

FOR THE HOSPITALITY PROFESSIONAL

Hospitality BIZ

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SPECIAL FEATURE

**Budget 2023 sees
positive reactions from
the hospitality industry**



G20 Presidency: Brightening the Prospect of Indian Hospitality

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Ajay Wadode

ajay.wadode@saffronsynergies.in | +91 8087127814/+91 8767031410

Pooja Nalawade

ooja.nalawade@saffronsynergies.in , +91 97690 52241

The Trend of Independent Lodgings gives Rise in competition with Franchise Hotel in Hotel Tourism market, says Future Market Insights

HBI Staff | Hyderabad

Research done by Future Market Insights said that the independent lodging tourism market is forecasted to grow at a steady rate during the forecast period. The growth can be attributed to several reasons both international and domestic. These hotels can directly target greater flow of guests at much high market share than other franchise hotels. In addition, a franchise has to face the task of running hundreds of hotels. Independent lodgings can simply be mindful of standardizing the procedures for enhancing their performance. They may not have a central hierarchy system. In the case of chain hotels, they all run under the same brand and have to maintain the same quality in every hotel. So there is not much scope of innovation in chain hotels,

since they all maintain the same quality. This means that there are no changes that a chain hotel can offer for people who stay there regularly. Independent lodgings can adapt to local dwelling environments. They have a unique identity that makes them stand apart from chain hotels. They have freedom to be creative and innovative. Franchise Hotels have their hotels in different cities and different countries. These hotels have their control in the hands of the central system. They have a general manager to operate each hotel. These managers do not have enough right to make policies for the hotel. They have to follow the guidelines of the central system. While in the case of independent lodgings management spend their time on it. They are more devoted to planning for a hotel/ They can utilize resources more optimally and management

can focus on improving the performance of the hotel more effectively than a franchise. They are free to adopt any type of innovation in their hotels.

The report also said that Independent hotel has become more important to the hotel and tourism industry, and they will continue to grow, according to the Lodging Automation Industry Research. Independent collections have become the growing sector, whereas chains, which have been outperforming independently. There are over 91,000 hotels and motels in the US. The main industry players must stay alert for what else may impact the industry after the pandemic. After the pandemic the market size of the hotels and motel industry in the USA increased faster by the economy overall. The average market grows from 2022 to 2023 is 11% CAGR. ■

HICSA 2023 announces Federico J. Gonzalez, Chief Executive Officer, Radisson Hotel Group as a Speaker

HBI Staff | Hyderabad

Hotelivate has recently announced Federico J. Gonzalez – Chief Executive Officer – Radisson Hotel Group as a speaker for the 18th Edition of its Hotel Investment Conference – South Asia (HICSA) in Bangalore from 11th- 13th April 2023.

Federico is a seasoned professional with extensive global executive leadership experience in the hospitality, leisure, and fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) sectors. Prior to joining Radisson Hotel Group, he was Chief Executive Officer of NH Hotel Group, where he led a major turnaround of the company. González was previously Deputy General Manager of Disneyland Paris and worked 16 years in senior management positions at Procter & Gamble in Brussels, Madrid, and Stockholm before becoming the company's country Head of Portugal in 2000. Today, Radisson Hotel Group has an international presence with more than 1,100 hotels and over 197,000 rooms in operation and under development. Since 2018, Radisson Hotel Group has been part of Jin Jiang International and is now one of the top two largest hotel groups in the world by number of rooms and hotels.

“HICSA is synonymous with the South Asian hospitality ecosystem and we are delighted to be part of its 18th edition. South Asia, particularly India, continues to be a priority market for us. 2023 is a milestone year as Radisson Hotel Group completes 25 years of operations in the country with more than 150 hotels in operation and under development. We are committed to growing our presence

in the region and doubling our portfolio by 2025. I look forward to

meeting and engaging with our industry colleagues,” said Federico J. Gonzalez, Chief Executive Officer, Radisson Hotel Group.

The Hotel Investment Conference-South Asia (HICSA) is an annual event that brings together a diverse range of participants from the hospitality, real estate, and investment industries. Attendees



include hotel owners, operators, investors, financiers, developers, architects, consultants, and other professionals from South Asia, the Middle East, Europe, and the United States. HICSA offers a comprehensive program of keynote presentations, panel discussions, and networking opportunities. Since our launch in 2005, the conference has grown to become the largest event of its kind in the region with attendees coming from across the globe to promote the development of new business opportunities and investment partnerships. The event will take place in Bengaluru over the course of two and a half days with the primary event

at Hilton and Hilton Garden Inn Bengaluru Embassy Manyata Business Park on April 12 and 13.

Commenting on the 18th anniversary of HICSA, Manav Thadani, Founder Chairman of Hotelivate said, “We are thrilled to have Federico J. Gonzalez, CEO of Radisson Hotel Group, as a speaker at HICSA 2023. His extensive experience and expertise in the hospitality industry, combined with his leadership at Radisson Hotel Group, make him an exceptional addition to our line-up of speakers. We are confident that his insights and perspectives will inspire and challenge our audience to think about the future of the industry in new ways, aligning perfectly with the conference theme of the 3 AI’s: Artificial Intelligence, Astute Investments, and Aesthetic Interiors.”. ■

'Ecobillz today is adding 10 hospitality properties every month to its existing list'

Established in 2016, Ecobillz is an AI-led Digitization B2B SaaS platform built to eliminate the use of paper by providing innovative real-time digital solutions and automating backend operations. As the hospitality industry rapidly amalgamated technology into its daily operations, the company saw a huge opportunity in the sector. **Asmita Mukherjee** spoke with **Dr. Ameet Patil, Founder & CEO of Ecobillz Private Limited** to understand the market in the current scenario.



Q Kindly brief us about your journey with Ecobillz.

Ecobillz is an AI-led Digitization B2B SaaS (Software as a Service) platform, which connects with the existing systems and software, accessing or reading data and streamlining them onto the Ecobillz platform to store, present, churn and automate.

Ecobillz.com—a NASSCOM 10,000 Startup and also part of 500 Startups was instituted with a strong mission to help large organizations adopt advanced digitization using AI in order to increase productivity with process automation and data mining while dreaming of saving trees and time—thus transforming the business to become more responsible. While Ecobillz today is adapted for the hospitality industry, the product can be assembled successfully for QSRs, hospitals (health industry) and the retail industry as well.

In our combined 25+ years of experience, we observed three important things and changed our course of operations and growth accordingly.

(1) We saw that automation was going to be a key driver of growth for large businesses.

(2) Businesses, despite using the latest technology in IT, are still inclined to continue age-old practices such as using paper and manual-driven processes

(3) Automation and Technology will have to boost Sustainability to survive the demands of nature.

Q What are the new technologies that Ecobillz has exclusively designed for the Hospitality and Tourism Industry? How is technology helping hotels to serve guests?

Ecobillz found that companies even when digitalised are not leveraging technology properly, and falling back on paper. The idea

struck the promoters of the start-up while shopping at a retail super-mart. The teller handed them a one-foot long receipt which led them to think about the wastage of resources in business. Ecobillz was conceptualised to save paper and trees while imbibing digitalisation, and smart technology like Artificial Intelligence and Data Analytics has been leveraged to digitize everything that is on paper while also providing full automation with the processes.

It provides Hotel guests with real-time service and seamless check-in/ check-out activities. The entire food ordering system, valet or laundry orders are fully digitised with minimum front desk interface.

We are also working on a paper-free and automated backend operation system for hotels with a technology-driven solution to fulfil the FRRO (Foreign Regional Registration Office) compliance seamlessly, without time loss. Along similar lines, we are also planning to penetrate other markets such as hospitals, retail, entertainment, and F&B businesses through innovative solutions.

Q Automation and AI are ruling the hospitality technology market. Apart from these, what are the other technologies that are grabbing attention?

Apart from automation and AI being implemented through each of the services, the other technologies that are grabbing attention in the hospitality industry are payment technologies, automated cleaning services and voice driven smart bots and smart security services. Apart from hospitality, technologies in the health sector and automobiles, especially solar and battery-enabled technologies will make a big splash.

Q According to you, will there be any job threats due to the massive adoption of

Q AI and automation in the industry?

As the Hospitality industry has shifted its focus on using technology on a daily basis, the dependency on technology will see a spike and the industry will find itself looking for a different kind of manpower. We do not see a fall in jobs in the hospitality industry, but what we perceive is a tech-enabled working staff in the hospitality industry.

Q How is Ecobillz taking advantage of the increased adoption of tech in the hospitality industry and using this as an opportunity? Are there any new use cases identified in the market?

Ecobillz is riding the tech spurt and adoption spree. As of date, there is no hospitality or hotel chain that does not know about Ecobillz, at least in India. All the top luxury hotel chains in India are our customers.

Ecobillz dreams of impacting the Global Sustainability mandate by implementing this AI-driven SaaS platform worldwide and adding to the Made in India story. Ecobillz is currently working with 200 plus hospitality establishments across India and is also planning to expand globally across Europe, Africa, the Middle East, South East Asia and Dubai. Today Ecobillz is adding 10 hospitality properties every month to its existing list and sincerely aims that they could make a foray into the sustainability index of India.

The market is ever-evolving and due to our deep understanding of the hospitality industry, we are quick to spot new use cases/problems/opportunities and build solutions to address them. C-Form automation, real-time EInvoice IRN generation, and Comprehensive Automated Reconciliation are some of the few recently introduced products in our portfolio. ■

asmita.mukherjee@saffronsynergies.in

Platform 65 eyes overseas footprint

Asmita Mukherjee | Hyderabad

Launched in November 2019, Hyderabad-based Platform 65 is India's largest train-themed restaurant chain. Riding a rapid growth curve the brand is now planning to expand its presence aggressively by branching out overseas, informed Co-founder and MD Sadgun Patha. "As we have received exponential positive response from our patrons, we are planning to expand more aggressively compared to previous years. Since we are into the FOFO model and getting a lot of requests for franchises, we have decided to go slow but steady. Branching out exponentially through the FOFO model can sometimes tamper brand reputation and image, and these are the two most important things for us which build brand value. However, we are getting a lot of requests for franchisee operations and from investors as well so we are taking one step at a time.

Also, if everything goes well, in 2-3 years down the line we will take our brand abroad. We are contemplating opening branches in

the USA, The UK and Canada."

Informing about the brand's domestic expansion plans, Patha said, "We have already signed contracts in three different locations: two at Karnataka and one in Hyderabad. Along with this, both our Karimnagar and Vizianagaram branches are already in the construction phase. We are planning to open both branches in February this year. This year, we are planning to touch a benchmark of 15, currently, we are having 8 branches. Before 2023 December we are planning to touch 15 branches. Our aim is to open around 20-25 outlets by 2024. We are also actively looking to branch out in the Northern part of India. For instance, we are targeting Delhi, Mumbai, Gujarat and Kolkata in the first phase and in the second phase we might focus on Pune."

The brand which plans on increasing its all-India presence has an equal focus on its Tier-II city-based outlets as they give them a lot of repeat customers just like their Tier-I outlets. "We have been receiving immensely good responses from our Tier-II city outlets as these days people are well travelled and they want to experience new things, which make us an outlet serving good food with great ambience. These Tier-II outlets also contribute a good share of the number in our growth, which is fantastic. However, like every other brand, we kept our price points 15% less than Tier-I cities while making the menu of Tier-II cities. But the footfall that we witness in tier-II outlets is no less than tier-I," Patha informed.

As the brand sets its eyes on bigger goals, it is also leveraging its own food delivery app, which was introduced a year back. Patha informed us that they have received a very good response from the patrons for delivery from their own app. "We are providing a flat 15% discount along with one dessert, which is complementary. We are doing a lot of marketing activities to promote our app. We are also focusing big on our loyalty part which costs only INR 199 and through which patrons can avail of a flat 15% discount and a lot of complementary dishes. We are also coming up with new themes for our upcoming branches - one of which is the newly launched Vande Bharat."

The brand gives clear credit to its customers for its success, and as a token of gratitude pays homage to its consumers. "On every third or fourth visit of our repeat patrons, we give them complimentary gifts. This is one of the little things that we could do to make them feel special."

The brand receives 39% repeat customers, and the percentage is growing day by day, informed Patha. "We believe that the customer is the king. We have seen a healthy number of repeat clientele even after 3 years of operations, which according to me, is the result of consistency and also customer satisfaction." Due to the immense love and affection of the patrons, the brand has managed to grow double, said Sadgun.

The brand is not only grateful to its customers but is also giving back to society through various means. Patha informed, "While growing double we realised that we should give something back to society. We keep on doing many CSR activities across Telangana, Andhra Pradesh and Bengaluru. At every festival, we donate clothes and food to orphanages and NGOs. It feels good to give back to a part of the society." ■

asmita.mukherjee@saffronsynergies.in



Sadgun Patha, Co-founder and MD, Platform 65

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Hospitality BIZ

www.hospitalitybizindia.com

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF & CEO

Sheldon Santwan

ASSISTANT EDITOR

Prasenjit Chakraborty
+91 9819263364

prasenjit.chakraborty@saffronsynergies.in

EDITORIAL TEAM

Mumbai

CHIEF SUB-EDITOR

Disha Shah Ghosh
disha.shah@saffronsynergies.in

Hyderabad

SR.REPORTER

Asmita Mukherjee

asmita.mukherjee@saffronsynergies.in

CONTRIBUTORS

Anurag Yadav (Delhi)
Nivesh Bhagtani (Delhi)
Marcellus Baptista (Mumbai)
Bhisham Mansukhani (Mumbai)
Dominic CostaBir (Mumbai)

MARKETING TEAM

Mumbai

HEAD - SALES & MARKETING

Ajay Wadode: +91 8087127814
ajay.wadode@saffronsynergies.in

MANAGER

Pooja Nalawade : +91 97690 52241
+91 78208 73901
pooja.nalawade@saffronsynergies.in

COORDINATION, SUBSCRIPTION & DATABASE

Gauri Sawant: +91 8369080796
gauri.sawant@saffronsynergies.in

*Responsible for selection of news under the PRB Act



Saffron Synergies

MUMBAI

Sterling House, 5/7 Sorabji Santuk Lane,
Opp. Dr. Cawasji Hormasji Street, Dhobi Talao,
Marine Lines (E), Mumbai 400 002
Tel: 91-022-6101 1700 / 701 Fax: 91-022-6712 1854

AN ALMOST PERFECT FINNISH

The last mile connectivity to a traveller's heart comes through happy front-line staff.

Not just hotels but staff in travel companies dealing directly with visitors do more for destination promotion than slick ad promos.

Travel brands invariably talk about the way they make their guests feel. Call it a marketing spiel or promotional plug, destinations build these emotional triggers by leveraging the science that forms the basis of good visitor experiences.

However pleasant interactions do not have to be constructed or built consciously. They are best when they flow as a matter of course. By slightly exaggerating a welcome, waiting staff can make the usual dinner special. By being pleasantly chatty a guide can make a brief car ride more informative than reams of travel brochures.

In the freezing climes of the Arctic Circle, just recently for me, two instances highlighted the reasons why last-mile impressions make a difference.

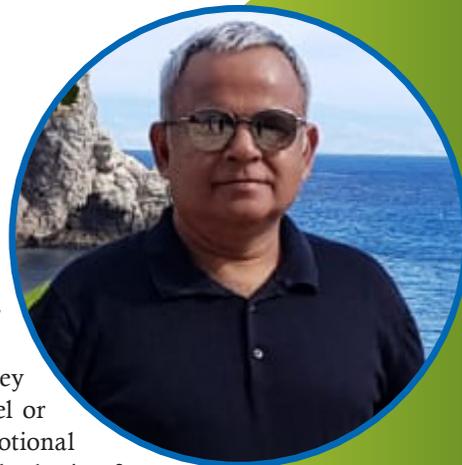
The effusive attention of a Tommy at the restaurant of Arctic Snow hotel in Rovaniemi or the garrulous narration of a Pia on a reindeer farm trip illustrates how impressions can be made involuntarily.

For the last four years, Finland emerged as the happiest country in the world. Now the usual reaction would be to savour such surveys with a pinch of salt. And this is why the real-time experience of the chirpy attitude of front-line staff dons more significance. The seeing-is-believing factor has the propensity to travel faster as a feeling through those who experience it.

Thus when anyone serving at a table comes across as enthusiastic, it does whet the appetite. If a drive is peppered with local details and asides, it makes for a more informative visit indeed.

Finland was always lesser known than its Nordic neighbours. Building the narrative about that nation's happy people created a pivot to hang a discussion about the meaning and desire of travel- namely, the pursuit of happiness. And this compensates for the higher promo spend of its neighbouring competitors with deeper pockets.

Tourists worldwide basically are just pursuing that Golden Fleece. And that is the essential element of any destination marketing or promotional strategy.



Anurag Yadav
Industry Expert

Anurag Yadav is a travel author and columnist, writing on hospitality and design. An avid traveller, he has published five books and divides his time equally between Delhi and London.

The views expressed in the column are of the author, and may or may not be endorsed by the publication.

BRANCH OFFICES

NEW DELHI

C/o Economic Research
India Ltd
D-100, 1st Floor,
Okhla Industrial Area
Phase - 1, New Delhi -
110020
Tel: 91-011-
26810964/65/66
Fax: 91-011-26810968

BANGALORE

C/o Adfactors PR Pvt Ltd
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Bangalore - 560 001
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Fax: 91-80-4113 3059

KOCHI

Poothully Lane,
Poothully Junction,
Mathai Manjooram Road,
Kochi - 682014
Tel.: 91-484-404 9871
Fax: 91-484-404 9871

CHENNAI

709 - 701,
Bathari Road,
Office No. 204,
Prince Center, 2nd Flr.,
Chennai - 600006.
Tel.: 91-44-42655800
Fax: 91-44-28552497

GOA

402, Fourth Floor,
Central Towers, Near Sai
Mandir, Boca-da-Vaca
Road, Panjim - 403001
Cell: +91-9822100020
Harshad Bhonsle
Head - Goa
+91-8999047490
harshadrhonsle@gmail.com

HYDERABAD

Saffron Media 302 Dega
Towers, Rajbhavan Road,
Somajiguda,
Hyderabad: 500 082
Tel.: 040-66103103

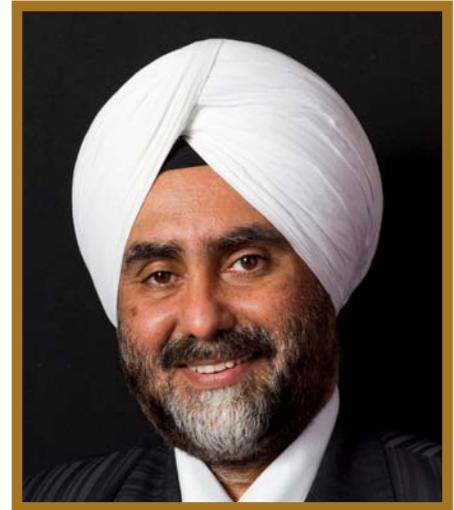
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'Providing infrastructure status to the Indian hospitality sector can go a long way in attracting fresh investment'

With an aim to showcase India's global stature as a hospitality industry powerhouse, HVS ANAROCK is presenting HOPE (Hospitality Overview Presentation & Exchange) to bring together Indian and International hospitality players for knowledge exchange amidst networking. The event will take place on March 2 – 3 at Goa. Ahead of the power-packed event, **Mandeep S Lamba, President (South Asia), HVS ANAROCK** spoke with **Asmita Mukherjee** about the challenges that are slowing the Indian hospitality sector and measures to tackle them.



Q What was the reason behind organising HOPE (Hospitality Overview Presentation & Exchange)? How will the event bring India's global stature in front of the worldwide hospitality industry?

HVS ANAROCK HOPE (Hospitality Overview Presentation & Exchange) is the result of years of discussion and brainstorming on developing a platform that goes beyond the typical content for hospitality conferences, which limits deliberations and often makes them repetitive. HOPE 2023 will bring together not only the top hospitality leaders for differentiated out-of-the-box discussions, but also highly eminent and coveted keynote speakers and presenters from outside the hospitality fraternity who will discuss the latest global technology trends, and India's rise as an economic powerhouse, including what makes India compelling for the world and engaging facts that will give the conference attendees much broader and more interesting insights into the India story.

Q Kindly throw some lights on the profile of eminent speakers who have been invited to HOPE.

HVS ANAROCK HOPE 2023 will feature over 80 eminent speakers from the who's who of the global and Indian hospitality, travel, and food & beverage industries to economists, private equity & banking leaders, architects, technology leaders, start-up gurus, change makers, and renowned travel writers and authors. We can't wait to have candid and thoughtful discussions with this distinguished group about recent trends and the industry's future.

Q According to you, what does the Indian Hospitality Industry lack and

how can it be overcome?

The cost of capital for the hospitality industry in India continues to be amongst the highest in the world, which along with the short tenure for repayment of debt causes severe stress on hotel owners and operators. Given the cyclical nature of the business, if the hotel enters the market in a down cycle phase, it is almost certain to head towards becoming an NPA as has been evident from the last cyclical downturn. Providing infrastructure status to the Indian hospitality sector, a long-pending request by key stakeholders can go a long way in attracting fresh investment in the sector.

Additionally, enhancing the ease of doing business in the sector through online single window clearances and lowering the GST rate on hotel tariffs can aid the sector's growth momentum.

Q As an industry stalwart, how do you see the impact of covid on the hospitality industry?

COVID has changed the hospitality industry as we know it, as travellers and hospitality players adapted to the evolving situation and found ways to keep moving forward. In the absence of inbound travel, hotel companies finally recognized the enormous potential of domestic tourism and the need to grow their presence in Indian leisure destinations. Focusing on cost efficiency, being more agile, thinking outside the box and accepting new ideas quickly are a few other changes that have strengthened the sector. Hoteliers are proactively focusing on alternative customer segments and diversifying into non-room ancillary revenue streams. Moreover, technology adoption has accelerated, and operations have become leaner.

The last two years have seen a significant change in traveller behaviour, with privacy, hygiene, and cleanliness taking precedence over all other considerations. Many travellers are now looking for greater flexibility and convenience, especially when travelling in small groups or with families and pets. The popularity of alternate accommodation products such as homestays and villa rentals has increased exponentially in India as a result of these changing preferences.

Q The Covid-battered hospitality is slowly recovering. As the demand has been pretty constant over the last few months, do you think the industry will manage to gain its lost glory within this year with this trend continuing?

The Indian hospitality industry has recovered strongly in the last year, mainly driven by increased domestic travel and closed the year 2022 with a nationwide occupancy rate of 59-61%, which is 15-17 percentage points (pp) higher than the same period in 2021 and just 5-7 pp lower than in 2019.

The average rate, meanwhile, has improved significantly and was almost 1-3% higher than pre-pandemic levels. Despite a variety of headwinds such as inflationary pressures, recession risk in the US and Europe, and manpower shortage, the Indian hospitality industry's performance outlook remains positive, driven by continued growth in domestic demand, the revival of inbound travel and slower supply growth. ■

asmita.mukherjee@saffronsynergies.in

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'Right marketing can develop effective brand positioning'

Asmita Mukherjee | Hyderabad

Chef Mahesh Padala, Cluster Director of Food and Beverage, Sheraton Hyderabad Hotel, Gachibowli believes that a brand should stick to its signatures rather than offering everything on the consumer's plate. In a free-wheeling conversation with Asmita Mukherjee at the Sheraton Hyderabad Gachibowli hotel, award-winning Chef Padala shared a competitive scenario of the Hyderabad F&B scene and how the hotel is standing apart with its limited but signature offerings.

Being a Chef, Padala gives a lot of importance on consistency, as according to him in this competitive age, consistency is the key. He also believes that not only consistency but both service and quality are equally important. He said, "Being a chef has helped me a lot to transform into the Cluster Director of F&B role. As a chef, most of the time we only focus on bringing the cuisines to our patron's plate and the focus totally goes into the taste, presentation and service, whereas, while being a Cluster Director of F&B the role has demanded me to bring innovation to the plate. But we also have to keep in mind the positioning of the brand so that innovations are in line with the brand messaging. It is imperative not to dilute the positioning of the brand and its offerings while maintaining pace with market trends."

Chef Padala, who is known for his disruptive innovations in the F&B scene added that in marketing, telling stories about products is necessary these days, which sometimes gets neglected by a chef. "We keep on thinking and churning about the marketing pathway and our focus is more on social media now as it helps us to reach our target customers, and gain valuable insights. However, one has to be very careful about what they are projecting on social media as these days if people don't see the same thing on their plate as it's shown in the digital medium they lose interest and trust in the brand, which can cause a boomerang for the brand. So visual

impact is extremely important when it comes to F&B marketing," he added.

Padala believes that marketing the right product is extremely important. With the mushrooming of various specialty, cuisine-focused restaurants the market is getting more competitive day by day. Padala believes that one should be selective with offerings rather than offering everything at once. "For instance, Zega, which is our Pan-Asian

along with our premium wine, and whiskey offerings, exclusives such as Toki, which is a blended Japanese Whisky, and Roku Gin which is also from Japan are a part of our premium offering. These are actually relevant to my restaurants and are perfect with the food pairing."

Speaking about the different concepts that the hotel has planned to launch, Padala stated that they have plans to bring ex-pat Chefs to Zega. "We are planning to bring Chefs from Malaysia, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and Singapore for our upcoming pop-up events. For Feast, which is our all-day dining restaurant and promotes a lot of regional food, one of the key aspects that we planned is to showcase Home Cooked Food. We also planned a contest named Indian Culinary Treasures. We had a hunt for 8 home chefs from different cities. This is a concept that we want to continue for the rest of the year. We will make sure that in a month there is the availability of Home Cooked Food in the restaurant for 20 days."

Padala informed that as a five-star hotel, they have seen a lot of demand for home-cooked food from travellers. "Especially from corporates, who visit the city for work and want to have something which is light on the stomach and easily digestible and equally comforting. As their length of stay with the hotel is also quite long so the demand that we have been seeing made us introduce comfort food. We are bringing eight home cooks from eight different cuisines and eight different regions under one roof through the Indian Culinary Treasures Hunt. We are including Bengali, Punjabi, Hyderabad, Telangana, South Karnataka, Karimnagar, etc. cuisines in our menu. They are going to showcase their regional cuisines at their own stall for 10 days in February from 7th February to 16th February."

While speaking about the current landscape of hospitality talent, Chef Padala said that nowadays people are mostly looking for money and running behind it. "These days it is required to be the best at what you do. Skill is something that doesn't go away with time but rather gets better," he concluded. ■

asmita.mukherjee@saffronsynergies.in



Chef Mahesh Padala
Cluster Director,
Food and Beverage,
Sheraton Hyderabad Hotel

restaurant, has only certain signature dishes, whereas Pan-Asian cuisine is an ocean, with so much to offer, such as Thai, Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Malaysian, Vietnamese etc. We can not offer or master everything. However, we as an F&B brand only focus on our signature dishes and want to be the best in that so that our patrons keep coming to taste their favourites. We keep on doing pop-up events at various food festivals. We also host a lot of expat chefs to keep it more authentic. In my opinion one has to be focused while offering, and positioning the right product is also equally important. Being a star hotel we always make sure that we make and project our category as premium. As Zega is known for its premiumity, we make sure that

G20 Presidency: Brightening the Prospect of Indian Hospitality



Asmita Mukherjee | Hyderabad

The hospitality industry has faced a lot of challenges but with business and leisure travel picking up pace in recent months, the industry is expecting rapid robust growth. The growth is poised to reach new heights with India taking over the presidency of G20 in December of 2022.

Industry experts are expecting that the G20 presidency will add oxygen to the rapid growth of the industry. It is estimated that in 2023, more than 200 meetings involving officials from different countries will be organised in India across 50 cities. As many as 30 heads of state and government from the G20 nations are expected to participate in the summit.

in tourism infrastructure, technology, skill development, start-ups, and more. The G20 CEO Forum alongside the Ministerial Meeting will be held at Goa in June. The event is being organized by World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) and WTTC (India initiative). The Ministry of Tourism will also be organizing a MICE Global Conference and event on adventure tourism in May and June respectively in 2023.

These events will surely add glitters to the growing number of the hospitality industry.

BIG OPPORTUNITY FOR THE HOSPITALITY SECTOR

While speaking on the opportunities, Vineet Verma, Director, Brigade Hospitality said that Indian hospitality stands to benefit from increased visibility and exposure on a global stage. Potential increases in tourism from G20 delegates and visibility of India's lesser-known destinations may also be enhanced by the G20 presidency. "The MICE (meetings, incentives, conferences, and events) segment is likely to see increased bookings from G20 delegates as many of these events are held in hotels and conference centres."

He added that G20 will also act as an impetus for increasing the room rates. "Hotel room rates are likely to increase during the G20 presidency due to increased demand for rooms.

However, this will also depend on factors such as the overall supply of hotel rooms and the competition among hotels in the area," he stated.

According to Param Kannampilly, Chairman and Managing Director, The Fern Hotels & Resorts, the G20 presidency will surely increase the number of footfalls in the country. He added that the Indian hospitality perspective is to increase the number of inbound travellers. "A lot of foreign delegates

and diplomats will be travelling to India. The occupancy will surely get a boost in all those places where G20 meetings are likely to be held. Besides, it will give us a chance to present the best of our country to the world in terms of our rich culture," he added.

BOOST IN INBOUND

The G20 presidency presents a unique opportunity for the Indian travel and tourism industry to change the narrative around inbound tourism, which has been slow to recover post the pandemic.

Mandeep S Lamba, President (South Asia), HVS ANAROCK explains, "Several diplomats and delegates from the G20 member countries and guest countries will attend over 200 meetings to be held across the country, and India will have the opportunity to turn each delegate into a spokesperson for its tourism industry, which has lost some of its global appeals as a result of the negative press which it received during the second wave of the pandemic. Additionally, India can showcase its rich heritage and cultural diversity, as well as a plethora of tourist attractions ranging from historical sites, monuments, and temples to pristine beaches, wildlife parks, and mountains to this global audience, which can help increase the country's minuscule share of global international arrivals in the future. It is an opportune time for our host hotels to rise to the occasion and present the highest levels of service and showcase Indian hotels and hospitality for the visitors to savour and carry back fond memories of."

According to Divakar Shukla, General Manager, Holiday Inn Chennai, India's G20 presidency will create an opportunity to showcase India's growth story along with its rich cultural heritage and the ethos of the hospitality industry, "Atithi Devo Bhava".

"Various working groups, initiatives, and engagement groups will participate



Vineet Verma
Director
Brigade Hospitality



Param Kannampilly
Chairman and MD,
The Fern Hotels & Resorts

According to reports, to celebrate India's G20 Presidency the Ministry of Tourism has planned to organize a number of events engaging not only the government-level stakeholders but also the travel trade and hospitality sector. The Ministry would be organizing the first Global Tourism Investors' Summit (GTIS) in April/May 2023 in New Delhi. The objective of GTIS is to attract global investment into the Indian tourism and hospitality sector along with investments



in discussions during 200 meetings and conferences scheduled across 50 destinations throughout the year, as a build-up to the final G20 summit scheduled at Delhi in Sep 2023. The destinations will also include Tier 2 and Tier 3 cities that offer a picturesque landscape and have a rich cultural heritage to showcase. For the hospitality sector, it will be an opportunity to partner and participate in India's growth story, showcasing the best of hospitality while hosting the delegates attending these meetings and conferences. Each of these 200 meetings would gather hundreds of delegates, with several discussion sessions and side events conducted over a course of 2-3 days. The overall projection of India's Growth story through locally rooted cultural enterprises with products tagged under "Make In India" will help project India as a destination with advanced growth, design, and high standards and is bound to attract new investment," he added.

INCREASED POPULARITY OF LESSER-KNOWN DESTINATIONS

According to a report, India will host more than 200 G20 meetings at over 50 locations during the year, including key tourist attractions across Rajasthan, Goa, and Jammu & Kashmir regions, as well as near the archaeological site of Dholavira in Gujarat and other historical monuments. The list includes not only popular destinations but also some of the destinations situated in tier-II and tier-III cities.

Speaking on the topic Shukla said, "The 50 destinations shortlisted for conducting the meeting of various working and engagement groups would also cover some tier-II and tier-III cities that offer a picturesque landscape and have a rich cultural heritage."

However, Kannampilly stressed on the fact that infrastructure and connectivity are the two key things that can be parameters of

including destinations.

"It depends on the infrastructure. If the connectivity to these places is good, people would love to visit them. Also, how well the state, as well as the central government, markets the destination to these delegates will also play a huge role in deciding it."

ELEVATED MICE SEGMENT

As the G20 will see a lot of corporate meetings happening in India, the MICE segment will surely get an impetus due to this.

Shukla said, "Since the format of the events scheduled covers various discussion sessions, MICE will remain a key performing segment for hotels. Against the backdrop of India's G20 Presidency, the Tourism Ministry has also declared 2023 as a "Visit India " year to draw more international tourists. While domestic travel will continue to drive domestic leisure business, showcasing India's rich cultural heritage on the side-lines of the G20 presidency, will help drive Leisure Inbound business, as well. A study conducted by STR for hotel performances across host markets for G20 summits noted that the impact was greater on the Group segment than Transient. This is due to the fact that the delegates often rent entire properties to accommodate their staff and security teams. For example, Toronto (June 2010) recorded a 361% increase in Group Occupancy during its 7-day host period, while Transient demand decreased by 57% over the same span."

Kannampilly opined that while the banqueting facility will receive a healthy number due to the numerous meetings, the biggest beneficiary will be the leisure sector as almost everyone would like to explore India's glory which offers so much in terms of tourism opportunities.

REVPAR AND OCCUPANCY SLATED TO RISE

The industry experts are contemplating that as the demand will surge there might be a supply constraint scenario in the shortlisted destinations.

Shukla informed that while the regular business for hotels is at par with pre-pandemic levels, the business opportunities created due to India's G20 presidency will add demand to cities shortlisted as meeting destinations. "The RevPAR is likely to see an upside on the G20 meeting dates, which is likely to be occupancy driven for weekends (in non-leisure destinations) and weekdays (in leisure destinations) and rate driven for

weekdays (in non-leisure destinations) and weekends (in leisure destinations). From the initial queries generated for several cities, it is indicative that the demand is not spread across the city and therefore likely to benefit only select hotels largely when it comes to driving occupancies and rates. For example, the Chennai version of the event had a clear preference towards Mahabalipuram and hence less likely to impact the performance of the city hotels. The surge in demand for Chennai is likely to drive incremental 5-10% occupancy levels (depending on a weekday, weekend date patterns) and incremental 10-15% ADR levels. The overall impact on RevPAR is likely to remain between 10-20%," he added.

Kannampilly added that the cities which are going to host events related to G 20 will definitely witness an increase in occupancy levels. The bigger metros will have a positive impact on occupancy levels.

Industry experts are saying that the demand for hotels can rise in the month of September



Mandeep S Lamba
President (South Asia)
HVS ANAROCK



Divakar Shukla
General Manager
Holiday Inn Chennai

due to the host week, otherwise, the demand will be more or less as predicted. Unusual demands are not on the cards. "While the build up meetings and conferences are not likely to drive demand significantly, the host week in September 2023 will definitely see a surge in demand across pre-event and event dates. If the pattern of booking an entire hotel by delegates for its staff and security continues, then it is likely to shift regular demand to other hotels that are not hosting the delegates and thereby create an opportunity to drive both occupancies and rates, during the event dates." Shukla added.

Shukla concluded, "The Investments made to host the G20 presidency will create a surge in demand and also create opportunities for hotels to drive occupancies and rates not just during the G20 presidency period but also beyond." ■

asmita.mukherjee@saffronsynergies.in

The overall hotel performance has been phenomenal, says India Hotel Market Review



HBI Staff | Hyderabad

Horwath HTL, a leading global hospitality consultant, in its year-end report called 2022 a dream year for the Indian hospitality industry. The report said that the overall hotel performance has been phenomenal, despite Occupancy not breaking the pre-pandemic level the RevPAR is the same as pre-pandemic. It also added that The drag is due to budget to economy hotels not performing well and cities where the market has IT dominance. Leisure hotels demonstrated they can perform very well as technically there is no cap to the ADR.

The report also mentioned about Key performance points:

All India Occupancy at 59.8% with an ADR of INR 6.1k; near complete RevPAR recovery on all India level compared to 2019; The performance is even better in the upscale to luxury segment.

Leisure destinations leading in terms of ADRs, much higher compared to business cities, although seasonality prevails; overall RevPAR is led by Udaipur, Goa and Mumbai in that order. ADR for Udaipur was 13,000, followed by Goa at around 10,000 and Mumbai at around 9,000

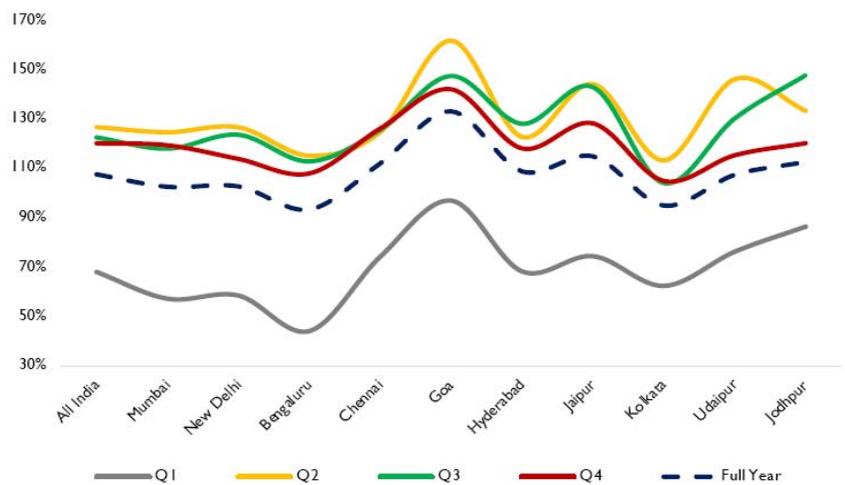
Five markets – Mumbai, Delhi, Goa, Udaipur, and Jaipur, having 27% supply share have delivered 37% of room revenue earned in India in 2022

Rise in wedding spending and

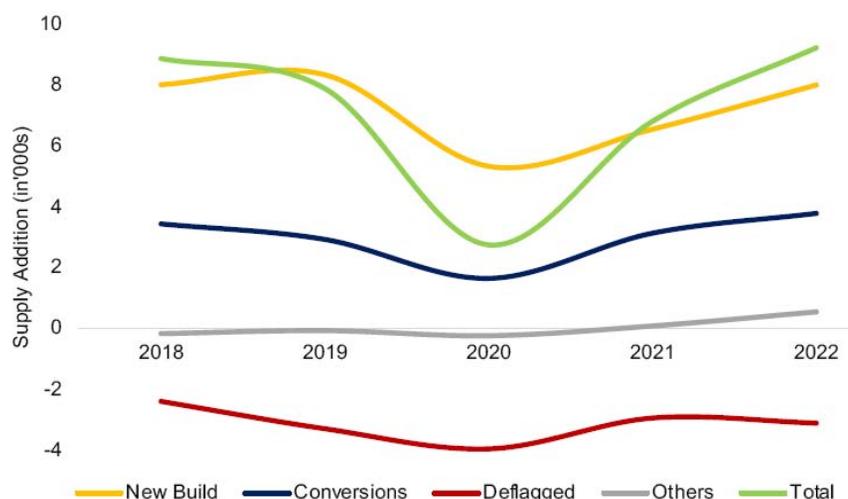
social events, while MICE remained soft during the year, it is expected to grow in 2023.

Promising Markets: North East, Kevadia (Statue of Unity), Varanasi (Uttar Pradesh). ■

Same Store RevPAR Recovery – By Quarter

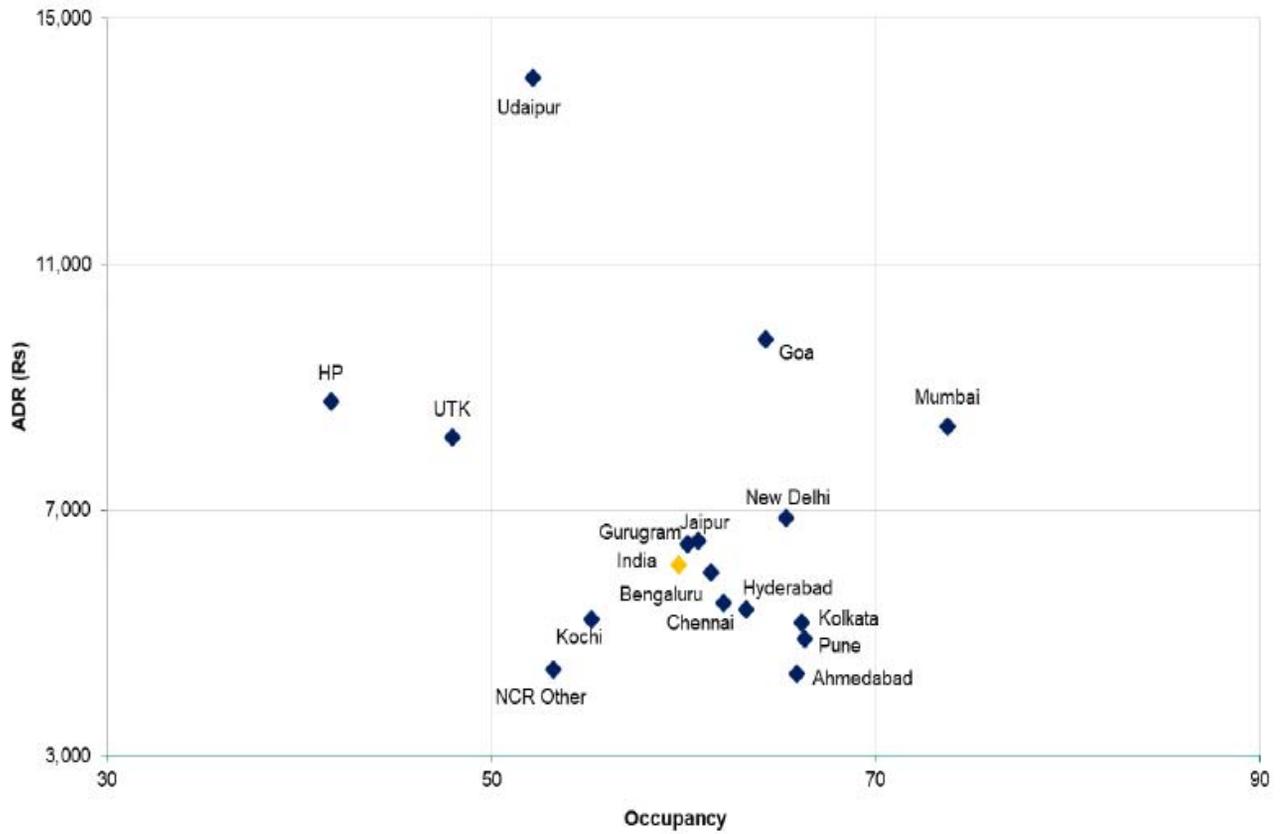


Source: STR



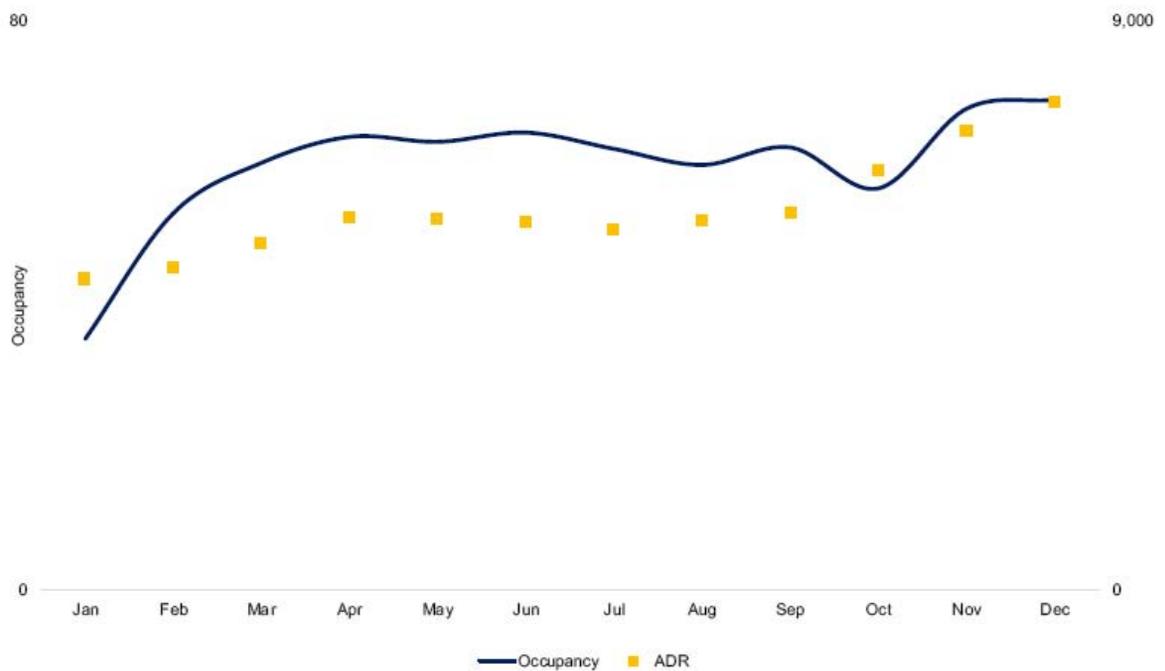
Source: Horwath HTL

Overall Performance - India Key Markets



Source: STR

Overall Monthly Performance - India



Source: STR

Budget 2023 sees positive reactions from the hospitality industry

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman's Budget announcements for the tourism sector are designed to strengthen the hospitality industry, stated industry stalwarts, although they also highlighted that no direct support was mentioned in the budget statement. Industry associations expressed that the budget statement could have covered more direct support measures for the tourism and hospitality industry. However, the budget has rightly proposed tourism as a transformative engine for job creation which needs to be developed on a mission mode via PPP basis, along with focus on 50 tourism destinations and infrastructure.

As the budget was coming on the back of a recovery from the pandemic, this was an opportunity to strengthen the tourism travel and hospitality industry of India by aiding it to reclaim its global inbound tourism share which would have boosted employment pan India, the experts said.





**PRADEEP SHETTY, PRESIDENT,
HOTEL AND RESTAURANT
ASSOCIATION OF WESTERN
INDIA (HRAWI)**

“The fact that Tourism got attention in the Union Budget is a big welcome. The Hon’ble FM recognized the country’s potential for domestic as well as foreign tourists and the huge opportunities the sector holds for jobs and entrepreneurship. The Hon’ble

FM stressed on promoting tourism on mission mode, with the active participation of States, the convergence of Government programmes and public-private partnerships. This is especially good news for regional tourism and hospitality. Developing new airports, heliports, water aerodromes and advanced landing grounds to improve regional connectivity will unlock the vast potential for growth in the Western region of India.



**SP JAIN, CHAIRMAN AND
MANAGING DIRECTOR, PRIDE
HOTELS LIMITED**

The Honorable Finance Minister Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman has announced the development of tourist places jointly by public and private partnerships. This will give a much-needed boost to the domestic tourism segment. The budget specifies that 50 tourist destinations will be selected and

developed as a whole package for domestic and international tourism. We welcome this announcement. For domestic tourism “Dekho Apna Desh” has already been promoted very widely now similarly international tourism too will be revived with these initiatives. The tourist infrastructure will also be provided on the border and in North East India which will be highly beneficial for the inflow of tourists. The industry can harness the direct and multiplier effects of tourism in employment generation to the youth of India as the sector creates direct and indirect job opportunities.



**M.P. BEZBARUAH, SECRETARY
GENERAL, HOTEL ASSOCIATION
OF INDIA**

It is heartening to note that the Union Budget 2023-24 continues to build on a strong foundation of economic development by promoting inclusive growth wherein fruits of development reach each and every citizen of the country. We are also enthused by the continued focus on developing

infrastructure – railways, transport, airports, heliports, water aerodromes – all of which will improve connectivity that is directly linked to the growth of tourism and hospitality. Digitisation, development of artificial intelligence, emphasis on skilling are other aspects that impact all Sectors and hospitality is no exception.



**VIJAY DEWAN, MANAGING
DIRECTOR, APEEJAY
SURRENDRA PARK HOTELS
LIMITED AND CO-CHAIRMAN OF
THE CII NATIONAL COMMITTEE
ON TOURISM & HOSPITALITY**

The budget demonstrates India’s rising global profile and sets the trajectory to be the third largest economy by the end of the decade.

The government has remained focused on the path of fiscal prudence reducing the fiscal deficit from 6.4% in FY 22/23 to 5.9% in FY 23/24. Strong focus on infrastructure development with outlay being increased from 7.3 lakh crores to 10 lakh crores and at 3.3% of the GDP will drive growth and generate employment.

On tourism, the budget fails to meet industry expectations on being granted infrastructure status and rationalisation of taxes. Increase in tax collection at source for overseas tour packages from 5% to 20% is also a negative and will hit the tour and travel industry especially since the industry has just reconnected from the pandemic. However, setting up 50 new airports and heliports and 50 new tourist destinations to drive domestic and international traffic is a welcome step.



**SARBENDRA SARKAR, FOUNDER
& MD, CYGNETT HOTELS AND
RESORTS**

With the FM announcing plans to renew 50 additional airports, helipads, water aero drones, and advanced landing grounds, it will boost regional connectivity. Moreover, the announcement to develop 50 destinations for domestic and international tourists will also help to draw attention

to the country’s tourism and hospitality sectors. The Finance Minister said that these tourist destinations will be selected through challenge mode. The impetus on Dekho Apna Desh will provide a further boost to the growth of domestic tourism in the country. The FM also highlighted that states will be encouraged to set up a “Unity Mall” in the capital city or most popular tourist destination for the promotion of the ‘One District, One product’ theme. Such initiatives will also help unleash the potential tapped in the tourism sector. ■

asmita.mukherjee@saffronsynergies.in

Adopt Multidisciplinary Approaches | Enhance Hospitality Education

By Prof. Satish Jayaram, PhD – Ideator | Innovator | Incubator

Ongoing participation in think-tank discussions, since creating new storyboards to renew learning models in hospitality education, has revealed academia's pre-occupation with a high vocational focus. This over emphasis on vocational boundaries in hospitality education can be myopic. Feeding aspiration to drive engagement with future talents, places enormous responsibility on creating opportunities. The propensity for aspiration to gain momentum, at both industry and sectoral levels is clearly the writing on the wall. Career trajectories of new-age hospitality leaders is testimony for growing diversification, from basic vocational expertise to universal orientation in evolving leadership ability. The focus of this writing, is on worthiness of multidisciplinary approaches in creating values required in future. It is important to enhance future talents to grow in the direction that their skills and abilities progress. The integration of multidisciplinary approaches in hospitality education is therefore pragmatic today. Synergies for learning experiences are possible with stakeholder support.

The difference between education for life and qualification for employment is our first milestone. Skill levels are transitory and directly proportional to the degree of ongoing practice. One must review this in the light of growing abilities, that will provide a broader set of competences required, for future growth and development. The outcome of short-term focused credentials - whether as skill certifications, specialist diplomas or qualifying degrees, must meet the fundamental responsibility to educate. The purpose of such education is to build future citizens, who can think critically, apply creatively and communicate empathetically. The ability to reason, analyse, research as well as collaborate with teams, digesting



The model alongside provides a view of the potential possibilities, as benefits can be derived from changing our approach towards hospitality education today. While each of the quadrants have their relative perspectives, the need to balance our focus in all four, will incubate a well-rounded future leadership.

The opportunity is to migrate from a vocational role to a functional one by developing relevant skills. The synthesis of ongoing abilities from commercial to leadership can be achieved with a hybrid focus. Our cross-hairs must target a well-balanced view of all competences to create future-proof citizens.

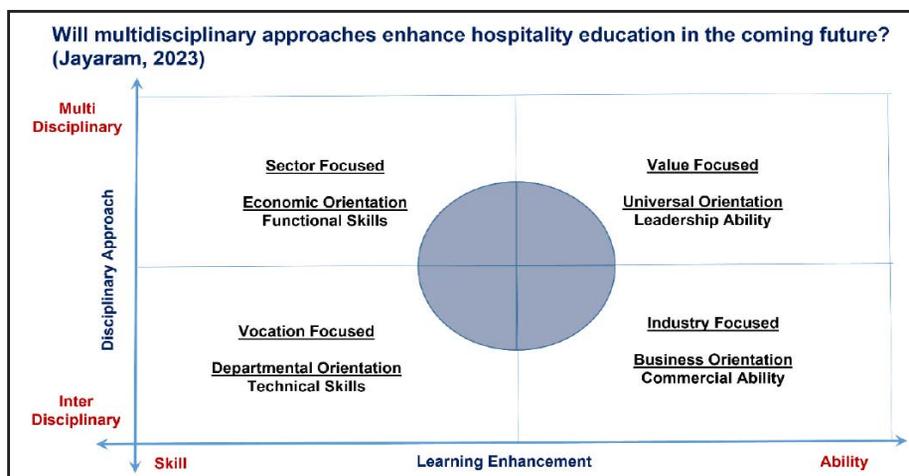
Each focus area can be attained at a foundation, intermediate, higher level or at advanced stages in the proposed curriculum and credit structure under the National Education Policy 2020 via facilitation.

1. **Vocation Focused:** Departmental orientation could benefit action learners, while fostering a parochial attitude to other learners. Technical skills are crucial for those, who wish to grow in select domains like chefs, servers, bartenders, housekeepers and only as technical specialists.
2. **Industry Focused:** Business orientation enhances the inherent abilities of learners with intrapreneurial or entrepreneurial mindsets. Commercial abilities in running hospitality businesses today, are a boundaryless phenomenon, even as gigs, start-ups and studios grow.
3. **Sector Focused:** Economic orientation enhances macro-thinkers with transferable skill-sets, much in demand in the larger service economy. Functional skills in customer relationship management, talent engagement, revenue strategy, digital marketing etc. are a case in point.
4. **Value Focused:** Well-balanced learning models will appeal to all learners as we acculturate the universal orientation required to build global citizens. Leadership abilities required to take responsibility, be accountable and work towards a sustainable planet is what we must aim for.

In conclusion, the balance between all four focus areas must be distinctive, while being consolidative. ODL (On-line Distance Learning) has acquired new meaning today in a post-pandemic world. The cross-learning opportunities available across a boundaryless ocean of multidisciplinary learning content, can be curated and streamed using technology.

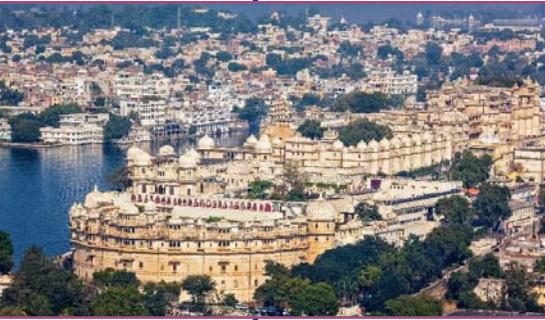
Personal technologies like mobile telephony, can open up perennial open learning systems like never before. The emergence of AI and revelation of ChatGPT's ability to synthesize, is only a reminder learning opportunities abound. Superficial qualification, without an underlying passion to excel serves no real human purpose! Wholesome multidisciplinary education is emotionally uplifting and empowering than ever before. After all, no technology can experience the holistic joy and fulfilment of the privileged few, who are truly educated on the planet. ■

The views expressed within this column are the opinion of the author, and may not necessarily be endorsed by the publication.



information for decision-making requires assimilation. The building of future leaders requires adaptation to contemporary learning - digital, technological skills alongside value building necessary to achieve multicultural competences. Universal orientation can be achieved with an inclusive spirit to grow accountability and foster responsibilities to both planet and people.

While the urgency of learning enhancement is largely expected in skill portfolios by industry, talents synthesize learning over time into abilities. The influence of disciplinary approaches followed during this learning journey, may have an interdisciplinary focus or multidisciplinary focus.



Country Inn Express Hotel Sajjargarh, Udaipur

Providing convenient access to the guests, Country Inn Express Seasons Hotel, Udaipur is located in close proximity to the Monsoon Palace, Fateh Sagar Lake, and Badi Lake. The newly built hotel offers 22 well-appointed modern rooms, a multi-cuisine restaurant, and modern amenities for a comfortable stay. With this launch the group's new select-service hotel brand has unveiled, which aims to address the needs of price-conscious business and leisure travellers seeking comfort at an affordable rate.

Sterling Arunai Anantha Tiruvannamalai, Tamil Nadu

Nestled in close vicinity, Sterling Arunai Anantha Tiruvannamalai is the perfect setting for seekers of spirituality, yoga, culture and heritage to unwind and revive. The resort features 30 well-appointed rooms that are spacious, aesthetically appealing and with select rooms offering breath-taking views of the sacred Arunachala Hill.

Inspired by the spiritual and cultural significance of the destination, the resort embodies various visual elements that are designed to rejuvenate body, mind and soul. The "Trikona" or triangle element representing the upward rising energy of Agni and "Padma" or the lotus symbolizing the padmasana or lotus pose in yoga adorn the interiors of the resort.

The 3.5-acre resort is filled with greenery and boasts of an open-air theatre and landscaped lawns, ideal for morning yoga sessions. With customized menus and expert in-house event planners, these lawns are the ideal venue for weddings, private and corporate events.



Pride Biznotel Haldwani

Pride Biznotel Haldwani offers elegantly designed deluxe, premium and suite rooms. All the rooms air-conditioned are filled with modern amenities like LED Television, Work desk, Tea & coffee maker, Mini-bar, Wardrobe, in-room safe, Iron & Iron Board, Hair Dryer, high-speed internet connectivity, and much more. The facilities at the hotel include 24-hours room service, a travel desk, complimentary breakfast, and laundry services. Guests can enjoy a magnificent culinary journey at Café Pride serving diverse Indian and Oriental cuisines, an Open Grill restaurant with Rational Cooking/ Live counters, and an Outdoor Glass bar with a wonderful view of the Naini Hills.

The 2 state-of-the-art banquets Imperial and Chancery can host 500 guests and 100 guests respectively in a floating-style area. These are ideal to host weddings, private parties, birthday parties, corporate events, and other intimate gatherings. Senate, the Board room with a capacity ranging from 25 persons to 30 persons is best suited for corporate meetings and training & development programs.

Norbu The Montanna an IHCL- SeleQtions Hotel Dharamshala, Himachal Pradesh

Located in the most scenic part of this popular leisure destination, South Goa, the resort Nestled within the serene Kangra Valley and at an easy driving distance from Kangra airport, Norbu the Montanna, spread over seven acres, offers picturesque views of the Dhauladhar range. The hotel design is inspired by regional architecture. The 31 rooms and suites have been conceptualised around local Tibetan motifs of Leopard, Sparrow, Yak, Yag God and the Tibetan flag, with each room carefully crafted for contemporary luxury. Guests can enjoy Indian, Tibetan and International delicacies at Namak, the all-day diner. For special occasions, Chef's Table offers Mediterranean cuisine while The Pool Bar serves small bites with stunning views. Experiences like fruit picking, tea-tasting, one-on-one spiritual sessions, trekking and adventure sports and a special Tibetan degustation menu make for the perfect holiday.



Hafele's introduces '15° Linear Lens' for seamless hospitality interiors

Häfele's linear lens technology provides a revolutionized approach towards functional and ambient lighting alike in any area where enhanced illumination is desired.

Made in Germany in compliance with Häfele standards, the new 15° Linear Lens from this family helps achieve brighter lighting over larger distances. The smaller angle of the lens makes it possible for the light to have a higher intensity and a better reach with minimum scatter loss. This makes it perfect for high ceiling applications in homes and other large spaces like shopping malls, airport terminals and offices and hotel rooms.



Only Earth adds almond milk to its vegan beverage portfolio

Only Earth, a sustainable plant-based/vegan milk brand is all set to introduce almond milk in its portfolio of vegan beverages among other options. Customers can now add almond milk to any hot or cold drink or make it a meal ingredient. The Almond milk will be available across all online and offline mediums. Launched in 2021, Only Earth is now available at 1000+ stores in 12 cities.

Glenmorangie unveils new packaging in India

Glenmorangie Highland single malt whisky today reveals its bold new packaging, designed to convey the deliciousness of its single malt in India. Inspired by its whisky's award-winning flavours, the brand has reimagined its packaging with an elegant new bottle, vivid colours and playful details. Glenmorangie will debut its new look in India from January 2023 in select retail outlets across various cities in the country. Price points: Mumbai: INR 5,990 onwards, New Delhi: INR 4,700 onwards, Gurgaon: INR 3,500 onwards, Bangalore: INR 7,788 onwards.



Marimbula brings a burst of flavour with a new range of fruit crushes for the HORECA segment

Food Services India Pvt. Ltd. (FSIPL) expanding their portfolio with the addition of a delectable range of Fruit Crushes. Their beverage brand Marimbula has launched fruit crushes to amplify FSIPL's reach amongst consumers & penetrate new markets. FSIPL, which is a one stop solution for all HORECA (Hotels, Restaurants, Catering) needs, is foraying into the mainstream retail formats as well with the launch of these crushes. Marimbula's Fruit Crush Range comprises of 8 fresh and fruity flavours, among them Pineapple, Strawberry, Mango, Butterscotch, Orange, Kiwi, Pink Guava and Lychee. Their range contains 35% of fresh fruit content which is completely natural with great product consistency. With Marimbula flavours, one can create a limitless number of cocktails & mocktails ranging both Indian and International mixes. Marimbula is the only brand that presents ethnic Indian flavours such as Saffron Cream, Paan, Cumin Spice, Tamarind, and Coconut Fudge.



ACCOR HOTELS



Rubin Cherian, General Manager, NHCC and HICC

Cherian is a well-rounded hotelier with over two decades of experience in the Hospitality Industry. In his current role as General Manager of Novotel Hyderabad Convention Centre (NHCC) and Hyderabad International Convention Centre (HICC), he will focus on delivering strong business results through optimizing profitability, business

management and increasing revenue. His priority areas will be enhancing services, increasing business growth and developing a talented and committed team to manage hotel operations. Ruben will lead the hotel to greater heights of success with his extensive experience and industry knowledge.

HILTON HOTELS



Anuj Majumdar, Assistant General Manager, Hilton Garden Inn Pune Hinjewadi

With over 25 years of experience in the hospitality industry, Majumdar's expertise will play a vital role in elevating the property to new heights.

A passionate hotelier, over the years, having worked with several brands across the country, Majumdar has gained deep knowledge and experience in dealing with a broad spectrum of situations and challenges, including pre-opening properties.

SAMHI HOTELS



Gautam Khanna, Director of Operations, Raffles Udaipur

Khanna brings a wealth of experience in the hospitality industry spanning over 14 years to his new position at Raffles Udaipur. During this time, he has been associated with renowned hotel chains like ITC Hotels and Marriott International.

In this role, Khanna will be responsible for overseeing the day-to-day operations of the hotel,

ensuring exceptional guest experiences and driving operational excellence. He will also work closely with the hotel's management team to develop and implement strategies to enhance the hotel's performance and reputation.



Rishabh Tandon, Cluster Director of Human Resources, SAMHI Hotels

Tandon brings a wealth of experience and expertise to this role, having held various leadership positions in the hospitality industry over the past 15 years. Prior to joining SAMHI Hotels, Tandon served as the Area Director of Human Resources for IHG Hotels at Crowne Plaza Greater Noida, where he

supported and strategised HR functions for 12 hotels across South West Asia. His vision is to make a difference in the lives of people in the current organisation and he believes in learning about people and understanding different facets of life.



Abhijeet Gadgil, Director of Sales and Marketing, Novotel Pune

With 12+ years of experience, Gadgil is a performance-driven professional and has an outstanding record of achievements. With a rich experience in the industry, he will bring a combination of sales expertise together with a natural ability to motivate and nurture a dynamic team.

Gadgil commenced his journey in the field of hospitality with a BBA in Hospitality and Tourism Management from Kohinoor IMI – School of Hospitality Management. He started his career with The Pride Hotel Pune as a Management Trainee in 2010 after completing his degree. Since then there has been no looking back. His last assignment was at Fairfield by Marriott Goa Benaulim as a Director of Sales where he was a part right from the pre-opening. He has been a part of the Marriott family for over 10 years in multiple roles garnering expertise in various verticals of hospitality.

MARRIOTT INTERNATIONAL



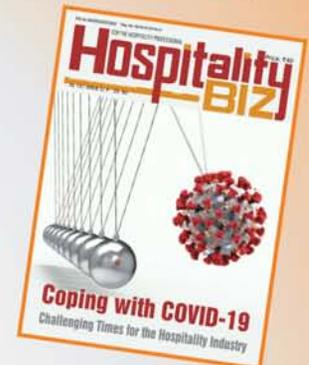
Sanjay Gupta, General Manager, Sheraton Grand Bengaluru Whitefield Hotel & Convention Center

Gupta's journey with Marriott International began in 2011 as the pre-opening General Manager of the 100th Le Meridien in Coimbatore followed by Le Meridien Jaipur and most recently he was the General Manager of Le Meridien Gurgaon, Delhi NCR.

He has also been the recipient of some very prestigious awards within the organisation such as the Spirit To Serve Associates Marriott 'Take Care' award Asia Pacific Except China (APEC) for the year 2022 and the General Manager of the year 2022 from Business World Hotelier as a National winner. Furthermore, he is the third Indian hotelier to be awarded an Honorary Diploma by the Les Clefs d'Or Paris, France.

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Contact Us

Ajay Wadode: +91 80871 27814
ajay.wadode@saffronsynergies.in

Pooja Nalawade: +91 97690 52241
pooja.nalawade@saffronsynergies.in

For Subscription

Gauri Sawant: +91 8369080796 | gauri.sawant@saffronsynergies.in