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India made affordable for all

A reduced e-Tourist Visa fee, a lower GST rate for hotels and the annual India Tourism Mart are helping create an ideal environment for the growth of the industry. The true impact, however, is yet to be seen.



Prahlad Singh Patel
Minister of State (I/C),
Tourism and Culture
Government of India

“The GST rate reduction will benefit the hospitality sector and will go a long way in promoting tourism. A reduction in the visa fee was not just a demand but a need of the industry, and we accepted and worked towards it. It is important to both invest in and earn from tourism. To do that, it is necessary to change the perception of the country and several steps are being taken to increase the number of tourists to India.”



Yogendra Tripathi
Secretary - Tourism
Government of India

“The government has taken all steps to make tourism competitive in the country and to ensure that tourists get attracted to the destination. Now, it's for trade participants and businessmen to make use of this opportunity and make it a success. We would like to see the number of tourists to the country increase, and the visa fee reduction, GST reduction, as well as the India Tourism Mart are necessary steps in making this happen.”



Meenakshi Sharma
Director General - Tourism
Government of India

“The GST rate for hotels has been reduced, corporate tax rates have been reduced, there is a huge reduction in visa fee, and new e-Tourist visas for one month at \$25 and at \$10 for the lean period have been introduced. This is a very good time as far as infrastructure, promotion, and facilitation are concerned. We are hoping this will create economic growth and employment opportunities for India.”

Contd on page 7 ▶

A speedy divestment for Air India

Ministry of Civil Aviation will expedite the divestment of Air India, while focusing on adding 10-15 aircraft every month to meet the growing demand in the aviation sector.



Nisha Verma

Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA) has made it clear that Air India will be completely divested at the earliest. **Hardeep Singh Puri**, Union

Minister for Civil Aviation, has said that “the government’s determination to privatise Air India is a given fact.” He insists that the government should not be running an airline and that buyers across

the world are interested in buying Air India.

MoCA is also adding 10-15 aircraft every month in a bid to ease increasing passenger traffic at Indian airports.

“We are looking forward to a scenario where we will have 2000 registered aircraft flying,” Puri shared.

Another significant development has been the launch of

a portal by MoCA, for job seekers in the industry to register their interests across various civil aviation sub-sectors. This will also help employers shortlist those who meet their requirements. ▶



Hardeep Singh Puri
Union Minister for Civil Aviation



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295 more sites for tourism

The Government of Tamil Nadu has set aside `100 crore for the development of tourism in the state, and has identified 295 sites that will be developed for tourism purposes.

 Manas Dwivedi

Buoyant on the success of the 2019 edition of CII Tamil Nadu Travel Mart (TTM) in Chennai and terming it as a game changer for the benefit of all stake-

holders in the tourism sector, **Apurva Varma**, Additional Chief Secretary to Government, Tourism, Culture and Religious Endowments Department, Government of Tamil Nadu, says that it is

in Tamil Nadu, he says, "More than 10 million foreign tourists come to India, and Tamil Nadu has been getting the highest share of tourists in the country for the last five years. The state is the

Public Private Partnership (PPP) model. For this, 295 sites have been identified for development as tourism destinations under Tamil Nadu Integrated Tourism Promotion Project, informs Varma. "This massive tourism promotion project will further attract domestic and international tourists by identifying specific circuits for domestic, Western and Asian tourists, as well as upgrading identified centres in these circuits with quality amenities and infrastructure," he explains, adding that MoUs (Memorandums of Understanding) worth `642 crore have already been signed during the Global Investors Meet 2019 for investment in the tourism sector. 

“Tamil Nadu Integrated Tourism Promotion Project will identify specific circuits and upgrade identified centres with quality amenities and infrastructure”

a power-surplus state with well-developed infrastructure, an excellent rail and road network, three major ports, 19 minor ports, as well as four international and three domestic airports.

second largest economy in India, ranking first among states in terms of number of factories and industrial workers. The state also holds the position of pride with five UNESCO World Heritage sites."

Reiterating that these factors bode well for tourism

The Government of Tamil Nadu has been working tirelessly to fully tap the state's potential. Tourism-centric infrastructure, including logistics, hotels and restaurants, are being upgraded to international standards under

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TRAVTALK

VIEWPOINT

India well on to an 'Incredible' path. Are we ready?

India had set a very ambitious objective of 20 million tourists, but the tourism industry had been reeling under apathy and crying hoarse about fulfilling certain demands. At this juncture, one would often wonder whether this goal would ever be met. However, 2019 has given a fresh lease of life to the industry. This year, the government has introduced new policies and revised a few old ones, providing a big boost to many Indian industries with tourism also coming out as a big winner. First came the reduction in e-Tourist Visa fee, then there was the recent slash in corporate tax, and the final was the GST rate cut that hotels had been waiting for with bated breath.

That's not all! The ministry has also announced a slew of schemes to boost tourism, not to forget the announcement of an e-Conference Visa for the private sector and the opening of peaks to foreigners for climbing or trekking. More importantly, in a perfect culmination of events, the recently-concluded India Tourism Mart was also a big hit with more than 240 foreign buyers and 140-plus sellers.

Everything that we had asked for has been granted and infrastructure is also being put in place to make sure that India figures as a prominent destination. As an industry, we need to work together, else we won't be taken seriously in the future. With the policies in place the government is now waiting in anticipation to see that we deliver, let us not let them down.

Earlier this month, India's travel and tourism sector also received a big boost as the country jumped six places in the latest Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Index. The World Economic Forum (WEF) report shows that India moved from its 40th rank to the 34th rank. Also, India accounts for a major chunk of South Asia's travel and tourism GDP, making it one of the most competitive travel and tourism-oriented economies in the sub-region itself.

Diwali, the festival of lights, may have come a month earlier for the travel and hospitality industry, but now the onus is on us to make sure that this light is bright enough to lead the path towards making India tourism, Incredible again!

Value and tech drive bookings

According to Travelport's Global Digital Traveler Research 2019, the demand for value continues to mount. While some trends are common across age groups, tendencies such as voice search for booking differ significantly among them.

Value over cost when booking a flight

The report suggests that though travellers seek value over cost when booking their trips, they often struggle to find it. When booking a flight, value is a top priority for over four out of five (86 per cent) travellers today with just one in five (18 per cent) now booking solely on cost. This trend is apparent across all age groups, but is led by Baby Boomers (91 per cent) who prioritise value marginally more than younger generations.

To find offers of value, travellers nearly always use a combination of travel review sites (42 per cent), price comparison sites (38 per cent), recommendation sites (36 per cent), and have conversations with travel consultants (31 per cent).



86% of flight bookers say value, not cost, is their top priority



42% want to personalise travel with add-ons like excess baggage allowance

More transparency for personalisation

Across all age categories, when booking a flight, travellers typically want to personalise their own experience (42 per cent) through add-ons. One quarter (24 per cent), however, prefer to receive branded offers that provide a basic level of personalisation.

A growing number of travellers, however, are getting frustrated by not being able to understand what is included as standard and what is an add-on. They are also increasingly frustrated by companies they regularly use not remembering their preferences. This is most prevalent among Gen-Y (39 per cent).

Technology influences decision making

Nearly half of all travellers (48 per cent) now believe augmented or virtual reality experiences would help them better plan their trips. Demand is greatest among Gen-Y (61 per cent) travellers, though still significant among all other age categories.

When researching a trip, three quarters (77 per cent) of travellers have reviewed videos and photos posted by travel brands on social media. Facebook is considered the most influential social media platform by all age groups except for Gen-Z, which puts Instagram marginally ahead.



77% travellers review photos and videos on social media when researching a trip



45% get frustrated when they can't access their travel information on a smart device

Technology in demand to manage travel

Nearly half (45 per cent) of travellers today get frustrated when they are unable to access their booking information round-the-clock on mobile devices, such as smartphones and smartwatches. When it comes to age groups, frustration is particularly high among Gen-Y (50 per cent) and Gen-Z (47 per cent) travellers but also maintained among others.

Nearly half (44 per cent) of travellers have now used voice search to help manage travel, with use greatest among Gen-Y travellers (61 per cent) and lowest among Baby Boomers (12 per cent). One quarter of Gen-Y travellers today nearly always use technology for this purpose.

Source: Travelport Global Digital Traveler Research 2019



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TRAVTALK 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.: +91-11-23234177

Family travel to get a boost

► Contd from page 3



Subhash Goyal
Honorary Secretary
FAITH

“The Prime Minister’s vision for tourism arrivals is to go from 10 million to 20 million. All steps by the government are taking us to the 20 million target. The India package is going to become cheaper, and the visa fee reduction is going to work in a better manner. The visa fee was earlier a deterrent for a family travelling to India, but not anymore. The reduced visa fee and GST, as well as events like ITM, are going to benefit the growth of Indian tourism.”



JK Mohanty
Chairman
HRAO

“The reduction of visa fee, the Goods & Services Tax, as well as other initiatives that the government is taking up time and again, would help develop the tourism sector and make the country more attractive for tourists. My only wish, however, is to get more international flights and connectivity to Odisha. Right now, we have flights only to Kuala Lumpur and Bangkok, but we need more international connectivity that can boost tourism to the state of Odisha.”



Rajiv Mehra
Vice President
IATO

“The Indian visa is now being looked at as an equivalent, maybe even more attractive than the visa of neighbouring countries, which is a significant development. A key problem with the Goods & Services Tax, however, is that the benefit now needs to be passed on to the end user. Once this happens, tourism to India would increase exponentially. Though it might not happen immediately, I am hopeful that January to April would be good months for tourism in 2020.”

Inputs by Nisha Verma



PP Khanna
President
ADTOI

“We are sure that these measures will help increase inbound as well as domestic tourism in the country. Earlier, even the domestic buyer thought of India as an expensive destination and hence, went abroad. Outbound tourism was already on the rise and now, with the reduction in GST, we are sure that inbound and domestic tourism will definitely grow.”



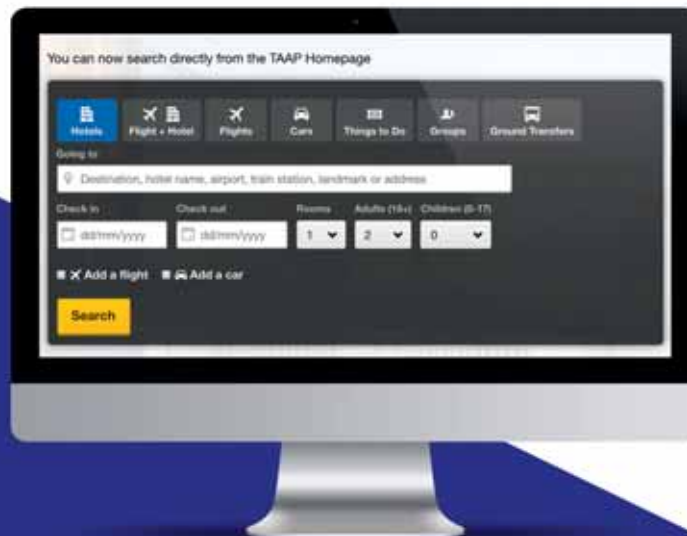
Sanjay Narula
Vice President
TAAI

“While the industry does expect more, this is a huge first step to boost tourist traffic to India and meet the target that we have set out to achieve. A lot more money has been put in the hands of the companies and the people, by reducing tariff and the Goods & Services Tax on hotels. This way, a lot of pressure has been cleared in terms of affordability. While this is a positive move for inbound and domestic tourism, it will take some time for results to take shape.”

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India has a bright cruise future

The Singapore cruise industry has many a taker in India, as was evident at Singapore Tourism Board's cruise forum in New Delhi. India is a key market for the Southeast Asian nation, and its tourism board aims to capitalise on the growing interest and establish Singapore as a hub for cruisers from India.



Nisha Verma

Singapore Tourism Board (STB), in association with TRAVTALK, recently organised a cruise forum themed 'Growing Cruise Connections, Achieving Together' in New Delhi, with travel trade partners, cruise liners, and professionals from the cruise industry in tow to discuss the opportunities and potential of Singapore as a hub for Indians looking for cruises.

The forum delved into the growing overseas cruise tourism from India via focused conversations and exchange of ideas. Addressing the gathering was **GB Srithar**, Regional Director (India, Middle East & South Asia), STB, who shared that STB was adopting a two-pronged



GB Srithar
Regional Director (India, Middle East & South Asia), STB

marketing strategy for the Indian outbound cruise market. Firstly, it would raise awareness and promote cruising as a hassle-free holiday option for the Indian traveller. Secondly, it would look to establish Singapore as a favoured cruise holiday destination by presenting the varied tourism offerings.



Raymond Lim
Area Director
India (New Delhi), STB

Srithar said, "STB partners with stakeholders in the cruise industry to secure a vibrant pipeline of cruise ships and new cruise offerings in Singapore. Cruise holidays present an opportunity to explore the popular attractions, rejuvenated precincts, the growing café culture, innovative bars and restaurants, and



Jiali Wong
Regional Manager (Asia), Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA)

go on a variety of interesting tours available in Singapore."

Raymond Lim, Area Director, India (New Delhi), STB, said, "We organise these forums to help us connect with the travel trade and we offer different schemes to make sure that we remain relevant and competitive against

other destinations. Such programmes can help the travel trade to promote Singapore better. The Cruise Development Fund gives marketing assistance to cruise companies or cruise agents who wish to sell Singapore and market it for cruising with pre and post-cruise programmes, which means staying in Singapore for overnights, and that's what we are trying to encourage."

Talking about the cruise forum, **Jiali Wong**, Regional Manager (Asia), Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA), said, "It was a fruitful session and there were a lot of good partners together. The topics discussed were interesting and everybody had a lot to say,

which is great because we all know that India is a market with a lot of potential and currently has a very low market penetration for cruises."

At the 'Appreciation Dinner' the same night, Srithar presented "Valued Tourism Partner" awards to representatives from key cruise lines operating out of Singapore and travel trade partners selling cruise holidays. 🇮🇳

According to reports, 221,000 Indian cruise passengers sailed the seas last year, a 28 per cent growth over 2017. Compared to 46.7 years for a global cruiser's average age, the Indian cruiser's average was at a relatively younger 37 years old.



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Breaking News

- STIC Travel Group celebrates its 46th anniversary
- Indian LCCs to grow 25-30% in domestic passenger traffic in fiscal 2020: CRISIL
- Lords Hotels to open 'MICE-W' hotels across 5 locations in India by end of this year
- Hotel stocks rise by 20% post GST rate cut
- Passenger load for domestic airlines registers growth of 3% from Jan-August: DGCA

Odisha tourism policy in 2020

Discussions at the fourth Odisha Tourism Conclave in Bhubaneswar touched upon important subjects such as a new tourism policy for the state slated for a 2020 release and simplification of land allotment for hotels. Both measures are expected to boost tourism to Odisha.



Kanchan Nath from Bhubaneswar

The fourth Odisha Tourism Conclave, organised by Hotel & Restaurant Association of Odisha (HRAO) under the theme 'Tourism to be the Driving Force of State Economy', was inaugurated by Governor of Odisha, Ganeshi Lal, along with other dignitaries. **JK Mohanty**, Chairman, HRAO, informed that of the 300 registrations for the conclave, 120 were tour operators and the rest were hoteliers from Odisha. He added, "People contributed immensely to each panel discussion, and the proposals made will be shared with the government."

New tourism policy by 2020
Speaking at the inaugural session, **Jyoti Prakash Panigrahi**, Minister for Tourism & Culture, Government of Odisha, announced that the state will come up with a new tourism policy in



Jyoti Prakash Panigrahi
Minister for Tourism & Culture
Government of Odisha

2020. He said, "There are many places in Odisha, the potential of which is yet to be realised. We must collaborate with states like West Bengal so we can have combined circuits to encourage inbound tourism. We are also making efforts to make Odisha the sports capital of India, and have already pumped ₹500 crore to redevelop the



Vishal Kumar Dev
Commissioner-cum-Secretary,
Tourism and Sports & Youth Services
departments, Government of Odisha

holy town of Puri." The minister also appreciated the efforts of Mohanty for promoting tourism footfalls to the state.

Iconic site for Odisha
Addressing delegates at the event, **Rupinder Brar**, Additional Director General, MOT, Government of India, spoke of the Centre's plan for



Rupinder Brar
Additional Director General, MOT
Government of India

the state. She said, "We hope to soon identify an iconic site for Odisha. Tourist guides are going to be educated on a common platform. It's an inexpensive programme where the basic course is just for ₹20,000. A global marketing campaign will also be launched soon by MOT and Odisha will be an important part of it."



JK Mohanty
Chairman
HRAO

Land allotment for new hotels
At the conclave, **Vishal Kumar Dev**, Commissioner-cum-Secretary, Tourism and Sports & Youth Services departments, Government of Odisha, said that the drastic simplification of the process of allotment of land for construction of hotels was needed for tourism to grow.

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Vipula Gunatilleka
Group CEO
SriLankan Airlines

that the objective now is to become the most customer-centric airline in Asia, both

“We are implementing many cost-saving initiatives including fuel-saving measures for our fleet”

being the largest carrier to both Sri Lanka and the Maldives, and the largest foreign airline in India. Vipula Gunatilleka, Group CEO of SriLankan Airlines, says

in the air and on the ground. “Our staff has been our biggest strength and we look to them to ring in many changes to help SriLankan evolve. We are implementing many cost-

saving initiatives including fuel-saving measures for our fleet. At the same time, the impact of global terrorism, trade tensions and climate change must be addressed,” he adds.

A member of the ‘oneworld’ global airline partnership, travellers on-board SriLankan’s all-Airbus fleet of modern aircraft can enjoy the comfort of flatbeds in Business Class and the in-flight entertainment that complements its world-class service. Expansion is on the cards for SriLankan and Gunatilleka shares, “Next year, new destinations such as Ahmedabad, Calicut, Kathmandu, Saigon and Sydney will be added and several code-share agreements have been finalised with carriers from Africa, the Middle East, and the Far East to bridge the gaps in our network.”

NZ has more for India

With a young population willing to travel and spend more, India is fast becoming a lucrative source market for New Zealand, especially cosmopolitan Auckland.

Kalpana Lohumi

Between July 2018 and June 2019, 60,000 Indians flew to New Zealand and 80,000 passengers flew from New Zealand to India, claims Adrian Littlewood, Chief Executive Officer, Auckland International Airport, adding that there has been a 15 per cent year-on-year growth of Indians travelling to New Zealand from 2015 to 2019. “We have even witnessed that the



Adrian Littlewood
Chief Executive Officer
Auckland International Airport

travel, that speaks English, and that loves the sport of

“As part of our long-term strategy, the team is working on bringing in a direct flight from India to New Zealand”

Indian traveller spends 15 days on an average in New Zealand, which is a great opportunity for us. India is a massive market and has huge potential. It has a young population that is willing to

cricket. Also, it is not hard to find Indian food in New Zealand, including vegan and vegetarian options,” he says.

The idea behind Littlewood’s visit was to understand the

India market better and discuss with key stakeholders the possibility of growth in tourism to New Zealand from India. He met with representatives of Ministry of Tourism and Ministry of Civil Aviation, as well as key tour operators and airlines.

According to Littlewood, though China has shown the maximum change in the last few years, it is India’s growth that they are looking forward to. They are also working with carriers into India through Kuala Lumpur, Guangzhou, Bangkok, and Singapore. “As part of our long-term strategy, the team is working on bringing in a direct flight from India to New Zealand. Premium Economy is our popular product on the long-haul route and we also have a range of options in terms of carrier pathways and alliances,” he shares.

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Japan **AUTUMN** Surprises

Nature's Wonderland

In autumn, Koyo or 'Red-leaves' paint the entire land from the north to the south, in brilliant flashes of red, creating inspiringly beautiful settings. Like the tea ceremony, Koyo viewing too is an introspective personal experience for many. From September to November crowds flock to witness the surprising dazzle at Hokkaido, Akita, Kyoto and other major spots.



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Crystal cabin on board

Travel agents can dazzle their clients by offering them MSC Bellissima, the cruise ship that has the world's first crystal cabin adorned with glittering Swarovski crystals.



Guests on-board MSC Cruises' recently launched MSC Bellissima (which means 'most beautiful') are in for a dazzling surprise. The privately-owned cruise line has announced that its newest flagship would now feature the world's first crystal cabin adorned with glittering Swarovski crystals. While the Swarovski staircases have been an iconic feature of MSC Cruises' ships for more than 10 years, with this new collaboration, the cabin will bring a touch of extra sparkle and glamour to MSC Cruises' flagship.

The new crystal cabin will be situated in the MSC Yacht Club, the premium ship-within-a-ship concept and will be recognisable thanks to a crystallised number on the outside of the cabin door. Every element



has been carefully chosen to add elegant touches and complement the cabin design with 700,000 crystals used to embellish the space, including furniture such as the bedside tables, sideboard, and coffee table. Other details include crystal-detailed wallpaper in the MSC Yacht Club and a crystallised Active Panel illuminated by custom LED with 500,000 crystals per sqm built into the design of the Champagne Bar to add an extra touch of refinement to the sophisticated bar on deck 7.

MSC Cruises' modern ships are distinguished by the brand's signature European style demonstrating use of marble, crystal, and glass to create design features.

The Swarovski cabin number 16018 needs to be booked early to ensure availability. It is available at no extra cost and will match other MSC Yacht Club cabin prices. The cabin will be available from mid-November.

SLH grows with partners

Small Luxury Hotels of the World (SLH), represented by ISA Tourism in India, organised 'Key Partners Meet' in Mumbai and Delhi, to grow the number of Indian guests at its properties.



Represented by ISA Tourism in India, Small Luxury Hotels of the World has member hotels in over 80 countries, with more than 100 hotels in Asia Pacific itself. With a focus on boosting SLH's brand awareness with the travel trade and driving reservations from the luxury outbound travel market and generate leads for small corporate meetings and leisure groups, it recently conducted 'Key Partners Meet' in Mumbai and New Delhi. During the event, travel consultants got a chance to gain valuable insights on destinations, niche accommodation, as well as unique activities that are not easily accessible to a casual browser or end customer planning a trip.

Speaking at the occasion, **Mark Wong**, Vice President Asia Pacific, SLH, said,



"The meet is also aimed to educate partners about new SLH-affiliated hotels and update them on the channels of bookings. It is important for us to enhance our local sales presence and provide better customer service to our travel partners."

During the event, three SLH properties were also presented by their representatives. These included The Fortress Resort & Spa in Galle, Sri Lanka; Twinpalms Resort Phuket and Twinpalms Resort Mont

Azure at Phuket; and Pimalai Resort and Spa in Koh Lanta (near Krabi), Thailand. The newly-opened The Outpost Hotel Sentosa, Singapore, also an SLH-affiliated hotel, was represented by the team of ISA Tourism. **Manas Sinha**, Director, ISA Tourism and India Representative for SLH, said, "Imparting and sharing the right knowledge with progressive travel partners is one of the key activities for 2019-20. We are also looking at boutique and luxury hotels and resorts in India."

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Travel well with Cozmo

With corporate and MICE travel in focus, Cozmo Travel is assessing the feasibility of filling gaps in these segments by developing an App and perhaps maintaining its own fleet.

 Hazel Jain

Even as Cozmo Travel gets ready to celebrate its fifth year of operations in India in 2020 (and a decade worldwide), it continues to innovate and do new things. With an emphasised focus on MICE and corporate travel segments, Cozmo Travel is looking at adding new services.



Jamal Abdulnazar
Chief Executive Officer
Cozmo Travel

business it has in the UAE, in India. "We have a fleet business called Sayara Rental with around 700 vehicles. We are looking at establishing that in India, and it will probably come to fruition in Q2 of 2020," he adds.

Continuing with its focus on MICE, Cozmo Travel will now also represent an American travel management company called Travel Leaders International in India.

"Through this, we will be able to service any multinational company coming into India either directly or through Travel Leaders International," the CEO says, adding, "Clearly, our focus for the coming years is India. It has a lot of potential and there are still heavily underserved areas like global visa and corporate travel that we want to service." 

“India has a lot of potential and there are still heavily underserved areas like global visa and corporate travel that we want to service”


Jamal Abdulnazar, CEO, Cozmo Travel, reveals their plans and says, "Our focus is on expansion here, since India is a strategic market for us. Our MICE division, Cozmo MICE, is planning to launch an App so that registration for an individual's

entire journey can be managed through it. This is being developed at the moment and we expect it to go live by early 2020."

Abdulnazar also reveals that the company is looking to replicate its car rental

Tech is now 'Eastbound'

Nitesh Kakkar, COO, Eastbound Discoveries, claims that the company is now changing the perception of travel through 'voluntourism', while also adopting new technology.

 TT Bureau

Eastbound Discoveries, as an entity of Eastbound Group, is an extended arm focused on creating tailor-made, sustainable, and experience-rich luxury products for the world's leading travel brands, shares Nitesh Kakkar. "Eastbound Discoveries is a young and dynamic company where we strive to achieve excellence on



Nitesh Kakkar
Chief Operating Officer
Eastbound Discoveries

system and a dynamic business model, which has allowed us to consistently deliver the highest quality of service with maximum speed and detailed precision. Technology has also helped us reduce communication time between our partners working in different time zones," claims Kakkar. He insists that their aim is to market India as a destination suitable for all age demographics, with a focus on local experiences.

“We put a lot of effort into retaining and engaging our current partners through trainings and educational programmes”

two major fronts: unmatched travel experiences and immaculate teamwork. This has helped us carve a niche in delivering unparalleled products and experiences," he adds.

With changing demands of travellers, Eastbound has

also changed its offerings. "At Eastbound, we understand the pivotal role technology has played and will continue to play. It has completely revolutionised the way travellers look at a destination. Therefore, we have embraced this change by installing a state-of-the-art

Eastbound continues to expand its footprint into new markets by introducing its latest products through webinars and trainings. "We have also changed the way we reach out to our partners. We are promoting 'voluntourism', through which we are promoting a new perception of travel. We put a lot of effort into retaining and engaging our current partners through regular training and educational programmes," he says. 




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About Jakson Resort Corbett:
If your ideal forest getaway experience is symbolic to waking up to chirping birds, dinners under starry skies, dipping your feet in cool river waters, cycling in the forest or visiting locals in the village...BINGO!

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Dining Experiences:
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time until 12 noon.

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Apart from this, the hotel has a multi-cuisine coffee shop & an outdoor BBQ restaurant amongst a mango orchard where you can enjoy some melodious foot tapping music.

Children are our special guests:
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10% commission for T20 Cup

Gainwell Sports is the official travel agent for ICC's T20 World Cup tournaments (men and women) in Australia next year, and is offering a referral agent scheme so partners can earn commissions of up to 10 per cent on published packages.



Being appointed as the official travel agent for the two T20 World Cup tournaments in Australia next year has created much fervour at Gainwell Sports, a subsidiary of Gainwell Travel. This will allow the company to create and sell packages inclusive of official match tickets for both tourna-

with tourism bodies across Australia will be launched soon and will cover print and digital media as well as exhibitions and outdoors, which will run periodically. Adding to this, Saraf says, "Specific campaigns targeted to lure passengers into visitation

The full range of packages and the categories of match tickets can be viewed on gainwellsports.com. The company encourages travel agency partners to take advantage of this scheme by signing up as referral agents on www.gainwellsports.com/referralagent

during the T20 World Cup will be run by tourism bodies. They are already ahead of schedule

with their preparations for the tournament, with many new hotels and attractions opening

in the coming months. Destinations such as Western Australia, which gets lower visitation than the east coast states, will see a spike in tourist numbers with the match between India and South Africa scheduled in Perth on October 24, 2020."



Manoj Saraf
Managing Director
Gainwell Travel

“ Packages include match tickets along with accommodation and inter-city travel, or all-inclusive deals covering flights, transfers, and tours ”

ments. Sharing his excitement on the appointment is **Manoj Saraf**, Managing Director, Gainwell Travel, who says, "Gainwell Sports is extremely excited about this T20 carnival. It has global rights for the sale of T20 World Cup packages and has sales offices in USA and the UK apart from India." While the women's tournament will be played between February and March, the men's tournament will be played between October and November next year.

Understanding the importance of travel agencies in a market as vast as India, Saraf adds, "Gainwell Sports has designed an attractive referral agent scheme allowing partners across the nation to earn commissions of up to 10 per cent on all published packages. To suit the needs of various travellers, it has created packages that include match tickets along with inter-city travel and accommodation, or all-inclusive deals covering flights, transfers, and tours." Early interest from a number of cricket fans and corporates has been reassuring for Gainwell Sports and its target of sending more than 5,000 passengers to Australia during the T20 World Cup.

While packages and sales have already been officially launched, joint marketing campaigns

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TRAVTALK Daily gets a warm reception

Delegates and dignitaries at India Tourism Mart in New Delhi had one thing in common: each shared an eagerness to read TRAVTALK live daily that was released on September 24, the second day of the mega mart. We share with you some glimpses from the day...






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Fly to Warsaw and beyond

LOT Polish Airlines celebrated the launch of its maiden flight to Warsaw from New Delhi on September 12. The route will operate five times a week on a Boeing 787 Dreamliner, with excellent onward connectivity to cities in the UK, The Netherlands, France, Belgium and more.





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Revamped JA Resort opens doors

JA The Resort, Jebel Ali Beach, Dubai, has opened doors to guests post an extensive renovation of its JA Beach Hotel. The cluster now also has a third property on the premises, the 348-room JA Lake View.



TT Bureau

Post extensive renovations, JA Beach Hotel at JA The Resort, Jebel Ali Beach, Dubai, is back in business. The renovated building façade now showcases sleek

all-glass balconies and new furniture, so that guests have a panoramic view of the 800 metre private beach as well as the sea. The bedrooms have also been further improved with wooden tile flooring, new beds, and

furniture in a vibrant colour scheme. Another exciting change has been the opening of new restaurants and bars at JA Beach Hotel. While the new Italian restaurant, Sette, will offer a 360 degree view of the dome of the resort, the

Phoenicia restaurant will be the perfect spot to taste some delectable Middle Eastern cuisine. JA Beach Hotel will also be home to a new bar and lounge, Vasco Da Gama, inspired by the intrepid Portuguese explorer.



Boasting a strong base of 30 per cent repeat guests every

year, JA Beach Hotel has a loyal following. The hotel experiences high volumes of repeat guests from Europe, while also providing UAE residents with an ideal staycation destination a short drive from the city centre. A true escape from the city vibe of Dubai, JA Beach Hotel has always offered a resort feel, with a surrounding expanse of greenery and wildlife, a private marina, and a host of family activities to suit all generations.

The Resort has also opened its third hotel, the 348-room JA Lake View Hotel, which is on the premises of JA The Resort. The three additional outdoor swimming pools and a spectacular contemporary rooftop bar with views over the golf course and Arabian Sea add another level of unforgettable experience to modern travellers with a discerning taste. The property also offers five meeting rooms.

The extensive refurbishment to JA Beach Hotel is an important step in the repositioning of JA The Resort in Jebel Ali Beach, which features a 104-berth private marina and a nine-hole golf course, making it Dubai's largest experience resort. Guests staying at the three properties can enjoy seven landscaped swimming pools; a choice of 25 restaurants and bars; 40 experiences including a championship golf course, FIFA-approved football pitches, cricket nets; as well as water sports that include water-skiing, catamarans, laser sailboats and more. ↴



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JA Lake View Hotel features 'Kinara', a signature Indian restaurant by celebrity chef Vikas Khanna of Michelin Star acclaim. The hotel will also house '81', a buffet restaurant with live cooking stations and 'Republik', a gastropub with Friday brunches and a rooftop mixology lounge.



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IATO brings a 'joyful' change



After a 17-year wait, the 35th IATO Convention returned to the City of Joy – Kolkata. Themed 'Is Tourism Thriving - Challenges and Opportunities', the event saw many a dignitary from the governments of India and West Bengal. Thirteen other states and UTs also showcased their tourism products at the mega event, which is being touted as a game changer for tourism in the East.



Business worth £3.5 bn

This year, WTM London turns 40 and is expected to generate business worth at least £3.5 billion during, and as a result of, the three-day mega event at ExCeL London.



Scheduled to take place from November 4-6, 2019, WTM London is poised to be the most successful event till date with more ideas arriving to the show than ever before. As a special gift to delegates, the organisers have simplified the online registration process, upgraded its popular meetings tool, and added new technology to help capture leads. With all this, visitors can get the most out of their time and investment during the three-day travel trade event in London.

“WTM London continues to improve every year, with 2019 poised to be the most successful yet. Apart from celebrating the completion of 40 years, there are many new initiatives for the 2019 event, all designed to facilitate creation of ideas in the travel and tourism industry. Furthermore, we anticipate that more than £3.5 billion worth of business will be generated between the 5,000-plus exhibitors and 10,000-plus senior industry buyers at this year’s event,” says Simon Press, Senior Director, WTM London.

The show’s 40th anniversary will be celebrated through a collection of parties on the last day. WTM Festivals will be hosted by exhibitors and partners, where they will showcase their culture, music, and cuisine. Around one million business meetings are expected to take place at WTM London, all generating ideas that will fuel the future of the travel and tourism industry. During the three days, WTM’s exciting new video concept, #WTMStories, will give viewers an insight into travel trends as seen through the eyes of key industry figures as well as consumers.

In another first, networking opportunities at the senior

Did you know, 40 countries, 221 exhibitors and 9,000 trade visitors took part in the first-ever World Travel Market at London Olympia in the year 1980. The 2019 edition is now poised to be the most successful yet.



level have been upgraded, with the introduction of an invitation-only Leaders’ Lunch on day one. To celebrate the importance of the growing

global tourism sector, the seven days surrounding WTM London (November 1-7) have been named London Travel Week.

Historic Delhi on Segway

Delhi City Segway Tour organised ‘Historic Delhi Tour’ on Segways, which commenced at the Secretariat and covered places of interest in Central Delhi.



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CII Tamil Nadu Travel Mart

CII Tamil Nadu Travel Mart (TTM) concluded recently with more than 230 exhibitors showcasing their products and services. Buyers from 45 countries thronged to Chennai to attend the three-day exhibition that also had the Medical Value Travel Mart running as a parallel event. Together, the two events aimed to showcase a side of Tamil Nadu that went beyond its much-visited temples.



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OCTOBER 2019

Odisha Travel Bazaar	Bhubaneswar	14-20
ITB Asia	Singapore	16-18
ETAA Diwali Celebrations	Delhi	18
JATA Tourism Expo Japan 2019	Osaka	24-27
Goa International Travel Mart	Goa	23-25
Tourism Expo Japan 2019	Osaka	24-27
ILTM China	Shanghai	30-Nov 1

NOVEMBER 2019

WTM	London	4-6
Switzerland Destination Training	Raipur	5
Switzerland Destination Training	Indore	6
Switzerland Destination Training	Nagpur	7
Serbia Trade Workshop	Mumbai	12
Nevada Governor's Global Tourism Summit	Las Vegas	12-14
Switzerland Destination Training	Lucknow	13
Switzerland Destination Training	Kolkata	14
Serbia Trade Workshop	Delhi	14
Expedia's Explore 2019	Las Vegas	14-15
Scandinavia Tourism roadshow	Delhi	18
IBTM World	Barcelona	19-21
Scandinavia Tourism roadshow	Chennai	20
Scandinavia Tourism roadshow	Mumbai	21
IITM	Hyderabad	22-24
PATA Destination Marketing Forum	Pattaya, Thailand	27-29
IITM	Pune	29-Dec 1

DECEMBER 2019

ILTM Cannes	Cannes	2-5
International Buddhist Travel Mart	Bodh Gaya	10-12
Travel Allied Show	Jaipur	13
Travel MICE Show	Jaipur	14-15

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

After Kolkata, it's Ahmedabad

IATO's 35th Convention in Kolkata proved to be as impactful as it was anticipated to be. The association has announced that it will conduct its 2020 convention in Ahmedabad, hosted by Gujarat Tourism.

Manas Dwivedi

The 35th Convention of the Indian Association of Tour Operators (IATO) concluded on a high note in Kolkata, with **Prahlad Singh Patel**, Minister of State (I/C) for Tourism & Culture, Government of India, assuring full support to IATO on its recommendations due to the Ministry of Tourism. During the valedictory session of the convention, the Minister said, "IATO is an integral part of our industry and we cannot take any step without the support of our tour operators. We also need the support of private players for deliberating on how we can work together and



move ahead. All stakeholders should come forward and work hand-in-hand with the ministry. I am delighted that India's ranking has improved positively on the Travel & Tourism Competitiveness report, in the last five years. We will target to feature in the top 10 of the list in the next five years.

I also assure you that we will put forward your suggestions to the government with full confidence."

For **Atri Bhattacharya**, Principal Secretary (Tourism), Government of West Bengal, the IATO Convention is sure to have a significant impact on

promoting tourism in the state and generate more employment in the industry. "Together with its allied services, tourism contributes more than 11 per cent to the total employment in the state. IATO's platform has proved to be a good one to engage and interact, and we are hopeful of hosting the convention in West Bengal again in the next five years," he said.

On the occasion, IATO also released a film on women's safety and security in India, which the association will use in highlighting how safe India is for female tourists, in the global market and during its roadshows abroad.

'Promote China to Indians'

During a joint promotion campaign with China National Tourist Office, TAFI – North India encouraged its members to sell China, especially for MiCE and leisure tourism.

TT Bureau

Travel Agents Federation of India (TAFI) - North India and China National Tourist Office (CNTO) organised a cultural seminar in New Delhi, with 150 agents in attendance. Claiming that with such an event members get an opportunity to interact personally with representatives from China, **Ashwani Sharma**, Chairman, TAFI North India, said that the event would give a big push to agents as well. "Members of TAFI and senior travel agency representatives from Delhi attended the event,



Ashwani Sharma
Chairman
TAFI North India

as we wanted people to promote China as a prospective destination for Indians. Both



Tian Xin
Director
CNTO

countries are similar to each other and a lot of scope for MiCE and leisure travel from

India to China exists," he added. The Chinese delegation also included representatives from airlines offering connectivity to China and beyond. Speaking at the event, **Tian Xin**, Director, CNTO, said, "Indians have been interested in regular attractions of Beijing, Shanghai and Guangzhou, hence, besides promoting tourism in these areas, we also intend to promote secondary cities like Hubei and Yuhuan, as well as other places in China. We would like Indian tourists to get to know more about China and its tourist resources."



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Singapore Tourism Board

New Delhi

Raymond Lim has been appointed as Area Director of India, based in New Delhi, at Singapore Tourism Board. He will be market lead for driving MICE travel, trade engagement, and regional coverage of North and eastern India. He will oversee the Board's destination promotion and marketing efforts to ensure that Singapore remains the top-of-mind leisure and business destination among Indian visitors. Lim has been with the Board since 1997 and has handled various areas of work including tourism infrastructure, attractions, precinct development, leisure marketing, and events management. Prior to this, he was the Area Director in Indonesia, based in Jakarta.



Singapore Tourism Board

Mumbai

Singapore Tourism Board (STB) has appointed **Lim Si Ting** as Area Director, India and South Asia (Mumbai). She will oversee the Board's destination promotion and marketing efforts in South and West India, including Sri Lanka. In her previous role as Senior Manager, India and South Asia (Mumbai), Si Ting was responsible for the cultivation of key partnerships with the travel trade and airlines, and led notable projects like the first-ever Hackathon conducted by STB for travel agents in India and destination management companies in Singapore, and the second edition of the Singapore Weekender in Delhi.



Tourism Office of Spain

Mumbai

Elisa Robles-Fraga has been appointed as Tourism Counsellor and Director of Tourism Office of Spain in Mumbai. Throughout her professional experience, Robles-Fraga has been mainly working at the Spanish General Administration both at national and international levels, including European Union related matters. In a previous position as Director General of the CDTI (Centro para el Desarrollo Tecnológico Industrial - Center for Industrial Technological Development), the Spanish Innovation Agency of the Ministry of Science, Innovation and Universities, Government of Spain, she had the opportunity to work with India.



Duet India Hotels

Gurugram

Abhishek Bhattacharya has been appointed as Area Director Sales – North & East India at Duet India Hotels. In the new role, he will lead the business development function at the group in terms of sales for its hotels in North and East India, while also supporting the goal-setting and revenue, distribution and marketing functions. Bhattacharya previously worked as National Sales Manager at Wyndham Hotels & Resorts, where he was responsible for launching the business vertical in India as a first in the company. The role included promoting the group's brands in Eurasia.



Desert Adventures Tourism

Mumbai

Vishal Sood has been promoted to General Manager, India operations, at Desert Adventures Tourism. In the new role, Sood will ensure continuation of the highest service levels and speed to market at the Destination Management Company. With growth in business and enhancement of the technology and distribution landscape, the Desert Adventures service centre has been set up to offer IT and processing support to the contracting, loading, and reservations team based in Dubai. In the interim, Anabela Radosevic, Head of Sales & Marketing, will support and oversee the contracting team.



Conrad Hotel

Pune

Conrad Pune has appointed **Dharam Singh** as the new Hotel Manager. In the new role, Singh will be responsible for managing hotel operations along with passionately setting up and developing new ideas and concepts for the hotel. Armed with an experience of more than 18 years within India and abroad, he has been associated with established hospitality brands such as Marriott, Fairmont, Mandarin Oriental, Rosewood, and Banyan Tree. He has expertise in strategic planning, interactive and direct marketing, sales promotions, and strengthening a hotel's positioning in the market.



Hilton International Airport

Mumbai

Hilton Mumbai International Airport has appointed **Vipul Mishra** as Commercial Director. He comes with an experience of 14 years, having worked with various hotels in India and abroad. In the new role, Mishra will help the brand maintain a trajectory of growth for the hotel and oversee the development of talent in sales and marketing. Prior to joining Hilton Mumbai International Airport, he worked with several well-known chains like, Hyatt, InterContinental Hotels Group, and Jumeirah. Mishra is an alumni of Mumbai University from where he graduated in the field of Hotel Management.



Marriott Suites

Pune

Saurabh Bharara is the new General Manager at Marriott Suites Pune. He has an extensive experience of more than 20 years in the hospitality industry, encompassing project management, strategic planning, resource utilisation, revenue growth, and guest experience enhancement. During his last assignment as Director of Sales & Marketing at The Ritz-Carlton in Bengaluru, Bharara played a key role in guiding his team in transforming the hotel's commercial performance, market profile, and reputation. He has been a part of the Marriott family for the last three years, prior to which he worked with renowned hospitality brands such as The Oberoi Hotels.



Lords Eco Inn

Ahmedabad

Lords Hotels & Resorts has announced the appointment of **Chetan Ambhore** as Operations Manager at SK Lords Eco Inn, Ahmedabad, Gujarat. In the new role, he will be involved in maintaining service standards along with achieving customer satisfaction through the team. A graduate in Hotel Management from Pune University and armed with a diploma in International Hospitality from Griffith University, Ambhore's strengths lie in organising hotel operations and ensuring standard operating procedures. Prior to Lords, he was with Saya Grand Club & Spa Resort as Front Office Manager & Acting Operations Manager.



TALKing People

Julian Ayers, Area Vice President North India & General Manager, Hyatt Regency Delhi, goes by the motto 'Nothing is impossible', and claims that his wife is his inspiration. A voracious reader, he recently finished reading 'A Gentleman in Moscow' by Amor Towles. "Currently, I am reading 'An Appeal to the Ladies of Hyderabad: Scandal in the Raj' by Benjamin Cohen," he shares. Talking about his favourite Indian destination, Ayers says, "We have had some amazing holidays in Goa."



For **Jaideep Dang**, Managing Director, Hotels & Hospitality Business, JLL, free time can mean only one thing – spending it with his two children! He also loves the outdoors and indulges in swimming or tennis, any chance he gets. He adds, "I also love travelling and my job ensures that I get plenty of it. If travelling within India, I love visiting Himachal Pradesh and Goa. Outside the country, I mostly like travelling to Europe. There's so much to explore there that my love for it has no end."



Piyush Tyagi, General Manager, Le Méridien Jaipur Resort & Spa, loves to read autobiographies. He feels that they help one discover new ideas and approaches through the experiences of another. Tyagi also likes to go for a run with his children or spend time playing squash. "I listen to Country and classical music, or practise reiki to de-stress. For me, the sound of waves touching the shore is also enough to put the mind at ease," he adds.





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Delhi-Warsaw, 5 times a week

LOT Polish Airlines recently launched its maiden flight to Warsaw from New Delhi, which will be operated five times a week. With this addition, the airline hopes to double the number of passengers between India and Europe.

 Kanchan Nath

LOT Polish launched its inaugural flight to Warsaw from New Delhi on September 12, a route that it will be operating five times a week between Warsaw Chopin Airport and New Delhi's Indira Gandhi International Airport. The route is regarded as not just a convenient travel option to Poland but also one that provides seamless transfers to Central, Western, and Eastern Europe. New Delhi is now LOT's sixth Asian destination.

Speaking at the launch, Rafal Milczarski, Chief Executive Officer, LOT Polish Airlines, said, "LOT provides not only the shortest and most convenient way of travel to Warsaw, but also a perfect gateway to all passengers travelling from the Delhi catchment area to Europe. This can be the path to the Baltic states, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Romania and Bulgaria among others like Warsaw, Kraków, Gdansk, or Wrocław."

Air travel between India and Europe has huge potential, and data suggests that almost 9.5 million passengers travelled between India and Europe, with as many as 3.3 million from New Delhi



itself, in the last 12 months. Milczarski hopes that these numbers will double with the latest addition.

"Our convenient schedule, including an overnight east-bound flight, a comfortable on-board product and seamless connectivity via Warsaw will certainly increase the flow of business and leisure travellers to and from India. We

“The route is regarded as not just a convenient travel option to Poland but also one that provides seamless transfers to Central, Western, and Eastern Europe”

will increase the frequency whenever it is practical to do so," he added. Milczarski also said that India had the most phenomenal potential, being the largest working democracy in the world, and was delighted to be connecting two countries that have had good diplomatic, political and economic relations stemming back many years.

Speaking of the growth of LOT Polish, he said, "LOT is

the leading legacy carrier in Central and Eastern Europe. We have grown the number of aircraft from 44 to 80, the number of routes from 41 to 104, and are already selling 111 routes on our network. Additionally, we have not only grown our network by 70 connections but have also more than doubled the number of passengers from 4.3 million in 2015 to 9 million in 2018. This year, we will exceed 10 million passengers."

For a special on-board experience, the airline will

launched Miami and Beirut routes, and will soon be launching Budapest to Seoul. We will also be launching Colombo on November 3."

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Rafal Milczarski
CEO, LOT Polish Airlines

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WAW-DEL (LO-071)	Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday, Saturday, Sunday	22:45	09:15 (+1)

Aircraft: Boeing 787 Dreamliner

have a Hindi-speaking cabin crew for better communication, a selection of Indian movies to watch, as well as Indian and continental dishes on the menu. "We try to make everybody as comfortable as possible," he shared.

To this, Amit Ray, Regional Director - India and DACH Markets, LOT Polish Airlines, said, "Operated by a Boeing 787 Dreamliner, the non-stop flight to Warsaw has great onward connectivity to more than 40 European destinations. We also have great connectivity to the North Atlantic. We are focusing on corporate as well as leisure traffic. Since it is our 19th anniversary, we have



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