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Domestic Tourism

picks pace as states
gear to make the
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OCTOBER
EDITION





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FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

Dear Friends,

The last quarter of the year is always special. There is nip in the air announcing the arrival of winters and that festivities are just round the corner. Starting with Navratri and ending with Christmas, with Dussehra, Diwali, Eid and Guru Nanak Jayanti in between, there is much to look forward to in the last quarter of the year. These festivities, every year, also bring with them hope and happiness, assuring people across the globe that all is well and God is kind. With Covid cases on a steep decline, the festive time couldn't have come at a more appropriate period as the world stands united in hope that the pandemic becomes an endemic soon.

Globally, the road from pandemic to endemic will be a rocky one but it is also the only one that will lead us safely into our future. As the Indian government announced the reopening of borders for inbound tourists, there was a wave of gratitude, positivity and hope amongst the travel trade fraternity. The announcement of resumption of Tourist Visa to foreigners coming to India on charter flights from October 15, 2021 and further for others effective November 15 2021 was a welcome relief for many. Various travel trade associations heads came forward to express their gratefulness at the announcement while for many others this was a signal of life slowly inching towards normalcy. As someone said, eventually, we will all learn to co-exist with this virus while carrying on with our everyday life...

Meanwhile, for us, putting together yet another issue of BOTT Magazine was a delight, as it always is. Our main focus for this issue was how numerous states across India are putting their best foot forward and launching special schemes, initiatives and campaign to attract more domestic traffic to their region. All this is being supplemented by the concerted efforts of the Ministry of Tourism, which are appraisable. So go ahead and read yet another issue of BOTT Magazine and we look forward to your feedback / suggestions/ criticism and appreciation on the same.

Your feedback, criticism and appreciation is most looked forward to.

Happy Reading!

Priyanka Saxena Ray

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Editor's DESK

BOTT
Business of Travel Trade
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As the worst seems to be behind us, several General Managers across hotels feel that Staycations and attractive f&b options will help keep them afloat.

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#FirstOpinion

"I have written to the Chief Ministers of Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Bihar and Chhattisgarh, requesting their personal intervention to instruct the concerned officers to initiate action for expediting the various matters like land allocation, deposition of funds with Regional Air Connectivity Fund Trust (RACFT), VGF support for International UDAN operations etc. for strengthening of aviation infrastructure in the respective states."

-Shri Jyotiraditya Scindia,
Civil Aviation Minister, Government of India



"Our members are very much depressed and disheartened. It is time for the Government to help the tourism industry by reviving inbound tourism to India. All other sectors have revived their business with the support from the Government and it is only the travel and tourism industry which is struggling for survival for last 18 months but there is no relief at all. Government should support the tourism industry especially the inbound tour operators who have zero business since March 2020."

-Mr. Rajiv Mehra,
President, Indian Association of Tour Operators (IATO)

"Jet Airways is aiming to restart domestic flights by the first quarter of 2022 on an all narrow-body aircraft fleet followed by short-haul international flights in the latter half of the year in the Q3 or Q4. It is the first time in the history of aviation that an airline grounded for more than two years is being revived and we are looking forward to being a part of this historic journey. The brand Jet Airways has a huge loyalty base and we are confident that with industry stalwarts like Captain Gaur, we will be able to capitalise and create new benchmarks."

-Mr. Murari Lal Jalan, Lead Member, Jalan Kalrock Consortium
and the proposed Non-Executive Chairman of Jet Airways



"Fortune Park Hotels, a member of ITC's hotel group, will be opening five properties with over 375 rooms in India by the end of next year, as part of its robust expansion plans in the country. Apart from this, we are also in advanced negotiations for a few more projects, some of which are anticipated to open before the end of next year."

-Mr. Samir MC,
Managing Director, Fortune Park Hotels Limited

"If we compare where we were 18 months ago to today, it's clear that despite the strain caused by COVID-19, the industry has not sacrificed its commitment to IATA's New Distribution Capability (NDC). On the airline side, we are now seeing new differentiated product bundles and price points. On the travel seller side, every Amadeus connected travel seller will be able to book NDC content. On the technology side, we continue to offer scalable, innovative solutions."

-Mr. Ángel Gallego,
Executive Vice President, Travel Distribution, Amadeus



CM launches Delhi Tourism's mobile app on World Tourism Day 2021

Chief Minister of Delhi, Arvind Kejriwal launched the Delhi Tourism's mobile app on the occasion of World Tourism Day 2021. "Our Govt strive to give tourists from all over the world the best experience when they visit Delhi. Now tourists can plan their complete journey from this one app", said Kejriwal. The app is one stop window to plan one's holiday in the national capital with information about historical monuments, art galleries, events and other sightseeing options. The app is available on both Android and IOS platforms.



Teardrop Hotels Sri Lanka appoints BRANDit as India Representative

Teardrop Hotels, a chain of luxury boutique hotels in Sri Lanka has appointed BRANDit, a specialist in tourism marketing, as its representation partner in India. BRANDit will be responsible for shaping the travel trade strategy, promoting sales and executing PR campaigns. This marks a new chapter for Teardrop Hotels as it looks to invest and strengthen its presence in the Indian market. Teardrop is a collection of small, stylish, service-driven hotels that prides itself for contemporising centuries-old heritage buildings and vintage tea bungalows-with-views in distinct regions across the island nation.

Pride Group of Hotels to expand to 50 Hotels nationally by 2022

The group currently has a presence in around 34 great locations with over 3200 keys. Once the new openings are complete Pride Hotels will have 50 properties and over 5000 keys across various geographical regions. It also plans to add 72 rooms and 35 rooms at its five-star properties in Nagpur and Pune respectively. Announcing the development, S.P. Jain, Managing Director, Pride Hotels Limited, said, "We would be expanding our footprints to 50 hotels nationally by 2022. The focus will be on an asset-light model for our expansion with a major slice of the portfolio managed directly by us." The new portfolio includes resorts and hotels in the cities of Mussoorie, Daman, Dapoli, Dehradun, Amritsar, Dwarka, Aatapi, Chandigarh, Faridabad, Gurgaon, Ujjain, Ratlam, Vadodara, etc. The Pride Resort in Aatapi is an amusement park plus a resort located in between Vadodara and Kewadia (famous for the Statue of Unity, the world's tallest monument).



Wyndham launches new hotel at Mumbai International Airport

Wyndham Hotels & Resorts plans to expand its presence in India with a 300-room new-build hotel at Mumbai International Airport. The new property, which is set to open in the summer of 2022, will be managed by MASA Hotels Private Limited. Ramada Plaza by Wyndham Mumbai Sahar is conveniently located minutes from Terminal 2 – the main terminal serving international flights – and will provide guests with direct access to the country's second busiest airport, with close to 50 million passengers passing through each year. The hotel will provide comfortable accommodations and modern amenities for both business and leisure visitors to Mumbai.

Fortune Hotels to operate a 96 rooms resort in Benaulim, Goa

Fortune Hotels, a member of ITC's hotel group has inked an operating agreement for a resort in Benaulim, South of Goa. Poised to open in October, this attractive resort is the third alliance of the chain in Goa. With this latest addition, Fortune Hotels now has 50 alliances across 43 cities of India. Located just 800 meters from the pristine Benaulim beach, this quaint and picturesque resort, is an existing property. It would be speedily refreshed and styled to the Fortune brand standards and readied to welcome guests in its new avatar as Fortune Resort Benaulim Goa by the early part of the festive season. Together with 96-rooms including plush suites and chalets, a relaxing spa, a stunning swimming pool, multiple food & beverage offerings and unique experiences, this tranquil property is sure to charm the mixed bag of leisure travellers headed to Goa.



TAT New Delhi hosts media over a networking luncheon at Soy Neung Roi



The Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) New Delhi recently organised a networking lunch for the media at Soy Neung Roi, Thai restaurant at Radisson Blu Plaza Delhi Airport hotel. The networking afternoon started with an address by Mr. Vachirachai Sirisumpan, Director TAT, New Delhi. "Thailand and Thai travel trade is eager and looking forward to welcoming Indians soon. We are waiting for the good news to come so that travel can resume between the two countries." Ms. Pinki Arora, Director, Marketing Representative North & East India, Bangladesh & Nepal, Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) thanked the media for their presence and support, not just at the event but also through the year. Mr. Ashwin Kumar Goela, Cluster General Manager, Rajasthan & Agra, Radisson Hotel Group, South Asia and General Manager, Radisson Blu Plaza Delhi Airport, announced the reopening of their quintessential Thai restaurant and also welcomed the members of the media present on the occasion..

Switzerland Tourism launches a new Swisstainable sustainability strategy

In keeping up with the needs of today's traveller for authenticity, proximity to nature and considerate consumption, Switzerland Tourism has launched a new Swisstainable sustainability strategy, with an aim to make the country the world's most sustainable travel destination. This new programme covers the entire Swiss tourism industry and is for anyone and everyone, locals included, looking for sustainable options while travelling within the country. Sustainability has been an intrinsic part of Switzerland for decades. The Swiss famously lead low waste/ sustainable lifestyles, sharing a common passion for household recycling, choosing public transport over private vehicles and a great love for the outdoors.



Ain Dubai, world's largest and tallest observation wheel to be unveiled on October 21

Ain Dubai, the record-breaking monument and the latest addition to the extensive Dubai Holding entertainment portfolio, is all set to open for public on 21 October 2021. Starting at AED 130 (approx. INR 2600), tickets are now available to book on www.aindubai.com. Ain Dubai is the ultimate celebration destination that has captured the imagination of the world. It plays a strategic role in supporting Dubai's long-term vision as set by His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, to strengthen its global position as a key tourism hub, continuing to build on the emirate's reputation as a leader in the global leisure and entertainment landscape.



Air Mauritius secures funding to meet growing demand as Mauritius re-opens

Air Mauritius has exited voluntary administration and is increasing flight capacity to cater for travellers from all over the world who are planning to visit the Indian Ocean paradise island for work and pleasure.

Airline exits voluntary administration with US\$280million government loan; consolidates aircraft fleet. The government of the Republic of Mauritius is injecting Rs12 billion (US\$280million) into Air Mauritius via a loan to provide long term stability for the company as international air travel and tourism rebuilds following the Covid-19 pandemic.

Air Mauritius is a strategic national asset central to the government's tourism and investment strategy and provides Mauritius with its own passenger and cargo connectivity to meet market demands. The new loan arrangement was overwhelmingly supported by Air Mauritius' creditors.



SriLankan Airlines launches flights to Paris, starting November 1, 2021

SriLankan Airlines has unveiled its plan to start flights to the French capital, Paris. SriLankan's new service will operate scheduled flights between Colombo's Bandaranaike International Airport (BIA) and France's Paris Charles de Gaulle Airport (CDG) from November 1, 2021. Accordingly, SriLankan would commence thrice weekly, non-stop flights to France every Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday using a fleet of Airbus A330-300 aircraft configured for 269 economy and 28 business class seats. The flight time is around 11 hours and 25 minutes and Flight UL563 is scheduled to depart Colombo at 00:35 hrs and arrive in Paris Charles de Gaulle Airport at 07:30 hrs. The return flight UL564 is scheduled to depart Paris on the same day at 14:30 hrs and arrive in Colombo at 05:20 hrs the next day.

Tourism professionals go on an 'appeal fam' to request govt. to open international tourism

A group of 18 inbound tour operators from Delhi undertook a trip to Dholpur and Ramsagar Lake with an appeal to the government for opening up tourist visas and regular international flights. People from the tourism and hospitality industry travelled to Dholpur in Rajasthan from September 15 – 18 to make an appeal to the government to initiate issuance of tourist visas under the banner of "Unlocking International Tourism". Around 25 people made their way to Dholpur in Rajasthan and also met 4 time Member of Parliament and a hospitality industry stalwart himself, Mr. Dushyant Singh. Mr. Dushyant Singh assured everyone that the government is working hard to come out with the new guidelines to reopen international travel towards India. Sanjay Razdan, Director – Razdan Holidays and Jt. Secretary IATO, was extremely pleased with the meeting.



ATOAI holds a National Awareness Webinar on The Great Indian Outdoors at the Threshold



ATOAI organised a National Awareness Webinar called The Great Indian Outdoors at the Threshold on September 15, 2021. The session was conducted by ATOAI Vice President, Mr. Vaibhav Kala. The Great Indian outdoors opened up two decades ago to a large domestic audience. Over the past 20 years, the industry has mushroomed to over 15,000 stakeholders in the outdoor adventure travel industry. The panel discussion was moderated by the ATOAI President, Mr. Vishwas Makhija and the speakers were – Dr. V. Venu, Additional Chief Secretary, Department of Tourism, Government of Kerala; Ms. Rupinder Brar, Additional Director General, Ministry of Tourism, Government of India; Brig. Ashok Abbey, President, Indian Mountaineering Foundation and Ms. Soity Banerjee, Project Editor, Outlook Responsible Tourism Initiative.

ETAA North India committee organises orientation trip at Palampur and Dharamshala

The ETAA North India committee organized yet another successful 2 night and 3 days orientation trip at Palampur and Dharamshala with Hotel Partner "JüSta Hotels and Resorts from the 22nd to 24th September 2021. The event was packed to capacity, and was keenly attended by 26 members who enjoyed the beautiful road trip to the beautiful locales of Palampur and Dharamshala. The trip started with 26 members and the Head of sales – Domestic Travel Trade jüSta Hotels and Resorts, Mr Raman Tuli for an overnight journey to Palampur on September 21 night with an arrival the next day morning. Members arrived with enthusiasm and joy, a quick check in and post lunch the orientation of the tea gardens and village walks gave a first-hand experience of the beauty that lies beneath!



In an attempt to revive tourism and reboot the travel business in the eastern part of India, the Skål International Kolkata elected its new management team for the next season 2021 – 2023. Skål International clubs worldwide consist of travel and tourism industry company owners and decision makers, thought leaders and industry influencers at the highest level. At its Annual General Meeting (AGM) held in Kolkata on September 23, the new Skål International Kolkata committee re-elected Sk Sanjeev Mehra as the President, Sk Amin Asghar as the First Vice President, Sk Punam Arora as the Second Vice President, Sk June Mukherjee as the Secretary, Sk Jay Saraogi in Membership Development, Sk Pramod Lunawat and Sk Avanti Chatteraj as Auditors, Sk Sreemoyee Mitra in PR & Communications, Sk Avijit Sarkar in CSR and Sk Ritu Jolly in charge of Young Skål.

New Skål International Kolkata team aims to bid for Skål World Congress 2024





Celebrating the World Tourism Day on September 27, 2021, Lok Sabha Speaker, Shri Om Birla, delivered keynote address at the programme “Tourism for Inclusive Growth” organised by the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India. Union Minister of Tourism, Culture & DoNER Shri G. Kishan Reddy and MoS for Tourism Shri Shripad Yesso Naik also graced the occasion along with other officials from the Ministry to Tourism and made several important announcements pertaining to the growth of Tourism in the country.

MoT launches ‘NIDHI 2.0’, Responsible traveller campaign & ‘India Tourism Statistics 2021’ at World Tourism Day



Priyanka Saxena Ray

On the occasion, the Secretary General, WTO, Shri Zurab Pololikashvili addressed the gathering through a video message. Secretary Tourism Shri Arvind Singh; DG Tourism, Shri Kamala Vardhana Rao; Head UNEP, Sh. Atul Bagai; senior officers of the Tourism Ministry and representatives of travel and hospitality industry also shared their thoughts on the occasion.

Speaking on the occasion, Shri Birla said that post-Covid, the tourism sector is reviving in India at a faster pace. He further said that committed and collective efforts will ensure that India will emerge as the best tourist destination in the world. “The way we collectively defeated Covid-19, our collective force and coordinated efforts will take our economy to a new height,” said Shri Birla. Tourism is one of the growth engines of economy and employment. Therefore, special focus is needed for further

development of this sector, he added.

On the vast tourism potential in India, Shri Birla said that our rich cultural heritage and diverse geography attract tourists from all over the world. There is tremendous potential in India in the fields of environment, spiritual, education and medical tourism. India’s domestic and foreign policy have provided an enabling environment for promotion of tourism. Our goal must be to make India the number one tourist destination. In this regard, more and more efforts should be made to develop tourist friendly destinations, the Speaker observed. Shri Birla emphasized on use of information technology tools in promoting tourism both at the domestic and international levels.

On this occasion, Shri Birla launched NIDHI 2.0 (National Integrated Database of Hospitality Industry) and released “India Tourism Statistics: At a Glance, 2021. NIDHI 2.0 data base which was released today will be a milestone

in this endeavour, hoped Shri Birla. The Ministry of Tourism, United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and The Responsible Tourism Society of India (RTSOI) have signed an MoU to actively promote and support 'sustainability initiatives' in the tourism sector, which was also exchanged at the event.

The purpose of this Memorandum of Understanding is to undertake measures to actively promote and support 'sustainability initiatives' in the tourism sector of each other and work in a collaborative manner wherever possible. MoU provides a framework of cooperation and facilitates collaboration between the Ministry of Tourism, UNEP and RTSOI, on a non-exclusive basis, in the areas of common concern and interest. A plan will be developed under MoU, including specific activities, projects and programmes, whose definition and implementation shall be subject to detailed separate agreements, in accordance with purpose of MoU.

The Union Tourism Minister, Shri G Kishan Reddy while addressing the gathering said, "The tourism sector is one of those few sectors which have suffered a lot due to this pandemic and the early resumption of tourism is very important for the recovery and growth of this sector". He added, "As on date, India has already administered over 85 crores vaccination doses to its citizens. With the ongoing aggressive vaccination strategy, we are now a step closer to the reopening of the country to tourism in the beginning of the New Year. I am grateful to the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi for his relentless focus on vaccination," he added.

He lauded the efforts of the ministry and said, "The National Integrated Database of Hospitality Industry (NIDHI) is the ministry's portal to register accommodation units in the country and as on date 44,024 units have been registered on the portal which was activated on 08.06.2020."

Shri Reddy said, "The Prime Minister's

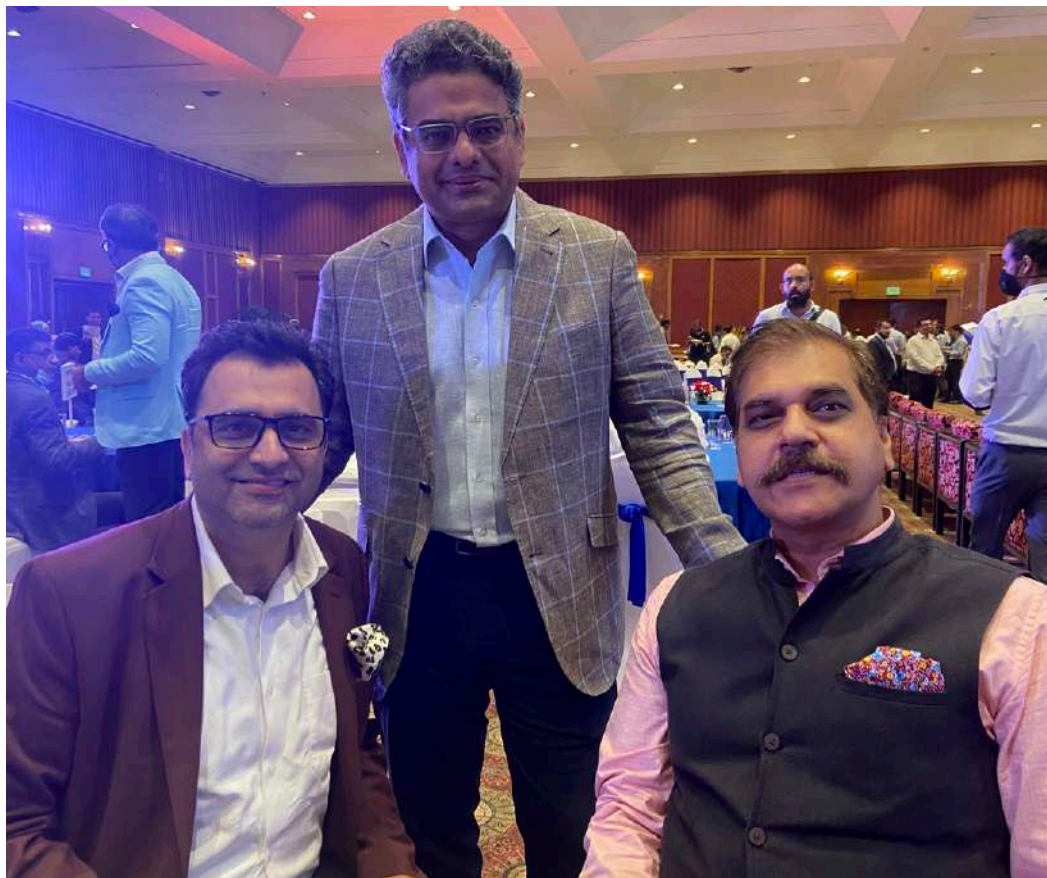


vision has been to use tourism as a tool for employment generation and inclusive development." The tourism sector has the highest job creating potential among the primary, secondary and tertiary sectors, he added.

MoS for Tourism Shri Shripad Yesso Naik, in his address said that the revival of tourism plays an important role in the recovery of global economy. Tourism sustainability is relevant for both developed and developing countries for its impacts on the environment, economy, and socio-cultural aspects of global, regional, and local economies. Shri Naik added that by adopting Responsible Tourism practices,

tourism plays an important role in the upliftment and involvement of the local community with the hospitality industry and government departments, leading to empowerment and development of the people in the area while sustaining eco-friendly tourism. He also informed that the ministry has planned a detailed strategy to utilize technology to the fullest extent to overcome the setback created by the pandemic.

Secretary, Tourism Sh Arvind Singh said that the Tourism Ministry is working tirelessly to revive the tourism sector which suffered greatly due to the Covid pandemic. It is possible to revive the tourism sector quickly by



reviving demand especially of domestic tourism, he said. The Secretary said that the Ministry is holding regular talks with states, and tourism industry stakeholders to work out solutions to revive and support tourism.

Smt Jyoti Mayal of Federation of Association of Indian Tourism & Hospitality; Shri Rakesh Mathur, Founding Member & Honorary President of RTSOI and Shri Atul Bagai, Head UNEP India also expressed their views on how to revive the tourism sector in the post Covid scenario as well as promote Responsible and Sustainable Tourism that benefits the person at the

last mile. "Our immediate objective is to recover the Indian tourism industry from the pandemic and to rightfully move forward with socio-economic contribution towards Indian economy and on the world stage. We surely have the potential of becoming the largest inbound, domestic and even outbound tourism markets of the world & also the largest hub between the east & west.



After IT industry, Indian tourism is the next growth engine on the world stage which can leverage a combination of tourism, technology and technical skilling," said Smt. Mayal in her address.

Shri Rakesh Mathur shared, "We are greatly indebted to Sh. Arvind Singh Ji, for renewing the MOU and to Sh. Atul Bagai for joining us in this landmark event and partnership. We are grateful to all our Patrons, Honorary Members, Founders, Ambassadors, Governing Council Members, Conveners and Members for supporting this cause which gives little direct benefit. And of course, my greatest gratitude is to my team who have made all this possible."



Let the World heal through TRAVEL

The pandemic has left deep scars on almost everyone... someone lost a family member, someone a friend, some lost work while many lost their jobs and sources of livelihood. Yet they say, human spirit is resilient and bounces back stronger than before after every calamity. On this World Tourism Day, let the world know that people will only heal through travel and let the process begin...



'Over the years, tourism has contributed significantly to the exchequer and has been a major employer as well. However, the last 18 months have taken a toll on the inbound tourism sector. It has been one of the worst phases for the tour operators and in view of the debilitating hardship endured, IATO earnestly urges the government to restore SEIS benefit to 7%, as was paid a year before. On this World Tourism Day, I hope our pleas are considered seriously.'

-Mr. Rajiv Mehra, President, Indian Associations of Tour Operators (IATO)



'As Covid cases played their erratic game in the last few months – dipping, rising and then dipping again, many people took solace in the idea of exploring their own country and taking a short driveable break. Domestic Tourism has played a crucial role in helping people maintain their calm and I have no doubt that in the coming year, more and more people will be attracted towards exploring their own country first. On this World Tourism Day, I can confidently say that India will heal through domestic travel.'

-Mr. P. P. Khanna, President, Association of Domestic Tour Operators in India (ADTOI)



'The MICE sector has been one of the worst hit during the pandemic as the very concept of 'physical meeting' underwent a whole new change. On this World Tourism Day, I hope we move forward towards a future where 'meeting and greeting' becomes part of our business yet again. MICE and Tourism Professionals should get vaccinated and we must all collectively focus towards showcasing India as a safe destination to host events and exhibitions.'

-Mr. Amaresh Tiwari, Vice Chairman, India Conventions Promotion Bureau (ICPB)



'This World Tourism Day, I hope that the worst is behind us and that we are all moving forward towards the end of the pandemic. I hope the government will open up commercial flights so that international travel can resume and people's faith in international travel is reinstated yet again. On this World Tourism Day, I urge people in the travel trade to please get vaccinated and not be afraid to undertake an international holiday.'

-Mr. Riaz Munshi, President, Outbound Tour Operators Association of India (OTOAI)



'As we commemorate the 41st World Tourism Day we stand on the cusp of a revival after the devastation of the last 18 months. Let us today reaffirm our commitment to resurrect the travel and tourism industry with a renewed sense of purpose; with a pledge to make it more responsible, more sustainable, more equitable and more caring of the planet. Tourism is a powerful tool to eliminate poverty, enhance gender parity, heal wounds of conflict and foster peace. Let us embrace this higher paradigm of tourism and work together as an industry to leave the world a better place.'

-Mr. Ajay Prakash, President, Travel Agents Fraternity of India (TAFI)

Gujarat Tourism unveils plans to make state a tourism hub

With more people getting fully vaccinated, the number of Covid-19 cases remaining capped, and consumer sentiment optimistic, tourism within Gujarat is set to gain this festive season. People who have stayed locked up inside their homes these last 18 months are now pining to take a break. With restrictions on international travel continuing, the preference for domestic and short-distance travel remains strong and it is this very demand that Gujarat aims to capture and make the state a popular tourism hub.

BOTT Desk

Claiming that Gujarat is the only state in India with maximum variety of tourism spots in the country, Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel recently called upon the tourism stakeholders for making the state an all-round tourism hub. Ranging from vast wetlands to lush green forests and from deserts to pristine beaches Gujarat boasts of many natural attractions which are a treat for eyes. The state also has one of the ancient cities in the world, Dholavira besides scores of sites of religious significance.

Addressing the Gujarat Travel and Tourism Excellence Award-2021 Second Edition distribution ceremony jointly organised by the Gujarat Tourism Department and the Tourism Corporation of Gujarat Ltd (TCGL), the Chief Minister said that global pandemic has hit hard the travel and tourism sector but Gujarat has converted the challenges into opportunity to revive this sector.

Patel noted that Prime Minister Narendra Modi has lent a new concept by joining festivals to tourism while establishing a new era of politics of development through such ideas like Sauna Saath, Sauna Vikas, Sauna Vishwas, Atmanirbhar Bharat and attempt to make India a Vishwa Guru.



He said that the state government has undertaken a novel concept of border tourism, setting up National Salt Memorial at Dandi to commemorate Mahatma Gandhi's famous Dandi March. Gujarat was the first state in the country to announce the Heritage Tourism Policy in 2020.

Tourism Minister Purneshbhai Modi said the state is committed to attract global tourists to Gujarat, having vast stretches of white Rann of Kutch, 1,600 km long coastline, historic stepwells Vav, temples at Somnath, Ambaji and other places.

The state government, earlier this year, had announced its new tourism policy for 2020-25 with special focus on attracting new investments in the state's "high priority tourism centres" by offering lucrative incentives to entrepreneurs. Under the new policy, tourism projects, such as hotels and resorts, which would come up in these high priority centres will qualify for subsidies on investment and other incentives. Some of these high priority centres are Kutch, Devbhumi-Dwarka, Narmada, Gir-Somnath, Porbandar, Junagadh and Dang districts. Some specific talukas of other districts,



such as Dhari in Amreli and Dabhoi in Vadodara, are also included in the list of high priority tourism centres. Under the policy, the government will give subsidy of 20 per cent on capital investment for setting up a hotel in the designated high priority centres. While the minimum investment required is R1 crore, there is no cap on maximum investment, which excludes the cost of land, as per the policy document.

For setting up theme parks or amusement parks in these priority centres, the subsidy will be 15 per cent for an investment in the range of R50 crore to R500 crore. To attract large investments in this avenue, the state government will provide land on lease, in addition to the 15 per cent subsidy, for projects of more than R500 crore proposed investment, according to the policy.

Holidays are just around the corner and the desperate need in people to travel is almost palpable. There has been a paradigm shift in the travel pattern and preferences of people over the past two years, i.e. since the pandemic. More people are travelling within Gujarat to short-haul destinations at a drivable distance. They don't want to take chances amidst the uncertain

Covid-19 scenario with guidelines varying from state to state. For holidays within Gujarat, uptakes are vigorous for pilgrimage tours at Somnath and Dwarka. People also prefer flocking to the Union territories of Diu, Daman, Dadra and Nagar Haveli. Bookings at resorts in Gir Forest, Saputara and the tent city at Statue of Unity as well as Rannotsav, which kick-starts from November 1, are quite good, say travel industry players.

Junagadh, Sasan, Somnath, Dwarka and Kutch are also some of the key destinations preferred by people during Diwali festival holidays. Dwarka and Mandvi have emerged as major tourist attractions because of the temple and Shivrajpur beach, which has bagged the coveted Blue Flag tag. In fact, hotel tariffs have shot up in the wake of the buoyant demand, suggest tour operators. Sanjay Mehta, a Rajkotbased travel agent, said, "In Kutch, bookings for Rannotsav and Mandvi beach are robust. Almost 70-80% bookings are full and room tariffs have increased threefold."

This year, Diwali falls in November and therefore, bookings and inquiries for the tent city are agreeable. Bookings are solid for the Rannotsav

from people within Gujarat as well as outside the state. Last year, train connectivity was a challenge due to Covid-19 restrictions. However, with connectivity improving, the state is now witnessing tourist flow from all parts of the country.

Heritage hoteliers in the state are also getting wholesome business this Diwali season. The growing preference for safe, driveable and short-distance travel is indeed spelling out fine news for heritage hoteliers in Gujarat, as boutique heritage properties are catching the interest of travellers. Under the norms of the new normal and evolving travel preferences, travellers now want privacy, and remoteness of destinations, all at a boutique or luxury property and thus, occupancies at heritage hotels are up.

Locked up at home for the last 18 months, Gujaratis are flocking to the eco-camps too for some adventure. Thus, be it the tents, the heritage hotels or the touristic sites, Gujarat is not just welcoming people from all states but also contributing majorly to the movement of domestic traffic in the country. I think it would be safe to say that Gujarat will contribute greatly to the revival of tourism in India.

Kerala announces Caravan Tourism policy; welcomes luxury liner with travellers at Kochi

Rising to the demands and preferences of tourists in the post-pandemic world, Kerala today announced a comprehensive, stakeholder-friendly Caravan Tourism Policy, promising the visitors safe, customised and closest-to-nature travel experience. Additionally, the newly-built cruise terminal in Kochi Port recently received the first batch of tourists as the luxury liner M V Empress from Mumbai called at the port city, marking a promising start to the revival of post-pandemic domestic tourism in Kerala.



BOTT Desk

“This marks a paradigm shift in almost three decades after the state made it big with houseboat tourism that provided a unique experience to visitors and positioned the state as a major global destination,” Kerala Tourism Minister Shri P A Mohamed Riyas said while unveiling the policy which offers attractive investment subsidy to Caravan operators.

“Like other successful tourism products of Kerala launched since 1990s, Caravan Tourism is also to be developed on PPP mode with private investors, tour operators and local communities being key stakeholders,” Shri Riyas said at a press conference here. He said investment subsidy would be given to Caravan operators, the details of which would be announced soon.

“The policy envisages laying down the broad framework for the development and encouragement of Caravan Tourism in Kerala, predominantly in the private sector through incentivizing the purchase of caravans and for establishing caravan parks, chalking out the process and procedures for its operations and approvals,” the Minister added. On the occasion, Shri Riyas also unveiled the logo of Caravan Tourism.

The project will be rolled out in the next few months.

“Caravan Tourism imparts an added thrust to the State’s inclusive approach of leveraging the tourism potential of the entire state by bringing to attention many an unexplored spot side-by-side the promotion of established destinations. Every unexplored destination can be made accessible with the roll out of this meticulously drawn up policy,” said Dr Venu V, Additional Chief Secretary, Kerala Tourism.

The two major components of this activity are Tourism Caravans and Caravan Parks. While the first involves specially- built vehicles for travel, leisure and stay, the Caravan Parks are designated places to park the vehicles and enable the visitors to spend a night or a day or station for an extended period to explore the destination.

Caravan Tourism will also promote Responsible Tourism activities for sustainable growth and for the benefit of the local communities, promote eco-friendly practices and market for local products.

“Going by Kerala’s inherent strengths of natural beauty and tourism friendly-culture, Caravan Tourism has immense scope for the state. Besides offering a refreshing experience for the tourists,



local communities stand to gain substantially by enabling them to showcase their culture and products before the visitors”, said Shri V R Krishna Teja, Director, Kerala Tourism.

There will be two types of caravans. In one model, two guests shall be accommodated, while the other is for a family of four members.

The tourism caravans will have all the necessary facilities for a comfortable stay such as sofa-cum-bed, kitchenette with fridge and microwave oven, dining table, toilet cubicle, partition behind the driver, Air-conditioner, internet connectivity, audio-video facilities, charging system and GPS.

Eco-friendliness being a major feature of Caravan Tourism, preferably Bharat Stage VI compliant vehicles will be pressed into service. Assuring complete security of the guests, there will be IT-enabled real-time monitoring of caravans.

A fool-proof approval mechanism is also put in place for according approval for the operation of caravans based on

the procedures set by the State Motor Vehicles Department in accordance with the Central Motor Vehicles Rules.

The caravan parks are to be developed in private sector, public sector or in the joint sector. The configuration of parks will vary from location to location, even though the fundamental attributes remain the same.

A caravan park will be a completely safe and secure zone offering hassle-free and stress-free environment to tourists, protected with necessary features like compound wall, adequate security and safety arrangements, patrolling and surveillance cameras. The park authorities will maintain effective coordination with local authorities and medical establishments to attend to medical emergencies.

The minimum land required for a park will be 50 cents, with at least 5 parking bays. The park design should be compatible with its surroundings, causing the least possible disturbance to the site. Landscaping and plantation have to be planned to ensure privacy, green cover, and take into account such factors as wind, dust and noise.

The parks in hilly and ecologically fragile areas will have to incorporate creative architecture in conformity with local heritage. The parks should have proper water harvesting structures. There should be strategically located open space for recreation, a forecourt, drive-in area and turning circles. The parks will have Tourist Facilitation Centres to inform the visitors of amenities and services available.

Meanwhile, the Lakshadweep-bound luxury cruise carrying 1200 travellers had a stop-over in Kochi with 300 travellers de-boarding the ship for a day-long on-shore sightseeing. Kerala Tourism Department accorded a warm welcome to the guests with martial Velakali dancers and women in traditional off-white dress greeting them. The snow-white vessel, owned by Cordelia Cruises, became the first luxury cruise to anchor at the state-of-the-art terminal, after the devastating Covid-19 pandemic swept across the world. The Cochin Port wore a festive look, as Velakali performers holding sword and shield swayed with graceful vigour in two rows, showcasing the richness of the medieval cultural form.

Durga Puja festivities come to the rescue of Bengal's tourism industry

At a time when the tourism industry had been reeling due to the pandemic, there's some relief for the tour operators in Bengal. Thanks to the festive season, bookings for Durga Puja have surged beyond expectations as many travellers are seen keen on travelling to not just the regular but also off beat destinations in the state.

BOTT Desk

Durga Puja in West Bengal is a cultural extravaganza unmatched in the scale at which it is organised. There are about 36,000 registered community Durga Pujas in West Bengal and 2,500 community Pujas in Kolkata. According to industry sources, bookings for trips during Durga Puja are in full swing amid fears of a possible third wave of the pandemic.

Keeping in mind COVID-19 safety norms, many travellers this time are more interested in quieter destinations. People are preferring to stay at one place for at least three to four days instead of hopping in and out of several tourist attractions. The tourist response to four districts of north Bengal – Darjeeling, Kalimpong, Alipurduar and Jalpaiguri is "extraordinary" for the festival season. Most village tourism destinations, such as, Sittong, Tagdah, Tinchuley, Pedong are totally booked for the Durga Puja, and bookings have also started for Diwali and Christmas holidays. According to industry sources, if this trend continues, the tourism industry would be assured of a turnaround from the lull it faced since March 2020, when the nationwide lockdown was announced. As the village destinations are getting priority among the travellers for health safety reasons, there is now a crisis of homestays and resorts in these places, he said. Giving another burst to tourism in



Bengal, it is a well-received news that hotels in Darjeeling are brimming with tourists, ahead of Durga Puja. Dashain (Puja) has arrived and so have tourists in Darjeeling after months of lull induced by the Covid-19 pandemic.

Samir Singhal, the treasurer of the Darjeeling Hotel Owners' Association, said that almost all hotel rooms in the hill town were booked at least for the next 10 days. "Starting today most hotels are fully booked. However, this tourism season is a short one and the flow is expected to taper off after October 22," he said.

Meanwhile, the state tourism department has introduced two eco-friendly, battery-run electric vehicles for tourists at "Bhorer Alo", the mega tourism hub, which is the initiative of the state government at scenic Gazoldoba near the Teesta barrage in Rajganj block of Jalpaiguri, ahead of the Durga Puja holidays. The tourism hub, which has come up over 210 acres of land and wetland, is a dream project of chief minister Mamata Banerjee. Back in October 2018, she inaugurated the site where cottages for tourists have come up, along with some additional attractions.

IRCTC launches special trains and attractive tour packages promoting temples & historical destinations

IRCTC (Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation) Tourism has launched a seven nights and eight days long tour package to Ayodhya, Chitrakoot, Nandigram, Prayag, Shringaverpur, and Varanasi. Meanwhile, keeping the passenger rush in mind during the festive season, the Indian Railways has planned to run almost 1500 special trains ahead of Diwali and Durga Puja 2021.

BOTT Desk

The seven nights and eight days long tour package cover destinations such as Ayodhya, Chitrakoot, Nandigram, Prayag, Shringaverpur, and Varanasi. The total cost of the package will start at Rs 7,560 per person and will cover a significant number of temples and tourist destinations of historical importance. The tour date for the same is slated for 27 November.

The cost is inclusive of travel by train in sleeper class non-AC and 3AC class sleeper coach, accommodation for standard class on multi-sharing basis for night stay, room accommodation for 3AC on multi-sharing basis at places of night stay, and quadruple sharing basis room for morning freshening up for 3AC.

This package also includes pure vegetarian meals, tour escorts for announcements and information, security arrangements for each coach, an IRCTC Official on train as train superintendent, non-AC road transfers on SIC basis, and travel insurance.

Keeping the passenger rush in mind during the festive season, the Indian Railways has planned to run special trains ahead of Diwali and Durga Puja 2021. As per latest updates, the Indian Railways is planning to operate nearly 1500 special trains from October 10 to November 21. In general, the Indian



Railways runs nearly 5000 trains during the festive season. However, the COVID pandemic has hit the operations of trains as well as the demand for trains.

Every year, there is high demand for passenger trains in eastern India side from Dussehra to Chhath Pooja time. The festival of Dussehra has started from October 7, but no special trains have been announced yet by the Indian Railways. On the other side, the Southern Railways has decided to run Special Train services in the coming days. As per latest updates, the Southern Railway zone will run Train Number 06003/06004 Tambaram – Nagercoil – Tambaram Superfast special train on special fare. As per updates, the train comprises of eight Sleeper class coaches, three AC 3-Tier class coaches, four General Second class coaches and

two Luggage cum Brake Vans.

Meanwhile, in a bid to promote religious tourism in the country, the Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC) has started a special Bharat Darshan Tourist train on October 8, which will run from Rewa station of Madhya Pradesh to Agra, Mathura, Haridwar, Rishikesh, Amritsar and Vaishno Devi Shrine. According to the IRCTC Public Relations Officer (PRO) Anand Kumar Jha, the main aim to run this train is to give an enhanced experience to explore beautiful historical and devotional places of North India. To provide comfort to the passengers, a boarding facility in this special train will be available from Rewa as well as Satna, Katni, Jabalpur, Narsinghpur, Itarsi, Hoshangabad, Habibganj, Vidisha, Ganj Basoda, Bina and Jhansi stations.

The Leela Gandhinagar combines modern splendour with vibrant traditions of Gujarat

The Leela Gandhinagar opened its door for guests on September 1, 2021 and has been in news since for all the right reasons. The hotel has been thoughtfully planned and designed to make it the quintessential stopover for the sophisticated global traveller. It offers the perfect blend of modern splendour with the vibrant traditions of Gujarat and is committed to providing guests with unforgettable stays. Mr. Jaideep Anand, Vice President & General Manager, The Leela Gandhinagar, shares more in an exclusive with BOTT India.



Priyanka Saxena Ray

Is your Hotel open for operations? How much occupancy have you experienced since the opening?

The hotel is now fully operational with all guest rooms and suites available for guest stays; an all-day dining indulgence at our dining outlets – Citrus Junction; all day meeting outlet – Mokhsa Lounge; along with various wellness and leisure activities. Our state-of-the-art meeting and celebration spaces with multi-functional facilities are open to host events and gatherings of all sizes. We are also excited to soon open our Indian specialty restaurant – Diya. Our start in this quarter has been excellent and we have received an extremely warm response from our guests during their stay as well as non-residents while visiting us for a dining experience.

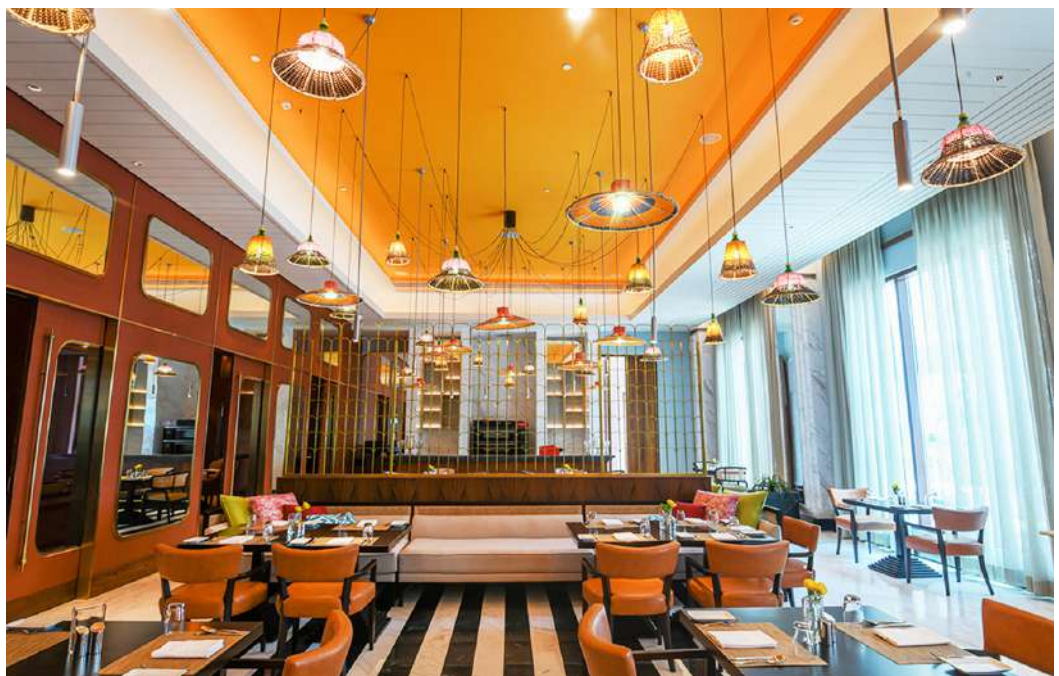
What kind of concerns are you facing from the customers who are engaging with you for bookings?

Given the present Covid scenario, guests are primarily concerned about safety and hygiene. In our efforts to ensure that we offer not only the most memorable stays but also the safest, we have implemented enhanced safety



and hygiene protocols under 'Suraksha by The Leela' - our comprehensive safety program. All our associates are vaccinated, and our hotel is also Platinum certified by Bureau Veritas. This is our holistic approach to ensure guest safety in our care.

Has your Hotel (Individual or Chain) come out with a special package to attract more traffic?



Yes, with the opening of our hotel, we launched a special offer – Gateway to Gandhinagar. This inaugural exclusive package offers a stay experience at our hotel with complimentary dining services and a host of other benefits, at a special price.

Since your property primarily caters to the MICE industry, are you disappointed with the time of opening? When do you see the Hotel industry (read MICE) in India going back to normalcy? How much time, in your opinion, will things take to settle down? The Leela Gandhinagar blends state-of-the-art facilities with traditional Indian hospitality and is ideal for all categories of guests, other than MICE. Be it families, leisure travellers, or the solo business traveller, the hotel ticks all the boxes. It offers a relaxing and idyllic stay making it ideal for family staycations and a perfect choice for leisure travellers. With its world-class meeting and conference options, The Leela Gandhinagar also meets the requirements of business travellers. The Leela Gandhinagar together with Mahatma Mandir Convention and Exhibition Centre Managed by The Leela is set to offer a distinctive and convenient solution for this segment. At the same time, we are also very strong on social MICE, which is weddings and events, and have already done three large events. We are waiting for corporate MICE to pick up which hopefully should happen in the next few months.

Are you seeing some movement in the weddings market in your region?

Weddings are a big segment for us and will always be. We have the largest banquet hall in the city that can accommodate 900 people in the ballroom. We have lots of small event areas, including indoor and outdoor venues. We also have a 15-acre lawn. Weddings will be a huge segment for us, and we have already done three big weddings. Our food, service, programming, and choice of venues have been truly appreciated.



How are the F&B outlets performing at the property? Can you share some insight on the same?

Our Food and Beverage outlets are doing extremely well. The guests have been sharing great reviews for the menu, ambience as well as our hospitality. We have also just launched the Sunday brunch at Citrus Junction. We are very delighted for this world cuisine restaurant with live kitchen to receive such appreciation. The Moksha lounge is doing very well too and has

emerged as a meeting point of sorts in Gandhinagar.

Is there any more information that you would like to share with us?

The Leela Gandhinagar has been thoughtfully planned and designed to make it the quintessential stopover for the sophisticated global traveller. The Leela Gandhinagar blends modern splendour with the vibrant traditions of Gujarat and is committed to providing guests with unforgettable stays.

‘Staycations, weddings & F&B business drove demand during the pandemic’: Gaurav Singh

Been associated with the Marriott group for close to 9 years now, Mr. Gaurav Singh – Market Vice President, South & East India, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka – Marriott International is a passionate hotelier who strongly feels that the worst is behind us. In an exclusive chat with BOTT, he talks about the adjustments that the hospitality sector on a whole will have to do in order to fit into the jacket of ‘new normal’ and enumerates the key points that the Marriott hotels undertook to surge ahead in the challenging times.

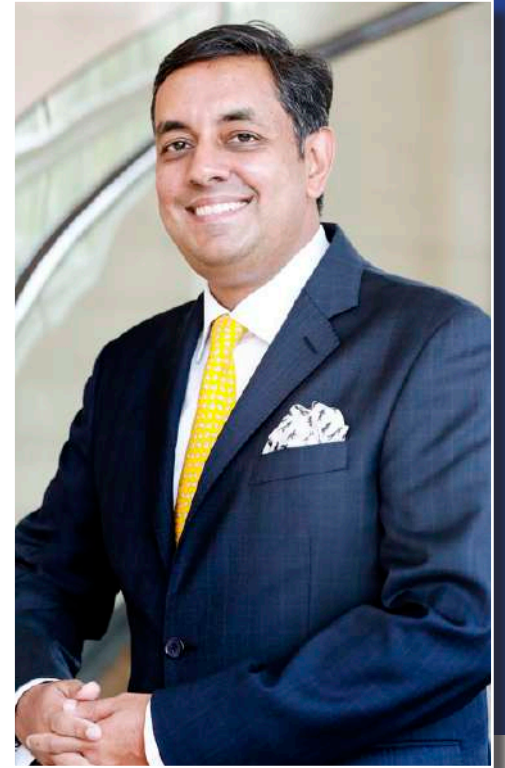


Priyanka Saxena Ray

Gaurav Singh is the Market Vice President, South & East India, Bangladesh & Sri Lanka for Marriott International. Based out of Bengaluru, his leadership entails overseeing and strengthening the position of the brands across markets and three countries. Over the last eight years with Marriott International, Gaurav’s exemplary leadership was defined by his strategic acumen, ability to adapt and manage operations and challenges in tough environments. Here are his thoughts of Marriott’s journey through pandemic and the way forward...

How severely, in your opinion, has the hospitality industry in South East India, Bangladesh & Sri Lanka been affected during the pandemic?

It has undoubtedly been an extremely challenging 18 months for the world but we can all see glimmers of hope in some areas now. There is a renewed positivity as people are slowly feeling confident about travelling again, especially to the secured and quaint resorts, which are much in demand, not just for staycations but also weddings.



While city hotels are not back to the same business that they were doing in 2019, I must confess that resorts are doing better business than what they were doing in 2019, especially those in the tier II cities.

What special steps are you ensuring at the property to keep pace with Covid safety protocols?

At all our Marriott properties, we





take extreme care to follow the cleanliness guidelines. Our protocols, the touchpoints are identified and everything that a guest touches is addressed vigorously. In the wake of the pandemic, we did a lot of work to bring in technology so as to reduce human intervention, making a guests' stay safe and secure, not just for him but also for the hotel associates. Key less entry along with scanned menus for in-house dining are just to name some of the technology enhancements that we have done. The future lies in this direction and sooner or later, we will all have to adapt many such technological advancements to ensure that we bring about efficiencies and blend of human interface and digitalization in everything we do.

What steps do you undertake to ensure your staff / team is in sync with your evolving ways of working, especially during these tough times?

The second wave was a humanitarian crisis and our foremost concern was to take care of our staff and their well-being. We stepped in, wherever we could, to ensure that our employees and their families did not suffer due to lack of hospital beds or proper medical care and assisted them in overcoming any

insurance related support. One of the first things that we did was to ensure that we have an internal system in place wherein we train our people to deal with the uncertainties that come along with the pandemic. We encouraged and supported our teams towards the vaccine and now have 100% of our staff across our properties vaccinated for the first dose vaccinated and the double vaccinated numbers are increasing by the day.

Has the Staycation business been helpful? When in your opinion will the business go back to what it was in 2019?

The concept of staycations helped numerous hotels and resorts drive demand in the last one year. As work turned virtual for many people, the idea of going to a nearby plush resort and working from there found many takers. What has supplemented the staycation business is weddings as many hotels and resorts are catering to intimate limited size customised weddings. However, corporate events are yet to pick up and I think it will be amongst the later to return. The demand now is back and it seems like the worst is behind us. Under the Marriott Bonvoy, we have

a growing cluster of loyal customers who believe in Marriott's hospitality and service and keep coming back to us for their holiday requirements. We were also the leaders to evolve and introduce the concept of Marriott Bonvoy on Wheels to bring home food & beverage offerings of our hotel to the homes of our patrons, which was something never done before. We also went local and started sourcing food ingredients from the community where our properties are located, which because of less transportation helped us in reducing carbon footprint and offer fresh sustainable produce. All in all, the last one year has been a great learning experience and taught us greater adaptability and flexibility. I am glad to share that many of our resorts are not just back to doing the business they were doing in 2019 but most are even doing better! City hotels, however, because of the low-lying corporate and international inbound traffic, still have their recovery path chalked out for them. On the whole I would say that domestic demand will start beating 2019 figures in 2022 and we would be back to our overall business figures of 2019 across all sectors by 2023.

'The pandemic has completely changed the hospitality landscape': Neha Chhabra

The past 18 months have been extremely challenging for various verticals, including the travel and hospitality, which has been one of the worst hit sectors.

Riding the tough tide, Courtyard by Marriott Bengaluru Hebbal was one of the few hotels that never shut down, neither in the first or the second wave.

Ms. Neha Chhabra, General Manager, Courtyard By Marriott Bengaluru Hebbal, shares more in an exclusive chat with BOTT.



Priyanka Saxena Ray

Is your hotel open for operations? How much occupancy have you experienced since the opening?

Courtyard by Marriott Bengaluru Hebbal was one of the few hotels that never shut down neither in the first or the second wave. We have always had guests and the requisite teams to look after them. We continued to operate with limited resources but with utmost caution, bringing together all our experience and intelligence in order to ensure work never stops and people's safety took precedence. To reach pre-covid numbers or to even have a significant traction as far as occupancy is concerned, it would take a couple of more quarters.

Having said that, interest among guests to dine out and opting for weekend stays as well as home dining, which is our Marriott Bonvoy on Wheels vertical is on the rise. We are optimistic this trend and new found belief in people continues.

What kind of concerns are you facing from the customers who are engaging with you for bookings?

The pandemic has completely changed the hospitality landscape including how we travel, stay and dine-out. From the very start of the pandemic our focus on Commitment to Clean has been laser sharp and this is one of the factors the customers want to be reassured all the time. When they come to a hotel of our stature and brand it is now a given and the way we live life now. The present day customers are conscious about hygiene and cleanliness and at the same time want all the standards expected out of the hotel. We make it a point to educate our guests on various precautions we have been practising at the hotel for not just the safety of our guests but also of our associates. So



while there is no concern, as a team we need to balance this very delicately to manage different customer perceptions and expectations.

Has your Hotel (Individual or Chain) come out with a special package to attract more traffic?

Pandemic has changed the industry and customer behaviour by leaps and bounds. Guests are more aware of the prevailing situation and are making informed decisions before venturing out for short leisure trips, work trips or to dine at their favourite hotel. We can safely say that this is indeed the year of packages. Every hotel/company have really become innovative in packaging their hotel facilities trying to give an all-inclusive experience to customers. The packages have been attractive ranging from meal inclusions, experimental activities, room credits etc basically giving the end customer to choose how they would like to stay. As a hotel we have worked through various packages depending on the time and need, starting from -Save now stay later,



Staycations, Work from Hotel, You stay we Pay or packages to enjoy the Cricket matches with beer buckets.

When do you see the Hotel industry in India going back to normalcy? How much time, in your opinion, will things take to settle down?

This is based on total gut but if the vaccination speed goes up, maybe end of 2022 we may see some normalcy. Again every city, country, region is behaving differently. The hills and the beach destinations seem to be on excellent track and some other cities in pockets have picked up good business traction. The increased effect of the pandemic is such that companies have figured different ways to work and this seems to be becoming the new normal. With the advent of technology and hybrid experiences, business travel may not even come back to what it was in the next few years or so.

Are you also seeing some movement in the meetings / events / weddings market?

There is a great demand in the social and wedding market and this has



pretty much kept a lot of us afloat. The customers are again looking for all-inclusive and intimate wedding celebrations and we have gone all out and curated packages based on their needs. As the lockdown restrictions are opening in a phased manner, we do see some amount of corporate meetings come up but in very small formats as this is indeed the new normal.

How are the F&B outlets performing at the property?

The food and beverage market has indeed sprung back with a bang. Customers are looking to dine out for special occasions with friends and families. Weekends are indeed quite busy with Saturday and Sunday brunches being the focus. There is still a restriction on evening timings of 9pm for restaurants and bar and this is still a setback for us. In terms of revenue we do see a surge and this will only become better.

66% millennials willing to travel to Thailand soon: BOTT Travel Sentiment Tracker

With Covid-19 Vaccination drives in full steam across the world, BOTT Travel Sentiment Tracker found that 73% millennial travellers would prefer international destinations with fewer Covid cases and about 67% would want to go to destinations with easy Covid policies and protocols.

Q. How soon are you willing to travel to Thailand?



Respondents: Verified 7800+ BOTT Subscribers & Readers
Age: 21 Years +
Gender: Female: 42%, Male: 58%
Note: Respondents are actual travellers with no direct association with travel and tour companies
Survey Period: Aug - Sept, 2021
*T&C

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Q. What kind of Destinations would you prefer for your next Holiday in Thailand?
(can choose up to 3)



Respondents: Verified 7800+ BOTT Subscribers & Readers
Age: 21 Years +
Gender: Female: 42%, Male: 58%
Note: Respondents are actual travellers with no direct association with travel and tour companies
Survey Period: Aug - Sept, 2021
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All thanks to the pent up travel demand, things are looking up for tourism sector as 66% millennial travellers are willing to travel to Thailand as soon as it opens up. With COVID-19 vaccination drives picking up steam across the world, bringing hope to millions that an end to the pandemic is on the horizon, 73% millennials would prefer to go to international destinations with fewer Covid cases, according to the report by BOTT Travel Sentiment Tracker. While 67% millennials would opt for destinations with defined Covid protocols to avoid unnecessary hassles while planning their international

holiday in the ensuing holiday season. “The findings aptly reflect the pent up travel demand among the Indian millennial travellers. We have started receiving queries for international travel for the upcoming holiday season but travellers are cautious too with respect to Covid restrictions, better connectivity and in selection of international destinations. It is not at all surprising that Thailand is a preferred destination for Indians who wish to travel for the purpose of tourism, shopping, golf, meetings or wellness and I am confident that it will

be one of the first to pick up outbound traffic from India,” says Riaz Munshi, President, Outbound Tour Operators Association of India (OTOAI).

The BOTT Travel Sentiment Tracker, done with over 7800 millennial travellers across the country for over a period of 5 weeks in the months of August and September 2021 has revealed 61% millennials would look for better connectivity when selecting for international travel destinations while 27% would prefer short-haul destinations. Interestingly, 38% millennial travellers would base their

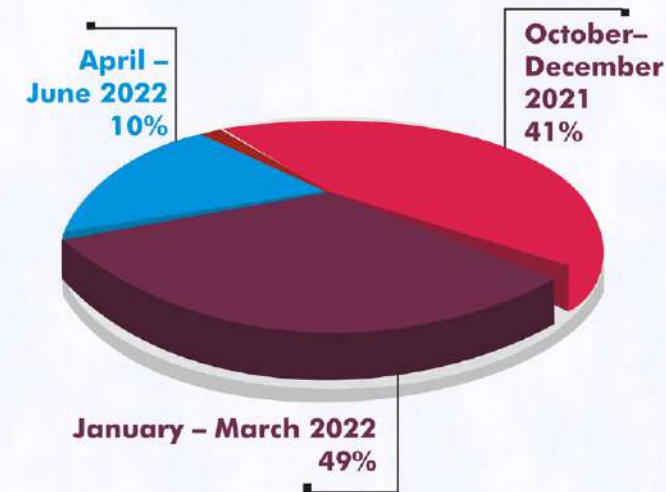
decisions on attractive destination campaigns highlighting their unique features and offerings. A whopping 68% millennial travellers are willing to travel to Thailand for their next vacations.

Says Mr. Chattan Kunjara Na Ayudhya, Deputy Governor, Tourism Authority of Thailand, “We are quite pleased to see through the tracker results that there is so keen interest to visit Thailand among the Indian millennial travellers. India has always been one of the key markets for Thailand. Phuket, Pattaya, Krabi, Bangkok and Koh Samui have become very popular with Indian tourists. They have attracted high-end tourists, honeymooners, and also budget travellers from India, because the beach destinations have diverse choices of accommodation, ranging from luxurious five-star hotels to comfortable resorts, budget hotels and bungalows. We are glad that India has been added to the list of low and medium-risk Covid countries and travellers from India are now allowed to visit Thailand under the guidelines included in our special pioneering projects like Phuket Sandbox. We are ensuring that all the hotels, restaurants, sightseeing spots, tour companies have gone through stringent checks and been certified in order to welcome international tourists.”

According to the survey, 83% millennials would prefer Beach destinations for their next holidays followed by Wellness & Spa destinations and Staycation at hotels and resorts at 65% and 53% respectively. Interestingly, 48% millennials opted for Golf destinations and 43% of them went for shopping destinations.

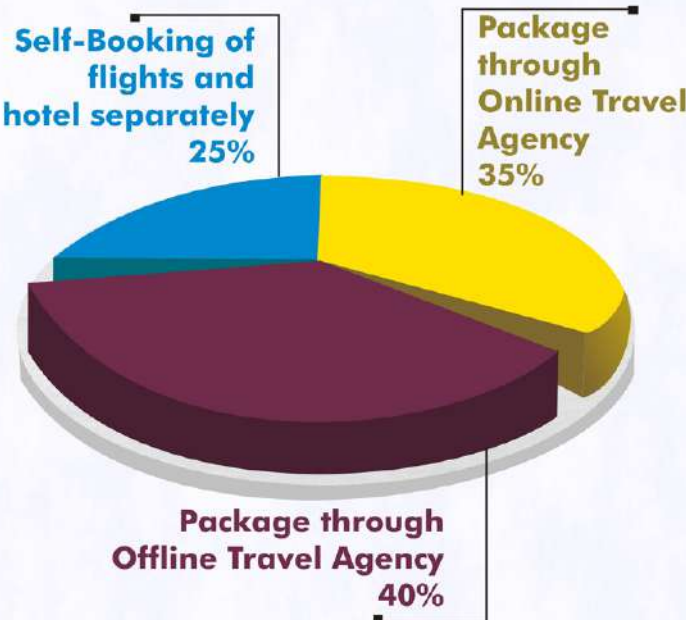
The survey also touched upon new travel trends such as rise of couple & do-it-yourself travel and innovations like popularity of touch-less technology, voice-activated services and more automation in the hospitality sector. Travellers are still looking for destinations with fewer crowds and minimum exposure.

Q. Around what time of the year would you prefer to take a Holiday to Thailand?



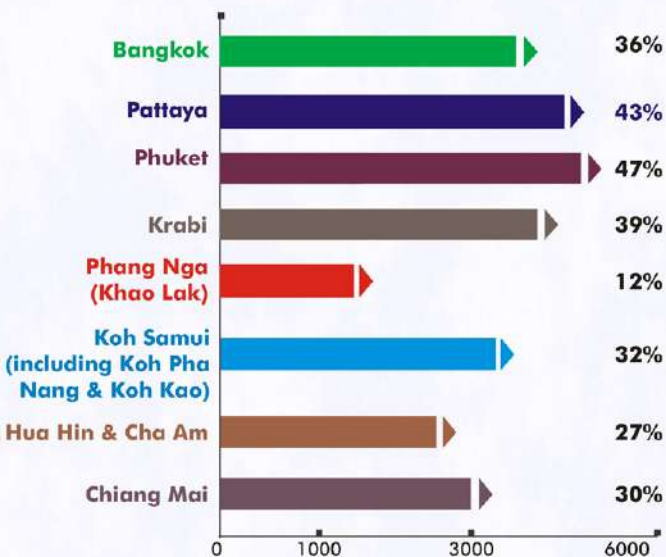
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*T&C

Q. How do you plan to arrange your travel to Thailand?



Respondents: Verified 7800+ BOTT Subscribers & Readers
Age: 21 Years +
Gender: Female: 42%, Male: 58%
Note: Respondents are actual travellers with no direct association with travel and tour companies
Survey Period: Aug - Sept, 2021
*T&C

Q. What would be your preferred destination to travel within Thailand?
(can choose up to 3)



Respondents: Verified 7800+ BOTT Subscribers & Readers
Age: 21 Years +
Gender: Female: 42%, Male: 58%
Note: Respondents are actual travellers with no direct association with travel and tour companies
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The 36th IATO Annual Convention to be held from December 16 – 19 in Gandhinagar

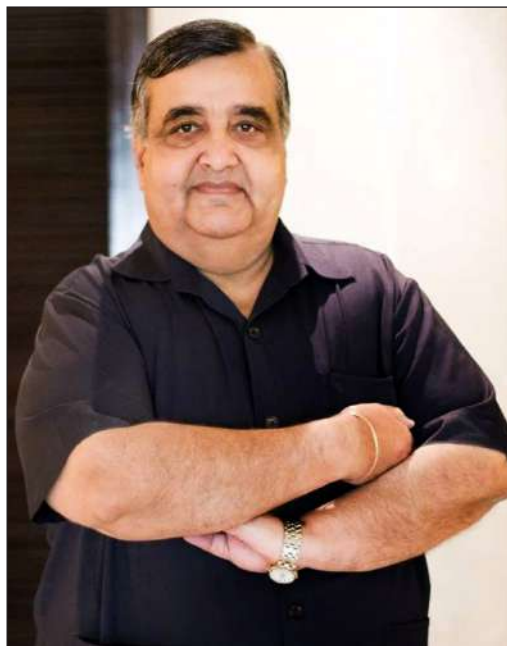
The 36th IATO Annual Convention will be held in Gandhinagar Gujarat from December 16 – 19, 2021 at the newly opened The Leela Gandhinagar. The association, having missed a convention due to Covid in 2020, is much excited to motivate the travel fraternity towards a brighter future and chalk out a revival plan to bring tourism in India back to its feet. Senior office bearers from the IATO share more –

Priyanka Saxena Ray

Mr. Rajiv Mehra, President, Indian Association of Tour Operators (IATO) along with senior office bearers from the team visited Gujarat a couple of times before finalising Gandhinagar as the convention venue. The association was earlier planning to hold its annual convention in Gujarat in September 2020 but had to be postponed the same due to Covid -19.

Now, since the situation is improving day by day and vaccination drive is going in full swing, the IATO EC members feels that December would be the appropriate time to have its physical annual convention. Announcing the news he said, “We are coming back to Gujarat after a gap of 10 years and it will be an excellent opportunity for our members to see the improved and developed infrastructure in Gujarat. The Stupendous Success of the pervious convention has raised the expectations of the members and sponsors. More than 900 delegates are expected for the three days event and the IATO convention is eagerly awaited by all.”

Keeping the Covid new normal in mind, the primary criteria for attending the 36th IATO Convention is that all delegates will be fully vaccinated. Sharing the news, Mr. E. M. Najeeb, Senior Vice President, IATO said, “Complete vaccination is the primary criteria for the attending delegates this



year. The convention is in December and our early announcement will give time to the stake holders to get their second dose, who have not taken it so far so that they are ready to attend the convention. All SOPs and norms would be strictly followed and all delegates who will attend the convention, will have to submit copy of fully vaccination certificate and based on that their convention registration will be accepted.” He also mentioned that IATO was exploring three possible convention venues in Gujarat – Kevadia, Ahmedabad and Gandhinagar and after much deliberation and physical reiki of all, the EC members collectively decided to hold the event at Gandhinagar.

Mr. Mehra further mentioned that the industry is going through a very bad phase and the past 18 months have been the toughest for the tourism industry.



Thus, the main focus of the IATO Convention this year would be to have deliberations as to how we can revive tourism and bring it back to pre-Covid level. The Ministry of Tourism has also assured the association its complete support for the convention and officials from the same will be very much a part of the event in December.

After the convention, various Post Convention Tours would be organized, which would be of great interest for our members. Concurrently with the 36th IATO Convention, there will be Travel Mart, which will be an opportunity for the exhibitors to showcase exciting and diverse range of destinations, conference and Incentive venues especially by the state governments. The theme and topics for the convention is being decided and will soon be made public.

OTOAI hosts a physical Members Meet and virtual 9th AGM

The Outbound Tour Operators Association of India (OTOAI) recently hosted a physical Members Meet inviting its own members, stalwarts from the travel trade, NTOs, media and more for networking at the Shangri La, New Delhi. Hosting a physical event after a gap of 20 months, the association garnered a warm response as many people came forward to meet and greet during the event.

Mr. Riaz Munshi, President, OTOAI, addressing the gathering said, “The worst, my friends, is over and I thank you all profusely for your support to OTOAI. Personally, I am quite bullish on Indian market as I see India as one of the leading outbound markets of the world. I am confident that our market will soon touch 100 million travellers and the main reason for that is the huge underlying demand for travel as people of all age groups, from seven to 75, are simply waiting to undertake a holiday soon. So, the game is about to begin and we must all prepare ourselves to put our best foot forward – be innovative and step ahead of your clients to tap this surge, as and when it will happen. There is a huge potential and big opportunity ahead for all of us to encash and year 2022 can be life changing for many in the business. Let us support each other and grow together.”

The evening then proceeded with members winning some lucky draws and gift hampers from Crowne Plaza Greater Noida, Vistara, Maldivian Airlines, Singapore Airlines, Accor and Hyatt Group of Hotels.

OTOAI also virtually hosted its 9th AGM on World Tourism Day wherein Mr. Himanshu Patil, Vice President, OTOAI welcomed members and talked about how the last 18 months were the toughest and perhaps the most confusing time for the travel tourism industry. Mr. Shravan



Bhalla, General Secretary, OTOAI enumerated the numerous activities that OTOAI undertook in the last one year. These mainly comprised virtual meetings with embassies, country heads, OTOAI's virtual participation in webinars, various trade events and



more. Mr. Vineet Gopal, Jt. Secretary, OTOAI presented the Balance Sheet of the FY towards the end of the meeting and announced that 12 new members joined the association in the last year, taking the total tally to above 500.

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Stretching out from this private and romantic mini-island are the six coveted Honeymoon Select Ocean Villas designed to create an ideal overwater getaway for couples through a luxurious interior, design highlights like a bright red circular bathtub underneath magical, mirrored skylights. This is a magical spot to soak in uninterrupted sunset views!



You'll find delightful surprises at every corner. From the picturesque Sunset Bar to an exotic Spiral Water Slide on the beach that opens directly into the warm lagoon – perfect for splashing fun times. There's plenty to do here, with yoga classes in the mornings, snorkelling in the house reef, water sports, chilling by the pool with tropical cocktails, and even complimentary Indian Ocean excursions.



With a choice of a main beachside restaurant, two speciality restaurants – Just Grill and Simply Veg, three bars, two swimming pools (one adult-only), gymnasium, kids club, and the ELENA Spa and Wellness Centre – there is something for everyone here, be it couples, families, or multigenerational groups.



Dharamshala

A destination for all Seasons...

There is something surreal about the quaint and mystic town of Mcleodganj in Dharamshala that makes it such a favourite not just for the first time travellers but also repeat visitors. Located in Kangra district, Mcleodganj's culture is a beautiful blend of Tibetan with some British influence. While it is most famously known as the abode of the Dalai Lama, its mountain peaks and hills are a trekker's paradise and frequented by visitors all year through.



Mcleodganj is a town brimming with Tibetan cultural vibrancy, which can be experienced, in its people, shops, artefacts and food! One of the most plush, comfortable, safe and authentic hotels in the region is the Asia Health Resorts & Spa Mcleodganj, Dharamshala

The Asia Health Resorts & Spa is a glorious blend of top class 4-star facilities combined with the opportunity to enjoy the goodness of living amidst pure nature. Situated near the famous Dal Lake and 20 km or 40 minutes away from the airport the visitors can unwind themselves by witnessing the pure joys of this beautiful heaven in Mcleodganj.

Asia Health Resorts & Spa is located at the foothills of the village Naddi and near the sacred Dal Lake. It features 25 well-appointed accommodations, including 2 junior suites with terrace, 2 two bedroom family suites with terrace, one quadruple room with private balcony and 20 well-appointed super deluxe rooms with private balconies.

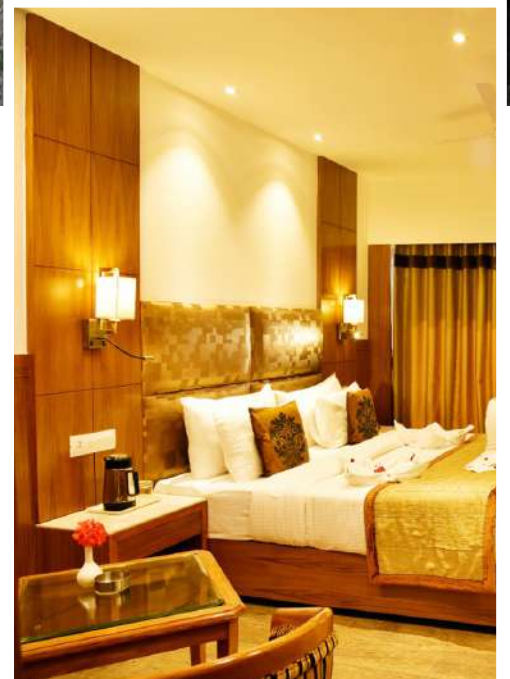
The hotel is the ultimate destination which offers unique environment and the finest drinking and dining experience at its lounge bar, restaurant and terrace garden. The resort offers a delectable range of cuisines like the Indian, Chinese, Continental and authentic Himachali dishes by its expert chefs. Guests can choose to dine at 'Reflection', which is the all-day dining restaurant at the property offering both indoor and outdoor seating with 120 covers. The restaurant offers a delectable range of cuisines like the Indian, Chinese, Continental and authentic Himachali dishes curated by the expert chefs.



exquisite collection of classic wines, single malts, rich cocktails and a complete range of elegant spirits coupled with sumptuous snacks. The lounge sets the perfect mood to enjoy a relaxing and chilling evening. Bar lounge has a fire place to offer also. For those looking to enjoy some delectable cuisine in an open space, another dining option at the resort is the Terrace Garden where guests can bask in the sun surrounded by breathtaking mountains and enjoy snacks and beverages while doing so. The place offers a complete feel of natural landscape with blooming flowers with panoramic view of Kangra valley and gorgeous Pong Dam Lake. At Terrace Garden guests can experience the exclusivity of the bar-be-que and an ultimate private dinner served at the terrace garden on request. They can sing and dance to their heart's content – the place offers a perfect setting for family reunions, youngsters and birthday and kitty parties.

For those who are looking for some

The 'Stobari-Bar-Lounge' offers an



tranquillity and peace, Asia Health Resorts & Spa houses an excellent Yoga and Meditation Centre that helps one connect with their spirit and replenish their soul. Once you have purified your mind and soul, treat your body to a wondrous dip in the temperature controlled Swimming Pool at the resort, which is the only temperature controlled swimming pool in all of Dharamshala. Guests can enjoy their day by the heated out-door swimming pool amidst pine forests and view of the scenic Kangra valley. In case you have forgotten any of your swim gear, the hotel's pool desk can take care with

apparel, swim goggles and caps on request.

Another added attraction is the Eva Spa that comes with a Therapy Room with attached Steam and Shower and Foot Lounge. Asia Health Resorts and Spa offer an extensive variety of massages and spa treatments designed to soothe your mind, body and soul, create a caring experience and provide the ultimate in luxury.

Sharing his thoughts, Mr. Vipul Garg, Asia Health Resorts & Spa says, "Our hotels – Asia Health Resorts & Spa has

been winning the hearts of tourists for over two decades now and we take pride in our distinguished offering and service. However, I strongly believe that as tourists we must all practice responsible travel and ensure that the ecological balance of a place is maintained at all times. Dharamshala is a beautiful destination that has so much to offer to a discerning traveller – adventure, beauty, serenity, tranquillity, fun and lifetime memories."

The sales contact for Asia Health Resorts & Spa is - sales@numenhospitality.com

KRABI

A tranquil tropical paradise buzzing with exciting activities



Thailand is a destination brimming with natural beauty, tranquillity, man-made marvels and exotic wildlife. There are numerous destinations within the country that cater to all types of tourist preferences. One of its hidden gems, which is a perfect cocoon for holidaymakers is KRABI that offers pleasures in the forms of island-hopping, relaxing amidst natural beauty, adventure activities such as snorkelling, rock climbing, sea kayaking, jungle trekking and scuba diving and enjoying meditative holiday in one of its many plush luxury resorts and hotels. Read on to know



Krabi is the perfect holiday destination for those looking for a relaxing area in southern Thailand. The province, located between Phang Nga and Trang, features stunning scenery, on the land as well as at the sea. With over 150 islands off its 150 km-long coast line (many of them featuring fantastic white-sand beaches and turquoise waters), a jungle-covered interior, towering limestone cliffs, caves, waterfalls and exotic wildlife, Krabi a great selection of natural assets that offer its visitors a wide array of leisure activities for the whole family.

Krabi is famous for its scenic view and breath-taking beaches and clear blue islands. Its coral reef vistas are also one of the world's most beautiful, which makes the city a great spot for coral diving. Some of its other attractions include hot springs, a wildlife sanctuary, sea caves, flourishing coral reefs and exotic marine life, limestone cliffs that draw rock climbing enthusiasts from around the world. One can easily spend weeks in Krabi and yet leave yearning for more.

If that wasn't enough, Krabi features some of the most photogenic sunsets in Thailand, often accompanied by spectacular displays of cloud to cloud lightning, that are best enjoyed from a beachside bar or restaurant. There are roughly 200 islands sitting just off the Krabi coastline, some are small rocks jutting out of the sea, some are quite a lot larger but still remain uninhabited and some are large islands with many inhabitants living a normal life. You can rent a boat from Krabi town or Ao Nang and explore the islands on your own if you are a keen sailor.

From its most prominent destinations – Ao Nang, Railay, Phi Phi Islands and Koh Lanta – to its lesser known areas – Ao Luk, Ao Nam Mao, or Ao Thalane, to name just a few – the province of Krabi is less developed and crowded than Phuket, more laid back than Koh Samui, and just 80 minutes by air from Bangkok. With a range of accommodation from budget to deluxe, this idyllic province truly is an ultimate destination with a plethora of offerings.

Here are some of the must experience activities in Krabi

Temple in a Cave at Wat Tham Sua: One of Thailand's natural wonders and certainly worth a visit is the warren of caves that sit within the jungle and house many monks that live and worship here, legend has it that a tiger once lived in the cave which is where the name of the temple originated. The caves can be explored and you will find many icons and relics to take a look at. When you are at the caves you need to make sure you visit the 'footprint of the Buddha' it is a climb up 1,237 steps which is no small task but when you get to the top you are rewarded with 360 degree views on the Andaman Sea and the beautiful islands that fall within it.



Phi Phi Islands: After being used as the film location for the movie 'The Beach', the Phi Phi islands shot to fame and became a hotspot for tourists, who started coming here on a speedboat, which takes about 45 minutes from Krabi mainland. There are two islands, Phi Phi Don and Phi Phi Leh, Phi Phi Don is inhabited and is the one where all the tourists flock. Known for its turquoise water and stunning beaches, the island really is a tropical paradise.



Klong Thom Hot Springs: Set inside beautiful rainforest surroundings are the Krabi Hot Springs. They have been cut into the smooth rocks and the water is provided from deep rooted thermal springs that are located inside volcanic chambers. The water get up to temperatures of 40 degrees Celsius and contains natural mineral salts that have many healing properties. You will feel totally relaxed here and if you fancy a cooling swim after, there is a stream that allows you to do so.



Khao Khanab Nam: The Khao Khanab Nam Mountains are the most famous landmarks in Krabi. They sit on either side of the river and are a real natural wonder. The two mountains sit on top of a large series of caves that have many stalagmites and Stalactites. One of the mountains is climbable and offers some excellent photograph opportunities from the top.

Four Island Tour: One of the most popular tours that visitors to Krabi go on is the Four Island Tour, which takes you on a tour of four different islands – Tup Island, Phra Nang Cave, Chicken Island and Poda Island. The tour is on a long boat and will stop at each location, giving you time to swim, sunbathe, explore and stop for lunch.



Shopping at night market: Krabi Town like so many other big towns in Thailand has a night market. This market is open every Friday to Sunday in the evening and is not to be missed. There are over 70 food stalls here as well as lots of local sellers selling souvenirs. Sometimes local school children put on a show as they collect money for their school or another charity.

Enjoy a massage at a Krabi Spa: Krabi is dotted with numerous Spa centres, where one can indulge in body wraps, scrubs and facials, all using natural ingredients that are available over Thailand such as Coconut and Tamarind. No trip would be complete though without indulging in a Thai massage whilst you are there, famed all over the world for their energizing and balanced results you are sure to feel like a different person when you leave.

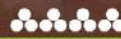


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MoT organises conference on Buddhist circuit to promote potential of Buddhist tourism

The Ministry has aggressively started tourism promotion with participation of the industry stakeholders especially after the dramatic improvement of Covid situation in the country and achievement of vaccination targets. To tap the potential of the Buddhist tourism, the Ministry of Tourism organised a Buddhist Circuit Train FAM Tour and Conference from October 4-8, 2021.



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The FAM tour covered the visit of prominent Buddhist sites and conferences at Bodhgaya and Varanasi. The event was attended by around 125 delegates including tour operators, hoteliers, media and officials of Ministry of Tourism & State Governments. Apart from this, around 100 local tour operators and other stakeholders of tourism & hospitality sector also attended the event at Bodhgaya and Varanasi to discuss the key issues with regard to the development and promotion of tourism in the circuit.

India is one of world's largest reservoirs of history, culture, philosophy, heritage, and religion and these together list the country amongst the most desired destinations for tourists and pilgrims. India has a rich ancient Buddhist Heritage with several important sites associated with the life of Lord Buddha. Buddhist tourism in India as a tourism product has a tremendous potential. The Indian Buddhist heritage is of great interest to the followers of Buddhism all over the world. It has remained

a vital force, an inspiration, and a guide to India's great traditions and customs. Ministry of Tourism has leverage these factors to showcase India as 'The Land of Buddha'.

Ministry has taken a four-fold development strategy that focuses on improving the connectivity via air, rail, and roads, enhancing the tourism infrastructure and dependent services, streamlining branding and promotion and showcasing the culture and heritage. Under Swadesh Darshan Scheme, 5 projects worth Rs.325.53 crore have been sanctioned for Buddhist circuit development in the states of Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Gujarat and Andhra Pradesh and those sanctioned projects are under different stages of implementation. While works of Rs. 44.19 crore on three projects have been sanctioned under PRASHAD Scheme; in Varanasi, two projects including a sound and light show at Dhamek Stupa and a Buddha Theme Park, Sarnath, worth costing Rs. 9.5 crores for the development of Buddhist structures have been completed.

In addition to the development of tourism related infrastructure under

the various schemes of the Ministry of Tourism, emphasis is also being put on promoting the various Buddhist Sites within India and overseas markets. As part of the above, India Tourism Offices in overseas markets regularly participate in a number of travel and tourism fairs as well as exhibitions wherein India's Buddhist Sites are promoted. Also, Ministry of Tourism organises Buddhist Conclave every alternate year with the objective of promoting India as a Buddhist Destination and major markets around the globe. The upcoming International Buddhist Conclave is scheduled from November 17 – 21, 2021. Ministry has undertaken multiple projects under branding and promotion that are currently in the pipeline including a live virtual exhibition at national museum, web portal, annual events calendar, social media marketing, campaigns in key source markets like Vietnam, Thailand, Japan, South Korea, Sri Lanka, etc.

Ministry of Tourism has showcased the Buddhist Sites on the Incredible India Website and has also developed a dedicated website www.indiathelandofbuddha.in.

Jyotiraditya Scindia inaugurates Sindhudurg Greenfield airport under UDAN scheme

Union Minister of Civil Aviation, Shri Jyotiraditya M. Scindia, along with Secretary, Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA), Shri Rajiv Bansal, Ms. Usha Padhee, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Civil Aviation and Shri Vineet Sood, CEO, Alliance Air virtually inaugurated the greenfield Sindhudurg airport in Maharashtra & also flagged off the first flight from Sindhudurg to Mumbai under the RCS-UDAN (Regional Connectivity Scheme - Ude Desh Ka Aam Naagrik) scheme of the Government of India. Chief Minister, Govt. of Maharashtra, Shri Uddhav Thackeray graced the event virtually from Sindhudurg airport as the Guest of Honour.

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Other dignitaries including, Shri Narayan Rane, Minister of Micro Small & Medium Enterprises, Shri Ramdas Athawale, Minister of State for Social Justice & Empowerment, Shri Ajit Pawar, Deputy Chief Minister of Maharashtra, Shri Balasaheb Thorat, Minister for Revenue, Maharashtra, Shri Aditya Thackeray, Minister for Tourism, Environment & Protocol, Maharashtra, Shri Subash Desai, Minister for Industries, Maharashtra, Shri Uday Samant, Guardian Minister, Maharashtra, Shri Vinayak Raut, Member of Parliament, Lok Sabha, along with other important stakeholders also joined the event virtually from the Sindhudurg airport.

Shri. Jyotiraditya M. Scindia, Union Minister of Civil Aviation in his address said “The inauguration of the Sindhudurg airport and start of flight to Mumbai marks a new chapter in the glorious history of the Konkan region. This development will open new avenues of growth of local trade and tourism. I am sure, with huge potential of the region, number of daily flights will increase to 20-25 within next 5 years.”

The day was a momentous day for the people of Maharashtra as the inauguration pins the coastal Konkan region of Maharashtra on the national air map. These new flights will further add convenience and comfort to travellers



creating a gateway for the people to easily access the Konkan region noted for its pristine beaches, temples, and forts. These new flights will facilitate people of Sindhudurg not only in their travel to Mumbai but also opens the horizon of additional connectivity with other metro cities directly connected with Mumbai such as Delhi, Pune, Kolkata, Hyderabad. Moreover, the Sindhudurg airport is a good option for people travelling to North-Goa.

Sindhudurg Airport is also known as Chipi Airport is in Sindhudurg District of Maharashtra. The airport is spread over 275 hectares area. The runway length is 2500 mtr. (8202 ft.) and is capable for the operation of narrow body aircraft like Airbus A-320 and Boeing B-737. The airport Terminal Building has the capacity to handle 200 departing and 200 arriving passengers during peak hours.

The inauguration marked the commencement of the 61st airport under the UDAN scheme and successful

operationalization of the 381 routes under UDAN. Now people can fly at ease by opting for a flight of 85 mins from Sindhudurg to Mumbai while earlier they were forced to opt for a road or train travel of more than 10 hours between these two cities.

The airline M/S Alliance Air was awarded the Sindhudurg – Mumbai route under the UDAN 3.1. This is the 75th UDAN route operationalized by the airline. Alliance Air will deploy its 70-seater ATR 72-600 aircraft on the route.

The financial incentives in the form of Viability Gap Funding (VGF) is being provided from the Centre, State governments and airport operators to selected airlines to encourage operations from unserved and underserved airports under the scheme.

To date, 381 routes and 61 airports including 5 heliports and 2 Water Aerodromes have been operationalised under the UDAN scheme.

Incredible India



(Established in 1988)

India Convention Promotion Bureau

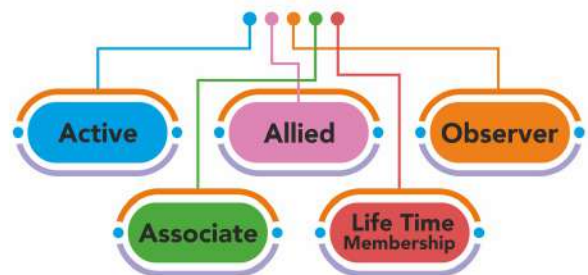
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India Convention Promotion Bureau, sponsored by the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, is the marketing arm of the Ministry to promote India as an attractive MICE destination. The Governing body of ICPB is chaired by the Joint Secretary, ministry of Tourism. The bureau undertakes various activities for the benefit of the members, offering them excellent business opportunities for networking and showcasing their products.



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