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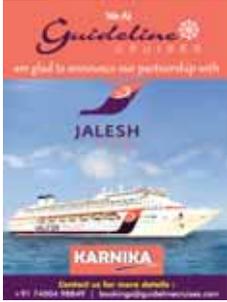
SOUTH ASIA'S LEADING TRAVEL TRADE FORTNIGHTLY

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Will this Budget deliver?

Travel and tourism industry stakeholders are once again pinning their hopes on the Union Budget. Though many are wary of how things will turn out this year, given last year's outcome, a ray of hope still remains.



Sunil Kumar
President
TAAI

“ We expect so much from the government, but it has disappointed us in the past. Somehow, the travel and tourism sector does not attract the government’s attention. There are so many challenges we are going through, including GST. If the government does not wake up to support this industry, then I don’t think it will be justified on its part. It’s the first year of the newly-elected government, and I can only pray and hope that they see travel and tourism as priority sectors and give them some much-needed attention. I am keeping my fingers crossed. ”



Mahendra Vakharia
President
OTOAI

by levying the same set of rules and tax structures both for income tax and the Goods & Services Tax. ”

“ It will be good relief if, in the upcoming Union Budget, the finance ministry allows for adjustment of Input Credit (at least half of what is being levied now) levied as GST towards outbound tour packages. Such a move will help create a level playing field and a healthy business environment between the home-grown travel and tour agencies operating in India versus the foreign online booking portals and platforms ”



Pradeep Lulla
Acting President and Vice
President, TAFI

“ We hope that GST on luxury hotels, which is very high at 28 per cent, is reduced. Also, duplication of GST which happens in the tourism industry right from issuing air tickets to using hotel facilities and then eventually a tour package which is again charged at five per cent GST is only cascading the cost. As an industry, we have given our representation to the GST Council in terms of indirect taxes. I hope this is heeded and they reduce the amount of GST and the way it is applied. ”

Contd on page 7 ▶

Hike in guide fee by 10 per cent

Rajiv Mehra, Vice President, IATO, shares that effective October 2019, guide fee rates will increase. He also shares details on the Association's recent initiatives.



Rajiv Mehra
Vice President
IATO



Rajiv Mehra has revealed that IATO and Tourist Guides’ Federation of India (TGFI) have signed an agree-

ment with regard to fee for guides. “Effective October 2019 till September 2021, there will be an approximate 10 per cent increase on the present rates,” he said. Mehra

also added that the IATO team recently met the tourism minister to discuss a strategy to help boost inbound tourism. He said that the minister emphasised on training of drivers

and also sought suggestions from IATO, which are being worked on. Mehra added that MOT had organised roadshows in USA and Canada, where 19 members, led by

IATO president Pronab Sarkar, had participated. Commenting on the Budget, he said, “We requested an ‘export’ status for the tourism sector among other suggestions.”

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ADTOICONVENTION

500 delegates expected

The ninth convention and exhibition of the Association of Domestic Tour Operators of India will be held at Hyatt Regency Ahmedabad from August 16-18, reveals **PP Khanna**, President, ADTOI.



Nisha Verma

After much speculation over ADTOI hosting its convention in Guwahati, the Association has finalised Ahmedabad as the venue of its ninth convention. Sharing more details, **PP Khanna** said, "We will be organising our ninth convention at Hyatt Regency

Ahmedabad, Ashram Road, with the support of Gujarat Tourism Board. The main convention will be held from August 16-18 followed by Fam trips to the Statue of Unity, the famous Dwarkadhish Temple, Gir, and a few other places to showcase the tourist attractions of the state."



Tourism will also be present," revealed Khanna.

He claimed that 400-500 delegates from across the country were expected at the convention. "We are also

Khanna shared that ADTOI had also organised a Breast Health Care and Screening Camp in Delhi for ADTOI women entrepreneurs and spouses of Association members. "We organised the camp as part of our women empowerment programme at NAB India Centre for Blind Women. On the day of the camp, almost 18 women got the test and screening done. The initiative was a success, and we are planning to conduct more of such CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility) activities in the future," he added.

Another initiative, just before the Union Budget, was to organise the GST session for ADTOI members, shared Khanna. "We organised the first GST session this year for our members. We invited GST experts Rakesh Chitkara and Ashu Dalmia along with Dheeraj Rastogi, Commissioner, GST Council, to address the queries of our members. Our aim was to simplify the GST for everyone," he said.

“ We have invited the chief minister of Gujarat along with the state tourism minister and principal secretary, tourism ”

"We have invited the chief minister of Gujarat along with the tourism minister of the state. The Principal Secretary and other officials from Gujarat

expecting a huge crowd from Gujarat, including local agents and tour operators," he added. While Khanna himself will be the convention chairman, **Anil Rajput**, Joint Secretary, ADTOI and **Sanjay Saxena**, Member, ADTOI, will be co-chairmen of the convention.



PP Khanna
President
ADTOI



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TRAVTALK brings to you news and events that made headlines **Trav Talk** 25 years ago with relevance even today. From the archives, we present the June 1994 issue:

Honouring commitments for the greater good

India has a very ambitious vision when it comes to increasing inbound tourist numbers and everyone says that they are working hard to bring in these numbers. But the question that we ask everyone today is, 'Are we really working hard to achieve this vision?' When an airline stops operations, it's not just the loss of the country, but it is a loss of the tourism industry as a whole. Somebody needs to be made accountable for the loss that tourism incurs as a result of last-minute cancellations. When a travel entity is not able to honour its commitments, it is the responsibility of the various associations, hotels, airlines and the government itself to take steps to ensure that there is enough awareness in the market and that the tourists do not suffer as a result of bookings not seeing the light of day. What do our associations do in a situation like this? Why are preventive measures not in place to ensure that tourists do not suffer and India does not lose out on foreign exchange that flows into the country? We are waiting for someone to don the accountability cap so that tourism does not suffer.

Revisiting Budget woes

Every year brings with it a fresh hope for the industry in the form of the Union Budget, and this year is no different. However, every year the industry seems to be asking for the same things, which means that either their requests are falling on deaf ears or they are not doing enough to be heard by the powers that be. While the inbound tour operators are looking for an industry status from the Government, the outbound tour operators are still struggling with GST. This new tax regime has been a major pain point for tour operators and hoteliers, too. For hotels, the GST Council has made quite a few changes already, but the biggest problem remains to be the 28 per cent tax slab for five-star luxury properties, which is making India an expensive destination for both inbound and domestic tourists.

From the Archive

Then (1994)



Sunil Ghadiok
Director of Operations Holiday Inn Crowne Plaza, Delhi

In June 1994, Sunil Ghadiok joined as the Director of Operations at Holiday Inn Crowne Plaza, Delhi. In the last 25 years, he has achieved a lot in the hospitality industry. Having worked with brands like The Oberoi Hotels, Park Hotels and Bharat hotels, he has successfully led many pre-opening teams and was responsible for launching world-renowned hotel and food & beverage brands in India. In his current role as the Director, Shanti Hospitality Management Services, he is responsible for managing the group's hotels and acquiring third-party hotel contracts for management. The brands promoted under Nidra Hospitality are Four Points by Sheraton, Aloft, Hyatt Place, and Hyatt Regency.

Now (2019)



Sunil Ghadiok
Director, Shanti Hospitality Management Services

UP Hotels Party



L to R: Rajeev Agarwal- Shiraz, Jogesh Nayar- InterGlobe, Vinod Chandna-JetAir and Rajesh Mudgill- Orient Express



L to R: Maharaj IS Wahi - Travel Promotion Bureau, LP Gupta and Soumyen Chowdhury - Indo Culture

Frankly Said ...



NDC allows greater access

George Ettiyil, Senior Director Sales South Asia, Lufthansa Group Airlines, shares how IATA's New Distribution Capabilities (NDC) is helping both agents and their customers with more choices.

The shift towards digitisation has affected the travel industry immensely. Most recently, meta-searchers have evolved into meta-bookers and are emerging as the dominant channel driving the highest

are unable to cater to. Most major distribution systems currently in use were created in the era before the mass adoption of the internet, and are therefore unable to keep up with the demands of today's

of NDC. Its XML-based APIs allow for deeper and more dynamic integrations between an airline's complete catalogue of offerings and the database available to its partner agents.

but also adds significant value to every single transaction and enables more streamlined and personalised bookings. The NDC standard is also much simpler to integrate and update than the older Edifact standard. Many premium airlines, such as the Lufthansa Group, are partnering with top IT service providers to help agents adopt and integrate NDC into their business operations.

“NDC gives travel agents access to branded fares, products, and special offers which are restricted to the airline's website, and serve their customers by offering price and offer differentiation”

traffic in the online travel domain, putting increasing pressure on the OTA model.

dynamic, agile, and digitally-driven travel landscape. Such a gap has a significant impact on third-party airline booking partners such as travel agencies. They can't offer any product differentiation to their end-customer and end up becoming merely a point of transaction for them. It is this particular need-gap that IATA sought to plug with the launch

Maximise growth and revenue

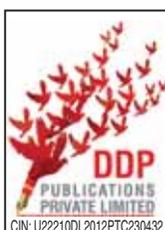
NDC integration gives travel agents access to branded fares, products, and special offers which were hitherto restricted to the airline's website, and serve their customers better by offering price and offer differentiation. Travel agents can also access various ancillary services such as extra legroom, meals, and class upgrade. NDC-based APIs can tailor the offers to suit consumers' specific requirements even before the purchase is made. All of this not only offers greater choice and control over the in-flight experience to the travel agent and, by extension, the traveller,

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



Plug the personalisation gap

Today's consumers demand immersion and, above all, personalisation across all touchpoints whenever they interact with a brand, service, or product. This is something that traditional booking processes



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Hopes ride high on Budget'19

► Contd from page 3



PP Khanna
President
ADTOI

“ We are looking forward to the upcoming Budget and request the government to finally give an industry status to the travel and tourism sector. We are also hopeful that new areas will be explored and smart cities will come up, which have been in the government’s plan for a long time now. Apart from that, allocation of a budget for tourism will be a good move so that more infrastructure can be planned and connectivity be increased for domestic tourism. ”



Rajesh Mudgill
Honorary Secretary
IATO and MD, Planet India Travels

“ The government spoke of ‘one nation, one tax’; we agreed and were willing, however, there should be a proper system in place. We are already paying taxes and without Input Tax Credit, we are still adding our five per cent, so there is tax on tax; this must be reviewed. We also want the government to waive off the visa fee during the summer season to boost inbound tourism to the country. I hope that the government recognises the potential of tourism this time. ”



Guldeep Singh Sahni
Founder Member, OTOAI
and MD, Weldon Tours & Travels

“ The government of India has always maintained that travel and tourism are important sectors, and till now they have been successful in doing things for getting traffic into India. That said, the government has not thought much about outbound tourism. In the first Union Budget of the new government, they should reduce GST charges and outbound travel should not have any GST charge because it is a service delivered by another country. We are positive towards the Budget. ”



Ashish Gupta
Consulting CEO
FAITH

“ Our expectations this year are with regard to indirect taxes and include reduction of the 28 per cent GST for hotels and reduction in presumptive rates for tour operators to 1.8 per cent. We also seek a 12 per cent GST for food and beverages. Other than that, we are also looking at an infrastructure status for hotels, incentives for domestic tourism, as well as a bidding fund for MiCE in order to bid for global events. ”



Ravi Gosain
Treasurer, IATO and MD,
Erco Travel & Tourism Enterprises

“ We are not getting the kind of support we expected from the government. I hope that all associations work together for the betterment of the industry. All of them are writing continuously to the Ministry of Tourism to do something for us and I feel that it’s high time that the ministry look at the industry from a positive frame of mind. In my opinion, the overall GST rate should not be more than eight to nine per cent. ”

► Contd on page 11





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The business of amusement

Only a collaborative effort between amusement parks and tour operators will drive footfalls to the former. A revenue-sharing model built on a transparent and flexible relationship is key to facilitating this growth.



Sohansinh Jadeja
President, IAAPI and Director, Funworld & Tourism Development, Rajkot

“Amusement park operators and tour operators or travel agents are two sides of the same coin and both offer a service aimed at creating joy among travellers. They are fully-equipped, well-established, and creative enough to fulfill all needs of every generation with a common aim of creating beautiful experiences for visitors. I am sure both parties can create a win-win situation by mutually exploring these opportunities.”



Rajeev Jainapurkar
Chief Executive Officer
Ramoji Film City, Hyderabad

“A travel agent is the first point of contact between the guest and the destination, so they play a vital role in promoting theme parks, amusement parks, and attractions. IAAPI has taken steps to work alongside travel agents by bringing them under one roof and conducting annual expositions that serve as a platform for them and park operators to come together to understand each other and learn about business opportunities.”



Abhikendu Gupta
COO, Wet 'N Joy Water Park and Magic Mountain Amusement Park, Lonavala

“When we look at the two business, we view them as two fraternities with many common areas. On a common platform, each of them wants to override the other with focus on individual profit maximisation. The result is a short-lived relationship with unresolved undercurrents. The time has come for both the travel agent and the amusement park management to collaborate and support each other's well-being.”



Bhaskar Joshi
General Manager (Theme Parks) Worlds of Wonder, Noida

“We have a very close association with travel agents and a good percentage of our business is routed via them. To be relevant and lucrative, we offer various services/benefits to them like dedicated GREs to ensure a smooth experience which in turn results in greater footfalls and profits for both. The Indian amusement park and entertainment industry is poised for a quantum growth, and transparency and flexibility is the key here.”



George Joseph
Joint Managing Director
Wonderla Holidays

“Amusement park operators need the support of travel agents for pan-India penetration. However, we do not see much headway, and a major issue is the mismatch between the monetary expectation of the travel agent and the willingness of the amusement park to part with the same. Travel agents can work as channel partners to bring visitors from tiered cities, plan B2B events, and associate with them for logistics and stay arrangements.”



VGP Ravidas
Managing Director
VGP Universal Kingdom, Chennai

“In our experience, visitors from out of town are still ‘untapped potential’. There is ample scope in India for us to take advantage of, by strategising deals with tour operators that are mutually beneficial. There should be a common portal where both stakeholders can communicate and share information through an open channel such as update on offers and new developments at the park.”

Contd on page 10 ▶



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Agent link to amusement parks

► Contd from page 8



Akshay Choudhary
Director, Shankus Water Park & Resort

“ We must establish a proper channel between amusement parks and travel agents. It is all about networking and the most important task is to build a rapport with each other. We must conduct meetings with agents regularly. Both sides have to understand the needs of customers and study trends. Weekly meetings and assessments should be arranged to observe the business closely and can take corrective action. Unless we don't complement each other's services, we won't succeed. Regular communication between us can make the association a successful affair. ”



Dhimant Bakshi
Joint CEO
Adlabs Entertainment

with the onslaught of technology, outdoor recreational amusement and entertainment centres work as the perfect digital detox. ”

“ Globally, destinations such as Orlando and Gold Coast have developed tourism keeping theme parks and amusement centres in mind. This works best when both itineraries and experience-based travel are well-interlaced. This can only happen when amusement park operators have a strong alliance with the travel trade. This can be done with continuous dialogue and addressing aspects of experience enhancement through tailored itineraries. Moreover, ”



Abhijit Dutta
Managing Director & CEO
Nikko Parks & Resorts, Kolkata

between us and them, a common platform should be set up to discuss problems and identify areas of mutual cooperation. ”

“ Amusement parks and tour operators in different countries enjoy doing business together. They help each other in exploring their strengths and services across all verticals through single promotional activities or cross-promo activities. This bond helps them lure tourists visiting the destination. Tour operators and travel agents are an important catalyst connecting the amusement park operators with its visitors. In view of better coordination ”



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Ashwin Dange M
Business Head
GRS Fantasy Park, Mysuru

“ In Karnataka, apart from a few organised players, most travel agents are self-employed and work as individuals or as teams of two to three people, hence it becomes very difficult for amusement parks to promote amongst them. Also, amusement parks have to develop a formal way to recognise travel agents and reward good performers through incentives, to help promote both business. ”



Flt. Lt. Anand Lamdhade
Vice President, EsselWorld & Water Kingdom

“ On the one hand, tour operators represent the sector by creating awareness and including it in their tour packages and on the other, we learn from them about consumers' changing requirements that helps us design a consumer-friendly product from our end. To improve the connection between the travel agents and ourselves, the next step would be digitalisation. ”

Inputs by Hazel Jain

Trade requests 5% GST

► Contd from page 7



Subhash Goyal
Secretary General
FAITH

“ We are hoping that this time, the Union Budget will bring positive news for the travel and tourism sector. We have been demanding a lot of things from the government for many years and have expectations this year as well. We expect that the Goods & Services Tax and all other taxes on tourism should not be more than five per cent. We also hope that the foreign exchange earnings will be exempt from all taxes. That said, I do hope that the government will consider our requests in taking the sector forward. ”



Himanshu Patil
Vice President
OTOAI

“ The ministry needs to streamline the implementation of GST where refunds are not delayed by more than 30 days. We need ‘one GST rate’ on accommodation as against four slabs. Further, the airline industry operates with wafer-thin margins, and TCS (Tax Collection at Source) leads to blockage of working capital and operational difficulties. With the airline industry being one of the most tax-compliant sectors, removal of TCS should be considered. Also, travel industry should come under a licensing structure, so genuine travel trade does not suffer because of fly-by-night travel agencies. ”



Rajiv Sabharwal
EC Member, OTOAI and
CEO, Gaurav Travels

“ The Union Budget should rationalise the commission structure for airlines. Also, GST should be rationalised because it makes it difficult for us to sell products as compared to online travel agents who do not charge GST. I also feel that the government should spend more on infrastructure for outbound tourism by getting more flights into the country and developing airports so that international visitors can avail the kind of facilities for which they are paying the airline. Fares have also increased due to rerouting of flights and hopefully, they will be capped. ”



Ashwani Sharma
Chapter Chairman
TAFI Northern India

“ We are hopeful that the government will offer some relief in terms of taxes for the travel and tourism industry under the Union Budget 2019-20. There is a very powerful government at the Centre, and we hope to see a lot of changes as far as GST is concerned for the travel as well as hospitality sectors. I am positive that the new Budget will work towards growth of the tourism sector. ”



Siddharth Jain
Chairman - GST Committee,
ADTOI and Managing
Partner, Sapphire Ventures

“ Presently, we have no expectations from the Budget and can only request the government to listen to our issues and understand them, to help them come up with the perfect solution for our grievances, one where the government need not lose out on any revenue. This is what we are looking forward to and do hope that the government focuses on the travel and tourism sector. ”

Inputs by TT Bureau

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Malaysia ties the Indian knot

The High Commission of Malaysia in India organised an Eid-ul-Fitr 'Open House' in the national capital as an opportunity for the travel fraternity to network with Malaysian officials and build stronger trade relations.



Manas Dwivedi

The Hari Raya Aidil Fitri 'Open House', popularly the traditional Eid celebration in every household in Malaysia, marks a true sign of friendship, good food and networking, explains **HE Dato Hidayat Abdul Hamid,**

High Commissioner of Malaysia to India.

"It is an occasion where Muslims celebrate after a month of fasting during Ramadan. It is also a tradition in Malaysia to celebrate with families and friends. The Open House

“ Malaysia is a good destination not just for weddings but also for MiCE. For travellers, we have made the visa application process easy ”

organised by the High Commission was one such occasion where we invited all

the members of the High Commission, their families, and the travel trade fraternity for a

get-together to try all the traditional Malay dishes that we serve to our friends and invitees during the festivities," he said.

In terms of Indian visitors, Malaysia recorded a growth of 18.6 per cent from January-March 2019

in comparison to the same period last year. During this time, Malaysia received approximately 158,000 visitors from India in comparison to the 133,000 arrivals during January-March 2018.

The Open House was driven by the objective of introducing the Malaysian culture to Indian citizens and to promote close ties with India.

The High Commissioner reiterated that they are taking up several initiatives to strengthen the relationship with India. He added, "There are so many things we are doing not just government-to-government, but also in the social circle. We foster good relations with



HE Dato Hidayat Abdul Hamid
High Commissioner
of Malaysia to India

the corporate world, captains of industry, as well as people in society, trade and the government. Through such events, they will understand us better and we will understand them."

Malaysia is also being promoted as a destination for weddings, the High Commissioner claimed. "We have always promoted Malaysia in many spheres and lately, we have been focusing on weddings because Indians love conducting big weddings, especially overseas.

Malaysia is a good destination not just for weddings but also for MiCE. For travellers, we have made the visa application process easy, and the visa-free regime will encourage tourists to come to Malaysia for holidays that give them value for money," he concluded.

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IndiGo eyes China market

This year, IndiGo is looking to offer at least 30 per cent more capacity than the year before. **William Boulter**, CCO, IndiGo, shares details.

 Kalpana Lohumi

QWhat are the plans of IndiGo for 2019?

This financial year is already underway and we are growing by 30 per cent in terms of available seat kilometres. We

around an aircraft per week, so we are expecting 50 aircraft to be delivered to IndiGo this year and the next.

currently has permission for 14 services a week between India and China, and we will be looking at increasing that.

“IndiGo currently has permission for 14 services a week between India and China, and we will be looking at increasing that”



William Boulter
Chief Commercial Officer
IndiGo

will be taking delivery of a large number of aircraft which will include A320s, A321s, and some regional ATR turbo props. We will be taking roughly

QWhich new routes can we expect to see?

We are very excited to start a route to China, which is still subject to government approval, but we are hopeful that the flight between Delhi and Chengdu will launch in September, followed by the route between Guangzhou and Kolkata a month or so later. Chinese carriers operate all routes that they are entitled to on China and India services, whereas Indian carriers only operate a handful. IndiGo

QWhat is your opinion of the Indian aviation industry?

The Indian aviation industry has always been dynamic and we have seen some big changes recently. One of the major players has dropped out of the market, unfortunately. This still leaves us with a competitive scenario with six different carriers trying to get a share of the market. The Indian customer is price-sensitive, and we pride ourselves on providing timely services at low fares. 

Avalon unveils Envision

Avalon Waterways has unveiled its new ship, Avalon Envision, that offers panoramic views to guests on board the all-suite cruise.

 TT Bureau

Avalon Waterways unveiled its new ship, Avalon Envision, earlier this year at a ceremony held in Budapest, Hungary. The 443-foot, 166-passenger ship has now joined an all-suite ship fleet to sail on Danube River

India, industry veteran Meher Framjee, CEO, Holidays@Leisure, was invited to travel to Budapest and experience the new ship with all the facilities first-hand.

Envision by Avalon is a style of vessel that features particularly spacious cabins known as



(L to R) Meher Framjee and Elizabeth Gilbert

throughout 2019. It was christened by author Elizabeth Gilbert of 'Eat Pray Love' fame, which chronicled her journey alone around the world. From

Panorama Suites on two of three cabin decks. The cabins have panoramic windows that slide open seven feet to create a balcony-like effect. 

Tourism Breaking News

- AAI makes 35 state-run airports plastic-free
- IndiGo to start 12 ATR flights on Buddhist circuit from Aug 8
- Kerala to organise 20 partnership meets in Indian cities to tap domestic market
- Kargil to have full-fledged airport for commercial flights
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Nepal beckons the Indian traveller

Nepal Tourism Board recently launched the Visit Nepal Year 2020 campaign in Delhi, a move aimed at achieving a 25 per cent growth in terms of tourist arrivals from India and two million tourists by 2020.

 Anupriya Bishnoi

Nepal Tourism Board (NTB) launched the Visit Nepal Year 2020 campaign in New Delhi on June 12, a move that will help the nation achieve its target of receiving two million tourists by 2020.

At the event, **Deepak Raj Joshi**, Chief Executive Officer, Nepal Tourism Board, spoke of the campaign being a method to change the perception of the country in the minds of visitors, who predominantly consider it to be a mountainous country or one that offers only adventurous activities. "While we do have the best of adventures," Joshi claimed, "we don't just have that," adding that Nepal has amazing wildlife experiences, culture and heritage among several other things on offer. "This is why we thought of promoting Nepal as a 'Lifetime Experienc-

es' destination," he said. Presently, Nepal receives close to 200,000 Indian visitors by air. Talking about the kind of growth Nepal expects from the Indian market, Joshi said, "This year we are expecting a 25 per cent growth from India and we are quite hopeful of meeting this target. While



Jet's demise has impacted the number of tourists coming from India, other airlines have pitched in. Recently, one of our private carriers - Buddha Air - connected to Kolkata."

Suraj Vaidya, National Coordinator, Visit Nepal 2020,



Deepak Raj Joshi
Chief Executive Officer
Nepal Tourism Board

shared that since its last campaign, Nepal has been through a lot. He said, "The last Visit Nepal campaign was conducted in 2011, but due to conflicts and the devastating earthquake of 2015, the world knows Nepal through a negative lens. Through the Visit Nepal 2020 campaign, we want to show the world our resilience (it will be five years



Suraj Vaidya
National Coordinator
Visit Nepal 2020

in 2020 after the earthquake) and how we have built our country and our heritage." Vaidya added that while the average rate of growth of global tourism stands at six per cent, Nepal is enjoying a 20-25 per cent growth on average.

India has always been the number one market for Nepal,



Shradha Shrestha
Manager, Brand Promotion &
Corporate Marketing, Visit Nepal 2020

and the culture the two countries have are similar, claimed Vaidya. "India is going to be our target, as always. It's not just numbers we are looking at, but we are also trying to offer new products. So far, Nepal has been known for Mt. Everest and Lumbini, but we want to show more of Nepal to tourists, including what we have on offer for

MICE. Nepal has doubled its tiger population in the last 10 years, and there are so many stories we want to tell. That's the whole idea behind Visit Nepal 2020," he shared.

Agreeing to Vaidya's viewpoint, **Shradha Shrestha**, Manager, Brand Promotion & Corporate Marketing, Visit Nepal 2020, said that the campaign was all about promoting Nepal in a new way.

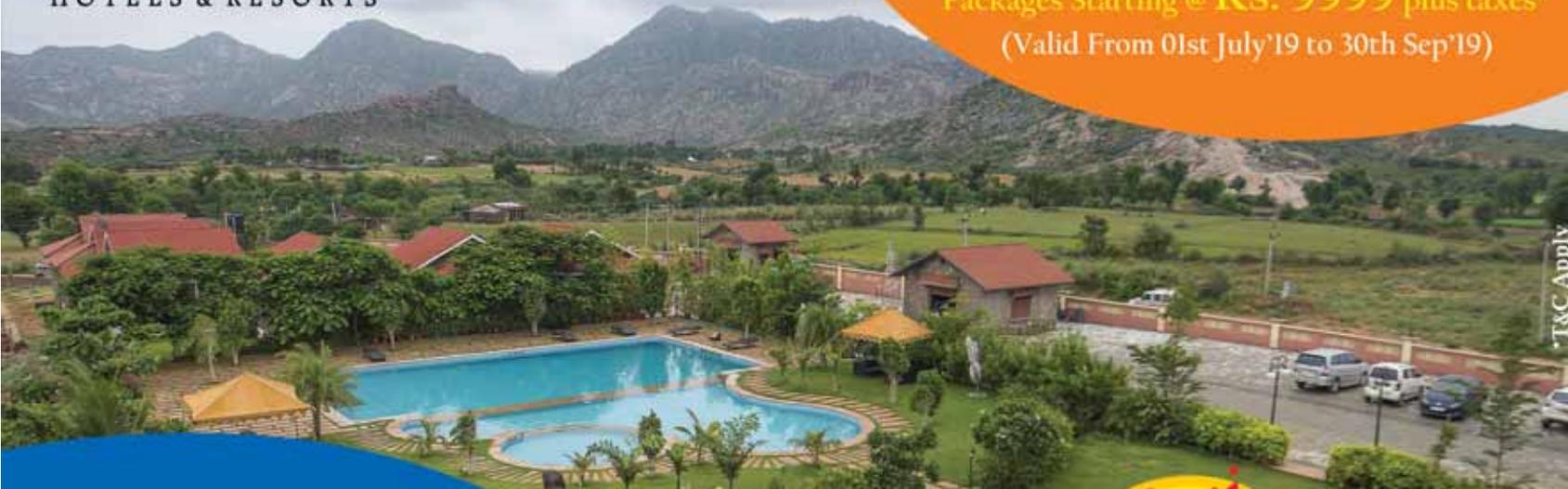
"After the 2015 earthquake, we didn't have a campaign because we were in recovery mode. In 2018, we met the target of one million tourists. Now, we are targeting two million tourists. Though India and China are the two main markets for Nepal, right now, India enjoys the number one position in terms of tourist arrivals and I hope it remains that way," she concluded. 



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NTB launches 2020 campaign



Nepal Tourism Board launched the Visit Nepal Year 2020 campaign in New Delhi on June 12, hosted at the city's Shangri-La Hotel. The evening turned out to be the perfect opportunity for the outbound travel trade and representatives of the media, who got a chance to witness the warmth of Nepalese hospitality and get a glimpse of its vibrant culture.



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Multilink's new product

Multizebra is an online marketplace for DMCs and agents across the globe to connect over static packages and component rates for destinations.

TT Bureau

Multizebra is another trend-setting product from the Multilink stable, which is touted to be the future of a modern travel industry. Multizebra is a marketplace for DMCs and travel agents across the globe. While the DMCs may upload their static packages and component rates, the travel agents can log on to the portal and create a quotation for any destination in a few clicks. Sharing this news



Nikhil Shah
Co-founder
Multilink

them to revert with the quotation. Then the travel agent has to make some changes and send it again to the DMC for a

Multizebra cuts off unnecessary time consumption and waste of manpower, adding convenience to processes

is Nikhil Shah, Co-founder, Multilink. He says, "Traditionally, the travel agent sends a query to a DMC and waits for two to three days for

revised quotation which again takes about two to three days. This entire process takes about a week and sometimes more. Meanwhile, the end-traveller

either closes with another travel agent or in a few cases even cancels the tour. This results in loss of precious manpower, time, and revenue."

What Multizebra does is that it cuts off all the unnecessary time consumption and waste of manpower and provides the convenience of quoting a query in a few clicks which takes about five to ten minutes. "As of now, we already have on-board more than 40,000 agents across the globe mainly from the Indian subcontinent, Indonesia, and the UAE," Shah reveals.

With Multizebra's access to a wide network across the globe, travel agents can view the packages and rates of multiple DMCs for each destination on a single platform itself. ↴

Destinations-in-waiting

Acre: Older than history

Located on the northwest coast of Israel, Acre was once a key port city and the main crossroads in the link between Europe and the Holy Land.

Inder Raj Ahluwalia

Traversing this Israeli township, you encounter relics of the past and journey through 5,000 years of history. Simply put, Acre is unique! The ancient city of the

alongside the old city that has now been developed into a historical site and recreation area with an international yachting port. Travellers can opt for a city discovery tour that will include myriad iconic sites, and it would be

to Acre Fortress is a must. A few steps from there is Khan El Umdan (the Pillar's Inn), where visitors can climb to the top of the tower and witness stunning views of the Marina, the fishermen's harbour, the bluest of seas, and the city of Haifa. One can then move on to the Al-Jazzar Mosque (also known as White Mosque) followed by a visit to Heroes Museum that was established in the memory of Israel's freedom fighters. A good way to conclude the trip is to dip into the baths at Turkish Hammam that is housed in a 200-year-old building. Acre is a short drive from Haifa and the nearest international airport is Tel Aviv. ↴

(Through the new column, Destinations-in-waiting, we aim to talk about unexplored corners of the world that hold immense potential for tourism.)



Hellenistic period was once the Eastern Mediterranean's key port, and the main crossroads in the link between Europe and the Holy Land.

Following Israel's creation in 1948, a modern Acre arose

a good idea to begin the tour at Tel Acre. They can then move on to the underground Crusader City that includes the Holy Order of the St. John Quarter, and from there proceed to Napoleon's Cannons. Once done, a visit

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Where is young India heading?

Millennials are keeping travel agents busy this season with their demand for both old and new destinations. Winners of India Travel Awards - South talk about trending destinations among the different age groups.



Best B2B Travel Exhibition
Global Panorama Showcase

“Harmandeep Singh Anand, MD, GPS, says, “This travel season, the maximum attention of millennials has been on the UK, mostly because of the ongoing ICC Cricket World Cup. Most of these travellers are from the Tier-II and III markets since travellers from metro cities faced issues amidst general elections and other circumstances. For the domestic market, I feel that cruises have really picked up this season. Travellers are also moving to hill stations such as Ooty, Mysuru, and other colder places.”



Best Educational Tour Operator
Kerala Amazing Holidays

“According to Dhanesh MS, Owner, Kerala Amazing Holidays, “Young Indians from Kerala are more bent towards travelling to Southeast Asian countries. In the domestic market, tourists prefer travelling to the northern part of the country including Delhi, Agra, and Jaipur. Hill stations like Shimla, Manali, and Kullu are also in demand. At times, our clients demand special activities and excursions as well, including adventure sports, heritage trails, and food trails among others.”



Best Tour Operator
68 M Holidays

“Syed Murtaja Ali, Director, 68 M Holidays, says, “From the Hyderabad region, more and more people are travelling to Singapore and Mauritius. Travellers below 40 years of age are especially opting for these destinations. Bachelors are really excited about travelling to Baku and Almaty, and millennials are asking for new destinations like Réunion Island and Seychelles. Looking at the domestic market, we have been receiving high demand for the Northeast.”



Best MICE Travel Agency
Dream Destinationz

“Manohar Jairam, Managing Director, Dream Destinationz, says, “During the current season, we are getting a lot of demand for nearby destinations like Thailand, Dubai, Mauritius, and Bali. Travellers with bigger budgets want to go to European destinations as well. First-time outbound travellers are wanting to explore more destinations in one trip. In India, millennials are more interested in heading towards the all-time popular Goa.”

Exploring the German countryside

Travel agents from around India share their view on the popularity of German cities among Indians and how the German countryside is the next big thing for tourists from India, who want to now go exploring beyond the hotspots.



Guldeep Singh Sahni
Founder Member, OTOAI and MD, Weldon Tours & Travels

“With many flights directly arriving into Germany, it is a preferred destination for Indian travellers. We are actively promoting self-drive tours, river cruises, Black Forest region, Bavaria, and Berlin apart from other regions. Health and wellness itineraries are also promoted but in the luxury segment. Our strategy to promote the destination includes promoting packages through print, social and electronic media, and jointly working with National Tourist Office.”



Ekta Sharma
Managing Director Khyath Design Holidays

“Germany is more popular as a business destination, but it is high time that as an agent, we promote it as a solo and leisure destination as well. People in India are now open to experiencing vineyards, the ancient city of Koblenz, and the South-West region. It is important to create awareness in the customer’s mind; both the customer and the travel agent need to be educated on this. I firmly believe that more of the countryside needs to be explored.”



Sweta Mistry
Managing Director Aspen Vacations

“We sell more of the Black Forest region, which is very popular among the Indian market, and Baden-Baden is also a popular region. For the last two years, we have also been promoting Germany’s countryside rather than cities. When our customers select countryside destinations or the northern region of Germany which has islands, we combine the tour with Black Forest or Heidelberg and Freiburg that are connected to Copenhagen.”



Nischay Manchanda
Director Tour Passion

“Germany is very popular among Indians and festivals like Oktoberfest also attract a lot of people. While first-time travellers visit the main cities, when they come a second time, they want to explore other towns and regions as well. Language, however, continues to be a barrier and the difference in accent makes it more difficult. That said, the situation is improving and I see positive developments in this direction.”



Jagdeep Bhalla
Head – Business Development, LTA Tours

“Germany conducts a lot of reputed international industrial exhibitions that attract a number of Indian businessmen to witness the latest technologies. For Indian holidaymakers, the first stop in Europe is Frankfurt because of its good connectivity from India and to other European cities as well. We sell educational study tours and MICE trade fair tours to the Indian market. For MICE, we are approaching corporates with specific campaigns.”



Deepali Gupta
General Manager – Contracting & Operations, JTB India

“Germany is famous because it’s one of the most beautiful and developed countries that also attracts visitors interested in its motor technology. Some of the top trade fairs are hosted in Germany and so, from a business point of view, it is one of the top countries. Since we are MICE specialists, for us, Munich tops the list followed by Berlin and Dresden. The Rhine Cruise is another aspect that’s coming up.”

Inputs by Kalpana Lohumi



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Atlas rebrands itself to Tripjack

In its new and improved avatar as Tripjack, the online travel company renews its focus on the accommodation segment with yet another tie-up, this time with OYO with special interest in its China inventory.

 TT Bureau

Atlas Travels Online has recently rebranded itself to Tripjack, which will have an updated interface with complete automation.

Hussain Patel, Director, Tripjack (erstwhile Atlas Travels Online), explains this and says, "We will continue to be in the B2B space with the new brand. Tripjack is just a new brand with a new, intuitive technology with better mobile specs so that our customers can book seamlessly. There will be multiple changes in the system for easing business. We will create multiple touchpoints between our travel agents and their customers. It will work like

Once that happens, there will be a lot of cross-selling opportunities. All travellers will be able to go on the website of all our travel agents, they will be able to see the flight bookings, do a lot of accommodation bookings, insurance, visas, etc. Gradually, all products will go live."

“The accommodation space in India is growing rapidly. Currently, we have about 300,000 hotels online and with OYO, this will come up to almost a million”

With a focus on the accommodation space, Tripjack and OYO have come together to provide

the hotel brand's worldwide inventory on the new platform. Together, they will offer 10 per

cent cash back on booking any OYO hotel on the Atlas portal, valid for 30 days beginning June 25, 2019.

The two companies will conduct joint roadshows across the country, in Gurugram, Mumbai, Chennai and Ahmedabad in the first phase

and include Kolkata and other cities in the second phase. Patel says, "The accommodation space in India is growing rapidly and we want to be a part of that. Currently, we have about 300,000 hotels online and with OYO, this will come up to almost a million." 



Hussain Patel
Director
Tripjack

a CRM. Presently, it is all about technology and we will add great content shortly."

The new URL is tripjack.com and all 20,000 agents across India who have been dealing with Atlas Travels Online will be moved onto the new platform.

"Not everything could be done online earlier. With the new interface, most of the things will be automated like pre-booking; post-booking; adding a seat, a meal, a bag, everything. Even cancellations and rescheduling will be automated," Patel adds.

The company is proposing a hybrid model for its newly-branded product – Tripjack. Patel adds, "Post migration, in a couple of months, we will present a new product to our travel agents. It will be like having their own B2C website. Tripjack will continue to be a B2B travel company, like Atlas Travels Online was, but at the same time empower our agents to create more touch points.

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TrawellTag for a hassle-free trip

TrawellTag Cover-More's claims assistance team continues to work towards delivering positive experiences to its customers, proving to be an essential companion while travelling.



Lalit Kumar Dave travels to the US every year to meet his daughter. Unfortunately, his last visit did not go as expected, as he had to be hospitalised due to an excruciating pain in the back. His daughter ensured

that all medical bills be cleared as soon as he was discharged, in order to avoid legal complications later.

Dave was expecting a reimbursement of the expenses on submission of documents, but things got worse when the

hospital authorities refused to provide them the invoices for almost a year, which led to closure of the claim. This came to light when Dave's son-in-law, Jayant Mehta, got in touch with TrawellTag Cover-More's claims assistance team. The team immediately swung into

action and coordinated with hospital authorities. Dave finally received the documents and Team TrawellTag also managed to secure a discount on the bill. Both Dave and Mehta decided that no matter where they go, TrawellTag Cover-More will always be their companion. ↴

An ideal locale in Delhi

Hotel North Avenue by Spree, Delhi, is a premium property just a few minutes away from shopping hubs, offices, and historical places, making it an ideal destination for business and leisure travellers.



Ideally located in the heart of University of Delhi, Hotel North Avenue by Spree is walking distance from famous



educational institutions like Shri Ram College of Commerce and St. Stephen's College. The hotel features 28 well-designed rooms offering cosy beds, round-the-clock room service, high-speed Wi-Fi, as well as an in-room safe deposit among many other facilities. Guests can also enjoy a range of cuisines at Treat.

The hotel is also in close proximity to several offices of both the public and private sector, including Tata Power, DRDO, and Titan. What makes the property an ideal

Set for a July 15 launch this year, the 28-room hotel is located close to shopping and business hubs

destination for all types of travellers is that it is well-connected to the Kashmere Gate and Chandni Chowk Metro stations, as well as Old Delhi Railway Station.

Set for a July 15 launch, the property is also ideal for those who don't want to miss out on some of Delhi's famous shopping hubs. While Kamala Nagar Market is less than a kilometre from Hotel North Avenue, the famous Chandni Chowk lies within a five-kilometre radius. Guests at the hotel can also visit prominent religious and historical sites including Gurudwara Sis Ganj Sahib, Jama Masjid, Red Fort, and Raj Ghat. ↴



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EVENT TALK

Media Partners:



JULY 2019

Nepal Training Workshop	Raipur	1
FICCI Tourism Investor Summit	Delhi	1
Asian Destinations Expo 2019	Indonesia	2-5
PATA India Tourism Masterclass	Delhi	3
Nepal Training Workshop	Ranchi	3
GPS	Ahmedabad	3-4
International Conference on Tourism and Hospitality (ICTH)	Singapore	4-5
Nepal Training Workshop	Bhubaneswar	5
CAPA Perth Aviation & Corporate Travel Summit 2019	Perth	5
TTF	Hyderabad	5-6
Okinawa Wedding Seminar 2019	New Delhi	6
Nepal Training Workshop	Delhi	8
Kiwi Link India 2019	Mumbai	8-9
Nepal Training Workshop	Ahmedabad	10
Kiwi Link India 2019	Kolkata	11
Kiwi Link India 2019	Delhi	12
TTF	Kolkata	12-14
Travel Wedding Show	Mumbai	13-14
Nepal Training Workshop	Bengaluru	15
GPS	Chandigarh	17-18
TAAI Knowledge Conclave	Mumbai	19-20
Amazing Thailand Roadshow to India	Ahmedabad	22
MICE INDIA and Luxury Travel congress	Mumbai	23-24
GPS	Lucknow	24-25
Amazing Thailand Roadshow to India	Pune	24
TTH Expo	Vadodara	26-28
TTF	Ahmedabad	30-1 Aug

AUGUST 2019

IITM	Bengaluru	2-4
GPS	Kochi	6-7
Caribbean Meeting & Incentive Travel Exchange	Curacao	6-9
Tourism Australia India Travel Mission	Kochi	8-11
IITM	Chennai	9-11
Tourism Australia India Travel Mission	Mumbai	12
ADTOI Convention	Ahmedabad	16-18
Tourism Fiji Roadshow	Mumbai	20
Tourism Fiji Roadshow	Ahmedabad	21
Bahrain Tourism Roadshow	Kolkata	21
GPS	Kolkata	21-22
Tourism Fiji Roadshow	Chennai	22
Tourism Fiji Roadshow	Delhi	23
Bahrain Tourism Roadshow	Ahmedabad	23
Karnataka International Travel Expo 2019	Bengaluru	25-27
Meeting & Incentive Forum - The Americas	Chicago	25-28
Hong Kong Tourism Roadshow	Bengaluru	26
Qatar Tourism Workshop	Mumbai	26
ACTE Global Summit	Macau	26-27
Hong Kong Tourism Roadshow	Ahmedabad	27

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

ASSOCIATION TALK



urges VFS: Train agents

The Travel Agents Federation of India (TAFI) has requested VFS Global Services to organise training seminars for travel agents across India to educate them about their services so there remains no ambiguity.

Hazel Jain

The Travel Agents Federation of India (TAFI) has suggested that VFS Global Services conduct a series of training seminars for its members to educate them about the various products it offers, and dos and don'ts for the trade as well as clients. This was brought out by **Pradeep Lulla**, Acting President, TAFI, during a meeting with Vinay Malhotra, Head (Special Projects) - VFS Global Services, in Mumbai recently.

Lulla explained, "At the behest of our members, TAFI along with TAAI asked VFS to jointly have an urgent meeting to iron out certain challenges our members were facing while processing visas. We were happy that on a short notice, their senior management from



Pradeep Lulla
Acting President
TAFI

Dubai, Vinay Malhotra and their senior staff came to Mumbai for this meeting. We had healthy deliberations where we discussed certain issues which were put forward to us by our agents, and there were a lot of points which were clarified. But, as we speak, VFS needs to come back with

further clarification on certain points discussed." Some of the points of contention were interviews and submission dates. "Certain consulates and embassies, because of certain pressures, were not able to give dates for visas or give visas on dates that were committed by them. Due of this, many passengers had to apply for premium

The other issue, he said, was that the agents didn't get the same kind of treatment in terms of submission of passports as a client would. "When we spoke to VFS, they declined this. We have asked VFS to communicate this in writing stating this to be untrue, so that we can circulate this to our members and make them aware of it. Another point

“ Points of contention were interviews, visa, and agents not being treated the same way as clients for passport submission ”

services and this was creating a discord among agents. If something doesn't go right, the consumer always blames the agent," Lulla explained.

which was clarified by the UK Embassy as well as VFS was that one can take appointments on their (UK Embassy) website," Lulla said.

Know your customer, digitally

IATO's digital marketing workshop, recently held in New Delhi, sought to train members on the importance of this new-age tool in growing business with the right customers in tow.

Manas Dwivedi

Post the success of its digital marketing workshop - Double Your Leads - last month, the skill development committee of Indian Association of Tour Operators (IATO) organised the next in the series - Get Overbooked - in Delhi. The two-day event that delved



on digital strategies and methods to increase business and boost the flow of clients in a short period of time, was attended by more than 45 participants.

Sharing his experience and knowledge in the arena of digital marketing, Akshar Yadav,



Pronab Sarkar
President
IATO

the trainer for the workshop and a well-known email marketing specialist, talked about the use of effective digital marketing through appropriate mediums of exchange and interacting with the client rather than emphasising on knowing who the client is.

Gracing the event with his presence, **Pronab Sarkar**, President, IATO, said that the initiative had received tremendous response from



Zia Siddiqui
Convener- Skill Development
Committee, IATO

members of the Association. "We are constantly working to help ventures, especially the smaller ones with limited resources, by giving them the right education. We are taking up issues, working to the benefit of our members, and also inviting comments and suggestions from them so that the future can be decided accordingly," said Sarkar.

"IATO is also actively involved with a number of universities

in deciding their syllabus and curriculum on tourism. Our members also take guest lectures in these universities to educate and develop young minds of the tourism industry so that more employment is generated," he added.

Highlighting the key aspects of the workshop, **Zia Siddiqui**, Convener- Skill Development Committee, IATO, said that the session trained members on how they can get their business overbooked and why searching for the right client is important. "While searching for a client," he said, "you don't need to segregate the crowd; one needs to go, search, and see the client through digital media."

After organising sessions in Delhi, Kochi, Bengaluru and Chennai, IATO will organise similar workshops in the western and eastern parts of the country.



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Cygnett Hotels and Resorts

Gurugram

Cygnett Hotels and Resorts has appointed **Debasish Chandra** as the Regional Director, Pre-opening & Development. Chandra will be responsible for formulating new ideas to extend the reach of the group in new territories. He will also be responsible for streamlining operations in the existing units and swift pre-openings of upcoming hotels. Chandra, with 25 years of experience in the hospitality industry, is a keen planner, a strategist, and a highly motivated team leader with strong communication and people skills. Prior to joining Cygnett, he spearheaded operations and pre-openings for leading hotel groups like The Lalit and Radisson.



Fairmont Jaipur

Jaipur

Rajiv Kapoor has been appointed to the role of General Manager at Fairmont Jaipur. Kapoor comes with a range of experience and an innate understanding of the hospitality and luxe segment, nationally and in global markets. In the new role, he has been tasked with creating a new vision for the hotel and setting a direction to capture a wide range of the market, from luxury travellers to free independent travellers, MICE events, and Indian weddings. Prior to joining Fairmont, he was the GM of The Westin Langkawi Resort & Spa and Langkawi International Convention Center.



Grand Mercure Mysore

Mysuru

Sunaina Sharma Manerker has been appointed as the General Manager of Grand Mercure Mysore. Manerker comes with over 19 years of experience in the hospitality industry and is a seasoned hotelier in the luxury space. Known for her focus and belief in doing the right thing, Manerker was the General Manager at Lebua, Lucknow, before joining Grand Mercure Mysore. In the past, she has led successful assignments with international brands like Le Méridien, Westin and Ramada, and also has experience in pre-opening of properties with groups like IHG and Ailla Hotels.



Radisson Blu Hotel New Delhi Dwarka

New Delhi

Radisson Blu Hotel New Delhi Dwarka has appointed **Munish Bhatia** as General Manager. A seasoned hotelier with 23 years of in-depth operational experience, he has held numerous positions in several departments over the entire span of his career. Prior to the new role, Bhatia was associated with Radisson Blu Hotel Greater Noida as its General Manager. In the past, he has also worked with various hotel brands such as IHG and The Grand, and international properties in Dubai. His experience and capabilities in operational readiness and standardisation of processes will help him set new benchmarks.



Novotel Imagica Khopoli

Lonavala

Rejoe Francis has been brought on board as Director of Sales at Novotel Imagica Khopoli. In this role, he will be responsible for leading and further evolving all aspects of sales, driving revenues, and promoting brand strategies. Prior to joining Accor, Francis was associated with Caravela Beach Resort, Goa, as Director of Sales – West India. He has also worked for renowned hotels like Radisson Blu Resort Goa Cavelossim Beach, Radisson Goa Candolim, Novotel Dona Sylvia Goa and Mercure Devaaya Ayurvedic Retreat, as well as Le Royal Meridien Mumbai (Now Hilton).



Hyatt Place Hampi

Hampi

Hyatt Place Hampi has appointed **Vanita Gomez** as the new Director of Sales for the hotel. In the new role, Gomez will be responsible for the entire sales, and will spearhead the growth and development of the leisure hotel. With a Bachelor's degree in hotel management, she is a strong sales professional with extensive experience in the hospitality industry. Prior to joining Hyatt, Gomez worked with Marigold Hotel by Green Park, Hyderabad, as Director of Sales. In the past, she has also worked with The Park Hyderabad and Taj Krishna Hyderabad. Her vast experience in the industry will immensely contribute to her new role.



Andaz Delhi

New Delhi

Hyun S Park has been appointed as the General Manager of The Hong Kong Club at Andaz Delhi. In this role, he will be responsible for the overall operation of the venue. His 12-year experience in the food and beverage industry has helped him gain good knowledge of the nuances of the luxury F&B industry, and this will help him deliver results under the new set of responsibilities. Park began his career in 2007, and joined the Hyatt family as Food & Beverage Manager at Grand Hyatt Seoul in 2016. He has also worked in the UK, where he undertook a series of roles.



DoubleTree by Hilton Goa - Panaji

Goa

DoubleTree by Hilton Goa - Panaji has appointed **Amar Albuquerque** as Director of Rooms. Albuquerque has 10 years of experience across a multitude of hotel brands, and prior to joining DoubleTree by Hilton Goa - Panaji, he was associated with Novotel Goa Hotels & Resorts as Rooms Division Manager. In the new role, Albuquerque will be heading the front office, housekeeping, and recreation departments. His diverse experience will contribute to development of the hotel and its premium positioning.



Holiday Inn New Delhi Mayur Vihar Noida

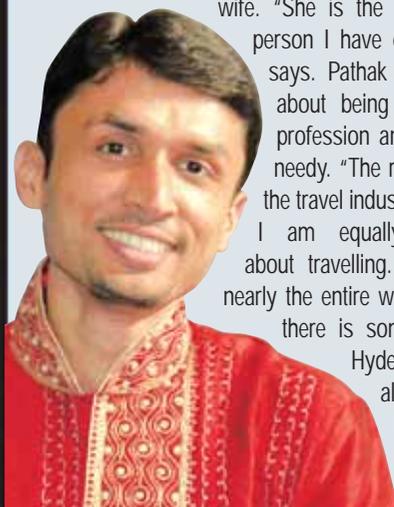
Delhi-NCR

Sakshi Diwakar has been appointed as Marketing Communications Manager at Holiday Inn New Delhi Mayur Vihar Noida. She has a strong background in digital marketing in the hospitality sphere, and has previously worked with The Claridges New Delhi. Having begun her career with an agency serving hospitality clients, Diwakar's foray into the digital game became stronger on the job, staying updated on trends in the hospitality industry. She has delivered and led award-winning ROI-driven campaigns and strategies in the past.



TALKING PEOPLE

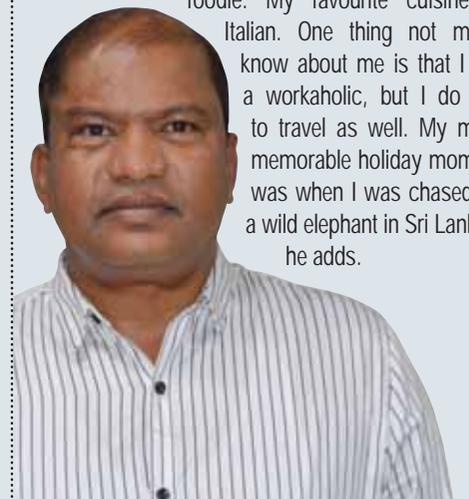
When **Dr. Kunal Pathak**, Managing Director, Canopus Holidays, wants to unwind, he changes his environment and does something relaxing for a while such as listening to music or talking to his wife. "She is the most positive person I have ever met," he says. Pathak is passionate about being a doctor by profession and helping the needy. "The reason I am in the travel industry is because I am equally passionate about travelling. I have seen nearly the entire world, however, there is something about Hyderabad which always gets me," he says.



When **Hareesh Koyande**, Founder & Managing Director, World Travel Studio, gets home from a regular work day, he usually watches the News for 15 minutes to catch up on all the action. He then logs on to Netflix or Amazon Prime. Family vacations for him are purely for relaxation. "My most frequented destination is Goa," Koyande adds. He also reads whenever he finds the time and recommends 'The Intelligent Investor'.



Martin Joseph Thygodath, Chairman and Managing Director, Freedom Holidays, Goa, spends time alone meditating on the beach and listening to the waves. "I am passionate about food and I am an absolute foodie. My favourite cuisine is Italian. One thing not many know about me is that I am a workaholic, but I do like to travel as well. My most memorable holiday moment was when I was chased by a wild elephant in Sri Lanka," he adds.



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Thai ABC to counter overtourism

As Thailand vies to offer quality products and services to travellers, Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT), at TTM+2019, made it evident that they are trying to balance quantity versus quality, and marketing versus management.



Peden Doma Bhutia from Pattaya

Tourism has always played a pivotal role in Thailand's economy. Armed with the objective to create jobs and distribute revenue country-wide, from major cities to local communities, TAT organised the three-day TTM+2019. The event that kick-started on World Environment Day (June 5) had for its theme - New Shades of Emerging Destinations- through which it aimed to promote 55 provincial destinations. The theme was also in sync with Thailand's effort to balance the number of visitors to the country.

In an interview, **Klissada Ratanapruk**, Executive Director, TAT's ASEAN, South Asia and South Pacific Region Department, talks about how emerging destinations will be integrated in all marketing and communication strategies of TAT. Here are a few excerpts:

Overcoming overtourism
The objective of the emerging destinations theme that has been adopted also helps to distribute the tourist from the main cities to smaller and lesser-known destinations. Some of these destinations can also be visited throughout the year. To solve the problem of overtourism, we have adopted a three-pronged strategic move.

A – Additional: Linking major cities like Phuket and Chiang Mai to emerging cities. All cities that get more than four million tourists per year are major cities. Thailand has 22 major cities, which we

now plan to connect with 55 emerging cities. The key point is to provide smooth and seamless connectivity to these destinations via well-known tourist cities.

B – Brand New: Promoting emerging cities. Some new destinations have enough potential to be individually promoted. For example, Buri Ram in the northeastern part of Thailand, which falls near the Cambodia border, boasts of a rich Khmer heritage. The city is also becoming a regional hub for domestic and global sports events since

Connectivity

The Indian cities that TAT is looking at for direct connectivity are **Pune** and **Guwahati**

the opening of the Chang Arena and Chang International Circuit. This year we are ready to welcome racers and spectators in the Moto GP 2019 in Buri Ram after last year's grand success.

C – Combined: Combining emerging cities together. Some emerging cities can be promoted together due to their proximity, shared histories and civilisations. For example, in the northern part of Thailand we have three emerging destinations - Sukhothai, Phitsanulok and Kamphaeng Phet - these areas have a historical significance, we are linking them together and promoting it to tourists.

Talking Numbers

- ◆ In 2018, the Thai tourism industry recorded a total of **38 million** international arrivals, generating an estimated **USD 62 billion**.
- ◆ Top 5 source markets: China with more than **10 million** arrivals, Malaysia, South Korea, Lao PDR and Japan ASEAN for the first time exceeded **10 million** visitors in 2018.
- ◆ This year, TAT has set a growth target of **12 per cent** in tourism revenue from the international market.

What next for Indian tourists?

Apart from sea destinations that are already popular in the Indian market, like Pattaya, Phuket and Krabi, we are trying to introduce more of the east coast to Indian travellers. Other than Pattaya that is also on the east coast, there are destinations like Chantaburi and Trat, which we want to showcase to Indian travellers. We would like to introduce the north of Thailand to Indians.

which we bring wedding planners from India to Thailand. This year we intend to do it in the south in Phuket as we intend to support the airline that flies direct to Phuket. ↴



Opening the road

Our marketing message 'Open to the New Shades' helps to raise awareness about emerging destinations. It has been well aligned with our marketing direction to motivate tourists to explore the undiscovered experiences in Thailand. We will be choosing the activity or the destinations based on the travelling behaviour of Indian tourists and their preferences. We host the wedding symposium every year, in

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