

HOTELS & RESTAURANTS INDIA

fhrainmagazine

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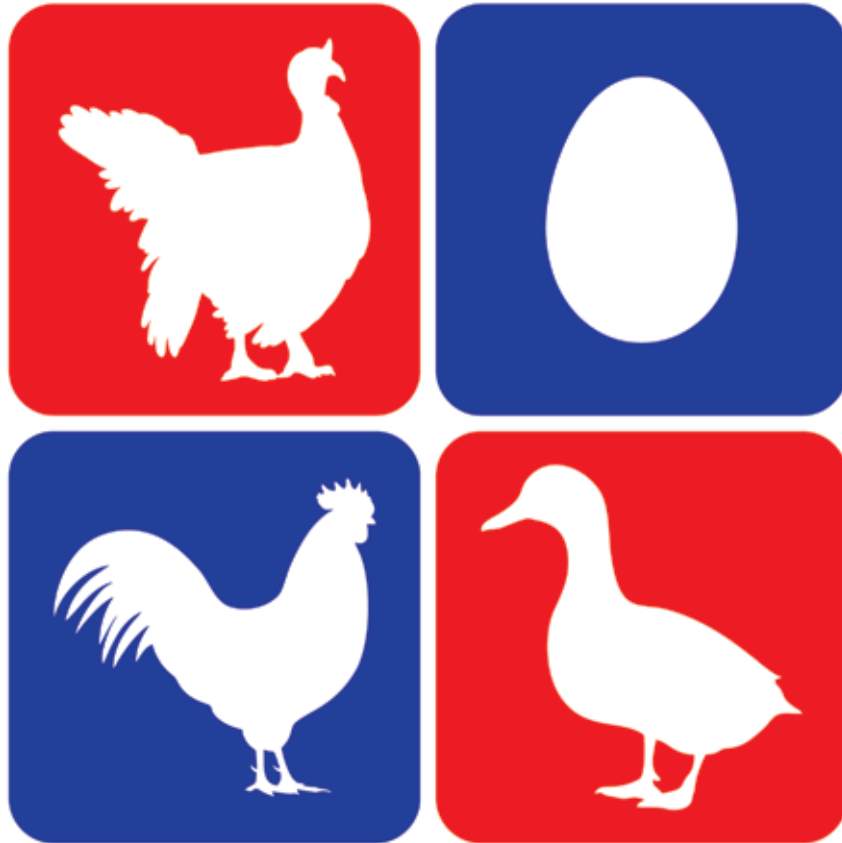
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Works I: Plot No. 58, Sector-6, IIE,
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Works II: B-7, Sector-3
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Works III: Gala No. R-8 & 9, Mahaveer Complex,
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Distt. Thane-421302 (Maharashtra)

Works IV: Plot No. 35, Shamrajpura Layout,
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KEEPING HER SAFE AND SECURE

The backbone of restaurants remains dynamic chefs. We try to get a bit of wisdom from experienced chefs on great cooking, perfect ambience, eating-out as an experience, starting on new projects, FSSAI, GST and licence hiccups

Cover Picture Design

Raashi Ajmani Girdhar



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SECRETARY GENERAL

Rahul Lall - sg@fhrai.com

PUBLISHER

Devika Jeet - devika@ddppl.com

MANAGING EDITOR

Peden Doma Bhutia - peden@ddppl.com

ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Kanchan Nath - kanchan.nath@ddppl.com

ASSISTANT EDITOR

Tripti Mehta - tripti.mehta@ddppl.com

CREATIVE DESIGN

Raashi Ajmani Girdhar

MARKETING & SALES - DELHI

Mayank Jain - mayank.jain@ddppl.com
Senior Manager Advertising (+919650399928)

Gaganpreet Kaur - gaganpreet@ddppl.com
Marketing Manager (+919650399934)

MUMBAI

Harshal Ashar - harshal@ddppl.com
General Manager (+919619499167)

Priyanshu Wankhade - priyanshu@ddppl.com
Manager Advertising (+919619499170)

SOUTH

Shradha Kapoor - shradha.kapoor@ddppl.com
Assistant Manager (+918179792492)

PRODUCTION MANAGER

Anil Kharbanda

ADVERTISEMENT DESIGNERS

Vikas Mandotia
Nitin Kumar

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HRAEI TO STOP TAKING BOOKINGS FROM GOIBIBO & MAKEMYTRIP

The Hotel & Restaurant Association of Eastern India (HRAEI) has decided to stop taking bookings from Goibibo and MakeMyTrip (MMT), two online travel portals, for charging heavy commissions from hotel owners and offering indiscriminate discounts to customers through their platforms.



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FHRAI

B-82, 8th Floor, Himalaya House
Kasturba Gandhi Marg, New Delhi 110001
Tel: 91-11-40780780, Fax: +91-11-40780777
Email: fhrai@vsnl.com

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Editor: Devika Jeet

Email: fhraimag@ddppl.com
Tel: +919818767141

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Dear fellow members,

There is some good news for hoteliers as per the latest ICRA report which states that the Indian hotel industry is set to grow at the rate of 9-10 per cent over the next four years. The Indian hotel industry witnessed its highest-ever 10-year occupancy in FY2018 and its Revenue per Available Room (RevPAR) increased by 17 per cent compared to the 10-year low witnessed in FY2014. Our trouble with Online Travel Aggregators (OTAs) continues. Issues of predatory pricing, the demand for exorbitant commissions, and the hosting of illegal and unlicensed Bed & Breakfast (B&B) accommodations continues. Profit margins, have been greatly reduced in the budget segment of hotels due to higher input costs, mainly due to the high commissions of the OTAs. We are still trying hard to come up with a feasible solution for all.

CRZ norms

The Union Cabinet has approved the Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) Notification, 2018. Under India's CRZ rules, coastal stretches are classified into different categories — ecologically sensitive areas such as marine parks, sanctuaries or mangroves fall under CRZ-I; areas already developed fall under CRZ-II; relatively undisturbed areas are classified as CRZ-III; and the coastal stretches of the Andaman & Nicobar and Lakshadweep islands make up CRZ-IV.

The new notification relaxes various provisions of the CRZ 2011 notification, including the reduction of 'No Development Zone' to 20 metres for all islands from the earlier 50 or 100 metres (depending on the type of island). Temporary tourism facilities such as shacks, toilet blocks, change rooms, drinking water facilities, etc., have now been permitted on beaches. These temporary tourism facilities are also now permissible in the 'No Development

Zone' (NDZ) of the CRZ-III areas as per the Notification. However, a minimum distance of 10m from HTL should be maintained for setting up of such facilities. The powers for clearances with respect to CRZ-II and III have been delegated at the state level with necessary guidance.

The notification has also streamlined CRZ clearances — only projects and activities located in ecologically sensitive areas CRZ-I and on coastal stretches of islands, or CRZ-IV, between the low tide line and 12 nautical miles seaward need be approved by the Union environment ministry. The powers for approval of projects in CRZ-II and CRZ-III have been delegated to the states. The change will also "defreeze" the floor area ratio frozen under the 1991 development control regulation levels in CRZ-II (urban) areas and permit floor space index for construction at levels as prevailing on the date of the new notification, enabling redevelopment in these areas.

Coastal development

The Central Government has sanctioned 11 projects for the development of coastal circuits in India for a total of over ₹800 crore. This also includes the amount for the development of Sindhudurg coastal circuit in Maharashtra for ₹82.17 crore, which was sanctioned in 2015-16. The coastal circuits are being developed under Ministry of Tourism's Swadesh Darshan Scheme, which also aims at integrated development of theme-based tourist circuits.

I hope that 2019 is a good year for your business and that the industry flourishes!

With kind regards,

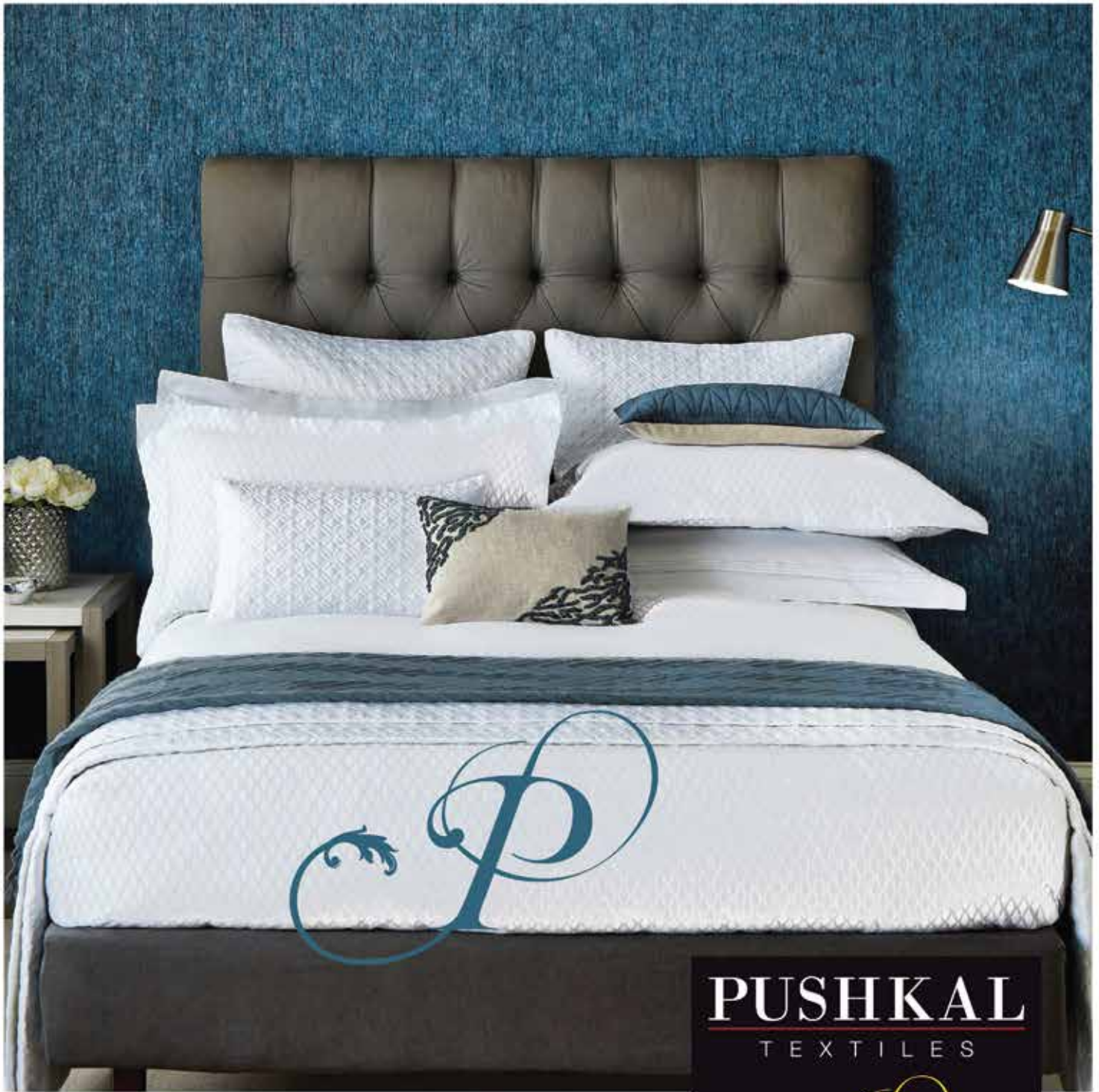
Dilip Datwani
Honorary Secretary, FHRAI

Dilip Datwani
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FHRAI

“The Central Government has sanctioned 11 projects for the development of coastal circuits in India for a total of over ₹800 crore

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FHRAI REQUESTS MOT'S INTERVENTION ON OTA ISSUE

The Federation of Hotel & Restaurant Associations of India (FHRAI) has reached out to the Ministry of Tourism (MoT), Government of India (GoI) regarding the hotel industry's on-going dispute with Go-Ibibo, Make My Trip (MMT), and Oyo Rooms requesting its urgent intervention for redressal of hoteliers' grievances.

After a month of failed attempts to amicably resolve issues with the Online Travel Aggregators (OTAs), the apex hospitality body has written to **K J Alphons**, Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Tourism, outlining the major issues of concern to the industry because of the OTAs' unfair and arbitrary business practices. A number of FHRAI's members are experiencing hardships due to the OTAs' business ethics, which are exploitative, unethical and divisive, leading to predatory pricing and other market distortions.

The letter to the ministry states that the hotel industry in the country is going through a very challenging phase, which is threatening the livelihood, business, investments and entrepreneurial initiative and spirits of the hospitality industry, and thereby eroding the viability of the sector. "The hotel industry, especially the budget and mid-market hotel segment is reeling under the adverse business tactics of the OTAs. The OTAs' malpractices are affecting the hoteliers' livelihood and business. These hoteliers who are part of the local and city hotel associations across the country have approached FHRAI seeking consultation and support and are in solidarity with the federation. The FHRAI has tried to resolve the issue directly with the OTAs, however instead its CEO has chosen to dismiss FHRAI's role in the matter. It leaves us with no choice



Gurbaxish Singh Kohli
Vice President
FHRAI



The budget and mid-market hotel segment is reeling under the adverse business tactics of the OTAs



but to ask for the Government to step in and create a norm for the OTAs just as the Commerce Ministry has done for the e-tailers recently," said **Gurbaxish Singh Kohli**, Vice President, FHRAI & President, Hotel and Restaurant Association of Western India (HRAWI).

The FHRAI's letter to the MoT summaries the most critical concerns of the hotel industry including the large-scale breach of contracts, issue of predatory pricing, the demand for exorbitant commissions and the hosting of illegal and unlicensed Bed & Breakfast (B&B) accommodations. "One of the most glaring irregularities is the illegal and unlicensed B&B, motels or accommodations hosted by the OTAs on their platforms. More than 40 per cent of the room inventory available on the OTAs is illegally operated. OTAs are legitimising the unlicensed



SK Jaiswal
Vice President
FHRAI



More than 40 per cent of the room inventory available on the OTAs is illegally operated



businesses by promoting them on their sites and apps whilst disrupting the business of the organised hotels.

Since these operators do not have to pay for licences and the statutory fees, they are cheaper by default and also are a huge loss to the exchequer. Not only does this put legit hotels at disadvantage but such indiscriminate hosting encourages illegal activities too. Such non-compliance of statutory rules and regulations compromises guest safety and which should be big concern for everyone involved," concluded **S K Jaiswal**, Vice President (North), FHRAI.

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WE ARE NOT 'DICTATING': FHRAI REACTS TO KALRA'S STATEMENT

After MakeMyTrip (MMT) group's chief executive Deep Kalra's recent comment that the Federation of Hotel and Restaurant Association of India (FHRAI) has no locus standi to determine commercial agreements between MMT and the establishments on its platform, **Gurbaxish Singh Kohli**, VP, FHRAI, says, "Goibibo and MMT have been exploitive, unethical and adapted divisive business practices, leading to predatory pricing, market distortions and cannibalisation. I fail to see how our letter clearly worded as requesting to "resolve" the situation would be misconstrued as trying to "dictate" terms. "FHRAI has never got involved all these years in any negotiations with standalone vendors but takes a strong stand

when the industry faces any outside coercion or intimidation. It is only when 1000's of hoteliers realised Goibibo and MMT's arrogant method of pressurising the small hotels in high commissions, more free rooms, started price control on the owners. FHRAI has, in its fiduciary duty stepped in to amicably resolve matters. Please note FHRAI is not here to negotiate as wrongly being projected. It is here to ensure that agencies like MMT and Goibibo do not take the industry for granted

by parenting such market conditions in which it would be difficult to do business for one party but a win-win situation for the other."

FHRAI has asked to look at partners' contract as the one shown below:

- Standardised commissions 12% to 15% instead of 30%-40%.
- No discounting hotel rates which are already listed.
- Not to infuse GOMMT funds to further discount hotel rates.
- No service charge on hotel bookings.
- They charge SC on stand-alone hotels only.
- They don't charge service charge on chain hotels
- They don't charge service charge on airline tickets
- h) NO PLB / VDI – free room demands / schemes
- i) De-list all the illegal hotel, illegal guest houses, illegal B&Bs immediately.

“
FHRAI takes a strong stand when the industry faces any outside coercion or intimidation.
 ”

FHRAI



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April 29 - May 3, 2019

A perishable service is one that cannot be used after a certain time. The potential revenue from an airline seat is lost if it is not filled by the time the flight leaves. A railway seat is lost if it is not filled by the time the train leaves. The revenue from a hotel room left empty for a night is lost. A rental car left idle during a day is a revenue loss. Airline seats, hotel rooms, and rental cars are some of the examples of perishable services. Some examples of perishable service providers are broadcasters and telecommunication companies.

Revenue management is a proven technique that helps service industries to maximize revenue. Coined as the "number one emerging business strategy" by the Wall Street Journal, revenue management is the art and science of price driven profit maximization. This programme on Revenue Management and Dynamic Pricing, perhaps the only programme of this topic in India, is being offered every year from 2004.

TARGET AUDIENCE

The participants of this programme are expected to be senior level executives who are responsible for maximization of revenue. These persons will be either from the commercial sector, information technology sector or marketing sector. Persons who are engaged in developing pricing systems in hotels, airlines, car rentals, restaurants, internet service providers, movie theatres, casino broadcasters, healthcare, trucking, transportation service providers, energy, petroleum, sports complex and cricket associations, cruise liners, and manufacturing would find this programme extremely relevant and useful. In addition, this will be an interesting area for consultants to work on.

OBJECTIVES

This programme aims to:

- Provide an insight into concepts of revenue management.
- Provide an understanding of how revenue management systems improve revenue.
- Acquaint the participants with various tools and techniques used in revenue management.
- Discuss the practice of revenue management in various industries.
- Discuss the technical and organizational challenges for implementing revenue management systems.

CONTENT

- The business process of revenue management
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- Inventory allocation
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- Case study and practice in Indian context
- Implementation of revenue management in an organization



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FHRAI FURTHERS THE CAUSE OF ITS MEMBERS WITH FSSAI



A delegation of FHRAI under the leadership of **Gurbaxish Singh Kohli**, Vice President, FHRAI and **Dr M. Venkadasubbu** and **Pradeep Shetty**, Joint Hony. Secretaries, called on **Pawan Agarwal**, IAS, CEO, FSSAI on December 19, 2018.

The delegation brought to the notice of the CEO such provisions of the Food Safety & Standards Act 2016 that are adversely affecting the food service providers and also requested for their mitigation. These included:

PENALTY CLAUSES

Restaurants, eateries, dhabas, mess etc. are food service providers. They cook and serve varieties of food based on the taste and choice of their customers. The area of operation of a food service provider is confined to a small locality in a town. The ethnic food varieties prepared by them are not standardised under the Act. Recipes and mode of preparation of ethnic food varieties vary based on geographical locations. Almost 90 per cent of their basic raw materials are sourced from the adjacent bazaars

and vegetable markets and are unbranded. The objective of the Act is safe food by self-regulation and self-declaration. Section 18(1)(d) of the Act also emphasises this and states that the regulatory measures shall be proportionate and no more restrictive of trade. The penalty clauses are seen to travel in the opposite direction of the proclaimed objective of the Act.

ADULTERATION

Penalties under adulteration shall not apply to restaurants and eateries for any raw material supply sample lifted from the food service provider if the FSP is able to establish that the raw material was bought from a duly registered and licensed source and is covered by a bill of sale.

SUBSTANDARD

Penalties under substandard category will not also apply to food service providers if the raw materials are covered by proper bills for purchase. Also, hospitality service providers falling under schedule 4 part V do not pack, label, distribute and sell products which are standardised in the Act.

UNSAFE

The definition is extremely severe. From an accidental occurrence to a willful default, every offence is viewed with same stiffness. FHRAI wishes to recommend categorisation as follows:

1. Accidental errors: Accidental errors are likely to happen in an industry where all operations are done manually. We have noticed that even in mechanised operations, mishaps occur. Even the Indian Penal Code Sections provide mitigations for accidents.
2. First time mishaps but not endangering customers.
3. Supervisory negligence not leading to serious mishap.
4. Willful default

FHRAI hopes that the facility to compound offences under section 69 of the Act may be extended to the food service providers also.

They also requested that appropriate guidelines with specific reference to the hospitality industry and mitigation should be introduced under section 49 of the Act.



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HRAEI TO STOP TAKING BOOKINGS FROM GOIBIBO & MAKEMYTRIP

The Hotel & Restaurant Association of Eastern India (HRAEI) has decided to stop taking bookings from Goibibo and MakeMyTrip (MMT), two online travel portals, for charging heavy commissions from hotel owners and offering indiscriminate discounts to customers through their platforms.

The decision to stop honouring the bookings from these two online travel agents (OTAs) was unanimously taken by the Managing Committee members of HRAEI on December 27 in Kolkata. "Following the meeting held among the Managing Committee members of HRAEI, the decision was taken that the bookings from Goibibo-MMT shall not be honoured, after January 15, 2019," said **Pranav Singh**, President, HRAEI.

"Accordingly, all fellow members have been asked not to honour Goibibo-MMT bookings from January 16, 2019 and have been asked to terminate their contract with Goibibo-MMT immediately." Hospitality industry associations across the country have been opposing major OTAs who charge heavy commissions from them and the hefty discounts they offer to consumers. These online booking portals initially charged between 15 and 18 per cent as commissions, but the figure has now climbed to over 40 per cent. "Initially online bookings had been beneficial to



Pranav Singh
President
HRAEI

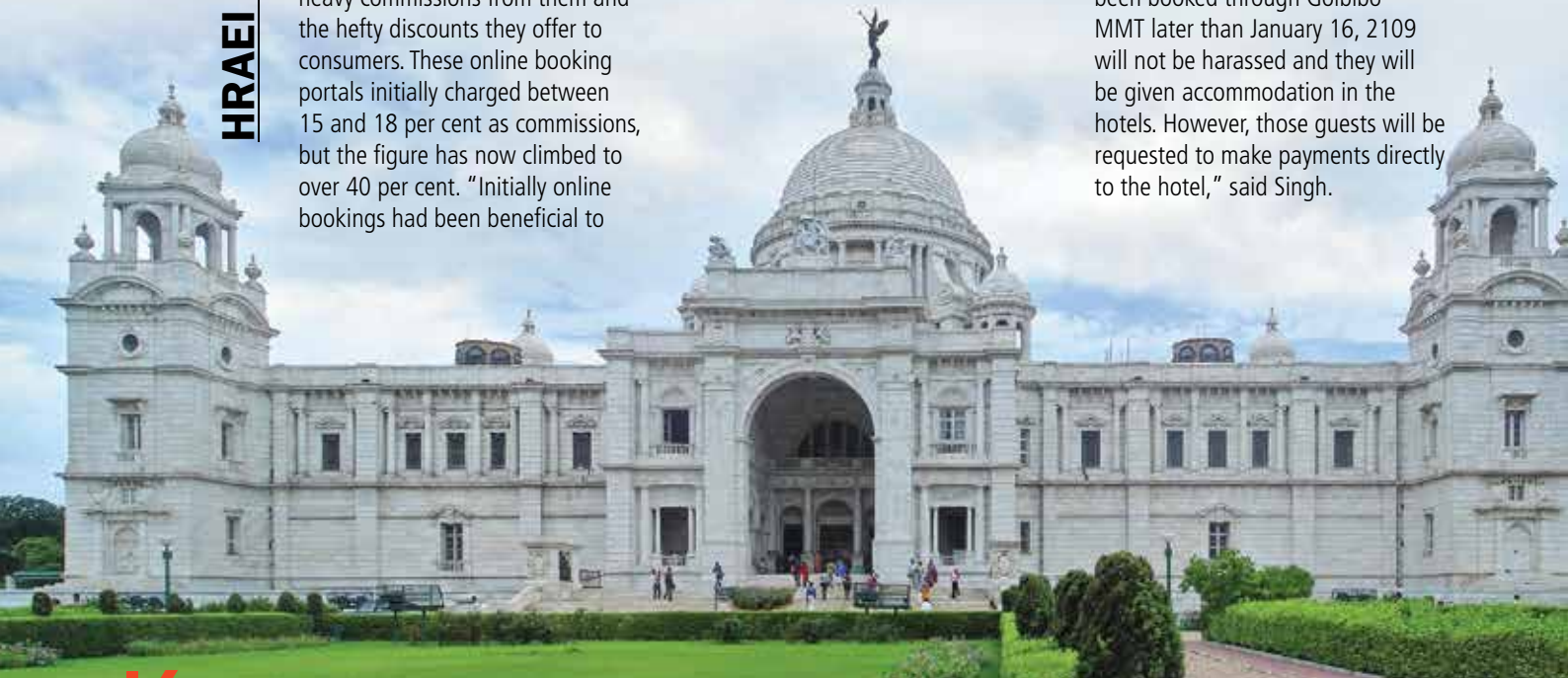
both sides—the hotel owners and the online booking platforms. But in the recent times it has been lopsided due to high-handedness of some specific OTAs, such as Goibibo-MMT, and has been eating up revenues of our member hotels," said Singh. To resolve the disparity, HRAEI had convened a meeting of its Committee Members on December 6, 2018, wherein Senior Managers of Goibibo-MMT were also invited.

"The main agenda of the meeting was discussion on reduction of the

commission and discounting of the hotel rates arbitrarily, by Goibibo-MMT, along with some other related issues," said Singh. "Following the meeting, a letter was issued to Goibibo-MMT on December 8, 2018, wherein the association had raised pertinent points for consideration by Goibibo-MMT. The timeline of 10 days was given to them for their appropriate response to the association." Goibibo-MMT sent an e-mail on December 14, 2018, stating that they would not deal with HRAEI directly on these matters and would rather deal directly with individual hotels with respect to their bookings. Thereafter another meeting of the Managing Committee members was convened on December 27, 2018 at the Association office at Everest House, Chowringhee Road, Kolkata, wherein the zonal head of Goibibo-MMT was also invited for discussion, but he did not attend the meeting, stating that they have already expressed the company's decision through e-mail.

Following this the HRAEI decided to stop honouring bookings by Goibibo-MMT after January 15, 2019. "However, guests who have been booked through Goibibo-MMT later than January 16, 2019 will not be harassed and they will be given accommodation in the hotels. However, those guests will be requested to make payments directly to the hotel," said Singh.

HRAEI



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GLIMPSES FROM HRANI MC MEETING

The Hotel and Restaurant Association of Northern India (HRANI) held its Managing Committee meeting on Dec 22, 2018 at Fortune Seclect Global Gurugram. We bring you glimpses from there.



INSIGHT ON PREFERRED VENDORS

Representatives of Yatra and BioD Energy India gave presentations for the Preferred Vendor Programme of HRANI.



(L-R) Aditya Gupta, Vice President - Hotels Supply, Yatra; Renu Thapliyal Secretary General, HRANI



(L-R) Dhruv Dhingra, Sr. Executive Operations, BioD; Aayush Pant, Manager: Siddharth Vig, Vice President

MEETINGS GALORE



A delegation from HRANI, led by President Surendra Kumar Jaiswal, met Suresh Prabhu, Minister of Commerce and Industry and Civil Aviation, Government of India, to discuss the issues relating to copyright societies.

L-R : Renu Thapliyal, Secretary General, HRANI; Vinod Gulati, MC Member HRANI; Garish Oberoi, Treasurer HRANI; Surendra Kumar Jaiswal, President HRANI & UPHRA, Vice President FHRAI & Suresh Prabhu, Minister of Commerce and Industry and Civil Aviation, Government of India.



A delegation from HRANI led by President Surendra Kumar Jaiswal met Yogendra Tripathi, Secretary Tourism, Government of India apprising him about the issues related to hospitality industry including Online Travel Aggregators (OTA).

L-R : Renu Thapliyal, Secretary General HRANI; Vinod Gulati, MC Member HRANI; Amarvir Singh, Hony. Secretary HRANI; Surendra Kumar Jaiswal, President HRANI & UPHRA, Vice President FHRAI & Yogendra Tripathi, Secretary Tourism, Govt. of India

A delegation from HRANI led by President Surendra Kumar Jaiswal met Suman Billa, Joint Secretary, Department of Tourism, Govt. of India apprising him on issues related to hospitality industry including Online Travel Aggregators.

L-R : Suman Billa, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Tourism, Govt. of India; Surendra Kumar Jaiswal, President HRANI & UPHRA, Vice President FHRAI; Amarvir Singh, Hony. Secretary HRANI & Renu Thapliyal, Secretary General HRANI





LAUNCH

VARUN BEACH BHEEMILI RESORT OPENS DOORS

Varun Beach Bheemili Resort managed by AccorHotels has opened doors for public. Located 25 kilometers northeast of Visakhapatnam, the resort has 28 rooms overlooking the Bay of Bengal. The room rates start from ₹5850. For outdoor team building activities or social events the resort offers five acres of outdoor space, perfect for any corporate weekend retreats. **Jean-Michel Cassé**, Senior Vice President, Operations, AccorHotels India says, "India is a priority market for us and one in which we are seeing solid growth momentum. By the end of this year, we expect to have a strong presence with a network of 45 hotels in the country. The state of Andhra Pradesh is integral to our development strategy and we are committed to opening more world class hotels here. The Varun

Beach Bheemili Resort is our second hotel alongside the 225-room Novotel Visakhapatnam and we have plans to open another Novotel with a convention centre in Vijayawada sometime later." **Madhav Bellamkonda**, General Manager, Varun Beach Bheemili Resort managed by AccorHotels & Novotel Visakhapatnam Varun Beach says, "Varun Beach Bheemili Resort infuses local architectural elements with the warmth of Novotel hospitality, elegance and simplicity focused on the needs of the leisure or business traveller. Our large sea-facing rooms with balconies are the closest to a cruise experience on land made even more real with the rising Sun over the East coast, making it a memorable stay for our guests. We look forward to welcoming guests to this pristine property."

BRAND

GINGER UNDERGOES REPOSITIONING



Ginger has opened its first prototype hotel with a completely new brand identity at Panjim, Goa, after an intensive repositioning exercise. The current portfolio of the other 45 plus hotels will be repositioned reflecting the new brand identity and brand promise. Ginger will introduce the lean luxe segment, the first of its kind in India. The new identity presents a co-existence of contrasts through re-imagined spaces blurring the lines of work and play, bringing about a fusion of global and local and create experiences that are vibrant, quirky, intuitive and smart.

Puneet Chhatwal, Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer, The Indian Hotels Company Limited said, "The Ginger brand journey is aligned to Aspiration 2022 that defines a brandscape that addresses diverse customer segments and price points. It will be an important growth vehicle for the company and we are looking at quickly scaling up the brand to a large number of hotels across India." **Deepika Rao**, Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer, Ginger said, "The brand is slated to appeal to an on-the-go lifestyle and is anchored in the idea of seamlessness, facilitating a 'never stop' lifestyle. Ginger will now be an aspirational hotel chain that is also surprisingly affordable." The redesigned spaces will bring together attractive public areas as well as spots designed for solitude, allowing the smooth transition from one to the other.



LAUNCH

LEMON TREE OPENS 201-KEY HOTEL IN PUNE

Lemon Tree Hotels has announced the formal opening of Lemon Tree Premier, City Center, Pune. Comprising over 7,000 sq. ft of modern banquet space, including large conference rooms and an open business centre, for meetings and events, this is its first 'premier' property in the state of Maharashtra and second 'owned' hotel in Pune city. Speaking on the launch, **Mahesh Aiyer**, Sr Vice President-Operations (South & West), Lemon Tree Hotels, said, "We are pleased to open our second and most anticipated property in the heart of Pune city. Known for its landmarks as well as noteworthy businesses, educational institutions and manufacturing companies, Pune has always been an important nerve centre of Indian culture and economy. With this hotel opening, we further strengthen our

footprint in this demand-dense market. We expect to make a mark by offering a high-quality stay experience with our impeccable service and great price."

Nostalgic and modern interiors at this new age Lemon Tree Premier, give it a unique character - be it the vintage styled art on the walls, the classic leather sofas, the wall-spanning windows or the grand staircase that runs through its larger-than-life lobby – all come together splendidly. This hotel's understated decorative lighting and retro-styled palette make for a stay that's inspiringly fresh yet classic. Lemon TreeGroup operates 3 brands - Lemon Tree Premier (upper midscale), Lemon Tree Hotels (midscale) & Red Fox Hotels.



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INTERNATIONAL FORAY

SAROVAR OPENS NEELKANTH SAROVAR PREMIERE, LUSAKA

Sarovar Hotels announces the opening of its first hotel in Zambia – Neelkanth Sarovar Premiere, Lusaka. With three operating hotels in Tanzania and Kenya, this will be their fourth in the African continent. Neelkanth Sarovar Premiere is an all-suite upscale development in the vibrant Manda Hill area of Lusaka. It offers a splendid guest experience with 82 all-suite, an all-day-dining restaurant, poolside grill, bar, lobby cafe, fitness centre and spa.

The hotel has large banquet and conferencing facilities to accommodate up to 600 people. All suites in the hotel are equipped with best-in-class modern amenities and supported by Sarovar's distinct service standards. **Anil Madhok**, Executive Chairman, Sarovar Hotels and Resorts, says, "I am delighted to welcome guests to Neelkanth Sarovar Premiere in Lusaka. For us, marking our presence in the capital city of Zambia is in line with our long-term focus on our growth plans for Africa. The elegantly-appointed interiors, along with our prompt personalised services, will ensure our guests have a memorable stay in Lusaka."

OPENING

CLARKS INN DEBUTS IN NEPALGUNJ, NEPAL

Clarks Inn Group of Hotels has signed one of mid-west Nepal's most iconic properties, Hotel Sneha in Nepalgunj, now known as Sneha Clarks Inn Suites. The new addition marks Clarks Inn's first operational debut in Nepal and the second property overall, including one in Kathmandu that is expected to open door later this year. Nepalgunj, a border town located just across the Indo-Nepal border along the state of UP, is fast emerging as a tourism hotspot of the mid-west region of Nepal. The border city serves as the gateway to the majestic Himalayas, wildlife and national parks, trekking routes and a host of water sports activities. Combining the old-world charm with cutting-edge guest services, Sneha Clarks Inn Suites is a more than 50 years old property with its colonial era architectural designs and the latest in amenities and world-class guest services. The 60-key property, currently a three-star hotel, is soon to be a four-star hotel as it has already applied for the four-star certification and is awaiting the same in about a month's time. **S N Srivastava**, President & Co-founder, Clarks Inn Group of Hotels, said, "This is our operational debut in Nepal and we are doing so with a property that befits this special milestone for us. It's a 60 key property spread over a huge area with big landscaped lush green lawns and international feel. The property will cater to guests with impeccable in-room guest amenities and provide facilities like swimming pool, for both adults and children, spa, health club and casino."



According to **Bhawani Rana**, Managing Director, Sneha Group of Companies, "Our tie-up with Clarks Inn is a step in the direction to strengthen border tourism and trade. Sneha Clarks Inn Suites is located just 3.5 kms from the border and we have visitors from Lakhimpur, Bahraich and as far as Lucknow and adjoining area too.

We are sure that this tie-up with Clarks Inn will not only help in growing tourism along the border areas of our two countries but will also have multiplier effect on border trade.

Hotels vs Online Travel Aggregators debate rages on...

Regional presidents share problems that they are facing with OTAs in their different regions, commission issues, devalued ARR, and the way forward to coexist.



Gurbaxish Singh Kohli
President
HRAWI

PREDATORY PRICING

The Online Travel Aggregators(OTA)issues which are concerning us in all regions are the following: They resort to distortion of market price i.e. they adopt the strategy of Predatory Pricing. They have inadvertently started charging unreasonable and exorbitant commissions. The biggest issue we are facing is their listing and hosting unlicensed and illegal accommodations eg: B&B, Motels and other random accommodations. Resorting to over discounting the rooms over and above the agreed rate thus leading to devaluing of ARR.

“You will be surprised to know that their commissions are in the area of 25-40%”

You will be surprised to know that their commissions are in the area of 25-40 per cent. Depending on the number of rooms available the percentage differs. These are divisive tactics and not good for the business. The Average Room Rates(ARR) once devalued do not come up easily. There is a perception created about that property and its ARR. It leads to a further decline of ARR. When signing with the OTAs it looks very rosy and the actual issues crop up when the deal is struck. Then you are at their mercy. From 5 star to non-starred, no one is spared. All are victims and at their mercy.

FOR BOTH TO CO-EXIST

Agreed that they give us business but what can they sell if there is no stock to sell. The idea is not to kill the golden goose but nurture it. The way forward is to co-exist. There are other OTAs also existing like Yatra.com and Booking.com, to name a few, how come no one has any issues with them?

The way forward is to create an atmosphere where both can co-exist and actually help each other and drive each other's business. Standardisation of commissions, adhering to business ethics, having a transparent commission and discounting policy is the only way out. One cannot survive where any one of the two is not having a level playing field.



Pranav Singh
President
HRAEI

TAKING THE LEAD FROM HOTELIERS

Members of HRAEI across the Eastern Region of India have been opposing major OTAs who charge heavy commissions from them and the hefty discounts they offer to consumers. These online booking portals initially charged between 15 and 18 per cent as commissions, but now climbed to over 40 per cent. Initially online bookings had been beneficial to both sides—the hotel owners and the online booking platforms.

But in the recent times it has been lopsided due to high-handedness of some specific OTAs, such as Goibibo-MMT, and has been eating up revenues of our member hotels. In recent times, some of the OTAs—such as Goibibo and Makemytrip—have been charging over 40 per cent commissions from the hotels.

HIGH-HANDEDNESS BY OTAS

Almost hotels have been suffering from the high-handedness meted out by some particular OTAs. This is why a decision has been taken that the bookings from Goibibo-MMT shall not be honoured, after January 15, 2019. Accordingly, all fellow

“OTAs that follow the terms and conditions laid down by our members will have business as usual”

members have been asked not to honour Goibibo-MMT bookings from January 16, 2019 and have been asked to terminate their contract with Goibibo-MMT immediately. However, guests who have been booked through Goibibo-MMT later than January 16, 2019 will not be harassed and they will be given accommodation in the hotels. However, those guests will be requested to make payments directly to the hotel. Since HRAEI members don't have problems with most other OTAs we have not decided to go against all. OTAs that follow the terms and conditions laid down will still be allowed to book and carry on the usual business.



K. Syama Raju
President
SIHRA

EXORBITANT COMMISSIONS

Online Travel Aggregators (OTAs) such as Make My Trip, Ibibo, Yatra and others are now household names in India today. They changed the face of Indian online travel bookings and took it to a new



level of maturity. India has one of the youngest populations, with more than 5 per cent of the population below the age of 25. This factor and the rapid improvements in technology played a significant part in the growth of the online travel business and India is one of the most lucrative markets today. OTAs charge commissions ranging from anywhere between 20 to 40 per cent. Exorbitant commissions will adversely affect revenues of hoteliers and impact the business. This is a concern that needs to be addressed to ensure

fair play. In addition to this OTAs sometimes also offer discounts from their end. This understandably leaves hotels in a difficult situation and also distorts the actual market situation.

NO LEVEL PLAYING FIELD

The other concern that has been raised is that OTAs are offering inventory from establishments who do not have valid licences issued by the local or state authorities. Since such establishments do not pay for licenses or the statutory fees, it goes without saying that the rates offered by these establishments are cheaper than the hotels from the organised sector. At this point it no longer is a level playing field, and the

“OTAs are offering inventory from establishments who do not have valid licenses”

outcome is causing distress to the organised sector. The need of the hour is dialogue between the two sides and a reasonable and amicable solution providing a win-win situation for both sides. Efforts are underway to ensure that the concerns are addressed.



Surendra Kumar Jaiswal
President
HRANI

UNETHICAL PRACTICES

The problems being faced in all states are more or less the same. OTAs' business practices are exploitative and unethical everywhere which have led to market distortions in all four states. The predatory pricing strategies being implemented by OTAs have huge potential to harm the industry as well as consumers in the long term.

Many of our members have complained that they are being charged commissions starting from 18 per cent which go as high up as 40 per cent. The practice of acquiring discounted rates from a hotel and then further discounting it on their online platforms is vicious and unprincipled and it disrepute's the hotel's image, and once the ARR's of the hotels are devalued then getting them back up is a dreary task which often is unsuccessful for many hotels.

“Once the ARR's of the hotels are devalued then getting them back up is a dreary task”

The so-called B&Bs are operating without valid licenses from local or state authorities. Since these operators do not have to pay for licences and the statutory fees, they are cheaper by default.

The spirit of a level playing field by pitting the fly by night operators against the organised sector is thus dishonoured. This is also a huge loss to the exchequer. Not only does this put legit hotels at disadvantage but such indiscriminate hosting encourages illegal activities. Such non-compliance of statutory rules and regulations compromises guest safety and which should be big concern for everyone involved.

MANY DISCREPANCIES

There are grave discrepancies in the clause which curb the freedom of hotels. This is a matter of crucial concern for the hotel industry.

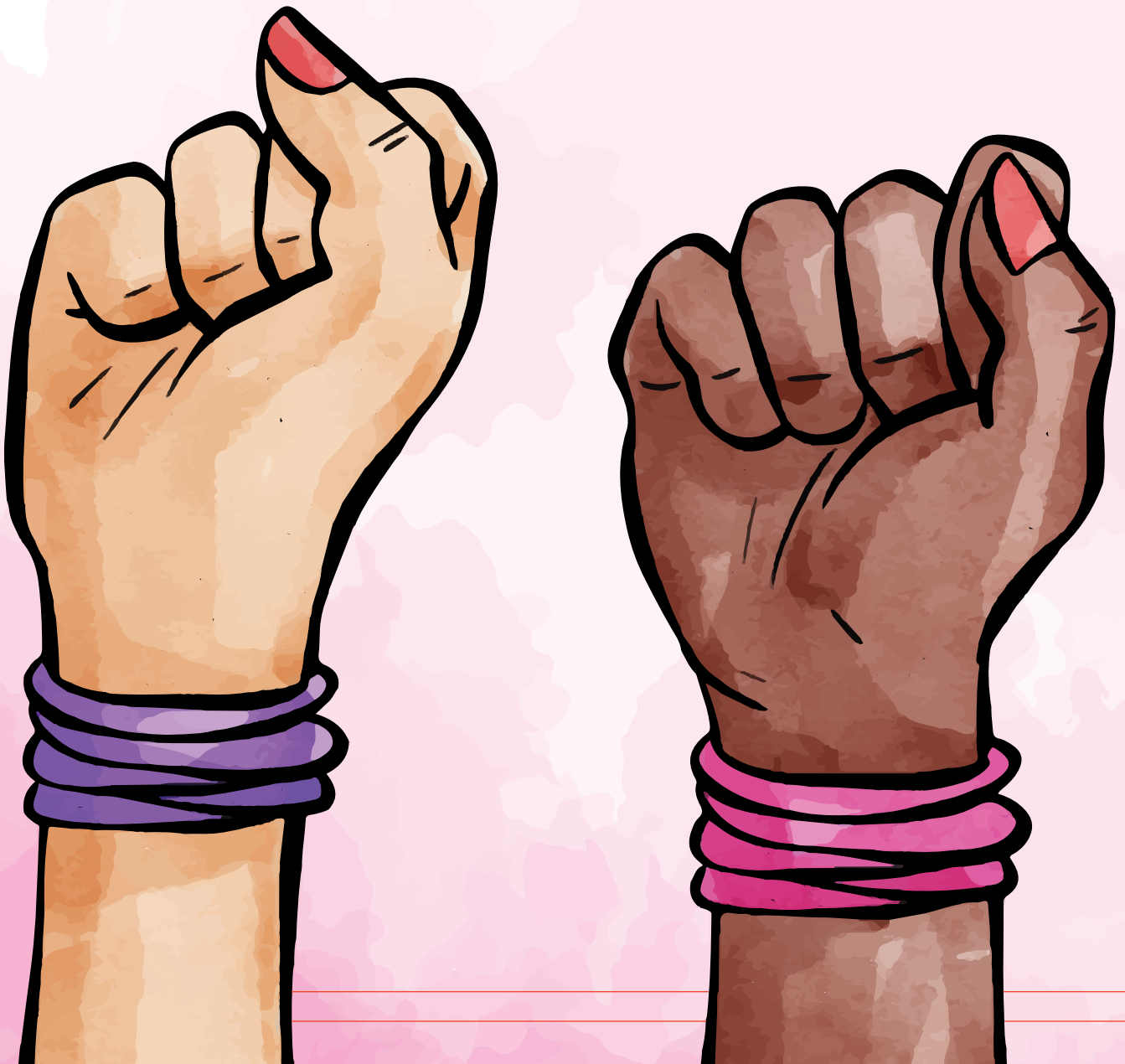
This has left the entire industry in feeble condition which is appalling. Hotels and OTAs must have a mutually beneficial relationship in order to sustain in the game. If the status quo remains, then we must not expect entrepreneurial initiatives within the hospitality industry.

Associations speak for the cause of hospitality industry truly believing in its potential in generating revenue for the Indian economy, such sad state of affairs with the OTAs is a major deterrent in achieving the true potential of our industry. The current scenario is clearly a lose-lose situation for individual hotels. It is high time that we fixed it.

KEEPING HER SAFE &

In our cover story, we explore what hotels are doing to empower women, in terms of safety, security, work-home balance, growth, pay-parity, leaves and more.

Kanchan Nath



SECURE

Safety and security remain paramount before anyone can go ahead and enjoy that perfect holiday. For women traveling alone or also with other guests, the hotel needs to be able to provide a secure environment. This can start from the time that she lands into a destination. The hotel location, booking a hotel cab if required should all be looked into. The check-in should be seamless. Doors should be well secured and the concierge readily available for assistance.

As the workforce takes in more and more women, security for hotel employees is also essential. In case of late night shifts pick and drop facilities should be provided. Proper screening of all employees especially drivers and security should be looked into.





Vijay Wanchoo

Vijay Wanchoo

Sr. Executive VP & GM
The Imperial New Delhi

SOLO SAFE

The Imperial has a special program 'ELIZA', for single lady travellers which aims at providing a distinct 'stay experience' associated with comfort, convenience and care, prioritising their safety.

The lady guests are allocated rooms in a 'Single Lady Corrido' equipped with CCTV cameras and are provided with special, in-room check-in facility. Single Lady Corridor consists of 12 Eliza rooms on the third floor and each room has a separate room door camera installed as an additional security feature.

While Pink linen, manicure set, women's magazines and special flower arrangements add to the elegant feminine touches, the safety is prioritised with the appointment of lady staff assistance for round-the-clock room service.

Also, all telephone calls are to go through a screening process before being connected to the room. Eliza rooms have enhanced security

measures including a security knob which allows the guests to check before opening the door. Eliza program also offers a special airport pick-up facility wherein a lady associate escorts the guest, all for a home away home experience.

SAFETY FOR FEMALE ASSOCIATES

The Imperial is deeply committed to women's safety, and recently the hotel again joined hands with Delhi Police's Parivartan program for a self-defense training, to train the hotel's women associates and empower them with techniques of safeguarding themselves in challenging situations.

The first training in the hotel was conducted in 2014, which aimed at developing skills and confidence in the ladies to knock out when the need arises, and the management has taken steps to sustain this effort.

The hotel also provides special 'pick-up and drop' facilities from the hotel to all female associates in order to ensure their safety, especially.



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“The Imperial New Delhi has linked with Delhi Police’s Parivartan program for a self-defense”

ensuring that associates on evening shifts are dropped safely to their respective residences.

LEADING FROM THE FRONT

The Imperial is home to a number of accomplished women leaders across various departments and fields. We have women associates leading a number of departments, both in front offices and back of the house as well.

Chef Veena Arora, prolific in her category, is one of the most renowned chefs in India and she has been associated with the hotel for several years and is heading The Spice Route at The Imperial.

STRIKING A BALANCE

The aim of the hotel remains to strike a balance when it comes to the ratio of men vs women in terms of employment, also the women associates are paid at par to their male co-workers.

We at The Imperial, believe in gender equality and have policies that offer equal status to both men and women employees across all levels.

MATERNITY LEAVE

The women at The Imperial have six months maternity leave but as such paternity leave is not applicable for men associates in the hotel.



S.M. Azmat

S.M. Azmat President, Sales & Marketing Jaypee Hotels and Resorts

QUICK RESPONSE TEAM

We as a brand are very concerned about the safety and security of all our guests especially female guests. We have designated and dedicated rooms for single ladies which are equipped with video phones, double locks and safety chains. CCTV cameras are installed at every corner of guest areas which are being monitored continuously. Our well-trained security and safety personnel's team caters as the 'Quick Response Team'. Female security personnel are deployed at strategic locations. We do not allow any visitors to the rooms without permission of the occupant and validating the credentials.

SAFE AND SECURE

Providing safety and security to all employees, especially females, is our top priority. We put female employees at fixed straight shifts and provide pick-up and drop facility with armed personnel from the door step at odd hours. A 'sexual harassment committee' is in place as per the guidelines and we provide ongoing training and education on

identifying and reporting harassment. We have alert devices and other safety tools at necessary places in the hotels. Our regular training programmes are well defined and give clarity on anti-harassment, safety actions and initiatives. Self-defense classes are held at regular intervals by experts.

LEADING FROM THE FRONT

Jaypee Hotels and Resorts is led by a dynamic and visionary female Managing Director, **Manju Sharma**, who is the driving force of the operations and administration. Her passion to excel has always made the hotel brand reach the milestone of the industry. We have many more women leaders at our hotels who are handling multi-responsibilities and portfolios like housekeeping, HR, operations, marketing, training etc.

PARITY

We have a ratio of 6:1 for men versus women in terms of employment. We have defined standing order and policies in place which does not allow any gender discrimination for remuneration or benefits. There is no difference in the salaries paid for same job or positions between men and women.

MATERNITY LEAVE

We follow the guidelines of Maternity Benefit Act 1961 with latest amendments for all women.



“We provide a drop facility with armed personnel for women employees at odd hours.”

Paresh Parekh
 Founder
 Nirvana Nature Cure, Pune

GUEST SAFETY AND SECURITY

At Nirvana, we have gender separated treatment buildings for all treatments. Men are not allowed entry into the buildings meant for women. Cross-gender treatments are not allowed at Nirvana, so only women treat women and men treat men. When a lady therapist has to go into a room for treating the guests, at least two women go in together, ensuring safety for the therapists.

EMPLOYEE SECURITY

All female employees at Nirvana live in a female-only building. The females are trained to handle any untoward advances made at them. The head of guest relations, being a woman is the reporting head for all female staff. If any female staff has to go outside our gated property, Nirvana tries to see that she is accompanied by a colleague. We have one head of guest relations who is the reporting head for all female staff with regards to safety. Also, we have one female head of medical staff to whom all female therapists report.



Paresh Parekh

“Cross-gender treatments are not allowed at Nirvana, so only women treat women clients”

PARITY IN WORKFORCE

At Nirvana, we have a 60:40 ratio of female to male staff. We prefer having more female staff as we are a Nature Cure center and have more female guests. There is no distinction between salaries, our female staff is paid more than the male staff because of the nature of our work.

Parvez Nisar
 Hotel Manager
 Fairfield by Marriott Pune Kharadi

SECURE GUESTS, HAPPY GUESTS

All our floors have access doors which open only with valid room keys. Single lady guests are given



rooms near elevators. Single lady guests are never given interconnecting rooms. Hotel has a strict visitor's policy and we do not allow entry of visitors after a set time. The room doors have double locks-one of which is a dead bolt, with a peephole and safety latch.

WORK PLACE PARITY

Marriott has a healthy men vs women ratio, as our property has recently opened, we are focusing to hire more and more female associates. Currently we have almost 10-15 per cent female associates in our hotel and our target is to increase the ratio to around 25 -30 per cent of the total manpower in the next calendar year.

MATERNITY, PATERNITY LEAVE

We follow the policy set down by the law.



Parvez Nisar

“The hotel ensures that single lady guests are never given interconnecting rooms for safety”



Namit Kharbanda

Namit Kharbanda
 Director Human Resources
 Andaz Delhi

HANDLING PRIVACY

As a hotel, we provide a safe and hygienic environment for all our guests and are sensitive to our single lady travellers and female guests. Our security team comprises of female colleagues to help our guest whenever required. We also follow international standards of room allocation, handling their privacy while they stay with us and even after that. Hyatt also understands that our female guests may prefer to eat differently, and we provide flexibility around that by providing smaller and healthier options to them.

THE HYATT FAMILY

Our company was founded and built by a family. It's common to see generations of family members who work for Hyatt. Women safety and security is not just a legislative tick box activity for us but a commitment to all our colleagues on how important it is for us as an organisation to provide a safe, non-biased work environment which is barrier free.

We have senior female leadership representation in our decision-making forums that impact all other female colleagues in the hotel. As a hotel, we provide flexibility in schedules for our colleagues – pick up and drop for all our female colleagues

for certain early and late hours of the day which is supervised by security and HR team. We have in place a committee, which has been formulated to prevent any sexual or workplace harassment for our female colleagues.

WORKFORCE PARITY

Our ratio for men vs women for the hotel is 1:3.5. Our salary structure is based on factors such as level, roles and responsibility, overall experience, performance and has nothing to do with gender.

MATERNITY LEAVE

We follow the central rules for maternity benefit and there is financial support extended through our group insurance. Hyatt colleagues globally under its 'Family Assistance Policy' are provided with a minimum of eight weeks of paid time off (for a birth mother or other primary caregiver) or two weeks of paid time off (for a non-primary caregiver) to allow for family bonding time following the birth or adoption of a child.

FOR THE BIRTH OR ADOPTION OF A CHILD

Birth mother, primary caregiver, or equivalent under local applicable law – eight weeks of minimum paid leave (in our case in India we have more weeks covered for the birth mother as per the central maternity rules of India). Spouse, domestic partner, or equivalent, under local applicable law – two weeks of paid leave.



“Our hotel aims to provide a safe, non-biased work environment which is barrier-free”

Vineet Verma
CEO & Executive Director
Brigade Hospitality

SECURITY PATROLLING

Irrespective of all guest information to be kept confidential, special attention to confidentiality is taken care for female guests and single lady travellers. They are marked separately and there is security patrolling in the guest floors at periodic intervals. We try sending female employees to service them at most times in their rooms, even their rooms are allocated near the elevator for easy access. Female guests are encouraged by the hotel concierge to use hotel cars while they move around the city or out of the city during their stay. The loss prevention team is very attentive towards the movement of female guests in the hotel keeping their space and privacy on top priority.

NO NIGHT SHIFT FOR FEMALE EMPLOYEES

One of the best practices we adopt at our hotel is that we do not have night shift for female employees. Any female associate scheduled to come to work before 06.30 am or finishes work after 08.00 pm is given pick-up and drop from and to the doorstep of the residence. The vehicles are escorted by security guards to ensure full safety to the staff. Female employees who have joined hotels from outstation places are provided with accommodation in close proximity to hotel premises. Once a year all employees are taken through the training program, which includes harassment and sexual harassment at work place to make the employees aware.

LEADING FROM THE FRONT

We have several mentorship programs to encourage and help women grow in the company. At one of our managed properties, Sheraton Grand Bangalore Hotel at Brigade Gateway has around 12 women in leadership positions handling portfolios in different levels in the executive committee to department heads and senior managers both in operations and support departments like human resources and finance. Additionally, Sheetal Ananth is the GM at Holiday Inn Express & Suites Bengaluru Racecourse

UNIFORMITY

The ration of male to female employees at our hotels is around 70:30. At our group hotels, we are fair to all our employees and treat everyone equally. There is no gender biasness with regard to recruitment, compensation, treatment, growth and development in the company. Everyone is given equal opportunities to grow and develop in the company with equality in compensation.

MATERNITY LEAVE

The maternity leave policy is as per the law, which is six months for female employees and men are given three days paternity leave.



Vineet Verma

“We have several mentorship programs to encourage and help women grow”





Reuben Kataria

Reuben Kataria
General Manager
JW Marriott Hotel Bengaluru

IN-ROOM CHECK-IN OPTION

At JW Marriott Hotel Bengaluru we have taken necessary measures to ensure complete safety of our female guests. Right from the moment they check-in to the hotel, to the time of check out, we have in place seamless guest experience process that takes into consideration every aspect of guests' management. For all the single female travellers, we have an exclusive in-room check in option as an extended service and providing them with a special VIP code. This enables our associates to maintain the record of their preferences and incidents. The guest is always attended by a female associate throughout their stay at the hotel.

SECURITY FOR FEMALE EMPLOYEES

We consider the security of our guests and employees as our top priority. All female associates in our hotel are provided with a pick-up and a drop facility before a certain time in the morning and post a certain time in the evening. Every pick-up is sent out with a security guard as well. We also engage and encourage several activities like self-defense classes for women, which we have done in the past along with educational talks on women security by a lady police inspector. Such programs empower the women employees and give them

assurance that we care for their safety and security. The Hotel has an ICC committee that deals with any kinds of issues faced by women at the work place.

LEADING FROM THE FRONT

We have five women in the senior leadership level and ten more in the middle management, who manage complete operations of the respective departments. The five senior women hold portfolios of – head of F&B, head of the rooms division, head of HR, head of our recreation and spa and head of housekeeping.

EMPLOYMENT AND PAY POLICIES

A very strong focus for Marriott hotels over the years has been diversity and inclusion. We strive to ensure that all hiring is done keeping this focus in mind. The ratio in the hotel as of now is 5:1. We are working on increasing this number in the coming months. As far as salary is concerned, there is absolutely no difference in the salaries between men and women. Marriott is a fair and equal employer and we strongly believe in equality in salary and position.

MATERNITY, PARTERNITY LEAVE

As of now, we provide the six months maternity leave to all pregnant women. They also have an option of half day and work from home in the one-month leading up to or post the maternity leave. As far as men are concerned, we do not have a paternity leave policy however, if anyone approaches us for leave due to birth of a child the same is granted.

“ We have an exclusive in-room check-in option as an extended service and a special VIP code”



Ranjan Banerjee
General Manager
Crowne Plaza Today New Delhi Okhla

SAFETY AND SECURITY OF WOMEN

Safety of our guests is our major priority and our security standards are in accordance with the international standards.

Single lady guests/ travellers are paid special attention in terms of room allocation, preferably closer to elevator and in the CCTV covered zone. External and internal calls to such rooms are screened before connecting to the room to

LEADING FROM THE FRONT

We have currently 13 female colleagues in executive and managerial roles in our organisation. They hold diverse portfolios from managing room sales to banquet sales as well as heading learning and development to marketing.

They are present in majority of hotel operations as well as the administrative department.



Ranjan Banerjee



maintain privacy of the guest. On request, a lady room attendant is provided to service rooms to female guests.

EMPLOYEE SECURITY

At IHG, we pay a lot of focus on gender diversity and inclusion. We have installed 160 CCTV cameras to cover maximum blind spots of the hotel. The hotel also provides drop facility in the evening hours along with a security guard.

The hotel has an active colleague engagement calendar with impetus on self defense practical trainings along with engaged female committee.

Fire and life safety are vital for everyone and each colleague is inducted with the session on day one of their joining.



“We have installed 160 Close Circuit Television (CCTV) cameras to cover maximum blind spots”

MEN VS WOMEN

We are currently at a ratio of 11:1 men v/s women and the organisation is aiming to increase the number of female colleagues in 2019.

There is no difference in the salaries paid to men and women working with us.

MATERNITY LEAVE

The hotel is in compliance with the updated Maternity Benefit Act which is 26 weeks.



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RECREATION with AMUSEMENT PARKS

In an interview **Pradeep Sharma**, President – IAAPI, tells us more about the organisation.



KINDLY SHARE FEW DETAILS ABOUT IAAPI.

Indian Association of Amusement Parks and Industries (IAAPI) is an apex body representing the interests of amusement parks, theme parks, water parks and Indoor Amusement Centre (FEC) in India. IAAPI is a non-government, not-for-profit, industry-led and industry-managed organisation, playing a proactive role in development of this sector. Founded in 1999, IAAPI is India's premier business association having 382 members from the private sectors.

WHAT ARE THE PARAMETERS TO SET UP AMUSEMENT PARKS IN HOTEL AREAS?

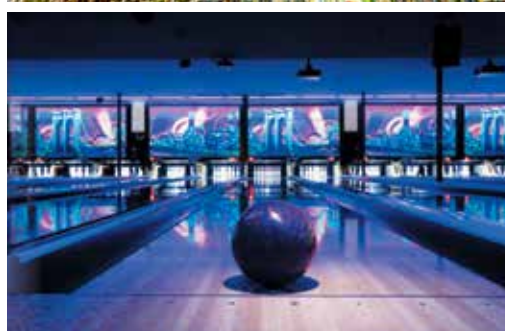
India has over 160 plus amusement parks and the future growth of the sector is going to be away from the city limit along with resorts and hotels at a tourism destination. Depending on the location, resources available various options like amusement park, water park, theme park, mythological park, adventure park or Indoor Amusement Centre can be explored. A medium size park requires approx. 5 to 10 acres of land with capex of 20 to 50 crores and for a small park area as small as 2 to 3 acres with capex of around 6 to 15 crores can be explored depending on rides, attractions and the theme.

HOW CAN AMUSEMENT PARKS HELP INCREASE HOTEL OCCUPANCIES?

In today's era amusement parks are not just about rides and fun games but have evolved as a tourist destination from rides, exhibits, F&B options, retail outlet and quality accommodation. As per national and international trends, hotels and resorts at tourism destination attract highest occupancy which includes amusement parks, entertainment, leisure centers. It creates holiday and weekend destinations thereby assuring captive audience with combo



Pradeep Sharma



INDUSTRY STATUS

The Indian Amusement Industry is expected to grow at CAGR of more than 25% with the annual revenue of around INR 2261 Cr (US \$ 315 million) in 2018 and is estimated to grow to at least INR 6250 Cr (US \$ 884 million) by 2022.

offer for stay, entry to amusement parks and food. Such destination ensures repeat visitors. Large and medium corporates prefer amusement parks for their training program to motivate employees by inviting them with their families who enjoy at the park while they attend training program. This helps corporates in employee's retention and team bonding. All this help is driving more hotel occupancies.



Picture perfect with THE POSTCARD HOTEL

Set to redefine the luxury hospitality scenario, 'The Postcard Hotel' brand has been recently launched by its Founder and CEO, **Kapil Chopra**. We tell you a little more about the newly-launched brand.

This new brand holds the promise of unique, intimate luxury hotels in India and the world. Transformative experiences and local community are at the heart of The Postcard

LUXURY REDEFINED

On his ideas for the brand, he said, "I believe that luxury hospitality, globally has not innovated enough, all the innovations mostly happened in the budget and mid-segment, so we wanted to put up a hotel brand that would innovate significantly. We wanted to start a luxury experiential hotel brand, we really thought about it, what was missing in luxury hospitality? I thought that intimacy of the hotel was missing, the luxury hotels in resort destinations had too many restrictions. Restrictive check-in-check out timings. Why is the entire experience confined inside a hotel and not outside? Why can I not walk outside and for me Goa is a collection of 50 villages. So, we have tried to incorporate all of these in this new brand."

OLD GOA CHARM

Elaborating on the hotels which have opened, he said, "The three hotels that we have started with are The Postcard Velha, overlooking a 300 acres coconut plantation, it is in two acres with just 8 rooms and a nice pool. We are also setting up a spa with Purnarnava Ayurveda, which has been operating the spa for over a 100 years in Coimbatore. With an ayurvedic doctor, we will have wellness in a very serious and significant way in Goa.

The second hotel is in the southern part of Goa, The Postcard Cuelim, that houses a 350-year-old chapel, I am very proud of that hotel because I had never been to a 350-year-old chapel before in India and to have it in one of our hotels is an iconic moment for us. Our third hotel, The Postcard Moira is in north Goa, which is very close to the cafes, restaurants and beaches. It is a 215 years old villa which has been renovated to intimate hotel standards by us.

IN THE PIPELINE

The brand is committed to building and operating 50 hotels in the next five years. On the upcoming



“

In the next 12 to 18 months, 'The Postcard Hotel' will be coming up with seven hotels

”

pipeline of the brand he added, "We have already announced in the next 12 to 18 months, we will be coming up with seven hotels. These would be in Uttarakhand, Karnataka, Dhauladhar Mountain Range, Sikkim in Ravangla, Darjeeling, Sundarbans and Kanha."

THE RANGE

All hotels are open for booking on our website postcardresorts.com. "The ARR's are going to range from ₹15000 to ₹35000 per night, depending upon the hotel and the destination."

CUISINE PHILOSOPHY

Elaborating on his cuisine philosophy for Goa hotels, he said, "I think Goan cuisine is so rich in culture, since it's a phenomenal confluence of what happened in India and what the Portuguese did in Goa. We have tried to develop that in a significant way by taking the authentic recipes, working with traditional house wives and getting recipes"



Looking at

Eastern Hospita

In an email interview, **Souvagya Mohapatra**, Executive Director, Mayfair Hotels and Resorts shares plans about the hotel group and its different offerings.



WHAT ARE YOU DOING TO STAY ABOVE COMPETITION?

We welcome newer hotel brands to expand in the east because there is a heavy requirement of quality hotel rooms due to high tourism potential and real good brands have yet not ventured especially in the North East. Recently this region has also seen a tremendous growth in MICE for which the quality rooms are essential. Over the period of time Mayfair has created a brand with a class product, offered personalised services, emphasised on nature, continuous up-gradation and promotion of local heritage which will always keep us ahead of any competition. We shall maintain our leadership position in the East and are also planning on further expansion.

HOW WAS THE YEAR 2018?

Year 2018 was really great for us in terms of business. We hosted mega Sports and MICE events during 2018 and all our hotels registered record sales. Highlights were the Hockey World Cup event at Bhubaneswar, large medical conferences at Bhubaneswar and Gangtok with increase in foreign and domestic tourists' arrivals at all locations where our hotels are situated. Mayfair has recorded an average occupancy of 73 per cent with an ARR and RevPAR of ₹7500 and ₹5500, respectively.

WHAT IS YOUR COMMENT ON THE MERGERS & ACQUISITIONS?

Internationally mergers and acquisitions of hotels is a routine affair, but this phenomenon has now emerged in India which will pave way for new players and create a very cut-throat competitive environment. With boom in economy, the mergers and acquisitions shall be very frequent wherein large business houses will pick up brands and create mega empires.

DO YOU OFFER LOYALTY PROGRAMMES?

On lines of loyalty programme, we have launched a privilege and fitness plus membership program to promote our SPA facilities. Under these memberships, our guests can use the fitness centre, swimming pool, in-door games free of cost at any location and can avail attractive discounts in the spa services, accommodation and F&B outlets. We also recognise them during their special days by offering them value addition services such as complimentary cake,

flower and candle-lit dinners. Privilege members are also entitled to avail two nights complimentary stay during the year in any of our resorts.

WHAT NEW INFRASTRUCTURAL DEVELOPMENTS HAVE TAKEN PLACE IN THE REGIONS WHERE YOUR HOTELS ARE?

Particularly in the state of Odisha where most of our resorts are located, the sports infrastructural development on massive scale has been established by the state government who has embarked on its mission to make Odisha, a sports hub of India. This has converted the area as a major sports destination and its side effects would in turn boost international and domestic tourism. A state of art stadium with multi sports facilities has been created by renovating the existing Kalinga Stadium in the state capital – Bhubaneswar. Resultantly, Odisha hosted Asian Athletic Championships in 2017, ITF Tennis Tournament, Super Cup Football Tournament, Asian Women's Rugby Championship and the most prestigious 'Men's World Cup Hockey' during 2018. Kalinga Hockey Stadium of Bhubaneswar is considered to be one of the best stadium in the world and is expected to attract many more international events in the year 2019. Tourism development infrastructure such as light and sound shows in Dhauligiri, Konark and Bindusagar are well implemented by the state government which will have direct impact on tourist arrival in the state. North East is also on fast track for infrastructural development. Commissioning of Pakyong Airport in Gangtok is a short in the arm for boosting tourism of Gangtok, Darjeeling and Kalimpong.

WHAT ARE YOUR TARGETS AND OUTLOOK FOR 2019?

We have mega projects lined up which are scheduled to be launched in the year 2019. Our next project – Mayfair Lake Resort, Atal Nagar (Naya Raipur) is slated to be operational from April 2019. This resort shall be the first five-star deluxe resort in central India with 124 keys spread across 13 acres of land surrounded by a lake and shall be a top class 'wedding resort'. Under 'Tea Tourism' Project at Siliguri in the footsteps of Darjeeling Hills, another 5-star deluxe resort, which will be one of its kind for promoting Tea Tourism in the region, with huge Conferencing and Banqueting infrastructure shall be commissioned. The construction of our first property in Kolkata has also commenced and year 2019 will see most of its developmental work.

Apart from the above new projects, keeping in view of the high demand we are adding 25 more keys to our Gangtok property, Mayfair Spa Resort and Casino which will be ready by June 2019.

lity



Souvagya Mohapatra

“

Mayfair has recorded an average occupancy of 73 per cent with RevPAR of ₹5500

”



TASTING INDIA SYMPOSIUM CONCLUDES

The third season of the Tasting India Symposium concluded with an endorsement of the idea of SWAAD: International Day of Indian Gastronomy by the External Affairs Minister, **Sushma Swaraj**. In a statement to the Symposium, the minister congratulated Tasting India and said SWAAD, modelled after the International Yoga Day, was an idea "whose time has come". Underlining the significance of the initiative, the minister noted: "Through this, India will extend an open invitation to the world to explore its myriad tastes and flavours. Today, the first step has been taken to forge the network that will drive SWAAD." The statement

was read out by Namrata Kumar, Deputy Director General, Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR).

The Symposium was inaugurated by NITI Aayog CEO **Amitabh Kant**, who made an eloquent plea for "an inclusive, sustainable and nutritious food culture" that would help small and marginal farmers to raise their income levels. "India has a vibrant and diverse culture offering a fascinating variety of unique tastes, from the coast of Malabar to the Valley of Kashmir," he said. "I am happy that Tasting India Symposium, is taking firm strides towards encouraging food culture."

TAJ MAHAL PALACE MUMBAI TURNS 115



The Taj Mahal Palace, Mumbai the iconic flagship of The Indian Hotels Company Limited (IHCL) and a defining city structure, turned 115 in December 2018. Built in 1903, the hotel that could also be credited as India's first luxury hospitality address, was a result of Sir Jamsetji N. Tata's vision to ensure that the city of Bombay has a landmark which could place it among the greatest cities of the world. **Taljinder Singh** - Area Director, Mumbai Hotels and General Manager, The Taj Mahal Palace said: "For more than

a century the Taj dome has anchored the Mumbai skyline and continues to stand tall as an epitome of bespoke luxury. Over the last 100 years, the hotel has made a fascinating journey and become synonymous with the city's vibrant soul. We are proud to be part of this milestone year and take forward its all-time legacy of philanthropy and larger social causes." The Taj Mahal Palace hosted a Black-Tie Charity Ball on the eve of its anniversary on 15 December 2018.

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BLENDING SEAMLESSLY

◆ Discover the seamless minimalist look and the sophisticated technologies laden into the all new Nagold Azzano Built-in Refrigerators by Häfele, that elevate the look and performance of your kitchen to a whole new level. Catering to the Indian consumption pattern these refrigerators have a larger dedicated space for storing fresh meat, fruits, veggies, herbs in the fridge section. The Azzano



fridge freezer combi model (HRC300NF) can be installed separately or can be combined.



THE PERFECT FINISH

◆ Gone are the days when solid-colour paint over walls or furniture pieces like cabinets, sideboards, doors, and ceilings were in fashion. As per contemporary design trends, the interior decor industry is inclined to laminates that add a perfect finish. Ply Mehal offers 'decorated laminated panels'.

COCO SOUL FOR YOU

◆ With consumers increasingly opting for healthier food options that are natural and farm fresh, Marico has introduced a range of cold pressed virgin coconut oils under the brand name 'Coco Soul'. The new range of products includes a 100 per cent organic and 100 per cent natural variants. Coco Soul originates directly from farms where coconuts are grown.



ELEGANCE REDEFINED

◆ A delicate and purist design, high-quality material and workmanship while boasting versatility and individuality. Finion, the new premium bathroom collection from Villeroy & Boch, creates a luxurious bathroom setting with its exclusive bathroom ceramics, elegant furniture, stylish lighting concept and high-quality monolith bath, making it an oasis of relaxation and well-being. Designed as an extensive complete bathroom collection, Finion offers a wide range of possible combinations. The three different types of washbasins in three ceramic colours look stunning when combined with the numerous models of vanity units in ten colours.





ALL IN RED

◆ IDUS the luxurious furniture store has launched its contemporary red colour furniture collection that would infuse spaces with lively, elite and modish touches. The red color collection by Idus comprises of arm chairs, lounge chairs and sofas. The collection holds on an amalgamation of modish designs, materials, shapes, and sizes that can smartly fit in your living spaces while adding a romantic and blissful style to the overall décor. All the furniture pieces of this splendid red collection are made from premium quality materials like solid wood molded foam, iron, steel, aluminum and ceramic with craftsman’s creative skills combined with the latest technology.



ROASTED TO BE CRUNCHY



◆ Cornitos California Almonds are roasted and seasoned to perfection and are offering 3 enchanting flavors - Honey, Lightly Salted and Smoky Barbeque. Almonds are known for their high health and nutritional value and are preferred snack for the winter season. Cornitos Honey roasted almonds are a flavourful combination of sweetness with a hint of salt. Cornitos Roasted Lightly Salted Almonds is sublimely salted to perfection. Cornitos Roasted Smoky Barbeque offers heat of chili and pepper with spicy sweet aroma of coriander, ginger and cumin.



FRAME SERIES

◆ Vitra, the leading bathroom solutions brand of Eczacıbasi Building Products Division in Turkey introduces its spectacular and award-winning Frame series. Intelligently designed, its geometric symmetry and pure, authentic modern design merges with the finest technology and functionality in this supremely inspiring collection.

THE WOODY TEXTURE

◆ Known for her aesthetically curate high-end selection, interior designer Nomita Kohli of Wisma Atria Interiors has launched the uniquely designed, furniture collection by Artebrotto from Italy. Each piece is a masterpiece that is made of wood with the exclusive concept behind its designing in different shades and textures of natural wood to give a vintage and rustic appeal. The pieces of this collection have authentically been made in Italy that has been synonymous with passion for wood, from generation to generation.





appointments



ZUBIN SAXENA

**Managing Director and Vice President of Operations—South Asia
Radisson Hotel Group**

★ Radisson Hotel Group has appointed Zubin Saxena as its new Managing Director and Vice President of Operations—South Asia, effective January 1, 2019. Saxena is also a member of the Group's Asia Pacific executive committee and is involved in growing and directing the company's business in South Asia. He will take over the regional leadership role from Raj Rana, who has decided to move on from Radisson Hotel Group after a long and illustrious career. In his new role, Saxena will provide counsel to the South Asia team. A strategic thinker and executor, he will be responsible for implementing new brand standards and delivering on operational efficiency and effectiveness to our hotels.



PUNEET CHAUDHRY

**General Manager
Radisson Blu Hotel New Delhi Paschim Vihar**

★ The Radisson Hotel Group has appointed Puneet Chaudhry as the new General Manager of their upper upscale hotel, Radisson Blu Hotel New Delhi Paschim Vihar. Representing the young brigade of Indian General Managers, he is a seasoned hotelier with over 19 years of experience in the industry. He has been associated with the Radisson Hotel Group for more than nine years, where he has held multiple managerial roles. In his new role, he will be spearheading the future growth and development of the hotel. Being adept at managing teams across diverse hotels, his core expertise lies in delivering successful outcomes by empowering the teams.



RAJAN MALHOTRA

**Director of Sales & Marketing
Shangri-La's – Eros Hotel, New Delhi**

★ Shangri-La's - Eros Hotel, New Delhi has appointed Rajan Malhotra as Director of Sales and Marketing. A post graduate diploma holder in Business Administration, he has over 16 years of experience in hospitality industry. Having worked with some of the leading hotel brands and luxury hotels including Hyatt Services India, The Zuri Group of Hotels and Resorts (Global), The Grand - New Delhi, Le Meridien, Jaipur and Taj Palace, New Delhi, Malhotra brings with him vast experience of handling the India market.



KUNAL DEWAN

**Director of Sales & Marketing
Hyatt Regency Delhi**

★ Hyatt Regency Delhi has appointed Kunal Dewan as the Director of Sales & Marketing. A driven, strategic and skilled individual, Dewan possesses a broad knowledge base of the hospitality industry and brings more than a decade of experience to the role, where he will be responsible for the daily sale efforts and overall positioning of the hotel. After obtaining his post graduate diploma in international hospitality from Les Roches, School of Hotel Management, he began his career as a management trainee.



SUBHASISH DUTTA

**Director of Finance
Sheraton Grand Chennai Resort & Spa**

★ Subhasish Dutta has been appointed as the Director of Finance at the Sheraton Grand Chennai Resort & Spa. Bringing with him over eight years of adept experience from the industry, he will be leading the finance division at the property. He started his career in the hospitality industry with Goa Marriott Resort & Spa in 2011 and comes full circle with his latest mandate as Director of Finance at Sheraton Grand Chennai Resort & Spa. His task entails ensuring smooth functioning of the finances.



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The Panasonic Commercial Rice Cooker comes in various capacities which can cook from 2 Kgs to 4.5 Kgs of Rice. Due to their durability and attention to safety Panasonic has earned the certificate for Electrical Equipment (IECEE) CB Scheme for these Cookers.

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MK-MG1000 / MK-MG1500

- 1000 Watts / 1500 Watts
- 3 Types of Blades (Rough / Mid / Fine)
- Rotary switch with reverse function

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MANISH JAIN

Chief Financial Officer
Sterling Holidays Resorts

★ Sterling Holiday Resorts has appointed Manish Jain as Chief Finance Officer. In his role at Sterling Holidays, he will be responsible for Sterling Holidays finance, accounting, tax, insurance, and treasury functions. A Chartered Accountant and a Company Secretary by qualification, Jain is a seasoned finance professional with over 26 years of experience in the hospitality and manufacturing sectors. Prior to joining Sterling, he held the position of Finance Director at Fassco International Pte in Abu Dhabi and as CFO at Roots Corporation (Ginger Hotels). He was associated with Taj Hotels for over eight years. He has previously held key leadership roles at Westin, Ista Hotels, Polar Group and Hindustan Development Corporation.



GAURAV SINHA

Director of Operations
JW Marriott Hotel Bengaluru

★ JW Marriott Hotel Bengaluru, has appointed Gaurav Sinha as the Director of Operations. Being in the industry since 2001, he comes with vast knowledge and experience in the hospitality domain. He is a result driven individual with proven track record of guiding teams to deliver to the best of their abilities and continues to thrive in a competitive environment. He started his career as a Front Office Assistant with Trident, Udaipur in 2001 and has been a part of prestigious properties such as Taj and Trident Hotels in the past, where he has had a steady growth trajectory. In his new role he will work to the best of his ability.



SONALE ZAGADE

Hotel Manager
Grand Hyatt Mumbai

★ Grand Hyatt Mumbai has appointed Sonale Zagade as Hotel Manager. With 16 years of experience in the industry, she is a seasoned hospitality professional and has been associated with the Hyatt family for five years in the past. In her new role she will oversee the hotel operations to ensure the highest level of guest satisfaction and quality. She is known for her analytical problem solving and people management skills. Her ability to implement creative and strategic plans to improve guest experiences across all facets of the hotel has been the key to her success. She will ensure the hotel, Grand Hyatt Mumbai meets its business objectives.



BHOJRAJ SHARMA

Food and Beverage Manager
DoubleTree Suites by Hilton Bangalore

★ An astute professional with over 15 years of experience, Bhojraj Sharma joins DoubleTree Suites by Hilton Bangalore as the new Food and Beverage Manager. Sharma has a deep understanding of restaurants and banquet planning, pre-openings, contract management, optimising guest satisfaction and overall hotel operations management. He holds a degree in Hotel Management/Catering Technology & Applied Nutrition from IHM, Shimla. Having started his career with Radisson MBD Hotel Noida, he has worked with many reputed hospitality brands such as ITC Maurya Sheraton New Delhi, The Westin Sohna Gurgaon Resort & Spa, etc. Bhojraj is an extremely dedicated professional and at DoubleTree, he intends to devise strategies that will increase business.



STEPHANE CALVET

Executive Chef
Four Seasons Hotel Bengaluru

★ Stephane Calvet, is the newly appointed Executive Chef of Four Seasons Hotel Bengaluru at Embassy ONE, has a curious mind and love for travel. He joins the pre-opening team of this much anticipated new hotel in Southern India from Four Seasons Resort Chiang Mai in Northern Thailand. Spanning several years of culinary journey across his Catalan home in Southern France, Sweden and further East to Japan, China, Vietnam, Thailand and now India, Chef Stephane still has an innate sense of wonder and curiosity. He is thrilled about learning the art of the *Tandoor* on his Indian escapade. Raised in Perpignan amid the Pyrenees in the Catalan region of France, he spent mornings learning “the small details” of cooking from his grandmother.

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GEL WELL with 'WONDER GEL'

Wonder gel is an excellent product for you to use in terms of vegan/vegetarian gelatin. This functional ingredient maintains the natural benefits of seaweed fiber.



Kurian Jose

Marine Hydrocolloids have recently introduced - Spreadable Agar Agar in India under the brand name 'Wonder Gel'.

Spreadable Agar Agar Type Wonder Gel is an excellent alternative for partial or total replacement of traditional animal-based gelling agents like gelatin and other expensive hydrocolloids to provide a particularly delicate and succulent mouth feel with smooth thixotropic flow.

Spreadable Agar Agar Type Wonder Gel will dissolve at lower than boiling temperature. It is a unique functional ingredient obtained by transforming the rigid structure of native agar with no chemical treatment to give a softer and creamy texture while still maintaining the natural benefits of seaweed fiber.

Kurian Jose, Jr., CEO, Marine Hydrocolloids, says, "As the name itself indicates, the use of this product

in various food production processes is to impart a wonderful change in the texture." Wonder gel can be used for cake glazing, ready-to-drink beverages, spreadable cheese, stirred yoghurt and drinking yoghurt, panna cotta, custards, chocolate milk, etc. Also for jams and marmalades sugar-only jam, ketchup, sherbet and sorbet, rolled fondant, etc

The main advantages of Wondergel are:

1) Low Syneresis

This helps to increase shelf life and gives a pleasant full mouth feel to the final products.

2) Synergy with sugar

It performs well with high sugar content products like confectionery and filling jams.

3) No need for gelling aids

Wonder Gel forms a strong cohesive gel dissolved completely in water at less than boiling temperature.

4) Thermoreversible

Thermo reversibility is of great advantage in production application.

5) Low Melting and Gelling points

This imparts a pleasant and rich 'melt -in-your-mouth' effect that mimics animal gelatin.

6) Low dosage and single ingredient requirement

Gives tighter quality control during production.

7) Non-animal origin product

Vegetarian and vegan populations are growing and demanding more products with ingredients of no animal origins.

8) Pure dietary fiber

Red seaweeds contain up to 10 times more total dietary fibers and about 50 times as much in soluble dietary fiber. They are also rich in functional minerals that are essential for good metabolism.

9) Excellent Binding Capacity

Wondergel has excellent binding capacity to minimise syneresis and offers a good and homogeneous structure in the final products

WONDER GEL APPLICATIONS

1. Cold Glaze/Mirror Glaze
2. Confectionary
3. Yoghurt and milk products
4. Low fat margarine and butter
5. Piping jelly
6. Cake topping
7. Fillings
8. Jams
9. Marmalades etc





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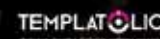
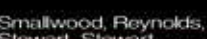
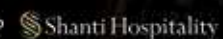
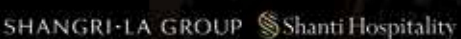
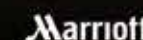
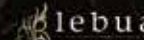
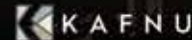
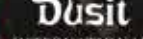
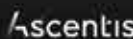
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