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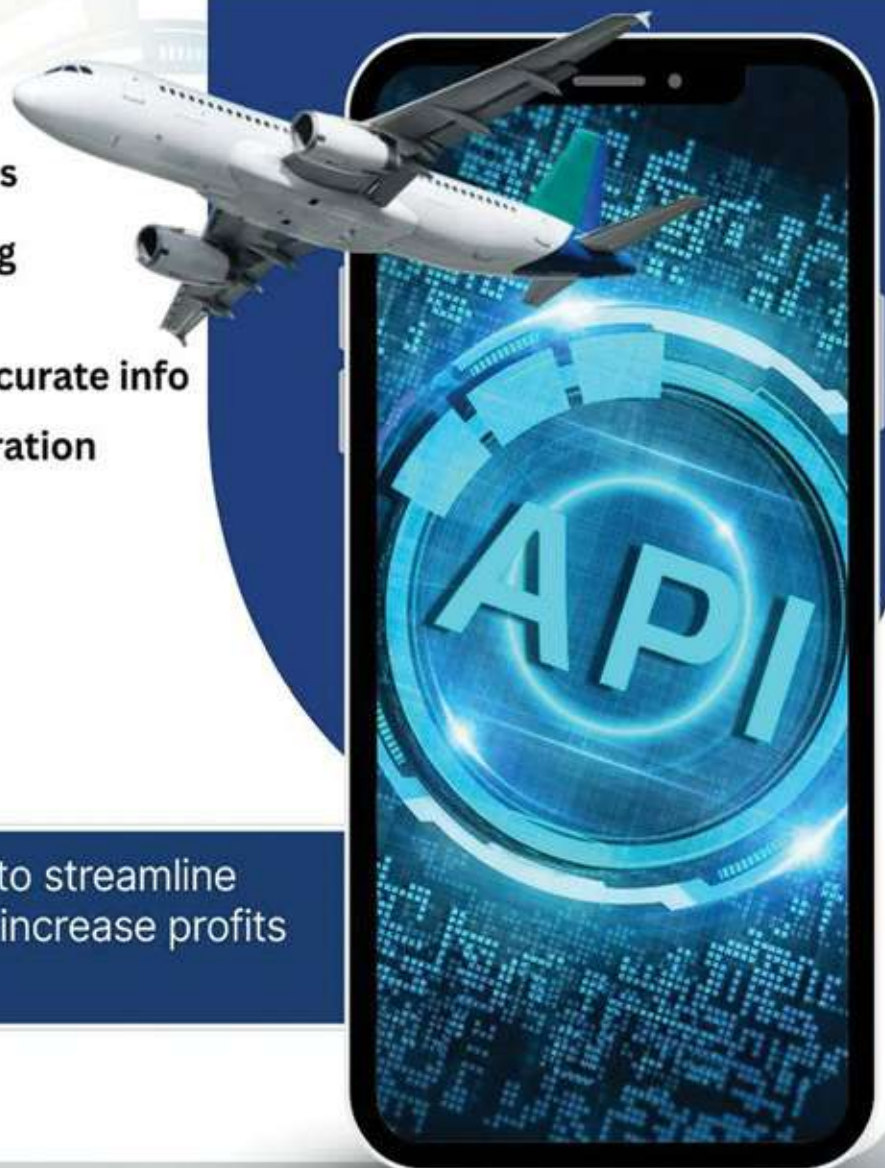


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Letter from the *Editor's Desk*



Dear Industry Colleagues,

The last few months have been testing times for the Indian travel and tourism industry. The unfortunate attack in Pahalgam, the tragic Air India crash, and the devastation caused by floods and landslides across almost all hilly regions of the country have cast a shadow of uncertainty. With nature's fury reminding us of our fragility, the industry has been sitting cautiously tight, yet with strong hope and anticipation for a robust business season ahead. Optimism, after all, is what has always driven our fraternity forward.

In this September issue of BOTT, which will also enjoy additional circulation at the TAAI Convention in Abu Dhabi, we bring you exclusive and insightful stories tailored for the occasion. We spoke to Sunil Kumar, President of TAAI, to understand his perspective on the upcoming convention, followed by candid interactions with a few MC members and other TAAI members, gathering their views, aspirations, and expectations from this much-awaited global gathering.

Beyond TAAI, we present an exclusive interview with Brand USA's Jackie Ennis, who highlights India's growing importance as one of the fastest-expanding markets for the United States, now ranking #2 among overseas visitors.

We also feature exhaustive coverage of two marquee industry events – ITB India in Mumbai and the IATO Convention in Odisha – both of which witnessed remarkable participation and outcomes. Adding to this, you will find first-hand coverage of exciting FAM trips, including the Andaman Mega Fam for inbound agents and the Thailand showcase, alongside curated reports on several noteworthy events that took place across the country.

As always, our endeavour remains to bring you stories that inform, inspire, and empower the travel trade community. Here's wishing all readers a fruitful convention season ahead.

Happy Reading!

Warm regards,

Priyanka Saxena Ray
Editor, **BOTT** India

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SAUDI LAUNCHES LATEST CAMPAIGN STARRING CRISTIANO RONALDO



“Saudi, Welcome to Arabia” the consumer facing brand of the Saudi Tourism Authority (STA), launched its latest campaign starring Cristiano Ronaldo (CR7).

Launching across key markets in Europe as well as India and China, “I Came for Football, I Stayed For More” brings to life a Saudi that offers visitors far more than the expected. Heralding the start of its extended season of high stakes sports, rousing entertainment, and breathtaking film, fashion and cultural events, the campaign harnesses TV, Social, Digital, and OTA to give audiences a taste of one of the world’s most exciting destination calendars.

AIR INDIA EXPRESS EXPANDS ROUTES FROM AHMEDABAD & CHANDIGARH

Air India Express has launched direct flights connecting Ahmedabad and Chandigarh to Bengaluru. The airline will operate twice-daily services from Chandigarh and daily from Ahmedabad, increasing to twice-daily from September 16, 2025. Enhancing convenience for both business and leisure travellers, the expansion will also include new flights between Dehradun and Bengaluru from September 15, 2025.



CENTRUM AIR LAUNCHES DELHI-TASHKENT FLIGHTS FROM OCT 3



Uzbekistan’s largest private airline, Centrum Air, will begin direct flights between Delhi and Tashkent from October 3, 2025. The service will operate twice a week—Tuesdays and Fridays—using a modern fleet including Airbus A320neo, A321neo, and A330-300 aircraft. The flights aim to boost connectivity and leisure travel between India and Uzbekistan. Delhi departures are at 12:10 pm, with returns from Tashkent at 6:55 am local time.

EMIRATES EXPANDS PREMIUM ECONOMY ON ALL A380 FLIGHTS TO NEW YORK

Emirates has announced the expansion of its Premium Economy cabin across all A380 services to New York JFK. From 1 December 2025, daily direct flights EK201/202 will feature four cabin classes, including Premium Economy, while the Milan–New York service (EK205/206) will offer the same from 10 November 2025. Passengers flying Dubai–New York can now enjoy a wider choice of comfort and flexibility.



INDIGO ANNOUNCES PURNEA, BIHAR AS ITS 94TH DOMESTIC DESTINATION

IndiGo has announced the launch of direct flights connecting Kolkata (West Bengal) and Purnea (Bihar), thrice every week, starting 15 September 2025. Purnea is IndiGo’s 94th domestic and 137th overall destination, and fourth in Bihar after Patna, Gaya, and Darbhanga. Flights on this new route will be operated with IndiGo’s ATR aircraft. This development will not only enable IndiGo to expand access to underserved markets but also promote trade, tourism, and economic growth in eastern India.

SKÅL INTERNATIONAL DELHI ELECTS NEW LEADERSHIP



Skål International Delhi held its Extraordinary General Meeting (EOGM) on August 28, 2025, at The Oberoi, New Delhi, to confirm a smooth transition of leadership. The new Executive Committee for 2025–27 includes Sk. Homa Mistry as President, Sk. Ankush Nijhawan as Vice President 1, Sk. Tekla Maira as Vice President 2, Sk. Vasudha Sondhi as Secretary, and Sk. Rohit Arora as Treasurer. Immediate Past President Sk. Ranjit Vig handed over responsibilities.

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SHORT NEWS

ECKO HOTELS & RESORTS GROWS WITH 12 NEW PROPERTIES



ECKO Hotels & Resorts, a fast-growing new-age hospitality brand, has rapidly expanded its footprint with 12 properties across iconic destinations

within just four months of its launch in April 2025. Adding over 1,000 keys in Pandukeshwar, Badrinath, Amritsar, Dehradun, Puri, Goa, Alibaug, Lansdowne and Udaipur, the brand is focusing on spiritual destinations, while also targeting the MICE, weddings, and leisure segments.



CYGNETT HOTELS EXPANDS WITH NEW RETREAT IN UJJAIN

Cygnett Hotels & Resorts has announced the signing of Cygnett Retreat TM Collection by Wyndham Ujjain, a 100-key premium boutique resort. Inspired by Santorini's whitewashed elegance, the property will feature an all-day dining restaurant, leisure amenities, spa, pool, and 15,000 sq. ft. of banquet space. Strategically located 12 km from Mahakaleshwar Temple, the retreat promises tranquillity with easy access to Ujjain's attractions. Slated to open mid-2026, it will cater to pilgrims, families, and leisure travellers alike.



SARISKA LODGE DEBUTS AS RAJASTHAN'S NEW ECO-LUXURY RETREAT

Sariska Lodge, an exclusive luxury retreat in Rajasthan, officially opened

its doors in 2025, offering a unique blend of sustainability, conservation, and immersive experiences. Nestled on 15 acres of afforested land by the Sariska Tiger Reserve and the Aravalli Hills, the lodge features 11 private suites, a restaurant, bar, outdoor pool, wellness centre, and horse stables. It is founded by Anand Shekhawat and Puneet Jain.

ROYAL ORCHID HOTELS ANNOUNCES NEW PROPERTY IN AMBALA

Royal Orchid Hotels Ltd. (ROHL) has signed a new 65-key property in Ambala, Haryana, in collaboration with Lovepreet Singh. Spread over 6 acres, the resort will feature deluxe, club, and suite rooms, a multi-cuisine restaurant, bar, spa, gym, and pool. With four banquet halls, a conference area, and a 25,000 sq. ft. lawn, it will cater to weddings, events, and corporate gatherings.



SINCLAIRS HOTELS UNVEILS SINCLAIRS PALACE RETREAT IN UDAIPUR

Sinclairs Hotels Limited announces the opening of Sinclairs Palace Retreat, Udaipur. This will be the company's second hotel in Udaipur. Located on Haldighati Road, approximately 35 km from Udaipur city centre, this expansive 5-acre heritage style resort is designed with palace inspired architecture. It features 90 rooms and suites, along with 5 stand-alone villas. The property is surrounded by the natural beauty of the Aravalli foothills.



RAJASTHAN TO HOST 8TH EDITION OF KABIR YATRA IN BIKANER & VILLAGES

The 8th edition of the Rajasthan Kabir Yatra, India's longest traveling folk music festival, will be held from October 1–5, 2025 across Bikaner and nearby villages—Kelan, Chhattargarh, Kalu, and Katariasar. Organised by the Malang Folk Foundation, the Yatra celebrates the poetry of mystics like Kabir, Mira Bai, Bulleh Shah, Amir Khusrau and Shah Latif. Hosted by local communities, the journey blends music, storytelling, satsang and cultural unity.





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From milestone events to digital storytelling, Brand USA sharpens its India focus

*India remains vitally important and one of the fastest-growing markets for the USA. As of July 2025, India ranks #2 among overseas visitors to the U.S., with over 1.09 million travellers—showing strong travel interest and a positive view of the U.S. as a destination. **Jackie Ennis**, Vice-President - Global Trade Development, Brand USA shares more.*

Priyanka Saxena Ray

India has consistently been among the top source markets for Brand USA. How do you assess the current traffic trends from India, and what key opportunities do you see for growth in the near future?

India remains vitally important and one of the fastest-growing markets for the USA. What's encouraging is that India's outbound travel demand continues to grow, supported by a resilient economy and a rising middle class.

In 2026, major events like America 250, the FIFA World Cup 2026, and the Route 66 centennial will present great opportunities to attract even more Indians. We believe America's 250 in 2026 will be an excellent chance to celebrate the history and heritage of the U.S. As part of this effort, Brand USA will showcase the anniversary celebrations through curated travel itineraries and compelling stories that connect visitors to the people and places that embody the American spirit.

Segments such as students, family visits, and friends-and-relatives traffic continue to drive steady inflows. How is Brand USA engaging with these segments to strengthen travel to the United States?

The USA provides diverse experiences, making it perfect for unique, immersive trips. As more Indians arrive, Brand USA is changing its approach to stay competitive. We focus on highly targeted marketing that connects with India's various traveller groups—

from first-time visitors, to visiting friends and relatives, to experienced explorers.

We are also growing partnerships with airlines, OTAs, and boutique travel companies to craft more personalized travel options for these segments. We're also boosting our digital storytelling—using influencers, content creators, and immersive video formats to highlight U.S. destinations in a way that sparks discovery. We recently announced the launch of a new global tourism campaign, 'America the Beautiful', inviting the world to explore the stunning landscapes and genuine experiences across the country.

With India's outbound travel expanding rapidly, what new strategies or partnerships is Brand USA focusing on to ensure continued growth from this high-potential market?

In a high-potential and evolving market like India, Brand USA is focused on building deeper, more targeted engagement through strategic partnerships. We're continuing our collaboration with Tata CLiQ Luxury, which is now in its third phase, targeting India's affluent, tech-savvy travellers between 18–45 years, who are actively seeking unique, elevated U.S. travel experiences. We also partnered with NBA for the first-ever NBA House in Mumbai.

At the trade level, we're working closely with tour operators to develop customised itineraries and integrated B2B2C campaigns that support high value, repeat visitation. Our USA Discovery Program has 2,621 active trainees and 46,939 badge completions to date. **BOTT**

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SUNIL KUMAR

Leading TAAI with Purpose and Goodness

*In an exclusive conversation with **BOTT**, **Sunil Kumar**, President of the Travel Agents Association of India (TAAI), shares his renewed vision and priorities as he leads the association into its 68th Annual Convention in Abu Dhabi. With a strong focus on member engagement, partnerships, and innovative initiatives, he emphasizes TAAI's commitment to delivering value despite industry challenges. Under his leadership, TAAI continues to uphold its credo of trust and integrity while championing initiatives such as the 'Rally for Valley' campaign. In this interview, he reflects on milestones achieved, challenges overcome, and the road ahead for India's outbound and inbound travel sector.*

Priyanka Saxena Ray



This is your first convention after being re-elected as President of TAAI. How does it feel to lead the association once again, and what are your immediate priorities?

It is exciting to work with the current team, with many newer members of the MC, including Chairpersons, and to put a high-quality convention together. We are certain that the Delegates will find this convention most delightful. Since we have been to Abu Dhabi before, 9 years ago, the focus has been to offer more than the previous.

The previous conventions under your leadership were highly successful. Post-pandemic, however, the industry has undergone major changes. What challenges have you faced while planning this year's convention, and how are you addressing them?

The usual challenges that come up post-pandemic. It is quite tough to continue offering the kind of subsidy TAAI offers to our delegates, despite a high spend. This convention is an example of the registration vs. spend, which is three times more. But that is what TAAI is known for.

While this puts pressure on us to invest more time in partnerships and sponsorships, we are grateful for the trust our partners and sponsors have in our team. We have been well honoured, though the challenge continues. We thank our sponsors and partners for obliging us. For sure, the quality of delivery is expected to be beyond the 2016 excitement.

The theme of the 68th TAAI Convention is "Business with Goodness." What inspired you to choose this theme, and how does it resonate with the current industry scenario?

Deal with someone you can trust. This is the TAAI Credo. At its heart are values of peace, empathy, kindness, and service—principles that guide us toward better living. When these qualities of goodness are embraced by business leaders and reflected in their acts of giving, they create more than success—they help build a world of value, free from conflicts, prejudices, and divisions. Our speakers will highlight these very aspects, sharing insights that will truly benefit our delegates. And that is why this year's theme is - "Business with Goodness."

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We have been able to achieve several milestones in last one year, all of which focus on Member Engagement via our program – Member First. Take a serious view at our issues of NAMASTAAI and one would notice how active TAAI is at the National, Regional, and Chapter levels. There has been plenty of revamping, with stronger communication channels, more inclusive participation, and initiatives designed to address members' needs proactively.

TAAI's 'Rally for Valley' campaign was a resounding success and won appreciation from across the industry. How do you see this initiative contributing to the revival of tourism in the region, and are there plans for similar campaigns in the future?

The revival of tourism in J&K is a reflection of our initiative. We are happy that we could rise to the occasion and take the bold step to promote J&K. We continue to get feedback that there are more and more people now visiting J&K, which is good. But we have to continue the promotion since the levels have to be achieved once. Again.

It has been almost a year since you resumed leadership as President. What would you highlight as the key achievements and milestones of TAAI during this period?

We have been able to achieve several milestones in last one year, all of which focus on Member Engagement via our program – Member First. Take a serious view at our issues of NAMASTAAI and one would notice how active TAAI is at the National, Regional, and Chapter levels. There has been plenty of revamping, with stronger communication channels, more inclusive participation, and initiatives designed to address members' needs proactively. The effort continues to keep TAAI ahead with more members joining us consistently, reaffirming our position as a dynamic and responsive association committed to the growth of our fraternity.

Membership strength is crucial for any association. Has TAAI witnessed an increase in membership during your tenure? What new initiatives are you taking to add further value for members?

We have a list of over 600 applications pending review. Need we say more! Surely, we will achieve much more than what we have already achieved. This overwhelming response reflects the growing confidence of the trade in TAAI's vision and leadership. Our continuous efforts to enhance member engagement, offer knowledge-driven programs, and create stronger industry linkages are ensuring that TAAI remains the preferred association for travel professionals across India.” **BOTT**

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TAAI MC MEMBERS

share insights on Outbound Travel & Convention 2025



Bettaiah Lokesh
Vice President, TAAI

Our business sessions are designed to inspire and empower while keeping the focus on ethics, sustainability, and long-term growth, under the theme 'Goodness as the Currency of Tomorrow's Business.' At a time of global disruption, tourism has a critical role in fostering peace through people-to-people ties and cultural understanding between India and Abu Dhabi. We have curated unique cultural and experiential itineraries, including visits to the BAPS Hindu Temple, the Louvre Abu Dhabi, Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque, and Qasr Al Watan. We are deeply grateful to Abu Dhabi Tourism, VFS, our airline partners, sponsors, and the TAAI Secretariat, whose collective support has made this convention exceptional. Beyond the sessions, my hope is that delegates return home with not just new business opportunities but also new perspectives on how tourism can be a true force for harmony, inclusivity, and long-term growth across borders.

Shreeram Patel
Hon. Secretary General, TAAI

AI-driven recommendations, real-time booking platforms, and seamless UPI payments are transforming outbound travel in 2025 by offering flexibility, personalization, and trust. I expect the Abu Dhabi convention to be a valuable platform to connect with global leaders and deliberate on digital transformation, sustainability, and emerging travel patterns. More than just discussions, I see it as an opportunity to shape collective strategies that drive growth and innovation. Going forward, TAAI will remain pivotal in enabling members to tap outbound potential through partnerships, digital readiness, and a strong focus on connectivity and visa facilitation. I believe this convention will also energize younger members, showing them how technology and collaboration can open doors to entirely new ways of delivering experiences for the next generation of Indian travellers.



Sameer Karnani
TAAI MC Member and Chairman,
Airline Council

Indian travellers in 2025 are seeking destinations with ease of visa access, nonstop connectivity, and fresh attractions. Spending remains strong, and repeat travellers now look for new layers of experiences. Abu Dhabi, with its unique offerings showcased in this convention, is perfectly placed to attract such audiences. Personally, I am eager for the insightful business sessions and the spiritual experience of visiting the BAPS Hindu Temple. These elements together make this convention both intellectually enriching and emotionally fulfilling. I also believe such conventions showcase the strength of TAAI in bringing members closer to global opportunities, while creating a cultural and emotional bond with the host destination.



Rajan Sehgal
TAAI MC Member
Chairman - Public Relation Council

Outbound travel today is heavily influenced by ease of visas, nonstop flights, and comfort, with destinations like Vietnam, Malaysia, Singapore, and Uzbekistan gaining momentum. The Abu Dhabi convention will be unique, starting with a grand inaugural at Emirates Palace, insightful business sessions with eminent speakers, and exclusive experiences including a visit to the temple and a private evening at Sea World. With business sessions in the mornings and explorations post-lunch, our members will return better equipped to sell Abu Dhabi with confidence to their clients. For me, the beauty of this convention lies in balancing serious deliberations with cultural immersion, making it both a learning journey and a celebration of the power of tourism.





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TAAI CHAPTERS

Driving growth, building connections, shaping the future

The Travel Agents Association of India (TAAI), the country's oldest, largest, and most influential travel and tourism association, continues to set benchmarks with over 2,500 members across 20 chapters nationwide. For decades, TAAI has been at the forefront of driving industry transformation through leadership, innovation, and collaboration. In an exclusive interaction with BOTT, TAAI's Chapter Chairpersons shared key highlights of 2025—ranging from impactful initiatives and outbound travel trends to their expectations from the upcoming 68th TAAI Convention in Abu Dhabi.

Shreya Shimpi



Rajesh Poddar
Chairman, TAAI Western Region

One of the key highlights of the year was the 'WoW Awards', a women's award function in Western Region, which saw the presence of the entire Managing Committee, Office Bearers, and prominent faces from the travel trade fraternity. We also organized networking sessions with hoteliers to build new connections and kept members updated on product developments.

We are seeing a clear shift in outbound travel to visa-free and visa-on-arrival countries like Thailand and Vietnam. In CIS countries, travel to Turkey and Azerbaijan has dipped, while direct flights to Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, and Jordan will boost tourism to these destinations.

From the Abu Dhabi Convention, I expect valuable insights into upcoming trends, networking opportunities, and a deeper understanding of Abu Dhabi as a tourism destination.

Nagesh Pampati
Chairman, TAAI Andhra Pradesh & Telangana Chapter

This year, our chapter focused on leadership sessions, women's empowerment, sustainability, and digital safety. We hosted sessions with industry stalwarts, honoured women professionals, planted 10,000 saplings with Telangana Police Training School, and organized a cyber safety aware-

ness program for IHM students.

Outbound travel from our region is increasingly shaped by better connectivity, demand for short-haul trips, and rising interest in experiential travel, with government support playing a positive role.

I look forward to the Abu Dhabi Convention for capability-building, innovation, and collaboration. It will provide sharper insights, peer benchmarking, and action plans tailored to regional needs.

Ln. S.P. Rajendran
Chairman, TAAI South Tamil Nadu Chapter

In 2025, our activities included tree plantation at Shivani College, Yoga Day celebrations with 500 students, World Environment Day, the 'WoW Awards' for women entrepreneurs, a press meet with the National President, and an outstation meeting at Munnar. We also met with Trichy Airport Director, Tamil Nadu Tourism Officer, and District Collector.





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Travellers from our region are now preferring Vietnam, Philippines, Indonesia, and Abu Dhabi over traditional choices like Singapore and Dubai. Domestically, the North-east, Uttarakhand, and Kashmir are in demand.

I expect the Abu Dhabi Convention to be highly informative and enriching, with sessions that will keep members engaged and add to their professional growth.



Sameer Baktoo Chairman, TAAI J&K Chapter

This year, we organised TAAI's 'Rally for Valley' to revive Kashmir tourism and conducted stakeholder engagements, knowledge sessions, and eco-tourism initiatives. We worked closely with government bodies to address challenges and create growth opportunities.

Kashmir has also emerged as a growing outbound market, with travellers exploring the Middle East, Southeast Asia, and Europe. Young travellers are drawn to adventure and experiential holidays, while families prefer religious and cultural destinations.

The Abu Dhabi Convention will help us connect with global partners, especially from the Middle East, to drive inbound tourism to Kashmir. Our members are keen to use the B2B sessions for meaningful business opportunities.



Mariyamma Jose Chairperson, TAAI Kerala Chapter

In 2025, our chapter strengthened collaborations through five meetings, including international sessions in Tashkent and Kuala Lumpur, working with boards like Sabah and Malaysian Tourism. We supported Kerala tourism initiatives such as the Seaplane Project launch, the Global Women's Conference at Munnar, and tourism education reforms with KITTS. Mem-

bers also joined FAMs to Gavi, Uzbekistan, and Malaysia.

Outbound travel from Kerala is growing strongly toward Central Asia, Southeast Asia, and long-haul markets like Australia and Germany, especially for leisure, MICE, and weddings.

I look forward to the Abu Dhabi Convention at Hyatt and Emirates Palace, which promises knowledge sessions, B2B networking, cultural experiences, and a grand mix of business and celebration under the theme "Business with Goodness."

Neeraj Malhotra Chairman, TAAI Northern Region



Our region had a vibrant year with highlights such as the WoW Awards, the "Rally for the Valley" initiative in Kashmir, and the TAAI 75th logo launch at The Ashok, New Delhi. We also hosted the Korea Roadshow, Accor Roadshow, and insightful member meetings, including a session with VFS on visa processes. The AGM at The Ashok in August brought together members to review achievements and set goals for the year ahead.

Outbound travel trends from our region show strong interest in new experiences, cultural journeys, and increased participation in short-haul destinations. However, issues like visa delays and pricing disparities continue to be challenges.

The Abu Dhabi Convention promises to be a grand platform for learning, networking, and building global partnerships. I look forward to meaningful interactions that will add value to our members and to the industry at large.

Manoj Kumar Sogani Chairman, TAAI Rajasthan Chapter



Over the past year, I have been privileged to lead initiatives that enhanced TAAI's visibility and member engagement in our region. Republic Day and Independence Day celebrations with flag-hoisting ceremonies brought the fraternity together, while one of the biggest cricket tournaments in our sector—complete with live streaming, an IPL-style auction, and prizes—set new benchmarks. We also organized Yoga Day, Heritage Walks, and workshops with VFS Global, alongside roadshows with tourism boards and DMCs to strengthen our chapter's growth.

Outbound travel from Rajasthan is increasingly inclined toward visa-free and visa-on-arrival destinations like UAE, Thailand, Vietnam, Singapore, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Kazakhstan. Domestically, Himachal, Uttarakhand, Kerala, Goa, and religious circuits remain popular, while Rajasthan itself continues to be a timeless favourite.

Looking forward, the Abu Dhabi Convention promises to boost international travel, attract new members, and create valuable global partnerships. Under the dynamic leadership of President Sunil Kumar, the event will truly showcase TAAI's stature on the world tourism map.



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Mehboob Shaikh
Chairman, TAAI Central & South
Maharashtra Chapter

This year, our chapter crossed 100 members for the first time, thanks to successful drives in Kolhapur and Aurangabad. We've built strong bonds through inclusive events and online meetings, while also organizing diverse sessions on cyber security, taxation, and travellers' conduct abroad.

Our flagship TAAI Cricket Tournament, running since 2006, continues to be a highlight, and the 17th edition will coincide with TAAI's 75th anniversary. We are also working to expand our presence in tier-2 and tier-3 cities.

Outbound travel from Maharashtra is seeing strong demand for wellness retreats, adventure and sports tourism, and spiritual journeys to Ayodhya and Varanasi. Event-based travel, including music concerts, cultural festivals, and sporting events, is also gaining traction.

Our chapter is excited about the Abu Dhabi Convention, with more than 30 delegates set to participate. We look forward to meaningful networking, knowledge sessions, and new opportunities for growth.



Alok Vaidya
Chairman, TAAI Vidarbha Chapter

This year began with our 1st Managing Committee Meeting in Hyderabad, followed by regular chapter meetings. A major milestone was the official renaming of the Nagpur Chapter to Vidarbha Chapter during the Jaipur meeting in March 2025. We also hosted the 2nd edition of the TAAI Cricket Premier League, celebrated Women's Day with awards and felicitations, and organized FAM trips to Tathastu, Satpura, and Tadoba Tiger Reserve. The Independence Day flag-hoisting added to the spirit of unity among members.

Outbound travel from Vidarbha is steadily growing, with travellers heading to the USA, UK, Europe, Kazakhstan, UAE, Singapore, Australia, China, Hong Kong, Thailand, Vietnam, and the Maldives. Demand for both leisure and business travel is expected to rise further.

The Abu Dhabi Convention offers a golden opportunity to connect with TAAI members across India and global stakeholders, while providing insights on future trends. Members from tier-2 and tier-3 cities will benefit immensely from B2B sessions, knowledge sharing, and curated pre-and post-tours.

Timoteo Luis Colaco
Chairman, TAAI Goa Chapter

This year, our chapter focused on revitalizing member



engagement and strengthening collaboration with government and industry stakeholders. We marked TAAI's 75th anniversary with the launch of a new logo and meetings with senior dignitaries, including the Chief Minister and Tourism Minister. The WOW Awards on March 8 celebrated exceptional women in tourism, while our meetings featured expert discussions and policy updates. We also formally requested representation on the Goa Tourism Board to ensure the trade's voice is heard in shaping policy.

Outbound travel from Goa is shifting toward luxury experiential journeys, short-haul international travel, and sustainable tourism. Family, wellness, and cultural trips remain popular, while solo and women-led group travel are also on the rise.

The Abu Dhabi Convention will be a milestone event. I look forward to sessions on sustainability, meaningful networking, and knowledge sharing that will empower members to adapt to changing consumer needs.

Hina Zaidi
Chairperson, TAAI Uttar Pradesh
& Uttarakhand Chapter

In 2025, our members actively engaged in key events such as the Sri Lanka Tourism Roadshow, highlighting the spiritual and cultural connections between Ayodhya and Sri Lanka. We also participated in Madhya Pradesh's Investor and Tourism Meet, interacting with DMCs and tourism leaders to explore investment opportunities.

Our Annual General Meeting was successfully held on 19th August in Lucknow, further strengthening chapter unity.

Outbound travel from our region remains strong for destinations like Bali, Vietnam, Singapore, and Thailand. Emerging favourites such as Phu Quoc, Uzbekistan, Georgia, and Azerbaijan are gaining momentum, especially with value-seeking and younger travellers looking for immersive cultural and wellness experiences.

Abu Dhabi is already a loved destination for Indian travellers, and I expect this convention to further deepen ties with tourism stakeholders. I look forward to productive discussions, networking, and fresh opportunities to promote Abu Dhabi to Indian travellers.

Prashant Madlani
Chairman, TAAI Gujarat Chapter

This year, our chapter remained active with initiatives such as a Fam trip to Goa in collaboration with the South





Travel Studio Hosts Successful FAM Trip to **Georgia**, Powered by **UTEN**. **Travel Studio**, a leading destination management company specializing in **Georgia** and Turkey, recently organized an enriching Familiarization (FAM) Trip, powered by **UTEN**. This initiative was designed to give travel agents and partners a comprehensive insight into **Georgia's** tourism offerings helping them sell the destination with greater confidence and clarity.



The trip offered participants a deep dive into the essence of **Georgia**: from exploring top-rated hotels and iconic landmarks to experiencing its unique culture, cuisine, and natural beauty. With expert on-ground coordination, **Travel Studio** ensured a seamless and immersive journey.



Georgia is steadily becoming a top choice for Indian travelers—and for good reason. The visa process for Indian citizens is simple and hassle-free, with approvals typically granted without complications. The country is incredibly welcoming to Indian tourists, offering a safe, friendly environment with a strong appreciation for Indian culture and hospitality.



Another key advantage? **Georgia** is a dual-season destination. Whether it's the snow-filled adventures of winter or the vibrant outdoor experiences in summer, the country has something to offer all year round. Even better, it's budget-friendly—with most trips averaging under ₹1,00,000 per person including Air tickets, making it a highly accessible international destination.

With initiatives like these **FAM trips**, **Travel Studio** continues to lead the way in promoting **Georgia** as a must-visit gem in Eastern Europe, and while we locate this country in Eastern Europe,



it indeed gives a feel of Europe culture and heritage as well there by empowering travel partners with firsthand knowledge and unmatched support.

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Gujarat Chapter, our Annual General Meeting, WoW Awards, and participation in the Malaysian Food Festival. We also hosted multiple chapter meetings and have several roadshows planned to enhance member engagement and business growth.

Gujarat continues to lead India in outbound travel. Airlines from Ahmedabad often report over 80–85% loads from Gujarat alone, as seen with VietJet's consistently high occupancies. This reflects the strong demand and vibrant outbound spirit of our state.

With TAAI celebrating 75 years, the Abu Dhabi Convention promises to be a landmark event. I look forward to the knowledge sessions, B2B networking, sightseeing, and a memorable gala at Sea World, all set against the stunning backdrop of Abu Dhabi.



Gurjeet S. Sekhon Chairman, TAAI Punjab Chapter

Punjab has always been a land of explorers, and our outbound travel reflects this spirit. Today, younger Punjabis are increasingly seeking immersive experiences like culinary tours, safaris, and cultural stays. Luxury cultural travel in Southeast Asia and Europe is popular, though visa restrictions in parts of Europe remain a challenge. Value-conscious travellers are driving demand for destinations like Baku and

Almaty, while strong diaspora links keep travel to the Gulf and North America robust.

We are also witnessing calls for improved international connectivity from Chandigarh, alongside continued demand for religious travel to Nankana Sahib, Kartarpur, and Ayodhya. Pilgrimage is now often complemented by leisure travel, showing a blend of tradition and aspiration.

For Punjab, the Abu Dhabi Convention is an opportunity to bring our region's voice to the global stage. The theme "Business with Goodness" is timely, and I look forward to meaningful partnerships, insights, and alliances that balance growth with responsibility.



Niranjan S. Bhargava Chairman, TAAI Karnataka Chapter

Our chapter remained active with workshops, presentations, and government engagement. We hosted sessions with Air India–Vistara, GRN Connect, Udaan India, and even LinkedIn, which shared insights on business growth through digital platforms. The VFS workshop was another highlight,

offering valuable updates for members.

Outbound travel from Karnataka is seeing greater demand for high-end and unique experiences, boosted by Bengaluru's growing connectivity. However, fare disparities between direct channels and agent platforms remain a concern, along with the growing shift of transactions online.

I look forward to the Abu Dhabi Convention as an opportunity to strengthen collaborations and showcase Abu Dhabi as a dynamic destination for Indian travellers. It reinforces that travel agents remain the most important stakeholders in this ever-resilient industry.

T. Devaki Chairperson, TAAI Southern Region

Our region has 218 members, including 144 IATA-accredited. In 2025, we raised nearly five lakh rupees for the Kerala Wayanad Relief Fund, addressed airport expansion issues with the Tamil Nadu Tourism Minister, and participated in multiple roadshows and tourism board meetings. We also hosted the Industry Leaders Excellence Awards, the WoW Awards, and engaged with students of Pondicherry University to inspire the next generation of tourism professionals.

Outbound travel from our region is witnessing steady growth, led by visa-friendly countries like Thailand, Vietnam, Malaysia, Abu Dhabi, and Bali, with Japan emerging as a new favourite.

The Abu Dhabi Convention will turn each delegate into an ambassador for the destination. With cultural exchanges, business sessions, and Abu Dhabi's warm hospitality, we move forward stronger, united, and ready to see beyond.



Hemendra Singh Jadon Chairman, TAAI MP & CG Chapter

This year, we focused on member engagement through B2B networking, knowledge sessions, and partnerships with tourism boards. Notable initiatives included a cyber awareness session by ADGP Varun Kapoor, a human chain for Kashmir tourism, FAM trips, and a large-scale tree plantation drive.

Outbound travel from our region is shifting toward wellness, eco-friendly destinations, and customized itineraries, with short-haul international trips seeing strong demand.

The Abu Dhabi Convention is an ideal platform to gain insights, build partnerships, and explore opportunities in the Middle East. The theme "Business with Goodness" resonates strongly with our vision of responsible growth. **BOTT**





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INDIA OUTBOUND 2025

Industry trends and emerging destinations

The Indian outbound and domestic travel sector is undergoing a major transformation in 2025. AI, visa-friendly policies, regional connectivity, and evolving traveller preferences are reshaping journeys. BOTT spoke with TAAI Chapter Secretaries across regions to understand the trends and destinations set to dominate by year-end.

Shreya Shimpi



Dipen Mistry,
Hon. Secretary, TAAI South Gujarat Chapter

Travel is now experience-led, with demand for detailed explorations, luxury stays, and seamless connectivity. Travellers are increasingly seeking curated packages that uncover hidden gems and off-beat experiences, moving beyond the mainstream. Top picks for 2025: Seychelles, Vietnam, Japan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, and South Korea. This shift highlights how Indians are eager to blend leisure with cultural discovery, making experiential travel the new norm.

Rajendra Akolkar,
Hon. Secretary, TAAI Vidarbha Chapter

Travellers are choosing sustainability, wellness, and offbeat experiences, reflecting a shift towards meaningful exploration. Vietnam, Georgia, Uzbekistan, Japan, and Nordics are rising for their affordability and uniqueness, while Dubai, Bali, and Langkawi remain strong short-haul favourites. Domestically, Shillong and the North East lead among young explorers eager for nature and adventure. The appetite for unconventional journeys is a sign that Indian travellers are ready to embrace diverse landscapes and lifestyles.



Amit Navlani,
Hon. Secretary, TAAI MP & CG Chapter

Tier 2 & 3 travellers are driving fresh demand with immersive journeys, from cherry blossoms in Japan to safaris in Africa. Visa ease and new regional airports are catalysts, making spontaneous and smarter trips possible. Emerging favourites: Georgia, Vietnam, South Korea, Japan, Mauritius, Seychelles, and Abu Dhabi—destinations offering cultural depth and scenic diversity. This evolving profile is pushing travel professionals to innovate, ensuring every journey is both meaningful and memorable.

Sainath Dharwatkar,
Hon. Secretary, TAAI Goa Chapter

Conscious, AI-driven travel defines 2025, with 61% of travellers under 35 seeking wellness, culture, and spontaneity. Younger travellers are exploring new horizons with short-haul, affordable destinations as well as eco-conscious itineraries. Malaysia, Kazakhstan, Bali, Vietnam, Philippines, Baku, Almaty, Sri Lanka, and Middle East hubs dominate the charts, while cruise tourism from UAE ports is gaining popularity. This new era marks a shift towards responsible exploration, with travellers eager to leave a positive footprint wherever they go.





Kannappan Babu,
Hon. Secretary, TAAI Southern Region Chapter

With shrinking margins online, agents add value via expertise and personalization, offering problem-solving and trust that technology alone can't replicate. Young travellers and visa-friendly destinations fuel growth, with Asia leading through Sri Lanka, Malaysia, Thailand, Philippines, Indonesia, and Vietnam. Top 2025 picks: Philippines, Vietnam, Hong Kong, Azerbaijan, and Georgia. On the domestic front, Maha Kumbh, Kashmir, Andamans, and Pahalgam are driving travel interest, reflecting a revival of faith-based and nature-driven tourism across India.

Anurag Agarwal
Hony. Secretary, TAAI - NR

Outbound travel in 2025 is witnessing a surge, with short-haul Southeast Asia leading due to affordability and ease, while the Middle East has emerged as a favourite thanks to connectivity, visas, and attractive stopovers. Luxury and premium travel are also growing significantly. For me, the Abu Dhabi convention promises three key takeaways—networking with 300+ TAAI members, gaining insights from powerful knowledge sessions, and experiencing Abu Dhabi's cultural depth firsthand. Together, these will inspire new opportunities for members to expand outbound horizons. I also see it as a chance to deepen fraternity bonds, exchange innovative ideas, and return with renewed energy to better serve the evolving expectations of Indian travellers.



Dr. Pazhani Murugesan
TAAI Member

Experiential and wellness travel are major drivers of outbound demand, with travellers seeking authentic cultural immersions, adventure, or holistic healing experiences. Luxury and personalized itineraries are also on the rise, especially among Tier II and III travellers who now aspire for unique, premium journeys. Sustainability and regenerative tourism have become imperatives, shaping travel choices. Abu Dhabi, with its focus on wellness and culture, presents immense opportunities for partnerships between Indian and Middle Eastern stakeholders. At the convention, I see great potential in building collaborations for wellness tourism, spiritual packages, and cultural exchanges that will enhance both outbound and inbound flows between India and the region. The sessions will be a knowledge bridge, helping members understand how to blend India's ancient strengths with global aspirations for new-age travel.

Anoop Kanuga
TAAI Member

Experiential travel built around events—concerts, Formula One, football matches, or art festivals—is on the rise, with travellers extending their stays for destination exploration. Social media continues to inspire demand for trending destinations like Baku and Phu Quoc, while VR and AR allow travellers to 'see before they buy.' Travellers are also more willing to spend on passion-driven journeys, from art tours in South America to music programs in Amsterdam. At the Abu Dhabi convention, I look forward to engaging with suppliers, exploring innovative products, and building collaborations rooted not just in business but also in trust and shared growth. I feel this is the right time for our fraternity to come together, share real stories, and co-create journeys that reflect the aspirations of today's discerning outbound travellers.





Thailand has long charmed travellers with its breathtaking landscapes, rich culture, and warm hospitality, but what truly makes it remarkable is its appeal as a family-friendly destination. From vibrant cities to tranquil islands, Thailand offers experiences that engage every generation.

Bangkok, the country's bustling capital, is a playground of sights and sounds. Families can explore the Grand Palace, cruise along the Chao Phraya River, or indulge in lively night markets. For children, attractions such as Safari World and Dream World offer unforgettable entertainment, while shopping malls double up as family leisure zones with aquariums, kid zones, and themed restaurants.

A few hours away, Chiang Mai brings families closer to nature and culture. Known for its elephant sanctuaries, interactive craft villages, and mountain adventures, it offers immersive experiences that combine fun with learning. Lantern festivals and temple visits add a magical dimension for young and old alike.

Thailand's beaches, however, remain its biggest draw for families. Phuket, Krabi, Koh Samui, and Hua Hin are home to pristine beaches, family-friendly resorts, water parks, and adventure activities like snorkelling and island-hopping. Many resorts feature kids' clubs, babysitting services, and tailored experiences, giving parents the perfect balance of relaxation and family bonding.

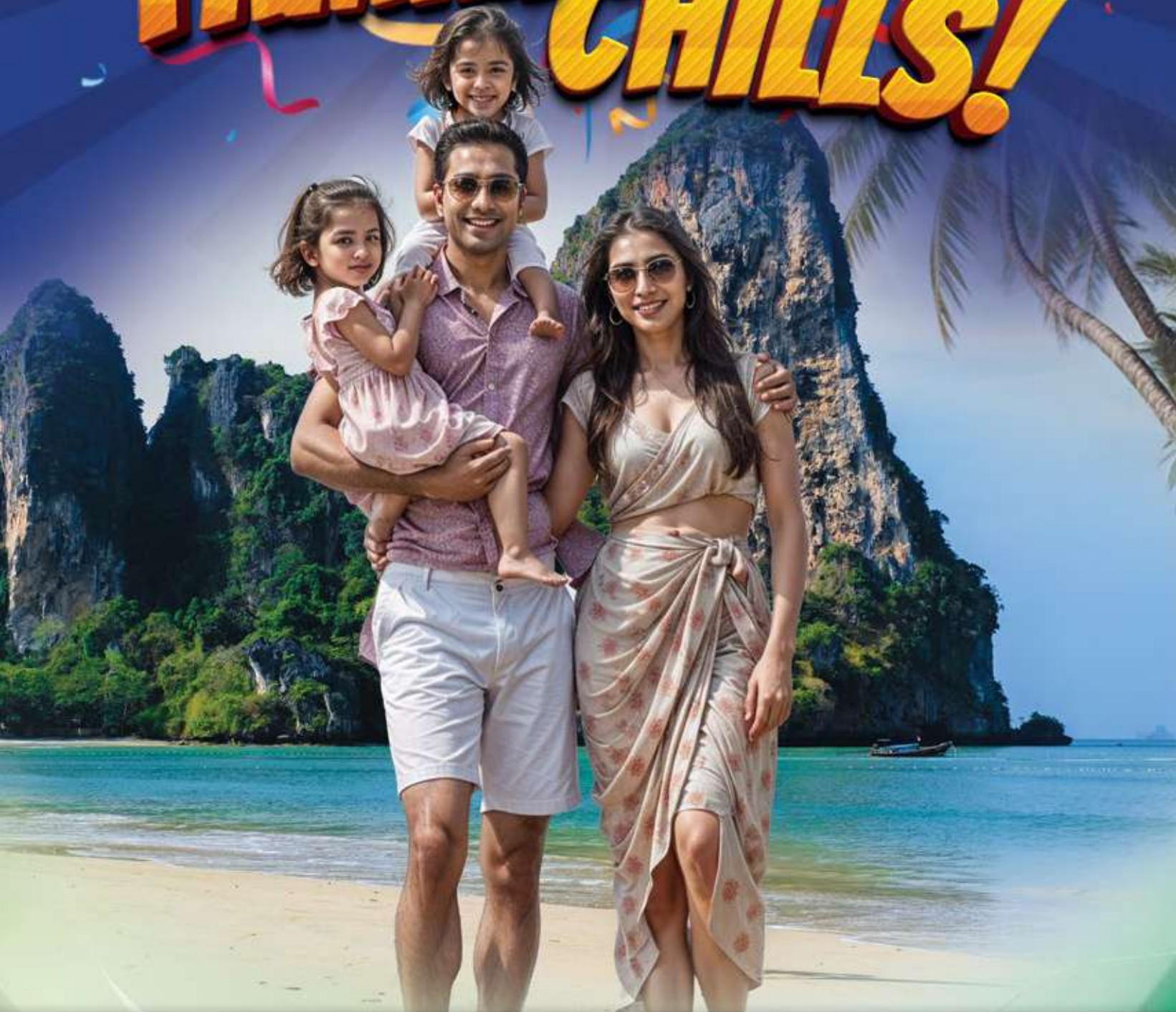
Adding to its allure is Thailand's affordability and connectivity. Excellent infrastructure, direct flights from major Indian cities, and a wide range of accommodations make it convenient for families to plan holidays without stretching budgets. Thai cuisine, celebrated globally, is easily adaptable for children with mild, flavourful options.

With its unique blend of culture, adventure, relaxation, and value, Thailand truly stands out as the perfect family destination — one where parents create memories, children discover joy, and every trip becomes a story worth telling.





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ANDAMANS MEGA FAMTRIP 2025

Showcasing paradise to Inbound travel fraternity

Amit Bhasin



A AndamanExperts.com recently hosted the much-anticipated Andamans Mega FamTrip 2025, offering leading inbound travel agents and media professionals an unforgettable journey through the pristine islands. Designed to spotlight the destination's immense potential for the global travel market, the initiative seamlessly blended business with leisure, giving participants first-hand experiences of the archipelago's natural beauty, cultural heritage, and world-class hospitality.

The journey began in Port Blair, where delegates were warmly welcomed at Lemon Tree Hotel before setting off to explore the iconic Cellular Jail Museum and the tranquil Corbyn's Cove Beach. In the evening, they returned to the historic Cellular Jail to witness the evocative Light and Sound Show, followed by a memorable dinner cruise hosted aboard the luxurious TSG Bella Bay.

The following day, the delegation sailed from Hadoo Jetty to Have-lock Island. After a hearty breakfast





and resort inspection at SeaShell, the group visited CGH Earth Tilar Siro and then proceeded to the opulent Taj Exotica Resort & Spa, where they enjoyed a grand luncheon. The day concluded with a serene sunset at the world-famous Radha Nagar Beach, leaving the guests captivated by its pristine white sands and turquoise waters. Dinner was later hosted by CGH Earth Tilar Siro, adding a perfect touch of indulgence to the island - experience.

The final leg of the trip took the participants to Elephanta Beach, renowned for its vibrant coral reefs and exhilarating water activities, followed

by an excursion to Baratang Island, known for its limestone caves and mangrove creeks. Each destination highlighted the diverse experiences that the Andamans offers, from history and culture to adventure and luxury.

Reflecting on the successful showcase, Mahi Singh, Founder & CEO, AndamanExperts.com, said, "We at Andaman Experts are entering the peak season with strong optimism. Last year was an exceptional year for the Andaman Islands, and this year we are already witnessing a remarkable 40-50% year-on-year growth, with queries pouring in ahead of Diwali. A 40% organic rise is indeed very encouraging.

Both domestic and inbound markets continue to be equally important for us. As Andaman Experts celebrates its 15th year, having begun with LTC before expanding into leisure, MICE, conferences, and honeymoons, we are now shifting gears to place greater focus on the promising inbound tourism segment. Our vision is to position the Andamans as a world-class destination for every kind of traveller."

With all IATO MC Members in attendance and BOTT as the exclusive media partner, the FamTrip proved to be a milestone initiative in reimagining the Andamans as a premier global tourism destination. **BOTT**

ITB INDIA 2025

concludes successfully in Mumbai

ITB India 2025, held from September 2 - 4, 2025, at the Jio World Convention Centre, Mumbai, was a resounding success. It served as an exceptional platform connecting global leaders with India's rapidly expanding travel market through strategic partnerships and innovation. With a strong turnout and enthusiastic response from the travel fraternity, the landmark event has reinforced its position in shaping the future of the travel industry.

Shreya Shimpi

ITB India 2025 brought together global exhibitors, setting the stage for strategic insights, business opportunities, and experiential growth. The event was a grand showcase of robust international presence and a curated conference agenda under the unifying theme “The Business of Experience: Curated Travel for Targeted Growth”. The third in-person edition of the three-day B2B trade show and conference, co-located with MICE

Show India and Travel Tech India, brought together more than 400 exhibitors and 600 high-calibre buyers, with over 8,000 trade visitors from MICE, Leisure, Corporate, and Travel Technology.

“ITB India 2025 has demonstrated the remarkable growth and resilience of the travel and tourism sector, bringing together global exhibitors, quality buyers, and industry leaders in one dynamic marketplace,” says Darren Seah, Executive Director,

Messe Berlin Asia Pacific. “With engaging content, high-value business appointments, and strong partnerships across MICE, corporate, leisure, and technology-driven travel, this year’s edition reinforces India’s role as a gateway to the Asia-Pacific region. We are excited to build on this momentum and look forward to an even stronger ITB India 2026,” he adds.

Deepika Unni, Director, Exhibitions & Market Development, ITB





India said, “ITB India 2025 concluded on a high note, reaffirming its status as part of the prestigious ITB Berlin portfolio — the only global travel exhibition brand hosting a show in India. The event fostered impactful conversations, meaningful business connections, and fresh opportunities across the global travel landscape.”

Some of the key exhibitors included Wonderful Indonesia, Visit Northern Finland, Ministry of Heritage and Tourism Oman, Sarawak Tourism Board, Ha Noi Tourism Information and Promotion Centre, Destination 2 Italia,

Fly24hrs, ETAA, Asego etc. Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, and Madhya Pradesh took centre stage as the Official Partner States of ITB India 2025.

Sharing his views, Dev Karvat, Founder & CEO, Asego, said, “We are delighted to be exhibiting at ITB India 2025. The event continues to grow stronger every year as it brings together genuine buyers. The panel discussions are impactful, and networking opportunities help pave the way for fruitful collaborations and professional growth.”

Another exhibitor at ITB India, Sa-

tyaprakash Gupta, Founder, UTEN, said, “It is an impressive show with a well-curated selection of agents focused on serious business opportunities. The networking sessions have been highly productive. We have been receiving a good response through first-time suppliers and vendors, which I believe is one of the key USP’s of this event.”

Running alongside the exhibition, the ITB India Conference 2025 delivered dynamic programmes with 1,440 minutes of content across 40 sessions and four dedicated tracks – Knowledge Theatre, MICE & Corporate, Travel

EVENTS AND MORE





Tech, and Experiential Travel. With a stellar line of speakers such as Isha Goyal, Naresh Rawal, Scott Wegener, Prateek Hira, Nalini Gupta, Dev Karvat, Naveen Rizvi, there were over 40 sessions on topics based on India's MICE Evolution, experience-driven travel, cruise tourism, tech trends shaping MICE, responsible tourism, and a lot more.

Isha Goyal, CEO, STIC Travel Group, a speaker at the conference, remarked, "ITB India 2025 has been a refreshing, insightful, and engaging experience. The show has truly evolved over the past year. The organisers have done a commendable job of bringing

together some insightful conversations and engaging dialogue on this platform."

"The show is well curated, and the sessions have been put together very thoughtfully. The knowledge-based sessions have been a real highlight. I believe ITB India will grow up to be

a premier show in the Indian tourism category," shared Prateek Hira, Founder, President & CEO, Tornos, who was a speaker at ITB India 2025.

The successful three-day event was a global convergence of industry leaders, power-packed discussions, and impactful business opportunities. **BOTT**

IATO'S 40TH ANNUAL CONVENTION

in Puri sets strategic roadmap for inbound tourism growth

The Indian Association of Tour Operators (IATO) commemorated a significant milestone with the successful hosting of its 40th Annual Convention at Swosti Premium Beach Resorts, Puri, from August 22–24, 2025. With the theme “Rejuvenate Inbound”, the convention served as a pivotal platform for dialogue, strategy, and collaboration, drawing over 1,200 delegates comprising tour operators, hoteliers, government representatives, and tourism stakeholders from across the country.

Pallavi Sharma



The inaugural ceremony on August 22 was graced by distinguished dignitaries including Shri Gajendra Singh Shekhawat, Union Minister of Culture and Tourism, Government of India; Smt. Pravati Parida, Deputy Chief Minister of Odisha; and Shri Suman Billa, IAS, Additional Secretary & DG (Tourism), Ministry of Tourism. Odisha's Chief Minister, Shri Mohan Charan Majhi, also honoured

the occasion with his presence. The event witnessed the release of the IATO Manual 2025 and the conferment of the Hall of Fame Award upon Shri Pronab Sarkar, MD of Swagatam Tours and former IATO President.

The convention featured a series of high-impact Business Sessions that addressed critical aspects of inbound tourism. The opening session, “Rejuvenate Inbound @2030”, examined

the trajectory of India's inbound sector over the next five years. Subsequent sessions focused on strengthening Brand India through global promotion, forging partnerships across airlines, hotels, and tour operators, embedding sustainability into tourism practices, and curating innovative and immersive travel products. Complementing these were knowledge sessions on professional indemnity, corporate liability





BOTT has once again been honoured with the 'Best Travel Media – Daily Online News' Award at the 40th IATO Convention in Puri, Odisha. This marks the fifth consecutive year of recognition, underscoring BOTT's consistency and credibility as the industry's trusted news platform. The award stands as a true testament to our hard work, dedication, and commitment to delivering timely and impactful travel trade journalism.

insurance, and the role of technology, particularly artificial intelligence, in shaping the industry's future.

A notable highlight was the special session on Odisha Tourism, alongside comprehensive state presentations from 18 states including Uttar Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Assam, and Tamil Nadu. These presentations showcased diverse cultural assets, new initiatives, and investment opportunities, reinforcing India's positioning as a destination of

unparalleled variety.

The convention also integrated cultural and networking engagements that encouraged collaboration in a dynamic yet informal environment. Initiatives such as the IATO Run for Responsible Tourism, B2B networking lunches, the Travel Mart, and evening entertainment including IATO Got Talent added vibrancy to the event while fostering industry connections.

The valedictory session on August 24 concluded the convention with rec-

ognition of contributions and cultural showcases. The announcement that Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh, will host the 41st IATO Annual Convention in 2026 underscored the continuity of IATO's mission.

The 40th IATO Annual Convention in Puri will be remembered for its comprehensive agenda, strategic insights, and emphasis on sustainability, reaffirming India's commitment to positioning itself as a global leader in inbound tourism. **BOTT**

*The One Travel Alliance – OTA Travel and Tourism Expo 2025 will take place from September 29 to October 1, 2025, at Yashobhoomi, New Delhi, bringing together over 25 countries, 300 exhibitors, and 12 dynamic conclaves. The expo will spotlight innovation, global partnerships, and sustainable tourism on an international stage. **Rimjhim Saikia**, Director of Mani Global Association for Trade and Culture (An initiative of Mani Enterprises), shares more.*

BOTT Desk



OTA TRAVEL & TOURISM EXPO 2025

Showcasing innovation, partnerships & spirit of global travel

How do you see the Expo shaping the future of tourism through technology and partnerships?

The Expo is designed to act as a catalyst for collaboration and transformation within the travel ecosystem. By bringing technology innovators, state tourism boards, and MSMEs together, we are creating an environment where traditional players and disruptors can co-create solutions. Partnerships forged here—whether between government and private players, startups and established brands, or international and domestic stakeholders—will shape a more resilient and inclusive tourism future. The Expo essentially becomes a launchpad for ideas that align with India's global positioning as a diverse, digitally savvy, and sustainable travel hub.

The Expo's special hosted-buyer program spans sectors from corporate MICE travel to luxury experiential tourism, destination weddings, and medical wellness. Which verticals are you most excited to bring into focus and why?

Each vertical has its unique relevance, but I am particularly excited about medical wellness and luxury experiential tourism. India has a deep heritage in holistic wellness and Ayurveda, and with global travellers increasingly seeking rejuvenation and preventive healthcare, medical wellness can position India as a world

leader in this space. Similarly, luxury experiential travel allows us to showcase India's cultural depth, natural beauty, and bespoke hospitality in a way that resonates with high-value international travellers. At the same time, MICE and destination weddings are fast-emerging verticals that drive scale and high-value inflows, making them equally critical to focus on through targeted matchmaking. Our hosted-buyer program is designed to ensure that every sector receives the right visibility and the right connections.

One of the Expo's standout features is its emphasis on emerging travel technologies. How do you envision these innovations transforming both the traveller's experience and the Indian travel trade's competitiveness?

Emerging technologies are the backbone of the future travel economy. AI and big data are enabling hyper-personalized journeys, from curated itineraries to real-time language assistance. VR/AR is reshaping destination marketing by allowing travellers to experience places virtually before making a decision. For the Indian travel trade, embracing these innovations means improved efficiency, reduced costs, and greater global competitiveness. By showcasing them at the Expo, we're not only introducing cutting-edge tools but also encouraging businesses—big and small—to future-proof themselves in a rapidly evolving market. **BOTT**

ASEGO

launches Travel Business Protect

In the evolving travel industry, travel trade partners are navigating a landscape that is not only competitive but increasingly fraught with risk. Minor mistakes and errors by them often carry heavy financial and legal repercussions. According to industry data, claims related to travel service errors and cyber incidents have risen by nearly 40% in the past three years, reflecting the heightened scrutiny and accountability faced by travel operators.

The consequences can be stark. A single error in a passenger's name on an air ticket resulted in a loss of ₹85,000 for one travel trade partner. These incidents highlight the reality that travel businesses today are accountable not just for their own actions, but also for those of their partners, vendors, and staff.

Recognising these challenges, ASEGO has introduced Travel Business Protect, a first-of-its-kind product designed exclusively for travel agencies and tour operators in India. Unlike standard offerings, this solution is tailored to travel trade partners, providing broad coverage across operational and legal risks. It offers legal defence and compensation support, covering lawyer fees, court expenses and payouts if a client wins a case. It also protects against unintentional service errors and omissions by staff, and safeguards important client documents such as passports. The cover extends to third-party bodily injury and property damage involving customers or third parties, as well as claims arising from negligence or unsatisfactory services. Accidents such as slips, falls, and transport-related incidents are included, and medical costs like first aid and emergency expenses during tours are



DEV KARVAT
FOUNDER & CEO, ASEGO

covered. Addressing modern challenges, it includes protection against cybercrime, phishing, identity theft and employee fraud, as well as coverage for losses from supplier defaults or delayed payments.

Additionally, Travel Business Protect also includes emergency travel assistance, including tele-assistance for travellers. This ensures that businesses not only safeguard their operations but can extend an additional layer of confidence and care to the travellers they serve, enhancing trust and service quality. This comprehensive suite ensures travel trade partners are protected on every front — from day-to-day operations to unforeseen crises.

Commenting on the launch, **Dev Karvat**, Founder and CEO of ASEGO, said, "Travel trade partners today are at the frontlines of customer trust. They are no longer just booking operators; they are service providers, financial custodians, and crisis managers. We created Travel Business Protect because we saw a gap — travel businesses needed a solution that understood their world and protected them at every level. This offering is about ensuring their hard work and reputation are secured, no matter what challenges come their way." **BOTT**

*Kashmir is one of the premier travel destinations in the country, and regardless of situations or phases of political instability, Kashmir has always managed to bounce back in a big way. **Sameer Ahmad Baktoo**, Chairman, Travel Agents Association of India (TAAI), J&K Chapter shares his insights on Responsible Tourism and the way ahead.*

RESPONSIBLE TOURISM

The 'New Normal' for Kashmir

*K*ashmir is often described as paradise on earth, but beyond its breath-taking beauty lies a harsh reality—our tourism industry is entirely dependent on the health of our natural environment. Kashmir is both an eco-fragile and eco-sensitive zone. If nature is compromised, the tourism industry—our lifeline—will collapse. This makes responsible tourism not just a choice, but an urgent necessity.

Balancing growth with Sustainability

Over the past few years, there has been a noticeable surge in the construction of hotels at already developed tourist destinations. While this reflects the growth of tourism, it also raises serious concerns about carrying capacity, overcrowding, and long-term sustainability. A more responsible alternative is to encourage eco-friendly luxury resorts rather than concrete hotels. At the same time, it is vital to carefully plan new destinations with designated carrying capacities

Green mobility and alternative experiences

Introducing electric buses in Gulmarg,



Pahalgam, and Sonmarg would significantly reduce fossil fuel emissions in these pristine resorts. Similarly, expanding gondola projects to destinations like Doodhpathri and Sonmarg would not only ease pressure on Gulmarg but also open fresh avenues of adventure tourism.

A shared Responsibility

Responsible tourism is not limited to infrastructure or government planning—it must also be embraced by stakeholders and tourists alike. Every stakeholder, from tour operators to hoteliers, must act as custodians of nature. Tourists, too, need to evolve into conscious travellers, mindful of their environmental footprint.

The road ahead

The path forward lies in responsibility, balance, and awareness. By combining policy measures, stakeholder responsibility, and conscious traveller behaviour, Kashmir can position itself as a model for sustainable tourism. Our natural assets are our greatest wealth, and if we protect them wisely, we ensure that Kashmir remains not only a paradise for today's travellers' but also for generations to come. **BOTT**

ICPB HOSTS MEMBERS' INTERACTIVE MEET to strengthen India's MICE potential



The India Convention Promotion Bureau (ICPB) successfully organised its Members' Interactive Meeting on August 21, 2025, at The Imperial Hotel, New Delhi. The session was chaired by M.R. Synrem, IAS, Chairman, ICPB & Joint Secretary, Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, and attended by Arun Srivastava, Joint Director General, Ministry of Tourism, along with ICPB Vice Chairman Chander Mansharamani, Honorary Treasurer Neeraj Dhawan, Executive Director Dr. Poonam Rajput, Board Members, and distinguished leaders of the MICE industry.

Addressing the gathering, M.R. Synrem, IAS, Chairman, ICPB & Joint Secretary, Ministry of Tourism, said, "The successful hosting of the G20 events demonstrated India's growing strength as a MICE destination. This momentum must be leveraged to bring more large-scale international events to our country."

Adding to it, Arun Srivastava, Joint Director General, Ministry of Tourism, emphasized the government's long-term vision, "Rather than focusing only on immediate promotion, the Ministry is committed to building a strong and sustainable foundation for the MICE sector. We are encouraging states to establish City Convention Promotion

Bureaus, which will create an ecosystem that supports the industry's long-term growth and global competitiveness."

Chander Mansharamani, shared, "ICPB is working to ensure greater engagement and visibility for India's MICE sector. We plan to host one Conventions India Conclave (CIC) and one State MICE Conclave annually, with proposals currently in discussion with Rajasthan, Odisha, and Karnataka. Our first training program has been successfully completed, and the next session in November will focus on Marketing India as a Convention Destination and the Bidding Process. In addition, we are planning a domestic roadshow in New Delhi and international roadshows in Geneva and Amsterdam."

Neeraj Dhawan, extended a warm welcome to all attendees, outlined the agenda of the meeting, and delivered the Vote of Thanks. He acknowledged the valuable contributions of M.R. Synrem, Srivastava, Mansharamani, and Dr. Rajput. He also expressed gratitude to all members for their presence and thanked The Imperial, New Delhi, for their warm hospitality and gracious hi-tea. "Together, we can strengthen ICPB's vision of positioning India as a global MICE leader," he added. **BOTT**

TBO ACADEMY

hosts Insightful Evening on Saudi Tourism in Delhi

Delhi witnessed an engaging evening as TBO Academy hosted an exclusive knowledge session for the travel trade and media, spotlighting Saudi Arabia's fast-evolving tourism landscape.

The event began with a comprehensive presentation by a Saudi expert on the destination's diverse offerings, including the iconic Golden Triangle, newly developed Red Sea region, and the growing portfolio of world-class luxury hotels. The session highlighted Saudi's robust air connectivity, with nearly 320 weekly flights operated by carriers such as Flynas, IndiGo, Air India, Air India Express, Akasa Air, SpiceJet and Saudia making the destination more accessible than ever.

Participants were also briefed on the four visa categories available to travellers, designed to make exploring the destination seamless and convenient. The presentation further showcased upcoming attractions, underlining Saudi Arabia's positioning as a hub for luxury shopping, adventure tourism, and unique cultural experiences.

Following the presentation, the gathering of nearly 100 travel trade professionals took part in a fun online quiz hosted on TBO's innovative TravelBytes app, which keeps the trade updated with the latest news and trends. Two winners from each of the six

rounds received exciting hampers.

Attendees also received a detailed walkthrough of the TBO booking portal and TBO Academy website. The booking portal allows agents to seamlessly book Saudi packages for clients—featuring hotel options, attractive discounts, flight deals, and more. The Academy platform offers online certification courses on various destinations and regularly hosts webinars to enhance knowledge. Dedicated Saudi-focused webinars are already scheduled for November, December, and January.

The evening concluded with networking and dinner, leaving the trade community better informed and inspired to promote Saudi Arabia as a must-visit destination. **BOTT**



Thailand

The perfect blend of Golf and Leisure for Indian travellers

From world-class fairways to riverside sunsets, Bangkok became the stage for a perfect blend of golf and leisure as the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) Mumbai hosted a special Media Fam Trip from August 29 to September 2, 2025. Over five immersive days, Indian media explored not just Thailand's championship golf courses but also its vibrant culture, indulgent wellness, diverse gastronomy, and lifestyle experiences... showcasing why the Kingdom continues to be a dream destination for travellers seeking the best of both sport and leisure.

Pallavi Sharma

A Riverside stay and Wellness welcome

The journey began with a warm welcome at The Salil Hotel Riverside Bangkok, a chic riverside property known for its boutique elegance, stylish design, and calming views of the Chao Phraya. Its central yet peaceful setting served as the perfect base to explore the city. To set the tone, the group indulged in a rejuvenating session at Divana Scentura Spa, where age-old Thai healing traditions blended seamlessly with modern spa therapies...an ideal way to unwind before diving into a packed itinerary.

Heritage at Talat Noi

Later that day, the media explored Talat Noi, one of Bangkok's oldest Chinese neighbourhoods. Wandering through its narrow alleys lined with heritage shophouses and vibrant street art felt like stepping into a living museum. The area's most photographed landmark...the orange Fiat surrounded

by graffiti...proved to be a favourite spot for content capture.

Evening at Asiatique the Riverfront

As the sun dipped, the group headed to Asiatique the Riverfront, a buzzing lifestyle hub along the river. Here, they stepped into the thrilling world of Jurassic World: The Experience, an immersive attraction featuring lifelike dinosaurs and interactive zones. A riverside dinner against the glittering Bangkok skyline rounded off the day in style.

The Dragon Temple: Wat Samphan

Day two unfolded with a visit to the extraordinary Wat Samphan, popularly known as the Dragon Temple. This striking pink cylindrical structure, wrapped by a colossal dragon sculpture, left the delegation awe-struck. Beyond its dramatic façade, the temple offered a quiet introduction to Thailand's Buddhist traditions.





The Dragon Temple



Jurassic



Louis Vuitton



Top Golf



Robinswood



Divana Scentura Spa

ONE Bangkok

Next was an inspection of ONE Bangkok, the city's most ambitious mixed-use development project, symbolising Thailand's modern urban growth. Over a fine lunch, the group sampled the cosmopolitan dining experiences that the complex has to offer.

Shopping at JJ Market

From futuristic Bangkok, it was back to the city's roots at JJ Market (Chatuchak). Spread across 35 acres, with thousands of stalls selling everything from antiques and handicrafts to street food and pets, the market gave a lively glimpse into Bangkok's grassroots culture.

Bangkok by Night: A Tuk Tuk Food Tour

That evening, a Tuk Tuk food tour brought the city alive in a completely different way. Zipping through Bangkok's streets in three-wheelers, the group stopped at hidden eateries to savour spicy noodles, smoky satay, and traditional Thai desserts, turning dinner into an adventure.

Golf @ Robinswood

Day three was all about golf at Robinswood, one of Thailand's most exclusive courses. Perfectly manicured greens, challenging layouts, and world-class facilities demonstrated why Thailand is hailed as Asia's golf capital, home to more than 250 international-standard courses.

The Impact Speed Park

After a morning of golf, it was time for an adrenaline rush at Impact Speed Park. High-speed karts on a modern out-

door track gave the group a taste of racing excitement while also creating plenty of dynamic photo opportunities.

Lifestyle meets Luxury

The day's explorations continued at the Louis Vuitton Café, where designer-inspired interiors and chic culinary offerings reflected Bangkok's rise as a luxury lifestyle hub. As night fell, the group strolled through Jodds Fair, a vibrant new-generation night market buzzing with live music, youthful energy, and endless street food choices.

Amata Spring Country Club

The final day began with a visit to Amata Spring Country Club, one of Thailand's most celebrated private golf clubs. Its immaculate course design and the iconic 17th hole, Asia's only floating island green, left a lasting impression as both a challenge and a spectacle.

Golf at Topgolf

The trip wrapped up at Topgolf, a high-tech entertainment venue that blends golf with games, music, and dining. It showcased the lighter, more social side of the sport, making it accessible to everyone, from seasoned players to first-timers.

The Golf + Leisure Media FAM trip offered a perfect snapshot of Thailand's multifaceted charm, championship golf, cultural heritage, vibrant markets, indulgent spas, eclectic food tours, and luxury lifestyle experiences. For Indian travellers, it underlined why Thailand continues to be a destination that caters to every mood, whether the aim is relaxation, adventure, or a winning round of golf. **BOTT**

NORTHEAST INDIA TOURISM AWARDS 2025

Celebrating the region's tourism excellence



The Northeast India Tourism Awards (NEITA) 2025, organised by the Emerging North-East Eco Forum (ENEEF), is set to be held on October 11, 2025 at Mayfair Spring Valley Resort, Guwahati. This first-of-its-kind initiative is more than just an award ceremony; it is a landmark movement to celebrate and promote the rich cultural heritage, sustainable initiatives, and innovative practices shaping the region's tourism landscape.

Mission & Vision

NEITA's mission is to recognise and honour individuals, communities, and organisations that contribute to Northeast India's cultural vibrancy, sustainable growth, and experiential travel offerings. Its vision is to firmly establish the region as a globally recognised, sustainable, and experiential tourism destination, while safeguarding its natural and cultural heritage for future generations.

Award Scope & Jury

The awards will span 40+ categories across six key pillars—service, sustainability, culture, digital storytelling, hospitality, and community initiatives. A distinguished international jury will ensure credibility and diversity in evaluation. Esteemed members include Dato Dennis Chuah, Dr. O.P. Mendiratta, Vikramjit Singh, Dr. Mahesh Chandra Uniyal, Jahnabi Phukan, Kalpen Shukla, Kay See, Lt. Gen. (Retd.) Himalay Singh, Pauline Suharno, Raj Basu, Rajendra Pandey, Somsong Sachaphimukh, Tsering Wange, Dato Aruldas, Saom Tshering Namchu, Ankita Kumar, and Arpan Kalita.

Why NEITA Matters

Tourism in Northeast India is more than sightseeing—it is about authentic experiences, resilient communities, and timeless traditions. NEITA 2025 aims to:

- Enhance visibility of the region on the global tourism map.
- Encourage sustainable practices that balance growth with ecological preservation.
- Celebrate cultural custodians and community-driven initiatives.
- Inspire investment and innovation across hospitality, eco-tourism, and adventure travel.

Looking Ahead

By uniting policymakers, entrepreneurs, cultural ambassadors, and global leaders, NEITA 2025 seeks to become a powerful platform for collaboration and recognition. It aims to redefine the tourism narrative of Northeast India, positioning it as a premier destination that thrives on sustainability, inclusivity, and creativity.

Nominations are open until 20th September 2025
To participate, visit www.netourismawards.com

JAKARTA-MUMBAI UPDATE (JaMU) 2025 showcases India-Indonesia's economic synergies

The Consulate General of the Republic of Indonesia, Mumbai, in association with IMC Chamber of Commerce & Industry, Mumbai, organised an interactive session titled "Showcasing the Strength to highlight the Future of the Indonesia-India Partnership" on the occasion of The Jakarta-Mumbai Update (JaMU) 2025.

Shreya Shimpi

An interactive session celebrating the spirit of camaraderie and the economic partnership between India and Indonesia was held on August 21st, 2025, at IMC Mumbai. With over a hundred members in attendance, the event was a resounding success. The program commenced with an enthralling cultural performance, "Tari Pasambahan" followed by the remarks of Eddy Wardoyo, Hon. Consul General of the Republic of Indonesia, Mumbai. He said, "We sincerely hope that the JaMU Forum will strengthen the cooperation between the two nations. The deep-rooted bond between India and Indonesia has been nurtured over the centuries through shared history and mutual understanding. Jakarta and Mumbai are important financial hubs in Indonesia and India, respectively. Fostering direct collaborations between these two powerhouse cities will strengthen the economic partnership between the two countries."

The event was graced by the presence of the IMC Chamber of Commerce and Industry President Ms. Sunita Ramnathkar, Juda Agung, Deputy Governor, Bank Indonesia, and other notable dignitaries. The expert panel featured Evi Fitriani, Professor of International Relations University of Indonesia, Nova Masrie, Head of Indonesia Investment Promotion Centre, Abu Dhabi, Erry Erjuno, Counsellor Economic Affairs of the Indonesian Embassy, New Delhi, and Moh. Haykal, Indonesian Trade Promotion Centre, Chennai. The Bilateral session highlighted information on the various investment opportunities in the economic and cultural space. It also showcased the remarkable progress made by the Indian business community within Indonesia, along with the current trends in bilateral commerce, including emerging sectors and new market opportunities.

The Jakarta-Mumbai Update (JaMU) Forum stands as a vital platform for business leaders, investors, and policymakers seeking to strengthen economic ties between Indonesia and India. Designed to provide current and actionable insights, this annual gathering offered participants a clear understanding of the evolving business landscape across both nations. Details were also shared about the upcoming 40th Trade Expo Indonesia, which will be held from 15th to 19th October 2025 in Indonesia. **BOTT**





Vaani Greens Kaziranga

Where luxury meets wilderness



Vaani Greens Kaziranga Wildlife Resort has officially opened its doors, offering travellers a serene escape in the heart of Assam's lush landscape, home to the world-famous one-horned rhinoceros and a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Designed to seamlessly blend luxury with nature, the resort positions itself as more than just a place to stay—it is an immersive experience in the wild.

The property offers a diverse range of accommodations to suit every traveller's preference. From spacious suites to unique geodesic domes, foxtail tents, and vintage bungalows, each option is crafted to provide privacy, comfort, and a close connection to nature. Guests can also enjoy premium amenities such as complimentary parking, high-speed internet, a bar and lounge, an inviting restaurant, room service, and a plunge pool for relaxation.

Beyond comfort, Vaani Greens invites guests to discover the true spirit of Kaziranga through curated activities. From thrilling wildlife safaris in the national park to peaceful bird-watching sessions, scenic hikes, cycling trails, and serene breakfasts in the woods, every experience is designed to celebrate the region's rich biodiversity. Evening cultural programmes further connect visitors to Assam's heritage, offering glimpses into local traditions and performances.

For those seeking rejuvenation, the resort's wellness offerings include yoga sessions, spa therapies, as well as steam and sauna facilities, ensuring holistic well-being in a natural setting.

Whether for travellers seeking adventure, families looking for immersive holidays, or tour partners curating unique experiences, Vaani Greens is set to become a premier retreat in Northeast India. With its focus on sustainability, culture, and comfort, the resort promises soulful stays that highlight the magic of Kaziranga's untamed beauty.

For more information, visit
www.vaanigreens.com



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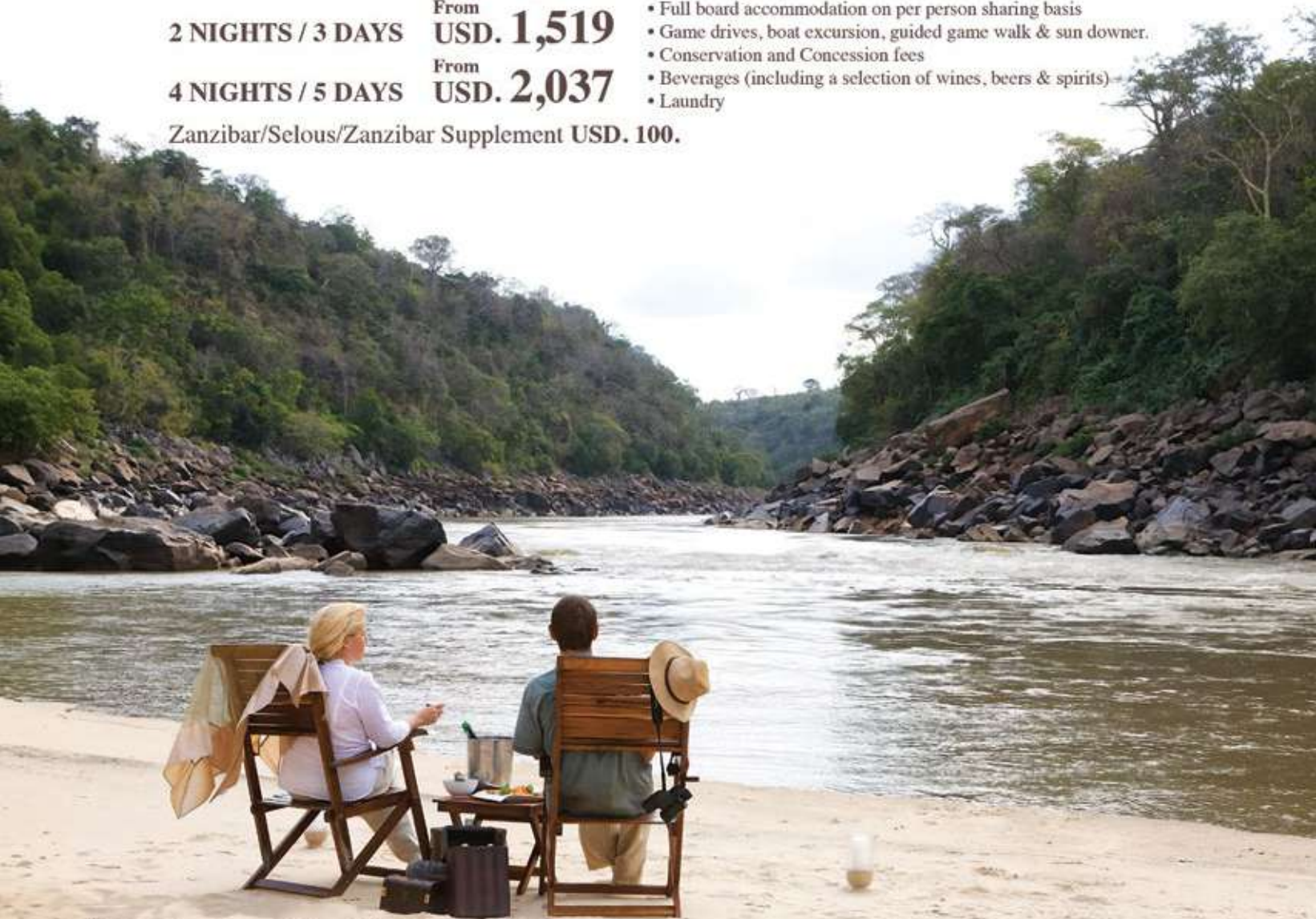
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Know what your stars say about September 2025



Tarot Card Reading is the art and science which helps understand the present status and the future course. It helps to apply course correction, if required. Tarot Card can be used for shaping Career, Health, Finance, Business,, Relationship, Marriage, Match-making, etc. **Ms. Richa Srivastava, a renowned Tarot Card Reader** conducts exclusive Tarot reading under the banner - Tathaastu. Here are her predictions for September 2025.



March 21 – April 20

Work promises excitement this month as Aries face new challenges they'll truly enjoy. Fresh opportunities and job offers may be on the horizon. Relationships will see harmony as conflicts resolve positively, while family life remains stable and abundant. A short trip with loved ones is also indicated.



July 23 – August 21

This month centres on love and abundance. Nurturing qualities in your relationships will bring comfort and emotional security. Professionally, anxieties may arise, but don't let stress overpower you. Tackle matters step by step, and lean on trusted support when needed.



November 23 – December 22

If financial or emotional worries weigh on you, turn to your partner for support. Professionally, adopt caution and financial discipline. Manage resources wisely, and avoid unnecessary expenses to keep your balance steady.



April 21 – May 21

On the career front, maintain a positive attitude, stay patient, and work diligently toward your dreams. Perseverance and careful planning will lead you closer to success. Family life will bring peace, contentment, and a deep sense of fulfilment.



August 22 – September 23

You're ready to express your emotions. You're about to make positive changes and advance in your career. You'll leave past challenges behind and enter a more peaceful and stable phase. Ensure you take advantage of the opportunities for growth and progress in your professional life.



December 23 – January 20

Your creativity and multitasking skills will shine this month. Expect a busy yet productive period on the work front, where you'll showcase your best talents. Make sure to balance this by spending quality, meaningful time with family.



May 22 – June 21

This month is set to be phenomenal, with progress on both personal and professional fronts. Happiness and growth will come naturally, though caution is advised regarding your health. Opportunities to innovate will open up, earning you recognition and popularity.



September 24 – October

Love and adventure light up this month, bringing joy and playfulness to relationships. At work, expect breakthroughs and clarity that allow you to make decisive moves. Use your sharp intellect to cut through confusion and take bold steps toward professional success.



January 21 – February 19

Your ideas are many, but focus is essential now. Refocus, recalibrate, and deliver on your key goals. Mood swings may impact your family, so stay grounded. Avoid high-risk investments or schemes that seem too good to be true.



June 22 – July 22

Your head is buzzing with ideas, but it's time to pause, refocus, recalibrate, and deliver on your true priorities. Mood swings may affect your family, so remain mindful. Avoid investments or deals that appear "risk-free," as they may not be what they seem.



October 24 – November 22

This month calls for introspection. Recognize your strengths and work steadily on your weaknesses. Those beginning their professional journey may soon find doors opening. Couples can focus on rest, relaxation, and strengthening their bond.



February 20 – March 20

Step up with confidence to tackle professional challenges head-on. However, keep an eye on your spending, as expenses may exceed income. Budgeting is crucial. Steer clear of unnecessary debates that don't concern you, and conserve your energy for things that truly matter.

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APPOINTMENTS

ACCOR

Ranju Alex has been named CEO – South Asia at Accor, bringing nearly three decades of hospitality expertise to the role. Formerly Area Vice President – South Asia at Marriott International, she managed operations across 170 hotels in India, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, and Pakistan. Starting her career with The Oberoi Group, she spent 15 years there before joining Marriott in 2010, where she rose to become one of the most respected leaders in the region.



MBD GROUP

Parmeet Singh Nayar has been promoted to Executive Vice President – Hospitality Operations at MBD Group, recognizing his strategic foresight and contributions. With over 35 years of experience across iconic brands such as Shangri-La, Hilton, Carlson Rezidor, ITC, Taj, and The Imperial, he has consistently delivered operational excellence and people-first leadership.



PULLMAN & NOVOTEL NEW DELHI AEROCITY

Manish Dayya has been appointed General Manager of Pullman & Novotel New Delhi Aerocity, ushering in a transformative phase for the dual-branded destination. With an illustrious 27-year career, he has led some of India's finest luxury and premium hotels. At Sofitel Mumbai BKC, he drove record revenues and achieved India's first Green Key certification, underlining his expertise in sustainability, operations, and guest experience.



MARRIOTT INTERNATIONAL

Kiran Andicot has been appointed Senior Vice President, South Asia at Marriott International, overseeing operations and development for the region. With nearly 30 years of experience spanning hotel operations, consultancy, feasibility, and development, he has been a pivotal part of Marriott since 2006. Over his 19-year tenure, he has played a crucial role in growth and strategy, and in this expanded leadership role, he will drive conversions, openings, and stronger owner partnerships.



TAJ WEST END, BENGALURU

Taronish Karkaria has taken over as General Manager of Taj West End, Bengaluru, bringing with him over two decades of luxury hospitality experience. A dynamic second-generation hotelier, he has successfully led iconic IHCL properties, most recently serving as pre-opening General Manager of Taj Gandhinagar Resort & Spa. He earlier worked as Director of Operations at Taj Palace, New Delhi.



RAS AL KHAIMAH TOURISM DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (RAKTDA)

Phillipa Harrison has been appointed CEO of Ras Al Khaimah Tourism Development Authority (RAKTDA). With decades of experience, including as Managing Director of Tourism Australia, she brings global tourism expertise to the role. Tasked with spearheading the Emirate's bold vision of becoming the 'Destination of the Future,' she will focus on expanding international markets, developing world-class tourism offerings, and positioning Ras Al Khaimah as a premier global destination.



CROWNE PLAZA GURUGRAM

Ramnik Choudhary has been appointed Area Commercial Director at Crowne Plaza Gurugram, effective August 28, 2025. In his dual role as Area Director Commercial for South West Asia, he will focus on driving revenue growth, brand visibility, and commercial performance. A hospitality professional with extensive experience at Accor, The Imperial, The Park, and The Leela, Ramnik has been part of the IHG family for three years, most recently serving at InterContinental Jaipur.



THE ST. REGIS MUMBAI

Nishanth Vishwanath has been appointed Multi-property General Manager for The St. Regis Mumbai and Courtyard by Marriott Agra. A hospitality leader with over two decades at Marriott International, he is known for operational excellence, strategic innovation, and guest-centric leadership. His career began at Renaissance Mumbai Convention Centre in 2001, and since then, he has built a reputation for delivering excellence.





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