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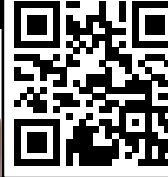
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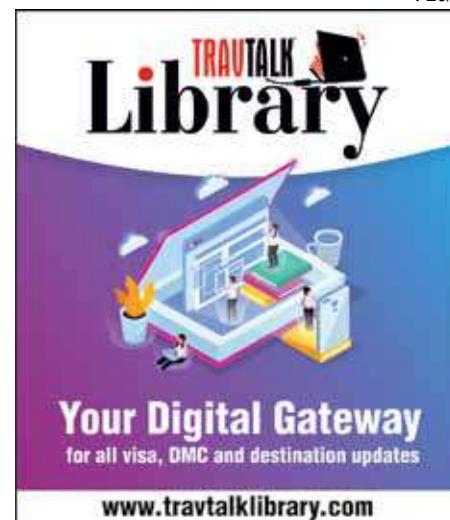
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## Yoga to promote tourism

Ministry of Tourism organises a grand celebration on International Day of Yoga in Hyderabad, graced by the presence of Vice President of India and helmed by Union Minister of Tourism. The State Ministers of Tourism chair the IDY events in Goa and New Delhi, respectively.

Nisha Verma

**G. Kishan Reddy**, Union Minister of Tourism, Culture and DoNER, led the mass yoga session to celebrate the International Day of Yoga (IDY) 2022 at the massive Parade Grounds in Secunderabad. Vice President of India, **M. Venkaiah Naidu** joined the celebrations and

performed yoga, along with hundreds of other participants, and also addressed the gathering. Among other important personalities present on the occasion were **Arvind Singh**, Secretary, Tourism, **Rupinder Brar**, Additional Director General, Tourism, Olympian **PV Sindhu** and actor **Adivi Sesh**.

Addressing the crowd, Reddy announced that the theme for IDY 2022 was 'Yoga for Humanity'. "Yoga Day would create just the right brand value for India across the world," he said.

Urging people to practise yoga, Reddy said everyone should incorporate it in their daily lifestyle.

### Other celebrations

In Goa, **Shripad Yesso Naik**, Union Minister of State, Tourism, Ports, Shipping and waterways, was at the helm of IDY celebrations. Speaking on the occasion Naik said, "To showcase the rich beauty, topography, geography and architecture of India and to brand Incredible India on the

global stage, the Government of India has identified 75 Iconic Tourist sites across the country for the celebration of International Day of Yoga 2022."

**Ajay Bhatt**, Union Minister of State, Tourism and Defence, was part of the IDY celebrations at the Defence Accounts Department



**G. Kishan Reddy**  
Union Minister of Tourism, Culture and DoNER

Headquarters in New Delhi. In his address, Bhatt hailed the Prime Minister's vision promote yoga and make it a way of life.

## Tourism Ministers meet in July

Arvind Singh, Secretary, Tourism, reveals that a national conference of tourism ministers will be organised in July with an aim to promote both domestic and international tourism.

Nisha Verma

**Arvind Singh**, Secretary, Ministry of Tourism, speaking at the International Day of Yoga celebrations in Hyderabad, shared that a national conference of all the tourism ministers will be held next month to promote India as an important destination to the rest of the world. "In July, we will have a national conference of tourism ministers. Location is yet to be



**Arvind Singh**  
Secretary  
Ministry of Tourism

decided. The agenda will be how to project India and the states to different parts of the world to attract both domestic and international tourists in the years to come," he shared.

### Popularity of yoga

Singh said that the popularity of yoga is increasing. "This year was significant because it was the first mass Yoga Day event after the pandemic. It was a kind of

Contd on page 18 ▶

## Uptick in demand for luxury

With around 30 per cent jump in the number of travellers, luxury travel market is moving in an upward direction. The luxury travellers are seek experiences that are more immersive and exceptional.

Janice Alyosius

As travellers make up for the time lost due to the pandemic, there is an increase in demand for the luxury travel. Year 2022 could see an increase in holiday budgets for luxury travellers, with an uptick in demand for 'once in a lifetime' adventures, according to GlobalData, a data analytics and consulting company tracking global data.



**Riaz Munshi**  
Managing Director, N. Chirag Travels

In India, a large number of people are looking out to travel in the luxury segments. "There is a jump of about 25 per cent to 30 per cent in luxury travel market," revealed **Riaz Munshi**, Managing Director, N. Chirag Travels.

"Despite the hike in airfares and hotel rates, a large number of Indian travellers are willing to travel, so this segment of tourism is booming. The prices of luxury

Contd on page 16 ▶

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# ‘Bharat Gaurav’ train begins journey

The first tourist train to connect India and Nepal was flagged off by Union ministers G. Kishan Reddy and Ashwini Vaishnav recently. The Ministry of Tourism, in association with the IRCTC and Ministry of Railways, also plans Bharat Gaurav tourist trains to Krishna Circuit, Buddhist Circuit and many other such circuits.

Nisha Verma

**G. Kishan Reddy**, Union Minister of Tourism, Culture and DONER, along with Ashwini Vaishnav, Minister of Railways, Communications, Electronics and Information Technology, flagged off the Bharat Gaurav Tourist Train from Delhi Safdarjung Railway Station on 21 June.

It is the first tourist train to connect India and Nepal, said Reddy. “Bharat Gaurav tourist train is starting its first Shri Ramayana Yatra for 18 days. The first trip of the train operating on the Ramayana Circuit will also cover the religious destination of Janakpur (in Nepal) for the first time in addition to other popular destinations such as Ayodhya, Nandigram, Sitamarhi, Varanasi, Prayagraj, Chitrakoot, Panchavati (Nasik), Hampi, Rameshwaram and Bhadrachalam,” he added.

In fact, he claimed, the Ministry of Tourism, in association with the IRCTC and Ministry of Railways, has also proposed

**Bharat Gaurav trains attempt to showcase the rich cultural, spiritual and historical legacy of the country**

Bharat Gaurav tourist trains for Krishna Circuit, Buddhist Circuit and many other circuits. “Bharat Gaurav trains is an attempt to showcase the rich cultural,

spiritual and historical legacy of the country to the people of India. The unique concept of Bharat Gaurav trains, as envisaged by the Ministry of Railways, will be helpful in promoting mass tourism across the country and provide an opportunity to people from all parts of the country to explore the architectural, cultural and historical marvels of the country,” Reddy added.

Lauding the design of the train, he informed that the exterior of the coaches of the trains have been designed as a kaleidoscope of Bharat Gaurav or Pride of India, highlighting various facets of India such as monuments, dances, Yoga and folk art.

Vaishnav claimed the launch of the Bharat Gaurav train is a historical day for everyone. “This is a gift from Prime Minister



Dignitaries at the flag-off ceremony of Bharat Gaurav train at Delhi Safdarjung railway station

Narendra Modi to its citizens, and it is his dream that has now been realised. The main objective behind Bharat Gaurav train

is to showcase the diverse culture and rich heritage of India. The response has been amazing and the passengers have said

that they are impressed by the conceptualisation of such an initiative that fulfils their dream of visiting these pilgrimages. They said that such an initiative is unheard and no one thought about something like this for the last 50-60 years.”

Branded as Bharat Gaurav tourist trains, IRCTC is operating these special comfort category tourist trains to promote theme-based tourism.

### About the train

- ❖ Bharat Gaurav tourist train begins inaugural run from Delhi Safdarjung railway station on 21 June 2022.
- ❖ It is the first tourist train to connect India and Nepal.
- ❖ During its first 18-day trip on the Ramayana Circuit, the train will cover various religious destinations including Ayodhya, Varanasi, Prayagraj, Chitrakoot, Panchavati (Nasik) and Rameshwaram.

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# Airlines on recovery path

IATA predicts that with the increase in travel activity, the industry losses are expected to reduce to -\$9.7 billion for a net loss margin of -1.2 per cent. It is a huge improvement from losses of \$137.7 billion in 2020 and \$42.1 billion in 2021.



TT Bureau

The International Air Transport Association (IATA) has announced an upgrade to its outlook for the airline industry's financial performance in 2022 as the recovery from the Covid-19 crisis picks up pace. IATA forecasts that the industry losses are expected to reduce to -\$9.7 billion (improved from the October 2021 forecast for an \$11.6 billion loss) for a net loss margin of -1.2 per cent. It is a huge improvement from losses of \$137.7 billion (-36.0% net margin) in 2020 and \$42.1 billion (-8.3% net margin) in 2021.

Willie Walsh, Director General, IATA, said, "Airlines are resilient. People are flying in ever greater numbers. And cargo is performing well against a backdrop of growing economic uncertainty. Losses will be cut to \$9.7 billion this year and profitability is on the horizon for 2023. It is a time for optimism, even if there are still

outlook comes from holding costs to a 44 per cent increase while revenues increased 55 per cent. As the industry returns to more normal levels of production and with high fuel costs likely to stay for a while, profitability will depend on continued cost control. And that encompasses the value chain. Our suppliers, including airports and air navigation service providers, need to be as focused on controlling costs as their customers to support the industry's recovery," said Walsh.

the industry's largest cost item in 2022 (24 per cent of overall costs, up from 19 per cent in 2021). War in Ukraine is keeping prices for Brent crude oil high. Nonetheless, fuel will account for about a quarter of costs in 2022.

Labour is the second highest operational cost item for airlines. Direct employment in the sector is expected to reach 2.7 million, up 4.3 per cent on 2021 as the

However, IATA stated that there are a number of risk factors associated with the outlook. It said the impact of the war in Ukraine on aviation pales compared with the unfolding humanitarian tragedy. The outlook assumes that the war in Ukraine will not escalate beyond its borders.

**Inflation and interest rate**  
Interest rates are rising as central banks combat inflation. Aside



industry rebuilds from the significant decline in activity in 2020.

**Macro-economic factors**  
The global macroeconomic backdrop is critical for the industry outlook. The forecast incorporates an assumption for solid global GDP growth of 3.4 per cent in 2022, down from the strong 5.8 per cent rebound last year. Inflation has risen and is expected to remain elevated throughout 2022, waning over the course of 2023. And, while nominal interest rates are rising, real interest rates are expected to remain low or negative for a sustained period.

from those carrying debt (who will see inflation devaluing their debts), inflation is harmful and has the economic dampening effect of a tax by reducing purchasing power. There is downside risk to this outlook should inflation continue to rise, and central banks continue to hike interest rates.

The outlook assumes that growing population immunity to Covid-19 means there will not be a repeat of the policy mistakes. There is, however, downside risk, should governments return to knee-jerk border-closing responses to future outbreaks.

Airlines (all over the world) are resilient. People are flying in ever greater numbers  
— Willie Walsh  
Director General, IATA

challenges on costs, particularly fuel, and some lingering restrictions in a few key markets," said

The IATA has cited several factors for the improvement in situation. It stated that the revenues are rising as Covid-19 restrictions ease and people return to travel. However, the challenge for 2022 is to keep costs under control. "The reduction in losses is the result of hard work to keep costs under control as the industry ramps up. The improvement in the financial

**Revenues**  
Industry revenues are expected to reach \$782 billion (+54.5 per cent on 2021), 93.3 per cent of 2019 levels. Flights operated in 2022 are expected to total 33.8 million, which is 86.9 per cent of 2019 levels (38.9 million flights). Passenger revenues are expected to account for \$498 billion of industry revenues, more than double the \$239 billion generated in 2021.

Cargo revenues are expected to account for \$191 billion of industry revenues, which is slightly down from the \$204 billion recorded in 2021, but nearly double the \$100 billion achieved in 2019.

**Expenses**  
Overall expenses are expected to rise to \$796 billion, which is a 44 per cent increase on 2021, which reflects both the costs of supporting larger operations and the cost of inflation in some key items. At \$192 billion, fuel is

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## VIEWPOINT

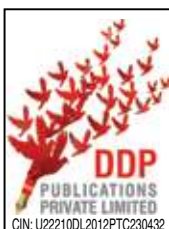
### Mindful travel

Suddenly, there is a lot of talk on sustainability, especially in the travel and tourism sector. But climate change has little effect on people's desire to travel and deciding not to travel at all for reasons to do with sustainability is rare. But the industry can start this conversation with their clients who, in turn, can take steps to ensure that their journey is making the least impact on the environment – because every action counts.

What does this mean for the trade? They can choose to work with vendors and suppliers who are sustainable-conscious. For consumers, they want to see sustainable travel information during the trip-planning process, preferably in the form of listings or info pages on travel sites, as well as in marketing campaigns. The bottom line – travel companies should take steps to respond to growing consumer demand and offer truly sustainable products and services, clearly communicate about them and illustrate the value of making conscientious choices.

### Time to tap the MICE?

The borders are open, people are travelling international, and domestic travel is already reaping the fruits of the pent up demand. However, MICE as an industry is moving slowly, which could be because there is a risk in moving a large number of pax, or because the demand for MICE has gone down in a world of zoom and online meetings. Whatever be the case, MICE operators, hotels and corporate are optimistic that the industry will bounce back. However, a number of measures are needed, not just by destinations to attract bigger groups, but also by airlines, hotels and service providers to give value for money. While India presents a huge opportunity for destinations, both international and domestic, for tapping the MICE market, it is time that India as a destination showcases its MICE potential to foreigners. It could be a great opportunity, which requires multiple steps, including easy visa, incentives to book bigger number of flights and rooms, travel insurance, as well as offerings that are unmatched. As Government talks about promoting travel, it's time that MICE is given a serious consideration too.



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# Clear recovery hurdles urgently: IATO

Indian Association of Tour Operators (IATO) urges the Union government to resolve the issues that are creating hurdles for revival of inbound tourism in the country. The association also raises other industry problems, including refund from Jet Airways; mandatory web-check-in and self-declaration on Air Suvidha portal.

Nisha Verma

Despite borders opening and international flights restarting, inbound travel is still facing recovery issues. Highlighting the same, **Rajiv Mehra**, President, IATO, has urged the Union government to remove hurdles in the revival of inbound tourism to India. The association has also sought the government's help in getting refund of travel agents from Jet Airways.

## Clear inbound hurdles

Mehra has written to G. Kishan Reddy, Union Tourism Minister, requesting him to push the government to withdraw requirement of submission of self-declaration form on the online Air Suvidha portal for foreign nationals. Currently, foreign tourists who intend to visit India have to submit a self-declaration form and attach documents, which is cumbersome

some for foreign tourists, especially the elderly. Thus, a number of foreign tourists have reported to have been offloaded, which is



Rajiv Mehra  
President, IATO

giving negative publicity, resulting in many tourists skipping to travel to India.

"On one hand, we are looking to bring more foreign tourists to India and on other hand, we are making it difficult for tourists to consider India as a destination by creating hindrances. Now under

the present situation, many countries have abolished all hurdles to attract more tourists. This is high time now that the situation is much better, we should consider removing such hurdles for foreigners. IATO has, therefore, requested that requirement of submission of self-declaration form on the online Air Suvidha portal should be removed to encourage foreign travellers to visit India, so that inbound tourism to India could be revived," he said.

## Lift web check-in mandate

Mehra also wrote a letter to the Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA), pointing out the problems foreign travellers are facing while travelling in India due to compulsory Web Check-in forced by all the domestic airlines. He mentioned that the basic purpose of web check-in is to avoid rush at the baggage counters, which is defeated as all travellers have to

stand in queue for handing over check-in baggage since there are no separate queues or counters for those who have already done the web check-in. "Also airlines are charging ₹200 per traveller, who have not done the web check-in. IATO has requested that directives should be issued



to all the domestic airlines, not to make it compulsory for the travellers to do web check-in and facility of issuing boarding pass should be available from the airline check-in counters at

the airport for those who have not done web check-in. It is the responsibility of the airline to issue boarding pass and baggage tag to the air travellers, hence there should not be any additional charges of ₹200 for the boarding pass," he added.

## Jet Airways' refunds

In another letter, IATO has also raised an issue of pending refunds of the travel agents from Jet Airways for over two years. Mehra welcomed the resumption of Jet Airways flights from the next quarter (July-September 2022) after getting the DGCA approval. However, he has written to the DGCA that a large amount of money is lying with Jet Airways for over two years towards the amount paid by the ticketing agents, which Jet Airways has not refunded in spite of repeated reminders by the agents. "In addition to this, ad-

vance deposits towards group bookings made by the travel agents for the ticketing of groups are also with Jet Airways. IATO has requested that operation of

Requirement of submission of self-declaration form on the Air Suvidha portal should be removed

Jet Airways flights should be kept in abeyance till the time refunds are made to the travel agents. It should be made compulsory for all the airlines operating in India to give bank guarantee to protect the interest of travel agents."

# 'An airport is not a destination'

A lot of hopes are riding on Goa's new Mopa airport. But Gavin Eccles, Managing Partner GE Consulting & Advisory, says that to bring more footfalls, the destination needs to build on its product offerings, not the airport facility. Goa needs to figure who it wants to attract and will it work with the Mopa team facilitate more carrier touch-downs.

Hazel Jain

The benefit of a new airport is to support airlines in their operations and schedule and allow a strong push for the region, says Gavin Eccles, Managing Partner GE Consulting & Advisory. "But an airport is not a destination. The vision for Goa as a tourism destination is built on its product and service offerings, not its airport facility. What we need to ensure is that the new airport is actively engaging with a strong air services rationale – which airlines are being contacted? And, clearly such work should be done in parallel with Goa Tourism," he says.

"Crucial for the destination is to understand which markets does the destination want to work with, and how is the airline situation in those markets, and which routes can then be worked on accordingly. It is not about which airlines will fly to

the new airport, but who do we want to attract, and how are we working with the Mopa team to have joint business cases to carriers, and incentive programmes



Gavin Eccles  
Managing Partner  
GE Consulting & Advisory

that build sustainable traffic that is positioned with inbound as a key component," he says.

However, the existing airport has had restrictions on arrivals and departures. If an airline is looking to fly at a certain time and this was not available, of course they will take their aircraft elsewhere.

Eccles adds, "So, for those flights that have been missed due to the issues of capacity and air traffic constraints, Mopa can provide an alternative. And, if we can build a strong reason to why holiday in Goa, the new airport can be a touchpoint that can be made available to such new demand. In essence, Goa Tourism is not going to see success just because of a new airport, but a new airport working in partnership with the tourism board to look at new market potentials and develop a strong combined incentive and marketing programme to drive new business to the destination."

## Is sun and sea enough?

For many years, Goa has pushed the sun, sea and sand philosophy. This, Eccles says, worked very well for Northern Europeans in what they call, their winter period (November through April). Charters from the UK and Germany were aligned with

the destination. "But many new destinations have replicated the 'winter-sun' offer and witnessed strong growth from Europe. Not

If we can build a strong reason to why holiday in Goa, the new airport can be used to meet the demand

least, new destinations such as Vietnam, Thailand, as well as the classics, Caribbean, Maldives

and Mexico. So, pushing the three S's mantra now may not be enough to bring tourists back. So, rightly, the new tourism minister of Goa has expressed interest in two differing areas: Interiors of Goa and heritage, and developing the destination as a great retreat for digital nomads," he says.

## Pushing inbound to Goa

As the original key charter markets of the UK and Germany have been slipping before the pandemic (Germany had no direct charter flights in the last years), and now Russia as the new opportunity is facing challenges, air services and route development must be a key driver in the vision for pushing inbound to Goa. But Goa

must first ask a key question: What is more important, the domestic or international market?

The famous film 'Field of Dreams' had Kevin Costner state, "if you build it, they will come". He was referring to a baseball stadium in the middle of nowhere. But this may not hold true for a new airport in the middle of nowhere, says Eccles.

"What is needed is an integrated vision between the public and private sector and draw out a plan of action that re-builds the Goa tourism proposition, and has at its arrival a world class facility offering airlines and tour operators a great way to put their passengers in and out of the destination," he adds.

Around 95 per cent of Indians have become more focused on a variety of sustainability topics with recycling, renewable energy and climate action gaining the most interest. They made changes in their everyday life to reduce their carbon footprint last year.

**TourismNews**

Radisson Hotel Group to expand APAC footprint, targets 400 per cent growth by 2025

Travel and tourism business registers growth of 1.4 per cent in May 2022: GlobalData

Vietjet opens four new routes; Hyderabad and Ahmedabad on cards

'Know Barcelona' quiz winners get free trip to Barcelona in Spain Specialist Program

GPS 2022 to start mid-September, to cover 10 cities till March 2023

TAFI signs MoU with leading bank to facilitate digital payments

Business Events Australia rolls out second phase of brand campaign to position Australia as a leader in MICE

Maharashtra DoT to launch accreditation policy for tour operators in July 2022

# Quest for sustainable moves

Aviation industry needs to be clear with governments on what is needed from regulations, it must deliver on commitment of net zero emissions and improve gender diversity, says Willie Walsh, Director General, IATA, while presenting the association's annual report at the AGM.

 Nisha Verma

Aviation industry is on course of recovery. "Aviation is resilient; and we are rebounding," said **Willie Walsh**, Director General, IATA, while presenting the association's report at the annual general meeting in Doha recently. "Our industry is now leaner, tougher and nim-



bler. Our latest analysis shows losses in 2021 close to \$42 billion, a huge loss, but down from our earlier estimate of \$52 billion. And we now believe that global losses will be cut further, to \$9.7 billion this year. Industry-wide profit should be on the horizon in 2023," he claimed.

However, he insisted that while the outlook is positive, the business environment is challenging. Highlighting four challenges, he said, "Everyone must learn the lessons of Covid-19. We need to be clear with governments on what is needed from regulation. We must deliver on our net zero emissions commitment, and it has never been more important for us to improve gender diversity."

He said, "The immediate priority is working together with governments and airports to address capacity issues. Let's be clear, these problems don't exist everywhere, and solutions are already emerging. The longer-term priority is ensuring that governments work much more closely with airlines in the next crisis—whatever that may be."

**What's needed in regulation**  
In terms of regulation, Walsh

highlighted that there are three areas are of particular concern—slots, accessibility, and consumer rights.



**Willie Walsh**  
Director General, IATA

He pointed out, "We don't oppose regulation, but it must create solutions, not add to problems. In October, I reported on the egregious attempts by infrastructure providers to raise charges. The nightmare is becoming reality. Focusing on airports, out of the top 100, more than half announced increases for 2022 and

2023—expecting their customers to make up for revenues they did not get during the pandemic. In fact, Airports Council International reports that aeronautical revenues for airports were \$99 billion in 2019."

**Sustainability & responsibility**  
Speaking on sustainability, Walsh reminded everyone, "At our last AGM we took the monumental decision to achieve net zero emissions by 2050. Now, we must turn our commitment into carbon reductions. We currently expect 100 per cent carbon abatement with 65 per cent through SAF, 19 per cent through offsets and eventually through carbon capture. Also, 13 per cent from hydrogen and electric propulsion that Airbus, Boeing, and other manufacturers are committed to delivering by 2035 and 3 per cent should come from more efficient operations."

Talking about operational efficiencies, he said, "Governments also need to do their part. Airlines have committed \$17 billion in forward purchase SAF agreements. Irrespective of price, airlines have

**We do not oppose regulation, but it must create solutions, not add to problems**

used every drop of SAF in 2021, and it will be the same for this year. Fortunately, airline demand has stimulated an exponential increase in SAF production.

# Wellness on the mind of travellers

Wellness tourists look for more immersive experiences rather than just relaxation, party or luxury breaks. They seek locations where there is more focus on activities, especially connected to fitness, health and wellbeing, share experts with TRAVTALK. They also share their views on other issues related to wellness tourism.

 Janice Alyosius

**What will be the look of Wellness Tourism in India in 2022?**

**Heidi Grimwood:** Wellness Tourism will be a popular option in India. In Covid times, people are more conscious about seeking a natural approach to their health concerns. A new generation of mindful travellers is emerging and people are looking for more health promoting breaks. They are looking to connect with the mind, body and soul at their travel venues.  
**Shiv Bose:** It will certainly go up if early indications are to go by. The surge of resorts and wellness centres are on the rise and even business hotels are inculcating healthy menu options and rejuvenation packages for the discerning traveller.

**What new are you offering to wellness tourists?**

**Heidi:** We offer daily fitness and wellness activities to our guests

as well as regular wellness workshops, which includes self-massage techniques, sound healing, floating meditation, meditation techniques, how to make your own spa products at home and expert knowledge from our resident and visiting practitioners.

**Shiv:** Being a resort, we have the luxury of space and our location with surreal backdrop of the Mandovi river and the lush landscapes adds to the experience. We are a nature's abode with greenery all around and a river at the vicinity. From healthy food offerings under Aayush banner to wellness offerings at the recently launched Elle Spa and Salon, the resort has a host of considerations for vacation seekers. Our infinity pool provides the much-needed serenity to travel and customised work out plans are listed for enthusiasts.

**What are your expectations from the government?**

**Heidi:** It is important to make well-



**Heidi Grimwood**  
Vice President of Spa, Atmosphere Hotels & Resorts and The Ozen Collection, Maldives

**New generation of mindful travellers is looking for health promoting breaks**

ness tourism all inclusive. We need to give wellness travellers options for sampling wellness to fully im-



**Shiv Bose**  
General Manager  
DoubleTree by Hilton Goa - Panaji

**Wellness Tourism will certainly go up in 2022 if early indications are to go by**

mersive programmes. Everyone has different needs and requirements; some people simply want

to try a few wellness activities and therapies to see if they like it. We should make it accessible for all entry levels.

**Shiv:** Adoption and accessibility are the two factors that needs attention. While the former is on the rise with the new age traveller, the latter needs to be developed to have more work class establishments delivering wellness. The beacon needs to be brighter on the guidelines to drive standardisation and uplift standards, thereby tagging such centres differently. It is imperative that the government envisages marketing them under the Incredible India campaign to promote tourism in this sphere.

**How popular is wellness tourism in domestic and international market?**

**Heidi:** Wellness tourism is forecasted to grow even faster by 2022 and reach \$919 billion, with an annual growth of 7.5 per cent. While North America is driving the

most wellness tourism revenues of \$242 billion annually and Europe clocking the most wellness trips, the Asia-Pacific region is the eye-opener growth leader, according to the Global Wellness Institute. While wellness tourism is mostly concentrated in several countries across North America, Europe and Asia-Pacific, the top five nations – US, Germany, China, France, Japan represents 59 per cent of the global market. But things have been changing over the course of the past three years, with both China and India shooting up the ranks.

**Shiv:** In Covid times, resurgence of travel is attributed to domestic travel. Currently our resort is solely reliant on domestic travel and our marketing efforts are geared towards this endeavour. Inbound is a trickle and not significantly large enough to form a share. We have been clocking more than 3,500 room nights every month from domestic travel, the monthly rise is significant.



# 'India beckons wellness tourists'

With International Yoga Day being celebrated worldwide, India is making the right moves to attract tourists in the country looking at it as a wellness and spiritual destination, especially in the post-COVID world.

**Rupinder Brar**, Additional Director General, Ministry of Tourism, at the International Day of Yoga (IDY) programme in Hyderabad, said, 'Yoga for Humanity', which is the theme of IDY 2022, is the central message from India to the whole world.

**Yoga boosting inbound**  
She believes that India will get huge promotion with IDY being celebrated worldwide. "The kind of yoga that you learn from an original practitioner and the way you can learn from a place where it was actually born is an entirely different experience. Thus, com-



Rupinder Brar at Yoga Day programme in Hyderabad

**Yogic wisdom**

"Yoga is born in India and yogic wisdom has been part of India's basic existence on a daily basis. That is something we would like to take forward. Particularly in the post-COVID world, it is a very important message because people have been negatively impacted, whether because of the world just shut down suddenly or because many people also suffered from Covid itself and from its impacts. The psychological impacts of Covid have also been huge across the world and we look forward to people taking in the whole philosophy of yoga into their daily lives and just be healthier in their body, mind and spirit," she said.

Yoga is born in India and yogic wisdom has been part of India's basic existence on a daily basis

ing to India would see higher interest from across the world as people prioritise Yoga more than ever before," she added.

**Going all out**

Brar revealed that they are actively working with various ministries towards making the visa easier, which should also help the whole process of people travelling to India for Yoga. "The last two years were focused more on sustaining and making sure that people felt safe. Therefore, the intervention of the ministry was largely fo-

cused on making sure that the industry learns new protocols and it was communicated that India is safe to travel. Now, that the world is open, India is also issuing visas, much more robust campaigns in terms of taking the message for India forward are already underway and more shall come in the coming months," she said.

## Travel demand remains intact despite higher inflation

Travel demand continues to stay strong across the world even in the wake of high inflation and an anticipated global slowdown due to lockdowns in China as well as the ongoing conflict in Europe,

ing more bookings, as families plan to step out during the annual summer break for the first time in two years. While hill stations were already witnessing a spike of 100-150 per cent in April as per the last re-



says RateGain Travel Technologies, a global SaaS provider for travel and hospitality, in its latest edition of PULSE report.

port, the same destinations are now witnessing a growth of 50-60 per cent. This is in stark contrast to last year when India was under the grip of a deadly second wave of Covid-19. When compared to May 2021, India's bookings have grown by 178 per cent even though the country witnesses high cost of travel. Delhi continues to clock double digit growth in bookings and a 65 per cent hike in ADR when compared to last month.

The company analysed demand from over 191,000 hotels, as well as monitored future travel demand from over 60 cities in the month of May.

India continued to see its monthly bookings grow with tourist destinations up north as well as down south attract-

195 Countries DMC

Tuesday

Tuesday June 28, 2022

# One Above News Today

## ONE ABOVE NEWS AND BULLETIN UPDATE

### ANNOUNCEMENT

"We are growing to serve you better."

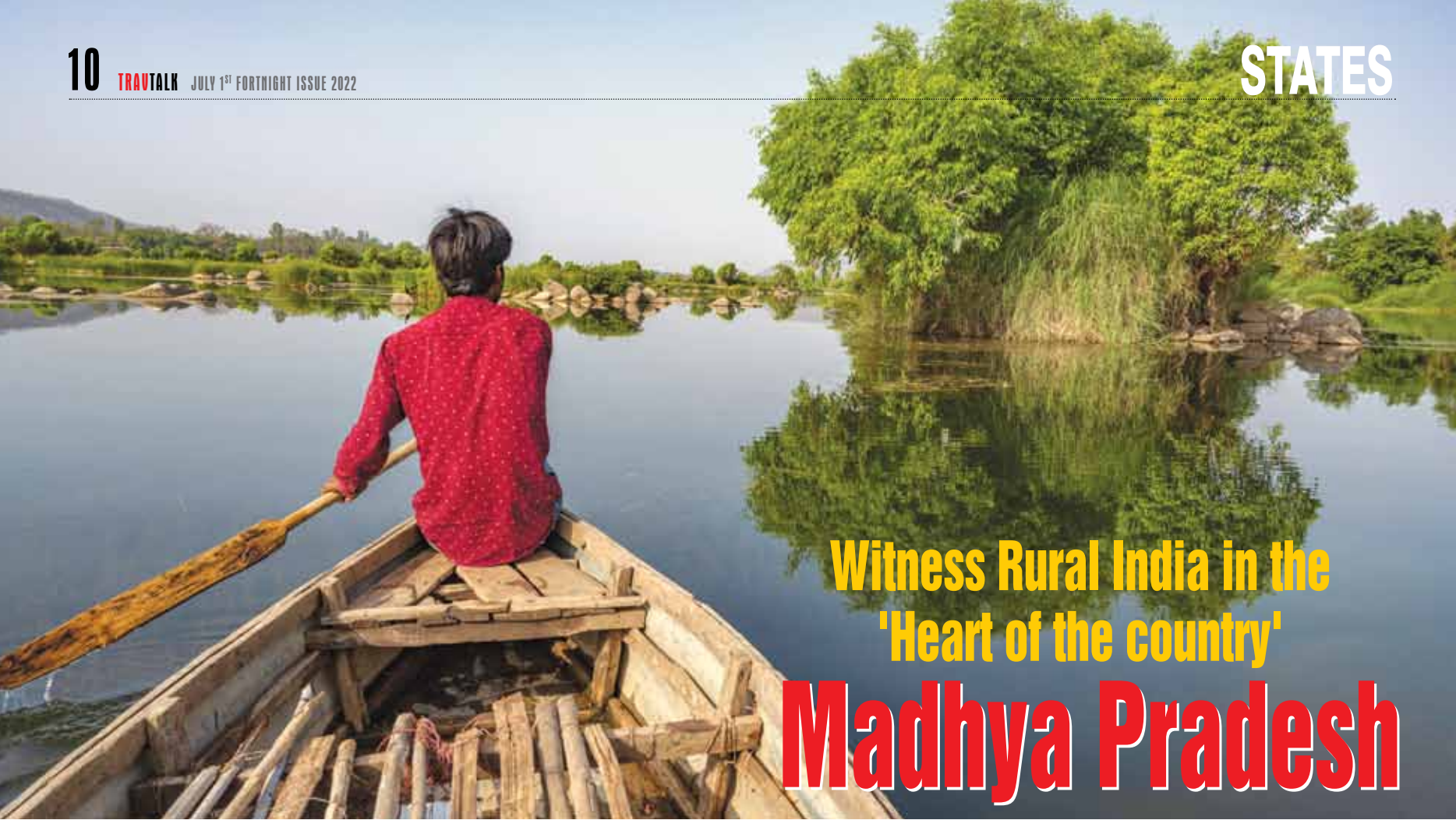
It gives us immense pleasure to introduce **Ms. Nisreen Bulbulia** as the Managing Director of One Above South Africa. Nisreen brings 14 years of progressive experience in the travel industry. She will be heading the South Africa DMC for contracting, MICE & Logistics. Please join us in welcoming her.



Name: Nisreen Bulbulia  
Managing Director  
M: +27 83 240 2865  
E-mail: nisreen.sa@one-above.com

Office Add: 16th Floor, The Pinnacle  
Building 8 Burg Street, Cape Town,  
South Africa





# Witness Rural India in the 'Heart of the country' Madhya Pradesh

Rural tourism is slowly gaining popularity among travellers and why not? Exploring rural destinations can help to know the traditional roots of a state!

If you are planning to spend some time away from the hustle and bustle of the city life and explore the village houses, taste simple yet delicious meal, experience tribal culture and enjoy the splendid natural and unpolluted surroundings to soak in the rural culture, Madhya Pradesh has it all for you.

The local communities are involved in tourism activities including high-class lodging and boarding facilities, local food, folk music and cultural activities, rural sports, local art and crafts. The homestay in the villages are made of using local material that helps to keep rooms protected from the heat.

Madhya Pradesh Tourism (MPT) has introduced Rural Tourism in a big way to provide safe and sustainable tourism experience. The state tourism board was felicitated with two international awards for its rural tourism project at the World Travel Market (WTM) Responsible Tourism Awards 2021 held in London between November 1 and 3, 2021.

Here we are suggesting a few villages to experience rich Indian culture:

### Ladhpura Khas: Niwari District

Situated just 6km from Orchha (also known as Ayodhya of Bundelkhand), Ladhpura Khas village in Niwari district of Madhya Pradesh was nominated in the 'Best Tourism Village' category

MP has introduced Rural Tourism in a big way for safe and sustainable tourism experience

for the United Nations World Tourism organization (UNWTO) Award in September 2021. Full of natural scenic beauty with

hills, forest and river within the vicinity make this village the perfect destination to relax and enjoy nature.

A visit to this village would let you experience the histories and the architecture while being in the tranquillity of countryside. You'll experience and get an insight into village life.

Tourists can get involved in various farming activities (including milking of cows), go on a tractor ride, walk around the village and meet the villagers, or simple relax and enjoy the serenity.

One can enjoy water sports activities like river rafting and kayaking in Betwa River, which is just 11km from this village. Tourists experience folk songs, folk dances, bhajans and other cultural activities apart from having delicious food cooked on clay stove.

### How to book:

Contact: Org- Haritika:

9926353281

Nearest Railway Station:

Jhansi (25KM)

### Dhamna, Basata: Chhatarpur District

If you are the one who loves to buy and find some unique handmade keepsakes, Dhamna, Basata and Madla villages could be the perfect destinations. Apart from enjoying the scenic beauty all around and a typical rural life, you would experience amazing arts and crafts that would give you a lifetime memory to cherish.

**Dhamna** - Dhamna Village is just 25km from UNESCO World Heritage Site Khajuraho and 6km from Panna National park. Pandav waterfall is 13km, while Raneh waterfall is 18km from this village. If you want to enjoy boating in Ken River, then you will have to travel just 6km from Dhamna. You can

### Madla: Panna District

The village is situated at the gate of Panna National Park. Khajuraho is 25km from Madla while Ken River is just at walking distance (2km). Pandav Waterfall is 7km and Raneh waterfall is 24km from this village. Here you will also be able to buy some



also buy some keepsakes such as terracotta, beautiful fridge magnets, car hangings, garden stakes, diffusers, board pin and paper match etc. prepared by villagers in Dhamna.

**Basata:** The village is 31km far from Khajuraho and 11km far from Panna National Park. Pandav Waterfall and Raneh Waterfalls are 18km and 16km far, respectively, from Basata. For boating in Ken River, you will have to travel just 11km.

### How to book:

Org- Dharshna: 7747007502, 9179875638

(For Dhamna and Basata)

Nearest Railway Station:

Chhatarpur Nearest Airport: Khajuraho

beautiful souvenirs like tote bag, lunch bag, cushion cover, folder, travel wallet, wall hanging, key chains, key covers etc.

### How to book:

Org- Bundeli Culture:

9669666939

Nearest Railway Station:

Chhatarpur Nearest Airport: Khajuraho

### Khokhara & Thadipathar villages: Sidhi District

If you are eager to know the tribal people's way of living and experience tribal cuisine, dance, music, art and craft, along with enjoying riverside stay then these villages are for you. You will be mesmerised by soothing music of tambura or tanpura, dancing,

interesting legends, cave, waterfall and will also get to know about herbs.

**Khokhara** is 30km from Sanjay Dubri National Park, while Barchar Waterfall is just 1km from this place.

**Thadipathar** is 28km from Sanjay Dubri National Park, it is a confluence site of Gopad and Mahan River, which is just 1.5km from this village, while Charakapani waterfall is just 2km from the village. One can also enjoy a long sand river beach.

### How to book:

Org: GSS: 6266229565

Nearest Railway Station:

Khajuraho Nearest Airport: Khajuraho



(Advertorial)

# Know Barcelona better

Continuing with its series of webinars to help the travel trade discover Spain, the Tourism Office of Spain – Mumbai, along with Barcelona Tourism, recently conducted a webinar titled ‘Know Barcelona’.



TT Bureau

Barcelona is a city with a wide range of original leisure options that encourage you to visit it time and again. Overlooking the Mediterranean Sea, and famous for

Gaudí and other Art Nouveau architecture, Barcelona is one of Europe’s trendiest cities. It’s a hub of new trends in the world of culture, fashion and cuisine. The charm and slower pace of the old town, the avant-garde vibe of more modern neighbour-

hoods, and the fast pace of one of the world’s most visited cities coexist in Barcelona.

### Winners take it all

The Tourism Office of Spain – Mumbai, along with Barcelona Tourism, conducted a

quiz, Spain Specialist Program (SSP)-Know Barcelona, on June 15, 2022. The quiz had two winners, who take away a five-day trip to Barcelona, inclusive of international airfare in October 2022. Congratulations to the two quiz winners!

## Winners rejoice!



Shreyanka Churiwalla  
Nimbus Tours & Travels

“The Spain Specialist Program is informative and well categorised into different sections allowing its users to enhance their knowledge about what Spain has to offer from its rich cultural heritage, diverse transportation, gastronomy, sightseeing, natural beauty, shopping and much more. The Barcelona webinar was quite interesting and a learning moment about the new openings and current attractions in Barcelona. The quiz followed by course has been quite enriching and of course to top it all up - a trip to Barcelona. Thank you for this great opportunity.”



Nitish Gupta  
Zenith Leisure Holidays

“The Spain Specialist Program is a very innovative programme focusing on beaches, islands, big cities, natural product, cultural product, different religious routes, different foods and beverages, which Spain as destination can offer. We learned some basic facts about the country and gained practical knowledge how to organise a visit to Spain. We gained knowledge of most extraordinary beaches, cliffs, natural sites, islands, Spanish big cities and city breaks, sports, routes showing Spain’s cultural sites and most importantly how to combine leisure and tourism with food and wine. Learning about Spain is more exciting with SSP. Thanks for conducting the Know Barcelona webinar. It was very informative and covered all aspects of Barcelona like its art, culture, cuisine, infrastructure and tourist attractions.”

(Advertorial)



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# When in Australia, go the Aussie way

Business Events Australia, along with Tourism Australia partners – Melbourne Convention Bureau and Business Events Sydney – recently hosted five corporates from Mumbai, along with SOTC, to a six-day luxury trip in Australia. The trip highlighted exclusive venues and activities in Melbourne and Sydney that corporates can include in their MICE travel.



# Singapore cruise greets Indians

Singapore Tourism Board (STB), along with Resorts World Cruises (RWC) and Royal Caribbean International (RCI), recently organised a webinar on 'Reimagine Cruising from Singapore', which updated the travel trade in India about cruising from Singapore and the latest cruise offerings.

 Nisha Verma

**G B Srithar**, Regional Director, India, Middle East & South Asia, STB, shared that Singapore is welcoming back cruise holidaymakers from India, who can now also enjoy port calls.

### Singapore is ready

Highlighting key points, he warmly welcomed back Indian travellers to Singapore. "Under the vaccinated travel framework, travellers from India and across the world are welcome back to enjoy Singapore. Secondly, we have both RCI and RWC providing exciting and varied cruise holiday options. A major development that will make

are three straightforward steps. First, the travellers need to show vaccination proof if they are born in 2009 or earlier. Second step is to get a visa. Lastly, three days before arrival, they need to submit their SG Arrival Card online. The on-ground experiences are back to near pre-Covid times - masks are not required outdoors, dining in big groups is possible and late night lifestyle and entertainment spots are open for party-goers. To keep visitors safe, masks are still required indoors," he said.

Srithar revealed that cruise lines have requirements for guests to go for ART test for Covid-19, one calendar day before. "There are

reimagined new ways of travel experiences, which are New, Unknown Unexpected and Transformative (NUUT). "There are many interesting offerings. These include the immersive Museum of Ice Cream - the themed attraction's first outlet outside the United States. On Sentosa, there is now Hydrodash (Singapore's first floating aqua-park) and Cable Car Dining (where one can admire the stunning aerial views of the harbour while dining in a private cable car cabin)," Srithar said.

For visitors looking for new accommodation options, he added that there are also six brand-new hotels in Singapore, ranging




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





**Naresh Rawal**  
Vice President, Sales & Marketing,  
Resorts World Cruises



**Varun Chadha**  
Chief Executive Officer, TIRUN Travel  
Marketing - India Representative for RCI

 Passenger traffic at present is 40 per cent of pre-Covid level and may reach 50 per cent by year end

 From October, we plan to initiate itineraries to Phuket and Bali too as borders open

 Singapore will continue to remain a focus for the cruise line with deployments



cruising even more attractive for Indian travellers is the return of port calls - to Malaysia by RCI, and to Malaysia and Indonesia by RWC," he said.

Inviting Singapore's travel trade partner-friends to bring cruise holidaymakers from India to Singapore, Srithar said, "Prior to Covid-19, India was our top cruise source market. More than 150,000 visitors from India to Singapore were cruise holidaymakers. We are hoping to build back the momentum and bring Indian travellers to Singapore to enjoy their cruise holidays." He said, "There has been a spike in cruise uptake by India in May and the forward booking of cruises are looking optimistic. We have several big group M&I movement on cruise in the second half of 2022."

### Ease of travel & Cruise protocols

He said that visiting Singapore is "very simple" as there are no flight restrictions or health application requirements. "There

many test centres around Singapore, where one can get tested fairly fast and it is affordable. Besides getting tested in Singapore, it can also be done in India through local service providers here," he said.

### Reimagining experiences & cruise offerings

Over the past two years, many of Singapore stakeholders have

from the Hilton Singapore right in the heart of glitzy Orchard Road, to Citadines Connect City Centre, the popular apart-hotel for travelling families in search of more space. He further added, "Singapore has a new and improved line up of cruise experiences. We have got Spectrum of the Seas and Genting Dream. Talks are on with other cruise liners also, who are eager to de-

ploy the ships back to Southeast Asia by the late 2022."

RCW's luxurious offerings **Naresh Rawal**, Vice President, Sales & Marketing, Resorts World Cruises, said that they, along with STB and RCI, are working towards making Singapore as Asia's leading cruise hub. Sharing that Resorts World Cruises is an extension to the Resorts World brand, he shared, "It is an integrated resort cruising on the high seas. With our flagship Genting Dream from Singapore, we will be offering two-night or three-night cruises. We will start our destination cruises to Malaysia and the first one to visit Indonesia as well. From October, we plan to initiate itineraries to Phuket and Bali too as the borders continue to open."

### Spectrum of the Seas, by Royal Caribbean International

Spectrum of the Seas is newly deployed to Singapore, revealed **Varun Chadha**, Chief Executive Officer, TIRUN Travel Marketing - India Representative for RCI.

Specifically on MICE, "The Business Events in Singapore (BEIS) scheme offers financial support for large corporate groups. Then we have the In Singapore Incentives & Rewards (INSPIRE) programme, which offers an array of extraordinary experiences



"Singapore was the first country that RCI restarted sailing from. It will continue to remain a focus for the cruise line. Currently Spectrum is offering three- and four-night ocean getaway sailings, every Monday and Thursday. We have restarted sailing to Penang and Port Klang from 30 June. There are also some longer itineraries planned for Q4 and Q1 2023 for five-, seven- and nine-night sailings," he said.

### Cruise & MICE Schemes

STB has designed an array of schemes for the corporate and the agents to take advantage of.

for smaller groups. There is also Singapore MICE Advantage Programme (SMAP), which offers delegates exclusive privileges islandwide."

Shedding light on Cruise Development Fund (CDF), he said, "It aims for STB to support travel agents in activities that helps market and promote Singapore as a cruise destination along with the land experiences. The fund will support the agent in the marketing and promotion of fly-cruises, land experiences and even development of on-board themes for the cruisers for up to 80% of the qualifying cost." 

(Advertorial)

# 'India key source market for us'

Roslina Arbak, MD and CEO, Desaru Development Holdings One Sdn Bhd, supports promotion of Desaru Coast – a new destination for the Indian market – and announces its largest incentive package at a total of ₹12 million to entice Indian travellers, event and wedding planners and corporates.



Hazel Jain

## What was the idea behind promoting Desaru Coast in India?

As an international destination, Desaru Coast has always seen India as an important source market with huge opportunities in all segments. The importance of the Indian market is undeniable. India has one of the highest growths in outbound travel and is expected to grow exponentially in the post-pandemic years. Indian visitors would be among the most coveted travellers due to its developing economy, young population, and rising middle class. Location and access-wise, India is within a four-to-six-hour flight to Malaysia and Singapore and is easily accessible via three international airports close to Desaru Coast – Singapore Changi Airport, Kuala Lumpur International Airport and Senai International Airport.



**Roslina Arbak**  
MD and CEO, Desaru Development Holdings One Sdn Bhd

This year, we visited India as a fully operational destination resort with all six world-class resorts and attractions and connectivity infrastructure – the Desaru Coast Ferry Terminal, completed. Our priority now is to re-engage and reintroduce our destination to our Indian partners. We are here to demonstrate Desaru Coast's diverse offerings, infrastructure and readiness to welcome more Indian travellers. We also recently announced our largest incentive package ringing in at a total of ₹12 million to entice Indian travellers,

event and wedding planners and corporates to our coastal resort for their next leisure travel, MICE event and weddings.

## What kind of numbers did you see pre-Covid from India?

As a newly developed international destination, Desaru Coast

world-class resorts and attractions and connectivity infrastructure. Pre-Covid, we received a good volume of inquiries from the Indian market for MICE.

We are confident that our new signature MICE Reinvented - bespoke, experiential and authentic events will bode well with Indian planners. Desaru Coast has reimagined all possible spaces and experiences across the destination to offer a multitude of integrated indoor and outdoor activities. Future MICE at Desaru Coast can be designed with an enchanting mix of indoor and outdoor experiences to include all five-star facilities, along with curated activities at the beach, forest, mangroves, local villages, golf courses, ballrooms and conference centre.

## Do you see Desaru Coast becoming even more popular with Indian wedding segment?

As a fully operational interna-

## 'We reach out to wedding planners'

**Manoharan Periasamy**, Senior Director, International Promotion Division (Asia & Africa), Malaysia Tourism, adds, "We will reach out to wedding planners and couples looking to get married. Destination weddings are huge in India, so we are looking at attracting a few of them, not only to our beach resorts, but also our new attractions and destinations, specially down south to an idyllic getaway destination called Desaru, near Singapore. We have lots of high-end properties."



**Manoharan Periasamy**  
Senior Director  
International Promotion Division (Asia & Africa), Malaysia Tourism

Our priority now is to re-engage and reintroduce our destination to our Indian partners

has been opening in stages since 2016. We are now a fully operational destination resort with all six

tional destination, we are now looking to significantly grow the wedding segment. With our portfolio of assets, Desaru Coast has the holistic product portfolio to be a leading wedding destination for the Indian market. To attract Indian weddings, ₹4.4 million incentive will be presented to the first five weddings booked at our destination, which trans-

lates to approximately ₹8,80,000 per wedding.

## Are you looking to conduct some on-ground engagements?

We are working with DMCs in Malaysia, which are actively promoting the country to the Indian market. We have also started working with DMC in Singapore to offer dual city packages.

# Yoga Day celebrated with fervour

The 8<sup>th</sup> edition of International Day of Yoga was celebrated at 75 iconic locations across India, which saw dignitaries from various ministries leading mass yoga sessions, including Ministry of Tourism. In addition, Indian missions across the world also celebrated the day at various locations.



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# Countries keen to greet Indian visitors

After a hiatus of more than two years, countries are gradually reopening borders. Since there is a pent up demand for travel, countries are ready with new products to cash in on. As India has been among the top source market in the world, countries are keen to welcome Indian travellers and allowing them hassle-free visa.

**Janice Alyosius**

As countries reopen borders after a gap of more than two years, people have started to travel. Owing to the pent up demand, the travel sector is booming.

Since India has been among the top source market in the world, interactions with diplomats of several countries reveal that the countries are enthusiastic to welcome Indian travellers and therefore allowing them hassle-free entry.

While Indian travellers do not need visa for entry to some countries, others are allowing them easy visa with certain conditions. Nepal, for example, is allowing entry to Indian visitors with only a valid vaccination certificate. Indians do not require a visa to travel to Nepal.

"However, Indians are required to carry proper credentials issued by the Government of India," says **Shankar P Sharma**, Ambassador of Nepal to India.

Another country where Indian travellers do not need visa to travel is Jamaica. The country opened its borders last year.

Serbia has also been providing easy visa to the Indian travellers. **Sinisa Pavic**, Ambassador of Serbia to India, said, "We have a very comfortable visa policy as compared to other countries, especially for India. Indian passport holders can enter Serbia without a visa for 30-day stay. This is a result of the bilateral agreement between the two countries and I believe this is a big advantage for future possibilities. I must underline that both the countries are working together for better results."



**Shankar P Sharma**  
Ambassador of Nepal to India



**Sinisa Pavic**  
Ambassador of Serbia to India



**David Puig**  
Ambassador of the Dominican Republic to India, H.E.

Indians are required to carry proper credentials issued by the Gov

Dominican Republic, a country famous for its beaches, majestic waterfalls and incredible

We have a very comfortable visa policy as compared to other countries

biodiversity adds to the list of countries that do not require visa for Indian travellers. Speaking to

DP is a safe country to travel since we have ensured a good vaccination coverage

H.E. **David Puig**, Ambassador of the Dominican Republic to India, said that the visa policies

of the Dominican Republic have not changed irrespective of the pandemic, but during the pandemic travelling became difficult because of the requirements such as PCR test and vaccination certificate that were in place not only in Dominican Republic, but around the world.

"Dominican Republic is considered a safe country to travel since we have ensured a good vaccination coverage. We have an easily accessible visa policy. Indians, who have a visa in their passport, can enter directly to Dominican Republic just by buying a tourist card on arrival at the airport. For the nationals of other countries, or the nationals who do not have the visa in their passport, they can seek a visa in our embassies. It is a simple procedure. We request a set of documents, which are easy to procure," he said.

## Oman Air showcases Muscat



Oman Air conducted a Fam trip from 8-13 June for MICE, Leisure and Luxury segments. The trip showcased Muscat infrastructure, hotel inspections, sightseeing, attractions and venue capacities besides rich culture, history, cuisine and famous landmarks.

## Luxury travel on the rise

Contd from page 3

hotels in India are also at peak due to the increase in demand. The starting airfares for Europe are estimated to be around ₹3-4 lakhs. Despite the high fares, people are not getting air tickets. This indicates the surge in the demand for luxury tourism," he added.

Interestingly, there is a growing demographic of socially conscious, high-net-worth consumers, who are rejecting overt displays of wealth in favour of inconspicuous and responsible consumption. Their approach to luxury is driven by ethical living, artisanship, authenticity and sustainability. Experience is the new currency for these holidaymakers, who seek self-fulfillment through greener travel and eco holidays, while wanting to 'do good' for people and the planet. "If luxury travel brands ignore this trend, it could put them at tremendous risk of total disconnect with an audience who are looking for sustainable options," Munshi says.

While COVID-19 has changed many aspects of the luxury trav-

el, there are still several defining features that set the sector apart from mass market tourism. This includes hyper-personalisation and exclusivity.

According to a study, as luxury travellers resume travelling both domestically and internationally in the aftermath of the pandemic, they wish to seek experiences that are "more immersive and exceptional" than in previous years. Sharing the view, Munshi says that there

ation and opting for longer stays," he says.

Speaking of the travellers' preferences, Munshi said that all destinations have the potential to offer luxury, but it depends on the travellers' demand and choice. "The definition of luxury for one need not be same for the other. Luxury travel is an emotion. How do you feel at certain destinations, attractions vary from individual to individual. For some luxury means exploring only high-end



has been a change in the travel trends since 2019. "Travellers are now choosing more relaxed and detailed itineraries for travel. Instead of covering four to five destinations in one trip, they are exploring a single des-

hotels, going aesthetically beautiful hotels and exploring the hotel facilities, for some it may be a jungle track and enjoying the nature, and for some it may be going to the Northern lights and enjoy the experience," he said.



# Village with unique offers

Developed on the concept of 'Back to Your Roots', Monteria Village offers an authentic village experience with a modern touch, while making sure that the guests fall in love with the natural surroundings.

TT Bureau

Monteria Village is a destination designed to give a guest an elevated experience of quintessential village life, says **Rahi Vaghani**, Managing Director, Monteria Resort. "Spread across 36 acres in Raigad district's Khalapur town, we have nurtured an ecosystem that plants its guests in the daily

ern agriculture practices, our guests are naturally exposed to its grounding energy. We have leaned on a modern outlook to offer the most authentic traditional touch to any family holiday, wedding destination and corporate events," he adds.

### Village vision

Vaghani says that 'Back to Your Roots' is a concept evolved with



Rahi Vaghani  
Managing Director, Monteria Resort

### Unique offerings

It offers unique village experiences, an immersive art experience, traditional village techniques, classic village masterpieces, street food, souvenir and art stores and daily essentials. A lot of entertainment and unwinding options are there for the guests as well, including costume photography, traditional games, amphitheatre, village mela and golf cart for elderly. "Considering the feedback from our guests, we are soon launching Kabila, a place for camping at Monteria Village," he said.



life, culture, cuisine, entertainment, art and heritage of an Indian village. Surrounded by lush green expanses that are farmed using age-old and mod-

his father's vision to lead his retired life in a village that would enable him to slow down and be close to the nature by leading the farming activities.

# Smooth sailing for Resorts World



Resorts World Cruises celebrated a double milestone with its maiden voyage as a new cruise line; and the Genting Dream's inaugural cruise from her homeport in Singapore, welcoming guests on board for the very first time. This marks the start of Resorts World Cruises' global premiere as a new Asian luxury and dynamic lifestyle cruise brand, introducing its flagship - the first ship of a planned fleet that are 'Resorts Cruising At Sea'.

# Indian consul promotes Goa in USA

Consul General of India in New York, Randhir Jaiswal recently hosted an event at the Consulate to promote tourism from USA to Goa. About 75 travel agents and opinion makers attended the event, in which Sunder G Advani, CMD, Advani Hotels and Resorts (India), made a presentation about the uniqueness of Goa as a tourism attraction.



# SEPC bats for industry status

Abhay Sinha, Director General, Service Export Promotion Council (SEPC), shares that SEIS will go a long way in helping the service sector exporters, including those in the travel, tourism and hospitality segments, as they will be able to claim benefits under the scheme, for which ₹ 2,061 crore has been provisioned.

Nisha Verma

The services sector in India is committed to achieving \$1 trillion exports by 2030 and the share of Service Exports from India Scheme (SEIS) will go a long way in giving much-needed impetus to the service sector exports, believes **Abhay Sinha**, Director General, Service Export Promotion Council (SEPC).

Talking about the scheme, Sinha said, "More than 45,000 exporters, most of them from the MSME sector, will get benefitted and it will help in the rapid growth of exports in the coming months and spur employment. Service sector exporters, including those in the travel, tourism and hospitality segments, will be able to claim benefits of SEIS, for which ₹2,061 crore has been provisioned. The disbursement is set for FY 2021-22."



**Abhay Sinha**  
Director General, Service Export Promotion Council (SEPC)

## Engaging with government

When it comes to working with the government for SEIS, Sinha said, "We believe that the Government of India views the services sector on par with manufacturing and provides equal attention. The services sector contributes nearly 60 per cent of the total exports, and

while the government and Ministry of Commerce oppose the system of financial incentives for any sector, they need to provide incentives to motivate and encourage businesses. The ability to generate employment is quite large in the services sector compared to the manufacturing sector. The more

you invest, the more is potential in the services sector. Similarly, the services exports help in overcoming the balance of payment deficit in the manufacturing and other sectors. Our efforts are to help the sector achieve a status that is on par with manufacturing."

## Discontinuing SEIS?

Claiming that the mood in the government is to discontinue the SEIS, Sinha said, "Our endeavour with the government is to work closely with them to convince it to have a different set of benefits in case the SEIS is discontinued. We are recommending something along the lines of Refund of Duties and Taxes on Exported Products (RoDTEP) for the services exporters to remain competitive with counterparts internationally."

## Industry and infra status

When asked about the need for

industry and infrastructure status for tourism and hospitality, he said, "Travel and tourism not only generate employment, but also bring in

**Tourism related services needs to get a proper status and benefits like other services sectors**

the vital foreign exchange for the country and remains a major contributor to the country's GDP. As far as contribution to employment is concerned, in 2018, the tourism sector generated 8.1 per cent

of the total employment in India by providing 42.7 million jobs. "The same is expected to rise to 53 million jobs by 2029. If the government intends to grow the services exports up to \$1 trillion by 2030, there is need for a comprehensive policy to propel the kind of growth. Tourism and travel is an industry that requires heavy capital investment and enhanced infrastructure. Giving it its due is bound to support growth," he emphasised.

## Way forward

Sinha suggested that the tourism sector needs to be given industry status. "Tourism related services have been a completely unorganised sector and the sector needs to get a proper status and benefits like other services sectors. The Ministry of Commerce can work with the Ministry of Tourism on identification of such players and support them."

## EVENT TALK

**Media Partners:**



JULY 2022

Date	Event	Time
1-3	Travel & Tourism Fair - Kolkata	10:00 am
5-6	Travel and Tourism Fair - Hyderabad	9:00 am
7-10	Travel and Leisure Expo (TLEX)	9:00 am
11-12	Women in Travel and Hospitality Conference	8:00 am
12-13	International Conference on Tourism and Hospitality	9:00 am
13-14	Annual MICE India and Luxury Travel Congress	8:00 am
15-17	Holiday Expo - Vadodara	9:00 am
16-17	Tourism Fair - Ahmedabad	1:00 pm
21	'Jewel of India' webinar with Maharashtra Tourism	TBA
28-30	Global Travel Marketplace	9:00 am
29-31	India International Travel Mart Bangalore	11:00 am

AUGUST 2022

2-4	PATA Destination Marketing Forum	9:00 am
5-7	India International Travel Mart Chennai	10:00 am
11-12	International Conference on Leisure and Tourism	8:30 am
11-14	Korea International Tourism Fair	9:00 am

For more information, contact us at: [talk@ddppl.com](mailto:talk@ddppl.com)

## Ministers to discuss tourism agenda

► Contd from page 3

reaffirmation of the importance of yoga in our everyday health practice, which the world itself has realised. Thus, the message of the importance of yoga for keeping one's own health and the practice of yoga, especially in the context of the pandemic, has gone down very well."

## Grand India celebrations

He highlighted that the IDY 2022 event was not just celebrated in Hyderabad, but at 75 different locations in the country. "These are important places that are associated with our culture and heritage. With these places, we are trying to highlight the importance of yoga, culture and heritage of our country. Hence, in this regard, it has gone off as a very successful event because it was the first time that this message of health has been spread after the pandemic."

On IDY celebrations being organised around the world by Indian missions, Singh said, "Especially after the pandemic, the importance of India as a wellness centre has gone up. People were traditionally coming to India for wellness tourism, including

yoga and other such practices. Especially after the pandemic, they will be more interested in travelling for wellness tourism, and India has a bouquet of services to offer in wellness—be it Ayurveda, Panchkarma, Yoga and various aspects of wellness. I think it will help raise awareness about the opportunities that India offers," he claimed.

## Work on Ayush Visa

Commenting on the work towards speeding up Ayush visa, Singh explained, "Any step needed to facilitate tourism, we always work in collaboration with other ministries. It is the whole government's approach and we will take any other step that is needed to facilitate tourism by way of facilitating visas. E-visas are a case in point where we significantly facilitated tourism for India." However, he added that it is still "too early" to say how soon Ayush visa will be a reality, but he will have a discussion with the Home Ministry.

## Tourism's contribution to GDP

He said, "The WTTC projections are that one in three jobs in the future will be created in tourism and the tourism GDP is expected to grow by a significant amount in

the future. Hence, we can capture a part of that business."

## Steps beyond promotions

India was climbing the ladder in terms of tourist arrivals, but post Covid, it has taken a huge hit. Now with borders opening and MOT already planning promotions, is

**To facilitate tourism, we always work in collaboration with other ministries**

— Arvind Singh

there a need for other initiatives like travel insurance? Singh answered saying, "There is discussion going on for travel insurance. Another major step was significant - expansion of the vaccination programme that has reached all the states. This gives tourists a sense of safety and we will be promoting our wellness

destinations and the fact that India offers a safe destination as well as safety of all class of travellers, be it women, old, or those who are looking for a wellness getaway offering a rich and rejuvenating experience in India. Apart from the promotions and publicity, there will be steps that we will be discussing with the states at the proposed conference about the measures to attract more domestic as well as International tourists."

## Trade engagement

In terms of working with the trade, Singh elucidated, "We are in dialogue with the travel industry. Throughout the pandemic, we took measures to help restructure the loans. We took steps to provide easy credit to travel agents, guides and other stakeholders of industry, including commercial establishments. Also, we always discuss with them to evaluate how these measures are working and we will be continuing the dialogue to see how we can make measures more effective. Already, some states have started giving industry status. It is a step in the right direction. We are encouraging the states to reduce the compliance burden on the hospitality industry."

# Maharashtra

grants

# Industry Status

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## HILTON MALDIVES AMINGIRI RESORT & SPA MALÉ

Hilton has appointed **GAURAV THAKUR** as the General Manager of the upcoming Hilton Maldives Amingiri Resort & Spa. Located on a private island in the North Malé Atoll, the 109-all pool villa resort will open on 1 July 2022. Thakur will lead the pre-opening team in all aspects of resort operations, from guest satisfaction to commercial activities. A hospitality veteran with a 17-year-long career in Hilton across the Waldorf Astoria, Hilton and Conrad brands, Thakur's diverse experience includes roles in countries such as the UK, India and the Maldives. He has played key leadership role in the opening of many renowned hotels.



## AIR INDIA

**New Delhi**  
**AZEEZ NARAIN** has been appointed as Head - Project Management, Office of Chief Commercial Officer, Air India. He holds a degree in Electrical Engineering from Delhi College of Engineering and an MBA from Faculty of Management Studies. He has been a part of the 2009 batch of Tata Administrative Service (TAS). He has been Vice President - Development at IHCL and Head - Business Development & Strategy at Ginger Hotels. Prior to joining the aviation and hospitality industry, Narain has had cross-functional exposure to various consumer businesses of the Tata Group in FMCG, retail and automotive sectors.



## SAROVAR HOTELS AND RESORTS

**New Delhi**  
Sarovar Hotels announces the appointment of **ANKUR CHANDRA** as the new General Manager - Development. Chandra has close to 20 years of experience in hotel operations to pre-opening and development. In his new role, along with his team, he will be responsible for underlining the hotel's strategy to boost new projects and development. His last assignment was with Cygnett Hotels as the Director of Operations and Development. Chandra started his professional journey in 2003 with Park Inn, Chennai.



## JW MARRIOTT

**New Delhi**  
**VIPIN KHATTAR** joins as the General Manager of JW Marriott New Delhi. Khattar brings with him more than two decades of extensive experience as a hospitality professional primarily in the UK, Middle East and Africa. He has had a tremendously rewarding career journey owing to his diligence and highly driven approach and commitment to business objectives. In his new role at JW Marriott New Delhi, Vipin is expected to elevate the performance of the hotel in Aerocity sector and the Delhi Market. One of his key priorities would be to enrich the strong culture of exceptional JW Treatment for the hotel's guests.



## WYNDHAM

**Gurgaon**  
Wyndham Hotels & Resorts has announced the appointment of **ARPIT PANT** as the new Development Director for Eurasia. With 20 years of experience working in hotels, residences and vacation rentals in multiple markets across South Asia and the Middle East, Pant has served several roles in asset management, feasibility, sales, marketing and finance. Pant's appointment comes as a part of the company's strategic plan to place resources closer to the business and spearhead growth across the region. With a wealth of hospitality experience and skills, Pant will be instrumental in driving the continued growth of the hotel in the region.



Sarovar Hotels and Resorts has also announced appointment of **RAJESH KUMAR** as the new General Manager for Sarovar Premiere, Jaipur. With a career spanning 22 years of cross-cultural experience in the hotel industry, Rajesh brings with him his strong analytical and planning skills, business driven and people-oriented management style. Prior to his present role, he was associated with Nile Hospitality based in Ahmedabad. With industry exposure across leading hotel chains in India, Rajesh worked with brands like Hyatt, Taj, Grand Hyatt, Shangri-La, IHG and The Lalit Suri Hospitality. He holds a bachelor's degree in B.Com and Hotel Management degree from NIPS.



## HYATT REGENCY

**Pune**  
Hyatt Regency Pune has appointed **MANUJ SAWHNEY** as the Director of Operations. An industry expert, Sawhney has an experience of more than 14 years in hospitality industry. In his current role, Sawhney will be responsible for heading and managing the hotel operations and maintaining high standards of guest satisfaction. A driven professional, Sawhney is passionate about enhancing customer experiences and achieving operational excellence with his team. Prior to joining Hyatt Regency Pune, he served as the Director of Food & Beverage at JW Marriott, Kolkata.



## GRAND MERCURE

**Bengaluru**  
**PRIYANKA MAJUMDER** joins Grand Mercure Bengaluru at Gopalan Mall as the Front Office Manager. She brings in more than 10 years of extensive experience in front office management, revenue management, guest service and customer support. In her last role, she was working as Front Office Manager at Pride Hotel Bengaluru, heading the departmental operations and assisting in revenue management. After graduating from IHM Bhubaneswar, Majumder began her career with Hyatt Regency as Guest Service Officer. She has worked with many renowned hotel brands, including Hyatt, IHG and Lalit.



## THE WESTIN MUMBAI GARDEN CITY

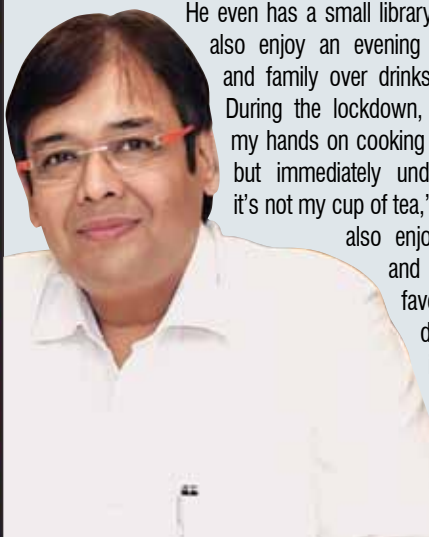
**Mumbai**  
**SAURABH CHOWDHURY** has been promoted as the Director of Operations for The Westin Mumbai Garden City. He has been associated with the hotel for the last six years. He joined the hotel as the Director of Sales in 2016 and was promoted to Director of Sales and Marketing in 2018 for his relentless spirit of learning and growth. Saurabh has been a part of the industry since 2006 and has worked with prestigious hotels like Grand Hyatt Mumbai, The Leela Palaces, Hotels & Resorts and The Renaissance Marriott Mumbai Convention Center Hotel.



## TALKING PEOPLE

**JITUL MEHTA**, Managing Director, VP Travels and TAFI Western India Chairman, is an avid reader and reads all kind of books, newspapers and magazines to de-stress.

He even has a small library at home. "I also enjoy an evening with friends and family over drinks and dinner. During the lockdown, I even tried my hands on cooking a few times, but immediately understood that it's not my cup of tea," he says. He also enjoys travelling and one of his favourite holiday destinations in India is Rajasthan, Udaipur in particular.



**MUKESH RAKSHIT**, Director of Operations - Sayaji Hotel Kolhapur, says, "Stress is a common word in today's world and to distress I used to follow certain things that gave me a sense of relief i.e. calling my best friends and share some good old memories, regular exercise, meditation in terms of morning prayer and listening to music. During the lockdown I have spent time cooking, reading books and exercise which gave me positive energy during that period. My next holiday will be to Leh."



**ANAND YEDERY**, Regional Head of Marketing and Sales, Cathay Pacific, spends time with his kids and family, which has been instant stress buster for him. He says, "During the lockdown I honed my cooking skills with help from my wife, who is a culinary chef. My favourite holiday destinations are Goa and Kerala in India and Cape Town in South Africa. During my last visit to South Africa with my family, we drove down the Garden Route. It is a spectacular beauty along the southwest coast of South Africa. We now want to visit Tokyo."





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# Melbourne's interest in India

While traffic from India into the state of Victoria in Australia was largely leisure traffic, Julia Swanson, Chief Executive Officer, Melbourne Convention Bureau, reveals that India has now become the largest source of leads out of the Asian-Pacific market.



## How important is MICE traffic from India for Melbourne?

India was the fastest growing inbound market for Victoria pre-Covid. This was predominantly leisure travel. However, we have been steadily seeing increased business event interest out of India. India is now the largest source of leads out of the Asia-Pacific market and we have been increasing our engagement activity in the Indian market. We are seeing smaller groups travelling more



The average night stay in Melbourne for Indian delegates is around four nights

frequently, a big focus on team building activities – reconnecting after two years stuck behind screens, and more sustainability focused activities.

## How do sport/ entertainment events help destinations like Melbourne attract more high-spending visitors?

Melbourne prides itself on being the sports capital of Australia,

with its enviable sporting precinct of stadiums, pools, tracks and fields. In fact, it is often commented that sport is like a religion in the Victorian capital city. Melbourne famously hosts international events like the Australian Open, legendary Boxing Day cricket test at the MCG and the Formula 1 Grand Prix. These major events attract a large number of visitors from around the world and also expose Melbourne to the world via international broadcasting. Many people wish to come to Melbourne as a result. The venues of these major events are all available to host business events.

## What is the average night stay in Melbourne for Indian visitors?

The average night stay in Melbourne for Indian delegates is around four nights and the compact city is easy to navigate. For those wanting to explore further afield, the unique natural beauty of regional Victoria is just a short trip away. Four nights allows enough time to take that all in, but more nights means more time to add

on other great experiences and indulge in some serious shopping which we know is a must do for many visitors.

## What kind of engagements is Melbourne CB looking to conduct with event planners, corporates and MICE agencies in India?

While travel was not optimised through Covid, we ensured the Indian market was up to date with the latest happening in our city with inspiring product showcases via live-streaming and webinars from a host of interesting locations. One of my favourites was with Australian cricket coach and former Australian cricketer Brad Hodge, who joined the Melbourne Convention Bureau at the Melbourne Cricket Ground to present in a destination training webinar for key Indian travel agents. Now that travel is back, we have started hosting familiarisations. Engagement is set to increase with trade shows, sales calls and more familiarisations on our future activity list.

up to service this, with many venues adding hybrid and streaming options to their AV mix. The growth of technology was already happening, but escalated due to Covid. Together with our innovative partners, MCB can support the delivery of your event and ensure you are maximising reach and growing your audience. We have created a user-friendly hybrid events guide to Melbourne which details exciting hybrid solutions and professional conference organiser service for hybrid events. ↴



Julia Swanson  
Chief Executive Officer  
Melbourne Convention Bureau

## Guidelines for visitors from India

All international arrivals must declare their COVID-19 vaccination status and complete a digital passenger declaration. Travelers entering Australia no longer require a negative pre-departure test. To visit Australia for Business or Tourism, they require a visa. Qantas Airlines and Air India both offer direct flights from Delhi to Melbourne.

## Is Melbourne prepared to conduct hybrid events?

While there is a pent up demand for in-person events, hybrid event options are on par for the course today. Melbourne is well set

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