of infrastructure for the country, especially in the Northeast region, which is trying to position itself on the tourism map of the country. The new bridge would clear bottlenecks to other states of Northeast like Arunachal Pradesh, which would be a blessing for tourists after the recently-cleared Protected Area Permit (PAP) restrictions. With other such projects underway, in many other regions of the country that face connectivity challenges, it would be a boon for both international and domestic tourists. Not only it would be easier to visit these places, this would snowball into more infrastructure projects being developed for tourists and locals alike. We hope that such initiatives pave the way for reaching the 20 million tourists target by 2020 for India.

A study on India in numbers

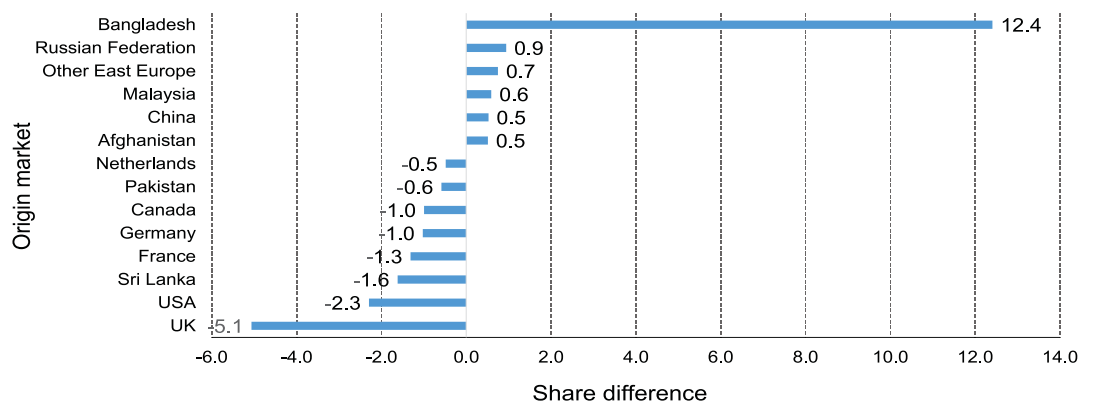
John Koldowski, Special Adviser to the CEO of PATA and Professor of Tourism at LSNU, China, discusses India's perspectives of travel and tourism with numbers and statistics at the 65th TAAI convention in China.

A Perspective on Inbound into India

■ Foreign Tourist Arrivals to India:	■ International Tourism Receipts:
- 2010 : ~ 42nd in the world	- 2010 : ~ 17th in the world (US\$14.5 billion)
- 2017 : 26th in the world	- 2017 : 13th in the world (US\$27.4 billion)

Shift in Relative Shares of Inbound Mix into India

2017 minus 2009, Only markets with +/- 0.5% difference included:



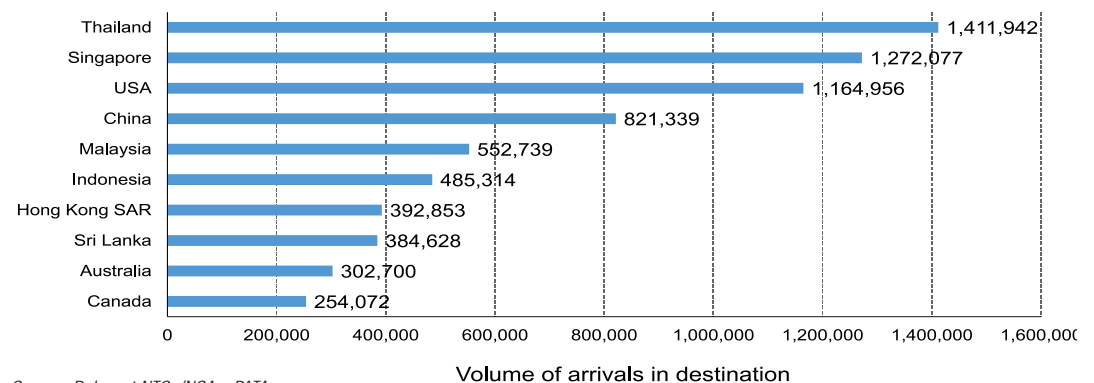
Source: Relevant NTOS/NSAs, PATA

Outbound Travel Trends from India

■ Spend by Indians travelling abroad:	- 2010 : ~ 22nd in the world (US\$10.5 billion)
	- 2017 : 17th in the world (US\$18.4 billion)

Indian arrivals into Asia Pacific destinations: top ten by volume, 2017

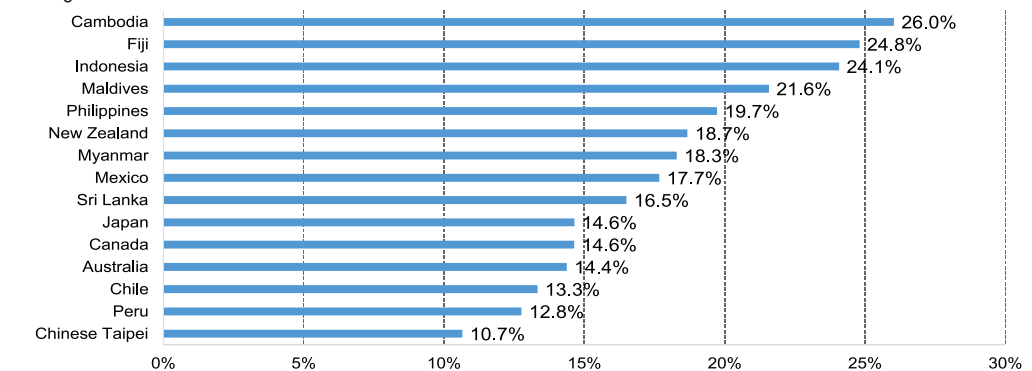
2017 minus 2009, Only markets with +/- 0.5% difference included:



Source: Relevant NTOS/NSAs, PATA

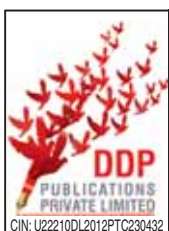
Strongest arrivals growth from India by CAGR 2013 to 2017, (%)

Average = 7.1%



Source: Relevant NTOS/NSAs, PATA

Source: UNWTO



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TRAVELTALK is printed, published and edited by Sanjeet on behalf of DDP Publications Pvt. Ltd., printed at Modest Print Pack Pvt. Ltd., C-52, DDA Sheds Okhla Industrial Area, Phase-I, New Delhi-110020 and published at 72, Todarmal Road, New Delhi - 110 001 Ph.: +91-11-23344179

Enjoy the ease of flying to Milan

Air Italy inaugurated its first direct flight to Milan from New Delhi and Mumbai. **Rossen Dimitrov**, Chief Operating Officer, Air Italy, elaborates on why the airline will be one of preference in the Indian market.

 Anupriya Bishnoi

Tell us something about the new operation.

We're excited about the launch of Air Italy's operations to India. The first service from the capital on an Airbus A330-200 marked the commencement of the three-times weekly direct operations for us. Offering 24 fully reclining flatbed seats in Business Class and 228 seats in Economy Class, Air Italy's Delhi service offers connections to New York and Miami as well as domestically across Italy. India is the fourth international addition to the airline's expanding network, following the commencement of operations to New York, Miami and Bangkok earlier this year. Italy is the second European destination for Indians travelling to Europe in terms of tourism, compared to other countries, and this



route has been a long-standing request from local authorities, leisure travellers and various trade organisations. The launch of our India-Italy sector represents another major step forward for Air Italy and reinforces our commitment to our network expansion plans in Asia. Our average load factor on both routes for the first month is already at around 70 per cent which is well within our business plan expectations and will only continue to grow now that operations have commenced.

What made you choose India to expand the airline's operations?

India is a fascinating destination with a significant base for business and tourism. We are delighted to welcome Delhi and Mumbai as part of our global network and look forward to providing more flexibility of travel choices to our customers, contributing to this ongoing growth. Indian travellers travel quite often now. There is a demand to travel to Europe and beyond and we believe we have a great opportunity to serve the

Indian market. People are happy with our service and the response has been overwhelming.

What, according to you, sets Air Italy apart from the rest?

Our USP lies in our product, services and the way we focus on our customers, besides being competitive in terms of pricing. From Milan Malpensa, Air Italy will provide domestic connecting flights to Rome, Catania, Palermo, Naples and Lamezia Terme, as well as

convenient connections to its US-bound flights to New York and Miami. Commencing in April 2019, the airline will also provide connectivity to Los Angeles and San Francisco with the launch of these two new destinations.

markets throughout 2018. We are very happy with the way the company has been growing, the direction we are taking and the feedback we are receiving from our customers. 

The exclusive Business Class cabin of Air Italy allows maximum comfort on fully reclining seats, an Italian and Indian menu accompanied by a selection of fine Italian wines and champagne, Wi-Fi and extensive in-flight entertainment while the Economy Class cabin offers guests a comfortable flight, personalised service, Wi-Fi and a wide choice of on-board entertainment.

How has 2018 fared for you in terms of business?

We have been busy expanding and establishing in newer





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We are not 'dictating':



► Contd from page 3

years in any negotiations with stand-alone vendors but takes a strong stand when the industry faces any outside coercion or intimidation. It is only when 1000's of hoteliers realised Goibibo and MMT's arrogant method of pressuring the small hotels in high commissions, more free rooms, started price control on the owners. FHRAI has, in its fiduciary duty stepped in to amicably resolve matters. Please note FHRAI is not here to negotiate as wrongly being projected. It is here to ensure that agencies like MMT and Goibibo do not take the industry for granted by parenting such market conditions in which it would be difficult to do business for one party but a win-win situation for the other," he said.

He further said, "Going back to December 7, 2018, whilst the Ahmedabad hoteliers blocked GOMMT in the city,

Kalra wanted to sit with FHRAI and work out the issues. The team sent to "resolve" arrived but with a fixed agenda of "fixing" only commissions that too by a paltry reduction of 22 from 25 per cent. The same FHRAI today has no locus standi according to him. The larger question is "Why are MMT

“As the voice of the hospitality industry, FHRAI provides an interface between the hospitality industry, policy makers, academicians, international associations and other stakeholders”

and Goibibo scared to sit with FHRAI? Why can't the issues be resolved amicably – especially when he calls all the hotels his "partners"?

"The answers are obvious – divide and rule and continue to exploit the free-standing hotels, so that the foreign

investors are pleased whilst crippling the small hotels in India. Goibibo and MMT are thriving on those stand-alone properties by taking away huge commissions, free rooms under the disguise of volume business and service charges from the person making the booking."

According to him, the two are demanding service charge from their clients, while hotel bookings are made on their website. Unusually, they have no standard policy for service charge, meaning every reservation made on their platform would charge a different percent-

age of service charge and in some chain hotel reservations no service charge is demanded at all. Does it mean they are providing the so-called website service towards the stand-alone hotels and the chain hotels no service is provided? They are fooling the consumer.

He also says, "Goibibo and MMT have been unethically promoting illegal hotels, illegal B&B on their platform to earn profits and commissions. We had pointed out in our letter to them which is available for all to see. We have only asked them to come to terms and resolve differences so that a level-playing field is created for both and does not unduly favour any one party. How is that dictating terms? There has been no answer to our other issues. What are they doing to delist illegal accommodations? Swiggy and Scootsy had to de-list 6,000 operators in one day after we

pointed out similar conditions to the government. This is a huge security problem and I would like to know why Kalra is choosing to highlight only the commission part and not even touching this burning and grave issue. They should have the morals to promote "Incredible India Campaign" with the pledge of "Safe & Honourable Tourism" in India by providing safe accommodation. Is this too much to ask for? FHRAI is a 63-year old apex body for the hospitality industry of India. As the voice of the hospitality industry, it provides an interface between the hospitality industry, policymakers, academicians, international associations and other stakeholders."

FHRAI has asked to look at partners' contract as the one shown below:

- ❖ Standardised commissions 12 per cent to 15

per cent, instead of 30 per cent to 40 per cent

- ❖ No Discounting hotel rates which are already listed
- ❖ Not to infuse GOMMT funds to further discount hotel rates
- ❖ No service charge on hotel bookings
- ❖ They charge SC on stand-alone hotels only
- ❖ They don't charge service charge on chain hotels
- ❖ They don't charge service charge on airline tickets
- ❖ NO PLB / VDI – free room demands / schemes
- ❖ De-list illegal hotels, guest houses and B&Bs immediately

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Priority market for Vietnam

Vietnam Tourism has deployed a range of activities to exploit the India market. **HE Pham Sanh Chau**, Ambassador to India, Nepal & Bhutan, Embassy of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, reveals more...

 Kanchan Nath

The tourism industry is growing leaps and bounds in Vietnam and has increased by 35-40 per cent. The country has been able to attract 16 million foreign visitors every year, informed **HE Pham Sanh Chau**, Ambassador to India, Nepal & Bhutan, Embassy of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam. "Last year we had around 100,000 Indians visiting Vietnam. I hope that will increase substantially in the future," he affirmed.



HE Pham Sanh Chau
Ambassador to India, Nepal & Bhutan,
Embassy of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam

A lot of roadshows have been organised to attract more tourists in 2019. "In 2018, the Vietnam Embassy had organised four roadshows — in Kolkata, Mumbai, Delhi and Odisha on the theme 'Vietnam- A Charming Destination for Indian Tourists'. We also conducted an event to especially promote Phu Quoc island, a new, untapped destination for the Indians," Chau mentioned.

The country is set to work closely with the tourist authorities in Vietnam to promote different destinations. "We will also be conducting events to promote Vietnam as a wedding, golf and MICE destination. Along with having some

beautiful golf courses, Vietnam is a shopping destination for Koreans and Japanese," he shared. Currently, Chau is working on organising two charter flights — one that will come from Delhi and the other from Mumbai to Vietnam and

vice versa. "In a first, an Indian wedding is slated for charter flights and visa. We are hopeful of launching a direct flight between New Delhi, Ho Chi Minh city and Hanoi to be operated by VietJet latest by August 1, 2019," he concluded. 

Indulging in Melbourne magic



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All they hope for in 2019

The Indian travel space has seen an uptick and is expected to continue on a high growth trajectory for the coming years. Bidding farewell to 2018, travel agents share their growth strategies for the new year.

TT Bureau

Agents



Manish Kriplani
Managing Director
Baywatch Travels

“Family travel is now a priority and with the upper middle-class segment getting bigger, there is a brand-new segment of business that has opened up for those who want to travel frequently with their family and enjoy experiences. Since we are in the bespoke FIT segment, we are expecting around 30 per cent growth in the luxury FIT business segment next year. We have seen a huge demand for destination wedding too.”



Dr P B Boss
Founder and Chairman
Osaka Group

“Inbound traffic has steadily increased by the end of 2018 and we are confident that it would reach full strength by mid-2019. Once again, we have to acknowledge the unconditioned support of the Kerala Government, the unity of travel and trade members, and the positive approach from all buyers and suppliers that helped our state recover at such a good pace. We are focusing on providing a mix of traditional and technological platforms to enter the global society. We are optimistic that 2019 will be one of dynamic transformation set to change our business perspectives.”

“Let 2019 be a flourishing year for everyone and for the tourism industry! As a company, we have been doing well in inbound tourism. We handle domestic tourism too which we trust will come up well in the coming days. We are happy about our new association with ‘Veena World’ headquartered in Mumbai, with which we are entering into outbound market from this year. We are the Key Sales Partner (KSP) of Veena World for South India. We are confident to explore this outbound market in an excellent way with Veena World in the coming days.”



Pandian Kumaravel
Managing Director
Cholan Tours

“We are opening three more offices in Bengaluru, Kolkata and Delhi to cater to our agents and direct passengers in these regions. The focus in 2019 would be to improve our services in the offline visa categories and increase the B2C segment of our business through social media and various other digital platforms. Additionally, we have included 10 more e-visa countries on our roster, the latest being Australia.”



Clevio Monteiro
CEO
Visa Lounge

“In the last year, we have seen numbers growing and we’ve added few more segments besides normal FIT booking. We specialise in the segment which cater to the youngsters travelling together. We’ve seen numbers growing for these sectors now. With new airlines coming up, we are seeing the load factors going up. In 2019, we are expecting a lot of social events and destination weddings to take place from India.”



Shravan Bhalla
Chief Executive Officer
Hi Flyer

“In 2019, we will focus on growing our hotel distribution at a large scale. With a large agent network and mature technology, we will achieve exponential growth in this segment as well. Hotels are a high-revenue driver for our agents and we have invested substantially to provide extremely good content at the lowest prices. We will continue to run promotional campaigns round the year to provide the best deals to our users.”



Hussain Patel
Director
Atlas Travels Online



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'Incredible' incentive to book early

Sans Incredible Vacations is offering agents lucrative incentives that they can pass on to their clients in order to encourage them to book early. Its current campaign is for bookings made on or before January 26, 2019.



TT Bureau

Sans Incredible Vacations has designed new fixed departures ex-USA for 2019 again after it was a hit with travellers last year. This has been specially a hit with travellers who have received inquiries for two to four pax and who would like to travel with a group but they don't want to start with the group from India as they might be visiting relatives in the US first.



Nalin Kapadia
Vice Chairman
Sans Incredible Vacations

Speaking about this is Nalin Kapadia, Vice Chairman, Sans Incredible Vacations. He says, "We started this last year but the itineraries were basic. This year, we have done it more professionally and are promoting it aggressively. We have received good response from the market so far and we hope that the agents co-operate and book with us instead of booking with some of the tour operators from India."

Sharing his perspective on why agents should book with him, Kapadia says that their tours are more diverse because it includes a lot of sightseeing. "We give a lot of value because the clients are spending so much time and money there; so I think they should cover a lot of activities. We specialise in North America and while some other companies have been doing it for longer than we have, they aren't offering a lot of products that we are. There are a cookie cutter, routine itineraries while we are trying to introduce a lot of new things," he adds.

The company encourages its clients to do things in a differ-

ent way – like a city tour but on a Segway.

This year, it has introduced something called Broadway on Wheels – Experience the Ride in Manhattan area. It is on a unique bus made specially for this with stadium seating

where travellers are facing the windows and not the driver. It's an interactive bus with 32 monitors and the streets have performances. This can be done during the day as well as evening which also gives guests a chance to see Manhattan by night.

The current campaign by Sans Incredible Vacations is for bookings made on or before January 26, 2019 where it is offering USD 50 per person as cashback which the agents can pass on to their clients. "We tell agents to encourage their clients to

book early because Indians are not fond of booking in advance. We will run similar campaigns throughout 2019 and give them incentives to book early. Even when we get direct inquiries from people, we direct them to our agents. We are

also introducing new itineraries in 2019 which will be very different from our earlier ones such as Lake Mammoth and more national parks. We want people to travel healthier and see newer places," Kapadia adds.

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Fams galore for VisitFinland



VisitFinland concluded Year 2018 with series of educational familiarisation trips under the themes of FIT, Luxury and Education Travel for the Indian travel fraternity.

Kesari goes offbeat

As part of its long-term focus, Kesari Tours & Travels continues to add new and offbeat destinations to its product offerings that span across the globe.



TT Bureau

Not resting on its laurels, Kesari Tours & Travels has been focused on expanding its product offerings by adding new and remote destinations to its portfolio. Sharing more information about this is **Himanshu Patil**, Director, Kesari Tours & Travels. According to him, the company has always laid emphasis on creating new products, particularly the special interest tours that have now become so popular – only women special, student tours, second innings for senior citizens, sports tours, etc. “These are just a few that we have introduced, and every year, we keep adding one new segment to our portfolio. Further, we keep adding new destinations. At Kesari, the product portfolio is huge. You name the country and we have it,” he says.

The company plans to gradually introduce two or three new destinations and new tours every year. “That is how we have tours right from the domestic market to Antarctica and even the Arctic Circle and the North Pole today. Our product portfolio spans across the globe, including the remotest regions on earth,” Patil adds.

Some of the new destinations that will slowly be introduced in the market include packages to Eastern Europe. He reveals, “We were the pioneers for introducing India to South America, which we started in 2003-04, and it continues to do well even today.”

Speaking about the change in travellers’ behaviour over the years, he says, “Today, customers come to us with selected destinations, but Europe has always been



Himanshu Patil
Director
Kesari Tours & Travels

number one in terms of popularity. The only difference is that earlier western Europe was more popular, but now central and eastern Europe are gaining attention – a lot of these countries are opening their borders for Indians and on-arrival visas. Some of the South American countries are also gaining momentum and in Asia, it is the Philippines that is gaining popularity.”

Ark & NCL host musical evening

Ark Travels and Norwegian Cruise Lines recently hosted a musical night for its key agent partners in Mumbai and thanked them for selling Norwegian Cruise Lines and its sister companies Regent Seven Seas Cruises and Oceania Cruises. Present at the event were **Kishan Biyani**, Managing Director, Ark Travels and **Felix Chan**, Vice President — Sales (Asia), Norwegian Cruise Lines Holdings.



'Tourism has to be sustainable'

Indian Tourism and Hospitality Congress (ITHC) along with the European University for Tourism (UET), Italy, organised an international conference in Palermo in November 2018. **Prashant Gautam**, Director, University Institute of Hotel and Tourism Management, Panjab University, Chandigarh, throws light on the conference and the various dimensions involved in tourism and hospitality education.

Peden Doma Bhutia

Tourism and hospitality are two sides of the same coin. Together, they form a dynamic engine of employment opportunity and have now expanded to become one of the largest economic sectors in the world. Formed in 2002 with an aim to enhance the standard of teaching, research and training in academic institutions, ITHC brings together leading tourism and hospitality academicians.

Almost every year ITHC members organise one international conference in collaboration with a foreign institute/university. ITHC organised an international conference in Palermo in November 2018 along with UET, Italy. Talking

about the choice of venue, **Prashant Gautam**, Director, University Institute of Hotel and Tourism Management, Panjab University, Chandigarh, says, "The President of UET, Italy, had visited India a few months ago to attend a

“If tourism has to grow, the growth has to be on a sustainable basis. Many places, in the absence of a sustainable plan, have lost their charm over the years”

similar conference and that is when we apprised her about the international conferences by ITHC. She showed keen interest and readily invited us to host the conference in Palermo, Sicily."

As the director of a tourism institute, Gautam advocates the need of a formal education in tourism and hospitality. "A formal education is the stepping stone towards according tourism the status of an organised industry. It is also essential to

help encourage growth in a sustainable manner and cater to the needs of the tourism and hospitality industry." With this, Gautam touches on a very essential aspect of tourism - sustainability. One thing to keep

in mind is, while we propagate growth in tourism, it also tends to exhaust resources. Thus, the issue of cultural, social and economic sustainability of tourism also needs close and constant attention. The conference at Palermo delved on issues related to sustainability development. As Gautam puts it, "If tourism has to grow, the growth has to be on a sustainable basis, else tourism activities at any destination will end soon. We have numerous examples of places, which in the absence of a sustainable plan, have lost their charm over the years as a tourist destination."

While tourism institutes also impart knowledge on sustainability, they help in bridging the gap between demand and



Prashant Gautam
Director, University Institute of Hotel and Tourism Management
Panjab University, Chandigarh

supply of skilled manpower too. As Gautam says, "We, at Panjab University, are in constant touch with the industry stakeholders and we update our curriculum as per the demand and future requirement of industry. With our dynamic

courses, the industry, alumni, students and parents are all part of our teaching-learning process. Being a public sector university, we have limitations in opting for channels to reach out to prospective students. However, word-of-mouth recommendation is helping us in this regard."

Talking about placement opportunities in store for students, he says, "Ample placement opportunities are available for our students. Recently, a software company approached me for placement opportunities. When I asked them the reason for hiring tourism and hospitality students for a company like theirs, they said that our students are presentable and well-versed in soft skills." ↴



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Market of celebrations: MiCE

Moderated by **Homa Mistry**, CEO, Trail Blazer Tours, the discussion on ‘MiCE – Dynamics & Expectations’ during Travel Business Show at Hyderabad Marriott Hotel brought to light some key aspects that make the business of MiCE a thought-provoking proposition. The panel comprised **Shamitha Shetty**, CEO, Success Tours; **Ajay Kapoor**, VP Procurement, HSBC Group and **Tekla Maira**, Director Luxury Sales - India, AccorHotels Luxe.



Panelists	Quote
 <p>Homa Mistry CEO, Trail Blazer Tours</p>	<p>“ MiCE is a dynamic industry where expectations keep changing and demands keep growing. Dynamics of the industry remain the same, only technicalities keep changing. As travel agents, we do not open all the cards, as we feel hotels might take the business away directly, unless there is a joint meeting initiated by the corporate to explain whose job it is. Though technology is here to stay, it needs to be updated constantly. Many agents that send large groups use Wetu. If I have a group of 400 from Hitachi, I use Wetu so that any change in the event can immediately be made. Every PAX has the itinerary available live, and you do not require the internet for that. Once you have downloaded the same, it remains and updates can easily be seen. Moving forward, weddings are an important part of MiCE. Now this market is expanding to include birthdays, anniversaries, bachelorettes and other celebrations. ”</p>
 <p>Shamitha Shetty CEO, Success Tours</p>	<p>“ Destinations in Europe have always been popular for MiCE. Croatia is a well-kept secret of Europe. It's got the sea, the mountains, and also has a 6200 km coastline. It has 1,200 islands and 10 national parks. Croatia offers surreal nature. It's an emerging destination for MiCE from India. It also offers Indian food options in almost all of the cities and in the cities where there may not be any access to the kitchen, and can get us going. There are countries like Slovenia, Montenegro, or a combination of the two that might work well. Apart from that Prague, Vienna and Budapest are popular destinations. ”</p>
 <p>Ajay Kapoor VP Procurement, HSBC Group</p>	<p>“ First, we need to understand the fundamentals in the execution of any event in which different industries are involved; they need to be synchronised. We definitely need to see how we can meet the expectations of the customer. This can be worked out by the 3C principle which calls for collaboration, connect and communication. This is called early-supplier engagement in the manufacturing industry. In the MiCE industry, if you want the right end result, you need to engage with all the stakeholders from the initial stage, so that they are the architects of the itinerary or meeting the expectations of the end customer.</p> <p>Every time we look for a new destination, we see if the expectations of our internal customers are being fulfilled. Based on that, we decide on a destination; sometimes it's a repeat and sometimes it's a novel destination. The role of the MiCE agency/DMC is very important; they are the ones to tell us about the new, undiscovered destinations. ”</p>
 <p>Tekla Maira Director, Luxury Sales—India, AccorHotels Luxe</p>	<p>“ As a supplier, 60-70 per cent of the entire cost of the itinerary comes from the hotel, 99 per cent of the time. Many a times, we don't even meet the end client. As a supplier, there are a couple of things I need to know - I need to know the budget, what the three main things that matter are, and what will determine the decision-making for the respective group. It takes a lot to get those answers.</p> <p>Weddings is a strong, emerging trend. Bachelorettes now happen at exclusive hotels and exotic destinations. An emerging trend that I heard of the other day was a 'babymoon', where a group of friends go for a holiday before the baby is born. They do so because they do not know when the next holiday would be. This is not really the numbers game and the budgets are far more generous. Of course, everyone wants value for money. Once you have crossed the hurdle of getting the initial proposal accepted, people don't mind spending. Numbers are in terms of money spent and those are the numbers that I am after. ”</p>

Layla lights up Bengaluru skies



With the grand launch of rooftop Mediterranean restaurant Layla, The Den Bengaluru hosted the opening reception of the first property by The Dan group in India. The guests, including corporates, city celebrities and influencers spent the night enjoying music while relishing Mediterranean cuisine.

(Fitur) for inclusive tourism

FiturNext Observatory will act as a guide for identifying future trends in tourism and to highlight guidelines with a positive impact on economic, social, cultural and environmental aspects.



The scale of business that FITUR achieves as one of the trade fairs, which annually brings together more than 200,000 professionals and more than 10,000 companies from 165 countries, has inspired IFEMA to set up the FiturNext Observatory. This project, which will be launched at FITUR 2019, seeks to highlight the best practices that different actors in the industry are implementing internationally to improve the quality of tourism business, and to share with the community the new models which will be the foundations of the tourism of the future. The Observatory's research will continue for the coming three years, to act as a guide for identifying future trends in tourism and to highlight guidelines with a positive impact on the economic, social, cultural and environmental areas.

Tourism is one of the main drivers for development, and according to the World Tourism Organization (WTO), is growing faster today than the global economy as a whole. Currently, one in every ten jobs created is related to this sector. The WTO estimates that in 2030, tourism will account for 12 per cent of world GDP and the number of passengers will rise to 1800 million worldwide. But tourism also has a large environmental and social footprint, given the sector's heavy impact and the pressure that large visitor numbers put on the resources and infrastructure of many destinations.

In order to help identify patterns and models of tourism, IFEMA/FITUR has set up the FiturNext observatory, a platform for industry convergence that will serve as a catalyst for future-oriented tourism projects and initiatives around the world. The Observatory will be open to all initiatives that promote a committed and inclusive tourism in which the different actors actively contribute to improving the quality of the tourism business.

"FiturNext is inspired by the question 'What will the tourism of the future look like?' The tourism business highlights cultural wealth, helps people meet one another, and encour-

ages personal growth of travelers. Therefore, all the tourism players are invited to participate in a global conversation," says **Eduardo López-Puertas**, General Manager, IFEMA.





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MSC collaborates with German chef

Chef **Harald Wohlfahrt**, with a unique experience and understanding of German and French classical cuisine, joins a host of internationally renowned chefs who are currently collaborating with MSC Cruises.

 TT Bureau

MSC Cruises has recently announced a new partnership with renowned German chef **Harald Wohlfahrt**. Voted one of the Top 10 Chefs in the World and the only German chef to hold a three Michelin Star

rating for 25 years in a row, Chef Wohlfahrt brings an unparalleled breadth of experience and unique understanding of German and French classical cuisine to MSC Cruises' fleet. He joins a host of internationally renowned chefs who are currently collaborating with MSC Cruises.

Gianni Onorato, Chief Executive Officer, MSC Cruises, commented, "The world-class expertise of chef Wohlfahrt brings an exciting new chapter to our onboard dining experience. Working with partners who embody excellence and innovation, as well as sharing our

Chef Wohlfahrt will develop a new menu for the Yacht Club restaurant of MSC Meraviglia, MSC Splendida and MSC Preziosa

values, is incredibly important for us and we are excited to be

working with one of the best chefs in the world to continue

delivering unforgettable culinary experiences to our guests."

Chef Wohlfahrt's philosophy is that perfection comes from craftsmanship and he approaches the development of his dishes as a painter approaches a canvas. He comments, "My motivation is to create a perfect starting position for a taste development in every dish! I am delighted to be partnering with MSC Cruises and I am excited to be able to create something for the guests that will delight and amaze their senses."



Chef Harald Wohlfahrt

Chef Wohlfahrt will develop a new menu for the private Yacht Club restaurant of MSC Meraviglia, MSC Splendida and MSC Preziosa whilst the ships are in Northern Europe, as well as two different main courses for Elegant Night. Working with MSC Cruises' own team of talented chefs, Harald Wohlfahrt will complete in-depth, interactive training, passing on his skill and expertise to enable all MSC Cruises' chefs to recreate his signature dishes on board to the highest possible standards. Chef Wohlfahrt has trained dozens of Michelin starred German chefs. The gastronomic delights will be available onboard from early 2019 on all ships in the Mediterranean, Northern Europe and China.

Apart from delighting foodies on land and now at sea, Harald Wohlfahrt also has the experience of developing menus for space travellers. Chef Wohlfahrt was asked to develop meals for astronauts on the international space station for the European Space Agency, trusted to combine nutrition and taste for astronauts. 

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QUICKBYTES

New hopes for new year

Association bodies' pledge for the new year is to focus on product and destination updates through tourism bodies and DMCs. Industry insiders share their views...



“We look forward to a more buoyant and stronger 2019. We will keep building on the agenda that we have started our term with – to increase the membership of the association, create more opportunities for members to attend different soft skill workshops on pan-India basis, destination training workshops and networking with NTOs and DMCs worldwide. Opportunities will be created to arrange for a mega educational trip to a destination for the benefit of the members.”



Mahendra Vakharia
President, Outbound Tour Operators Association of India

“2018 was a good year for both TAFI and for the industry in terms of progress in aviation and tourism industry. Going forward, we hope that the confusion related to GST and taxation is eradicated. We are quite hopeful that whatever recommendations are being forwarded by the industry, the outcome will be good. As an association, our mission has always been to look for new destinations to be introduced to the Indian travellers. For 2019 convention, we are already looking at a new exotic destination, which has been visited only by one per cent of Indian travellers.”



Praveen Chugh
President, Travel Agents Federation of India

“In 2018, we introduced TAAI Connect as an online platform for members who cannot invest in technology. In 2019, we would like to take it to another step to evolve and ensure that everyone is available on this platform. It has its teething problems like any other new business. Hence, our biggest challenge is to get deals for all our 2000 members so that they can work collectively. It's also time for us to sit down with all the airlines and work out a way where a remuneration may be not in the form of commissions but in the form of add-ons.”



Jyoti Mayal
Secretary General, Travel Agents Association of India

Skål Ball in Delhi in Feb

An annual event hosted by Skål Delhi Chapter, Skål Ball is set to be held at Le Meridien, New Delhi on February 16, 2019.



Skål Ball is scheduled to be held at Le Meridien, New Delhi on February 16, 2019. Speaking at the Skål Christmas lunch, Sanjay Dutta, Immediate Past President, Skål Delhi said, “The Skål international board, with its new President, Lavonne Wittmann, might come down for Skål Ball. The Skål Christmas lunch has become an annual event now as we have been hosting it at The Imperial lawns for the past 12 years. I must give credit to Vijay Wanchoo, Senior Executive Vice President and General Manager at The Imperial New Delhi, for putting up a big show, year-on-year. Our team



Sanjay Dutta
Immediate Past President Skål Delhi

works hard to put this event in place to ensure that the food is excellent and ambience is great with bright sunshine and outdoor lunch.”

Ranjit Vig, Secretary, Skål

International Delhi added, “Month on month, Skål has had one achievement after the other. We have a lot on our agenda for 2019. We are now looking forward to Skål Ball in February as we brace for tourism getting better each year.”

Sharing future plans of the organisation, Wittmann elaborated, “At Skål Delhi, we have never underachieved our attendance as it has always been 60 per cent and above. It is interesting to note that we keep innovating and do things differently as compared to what others usually do. We will soon have the new team take over with a new AGM either in March or April.”

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Cruising to reach a crescendo

Jaykumar Rawal, Minister of Tourism & Employment Guarantee Scheme (EGS), Government of Maharashtra, reflects on all that is being done to ensure that the state doesn't lose out on the cruising wave in India. Domestic cruise travellers are estimated to rise to 1.5 million by 2031-32.



Hazel Jain

QTell us about the cruise routes that have started from and within Maharashtra and those which have been planned.

The Mumbai Port Trust and Angriya Sea Eagle joint venture started the first luxury domestic cruise from Mumbai to Goa which can accommodate 399 passengers. Earlier, Italy's Costa NeoClassica sailed from Mumbai to Kochin and from Kochin to the Maldives. Costa Cruise NeoClassica could accommodate 1,700 passengers with 658 cabins from Mumbai to the Maldives via Cochin. In 2017, 80 cruise ships came to Mumbai and the government has invested around ₹1,000 crore to build the new cruise terminal.

QHow will the new cruise terminal help boost tourism in the state?

After five years, the new international cruise terminal will be able to welcome 950 ships from different countries across the globe to boost tourism in the state. The domestic cruise travellers are estimated to rise to 1.5 million by 2031-32. Cruise tourism is becoming a popular 'leisure choice' worldwide. The trends show a qualitative as well as quantitative consolidation in the sector, which is effectively growing as an important niche market.

QWhat about seaplanes?

Yes, we will be starting seaplanes as well. The Maharashtra

Tourism Development Corporation (MTDC) has signed a contract with Maritime Energy Heli Air Services to



Jaykumar Rawal
Hon'ble Minister of Tourism & Employment Guarantee Scheme (EGS), Government of Maharashtra

start services from Juhu to Nariman Point, Pawana Dam and Gangapur dam in Mumbai city. The Maritime Energy Heli Air

Services is also working to obtain the required permissions for the seaplane projects from various government organisations.

QHow is the Maharashtra government working with Mumbai Port Trust and MTDC to develop cruising in and from Maharashtra?

“After five years, the new international cruise terminal will be able to welcome 950 ships from different countries across the globe to boost tourism in the state. The domestic cruise travellers are estimated to rise to 1.5 million by 2031-32”

Ministry of Shipping, in association with the Ministry of Tourism, is working to bring India's initial cruise tourism policy. Under this, five ports including Mumbai,

Goa, Mangalore, Chennai and Kochi will be established as cruise centres. The action strategy will be finalised in the coming months as per global standards. Immigration will be hassle-free and docking processes for cruise vessels will be easier with the goal of making Mumbai a universal hotspot.

These opportunities have brought new prospects in the development of cruise port, which will create opportunities for international cruise liners.

QHow is the Tourism Ministry helping in developing the area around the cruise terminal?

The Ministry of Tourism, in association with the Ministry of Shipping and Mumbai Port Trust, is planning to provide different language guides, parking spaces for coaches, clean toilet facilities, special taxi services, tour packages, and develop

basic amenities for the tourists. MTDC has conducted guide-training programme across many cities like Aurangabad, Mumbai, Nagpur and Sindhurdurg in the year 2017-18.

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Pink Sand

All eyes set on Europe

Akquasun has recently opened an office in the UK to help it sell Central and Western Europe packages in India.

TT Bureau

Sujit Nair, Founder & Group Managing Director, Akquasun Group, reveals that the company has started promoting European packages and to facilitate this, it has recently opened an office in the UK. "The company's name is Akquasun Celestial DMC and we have a back-office in Gurugram with around 10 people. We will offer

Sharing more information on this is **BA Rahim**, Group Director & CEO, Akquasun Group, who adds, "For Maldives, we have allocated 300 rooms. We have some features such as 'split-stay' which are not available on many other online portals. This means that guests can book

different category rooms at the same resort."

DID YOU Know?

Adding salt and pepper to your food is considered highly offensive to chefs in Switzerland

On a gastronomic ride



The Consulate General of the Republic of Indonesia, Mumbai in cooperation with The Club, Mumbai organised an Indonesian Food Festival over two days. It was inaugurated by Ade Sukendar, Consul General of the Republic of Indonesia, Mumbai and the dishes were cooked under the supervision of Chef Bera Martomo from Indonesia. The event also showcased an Indonesian cultural performance by the Consulate officials.



Sujit Nair
Founder & Group Managing Director,
Akquasun Group

everything now for Europe through this focusing on Central and Western Europe. We are selling types of packages – whether it is customised, groups or FITs. We will now come with our own series departures. It is not online but agents can start sending us inquiries and start booking through us," Nair shares.



BA Rahim
Group Director & CEO
Akquasun Group

Another major development from Akquasun Group is that it is now completely online for Maldives, Mauritius and Seychelles. "We are also giving API integration to agents who want our inventory. So they can integrate our system into theirs. If an agent wants back-end directly, they can go from my system and access our inventory. We have just started this and perhaps the wholesalers are doing it right now. We will soon tap the B2C agents for this. Our sales guys all over India are talking to them to promote this along with regular e-mailers," Nair adds.

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Twice the fun at DoubleTree Goa

Expanding its footprint in western India with the launch of its second hotel in Goa, Hilton is looking to double its presence in the country over the next few years. In an interview with TRAVTALK, **Swati Dhir**, General Manager, DoubleTree by Hilton Goa-Panaji shares her vision and targets for the new property.

 Manas Dwivedi

QWhat sets DoubleTree by Hilton Goa-Panaji apart from other hotels in Goa? With the presence of big hospitality brands in Goa, how are you looking to tackle the competition?

Located strategically by the highway to Old Goa, our hotel is easily accessible to popular beaches and attractions in the capital and serves as the closest five-star property from the airport. Our 160 well-appointed rooms that overlook the Mandovi river features signature DoubleTree by Hilton amenities such as DoubleTree Sweet Dreams Sleep Experience bedding and smart lighting with motion sensors,

among others. All rooms are equipped with Digital Key feature that allows guests to use their smartphones as a room key, bypassing the front

“The biggest challenge for any new hotel is to drive business growth while striving for guest satisfaction and we work very closely as a team to deliver quality performance”

desk check-in. The property is also part of Hilton Honors, the guest-loyalty programme for Hilton's distinct hotel brands.

The property offers varied choices of indoor and outdoor venues for conferences and events, a ballroom, two boardrooms and sunset lawns

along with state-of-the-art audio-visual technology. With over 7,500 sqft of meeting and banquet space, DoubleTree by Hilton Goa-Panaji presents

itself as a preferred choice for exclusive meetings, private dinners and grand receptions.

QWhich source market are you looking at for domestic and international guests?

The opening of the second DoubleTree by Hilton in

the region showcases our commitment in this dynamic market. The metro cities continue to be the primary focus for us. Markets such as the UK continue to be buoyant for our hotel.


QAs a new hotel, what kind of challenges do you foresee?

At Hilton, we consistently keep our customers at the heart of our business and endeavour to exceed customers' expectations throughout their journey with us. Hilton globally has spent close to a century listening to and serving the needs of guests all over the world through its 15 brands. The biggest challenge for any new hotel is to drive business growth while striving for guest

satisfaction and we work closely as a team to deliver quality performance across verticals and serve our guests with utmost passion and gusto. We are also focussed in nurturing talent and providing training to our employees to meet the ever-changing demands of customers.

QWhat are your plans and targets for 2019?

The ongoing holiday season and the next year are important for our growth and we are looking forward to it. With in-house expertise and technological advancements, we are hoping to deliver

tailored guest experiences, which, in turn, will help drive business and define our growth trajectory. 



Dubai conducts 4-city roadshow

Dubai Tourism Corporation and Marketing (DTCM) recently held a four-city roadshow in North India. Represented by Nijhawan Group in India, DTCM held roadshows in Lucknow, Jaipur, Chandigarh and Delhi. **Khalid Al Awar**, Manager-India & Pakistan, International Operations, led the delegation which consisted of partners including airlines, hotels and popular attractions from Dubai.



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Picture perfect with The Postcard

Set to redefine the luxury hospitality scenario, 'The Postcard Hotel' has been recently launched by its Founder and CEO, **Kapil Chopra**. This new brand holds the promise of unique, intimate luxury hotels in India and the world. Transformative experiences and local community are at the heart of the hotel's offerings.

 Kanchan Nath

Globally, luxury hospitality has not innovated enough, feels Chopra. "All the innovations mostly happened in the budget and mid-segment categories; we, therefore, wanted to put up a hotel brand that would innovate significantly. With The Postcard Hotel, we are curating an eclectic design range of hotels not only in India, but also globally. I was looking for a name that brought the romance for travel back, and nothing evoked those emotions for me, but the moment you say 'postcard', it brings the past romance back when holidays were slow, fun and without any restrictions. Each of our hotels is a picture-perfect postcard from an art, design, architecture, service point of

view," he elaborated on the brand.

Old Goa charm

Elaborating on the 3 hotels which have opened, Chopra informed, "The first hotel is The Postcard Velha, overlooking a 300 acres coconut plantation, it is in two acres with just eight rooms and a pool. We are also setting up a spa with Purnarnava Ayurveda, which has been operating the spa for over 100 years in Coimbatore. With an ayurvedic doctor, we will have wellness in a significant way in Goa. The second hotel is in the southern part of Goa, The Postcard Cuelim, that houses a 350-year-old chapel. I am proud of that hotel because I had never been to a 350-year-old chapel before in India and to have it in one

of our hotels is an iconic moment for us. Our third hotel, The Postcard Moira in north Goa is very close to the ca-

seven hotels in the next 12 to 18 months. These would be in Uttarakhand, Karnataka, Dhauladhar Mountain

“We will be coming up with seven hotels in the next 12 to 18 months. These would be in Uttarakhand, Karnataka, Dhauladhar Mountain Range, Sikkim in Ravangla, Darjeeling, Sundarbans and Kanha”

fes, restaurants and beaches. It is a 215-year-old villa which has been renovated to intimate hotel standards.”

In the pipeline

The brand is committed to building and operating 50 hotels in the next five years. Chopra added, "We have already announced that we will be coming up with

Range, Sikkim in Ravangla, Darjeeling, Sundarbans and Kanha." All hotels are open for booking on the website postcardresorts.com. "The ARR's are going to range from `15,000 to `35,000 per night, depending upon the hotel and the destination you are staying in. All travel partners are our esteemed partners," he said.

As it starts its operations, the hotel company has `600 crores of assets under management, led by a group of carefully chosen hospitality talent that has experience in the best hospitality names in India and the world. He added, "Ambuja Neotia Group are our partners in Eastern and North Eastern India. In terms of investors, Small Ventures has led a round of funding into our operating company. We have also set up a Real Estate Investment Trust (REIT)."



China Eastern awards trade

Celebrating its success in the Indian market, China Eastern Airlines felicitated top performing agents during an award ceremony at Le Méridien New Delhi. The airline also presented a product presentation to update the trade about its new offerings.



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2019

JANUARY

▶ National

3-5	Ahmedabad	TTH Expo
3-5	Kochi	India International Travel Mart (IITM)
4-6	New Delhi	Adventure and Travel Show India
4-6	Vijaywada	India International Travel Exhibition
7	Kolkata	U & I Roadshow
7	Chennai	Penang Sales Mission to India 2019
8	Delhi	U & I Roadshow
9	Surat	U & I Roadshow
9	Ahmedabad	Penang Sales Mission to India
10-12	Mumbai	India International Travel & Tourism Exhibition
10-12	Hyderabad	International Joint World Cultural Tourism Conference
11	Ahmedabad	U & I Roadshow
11	Mumbai	Penang Sales Mission to India 2019
14	Pune	U & I Roadshow
14	Delhi	Penang Sales Mission to India 2019
15	Mumbai	U & I Roadshow
15-16	Mumbai	Global Aviation Summit
16-18	Delhi	SATTE
18	Delhi	Alitalia Roadshow
17-20	Araku Valley, Andhra Pradesh	14th ATOAI Convention
18-19	Delhi	Business and Luxury Travel Mart
20-22	Nagpur	Global Panorama Showcase
23	Delhi	Switzerland Tourism Roadshow
23-25	Mumbai	Outbound Travel Mart
26-28	Surat	TTH Expo
28	Mumbai	Kenya Tourism MiCE Roadshow
31	Mumbai	Tourism Ireland roadshow

▶ International

6-8	Izmir, Turkey	Travel Turkey Izmir
18	Kuta, Indonesia	Indonesia Travel Mart
22-26	Thailand	ASEAN Tourism Forum
23-24	Tokyo	National Tourism Bussan Fair
23-27	Madrid	Fitur <Fitur>

FEBRUARY

▶ National

1	Bengaluru	Kenya Tourism MiCE roadshow
1	Delhi	Tourism Ireland roadshow
4	Mumbai	South African Tourism Roadshow
5	Mumbai	ANTO Workshop
6	Ahmedabad	ANTO Workshop
6	Chennai	South African Tourism Roadshow
7	Delhi	ANTO Workshop
7	Kolkata	South African Tourism Roadshow
8	Delhi	South African Tourism Roadshow
13-15	Rishikesh	PATA ATRTCM 2019
15-17	Bengaluru	TTF
15-17	Rajkot	TTH Expo
22-24	Kolkata	TTF
23-24	Delhi	Travel Allied Show
25	Kolkata	Mauritius Tourism Roadshow
26	Hyderabad	Mauritius Tourism Roadshow
27	Coimbatore	Mauritius Tourism Roadshow
27	Mumbai	Visit Finland Workshop
28	Delhi	Visit Finland Workshop

February Contd...

▶ International

10-12	Milan	BIT MiCE 2019
20-21	Olympia, London	Business Travel Show
20-21	Olympia, London	TTE
27-28	Singapore	Aviation Festival Asia 2019

MARCH

▶ National

1	Pune	Mauritius Tourism Roadshow
1-3	Vadodara	TTH Expo
2	Nagpur	Mauritius Tourism Roadshow
6	Hyderabad	Thailand MiCE Roadshow
8	Jaipur	Thailand MiCE Roadshow
15-17	Bhubaneswar	India International Travel Exhibition (IITE)

▶ International

6-10	Berlin	ITB
12-14	Moscow	MITT 2019
19-21	Shanghai	IT&CM China
21-23	Dhaka	Dhaka Travel Mart
25-27	Abu Dhabi	IBTM Arabia
27-29	Kyiv, Ukraine	UITT

APRIL

▶ National

3-4	Mumbai	Hotel Investment Conference South-Asia (HICSA)
6-7	Mumbai	Travel Luxury Show
24	Lucknow	Thailand MiCE Roadshow
26	Kolkata	Thailand MiCE Roadshow
28-30	Jaipur	Great Indian Travel Bazaar (GITB)

▶ International

3-4	Seville, Spain	WTTC Global Summit
4-6	Baku, Azerbaijan	AITF
6-9	Perth	The Australian Tourism Exchange (ATE)
7-9	Chicago	ACTE Global Summit
8-10	California	Digital Travel Summit
7-9	Cape Town	ILTM Africa
15-17	Beijing	COTTM
17-19	Almaty	KITF
28-29	Dubai	ILTM Arabia
28-Jan 1	Dubai	Arabian Travel Market

MAY

▶ National

18-19	Jaipur	Travel Allied Show
12-14	Wiesbaden	Germany Travel Mart
14-17	Sao Paulo	ILTM Latin America
15-17	Shanghai	ITB China
21-23	Frankfurt	IMEX
27-30	Singapore	ILTM Asia Pacific
29-30	Mexico City	IBTM Americas

JUNE

▶ National

4	Pune	Best of Australia roadshow
5	Ahmedabad	Best of Australia roadshow
10	Hyderabad	Dubai MiCE Workshop
11	Chennai	Dubai MiCE Workshop
13	Bengaluru	Dubai MiCE Workshop
14	Kolkata	Dubai MiCE Workshop

▶ International

1-3	Seoul, South Korea	75th IATA Annual General Meeting
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JULY

▶ National

5-6	Hyderabad	TTF
13-14	Delhi	Travel Wedding Show
17-18	Delhi	MICE INDIA and Luxury Travel congress

▶ International

4-5	Singapore	International Conference on Tourism and Hospitality (ICTH)
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AUGUST

▶ National

8-11	Kochi	Tourism Australia India Sales Mission
12	Mumbai	Tourism Australia India Sales Mission

▶ International

28-29	Beijing	IBTM China
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SEPTEMBER

▶ National

6-8	Surat	TTF
10	Chandigarh	DCT Abu Dhabi Roadshow
11-12	Delhi	Switzerland Travel Experience
12	Ahmedabad	DCT Abu Dhabi Roadshow
13	Kolkata	DCT Abu Dhabi Roadshow
13	Chennai	Switzerland Travel Experience
16	Kochi	Switzerland Travel Experience
17	Bengaluru	Switzerland Travel Experience
18-19	Mumbai	Switzerland Travel Experience
20-22	Pune	TTF
29-Oct 1	Delhi	India Tourism Mart (ITM)

▶ International

18-20	Astana, Kazakhstan	PATA Travel Mart
23-26	Riviera Maya	ILTM North America

OCTOBER

▶ International

1-4	Paris	Top Resa
9-11	Rimini, Italy	TTG Incontri
16-18	Singapore	ITB Asia
24-27	Osaka	Tourism Expo Japan 2019
30-Nov 1	Shanghai	ILTM China

NOVEMBER

▶ National

22-24	Hyderabad	IITM
29-Dec 1	Pune	IITM
4-6	London	WTM
19-21	Barcelona	IBTM World
27-29	Pattaya, Thailand	PATA Destination Marketing Forum
30-Dec 1	Delhi	Travel MiCE Show

DECEMBER

▶ International

2-5	Cannes	ILTM Cannes
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For more details, contact: talk@ddppl.com

The dates shown on the annual event calendar are subject to change. Please refer to Event Talk in TravTalk to track the changes in dates



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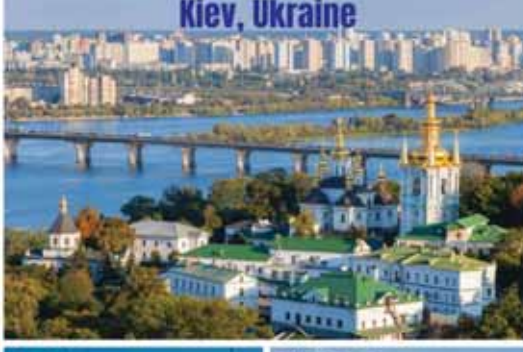
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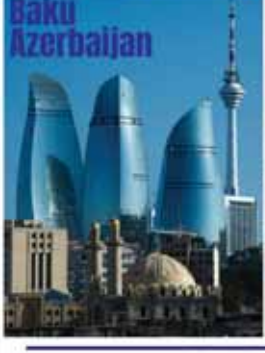
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The Travel Corporation

Mumbai

The Travel Corporation (TTC) has promoted **Darshan Maheshwari**, Country Manager for TTC India for a dual leadership role that will see him helm TTC Middle East. With over 22 years of experience in the travel industry, Maheshwari has a diverse background for both leisure and business travel. In his new role, he will leverage on the synergies that exist for both the India and Middle East travel industry to expand TTC's regional footprint and will actively engage agent partners in training and sales-driven events.



Radisson Hotel Group

Delhi

Radisson Hotel Group has announced the appointment of **Zubin Saxena** as its new Managing Director and Vice President of Operations—South Asia, effective January 1, 2019. Saxena is also a member of the Group's Asia Pacific executive committee and is involved in growing and directing the company's business in South Asia. In his new role, Saxena will provide counsel to the South Asia team. A strategic thinker and executor, he will be responsible for implementing new brand standards and delivering on operational efficiency and effectiveness to our hotels.



Preferred Hotels & Resorts

Delhi

Preferred Hotels & Resorts has announced the promotion of three executives to new leadership roles. **Seema Roy** has been elevated to Area Managing Director—South Asia, Middle East & Africa. Roy will drive retention and development efforts of the brand's growing portfolio in South Asia, Middle East & Africa, supported by the company's regional offices in New Delhi, Dubai and Cape Town. Since joining Preferred Hotels & Resorts in 2010, Roy has played a key role in successfully amplifying brand awareness of the brand in the region.



Hyatt Place Gurgaon

Gurgaon

Hyatt Place Gurgaon has designated **Ashish Shome** as the brand's new General Manager. With his rich knowledge and extensive background, Shome brings in a fresh perspective for the hotel and aims to establish the brand's broader goals and objectives while ensuring the highest level of guest satisfaction. He will be spearheading the hotel operations, overall performance and strategy execution of the hotel. With more than 28 years of experience in the hospitality industry, Shome specialises in Food & Beverage. While moving up the ladder, he has adorned several capacities with leading hospitality brands.



The Ritz-Carlton, Bangalore

Bangalore

The Ritz-Carlton, Bangalore has appointed **Tusch Daroga** as Hotel Manager for the 273-key luxury hotel. He brings with him over 16 years in hospitality across leading luxury hotel brands. In his latest capacity, Daroga is responsible for leading the team in achieving operational efficacy and creating exceptional guest experiences. A graduate from Oberoi Centre of Learning and Development, Daroga has grown through the ranks from an Assistant Manager in Front Office with The Oberoi Group to his most recent role as the Executive Assistant Manager of The Leela Palace, New Delhi.



Gaurav Sindhwani takes on a new role as Director—Global Sales & Development for South Asia, Preferred Hotels & Resorts. Sindhwani will continue to drive the company's efforts in corporate, MiCE and leisure sales as well as take on additional responsibilities of overseeing the development and retention of the brand's portfolio across the region. With over 20 years of experience in the hospitality industry, Sindhwani specialises in sales and marketing, as well as hotel operations.



Radisson Salem

Salem

Radisson Salem appoints **Madhusoodhanan Sugumaran** as its new Hotel Manager. Sugumaran is a seasoned hotelier with over 19 years of experience in the hotel industry. His previous assignment was Director—Food & Beverage with Radisson Blu Coimbatore. He was also associated with Lalit Ashok, Le Meridien, Avasa, Aloft and Residency Towers. His core expertise would be in delivering successful outcomes by empowering effective teams and building efficient processes and elevate the hotel's Food & Beverage offerings.



Dusit International

Mumbai

Dusit International, with its Global Sales Office (GSO) in Mumbai since 2017, has appointed **Snehal Koli** as Director of Sales—GSO India. She brings an enriching experience working with the hotel industry in India and has fantastic connections with the travel trade fraternity. A tourism professional with over a decade of experience, Koli will be responsible for providing sales and marketing services to the group for the entire Indian market. She would be representing all Dusit Hotels & Resorts, while developing business relationships with strategic partners and forging ties with travel agents, tour operators, wedding and event planners, MiCE planners and corporates.



The hotel also promoted **C S Ramachandran** to Vice President—Revenue Account Management for South Asia, Middle East, Africa & Australasia. In his new position, Ramachandran will lead the regional revenue management team to drive strategic success for the brand and continue to assist member hotels in maximising the effectiveness of their online distribution channels and revenue optimisation. He brings more than 20 years of expertise in hotel management including key interests in business analytics, business strategy, distribution, online marketing, sales and customer relationship management.



TALKING PEOPLE

HE Nina Vaskunlahti, Ambassador of Finland to India is an avid reader and reads a lot during her free time. "I like reading biographies, thrillers and Nordic noirs. Besides, since I also like sailing, every summer, I go for it in Finnish archipelago. I admire the sea and the silence and beauty of the nature. I also love doing cross-country skiing and am really fond of Opera," she shares. Talking about the philosophy of life, Vaskunlahti insists that one should not give up easily and should try again until turning the last stone.



Chitra Bhatia, General Secretary, OTOAI, loves gardening whenever she is not travelling. "I love plants, so I spend a lot of time in gardening and looking after my plants. Apart from it, I am fond of painting too. I also take a lot of interest in music, although I am not a good singer," she chuckles. Listing out the unexplored destinations from her wishlist, Bhatia says she is keen on visiting New Zealand, Vietnam and Cambodia. In India, she loves travelling to Goa and Kerala.



For **Cajetan Araujo**, General Manager, W Goa, music has always been a keen area of interest. "I love to strum away tunes on my guitar, including my Martin and Fender telecaster. Apart from music, biking expeditions also keep me going. Cruising along the coast of Goa, be it the south on a warm, sunny day or the north of Goa for an exciting taste of adventure is the ideal way to destress," he tells. One of his most memorable holiday moments was a road trip from the North of California, traversing all the way down South and into Mexico.



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'Product know-how is key'

Taught from the streets of life, his companies today have a market value of \$7 billion. **Kapil Bhatia**, Executive Chairman, InterGlobe Enterprises, shares his experiences at the TAAI Convention in China.



TT Bureau

A journalism teacher in Punjab University decided to give tourism a chance and forayed into this industry as a sales manager at an IATA agency. He now heads one of the largest travel, hospitality and aviation company in India with an estimated market value of \$7 billion. This is a dream many see, but only he could make it possible.

In 1964, **Kapil Bhatia**, Executive Chairman, InterGlobe Enterprises, founded Delhi Express Travels, which gradually developed into a group of travel-related organisations. 25 years later, InterGlobe Enterprises has grown from a single company to a formidable

travel corporation as a result of Bhatia's foresight and the confidence he displayed in his team. As he says, 'taught from the streets of life and not from the school of life', Bhatia has a rich experience of 57 years in the trade.

A noble profession

"Having been born in this world, it is my birthright to see this world. It is unfortunate that the world is divided into various countries and there are many restrictions like passports, visas..." says Bhatia. He adds, "The noble profession of a travel agent — seeing the world

—is an intrinsic desire, and travel agents are the torch-bearer for that, the guides. Travel agents make things easy and look after all the arrangements, but where we fail, and we should not, is when

it comes to consumer service. We must deal with our clients in a way that it should not be just about making profit from them."

Product know-how

Bhatia further says, "The quantum of play, knowledge and interest that is gained because of going abroad through a travel agent should bring the client back home quite enriched, that's where the nobility of the profession comes." Highlight-

young man being pressurised to get married. On asked his peers the benefits of marriage, they mentioned a loving wife and babies. Convinced with the idea of having babies, he got married. Next day, he asked his wife where the babies are, and she said it takes time, a month later, the same question came up and again she said that it would take time.... 50 years of hostility, visa restrictions and no interaction between India and China, it will

“Travel agents look after all the arrangements, but where we fail is when it comes to consumer service. We must deal with our clients in a way that it should not be just about making profits from them”

ing the highs and lows of the profession, he explains, "I regrettably noted the know-how of the product is lacking and no one can sell a product without a complete knowledge."

India-China

Discussing his experiences, Bhatia remembers the beginning of China Eastern's operations in India. He says, "When China Eastern started its operations in India, my organisation was looking after the operations. After 4-5 months, our delegation was visiting China and I was asked to join the team as the airline was looking at withdrawing its operations. I quickly flew in and joined the meetings. As I entered the conference room in China, I told the Chinese delegation that I've come to share a joke — Once there was a

take more than five months to establish a market between the two nations."

Kunming

Bhatia talks about his personal visit to the region and showcasing the product to travel agents, reiterating that without proper product know-how, agents will not be able to appropriately promote Kunming. He concludes, "To sell China, please have an open-hearted approach towards the destination and your traveller will not regret it."

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TRAVEL AWARDS

1 IN CIRCULATION & READERSHIP SOUTH ASIA'S LEADING TRAVEL TRADE FORTNIGHTLY

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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

India presents a perfect blend of traditional and modern, preserving its rich culture and heritage besides encouraging contemporary infrastructure development. The country is fast moving towards becoming a major hub for tourists all over the world and we would like to support the efforts of individuals who have been instrumental in helping the tourism sector grow. The growth of the sector has a direct bearing on employment opportunities and in GDP contribution.

As a tribute, DDP Group decided to organise India Travel Awards and India MiCE Awards to recognise the achievers of the travel and tourism industry, who have worked steadfastly towards enhancing the environment to allow the growth of this business. These stalwarts need to be acknowledged, appreciated and encouraged in the most befitting manner.

Our highest honour, the Gold Maya, is awarded to those stalwarts who have shaped the industry in the way it is today by creating innovative ways and products to take the industry a notch higher. The earlier editions of the India Travel Awards and India MiCE Awards have set the beginning of a journey of long-term associations with some and a renewal of the bond with many others.

Overall, this edition of the India Travel Awards and India MiCE Awards was another successful chapter in this journey.

The awards will be travelling to various other cities in its subsequent editions. Thus, we take it upon ourselves, in our own small way, to revive and enhance tourism in various regions of India.

SanJeet

India Travel Awards

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INDIA TRAVEL AWARDS is printed, published and edited by SanJeet on behalf of Durga Das Publications Pvt. Ltd., printed at Modest Print Pack Pvt. Ltd., C-52, DDA Sheds Okhla Industrial Area, Phase-I, New Delhi-110020 and published at 72, Todarmal Road, New Delhi - 110 001 Ph.: +91-11-23234177

Maya descends on Agra to



The winners of India Travel Awards & India MiCE Awards 2018 with their trophies

As the perfect platform for recognising achievers from the travel, hospitality and MiCE industry, India Travel Awards in its latest edition, felicitated the best of the best from every segment of the travel and tourism fraternity.

 NISHA VERMA

The India Travel Awards and India MiCE Awards concluded its latest edition with a grand ceremony at Hotel Clarks Shiraz, Agra. The event saw in attendance stalwarts of the travel and hospitality industry from across the country. The chief

guest for the evening was **Satyajeet Rajan**, Director General, Ministry of Tourism and the guest of honour was **Manvinder Sandhu**, First Runner up, Gladrags Mrs India Celebrating the achievements of travel professionals in travel and MiCE industries across the country, the award was given in a total of 74 categories.

Congratulating the audience for being a part of the industry, Rajan said, "Being an entrepreneur in India is difficult, and I must congratulate everyone for being a part of the travel business and achieving so much. We, at Ministry of Tourism, have always tried to help entrepreneurs if they

approach us with a concern or challenge. The tourism sector has been contributing immensely to employment generation in the country. It is the industry that make us take decisions which can in turn push the tourism sector to do better and achieve more. Each person outside India is either a tourist or



(L-R): SanJeet, Rupak Gupta, SMA Sheeraz, Himanshu Patil, Satyajeet Rajan, Manvinder Sandhu, Dilruba Pandey, P S Duggal and Deepak Bhatnagar

mesmerise tourism fraternity



a potential tourist, and all of us are ambassadors of our country.”

Rajan also claimed that those who focus on experiential tourism will be the game changers in the travel industry. “The ones who make trends and innovations are going to succeed much more than those who do not make innovations. I wish India Travel Awards and India MiCE Awards a big success. The selection process of these awards involves the industry at large and the way awardees have been chosen is very participative,” he shared.

The award ceremony was attended by 150 guests from the tourism and hospitality industry, acknowledged achievers in their field. **Sanjeet**, Mentor, India Travel Awards, said, “It is our aim to recognise, felicitate and reward outstanding contribution to the MiCE industry. These awards are powered by TravTalk and MiCETalk, India’s leading travel and MiCE publications respectively.”

Talking about the industry, he said, “Indian tourism is the fastest growing among the G20 countries

and it will be responsible for 10 per cent of all jobs in India. Tourism has more funded start-ups than any other industry in India. The Indian MiCE industry is currently pegged at ₹25,000 crores and is expected to double in the next two years. The potential is therefore, huge. The India MiCE and Travel Awards have been instituted to recognise this excellence, hard work and success of this industry that is now synonymous with progress, development and opportunity.” He claimed that these awards, through their unique voting system, aims to celebrate

the large global players and even the smallest players who often go unnoticed.”

The awards were divided into four categories — Personal Awards for the legends and leaders of today and tomorrow, Business Awards for the organisations who have set benchmarks for themselves in their respective fields and have exceeded expectations, Trending Awards decided by the critics and meant for individuals with extraordinary work and Partner Awards for the partners who have contributed to make India Travel Awards a success.

The winners of India Travel Awards are selected through an online nomination process, followed by online voting and finalised after a jury verdict. Voting is carefully monitored to avoid duplications and maintain transparency. For the current edition, over 50,000 votes were cast.

PS Duggal, Executive Director, Minar Group, entered the Gallery of Legends at the prestigious ceremony. **Himanshu Patil**, Director, Kesari Tours, was chosen as DDP Trailblazer for his contribution in the growth of his company and the industry at large while **SMA Sheeraz**, Managing Director, Sheeraz Tours, was declared as DDP Face of the Future. 🏆



Gallery of Legends | P S DUGGAL



► P S Duggal, Executive Director, Minar Travels, received the award for Gallery of Legends. He was felicitated by Sanjeet, Mentor, India Travel Awards, Satyajeet Rajan, Director General, Ministry of Tourism and Manvinder Sandhu, First Runner up, Gladrags Mrs India

Thanking the team of DDP Publications and India Travel Awards, P S Duggal, Executive Director, Minar Travels, said that he holds India Travel Awards in high esteem. “Despite many stalwarts in the industry, I am thankful to DDP Publications and the jury members for having chosen me and the company for this award. I know it would have been a tough decision for the jury, and I am really glad to have received it,” he said.

Having started as a banking professional at ANZ Bank, Duggal joined the company in 1992 and has since been part of the growth story. With 26 years of experience in the industry, Duggal now looks after the entire administration and accounts of the company whilst coordinating with all its offices across countries. Today,

Minar Travels is a market leader in Russia, Kazakhstan and Ukraine, and has an international presence in 32 countries, with inroads in the Latin and North American markets as well as Europe and Asia. The company is one of the biggest aviation services and destination management companies in the country with 16 offices in India and nine overseas. It is also the GSA for eight airlines. The luxury division became a traveller-made DMC in 2018. That’s not all, the company’s MiCE division is also a huge success.

“Despite many stalwarts in the industry, I am thankful to DDP Publications and the jury members for having chosen me and the company for this award”



DDP Trailblazer | HIMANSHU PATIL



► Himanshu Patil, Director, Kesari Tours received the award for DDP Game Changer. He was felicitated by SanJeet, Mentor, India Travel Awards, Satyajeeet Rajan, Director General, Ministry of Tourism and Manvinder Sandhu, First Runner up, Gladrags Mrs India

For Himanshu Patil, Director, Kesari Tours, India Travel Awards has set very high standards for itself and is exceeding year after year. “I want to congratulate team DDP and hope they keep doing this good work. Your encouragement makes us strive to do better in life. Thank you DDP Publications and SanJeet for putting up this great show. We really feel honoured. The ceremony, designing and everything was so perfect. Right from the selection process to putting up the show, the entire process is a labour of love and I want to thank everyone for rewarding us,” he said.

“ Right from the selection process to putting up the show, the entire process is a labour of love and I want to thank everyone for rewarding us with this honour ”

An industry veteran with 30 years of experience and sharp insights into the travel industry, Patil inspires the youth to venture out and follow their passion and experiment with

innovation. His latest initiative ‘Travosh’ offers Indian tourists a perfect match for every destination and season with a functional product range that promises prompt delivery. His company brings a smile on the faces of millions of tourists every year. As Vice President of Outbound Tour Operators Association of India (OTOAI), he ensures high-value proposition in every initiative towards business transformation.



DDP Face of the Future | SMA SHEERAZ



► SMA Sheeraz, Director, Sheeraz Tours, received the award for Face of the Future. He was felicitated by SanJeet, Mentor, India Travel Awards, Satyajeet Rajan, Director General, Ministry of Tourism and Manvinder Sandhu, First Runner up, Gladrags Mrs India

SMA Sheeraz, Managing Director, Sheeraz Tours thanked Team DDP and the industry at large for having honoured him with an award. “We started this business in Lucknow in 2007 which now has emerged to be one of the main markets as every tourism board and airline is focusing on Tier-II cities. Sheeraz Tours is a B2C company but we also have started a B2B company called Tripshapers.com. Today, we are working hard to improve tourism in our state and this award encourages us to do more. We will grow our market as well as grow our company.”

Through his 20-year long association with the industry, Sheeraz has earned the goodwill of various domestic and international tourism boards and airlines. As the founder of Sheeraz Tours in Lucknow, he has helped scale the company to new heights and has become one of the most trusted travel companies in North India. He is also the Director of Tripshapers.com, a B2B online portal company, where he plays an instrumental role in showcasing the Uttar Pradesh region as a potential outbound market from India.

“Sheeraz Tours is a B2C company but we have also started a B2B company. Today, we are working hard to improve tourism in our state and this award encourages us to do more”





Chief Guest | SATYAJEET RAJAN

Satyajeet Rajan, Director General, Ministry of Tourism, Government of India was happy to attend the India Travel and MiCE Awards and called them a great motivator. “It is a very well-organised awards ceremony and has been conducted quite professionally. Those who make trends, innovations in this are going to succeed much more than those who do not make innovations. I wish India Travel Awards and India MiCE Awards a big success, and the way awardees have been chosen is very participative. The selection process of these awards is very good and involves the industry at large.”

► Satyajeet Rajan, Director General, Ministry of Tourism received the award for Chief Guest

Best Hospitality Professional in a Tourist Destination |

DEBASISH BHOWMIK

Debasish Bhowmick, Senior Vice President, Clarks Shiraz Agra, has been in the industry for a long time and has been at the helm of affairs at Clarks Shiraz Agra for quite some time. “It’s a good time to win an award. We are continuously striving in the industry and trying to do the best. It is always good to be recognised for what you have done in the industry and the journey you’ve had,” he said.

► Debasish Bhowmick, Senior Vice President, received the award for Best Hospitality Professional in a Tourist Destination



Distinguished Travel Technology Stalwart | DEEPAK NARULA

With innovation as key, Deepak Narula, Managing Director, GRNconnect.com, has achieved great heights in the travel industry. On receiving the India Travel Award for his contribution to travel technology, he said, “It is definitely a moment of glory for me and my team. We have always embraced technology since the beginning and have changed the way travel agents work through our innovations. We have always stayed ahead of our competitors as far as technology is concerned as we have always invested in latest technology and have solved many bottle necks faced by travel agents. We can proudly say that today GRNconnect.com is the most user-friendly system in the industry.”

► Award was received on behalf of Deepak Narula, Managing Director, GRNconnect.com for Distinguished Travel Technology Stalwart



Most Professional Inbound Operator |

DEEPAK BHATNAGAR

Deepak Bhatnagar, Managing Director, Amantran Travel, has worked in the inbound industry for a long time. On receiving the award, he said, “India Travel Awards encourages people to work hard, get nominated and finally get awarded.” Talking about what the government needs to do for inbound tourism, he added, “The government shall focus on three things — visa regime, air capacity and the poor image of India in international markets. The government needs to access the source markets, besides the visa and air capacity.”

► Deepak Bhatnagar, Managing Director, Amantran Travel, received the award for Most Professional Inbound Operator





Best Travel Insurance | RELIGARE HEALTH INSURANCE

B Shiva Shanker, Business Head — Travel Insurance & New Business Lines, Religare Health Insurance, received the award and said, “We are delighted to have this award and would like to thank all our customers, and particularly channel partners for supporting us. The India Travel Awards is an excellently-organised show and we are delighted to be a part of this.”

► The award was given to Religare Health Insurance and, received by B Shiva Shanker, Business Head - Travel Insurance & New Business Lines, Religare Health Insurance and Paritosh Kataria, Head – Marketing, Religare Health Insurance

Fastest Growing Mid Market Hotel Brand | VINNCA HOTELS

A ccording to Snehal Kulshreshtha, Director, Vinnca Hotels, their focus on Tier II, III, IV and V markets is what has made them win an award. “We also have a property that is running in Kolad, which is 3.5 hours from Mumbai. These are adventure tents set up in a 36-acre resort. These are unique, and I invite all the viewers to come and experience luxury in a tented accommodation. This award is encouraging and motivational. A great event like always, DDP is outshining itself every single year,” he said.

► The award was given to Vinnca Hotels and, received by Snehal Kulshreshtha, Director, Vinnca Hotels



Best Luxury Wedding & MiCE Resort | ANANTA UDAIPUR

Pleased to receive the award, Satya Roy Choudhary, Vice President, Ananta Udaipur, said, “I have heard a lot about these awards, and it’s a pleasure to have won this award today. Ours is a 250-room-hotel with the banquet size of 14000 sq ft. On an average, we organise 60 luxury weddings and around 50 conferences in a year. Hence, with the number of events we conduct, we stand out in the entire Rajasthan and this is the reason we have won this award.”

► The award was given to Ananta Udaipur and, received by Satya Roy Choudhary, Vice President and Sudip Raha, General Manager



Best Luxury Travel Website | FABGETAWAYS.COM

Talking about their company Raaj Bajaj, Founder & CEO, FABgetaways.com, said, “It’s a members-only online luxury travel platform, where essentially we showcase deals of four- and five-star hotels across the world. We believe that this unique concept and the fact that within 7 months of being live, we have over 50,000 members who have subscribed to the platform, has won us this award.”

► The award was given to FABgetaways.com and, received by Raaj Bajaj, Founder & CEO and Kaushal Gandhi, Senior Manager - Business Development





Best Adventure Tents | VINNCA VILLAGE AT ROCKHILL ADVENTURE & RESORTS

Vinnca Village at Rock Hill Adventures & Resorts at Kolad offers a heaven of tranquillity, away from the stress of city life. It enjoys a reputation for exceptional hospitality, friendly and efficient service, comfortable luxurious tents and dormitory, good food and an interesting activity. **Snehal Kulshreshtha**, Director, Vinnca Hotels, said, "These are adventure tents set up in a 36-acre resort. These are unique, and I invite all the viewers to come and experience luxury in a tented accommodation."

► The award was given to Vinnca Village At Rockhill Adventure & Resorts and, received by Snehal Kulshreshtha, Director, Vinnca Hotels

Fastest Growing Hotel Brand | BEST WESTERN HOTELS & RESORTS

Tajinder Singh, Vice President - Sales & Marketing, BestWestern Hotels & Resorts, India, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh, received the award on behalf of the company and revealed that they have a long-standing association with India Travel Awards. "This award allows us to socialise, get recognised and gives you an opportunity once in a year to say Hi! to our friends and colleagues. Since we started three years back, we have put a lot of effort to change the brand perception," he said.

► The award was given to Best Western Hotels & Resorts and received by Tajinder Singh, Vice President - Sales & Marketing



Best Travel Exhibition | GLOBAL PANORAMA SHOWCASE

Harmandeep Singh Anand, Managing Director and Founder, GPS, claimed that 2018 was a historic year for GPS. He said, "Everyone in the core team has worked hard for the last six years since the inception of the event." **Tanushka Kaur Anand**, Executive Director, GPS, said, "We are almost doing eight events a year and in 2019, we will be doing 12 events. Moving forward, we are going more towards digitalisation and are trying to enhance this event even more."

► The award was given to Global Panorama Showcase and, received by Harmandeep Singh Anand, Managing Director, Tanushka Kaur Anand, Director and Sobinder Singh Kohli, Director



Best Asian NTO | DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM PHILIPPINES

Seema Datt, Country Manager, Department of Tourism Philippines, believes that their team has been putting in a lot of effort, which is why they won the India Travel Awards. "We are putting in a lot of effort in training our trade partners about the destination and I think our efforts are well-rewarded with this trophy. Philippines is one of the most exotic places in the world, with world's top 3 beaches," she said.

► The award was given to Department Of Tourism Philippines and, received by Seema Datt, Account Director



Most Trending Destination | VISITFINLAND

For **Sara Sodhi Juneja**, Country Head, VisitFinland, the Indian travel industry has been warm. "We got a good welcome this year. Visit Finland re-entered the Indian market this year, and with the amazing experiences that we offer, the numbers have been growing in double digits. Hopefully, we look forward to gaining more market share from the Indian market and with the experiences of Santa Claus, Northern Lights, and igloo stay, it's a bucket-list destination and we hope to gain a lot of market share from India," she revealed.

► The award was given to VisitFinland and received by Sara Sodhi Juneja, Country Head, VisitFinland





Best Mice Organiser | MACH CONFERENCES

Ranjan Ghosh, General Manager, Operations, said that to receive the award was a great moment for the entire Mach Conferences team. "It is a great recognition for all our hard work, which we have put in throughout the year. Thank you to my team for making this happen. Also, I thank the DDP team for creating such a nice platform for MiCE players."

► The award was given to Mach Conferences and, received by Suresh Gupta, COO, Ranjan Ghosh, General Manager - Operations, Kamal Ahuja, Manager and Ankita Gulati, Deputy Manager

Best Organiser of Conferences – Domestic | ICE GROUP INDIA

Thanking the team of India MiCE Awards, Disha, Managing Director, Ice Group, said, "We are the best at what we do, and that's why we have won this award. We have done some good work during the year which has been noticed. It's one of the most professionally-organised award ceremonies that I have seen of late. Kudos to the whole team for the same."

► The award was given to Ice Group India and, received by Mohit Khanna, Director and Disha Shah, Director



Best MiCE Company | CONCEPT TRAVEL & CONFERENCES

Feeling honoured to receive the award, Ashish Jagota, Executive Director, Concept Travel & Conferences, said, "It was a fabulous show and a great opportunity to meet everyone. I must say that the show reflects our responsibility towards the industry and we shall focus on doing good work and try to enhance the opportunity for the Indians in the MiCE industry."

► The award was given to Concept Travel & Conferences and, received by Vanessa Williams, Head, Business Development and Ashish Jagota, Executive Director

Best Venue for Launches – Tier II | PARADISE VILLAGE BEACH RESORT, GOA

Calling the award ceremony a great initiative by the team, Rishi Dandona, Managing Director, Paradise Village Beach Resort, Goa, said, "We have a 10-acre property right on the beach with 105-room inventory. We have two lakh sq feet of banqueting space and we are one of the preferred venues for launches. This is a great encouragement and thanks to the team of DDP for a great initiative."

► The award was given to Paradise Village Beach Resort, Goa and, received by Rishi Dandona, Managing Director and Mona Dandona, Chairman



Leading MiCE Operator | DNATA

Over five decades, dnata has established itself as an industry innovator in the Middle East. It is the leading travel management company in the region offering the most comprehensive range of corporate, leisure, partnership and trade services. With its constant expansion, it is today a one-stop shop for travellers across sixty countries.

► The award was given to dnata and received by Preetham Kiron, Managing Director and Dheeraj Rastogi, CFO



BEST MiCE Operator South East Asia

TRAVELBULLZ

Kanwer Deep Singh, Founder & President, TravelBullz, claims that getting multiple awards for every region in one night is a very humbling feeling. According to him, “The credit for this completely goes to our team across Hong Kong, Thailand and India. I want to thank our customers who have been supporting us and always voting for us, as well as our partners, who have been helping us to grow over the last eight years.”

► The award was given to TravelBullz and, received by Raman Deep Singh, Director MICE & Groups (Asia), Shikha Choudhry, General Manager – MICE

Fastest Growing MiCE Travel Agency

SKIL

Sharing that theirs is a new firm, Trishal Rao, CEO, SKIL, said, “We’ve been in the MiCE space for the last 2-3 years. I indeed thank DDP for appreciating us with this award. It’s a great motivation for our entire team and will help us take our company to bigger heights. For us, it is the result of team work and effort.”

► The award was given to SKIL and received by Ramanpreet Singh, Senior Partner and Trishal Rao, CEO



Best Organiser of Conferences – Abroad

ICE GROUP INDIA

Thanking the team of India MiCE Awards, Disha, Managing Director, Ice Group, said, “We are the best at what we do, and that’s why we have won this award. We have done some good work during the year which has been noticed. It’s one of the most professionally-organised award ceremonies that I have seen of late. Kudos to the whole team for the same.”

► The award was given to Ice Group India and, received by Mukesh Bhalla, Manager, MICE, Disha Shah, Director and Mohit Khanna, Director

Best Debut Business Hotel

FERN GOREGAON, MUMBAI

Sujit Gopinath, General Manager, The Fern Goregaon, Mumbai, thinks that it’s their guests who can best tell how good their property is. “The value proposition that we give as a debut business hotel is huge. We have got the numbers for being in proximity with Bombay Exhibition Centre. The kind of service and product quality we offer continuously and consistently has been amazing in the last couple of years, which has been rewarded today,” he shared.

► The award was given to Fern Goregaon, Mumbai and received by Sujith Gopinath, General Manager



Best Organiser of Incentive Programmes – International

AMBASSADOR EXPRESS HOLIDAYS

Thanking his team for doing a good job, Saurabh Mahajan, Director, Ambassador Express Holidays, said, “We are a MiCE company and are glad that my team was able to do some good work this year, the reason we were given this award by DDP. The awards ceremony was well-organised, crisp and reached out to both travel and MiCE segments very well.”

► The award was given to Ambassador Express Holidays and received by Saurabh Mahajan, Director

Best MiCE Experience & Innovation

ADIONA TRAVELS

Major Pradeep Dhariwal, Director of Sales, Adiona Travels, revealed that it was the second time in a row that they have got this award. “It is the hardwork of the Adiona Travels team. They are consistent, and I think many more such awards will be coming our way. Thanks to DDP Publications for encouraging us,” he claimed.

► The award was given to Adiona Travels and, received by Major Pradeep Dhariwal, Director of Sales and Sunil Nain, Director Inbound





Best Airline - International

SILKAIR

SilkAir is a full-service regional airline with its head office in Singapore. It is a wholly owned subsidiary of Singapore Airlines and operates scheduled passenger services from Singapore to 52 cities in 16 countries in Southeast Asia, the Indian Subcontinent, China, Japan and Australia. From India, SilkAir operates to eight cities and offers connections to not only Singapore, but further ahead for travellers across the country.

► The award was given to SilkAir and received on behalf of Jagdish Ram Bhojwani, General Manager



Best Global Distribution System

TRAVELPORT GALILEO

On winning the award, Anoop Tewari – National Head (Relationship Management), Travelport, said, “It’s a great recognition for which I thank TravTalk. We provide support to our airline and hotel partners through content and technology. To our travel agent partners, we give all possible solutions and content and I hope to keep on doing a better job.” On the award ceremony, he commented, “It was great to see such a big turnout in Agra and meet everyone under one roof. The event was organised in the best possible way.”

► The award was given to Travelport Galileo and, received by Anoop Tewari, National Head (Relationship Management) and Taruna Soni, Head- Marketing



Best MiCE Operator

ICON PLANNERS

Calling it a great show, Sunaina Chatterjee, CEO, iCON Planners, said, “Just like they say ‘Wah Taj’, I want to say ‘Wah DDPPL’, and I must thank all my team members, since it’s because of them that this is the third award for us in the years that went by. It’s a team effort and I also want to thank our patrons who’ve been with us throughout. The award ceremony was a great show. Today, MiCE is the buzzword, and even normal travel agencies want to get into this business. However, it is becoming specialised and I am sure it’s going to evolve. There is no going down from here.”

► The award was given to iCON Planners and, received by Sunaina Chatterjee, CEO and Ritesh Joshi, Head Corporate Travels



Best B2B Travel Portal

TRAVEL BOUTIQUE ONLINE

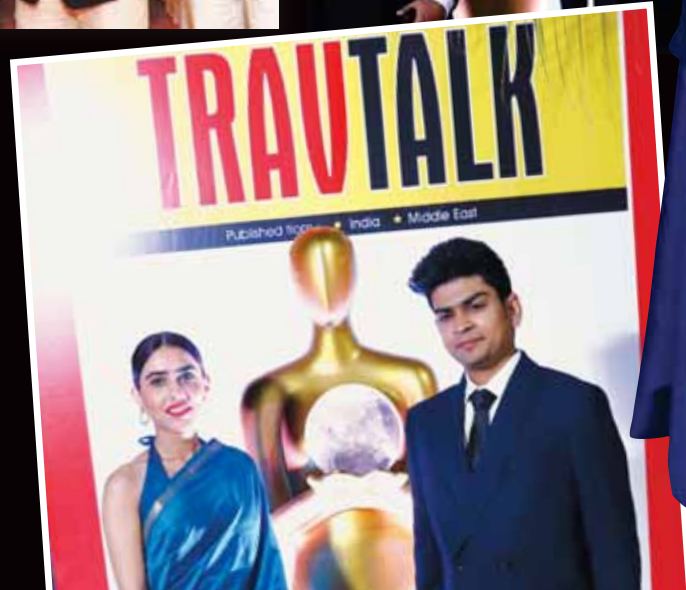
Ramen Ch Das, Sales Manager— Assam & Meghalaya, Travel Boutique Online was excited to receive the award. “In the Northeast, TBO is doing very well because we have a lot of products. We are not just doing ticketing or hotels, but also offering a lot of things like packages, holidays — international and domestic, hotels and DMCs. People in the Northeast want to go to international destinations. Travel agents are also giving good response and trying their hand at packages,” he said.

► The award was given to Travel Boutique Online and received by Ramen Ch Das, Sales Manager – Assam & Meghalaya





GLIMPSSES of India Travel Awards





Best Global Emergency Assistance

TRAWELLTAG COVER MORE

Referring to India Travel Awards a great platform for the entire travel fraternity, **Deepak Singh**, AVP, North Zone, TrawellTag Cover More, said, “This is a great platform for the entire travel fraternity and the travel industry partners. We are working very hard in the industry. Since we are into the business for the last two decades, and have earned from the travel fraternity, we now want to return to this industry. This award brings a lot of recognition for us.”

► The award was given to TrawellTag Cover More and received by Deepak Singh, AVP North Zone

Best Business Car Rental

Company | NILJYOTI TRAVEL AGENCY

Hailing from Tripura, **Sanjib Acharjee**, Proprietor, Niljyoti Travel Agency, claimed that they have been running their car rental company for a long time. “In Tripura, we used to lag behind in tourism sector, but it is developing now. Through these awards, we would like to let the industry know about the offerings in Tripura. It’s a great tourism destination — green and peaceful. To take the region forward, we need support and promotion in the media,” he shared.

► The award was given to Niljyoti Travel Agency and received by Sanjib Acharjee, proprietor



Best Luxury Tour Operator -

Outbound | AZURA HOLIDAYS

Sohail Hanafi, Director, Azura Holidays, believes that India Travel Awards is a great opportunity for budding travel agencies. “People from all over the fraternity come together and attend this programme where achievers are felicitated, and it’s a great opportunity for all of us. I am glad to have been a part of it. Azura Holidays is a boutique travel agency and we deal with luxury holidays. Our company has been really working hard for the past five years in the luxury outbound market and I think our efforts are finally paying off and we are reaping the benefits with this recognition now,” he claimed.

► The award was given to Azura Holidays and received by Sohail Hanafi, Director

Best Foreign Exchange

Aggregator | FXKART.COM

After winning multiple awards for years, **Abdul Hadi Shaikh**, Co-Founder, FxKart.com, expressed his happiness saying that winning continuously for years gives them the confidence that they are doing the right thing. “I think that we deserve this award for putting a lot of effort, in terms of revolutionising the entire industry, and giving them the technology tools that they are craving for. Fortunately, for us, nobody is focusing on that, and, in the past 12 months, we have grown by leaps and bounds,” he claimed.

► The award was given to FxKart.com and, received by Abdul Hadi Shaikh, Co Founder and Adnan Hasan Khan, Regional Manager - North India







Best Global Distribution System

TRAVELPORT GALILEO

On winning the award, **Anoop Tewari**, National Head (Relationship Management), Travelport, said, "It's a great recognition for which I thank TravTalk. We provide support to our airline and hotel partners through content and technology. To our travel agent partners, we give all possible solutions and content and I hope to keep on doing a better job." On the award ceremony, he commented, "It was great to see such a big turnout in Agra and meet everyone under one roof. The event was organised in the best possible way."

► The award was given to **Travelport Galileo** and, received by **Anoop Tewari**, National Head (Relationship Management) and **Taruna Soni**, Head- Marketing

Best MiCE Destination

THE DELTIN DAMAN

Deltin Daman is spread across 10 acres (40,300 sq metres) and boasts 176 rooms generously sized at 44 sq metres. Guests staying at the property can relish greenery and meandering pool. The property boasts plethora of facilities and amenities for guests. The spa has 7 treatment rooms and offers both Asian as well as European treatments. The Grandice ballroom accommodates 350 people in cluster-style seating. All in one, The Deltin is a luxurious Daman Hotel with a capacity of up to 2000 people.

► The award was given to **The Deltin Daman** and received on behalf of **Tanya Ahluwalia**, Vice President - Marketing & Sales



Best Wedding & MiCE Hotel

SAYAJI HOTEL KOLHAPUR

Manish Singh Kushwaha, General Manager, Sayaji Hotel Kolhapur, revealed that they opened the property in 2015. "Prior to that, from Pune to Goa, there was no such good destination in the entire region. Hence, there is a reason our group came up with this hotel, and it's a gift to the entire region. Since we opened the hotel, it's been growing in terms of revenue and ARRs day-by-day and it's been a much-needed landmark for the entire western Maharashtra," he said.

► The award was given to **Sayaji Hotel Kolhapur** and received by **Manish Singh Kushwaha**, General Manager

Best Customised Tour Operator – New Zealand

XTREME DESTINATIONS

Chintan Kayani, Director, Xtreme Destinations, believes that India Travel Awards are only getting better year by year. Owing the success of his company to his team, he said, "It's definitely the full effort of my team behind this award. We have won for the best Customised Tour Operator for New Zealand, and we are happy to receive the award. Thank you to the team of India Travel Awards and DDP Publications for putting up a great show."

► The award was given to **Xtreme Destinations** and, received by **Chintan Kayani**, Director, **Hemant Shah**, Director and **Neelanj Shah**, Finance and Marketing Advisor





Best Boutique Resort | THE WOODS AT SASAN

Talking about their property, **Maulik Bhagat**, Managing Director, The Woods at Sasan, said, "We have just opened our flagship property in Sasan Gir, where there are Asiatic lions. The Woods at Sasan has been made with a lot of passion and has a soul. There is an inspiration from the geopolitical boundaries where we are, and we really believe that getting an award for the property means that it's an award for the destination."

► The award was given to **The Woods at Sasan** and, received by **Maulik Bhagat**, Managing Director and **Sanjay Bhowmik**, Resort Manager

Best Experiential Tour Operator | COX & KINGS

Yusuf Poonawala, Senior Vice President, Cox & Kings, claims that an award like the India Travel Award adds more responsibility on their shoulders to live up to. "With this award, we strive to work harder so that we keep on shining and doing better. I want to dedicate the award for the full team of Bharat Dekho because of which we have got this. The ceremony was fantastically organised. There are a number of shows out there in the market, but the way the quality has been this year is brilliant and flawless," he said.

► The award was given to **Cox & Kings** and, received by **Nagender Panwar**, National Head Operations and Contracting and **Yusuf Poonawala**, Senior Vice President



Best Sports Tourism Company | GREYNOMAD

Rishav Jana, Manager — Business Development & Operations, Greynomad, claims that winning the India Travel Award is inspiring. "It motivates us to do better and work harder. It's a great recognition for our teamwork and makes us strive to work harder," he said.

► The award was given to **Greynomad** and, received by **Tanisa Mookerji**, Manager - Marketing and **Rishav Jana**, Manager - Business Development & Operations

Best Floating Casino Hotel | DELTIN CARAVELA

When in Goa, it's mandatory to visit the Deltin Caravela. Afloat on the Mandovi River, away from the crowds, Deltin Caravela is India's only Luxury floating Casino hotel. Get into your almost 500 sq ft suite and relish all the luxuries while trying your hand at almost 140 gaming positions. Deltin Caravela has 8 ultra-luxurious suites, skylight restaurant, spa, roulette and many other games for guests looking for some gaming time.

► The award was given to **Deltin Caravela** and received on behalf of **Tanya Ahluwalia**, Vice President - Marketing & Sales



Best Foreign Exchange Aggregator | FXKART.COM

After winning multiple awards for years, **Abdul Hadi Shaikh**, Co-Founder, FxKart.com, expressed his happiness saying that winning continuously for years gives them the confidence that they are doing the right thing. "I think that we deserve this award for putting a lot of effort, in terms of revolutionising the entire industry, and giving them the technology tools that they are craving for. Fortunately, for us, nobody is focusing on that, and, in the past 12 months, we have grown by leaps and bounds," he claimed.

► The award was given to **FxKart.com** and, received by **Abdul Hadi Shaikh**, Co Founder and **Adnan Hasan Khan**, Regional Manager - North India



Best Online Portal | ATLAS TRAVELS ONLINE

Hussain Patel, Director, Atlas Travels, claims that their hard work is what has earned their company the India Travel Award. “We are very excited to receive this award and we would like to thank you for recognising our efforts and awarding us with the 'Best Online Portal'. It is our continuous endeavour to provide the best deals to our customers and to increase our network in becoming the largest distributor,” he said.

► The award was given to Atlas Travels Online and, received by Amit Sharma, Area Sales Manager and Sachin Sharma, Zonal Head

Best Luxury Resort | THE FERN SAMALI RESORT

Sumit Rahate, General Manager, The Fern Samali Resort, commented that India Travel Awards is a beautiful platform for them to get recognised and rewarded by the hospitality and tourism fraternity members. “We have got this award, because of my team members, who have been providing a consistent service delivery and achieving the best guest satisfaction. I want to thank everyone who has voted for us for getting this award this year and one of many from the ITA to come,” he said.

► The award was given to The Fern Samali Resort and received by Sumit Rahate, General Manager



Best Customised Tour Operator – Europe | XPLORE DESTINATIONS

Chintan Kayani, Director, Xplore Destinations, believes that India Travel Awards is only getting better year by year. Owing the success of his company to his team, he said, “It’s definitely the full efforts of my team behind this award. We have won for the best Customised Tour Operator for Europe, and we are happy to receive the award. Thank you to the team of India Travel Awards and DDP Publications for putting up a great show.”

► The award was given to Xplore Destinations and, received by Chintan Kayani, Director, Hemant Shah, Director and Neelanj Shah, Finance and Marketing Advisor

Best Boutique Hotel | GOLDFINCH HOTEL MUMBAI

Thanking the India Travel Awards team, Subhadeep Datta, General Manager, Goldfinch Hotel Mumbai, said, “It’s a great effort and I thank you for recognising us. There has been a lot of hardwork by the team. The award is not only for me or the hotel, but the people behind it. Hence, Maya goes to everyone.”

► The award was given to Goldfinch Hotel Mumbai and received by Subhadeep Datta, General Manager



Best Casino Hotel | DELTIN SUITES

Located five minutes from Candolim beach, Deltin Suites is a Casino Hotel in Goa, which is known for its intimate and stylish ambience. The fine and commodious suites are 286 square metres and fashioned in shades of yellow and brown with playful design accents built along the cosy courtyard, which houses a swimming pool.

► The award was given to Deltin Suites and received on behalf of Tanya Ahluwalia, Vice President - Marketing & Sales





Best B2B Online Travel Portal

TRAVELBULLZ

Kanwer Deep Singh, Founder & President, TravelBullz, claims that getting multiple awards for every region in one night is a very humbling feeling. “The credit for this completely goes to our team across Hong Kong, Thailand and India. I want to thank our customers who have been supporting us and always voting for us, as well as our partners, who have been helping us to grow over the last eight years.”

► The award was given to TravelBullz and, received by Amit Paul Singh, General Manager Sales and Kanwer Deep Singh, Founder & President

Best Travel Agency | NEXTOURISM

For Dipak Dhumal, Travel Advisor – Domestic, Nextourism, it is a third-time win at the India Travel Awards. “It’s an excellent show and I am glad to receive this award. I would like to thank DDP Publications for recognising us for our efforts,” he said.

► The award was given to Nextourism and, received by Dipak Dhumal, Travel Advisor - Domestic



Best Emerging Tour Operator - Outbound

DEWBERRY HOLIDAYS

According to Ashish C Shah, Founder, Dewberry Holidays, having satisfied customers is what has earned them the award. “We are basically into outbound and our 90 per cent business goes into outbound. We don’t do domestic and weekend tours. Our customers have no complaints because of our networking and infrastructure. India Travel Awards is a fantastic platform where we can be recognised in the industry. We really appreciate the hard work behind the show,” he said.

► The award was given to Dewberry Holidays and, received by Ashish C Shah, Founder and Ashish D Shah, Chairman



Best MiCE Operator

ALTAIR HOLIDAYS

A complete service package for the customers, Altair Holidays aims to deliver excellent customer service and satisfaction through continuous variations, development and skill of their staff, along with technology. For MiCE travel, Altair Holidays helps its guests make hassle-free group tours with passenger satisfaction and prompt services. Their USP is to offer end-to-end solutions for ground planning and execution.

► The award was given to Altair Holidays and, received by Priyaank Ranka, Director and Amit Motwani, Director



Best Global Emergency Assistance

TRAWELLTAG COVER-MORE

Calling India Travel Awards a great platform for the entire travel fraternity, Deepak Singh, AVP, North Zone, TrawellTag Cover More, said, “This is a great platform for the entire travel fraternity and the travel industry partners. We are working very hard in the industry. Since we are into the business for the last two decades, and have earned from the travel fraternity, we now want to return to this industry. This award brings a lot of recognition for us.”

► The award was given to TrawellTag Cover-More and received by Girish Chandra Yadav, Regional Manager and Deepak Singh, AVP North Zone





Fastest Growing Luxury Travel Agency | T3 : TAKEOFF - TRANSIT - TRAVEL

T3 is the brainchild of three ardent travel enthusiasts and serves domestic travellers, but also an international client base. The company takes care to design typical travel itineraries, which are based upon first-hand experience of enthusiastic travellers. T3 is an extensive platform that makes sure that its clients derive the maximum benefit out of their travel.

► The award was given to T3 : Takeoff - Transit - Travel and, received on behalf of Dhruv Somaia, Director

Best Destination Management Company – Domestic | MOUNTAIN EDGE TOURS & HOLIDAYS

Mountain Edge Tours & Holidays is a reputed and premium travel company and offers a broad spectrum of services that include holiday and honeymoon packages, special interest tours, escorted tours for groups and senior citizens, weekend trips, hotel/resorts reservations, car services, airline reservations/charter, etc. The company offers a wide range of customised holidays, which suits the budget of every guest.

► The award was given to Mountain Edge Tours & Holidays and received by Prakash Kumar Raj, Director



Best Casino | DELTIN ROYALE

Offering luxury gaming for guests on three levels, and spread across 40,000 sq ft of space, Deltin Royale offers 850 gaming positions. One can also enjoy live entertainment including floorshows, bands, stand-up-comedy and much more. Keeping the palate of the guests in mind, it offers world cuisine buffets and A-la-carte menus.

► The award was given to Deltin Royale and, received on behalf of Tanya Ahluwalia, Vice President - Marketing & Sales

Best Tour Operator Outbound | S K TOURS & TRAVELS

Excelling in handling outbound packages, Salil Karulkar, Founder, SK Tours & Travels, thanked India Travel Awards for the recognition. "I am really excited to receive this award. Our USP is that we give prompt service to all our clients and all our packages are well-planned and well-organised. The show was fantastic and very well-organised," he said.

► The award was given to S K Tours & Travels and, received by Salil Karulkar, Founder



Fastest Growing B2B Travel Portal | MULTILINK WORLD

Multilink offers an innovative 'Business-In-A-Box' concept that provides opportunities in IRCTC online ticket booking agency, air ticketing agency, hotel and holiday package bookings, online mobile recharge agency, money transfer agency and more. The company is trusted by a strong network of over 20k agents all over India and is growing rapidly.

► The award was given to Multilink World and, received by Nikhil Shah, Director - Co Founder



Best European NTO VISITBRITAIN

On receiving the award, **Vishal Bhatia**, Country Manager, India, VisitBritain, said, "It's good to see that the India Travel Awards is moving away from the regional travel awards to make it a more consolidated award for pan-India presence. We have been doing great work with travel trade over the past year and are reaching out to new travel agents in Tier II cities now."

► The award was given to **VisitBritain** and, received by **Shuja Mehdi**, B2B Manager - India and **Vishal Bhatia**, Country Manager - India

Best Global Distribution System TRAVELPORT GALILEO

On winning the award, **Anoop Tewari** – National Head (Relationship Management), Travelport, said, "It's a great recognition for which I thank DDP Publications. We provide support to our airline and hotel partners through content and technology. To our travel agent partners, we give all possible solutions and content and I hope to keep on doing a better job." On the award ceremony, he commented, "It was great to see such a big turnout in Agra and meet everyone under one roof. The event was organised in the best possible way."

► The award was given to **Travelport Galileo** and, received by **Taruna Soni**, Head-Marketing and **Anoop Tewari**, National Head (Relationship Management)



Best Leisure & MiCE Resort CLARKS SHIRAZ, AGRA

Rupak Gupta, Joint Managing Director, UP Hotels, said that they have completely revamped the property. "Clarks Shiraz Agra has completely renewed itself and yet maintains the old-world charm. We have retained the heritage and upgraded all the facilities. We are a full deluxe hotel with all the rooms, public areas and conference halls renovated, yet maintaining good differentiation from the rest of the market by retaining the Indian hospitality and old-world charm," he said.

► The award was given to **Clarks Shiraz, Agra** and, received by **Geetha Subramanian**, General Manager Marketing & Sales, **Rupak Gupta**, Joint Managing Director (U.P. Hotels) and **Debasish Bhowmik**, Senior Vice President



Fastest Growing B2B Travel Portal JUSTCLICKKARO.COM

Incorporated in 2009, JustClickKaro.com is an organisation of highly motivated and dedicated team of professionally-qualified travel specialists. It has established itself as a leading travel agency for managing travel-related services of the corporate clients, sub-agents and individual travellers. With time, the company has established itself as a unique and user-friendly service for booking airline tickets, by providing distinctive deals, being service oriented and cost-effective travel management company for our business associates/sub-agents/individuals.

► The award was given to **Justclickkaro.Com** and, received by **Navjot Bhasin**, Managing Director, **Sovinder Bhati**, VP Sales and **Pawanjot Bhasin**, Managing Director





Best Emerging Travel Management Company

STG JOURNEY INDIA

Arun Prakash Choubey, Managing Director, STG Journey India, received the award on behalf of their company. Speaking on the India Travel Awards, he said, "It is a great platform and has provided us with great encouragement. Whatever activities we will have in the future, this award will be helpful."

► The award was given to STG Journey India and, received by Arun Prakash Choubey, Managing Director

Best Global Emergency Assistance

TRAWELLTAG COVER MORE

Referred to India Travel Awards a great platform for the entire travel fraternity, **Deepak Singh**, AVP, North Zone, TrawellTag Cover More, said, "This is a great platform for the entire travel fraternity and the travel industry partners. We are working very hard in the industry. Since we are into the business for the last two decades, and have earned from the travel fraternity, we now want to return to this industry. This award brings a lot of recognition for us."

► The award was given to TrawellTag Cover More and, received by Deepak Singh, AVP North Zone



Best Business Hotel | THE SURYAA

Dhananjay Kumar, General Manager, The Suryaa New Delhi, believes that India Travel and MiCE Awards are genuine and prestigious. Speaking for their property, he said, "I completely believe in guest satisfaction. Hence, all our guest ratings have been quite good. I feel good on winning the award and the credit goes to our team members who have worked day in and out, 24*7 round the clock."

► The award was given to The Suryaa and, received by Dhananjay Kumar, General Manager, Chetan Kapoor, Director of Sales, Tooba Hasan, Manager - PR & Marketing Communication



Best MiCE Operator – Domestic

COX & KINGS

Yusuf Poonawala, Senior Vice President, Cox & Kings, claims that an award like the India Travel Award adds more responsibility on their shoulders to live up to. "With this award, we strive to work harder so that we keep on shining and doing better. I want to dedicate the award for the full team of Bharat Dekho because of which we have got this. The ceremony was fantastically organised. There are a number of shows out there in the market, but the way the quality has been this year is brilliant and flawless," he said.

► The award was given to Cox & Kings and, received by Yusuf Poonawala, Senior Vice President





Best Debut Hotel | ALOFT NEW DELHI AEROCITY

Suman Gahlot, General Manager, Aloft New Delhi Aerocity, said that she really felt elated on receiving the award. "It is a reminder to keep up the great work and efforts that the hotel and everyone associated to it has put in to make it win such a prestigious award in its first year of operations. We would also like to extend a vote of thanks to our guests, clients and patrons from across the globe," she added.

► The award was given to **Aloft New Delhi Aerocity** and, received by **Suman Gahlot**, General Manager and **Bhupinder Singh Rawat**, Director of Operations

Best Foreign Exchange Aggregator | FxKART.COM

Abdul Hadi Shaikh, Co-Founder, FxKart.com, expressed his happiness saying that winning continuously for years gives them the confidence that they are doing the right thing. "I think that we deserve this award for putting a lot of effort, in terms of revolutionising the entire industry, and giving them the technology tools that they are craving for. Fortunately, for us, nobody is focusing on that, and, in the past 12 months, we have grown by leaps and bounds," he claimed.

► The award was given to **FxKart.com** and, received by **Abdul Hadi Shaikh**, Co Founder



BEST B2B Online Travel Portal | TRAVELBULLZ

Kanwer Deep Singh, Founder & President, TravelBullz, claims that getting multiple awards for every region in one night is a very humbling feeling. "The credit for this completely goes to our team across Hong Kong, Thailand and India. I want to thank our customers who have been supporting us and always voting for us, as well as our partners, who have been helping us to grow over the last eight years."

► The award was given to **TravelBullz** and, received by **Kanwer Deep Singh**, Founder & President and **Amit Paul Singh**, General Manager - Sales



Best Luxury Camp | THE ULTIMATE TRAVELLING CAMP

Rajnish Sabharwal, Chief Operating Officer, TUTC, was really happy to receive the award, and said, "It's a pleasure to hold this trophy. This is dedicated to the team at the TUTC. Thank you so much DDP. It was a great evening and we really had a great time. We are ready to welcome guests right now for the Hornbill Festival at Kohima in Nagaland. After that, we would be receiving the guests at Allahabad for the Kumbh, which is in January 2019," he shared.

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





Best Wedding and MiCE Resort

CLARKS SHIRAZ, AGRA

Rupak Gupta, Joint Managing Director, UP Hotels, revealed that they have fully renovated the rooms, public areas and conference halls of the property recently. Debasish Bhowmik, Senior Vice President, Clarks Shiraz, Agra, said, "We are continuously striving in the industry and trying to do the best for our guests."

► The award was given to Clarks Shiraz, Agra and, received by Rupak Gupta, Joint Managing Director (U P Hotels) and Debasish Bhowmik, Senior Vice President

Most Promising NTO

NBTC HOLLAND TOURISM

Seema Datt, Account Director, NBTC Holland Tourism, claimed that Holland is much more than its capital Amsterdam, which is the most visited city in the country. "In Holland, Amsterdam is famous for its tulips, windmills, cheese factories, canals, cruises and as a cute little country. It is more like a global city for a tourist going to Europe. Of late, people have been discovering Holland a lot more when in Europe," she said.

► The award was given to NBTC Holland Tourism and received by Seema Datt, Account Director



Hospitality Partner

CLARKS SHIRAZ, AGRA

Rupak Gupta, Joint Managing Director, UP Hotels, welcomed India Travel Awards and India MiCE Awards to the city of Taj Mahal. "The property is more relevant for the tourism industry, as Clarks Shiraz, Agra is actually the first big hotel that came up catering to tourism and a lot of industry stalwarts have been here for training and working. Most of the big travel agents have started selling Agra packages with this property only," he said.

► The award was given to Clarks Shiraz, Agra and, received by Rupak Gupta, Joint Managing Director, UP Hotels and Debasish Bhowmik, Senior Vice President





Nominations are now open

INDIA TRAVEL AWARDS SOUTH 2019

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