

# travel News Digest

Volume VI • Issue 15 Pages 32 www.travelnewsdigest.in ₹50 / US \$5 16-30 JUNE 2017

Posted at NDPSO, New Delhi - 110001 on 5/6 & 20/21 of every month | Date of Publication 01/02 & 15/16 every month | Postal Registration No. DL(S) - 01/3404/2015-17 | RNI No. DELENG/2011/40217

INDIA 04 ASIA 11 MIDDLE EAST 16 EUROPE 18 AMERICAS 20 AFRICA 21 OCEANIA 23 CARIBBEAN 24 TECHNOLOGY 26 GLOBAL 27 RESPONSIBLE TOURISM 28 EVENTS 30

India's ranking improves in International Tourist Arrivals



P# 04

Women's Journey Thailand campaign to return with great offers



P# 11

Saudi Arabia focuses on growth of MICE sector



P# 16

Reunion Island records 175.5% growth in Indian arrivals



P# 18

Brand USA hosts Discover America educational seminars



P# 20

Rwanda — A country that must be close to paradise



P# 21

Australia rolls out the second edition of Australian Airfare Sale



P# 23

Caribbean Tourism welcomes a new record of tourist arrivals



P# 24

## TTF Kolkata kicks in travel trade show season with aplomb



Travel & Tourism Fair (TTF), India's longest serving travel trade shows starts the season with bigger TTF Kolkata and Hyderabad, with several new features. TTF is India's largest travel trade show network, organised in nine Indian cities annually.

Kolkata was ranked the third wealthiest city in India (after Mumbai and Delhi), with a unique tradition of taking domestic and outbound trips in large numbers. TTF has been serving as a platform for this huge market in Eastern India, since 1989 as the oldest and one of the biggest travel trade shows in the country.

TTF Kolkata will be held from July 7-9, 2017, with a full-house show at the Netaji Indoor Stadium and Khudiram Anushilan Kendra. It will showcase over 350 sellers, including official pavilions from various states and countries.

TTF Kolkata is the oldest and one of the busiest travel trade show in the country, since 1989. Thousands of travel trade members visit the show in the first one and a half days reserved for the trade. Equally huge number of most avid travellers through the show in the remaining one and a half days of the show - on the weekend.

TTF Kolkata has maintained a steady growth, in keeping with positive sentiments in the travel trade, despite the headwinds due to demonitisation and uncertainties of the GST regime from July 1, 2017.

Among the state tourism departments who have committed in principle big participation are Andaman & Nicobar, Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Jharkhand, Kerala, Lakshadweep, Madhya Pradesh, Manipur, Odisha, Rajasthan, Telangana, Tripura, Uttarakhand, West Bengal and many more.



Country-level participation from Bangladesh, Macao, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Korea and China has added feathers to the TTF this year.

With consistent support from the Ministry of Tourism, State Tourism Boards, National Tourist Offices, thousands of private exhibitors and trade associations, TTF continues to be the widest platform providing opportunities for the buyers and sellers from across the country to showcase their latest offerings and build long term business ties.

"TTF Kolkata is India's oldest and one of the busiest travel trade show in India. With the increasing importance of Outbound and Inbound potential in the East and Southeast Asia, it serves as a strategically important gateway for the industry. That is the reason it is a full-house show every year since last 27 years - a legacy that we are proud of," remarked Sanjiv Agarwal, Chairman and CEO of Fairfest Media Ltd.

For more information on TTF, visit: [www.ttfotm.com](http://www.ttfotm.com)



Amadeus introduces Destination Insight taking travel to the next level



P# 26

PATA elects a new Executive Board



P# 27

Mission Vision: A responsible approach to make our planet abled



P# 28

# BLTM concurrent with TTF at HICC Hyderabad to herald a new standard in travel trade shows in South India

Staging of Business & Luxury Travel Mart (BLTM) and Travel & Tourism Fair (TTF) together at Hyderabad International Convention Centre (HICC) from July 14-15, 2017 would herald a new standard in travel trade shows in South India.

BLTM Hyderabad provides a one-stop opportunity to meet hundreds of Sellers from the Business, MICE and Luxury Travel segments from around the world in a five star setting.

For the first time ever, more than 250 fully hosted highly qualified corporate and travel trade buyers from all over India will be staying within the show venue, at the HICC. They will be scheduling appointments online as well as on-site, with more than a hundred sellers on the show floor.

Buyers who have confirmed their presence for BLTM South India include Adani Wilmar Ltd, Ambuja Cements Ltd, Bajaj Electricals Ltd, Canara HSBC OBC Life Insurance Co Ltd, Cox & King Ltd, Global Cynergies LLC, Godrej Industries Ltd, Godrej Industries Ltd, Kaya Ltd, Khaitan & Co, Loreal India Pvt Ltd, Magma Fincorp Ltd, Neptune Tours & Travels Pvt Ltd, Pulsar Knowledge Centre Pvt Ltd, STHI Holidays India Pvt Ltd, Suzlon Energy Limited, Tamarind Global Services Pvt Ltd, World Destinations Events and Zycus Infotech Pvt Ltd.

In addition to the hosted buyers as above, the show will also attract thousands of day visitors from the travel trade and corporate sector within Hyderabad and nearby areas. BLTM is equipped with an effective online meeting diary feature, having state-of-the-art online matching and appointment scheduler for conducting onsite speed networking sessions.

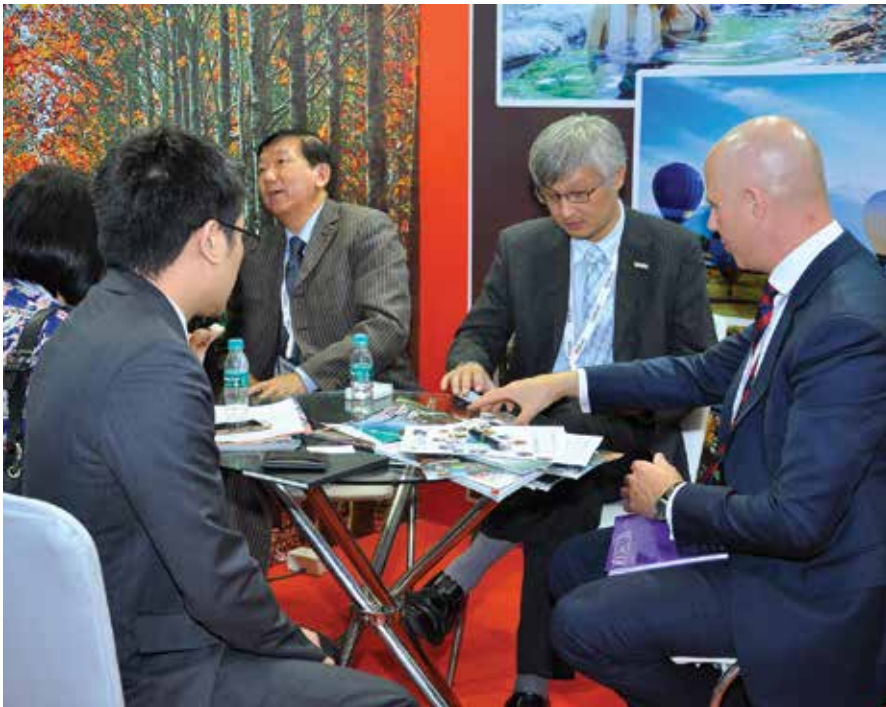
BLTM during its maiden opening in Delhi-NCR in October 2016 set a successful benchmark in the business travel and luxury segment; followed by another successful event in Mumbai in February 2017 (coinciding with OTM).

“India is a continent size country and its source market is potentially huge but scattered in different geographical regions. This is the reason for rolling out BLTM in Hyderabad, to cater to the booming markets in South India. The show has already received good response and it will be the largest of its kind in the South. The co-location strategy of placing TTF which is the oldest travel trade show in the country, side by side BLTM is designed to maximise on the opportunities for all buyers and sellers,” remarked Sanjiv Agarwal, Chairman and CEO of Fairfest Media Ltd.



BLTM is brought to you by Fairfest Media Ltd, organisers of OTM and TTF-India's longest serving and most well established travel trade show network which operates in some of the country's biggest outbound source markets and publisher of the most widely distributed print and web editions of the B2B journal Travel News Digest.

For more information on BLTM, visit: [www.bltm.co.in](http://www.bltm.co.in)



#### Editor & Publisher

Sanjiv Agarwal

#### President

V Suresh

#### Content

Chirajit Nath  
Rohit Ganguli  
Palak Sharma

#### Design

Dilip Manna  
Ritam Maity  
Maruti More

#### Managing Directors

Gazanfar Ibrahim  
Rajiv Agarwal

#### Director

Harsh Agarwal

#### Associate Directors

Rajarshi De  
Raj Kapoor Singh  
R Mahesh  
Tarique Ebrahim  
Nitin Telang  
Raminder Singh  
Gunjan Dutt  
Vicky Menezes

#### Advisors

Abraham John  
Sheila Leong

#### Managers

Fatima D'Costa  
Uma Sureka  
YC Anil  
Philomena D'Souza  
Tania Das  
Ramesh Chauhan  
Sanjeev Gupta  
Medha Anand

#### Assistant Managers

Kanika Singh  
Shreya Bothra  
Shiv Shankar Dutta  
Pauline Dias

#### Executives

Pauravi Oak  
Komal Solanki  
Khushbu Thakkar  
Priya Das  
Priyanka Mandal  
Kiran M

Travel News Digest (TND) is printed and published by Sanjiv Kumar Agarwal on behalf of Fairfest Media Ltd.

Printed at International Print -o-pac Ltd, C-4 to C-11, Hosier complex, Phase-II, Extension, Noida - 201 301, Distt. G. B. Nagar, UP.

Published at 216A/1Gautam Nagar, Gulmohar Park, New Delhi-110 049

**Editor**  
Sanjiv Kumar Agarwal

No responsibility will be accepted for unsolicited manuscripts and photos received. Despite careful selection of sources, no responsibility can be taken for accuracy.

The Publishers and the Editors do not necessarily individually or collectively identify themselves with the views expressed by respective writers and contributors in this journal. The views expressed are those of the authors only. The magazine assumes no liability or responsibility of any kind in connection with the information thereof.

All right reserved. Reproduction in whole or in part is strictly prohibited without written permission from the publisher.

**Fairfest Media Limited**  
(CIN - U74140WB1988PLC045101)

**Head Office**  
216A/1, Gautam Nagar,  
Gulmohar Park,  
New Delhi - 110 049  
Tel: (91)(11) 26866874

**Registered Office**  
25C/1, Belvedere Road, Alipur,  
Kolkata 700 027  
Tel: (91)(33) 24790010-14

**Branch Offices**  
MUMBAI (91) (22) 4555 8555  
HYDERABAD (91) (40) 27896149  
BANGALORE (91) (80) 26761598  
AHMEDABAD (91) (79) 2646 1217

**Volume VI • Issue 15**

For feedback and information,  
write in at [info@travelnewsdigest.in](mailto:info@travelnewsdigest.in)  
Web: [www.travelnewsdigest.in](http://www.travelnewsdigest.in)





गरीब कल्याण वर्ष

*For blissful moments and timeless memories*

# Visit Uttarakhand

*Colourful hues, breathtaking views*



Home Stays are Available  
in Uttarakhand



**Uttarakhand**  
**Simply Heaven!**

[www.uttarakhandtourism.gov.in](http://www.uttarakhandtourism.gov.in)

Come discover the beauty of Uttarakhand. Visit destinations such as Almora, Auli, Nainital, Haridwar, Ukhimath, Joshimath, Kharsali, Mukhba, Jim Corbett National Park, Lansdowne, Chopta, Binsar, Kausani, Mukteshwar, Khirsu and many more.

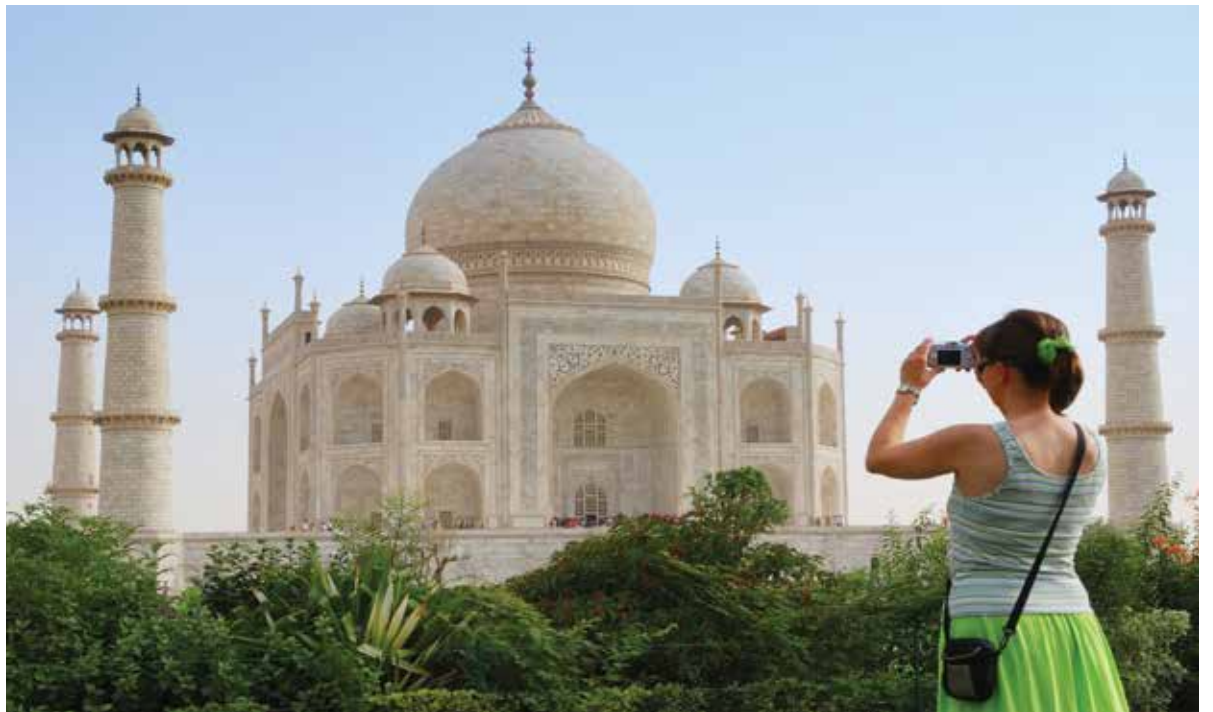
# India's ranking improves in International Tourist Arrivals

According to United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) definition, International Tourist Arrivals (ITAs) consist of two components namely Foreign Tourist Arrivals (FTAs) and Arrivals of Non-Resident Nationals, with UNWTO ranking countries in terms of their ITAs. So far only the figures of FTAs were compiled in India. However, India has now also started compiling the data arrivals of Non-Resident Indians (NRIs).

During 2014 and 2015, the number of NRI arrivals was 5.43 million and 5.26 million, respectively. Accordingly, the numbers of ITAs in India during 2014 and 2015 were 13.11 million and 13.28 million, respectively. The data of ITAs, containing both the arrivals of NRIs and FTAs, is now as per international recommendations.

This inclusion has resulted in India's improved rank reflecting the true and comparable scenario, which has been acknowledged by the UNWTO. As per the latest UNWTO Barometer for March 2017, Rank of India in ITAs in both 2014 and 2015 is 24 as against the previous rank of 41 and 40 in the year 2014 and 2015, respectively. With this inclusion, the share of India in the ITAs has also increased from 0.68% (based on FTAs) to 1.12% in the year 2015.

Rank of India in Travel & Tourism Competitiveness Index (TTCI) Report of 2017 was 40th as compared to 52nd in 2015, 65th in 2013 and 68th in 2011.



While UNWTO gives ranking in terms of numbers of ITAs, TTCI is composed of 14 pillars organised into four sub-indices of 'Enabling Environment',

'Travel & Trade Policy and Enabling Conditions', 'Infrastructure' and 'Natural and Cultural Resources'.

## Dr Mahesh Sharma chairs the third National Medical and Wellness Tourism Board meeting

The third meeting of the National Medical and Wellness Tourism Board was held recently under the Chairmanship of Dr Mahesh Sharma, Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Tourism and Culture. The meeting was attended by Rashmi Verma, Secretary, Ministry of Tourism, other senior government officials and members of the Board comprising of stakeholders in the travel and hospitality industry and experts in the field of Medical and Wellness Tourism as well as other systems of Indian Medicine.

In the second meeting of the Board held on March 28, 2017, it was announced that comprehensive framework and roadmap on Medical and Wellness Tourism would be prepared and presented before the nation in time for the International Yoga Day on June 21, 2017. Following the decision of the Board, a Committee was formed under the chairmanship of Dr H R Nagendra, President,

Vivekananda Yoga Anusandhana Samsthana, Bengaluru to formulate a comprehensive framework and roadmap on Medical and Wellness Tourism.

The Committee presented its report for adoption by the Board in which a standard framework for assessment and accreditation of all AYUSH facilities that cater to tourism has been created. The institutions can apply online for self-assessment which would then be reviewed for accreditation. All organisations that are already accredited and/or qualified and/or certified by NAAC, NABH, ISO-9004, Indian Yoga Association (IYA), Centre of Excellence (CoE), Organisations affiliated by Universities, Approved Integrative Hospitals and government AYUSH Institutions and Green Leaf / Olive Leaf organisations approved by Department of Tourism, Government of Kerala would be listed on the Ministry of Tourism website.



## Centre looking at options to make Air India profitable: Jayant Sinha

Minister of State for Civil Aviation, Jayant Sinha has said that the government is looking at 'alternatives' available to make Air India and other public sector units more competitive and profitable.

"Our objective is to transform the public sector carrier to a great global airline and we are doing whatever possible in this regard," the Minister said. He stated that the government was studying alternatives to strengthen the public sector units, including Air India and make them 'competitive and profitable'. He said that during the last three years, the government has made efforts to optimise route network based on viability and was viewing the new routes such as Washington DC, Copenhagen and Ranchi-Kolkata as profitable.

"We have made efforts to optimise route network on favourable routes with an intention to make the airline more competitive and profitable. The Air India also procured new aircraft to achieve the goal," said Sinha.

Union Finance Minister, Arun Jaitley and his Civil



Aviation counterpart Ashok Gajapathi Raju discussed the future course for Air India, with senior officials indicating that a decision on privatisation will be taken within three months. Sinha appreciated the initiatives taken by the government, stating that its efforts had resulted in Air India to make ₹105 crore operating profit last year.

## FHRAI welcomes uniform GST at 18% for the hospitality industry

The Federation of Hotels & Restaurants Association of India (FHRAI), India's apex body for Hotels & Restaurants welcomed the move by Government to reduce the GST percentage on Restaurants to 18%, from its earlier rate of 28% in Star-hotels, thereby bringing it at par with stand-alone restaurants.

This has come in the aftermath after presentation put forward by FHRAI, for the Government to relook at the present proposal as they had advocated a uniform Hospitality GST at 12% across the country.



Commenting on the development, K Syama Raju, President, FHRAI, said, "We are pleased to inform the good news to all our hotel and restaurant members that the representations given by FHRAI to the Prime Minister, Finance Minister, Members of the GST Council and other senior government officials have been favourably addressed."

The slab of ₹5000 on which earlier there was a GST tax of 28% has now been enhanced to ₹7500, now 28% GST will apply on ₹7500 and above. Raju further reinstated, "It is expected that this measure will benefit a majority of our hotel members. FHRAI will continue tirelessly to espouse the cause of its members in future and will aim at securing lowest GST for all our hotel members."

FHRAI delegation was led by K Syama Raju, President along with Garish Oberoi, Vice President; Dilip Datwani, Vice President; T S Walia, Vice President; Surendra Kumar Jaiswal, Joint Hon. Secretary; T Natarajan, Executive Committee Member and Amitabh Devendra, Secretary General met Senior Finance Officials of the Government of India on May 31, 2017.

## Aviation sector in India emerges as the world's third largest aviation market

The Civil Aviation industry in India has emerged as one of the fastest growing industries in the country during the last three years. With 19% growth in domestic passenger traffic from about 6.1 crore in 2014 to 10 crore in 2016-17, India is now the third largest aviation market in the world, with the promise to grow even further.

The Regional Connectivity Scheme UDAN has been by far the most path-breaking achievement of the Ministry. 31 currently served, 12 under-served and 27 under served airports are now connecting 128 RCS routes across the country. 50 airports are being revived and 13 lakh new UDAN seats are being added annually under the first round of UDAN for a Viability Gap Funding of ₹205 crore.

P Ashok Gajapathy Raju, Union Minister for Civil Aviation while briefing the media about the achievements of his Ministry during the last three years stated that average or median air-fares fell by 18% during 2016-17, making flying more affordable for the common man.

Scheduled domestic flight movements also rose from seven lakh in 2014 to 8.2 lakh in 2016, an 8.2% CAGR growth. As against 395 aircrafts in the fleet of Indian carriers, currently there are 496 aircrafts in operation and another 654 are under purchase.

The Minister also talked about other achievements of the Ministry like promoting Ease of Doing Business by allowing 100% FDI in domestic scheduled air transport, Open Skies Service Agreements offers to 49 countries and five SAARC nations etc, developing a robust security architecture by complying with ICAO requirements, Anti Hijacking Act, promoting innovative technology like GAGAN, India's first navigation based system to improve accuracy of air navigation services and focusing on skill development in the aviation sector.

Jayant Sinha, Civil Aviation, MoS said that the Ministry hopes to have 200 plus airports in the next 10-15 years. He informed that the capacity of existing major airports is also being increased rapidly, while Greenfield airports are coming up at several places in the country like Goa, Navi Mumbai and other places.



## Maharashtra Tourism Development Corporation pushes for Agri-Tourism



On the occasion of the tenth World Agri Tourism Day, the Maharashtra Tourism Development Corporation (MTDC) organised a conference on National Agri-Tourism in Mumbai.

The event was aimed at creating employment opportunities and boosting investment in the agriculture sector that would encourage tourism. Jaykumar Rawal, Minister of Tourism, Government of Maharashtra, was present at the conference and spoke about how farmers and other stakeholders can develop their skills and farms to attract more tourists looking for a rural, farm-stay experience.

The conference also touched upon MTDC's 'Mahabhraman Scheme' which showcases farmer's lifestyle and experiencing different activities like planting trees, plucking fruits and vegetables, bullock cart rides, etc.

Rawal revealed, "The Department of Tourism also intends to set up a government interface to cater to the needs of the agri-tour operators. This interface will co-ordinate and provide a link with regional and local government bodies to boost employment opportunities and sustainability in the agricultural sector."

## Indian business travel expected to show a growth of 7.2% over next decade



According to a report released by Travelport and World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC), India's business travel industry has grown by 16.2% over the past five years (2011-2016). It has been predicted that Asia-Pacific will lead the way at an expected rate of 6.2% each year to 2027, with India at 7.2% among the top five countries attributing to the growth.

Globally, in the past five years, business travel spending has grown at an annual average of 3.6%, with the strongest growth having taken place in Asia, the Middle East and Sub-Saharan Africa.

Gordon Wilson, CEO, Travelport, commented, "Every day we see business travel growing at a significant rate in

many emerging markets with technology playing an increasingly important role in easing the way for those on trips for their work. As an industry, we need to continue to invest in the best technologies and infrastructure whilst governments need to be more business-friendly by removing burdensome visa requirements."

David Scowssill, President & CEO, WTTC, said, "Travel & Tourism generates \$7.6 trillion in GDP and supports over 292 million jobs. Business travel is a vital part of the sector, and it is a key catalyst for global growth. It drives the relationships, investments, supply chains and logistics that support international trade flows."



**Our airline is all about you**

Everything you've ever wanted in an airline and more. Our entertainment, delicious cuisine and attentive service will impress the most discerning passenger. Making your experience perfect is our commitment to you.

Origin	Destination	Flight	Departure	Arrival	Day
Delhi	Seoul	KE 482	1940	0650	TUE/THU/FRI/SAT/SUN
Seoul	Delhi	KE 481	1400	1805	TUE/THU/FRI/SAT/SUN



HOME PAGE : [www.koreanair.com](http://www.koreanair.com)  
Reservation Number: 022 2287 32002

**Excellence in Flight**  
**KOREAN AIR**



## Participating State

## West Bengal government plans new tourism initiatives



The Chief Minister of West Bengal Mamata Banerjee has announced her plans for a tourism circuit around Mangal Pandey, whose death on April 8, 1857 triggered India's First War of Independence. She further announced that the highlight of the circuit will be a perpetual flame like the Amar Jawan Jyoti at India Gate in Delhi.

"The perpetually burning flame styled as Amar Jawan Jyoti in New Delhi will be named Uthsa Dhara. This was the starting point of India's First War of Independence and Mangal Pandey was the country's first martyr. Barrackpore's role in the 1857 revolt is part of the heritage and a tourism circuit will be

developed around that heritage," she said while chairing an administrative meeting at Barrackpore.

Additionally, the Fisheries Department of West Bengal government is gearing up to introduce a new concept- Eco Fish Tourism. State Fisheries Development Corporation will be in charge of the project.

A pilot project on Eco Fish Tourism has already been completed at Nalban in Salt Lake, close to city's IT hub. The project has already been well accepted by the tourists. The government has introduced a two-day-one-night package to promote Eco Fish Tourism. For a family of four, it would cost ₹4000-4500, depending on the facilities availed.

## Participating State

## Museum on Wheels to give digital tour of famous spots in every district of Telangana

In an effort to educate people especially the youngsters, the Department of Tourism, Telangana will be making its presence felt in all districts. The Museum on Wheels, which was inaugurated on September 21, 2016, will be travelling to residential schools and colleges across all the 31 districts in the state tentatively by mid-June.

The Museum on Wheels, as per a schedule parks itself at the most popular tourist spots in the city through the week and houses two guides, trained by the department, who give a digital tour of tourist spots in the state.

S Prabhakar, District Tourism Officer, Hyderabad and Rangareddy, said, "An average of 500 people takes the virtual tour in a day."

The bus can be spotted parked at Charminar,



beside the Dhanlakshmi Temple gate, Seven Tombs, NTR Gardens and NTR Samadhi. It has a touch-screen kiosk, a replica of the Egyptian Mummy, literature related to the tourist spots, while the guides take tourists on a tour across places in the state. It operates through the week except for Fridays as most of the spots are shut on that day.

## Participating State

## Gujarat Tourism witnesses 17% growth in tourist arrivals

Gujarat has managed to hold on to impressive growth rates in tourist footfalls, accomplishing a growth of 16.94% in tourist arrivals in FY17 over the previous year.

The state's tourist inflow grew from 38.3 million in FY16 to 44.8 million in FY17, with tourist inflow from other Indian states growing by 22%. At 55% business remained the dominant purpose of visit, followed by spiritual tourists at 36%. As per the data collected from the Gujarat Industrial and Technical Consultancy Organisation (GITCO), which manages the Tourist Flow Information System for the Tourism Corporation of Gujarat Ltd, the growth in tourist inflow was 263% compared to 2006-07.

The compounded annual growth rate (CAGR) of tourist inflow during a five-year period between FY07 and FY12 was 12.62%, while the CAGR of tourist inflow during the past five-year period between

FY12 and FY17 is 14.91%, marking an improvement.

Leisure tourist inflow increased from 2.5 million in FY16 to 3.1 million in FY17. Spiritual tourists' footfalls have grown by 24.6% while business tourist arrivals have grown by 14.7%.



## Participating State

## Uttarakhand to develop a new tourist destination in each district

The state government of Uttarakhand has decided to develop one new tourism destination in each of the 13 districts. Alongside, the locals would be roped in to provide support to environmental and tourist activities.

Chief Minister Trivendra Singh Rawat has laid thrust on providing tourism based jobs to youths residing in the hills. Simultaneously, the tourism department will also lay thrust on the promotion of homestay in the state, with the booking of homestay to be included in the packages of GMVN and KMVN.

The Chief Minister in a review meeting of the tourism department was told that the work for the construction of a ropeway to Kedarnath is currently underway. While the survey and mapping work was also underway for the development of nine villages near Kedarnath.

The priority list of the tourism department included the ropeways on the Yamunotri-Kharsali and Dehradun-Mussoorie route.



## Participating State

## IAF and Himachal Pradesh join hands to promote Adventure Tourism in the state

A team of 16 members of Indian Air Force (IAF) in collaboration with Himachal Tourism department recently organised a six day long multi-activity expedition to various parts of Himachal Pradesh with an aim to promote Adventure Tourism in the state.

Director of Atal Bihari Vajpayee Institute of Mountaineering and Allied Sports, Captain Randhi Salthuria flagged off the expedition from Manali. The joint expedition began with sky diving in Shimla, followed by cycling from Shimla to Tattapani. The team then moved to Bir Billing for paragliding. The 16 IAF officers including two lady officers went for trekking expedition to Beas Kund.

District Tourism Development Officer, Rattan Gautam said that the team would stay in camps at Bakarhach and would go to Beas Kund. "The team will go for river rafting in Beas once they return from Manali. Himachal has vast potential in Adventure Tourism," Gautam added.



## Participating State

## Manipur plans to transform itself into a medical tourism hub



Manipur Chief Minister N Biren Singh has said that his government was in talks with the Centre to make travelling from Myanmar to Manipur easier.

At the North East Healthcare Conference organised by CII in Imphal, Singh said, "The new government in Manipur is working on a plan to transform itself into a thriving healthcare and medical tourism hub. Manipur is well-positioned to cater to the other North-eastern States as well as Myanmar in terms of improved healthcare services."

India's population is projected to reach 1.4 billion by 2025, with urban adults (15-year plus ones) constituting about 45% of it. To cater to this changing demography, the healthcare sector will have to be about \$100 billion in size contributing

nearly 8 to 10% to the then GDP.

The Federation of Industry and Commerce of North Eastern Region (FINER) has urged the Centre to formulate a focused and favourable industrial policy for the North East and has sought greater clarity on how the Central excise duty refund, currently applicable to industries set up pursuant to the North East Industrial Investment Promotion Policy (NEIIPP), would continue under the GST regime.

FINER President Pabitra Buragohain met with Union Minister of State for Home Kiren Rijiju in New Delhi and submitted a representation seeking his intervention in finalising the industrial policy, keeping in view the various representations that have been submitted to highlight specific needs of the North Eastern Region.

## Participating State

## Heritage Palace on Wheels for Shekhawati soon



After the luxury train Royal Rajasthan on Wheels (RROW) took on the mantle of Palace on Wheels (POW), the old rake of POW will still continue to chug, albeit on a smaller route.

The proposal that is in the pipeline recommends two itineraries for the POW rake that would be put to disuse from this season, after the RROW rake would be used to run the POW itinerary. The new itinerary of the HPOW is going to spiral tourism to the Shekhawati region, Bikaner, Keoladeo National Park and Talchapar and would be a far economical than the original POW albeit with the same royal experience.

From the ensuing tourist season, there is a proposal to run a three and a four day tourist itinerary. One would

cover a distance of 1536 km and would be called 'Shekhawati Desert & Wildlife Tour' over a span of four days. This would depart Delhi every Sunday. The other would be 'The Golden Triangle with Bird Sanctuary' that would cover a distance of 744 km, departing Delhi every Thursday.

Pradeep Bohra, General Manager of the two luxury trains, RROW & POW, said, "On account of corrosion-related problems and codal life basis, the rake needs to be replaced on the completion of 25 years. Operating since 1982, the third version of the POW that was launched in 1995 and has three more years of life left. The 3/4 day itinerary is being crafted to effectively put to use the POW rake on shorter routes and far economical tariff."

## Participating State

## Madhya Pradesh eyes tourism expansion and investment in the state



Madhya Pradesh Tourism Board recently held its first meeting since its establishment under the Chairmanship of the Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan for expansion of facilities at tourist spots and to draw investments into the sector.


"It was the first meeting since the establishment of the board and was majorly about approving statutory powers under the board," said Principal Secretary Tourism, Hariranjana Rao. He stated that the meeting successfully elected the Chairperson, delegated powers to Managing Director, authorised the MD for seal along with the signing of contracts on behalf of the board and also approved official address of the board.

The board has initiated a work plan for all the tourism-related archaeological sites, wildlife places, caves with natural beauty, amusement and other parks, water reservoirs and also takes measures for their supervision.

The Chief Minister became the Chairman of the board at its first meeting while the Tourism Minister, Surendra Patwa became the Deputy Chairman. Eight members, including Chief Secretary and Principal Secretaries of Finance, Forests, Urban Development and Environment and Culture Departments were made Directors and Members of the board. Hariranjana Rao was given the charge of the board's Ex-Officio Member Secretary and Managing Director.









# BARISAL BACKWATER

"TRIP TO THE BIGGEST FLOATING MARKET"

For making a tour to the largest floating market in Bangladesh, you may visit to Barishal which is called the "Venice of Bangladesh". The backwater of Barishal can provide you pleasant taste of real travel and really have a chance to explore unique experience that you will never get anywhere in Bangladesh. Miles after miles you can enjoy the striking beauty of nature as well as floating business on boats. The green trees of the two sides of the canal can be a good feast for your eyes and the shadows of the trees can drench your soul with eternal peace.



National Tourism Organization

www.tourismboard.gov.bd  
www.visitbangladesh.gov.bd  
facebook.com/BangladeshVisit

MarketEdge/ETB/2016

## Participating State

## Kerala Tourism aims to achieve 50% growth in tourist arrival by 2021: Tourism Minister



Tourism Minister of Kerala, Kadakampally Surendran has said that the state government is looking to double the number of domestic tourists and is aiming 50% increase in foreign arrivals by 2021.

“Digital platforms are the key to achieve the aim,” he said while inaugurating the second edition of International Conference on Tourism Technology (ICTT) in Kochi. The event was organised by Kerala Tourism and Association of Tourism Trade Organisation (ATTOI), featuring speakers from varied backgrounds who shared their insights on how to make use of technology to brand, market and sell tourism products and services.

“Year after year, we see a constant growth in the number of tourists we host. Hence, the industry needs to evolve in accordance with the changes in global market. Kerala Tourism has been exploring new media as a key platform and has witnessed the reach and response to it,” Surendran noted.

The inauguration ceremony was also attended by Hibi Eden, MLA for Ernakulam; Dr Venu V, Principal Secretary, Department of Tourism, Government of Kerala; and P Bala Kiran, Director, Department of

Tourism, Government of Kerala.

On the sidelines of the event, Dr Venu V launched the Twitter campaign #Kerala #IndiaForBeginners while P Bala Kiran launched the Facebook campaign during the inaugural ceremony.

“Kerala Tourism has always been in the forefront as we were the first tourist destination to start a website. Later, we spread our presence to other social media platforms. The technology platforms are gently stronger. Hence we need to redesign and reengineer to cater the demands of guests,” stated Dr Venu.

P Bala Kiran said, “The tourism sector concentrates mostly on the southern part of the state but we need to focus on the northern parts as well. The technology platforms can be used for creating buzz about new destinations.”

Hibi Eden said that the international tourists are keen to experience the authentic and local feel of a place. “The initiative of ‘Responsible Tourism’ is a much-appreciated effort as it gives them the local flavour. Such initiatives can be easily spread out to the world through the world of social media,” he further added.

## Participating State

## ₹100 crore Shakti circuit project envisages of developing tourism at Jharkhand

Bordering Chatra in Jharkhand, the ‘Shakti circuit’ is expected to give a big fillip to tourism in the region. Efforts are on to connect the three ‘Shakti circuit’ shrines of Kauleshwari and Bhadrakali (Itkhor) in Chatra district and Chhinmastika at Rajrappa in Hazaribagh. All three shrines fall in red zone and most parts of the proposed Shakti circuit are covered with jungles.

To further speed up the process, the Jharkhand government, in association with the Union Tourism Ministry has conceived the ₹100-crore project for the integrated development and beautification of the shrines to international standards.

While Kauleshwari is already linked by road with Dobhi, the gateway of the circuit, direct roads from Kauleshwari to Bhadrakali (Itkhor) and Rajrappa will be needed to complete the Shakti Circuit, as per the plans mooted.

Chatra MP, Sunil Kumar Singh, said, “We have plans for integrated development and beautification of Kauleshwari, including ropeway, safari market complex on the hilltop, apart from educational institutions at the foothills. The Government of India has already approved a Sainik school for the Kauleshwari region.”



## Participating State

## Jammu and Kashmir government offers 50% rebate to boost tourism

The state government of Jammu and Kashmir has announced massive rebates to boost tourist arrivals to the valley.

“Jammu and Kashmir Tourism Development Corporation (JKTDC) will provide 50% rebate on lodging and transport charges or even on total packages in some cases to the tourists visiting the Valley,” said Ghulam Jeelani Zagar, Deputy Director of Jammu and Kashmir Tourism.

The Deputy Director also informed that private tourism players were also offering 32% concessions in boarding and lodging or on total packages to the tourists.

West Bengal topped the list in domestic tourist inflow, with the valley welcoming tourists from the state as well the eastern region.

Jammu and Kashmir is offering major tourism products like leisure, pilgrim, adventure, water sports, golf, MICE tourism,

heritage and Tibetan culture.

Stating that tourist inflow to the valley during 2016-17 was nearly 17 lakh, Zagar hoped that the number would be more this time following massive

campaign to boost the sector. The state government is emphasising on carrying out a mass publicity campaign to attract more tourists from other states and abroad to the valley.



## Participating State

## Adventurous Boat Ride to Debtamura through rain forest

Tourists flocked to the hill range in South Tripura district, Debtamura, to witness archaeological site of rock sculptures, panel of carved images on the steep mountain wall on the bank of Gomti River.

A boat is the only source of approach to travel to Debtamura. The journey resembles the travel by water through the Amazon rain forest.

Ishanika Tiea, a tourist from Assam, said, “I heard that this place is really adventurous and we enjoyed

taking a boat ride. I came to know about this place from internet and wanted to visit the place with my family.”

Sidhartha Debbarma, a local forest officer said, “During last two years number of tourists coming to Chabimura has grown by several folds and along with their arrival, the area has also developed increasing the income of the local population.”

Sujit Chakraborty, another tourist, said, “Chabimura has immense scope as a tourist site



attracting domestic and international tourists. Moreover, the central government might encourage tourism from Bangladesh if they would spend some money on development of Gomti River for easy navigation.”



# Odisha Tourism Conclave highlights the state's myriad tourism offerings

Odisha Tourism recently organised an 'Odisha Tourism Conclave' in association with Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), Hotel & Restaurant Association of Orissa (HRAO), Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI), Utkal Chamber of Commerce & Industries (UCCI) and Indian Association of Tour Operators (IATO) at Hotel Swosti Premium, Bhubaneswar.

While addressing the gathering, Naveen Patnaik, Chief Minister of Odisha, said, "Our state has created a significant improvement pertaining to law and order and general infrastructure. Odisha is a true source of Incredible India due to the diverse range of flora and fauna, culture, tradition, tribal diversity and many more."

The CM pointed out that in recent years, the tourist arrivals to the state have shown a prominent rise. With the declaration of Bhubaneswar Airport as an international airport, the state tourism board is assertive to receive a significant number of international tourists.

The tourism department of Odisha has signed an MoU with Air Asia that offers daily flights from Bhubaneswar to Kuala Lumpur. It will open the Southeast Asia window for Odisha resulting in larger tourist footfalls.

Ashok Chandra Panda, Minister for Tourism & Culture, Government of Odisha, said, "Odisha's 2016 Tourism Policy has been a progressive policy that has precise plans to encourage tourism and infrastructure in Odisha. Air Asia flying to Kuala Lumpur from Bhubaneswar is a milestone that we have achieved and we aim to advance the investments in the tourism sector by developing more visibility to the tourism offerings of our state. We are also very honoured to be the host state for IATO Annual



Convention in September along with Odisha Travel Bazaar by FICCI."

Panda also informed that the department of tourism is trying to boost the average stay of a traveller to the state owned hotels by organising several cultural theme based events and heritage walks.

Dr Nitin B Jawale, Director Tourism and MD, Odisha Tourism Development Corporation Ltd, briefed about

the existing and ongoing projects of the state's tourism department. "We have recently entered into an MoU with the forest department to promote Eco Tourism since more than one-third area of the state is covered with forests. We have also undertaken the charge to develop infrastructure in these areas and promote it equally and aggressively through digital and print mediums. The forest areas also house 62 different tribes in these regions having diversity in language, skill and culture. We want to develop more skill based activities for the local communities working here and promote it amongst foreign and domestic tourists," he said.

The tourism department had also been working on its major project for Shamuka Beach. It is approximately 1000 acres project for which the department is working on the relevant clearances from multiple departments. It will comprise of Golf Course, villas, museums, followed by much more which will also turn to be the largest and most lucrative tourism areas in the entire country.

Under department of tourism's land banking exercise, they have identified 3,700 acres of land primarily near the untapped tourist spots. These banking displays are specifically for investors in order to establish tourist friendly projects on these areas. This project is on for five years through which different locations in Odisha can build tourism.

The conclave had 45 speakers from the public and private sector taking sessions on Branding Odisha from Smart City to Smart State through digital marketing, TV, social and print media mediums; the Need to Build tourism infrastructure and connect Odisha globally; tourism to be the driving force of future economy of Odisha; promoting niche tourism- eco and wildlife tourism, Buddhist tourism, tribal tourism, textile and handicraft tourism and adventure tourism; Skill development in hospitality-safety and security for growth of tourism and advantage destination: Odisha- Investments, Policies and Opportunities.



## Swosti Group announces the opening of Swosti Chilika Resort on June 26, 2017

Jitendra K Mohanty, Chairman & Managing Director, Swosti Group, said, "With the present tourism policy where the government is providing 20% capital investment subsidy to hospitality industry, it indicates that there will be more investment happening in the coming years in regard to hospitality in Odisha."

He said that Swosti Group will open its latest property- Swosti Chilika Resort on July 26, 2017. Other projects include eco and sustainability resorts in Puri, Bhitarkanika and Sata-pada. "In the long run, eco sustainability will matter. Hence, our upcoming projects will be on the same line."

Mohanty also being the representative of HRAO said that they have proposed the government to introduce Night Safari, set up vibrant nightlife places and more. "We have also proposed to the government to create a brand ambassador for the state," he added.

The tourism budget for Odisha was 45 crores but has



gone up to 200 crores. He said, "Since Air Asia has commenced direct flight from Bhubaneswar, therefore, the government is planning to do roadshows in Sri Lanka, Kuala Lumpur, Thailand and Singapore this year."

The group is also planning to conduct roadshows in Kuala Lumpur and other Southeast Asian countries to promote their properties and potential of hospitality sector of Odisha.

## Participating State

## Andaman and Nicobar Islands soon to upgrade tourism infrastructure

Andaman and Nicobar Islands are planning to boost tourism in the territory in addition to showcasing the heritage and culture of the destination. The tourism department, under the aegis of Swadesh Darshan and other schemes of the government has reportedly identified Cellular Jail along with prominent beaches in different parts of these islands for the development of tourism.

Amit Anand, Director Tourism, Andaman and Nicobar Administration, has said that the execution of all schemes in the tourism sector is being closely monitored. "The administration is committed to the holistic development of these islands and to showcase Andaman prominently in the world tourism atlas. Various schemes for development of tourism launched by the government are being implemented here in the right earnest and the sector is poised to witness rapid growth in the days to come," he stated.

The administration has plans to improve facilities and safety measures at beaches like Ross and Smith, Baludera, Ramnagar, Lalaji Bay, Lakshmanpur, Bharatpur, Elephant, Kalapathar, etc. Under schemes for the Union Territories, plans have been formulated to introduce ropeway from Port Blair



to Ross Island, tented accommodation facilities at Neil, Long Island and Baratang. Plans have also been made to introduce submersible scooters for

adventure water sports, canopy walk at Chidiyatapu besides launching promotional campaigns in a big way.

## Participating State

## Andhra Pradesh enters into collaboration with Ola to boost transportation services



Andhra Pradesh Tourism Development Corporation has entered into collaboration with Ola in order to boost transportation services and further promote tourism and mobility ecosystem in the state.

Over a period of five years, Ola will create 25,000 job opportunities and start functioning from six cities including the state's new capital Vijayawada, connecting 30 destinations across the state.

The agreement was signed and the first batch of exclusively co-branded Ola and Andhra Pradesh Tourism cars were flagged off by the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh, N Chandrababu Naidu; Secretary Tourism Mukesh Kumar Meena; CEO-APTA & MD- APTDC Himanshu Shukla, along with Pranay Jivrajka, Founding Partner, Ola, at the MoU signing ceremony in Amaravati.

Addressing the event, Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu said, "Our vision is to make Andhra Pradesh a model state, not just for India but for audiences globally. For this, we are betting heavily on technology-based models across sectors."

"Partnering with companies such as Ola, that has added a new dimension to transportation in India, is in keeping with this vision. Together, we will be able to provide a reliable commute service to tourists and residents, as well as create job and entrepreneurial opportunities for several thousands," he added.

## CTB to introduce new developments in quality of infrastructure in tourism circuits

The Chhattisgarh Tourism Board (CTB) will be developing water sports and integrated recreation facilities at various dams of the state alongside the development of the area around Gangrel Dam in Dhamtari district of the state as an 'eco-ethnic destination'.

The Chhattisgarh government had been making strenuous efforts to improve the quality of infrastructure and provide basic amenities in the tourism circuits. Notably, the Union Tourism Ministry had also allocated ₹99.94 crore to develop Tribal Tourism Circuit to highlight tribal culture to the domestic and foreign tourists in the year 2015-16.

The districts which are to be developed are Jashpur, Kunkuri, Maipaat, Ambikapur, Maheshpur, Ratanpur, Kurdur, Sarodha Dadar, Gangrel, Kondagaon, Nathiyawagaon, Jagdalpur, Chitrakoot and Thirthgad. The tribal theme is being implemented in these districts and the project will be completed in a phased manner.

Moreover, the Chhattisgarh government will also be creating an 'eco-ethnic' tourist destination near the world famous Chitrakot waterfalls in Bastar region of the state and an amount of ₹32 lakh had been released by the Bastar District Collector to construct a Tourism Information Center at Jagdalpur.



## Karnataka collaborates with Vyoma Technologies to promote Year of the Wild

Karnataka Tourism, looking to intensify its 2017 campaign titled 'Year of the Wild' has collaborated with digital outdoor media company Vyoma Technologies. The strategic partnership is in line with the elevated impact and increased awareness that Karnataka Tourism is looking to create across highly dynamic, engaging and measurable mediums in the country.



The 2017 campaign aims to appeal audiences across demographics, geographies and age groups. Vyoma's intelligent displays, powered by curated audience engagement will facilitate a reach of over 10 crore people a month across 279 railway stations. Currently, the campaign is running across seven states namely Maharashtra, Telangana, Bihar, Gujarat, Andhra Pradesh, Rajasthan and Karnataka.

Speaking about the potential of the medium and creative approach of Karnataka Tourism, Shiranga K Sudhakara, MD, Vyoma, said, "Karnataka Tourism has been at the forefront of adopting innovative mediums and we are very excited to partner with them and provide the massive reach of Indian Railways on a digital tech platform that offers both measurability and engagement."

# SACEOS to introduce thought-leadership programme for Singapore MICE Forum 2017

Singapore MICE Forum is Singapore Association of Convention and Exhibition Organisers and Suppliers' (SACEOS) signature annual event. As a respected and MICE industry supported professional knowledge and networking platform, SACEOS encourages delegates to participate in conversations that generate business solution.

This year SACEOS is rolling out a new thought-leadership programme for Singapore MICE Forum (SMF) 2017 that will focus on a higher sense of engagement for its anticipated 450 delegates.

Commenting over the development, Janet Tan-Collis, President, SACEOS, said, "Leveraging on the success of last year's conference theme 're:imagine', this year we expand the theme to 're:imagine - #EngagE' where we are looking at opportunities and challenges faced by our region on a macro and micro level across 11 breakout sessions. We will also enhance the programme with a half-day Professional Convention Management Association (PCMA) Business School to ensure that the programme is catering to our delegates' broad range of skill sets and business interests."

Day one of SMF 2017, slated to take place from July 27-28, 2017 at the Sands Expo and Convention Centre, will commence with painting and visualisation of the future, and a glimpse of what the industry could be like in the year 2050. Day two will accentuate on how the industry should respond to elements that will impact event engagement levels, followed by sessions curated for marketing, finance and talent management professionals.

Sharing her views, Dr Shirlena Soh, Executive Director, SACEOS, said, "It is a pleasure seeing the industry coming together to create thought-leadership content for SMF 2017. We are confident

that this programme will suit all levels of talent, whether you are new to the industry or a veteran. It makes our focus on driving professionalism through professional education even more exciting and relevant."

Topics to be covered during the breakout sessions include 'The Art of Engaging Communities' which comprises of a debate and research on the connection between reward and motivation; 'If Digital is the Answer, What is the Question?' which will shed light on the scope and utility of Digital in this industry; and 'Unconventional Experiences' which will showcase three unconventional approaches to events that engage the audience's attention and highlights tomorrow's possibilities.

Visit [www.singaporemiceforum.com](http://www.singaporemiceforum.com) for more information about the content that will help event professionals grow.



Participating Country

## Women's Journey Thailand campaign to return with great offers throughout August 2017



The Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) is bringing back the Women's Journey Thailand campaign with all the highlights and offers to entice women travellers from around the world to enjoy a huge range of activities, special deals, discounts and privileges in Thailand throughout the month of August. According to the latest statistics of international arrivals to the kingdom, the growth of female travellers has risen significantly over the past few years.

Srisuda Wanapinyosak, TAT Deputy Governor for International Marketing - Asia and the South Pacific, said, "Today women are significant decision makers and powerful with high-spending power. With a full range of products and services that can serve women's needs, Thailand can definitely be the ideal destination. The Women's Journey Thailand campaign will showcase how women travellers can enjoy these products and services at very attractive prices when they visit Thailand in August."

TAT is bringing back several activities launched as part of the inaugural Women's Journey Thailand campaign, including the Lady Golf Challenge, Lady Celebrities to Thailand, Thailand through Her Eyes, Lady in Thai Fabrics and Lady Bloggers. These activities are to enhance Thailand's positive image as one of Asia's most female friendly destinations.



India's Only Global Travel Trade Newspaper

Limited  
**FREE**  
SUBSCRIPTION  
**OFFER!**

For Qualified Readers



SEND TO:

**FAIRFEST MEDIA LTD**  
216 A/1 GAUTAM NAGAR, GULMOHAR PARK,  
NEW DELHI 110049  
Tel: (91) (11) 2686 6874

FOR SUBSCRIPTION ENQUIRIES:  
[info@travelnewsdigest.in](mailto:info@travelnewsdigest.in)

- SUBSCRIPTION IS FREE TO QUALIFIED READERS ONLY ■ PLEASE FILL THE FORM BELOW TO BE CONSIDERED FOR FREE SUBSCRIPTION
- TND RESERVES THE RIGHT TO SELECT THE QUALIFIED READERS ON THE BASIS OF A PREDETERMINED CRITERION
- INCOMPLETE FORMS CANNOT BE PROCESSED

Yes!  I want to be considered for **FREE SUBSCRIPTION** for a Year ( 12 Issues)

**PARTICULARS (Please attach Business Card\*)**

FULL NAME (MR/MS/MRS/DR) : \_\_\_\_\_

OCCUPATION: \_\_\_\_\_

DESIGNATION: \_\_\_\_\_

COMPANY NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

COUNTRY: \_\_\_\_\_

FULL ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

MOBILE: \_\_\_\_\_ TEL: \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_ (\*) mandatory

REGULAR USERS MAY AVAIL PAID SUBSCRIPTION AT A DISCOUNT

Yes! I want to Subscribe Cost per copy ₹ 50 /-

<input type="checkbox"/> ( 12 ISSUES )	<b>REGULAR</b> ₹ 600 /-	<b>OFFER</b> ₹ 500 /-	<b>YOU SAVE</b> ₹ 100 /-
--	-------------------------	-----------------------	--------------------------

FULL NAME (MR/MS/MRS/DR) : \_\_\_\_\_

FULL ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

AMOUNT \_\_\_\_\_

CHEQUE NO./DD NO. / CASH \_\_\_\_\_

DATED \_\_\_\_\_ All cheques/ DD payable to Fairfest Media Ltd

**TERMS & CONDITIONS:** This is a limited period offer | Rates & offer valid in Delhi/NCR only | Allow 5-6 weeks for processing of your subscription | Orders once placed will not be terminated or transferred | Replacements will be made upon receipt of the damaged copy within one week of delivery.

# Bali International Convention Centre hosts the 23rd Coaltrans Asia 2017 Conference

The Westin Resort Nusa Dua, Bali was honoured to host the consecutive 23rd Coaltrans Asia 2017 Conference from May 14-16, 2017 for 900 delegates at the Bali International Convention Centre (BICC). The prestigious three-day event was officially opened by the Indonesian Minister of Energy and Mineral Resources, Ignasius Jonan.

Coaltrans Asia returned for its 23rd year to connect with over 700 fellow coal leaders for two days of networking, deal-making and discovering the latest content, all under one roof. This event was provided with keynote presentations from industry thought-leaders, interviews with market influencers, interactive panel discussions and much more. It was held to ensure



participants were well-equipped to stay ahead of the game. Approximately 25 Coaltrans events are coordinated around the world on an annual basis and this has been the largest one of them all.

During the Conference, Coaltrans had exclusive access to BICC's versatile Mangupura Hall with indoor and outdoor exhibition space as well 20 meeting rooms and other supporting conveniences. Delegates were treated to an array of social events including a welcome cocktail reception, plenary and exhibition as well as networking beach reception. The Westin Resort Nusa Dua, Bali once again proved to be the perfect venue to host a large scale group and conference together with its iconic BICC.

## Participating Country

### Tourists from the Middle East are the biggest spenders in South Korea

A new tourism report has revealed that wealthy tourists from the Middle East spent the most in South Korea in 2016. The survey was conducted with the participation of 10,203 foreign nationals who visited South Korea last year.



According to the Korea Culture and Tourism Institute, Middle Eastern tourists spent an average of approximately \$2,593 last year, amounting to nearly 3 million won when exchanged to Korean won, while Japanese tourists spent around \$813, making them the only country with average spending below \$1,000.

Among the 135 tourists from the Middle East who were surveyed, the number who spent over \$10,000 accounted for over 10%, while those who spent between \$3,000 and \$9,999 accounted for 32.6%, which means four in ten Middle Eastern visitors spent at least \$3,000 in South Korea. Foreign tourists spent an average of \$1,625, down from last year's figure of \$1,712.

An official at the Korea Culture and Tourism Institute, said, "Middle Eastern visitors tend to spend a lot because many of them visit South Korea for health care."

## Participating Country

### Nepal welcomes 100,000 Indian arrivals by air in 2016

Nepal Tourism Board (NTB) has recorded over 100,000 Indian arrivals in 2016 through the air route, said Nabin Pokharel, Senior Assistant Manager- Corporate Services Department, NTB. He was speaking at the destination training session programme organised by the NTB in association with Nepal Airlines and United Travel Agents in Mumbai.

Pokharel stated that India continues to be the largest source market in terms of arrivals for Nepal, though China is closing the gap between the two countries. He said, "Though North India remains a major contributor in terms of arrivals to Nepal, with religious tourism growing extensively, South India is also emerging as a top contributor to tourists arrivals. Unlike Europe which is our value market when

it comes to Adventure Tourism, Indians are equally distributed to all the tourism activities offered in Nepal."

Bindu Thomas, Sales Manager- Mumbai, Nepal Airlines Corporation, said, "Post demonetisation since January 2017, the numbers have grown at a great pace for Nepal Airlines. We are recording a passenger load factor of around 90% on all our flights, be it from Mumbai or Delhi. At present, Nepal Airlines flies daily from Delhi to Kathmandu and thrice a week from Mumbai and Bengaluru."

Nepal Airlines also plans to deploy a new Airbus A330-300 on Mumbai-Kathmandu-Mumbai route by April 2018. At present, the airline operates A320-300 on the same route.



### Melbourne to join SriLankan Airline's global route network from October 2017

SriLankan Airlines will be establishing its presence in Australia with daily non-stop services to Melbourne commencing from October 29, 2017. The non-stop services will also facilitate passengers from the Middle East and South Asia seeking onward connectivity via Colombo to/from Australia. The Airline will be operating Airbus 330-200 aircraft on the route, offering its passengers modern in-flight comforts.

SriLankan Airlines' CEO, Captain Suren Ratwatte, said, "Our presence in Australia cements the long-standing relationship between the two countries. We recently celebrated the 70th anniversary of diplomatic relations between our nations and the addition of Melbourne signifies our strategy of optimising the Airline's network in line with our restructuring."



SriLankan Airlines' Chief Commercial Officer, Siva Ramachandran, said, "Despite the absence of direct connections, we have witnessed a steady increase in passengers travelling between Colombo and Melbourne via various Asian connecting points such as Singapore and Kuala Lumpur. With the launch of the new services, SriLankan Airlines' passengers will also have the choice of flying to other Australian cities such as Sydney, Brisbane, Adelaide as well as Auckland, New Zealand."

Australia's High Commissioner to Sri Lanka, Bryce Hutchesson, said, "We congratulate SriLankan Airlines on the addition of a direct flight to Australia. Direct air connections between countries stimulate two-way tourism, business, trade and people-to-people exchange which are the core ingredients for a vibrant bilateral relationship. We are seeing a growing number of Australians looking to travel to Sri Lanka for tourism and business and to reconnect with family."

These operations will further complement the existing double daily services offered by SriLankan Airlines between Sri Lanka and Australia via Singapore and Kuala Lumpur with its code-share partners, Qantas and Malaysia Airlines.

## Participating Country

## India ranks as the tenth top source market for Macau



Macau through its engagement with the Indian market has earned a prominent destination amongst Indian travellers. With its varied offering, Macau keeps attracting increasing number of Indians, due to which Indian visitor arrivals to Macau has peaked up to 3,70,000 as of May 1, 2017.

India stands at the top 10 list as the important source country market for Macau. Having hosted nearly two lakhs Indian visitors in 2016, Macau is expected to see a continued growth in tourism.

According to records provided by the Public

Security Police Force, Macau registered over 3,75,000 visitor arrivals (excluding non-resident employees and students) during May 1, 2017 with a rise of 6.7% over the corresponding three-day holidays of last year.

Over 338,000 visitors came from the Greater China markets with a rise of 5.5%. Visitor arrivals from the Mainland, Hong Kong and Taiwan increased by five percent, 7.5% and 5.1% respectively, whereas other markets registered a double-digit growth of 18.9%.

## Japan offers unique activities and places for MICE travellers

Japan has proved itself to be an ideal location for international conferences and incentive tours. This is mainly due to its highly-developed infrastructure, world-class venues and excellent facilities, a wide variety of accommodations, a wealth of tourist attractions and superb level of hospitality, safety, cleanliness and above all, professionalism.



Japan offers a wide variety of unique venues and activities for the MICE traveller like MICE venues at the Tokyo National Museum, Nijo Castle in Kyoto, Atake-Maru Tokyo Bay Cruise & Entertainment, the Osaka Aquarium to name a few.

- Nijo-Jo Castle - Kyoto

A UNESCO World Heritage Site, the Nijo-jo Castle is a venue apt for events where one can take full advantage of its historic value and the great national treasures held there.

- Moerenuma Park, Hokkaido

There are 15 buildings on the premises which include the 32m-high Glass Pyramid, the symbol of the park.

- Glover Garden, Nagasaki

A famous sightseeing spot nationwide, Glover Garden can be rented out after closing where one can host social gatherings.

- Okinawa Churaumi Aquarium

Holding a gala dinner or reception in front of the gigantic Kuroshio Sea tank at Okinawa Churaumi Aquarium will make any meeting or gathering feel special.

The most popular cities for MICE amongst Indians are Tokyo, Osaka, Kyoto, Yokohama and Mount Fuji.

## Bhutan Tourism eyes 20% growth from the Indian market in 2017

The Tourism Council of Bhutan announced that 209,570 tourists including regional tourists (from India, Bangladesh and Maldives) visited the country and recorded the highest tourist arrivals last year. Out of 146,797 regional tourists who visited last year, 138,201 were from India, an increase of about 43% from 97,000 travellers in 2015.

Damcho Rinzin, Head- Marketing and Promotion Division, Tourism Council of Bhutan, said, "Overall, India has once again emerged as the topmost inbound source market for Bhutan. This year the destination is hopeful of achieving another 20% growth from the Indian market."

On the foreign tourist arrival front, Chinese tourists dominated at 17% of the total visitors, followed by the United States of America at 13% and Japan at 9% at the second and third position. Thailand and UK made it to the fourth and fifth inbound markets.

Sharing information on the new online entry permit launched in January 2017, Rinzin said that they highly recommend the free online entry permit system as per which Indian nationals can avail permit in advance through a travel agent or their accommodation provider and he believes that this initiative will further boost travel demand from our regional markets.

He further said, "Tourist arrivals shot up 35% last year, compared to the previous high of 16% in 2015, which was the highest growth percentage in the last five years, according to the recently released Bhutan Tourism Monitor 2016. This marked an increase in both regional and international arrivals. International arrivals recorded an increase of 35% and regional recorded 50% growth compared to arrivals in 2015. Regional visitors constituted 70% of all arrivals to Bhutan of which, 69% arrived over land."



## Vietnam promotes tourism and cinema at Cannes Film Festival

The 2017 Cannes Film Festival from May 17-28, 2017 in France witnessed Vietnamese cinema and Ho Chi Minh City being promoted as a tourist destination.

Three posters of 21m x 3m size were displayed during the festival, including one featuring the image of Son Doong cave in Quang Binh province where the movie 'Kong - Skull Island' was filmed and three others highlighting the beauty of the land and people of Ho Chi Minh City.

All the billboards were designed with modern technology by Cannes' leading traditional design professionals. Additionally, a 'Vietnam Night' was held on May 20 under the framework of the festival, featuring the most famous and successful films of Vietnamese cinema. On the occasion, the Vietnam Cinema Department and French Cinema Centre also signed several cooperation agreements.

The 2017 Cannes Film Festival, which attracted over 23,000 visitors from countries around the world was a good opportunity for Vietnam to promote its cinema and tourism, particularly Ho Chi Minh City to international friends and filmmakers.

At the film festival, representatives of Ho Chi Minh

City Tourism Department also held talks with some international investors and communicators to discuss

the sector's development strategy as well as call for the investment.



## Philippines witnesses tourist growth of 11% in the first quarter of 2017



The Philippines during the initial quarter of 2017, has recorded a growth of 11.4% in tourist arrival, welcoming 1.784 million tourists compared to 1.6 million in the same period last year.

Tourism Assistant Secretary, Frederick M Alegre, has said that this growth can be attributed to the 160,000 airline seats which were added this year thanks to new direct flights connecting local secondary airports to South Korea and also China.

He went on to add that out of these new flights that are introduced, the ones from Kalibo to Shanghai, Cebu to Wuhan, Clark to Incheon, South Korea, Chongqing to Chengdu and Hangzhou to Chengdu would be functional.

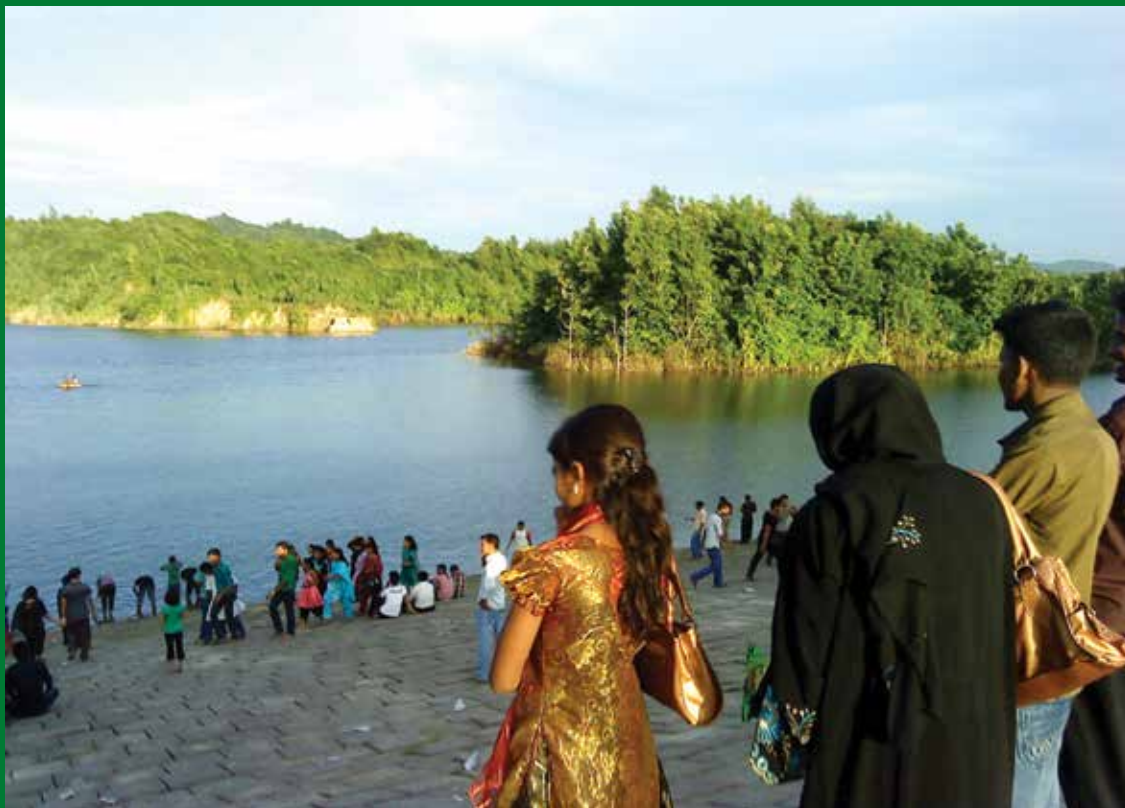
Alegre also informed in less than a year, the

Philippines had signed tourism deals with Russia, Turkey, Thailand, Cambodia and China. Further stating that arrival of Chinese tourists in the Philippines had risen by as much as 30.3% at 240,354. The U.S. tourists, on the other hand, had increased by 11.6% at 258,097. South Koreans continue to top the list of travellers in the Philippines with 440,865 tourist arrivals, while arrivals from Taiwan reached 64,896, a rise of 24.6%.

India demonstrated a marked improvement in arrivals by 21.63% to 26,905. Tourists from Japan were around 106,251, marking an increase of 15.8%. The tourists from Canada were up by almost 14.2% touching 60,838 and the ones from Germany were about 29,301, going up by 2.38%.

### Participating Country

## Bangladesh invests to turn Mohamaya Lake into a tourism hotspot



The Government is going to take necessary steps with a big investment plan for further developing and branding Mohamaya, an eye-catching hillside lake in Mirsarai, Chittagong, as a popular tourist hotspot.

Tour operators and local elite think Mohamaya, the country's second largest lake with ecstatic natural beauty and an 11-sq km area can draw a greater number of tourists if it could properly be branded with regular maintenance and better security arrangement.

The Civil Aviation and Tourism Minister, Rashed

Khan Menon said that they are working out plans to develop the spot further and brand it both at home and abroad through massive publicity. He added, "We've already talked to local MP (housing and public works minister) about Mohamaya Lake and we'll take required steps to make the site even more attractive and secure to catch the attention of tourists."

Menon also stated that Bangladesh has welcomed more than 3.12 million foreign tourists between 2010 and 2015. The year 2015 had seen the highest number of tourists- 643,094 visiting the country.

## Alila Hotels & Resorts announces the opening of Alila Yangshuo in Guilin China

Alila Hotels and Resorts has announced the opening of its second property in China, the Alila Yangshuo. Set amongst picturesque karst mountains, rolling green hills and meandering rivers, Alila Yangshuo will pave the way for an exciting journey into the area's natural and cultural wonders.

Once a working sugar mill, Alila Yangshuo is a modern retro resort of 117 rooms, suites and villas combining stylish simplicity with exceptional comfort and convenience. Located in Guilin and overlooking the scenic panorama of the Li River, Alila Yangshuo is a 1.2 hour drive from Guilin Liangjiang Airport and only a 30 minute car journey from the Yangshuo railway station.

Designed by Dong Gong of Vector Architects with interiors by award winning Ju Bin of Horizontal Space Design, the vision of Alila Yangshuo is to integrate the new with the old. The designers have artfully incorporated elements of the retro 1960's sugar-mill architecture into the common areas of Alila Yangshuo as seen in the hollow wall structure and in the transformation of the original sugarcane dock into a swimming pool.

Offering guests exclusive treatments that combine the finest traditions of East and West, Spa Alila at Alila Yangshuo offers a heavenly experience that promises to rejuvenate guests and leave them with a sense of renewed well-being.



## Taiwan hosts the Fulong International Sand Sculpture Festival

Taiwan is blessed with plenty of natural resources that can be used to draw visitors, such as the three-kilometer long golden beach between Yanliao and Fulong in the Northeast Coast. For its soft, highly cohesive white quartz sands, this beach is acknowledged by the World Sand Sculpting Association to be the best for making sand sculptures in Taiwan.

The first Fulong International Sand Sculpture Festival was held in 2008 to promote sand sculpting art in Taiwan. This year's festival from May 6 to July 9, 2017 is being jointly held by the Administration and the Fullon Hotels & Resorts. By co-organising the event with the company, the Administration hopes to instil different energy into the festival while attracting even more visitors.

This year's festival theme is 'Celebrating the 10th Anniversary: A Castle of Golden Sands in Fulong'. This summer, some skilled sand sculptors will present to the public a magical castle of golden quartz sands that they've built.



## MATTA and TAFI's MoU to foresee a significant tourism exchange between the two countries

Malaysian Association of Tour and Travel Agents (MATTA) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Travel Agents Federation of India (TAFI) to promote tourism between India and Malaysia. The official ceremony happened in Delhi recently where the Malaysian travel delegation were present as part of its roadshow.

The MoU was signed by Praveen Chugh, President, TAFI and Datuk Hamzah Rahmat, President, MATTA. The MoU signing was witnessed by Dato Hidayat Abdul Hamid, High Commissioner of Malaysia to India together with Sulaiman Suip, Director- North & East India, Tourism Malaysia.

Speaking over the collaboration, Praveen Chugh, said, "I would like to thank MATTA for showing confidence in TAFI and starting the dialogue open on how we can further increase the tourism exchange between the two countries through our association. Within a couple of years, India has seen more than 600,000 Indian visitors going to Malaysia. Keeping this number in mind, we are optimistic to have a substantial exchange of tourists between both the countries."

Adding his views, Datuk KL Tan, VP- Inbound & Domestic, MATTA said, "With this MoU signing, we hope that the two associations will escalate the tourism not only to Malaysia, but also to India. We will also organise industrial FAM trips, taking travel agents associated with TAFI to Malaysia and will also bring our fellow travel agents for extension of ideas, meetings and incentive planning to explore every prospects of promoting tourism."

Sulaiman Suip stated, "The Malaysian government considering India as a key market had introduced E-Visa in April 2016 and this year



introduced the entry waiver programme (currently on a trial basis) to evaluate its benefits for travellers. Our vision is to promote Malaysia as a family holiday destination this year for the metro cities of India. Therefore, this year our target for Indian market is to attract one million tourists."

Closer cooperation between TAFI and MATTA may see visitor arrivals from India to Malaysia increased by 20% this year and up to 1.5 million tourists annually by 2020. New highlights of Malaysia will be Ipoh, Genting, Sabah, Sarawak and many more along with new facilities. They will work closely with the airlines to bring more air connectivity by working closely with Air Asia, Malindo Air and Malaysian Airlines.

As part of its ongoing efforts to promote Malaysia, MATTA and Tourism Malaysia organised a roadshow in Kathmandu, Delhi and Colombo to interact with travel fraternity and encourage them to promote Malaysia. 12 Malaysian tour operators, three product owners and Malaysia Health Travel Council participated in this roadshow.

### Participating Country

## China gearing up to launch the world's first panda-themed tourist route

The world's first panda-themed tourism route is all set to be built in south-west China. The Project will link panda reserves and research centres and include attractions such as panda-themed hotels, camping sites designed for cyclists and much more.

The route will be aimed at domestic and foreign visitors and will link protected areas for pandas and breeding research centres in Sichuan Province. The sites will include dozens of sites such as the Wolong National panda reserve and a research base in Chengdu.

The giant panda has been taken off an international list of endangered species and is now considered 'vulnerable' as numbers rebound. The International Union for Conservation said protection work in China had succeeded in arresting the species' decline.

As per the report, the infrastructure for the panda-themed tourist route will be put in place over the next couple of years. The initiative has been prompted because of the increasing interest in pandas among tourists, according to the province's economic planning agency.

The main tourist attractions are within half an hour to three hours' drive from Chengdu. Journey times will be cut after a large highway is built in the region in the coming years.



## Pullman to launch its first hotel in Japan

Pullman Tokyo Tamachi is being developed as part of the MSB Tamachi mixed-used complex and will open for the fall of 2018. Featuring 143 rooms, the contemporary designed hotel successfully connects the international style of Pullman with a touch of Japanese art and culture. This business and leisure hotel includes meeting facilities and unique dining concepts. The hotel is directly connected to the JR Tamachi Station east exit and a three-minute walk from the Toei Subway Mita Line.

Patrick Basset, Chief Operating Officer for Upper Southeast and Northeast Asia, AccorHotels, said, "Japan keeps attracting more and more international travellers, with historically high growth rate recorded in the beginning of 2017. The increasing

inbound market, especially from Korea and other Asian countries (China, Taiwan, Indonesia, Vietnam) is on a continuous positive trend which will be amplified as the country will benefit from the worldwide attention with the upcoming 2020 Summer Olympic Games."

Eric D'Ignazio, Vice President Japan, AccorHotels, said, "The opening of Pullman Tokyo Tamachi marks an exciting step in developing more upscale and luxury hotels in Japan to meet the growing demand of cosmopolitan travellers who appreciate innovative design and wellness in the travel scene. The global nomad is Pullman's representation of the new generation of travellers and business leaders who fully and naturally blend work and leisure."



### Participating Country

## Sri Lanka seeks to expand in Medical Tourism



According to Oxford Business Group, the rising numbers of tourists from abroad and a state-led campaign to expand Medical Tourism could attract further investment to Sri Lanka's healthcare sector, creating additional opportunities for its hospitality industry in the process.

The country's bid to become a centre for health and wellness is supported by improved connectivity and infrastructure, as well as its increased popularity as a tourism destination. Foreign arrivals were up 3.4% year-on-year in the first quarter, according to the Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority.

Local brokerage and research firm NDB Securities said Medical Tourism could drive new demand for health services, catalysed by the three private hospitals in the country that are accredited by Joint Commission International (JCI).

Oxford Business Group concludes that while targeting the health and wellness segment would require some investment up-front, gaining a foothold in this market could bring strong advantages, including longer average stays, larger bookings for accompanying families and a higher share of clientele from the upper end of the tourism market.

## Abu Dhabi summer season to bring an extravaganza of entertainment



Abu Dhabi Tourism & Culture Authority (TCA Abu Dhabi) has announced the full programme of the 2017 edition of Abu Dhabi Summer Season, to be held from July 20 to August 20.

TCA Abu Dhabi has joined with leading UAE event organisers, partners and stakeholders to bring spectacular international events and activities to multiple venues across the emirate and deliver a memorable summer season for both residents and overseas visitors.

H.E. Saif Saeed Ghobash, Director General, TCA Abu Dhabi, said, "Abu Dhabi Summer Season is one of our anchor events and underpins the emirate's credentials as a premium leisure destination. It forms part of our long-term entertainment and cultural event planning process designed to incentivise private sector involvement in event development while building

international awareness of the emirate's appeal."

TCA Abu Dhabi is working with the UAE's leading event companies including MBC Group, YAK Events, Wizcraft International, Bidaya Media and Oberoi Middle East Events to provide this season's theatrical performances, shows and mall activations.

Mubarak Al Shamsi, Director of Abu Dhabi Convention Bureau, TCA Abu Dhabi, said, "We have a superb month-long series of shows, entertainment, promotions, prizes and offers showing just how much Abu Dhabi has to offer as a holiday destination which is exciting, affordable and with world-class accommodation and attractions. Holding the emirate-wide Abu Dhabi Summer Season is a vital component of our strategy to reach our goal of 4.9 million hotel guest arrivals this year."

## Saudi Arabia focuses on growth of MICE sector



Saudi Arabia has started investing in its MICE sector with an aim to strengthen its infrastructure with regards to the meetings industry to lure on more meetings and business events. Saudi Exhibition and Convention Bureau (SCEB) is currently leading this growth drive. It had also participated in IMEX Frankfurt 2017 for the very first time.

As of now, public investment in the industry in Saudi Arabia up to 2020 is estimated at around SR6 billion that amounts to \$1.6 billion.

Such investments include setting up five important convention districts including King Abdullah Economic City, King Abdullah Financial District in Riyadh, King Khaled International Airport in Riyadh, etc. These

would all be completed in the next five years in addition to fresh investments in the private sector represented by hotels enriched with smart conference and exhibition facilities all across the kingdom.

Now, the kingdom has over 600 first class hotels, event and convention facilities and almost all important international hotel groups with properties in major cities. The investment is a part of the Saudi Arabia Vision 2030 that had been declared in April 2016 that dwells on the strengths and opportunities of the country as well as its long-term goals.

The main objective of Vision 2030 to establish Saudi Arabia firmly as a global investment powerhouse as well as a global hub for connecting Africa, Europe and Asia.

## Jordan to attract even more Indian visitors in 2017

Jordan has always considered India as one of the most important source market and is planning to attract even more Indians in 2017. As per Dr Abed Al Razzaq Arabiyat, Managing Director, Jordan Tourism Board, the country is working on utilising its existing assets, zoning in on its heritage, culture, gastronomy, adventure and infrastructure with tourism campaigns designed to attract tourists to Jordan.

The tourism sector in Jordan acts as the driver of sustainable economic development and is considered the second fastest growing sector in the Kingdom and is the largest export sector and a major employer. Jordan witnessed several development projects in some of the key tourist attractions, mainly in Aqaba and the Dead Sea, which contribute towards marketing Jordan as a tourist destination and raise its competitiveness within the region. In the recent Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Report produced by the World Economic Forum, Jordan ranked 53rd out of 130 countries on the Travel and Tourism Competitive Index.

According to Adel Amin, Deputy Director & Director Marketing, Jordan Tourism Board, India is an important market for Jordan as they are seeing a lot of traction from our efforts in the market in the past few years.

The 2016 Indian arrival figures to Jordan have shown an unprecedented growth of 18.40%, and the same day visitor arrivals from India has declined by 4.50%, which indicates that visitors are now spending more time in the country. "We welcome Indian visitors, and are also offering free visa on arrival in Jordan which makes it easier for Indians to travel to the country. India is firmly established as an important market for us and we hope to see it in the top five markets in the future in terms of tourist inflow. The country continues to focus on family tourism and honeymoon travel and we are expecting many Bollywood films to also be shot there in the near future," he said.



## Emirates to incorporate A380 services to Beijing and Shanghai

Emirates has taken an innovative decision of replacing its Boeing 777-300ER operations on the EK308/EK309 routes and EK304/305 routes with the Airbus A380. The result of this, is effectively initiating an all-A380 service on its Beijing and Shanghai services.

The move, effective from July 1, 2017, will strengthen Emirates' A380 offering in northern Asia, which includes Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou, Hong Kong, Taipei, Seoul and Narita.

On Chinese routes, the Emirates A380 offers up to 519 seats in a three-class configuration as well as the First and Business Class Onboard Lounge on the upper deck and the onboard shower spas in First Class.

Shanghai was Emirates' first Chinese destination, with freight operations in 2002, followed by passenger services to the city in 2004. Launched in 2006, Beijing routes first deployed the A380 service in August 2010.



# Hotel guest arrivals rose by 1.6 million in Abu Dhabi

New figures from Abu Dhabi Tourism & Culture Authority (TCA Abu Dhabi) indicate that Abu Dhabi welcomed 1.6 million guest arrivals year to end of April, with seven percent growth compared to the same period in 2016.

H.E. Saif Saeed Ghobash, Director General, TCA Abu Dhabi, said, "As we expand our year-round programme of events and develop new cultural and family attractions, we expect even greater traction in enticing more people to explore the emirate. Our inaugural Culture Summit in April brought together leaders of the world's art, media and cultural policy communities from 80 countries, while Abu Dhabi International Book Fair attracted more than 300,000 visitors. Both these events contributed to highlighting our vision of developing the emirate into a thriving cultural hub and a global cultural destination."

As a single month, April has continued to build on the strong performance of the opening quarter of the year, posting a year-on-year increase of 15% in hotel guest



arrivals. Each of the six international tier-one markets of China, India, UK, USA, Germany and Saudi Arabia showed growth. As far as the detail of April is concerned,

China has maintained its position as the largest overseas source market with 131,253 hotel guest arrivals, followed by India with 104,436 and the UK with 86,529.

## Royal Opera House Muscat to offer a musical treat through a range of performances



The Royal Opera House Muscat (ROHM), Oman's premier venue for musical arts and culture has announced an exciting line-up of performances for the forthcoming season, 2017-2018: A Legendary Season. After marking its sixth anniversary this year, the Royal Opera House Muscat will commence its seventh season with a wide range of top quality productions in many different genres—opera, concerts, ballet & dance, Arab performances, jazz, world music, musicals, education and more.

"The Royal Opera House is one of a kind opera house in the Middle East which reflects contemporary Omani architecture and has a capacity to accommodate around 1,100 people. Watching a performance at the opulent state-of-the-art Royal Opera House in Muscat, where world class operas and musicians perform round the

year, is a privilege one should not miss out on. The great lineup of performances in the upcoming season can be enjoyed by all age groups, and special performances like Cinderella, Peter Pan will mesmerise children," said Lubaina Sheerazi, India Representative, Ministry of Tourism, Oman.

The new season will open in September with Giuseppe Verdi's grand masterpiece 'Aida', set in ancient Egypt and brilliantly performed by world-class artists. Other highlights of the Opera performances include great romantic and tragic works like Vincenzo Bellini's Norma, Ruggero Leoncavallo's Pagliacci (Clowns); and delightful operas that gives joy Gioachino Rossini's L'Occasione fa il Ladro (Opportunity Makes a Thief) and Vincenzo Bellini's La Sonnambula (The Sleepwalker) and many more.

## QTA's five-year tourism strategy to be launched by September 2017

The Qatar Tourism Authority (QTA) is finalising a five-year tourism strategy, planned to be launched in September 2017 during the World Tourism Day celebrations in Doha.

QTA's Chief Tourism Development Officer, Hassan Al-Ibrahim, said, "We are looking forward to finalising and implementing the next chapter of the Qatar National Tourism Sector Strategy 2030 in the next five years. QTA is set to hold a series of workshops in the coming weeks on how it can open up to new markets and sustain the current ones."

The QTA official said that more than 40,000 people visited Qatar using the free transit visa, which allows transit passengers up to 96 hours stay. The number of transit passengers who visited Qatar increased by 40% in May as compared to the same period last year.

QTA also saw an increase in bookings with its '+Qatar' initiative. It includes a free night's stay in a five or four-star hotel in Doha alongside a free 96-hour transit visa.



Al-Ibrahim said, "We haven't seen any cancellations or any changes and the number of bookings is growing day after day. QTA also recorded a growth of the cruise industry with Qatar receiving 45,000–46,000 passengers from various cruise ships during the 2016-2017 seasons. We are focusing on business development, family entertainment, authentic experiences, sports."

## Eminent Indian Wedding planners visit Bahrain

Bahrain is emerging as an island wedding destination, promising the romance, adventure and novelty which exceed the expectations of Indian weddings. Therefore, the Kingdom of Bahrain recently organised its first Indian wedding FAM trip, inviting all eminent wedding planners to the destination.

The trip included visit to handpicked venues focusing on outdoor arrangements on private islands. The wedding planners also got an opportunity to review six five star hotels to understand their offerings. They further went to check out the island flavour, exploring varieties of culinary options for a grand wedding.

The trip also had visit to various cultural sites and attractions to witness Bahrain's hospitality and lifestyle.



They were later taken to Bahrain international circuit. The home to motorsport in the Middle East, to see one of

the most modern motor racing venues in the world where they got a chance to ride their favourite sports car.

## GNTO declares to receive 30 million visitors in 2017

Greek National Tourism Organisation (GNTO) has recently announced of receiving a record-breaking 30 million international visitors to Greece for 2017. For the past two years, Greece's growth has been nearly twice the global industry average of 3.9% as reported by the World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) in January 2017.

This represents a growth rate of seven percent, or an additional two million additional visitors over the previous year. According to the GNTO's New York branch, 900,000 American travellers are expected to visit Greece this year.

"We are very optimistic about the upcoming tourist season and our continued momentum. Greece's incomparable natural beauty, ancient history, vibrant urban culture and spirit of 'philotimo' make it one of the world's most unique and desired year-round destinations," said Greek Tourism Minister, Elena Kountoura.

The World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC) estimates that tourism in 2017 will help boost the Greek economy by 6.9%, and will boost employment by 6.3%, supporting nearly 1 million jobs and representing 20% of the country's GDP.

New flights and connections will make travelling to Greece easier in 2017, including daily year-round service by Emirates to Athens from Newark Liberty International Airport. Destinations such as



Kos, Rhodes, Mykonos, Santorini, Corfu, Kefhalonia, Zakynthos, Aktio and Thessaloniki now have direct flights or connections to a larger number of European cities, as well as the U.S., China, India, Russia and Israel.

The GNTO's development strategy includes increasing access via air, land and sea. An increased focus on audience segmentation including luxury, religious, cruises, yachting, diving, cultural tourism, adventure, LGBT and new international markets along with the use of new technology platforms and social media.

## Reunion Island records 175.5% growth in Indian arrivals in the first quarter of 2017

Reunion Island has registered a substantial growth of 175.5% from the Indian market in the first quarter of 2017 as compared to the same period last year, according to the official statistics shared by Airport Roland Garros, Reunion Island. India ranked top among all 10 other countries in visitor arrivals in the first quarter of 2017 for the country.



William Techer, Head- Promotion & Marketing, India and Indian Ocean, Reunion Island Tourism Board, said, "We have experienced the zeal of Indian travellers to explore new destinations which have unique offerings and have a diversity of climate, nature, food, tourism products, like Reunion Island. I am very happy with these encouraging numbers and this wouldn't be possible without the concentrated marketing efforts of our India's Representative - Representation World."

Sharing his delight, Vineet Gopal, Director-India, Reunion Island Tourism Board, shared, "This figure didn't come as a surprise to me as I was confident about Reunion Island's tourism potential and unparalleled support we received from the Head Office in Reunion Island and Air Austral. Furthermore, simplified visa process and free visa for Indian nationals travelling to Reunion Island for 14 days has really helped us to achieve this inspiring growth."

The Reunion Island Tourism Board is planning various marketing activities for the upcoming quarter to lure more Indian travellers to the destination.

## Georgia Visa Application Centres to commence operations across five cities in India

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia has awarded a contract to VFS Global, for the setup and operation of Georgia Visa Application Centres in five cities in India. The centres are set to commence services in New Delhi, Bengaluru, Chennai, Kolkata and Mumbai soon.

The new centre in New Delhi was inaugurated recently by Giorgi Tabatadze, Director of the Consular Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia, and H.E. Archil Dzuliashvili, Ambassador of Georgia to India. Services for applicants at this centre are expected to begin by the end of June 2017.



Georgia is VFS Global's 55th client government worldwide, and the 38th to be served in India. At the launch, H.E. Dzuliashvili said, "We have successfully accomplished negotiation process with VFS Global and finally signed a contract which allows us to facilitate and offer more accessible services to the Indian travellers through the several VFS Visa Application Centres in India. Georgia is emerging as a popular destination among travellers in India for purposes of tourism, education, business, etc. I believe that with our common commitment and efforts we will witness further achievements in the years to come. We are looking forward to close partnership with VFS Global."

Commenting on the launch, Vinay Malhotra, CEO-Middle East and South Asia, VFS Global, stated, "We are honoured to enter into this partnership with the Government of Georgia to begin offering visa application services in India. VFS Global's nationwide network of visa application centres will make Georgia visa services more easily accessible for citizens, and will go a long way in significantly increasing travel to Georgia and enhancing its perception as a popular tourist destination."

## Cyprus witnesses record tourist arrivals in April 2017

In April 2017, tourist arrivals to Cyprus reached 286,331, compared to 225,575 in April 2016; with a year-on-year increase of 26.9%. This is the highest volume of tourist arrivals to Cyprus ever recorded during the month of April.

Of these arrivals, the United Kingdom and Russia were the main sources for tourism (visitors made up 37.1% and 16.4% of total arrivals respectively). There was a year-on-year increase in visitors from the United Kingdom (16.3%), Russia (21.8%), Germany (156.6%) and Israel (77%).

The majority of visitors to Cyprus in April 2017 categorised the purpose of their trip as a holiday (78.9%) with 14.3% stating they were visiting friends and relatives and 6.6% travelling for business. Slightly more women (55.3%) visited Cyprus in April 2017 than men (44.7%) and the majority of tourists (44%) were aged between 20-44 years.

Orestis Rossides, UK Director of the Cyprus Tourism Organisation (CTO), said, "This year, we're seeing record numbers of tourists attracted by Cyprus' year-round sunshine, beautiful scenery, legendary hospitality and range of activities from cycling, scuba diving, trekking and golf to world-class spas. We're looking forward to a successful summer season to cement 2017 as a record-breaking year for Cyprus."



## VisitBritain launches an international Film Tourism campaign

VisitBritain, in the run-up to the release of the action adventure film King Arthur: Legend of the Sword, launched an international film tourism campaign in order to showcase why Britain is a legendary tourist destination. The campaign 'Where Stories Become Legends' aimed to inspire people to book a King Arthur-themed holiday to Britain using #OMGBLegends.

"Our collaboration with Warner Bros Pictures on King Arthur: Legend of the Sword is a fantastic opportunity to showcase to a global audience of millions the legendary experiences only available in Britain, inspiring people to book a trip right now to discover their own epic stories," says Clare Mullin, Director of Marketing, VisitBritain.

The campaign drives online 'traffic' to a VisitBritain King Arthur: Legend of the Sword site on visitbritain.com filled with information on British locations from the film and King Arthur-inspired holiday experiences available in 13 languages.



India's Biggest Travel Show

# India's Biggest Travel Show Network



[www.ttfotm.com](http://www.ttfotm.com)



Since 1989, it provides annual marketing platform and opportunity to network with the travel trade in all major cities. **OTM** is India's biggest travel trade show on the basis of number of participants, visitors and rented area. It is held every year in Mumbai, the largest source market of Domestic and Outbound tourists. This is in addition to the **TTF Mumbai** in pre-diwali high season in September.

More than 2,500 Exhibitors from 80 Countries and 36 Indian States / Union Territories have participated in our **TTF** and **OTM** branded shows, making us the leading travel trade show organisers, with about 50% market share.



*TTF is a very good opportunity for all the tourism related stakeholders and for all the states who are trying to promote their tourism to meet and share their ideas.*

**Dinesh Dhanai**  
Tourism Minister of Uttarakhand



*TTF has been doing a great job over the years. We are grateful to TTF for organising these shows and for giving us the opportunity to showcase Gujarat and its tourist attractions to the people. Gujarat Tourism is glad to partner with TTF*

**N Srivastava**  
Managing Director and Commissioner, Tourism Corporation of Gujarat Ltd



*CNTO has been collaborating with TTF for a long time and we are very pleased to be a part of the exhibition in 2017 as well. These shows appropriately communicate our tourist offerings to the Indian market.*

**Tian Xin**  
Director - China National Tourist Office, New Delhi



*This is the first time that we participated in TTF Kolkata and this time we focused on our B2B portal. TTF is very nicely done and managed. The footfall was good and we have been able to capture it well and will gain from it.*

**Sucheta Nagpal**  
Director & CEO, Travstarz Global Group



## Schedule

### 2017

- TTF Kolkata : 7, 8, 9 July
- TTF Hyderabad # : 14, 15 July
- TTF Ahmedabad : 1, 2, 3 September
- TTF Surat : 8, 9, 10 September
- TTF Mumbai : 15, 16, 17 September
- TTF Pune : 22, 23, 24 September
- BLTM Gurgaon : 26, 27 October

### 2018

- OTM Mumbai : 18, 19, 20 January
- TTF Chennai : 16, 17, 18 February
- TTF Bengaluru : 23, 24, 25 February
- TTF New Delhi : 7, 8 April

# Co-located with BLTM South India

To book your vantage stand at TTF write us to [contact@fairfest.in](mailto:contact@fairfest.in) or visit [www.ttfotm.com](http://www.ttfotm.com)

Supported by :



Official Publication :

For More Details Please Contact : Raj Kapoor Singh +91 - 9987615640

## Brand USA hosts Discover America educational seminars across India

Brand USA successfully completed a string of educational seminars across 10 major cities in India. Held between November 2016 to April 2017, the Brand USA 'Discover America' Educational Seminars had over 1000 travel agents and tour operators from New Delhi, Chandigarh, Mumbai, Pune, Ahmedabad, Chennai, Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Kolkata and Lucknow.

With the aim to inspire travellers to explore the United States of America's boundless possibilities, these seminars provide in-depth knowledge on products and attractions that are available for leisure and MICE visitors.

The 'Discover America' Educational Seminars also focused on the USA Discovery Program – an innovative and interactive online training course that provides

tour operators with the knowledge and skills needed to enhance their products and sell trips to the USA more effectively. Currently, over 2,500 travel agents across India have registered on the USA Discovery Program and are now 'USA Specialists'.

Speaking over the development, Sheema Vohra, Managing Director, Brand USA India, commented, "The Brand USA 'Discover America' Educational Seminars provide a great platform for the travel industry to learn about diverse facets of the destination. These presentations give them an insight on new products and regions, plus updates on those that they are already selling to their clients. We are very pleased at the tremendous interest and support for destination USA, from our Indian travel trade partners."



## Peru exempts Indian Nationals from the requirement of temporary visa



Peru had announced that starting from March 27, 2017, holders of a valid ordinary passport from India are exempted from the requirement of temporary visa in business or tourist category, provided that they meet at least one of the following conditions:

At the time of entry into Peru, the Indian national holds a visa with a validity of minimum six months from any one or more of the following countries: United States of America, Canada, United Kingdom, Australia or any Schengen space country.

The Indian national holds permanent residence in any one of the following countries: United States of America, Canada, United Kingdom, Australia or any Schengen space country.

The maximum period of stay will be up to 180 calendar days, whether continuous stay or various visits during the period of one year. The stay will be determined at the port of entry by the Immigration Officers. The exemption is not valid for the transit visa category.

In the case that an Indian national does not meet the conditions specified above, he or she is required to apply for a visa at the Consular Section of the Embassy of Peru.

## NYC & Company unveils the 'New' New York City: Midtown Edition at IPW 2017

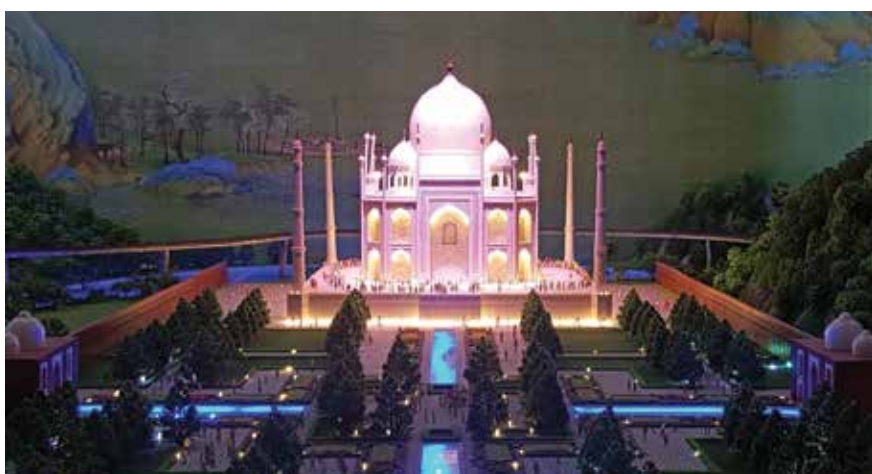
At a recent press conference at IPW (International Pow Wow) 2017, NYC & Company presented new destination updates and highlights of the 'New' New York City: Midtown Edition to an audience of key Global Travel Media.

At the event, NYC & Company President and CEO Fred Dixon and SVP Global Communications' Chris Heywood outlined new developments and story ideas in the City's hotels, infrastructure, attractions, arts and culture, and more. They were joined by representatives from groundbreaking Midtown Manhattan attractions Gulliver's Gate (opened May 9), National Geographic Encounter: Ocean Odyssey (debuting October 2017) and NFL Experience Times Square (November 2017).

NYC & Company President and CEO Fred Dixon, said, "The 'New' New York City and Midtown Manhattan in

particular is experiencing a period of momentous growth with groundbreaking developments. We are proud to be back at IPW this year, showcasing the many reasons visitors should choose the City's five boroughs now for their next holiday."

Additionally, New York City has the most active hotel development pipeline in the country, with 113,000 hotel rooms as of May 2017 and an expected inventory of 137,000 hotel rooms by 2019. Noteworthy hotel property openings in 2017 include 1 Hotel Brooklyn Bridge (opened February 2017), The Whitby Hotel (debuted February 2017), 50 Bowery (opened May 2017), MOXY NYC Times Square (coming August 2017), Public, an Ian Schrager Hotel (June 2017) and The Hoxton Brooklyn (late 2017) New York Edition Times Square (early 2018).



## Rendez-vous Canada 2017 witnesses an all time high attendance record



The 41st edition of Rendez-vous Canada (RVC), Canada's premier tourism marketplace, was held at the BMO Centre from May 9-12, 2017, in Calgary, Alberta. The four-day long annual conference saw an all-time-high attendance record, close to 29,000 face-to-face business appointments between Canadian sellers and tourism buyers from across the globe.

RVC is aimed at providing a platform for Canadians to launch new tourism strategies, share market insights and the know-how to help cater to existing as well as potential clients, thereby boosting the range of tourism experiences that the industry offers.

Bardish Chagger, Leader of the Government in the House of Commons and Minister for Small Business and Tourism, said, "As Minister for Small Business and Tourism, I have had the

opportunity of meeting many Canadian tourism business owners this year at RVC. The best-ever attendance record is a good indicator of how dedicated and hard-working Canadians are helping shape Canada's thriving tourism industry."

Hosted by Tourism Calgary, this year's sold-out event featured around 1,840 buyers from 28 international markets and Canadian sellers from across the country, boasting of the best seller-to-buyer ratio ever with more than one buyer for every seller in attendance.

Sanjeet, India Representative, Destination Canada, said that he is expecting around 227,500 Indian arrivals to Canada in 2017, a growth of seven percent. He further highlighted, "Indians often spend more on shopping than they do on their entire trip."

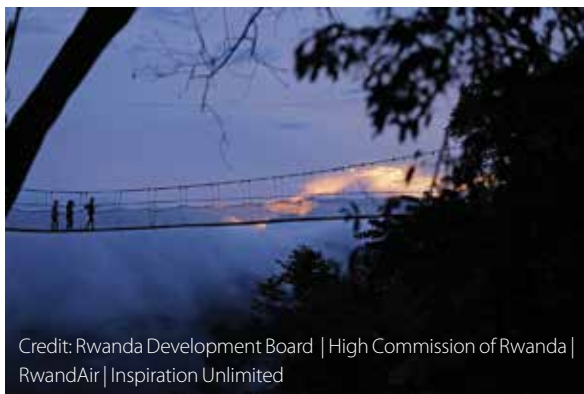
# Rwanda — A country that must be close to paradise

By Sandy & Vyjay

Rwanda — a small country that lies just two degrees south of the equator — is sure to stun you with its beauty, and ultimately transforms you into a poet, writer or painter. It truly lives up to its taglines of ‘Remarkable Rwanda’ and ‘The land of a thousand hills and a million smiles.’ The seven days that we spent in Rwanda, thanks to a Familiarisation trip organised by Rwanda Development Board (RDB), High Commission of Rwanda, RwandAir, and Inspiration Unlimited, we lost all sense of time, such was the magnetic power of the place. It truly led us to believe a local saying that states, “God roams the world, but comes to rest in Rwanda.”

As soon as we set our feet on the magical soil of Rwanda, we were smitten by the angelic beauty of the land and the warm and loving hearts of the people. The experiences we had here were all unique and touched the very core of our beings with their intensity. Though words and pictures are woefully inadequate to do justice to our experiences, here is a humble attempt to do just that — to describe a few experiences of the indulgence to the senses that Rwanda truly is.

The first thing that strikes you as you travel across the country is the breathtakingly stunning landscapes that seem to serenade you around every bend of the road. From ethereal lakes to lush tea and coffee plantations, from majestic hills to dense rainforests, the song of nature resonates in a melodious symphony that is so enthralling.



Credit: Rwanda Development Board | High Commission of Rwanda | RwandAir | Inspiration Unlimited

The Canopy Walkway against a serene setting sun

For the traveller who is looking for adventure and encounters of the wild kind, Rwanda has three major National Parks, namely, Akagera National Park, Nyungwe National Park, and Volcanoes National Park.

The Akagera National Park is home to the big five, which means you are likely to sight leopards, lions, elephants, buffaloes and rhinoceros, apart from zebras, giraffes and different species of deer and monkeys.

The Nyungwe Forest National Park is a paradise for hikers and offers more than 10 different nature trails, with expert guides. The hike to reach the Canopy Walk takes one across a slippery path deep in the rainforest. One has to descend down a sloping trail, which can be quite steep and difficult, at times. But the hike itself is a lovely experience as you listen to the sounds of the forest and move along, as if in harmony with nature. Once you reach the Canopy Walk, your adrenalin is sure to start pumping as you walk on the shaking rope bridge suspended 50 metres above the ground. As you reach the centre of the Canopy Walk, you are sure to experience moments of bliss as you watch the white fluffy clouds parading in the distance, probably tinged by the golden hue of the setting sun. The experience of the Canopy Walk is one of those travel experiences that you want to relive again and again.

Your heart will start beating faster as you trek across fields, hills and slushy narrow paths to reach the thick of the jungle. As you walk with bated breath, cutting a narrow path in the almost impenetrable and thick vegetation, the excitement builds to a crescendo. The climax is when you are face-to-face with a huge but gentle silverback gorilla, or see a female gorilla nursing a baby, all at an arm’s length away. That moment is bound to be frozen in your head and heart for life. This kind of encounter is possible only in the Volcanoes National Park in Rwanda



The participants of the Familiarisation Trip to Rwanda

— home to the rare mountain gorillas, which is an endangered lot with less than a thousand inhabiting the world today.

Rwanda weaves its magic on its visitors and is sure to pull them again to its fold to explore more of its natural beauty and experience the hospitality of its people.



Credit: Benaifer J. Mirza

The beautiful and mighty gorilla at Volcanoes National Park, Rwanda

## Dream Offers from Mumbai

rwandair.com

Destination	Price* Economy class	Price* Business class
Kigali	₹ 34,132	₹ 78,580
Accra	₹ 52,030	₹ 84,481
Dar-Es-Salaam	₹ 21,351	₹ 56,722
Entebbe	₹ 22,412	₹ 62,976
Harare	₹ 26,262	₹ 66,570
Johannesburg	₹ 26,098	₹ 65,879
Kilimanjaro	₹ 40,972	₹ 66,096
Lagos	₹ 45,828	₹ 83,915
Nairobi	₹ 24,915	₹ 66,913
Lusaka	₹ 33,397	₹ 72,318

\*Return Fares, Taxes Inclusive  
 \*Sales validity - 30th September, 2017

+912266603877 | +912266167273

sales.mumbai@rwandair.com

Terms and conditions apply



RwandAir

Fly the dream of Africa

## Sarovar Hotels introduces a luxury hotel in Kenya



Sarovar Hotels Pvt Ltd has launched The Lazizi Premiere Nairobi, a luxury hotel positioned inside the Jomo Kenyatta International Airport (JKIA) in Nairobi, Kenya. The property managed by Sarovar Hotels was inaugurated by H.E. Uhuru Kenyatta, the current President of Kenya. The tourism and hospitality industry of Kenya has received a boost following the launch of this hotel which is the country's first five-star airport hotel.

President Uhuru Kenyatta officially opened the 144 room premium hotel as part of the government's tourism and hospitality transformation strategy. Conveniently located inside the JKIA airport, The Lazizi Premiere Nairobi is designed to be the most prominent hotel in the area.

Speaking at the launch, Ajay K Bakaya, Managing Director, Sarovar Hotels Pvt Ltd, said, "Kenya is the business hub for Africa and has one of the most diverse accommodation facilities. Nairobi being the hub of East

Africa offers a great launch pad for our expansion and growing our footprint in the African region. Travellers in transit, airline crews and other local and international visitors intending to avoid traffic enroute to the airport have not had much luck as most hotels are still quite a distance from the main international airport in the capital city. We are aiming to tap that segment with The Lazizi Premiere".

Commenting on the launch, Kiran M Patel, Hotel Promoter & Chairman, Lazizi Premiere, said, "The entry of The Lazizi Premiere Nairobi into the Kenyan market seeks to complement the ever-increasing demand for hotel rooms in Nairobi especially during peak tourist seasons, local and international conferences. Our intention is not only to contribute significantly to the country's growth and Vision 2030 but also to create over 1000 job opportunities in the hospitality industry, directly and indirectly."

## Ethiopian Airlines to commence sixth daily flight service to Seychelles from December 2017

Ethiopian Airlines has announced that it will add a 6th weekly flight to Seychelles from December 6, 2017.

Commenting on the development, Chief Commercial Officer, Ethiopian Airlines, Busera Awel, said, "Air transport being a vital component of the tourist appeal and the driving factor for economic growth in general, we have been serving our continent for seven decades, offering convenient connectivity options to more than 54 African cities. Seychelles being Africa's premier tourist destination, with the natural attractions of the archipelagos, we have now added a sixth weekly service to provide more options for passengers flying from any part of the world to Seychelles and vice versa through our strategic hub at Addis Ababa. As per our growth strategy, vision 2025, we shall continue to increase our presence in Africa, so as to better promote and facilitate growth in the business and tourism sectors."

Ethiopian also offers special fares for tour packages to the major African tourist destinations such as: Victoria Falls, Antananarivo, Guinea Conakry and Gaborone.



## Seventh edition of Learn South Africa to launch in July

The annual 'Learn South Africa' training programme equips travel agents with the best tools and tips to sell South Africa in the Indian market. In its seventh edition this year, South African Tourism promises that the 2017 version of Learn SA will have new, exciting and useful sessions that will ensure a profitable South Africa business and repeat customers for travel agents who attend the training.

Also on offer for the first time ever, attending travel agents displaying high interest levels and strong potential, stand the chance of being invited to participate in marketing activities supported by South African Tourism.

Registration is free and travel agents are encouraged to sign up multiple participants. Learn SA will cover 17 cities to ensure that travel agents all over the country are given the opportunity to learn and thereby sell the destination.

Following are the dates for the training programmes:

- July 06, 2017 in Mumbai
- July 07, 2017 Rajkot
- July 08, 2017 Baroda
- July 10, 2017 Ahmedabad
- July 11, 2017 Jaipur
- July 12, 2017 Delhi
- July 13, 2017 Chandigarh
- July 14, 2017 Delhi
- July 17, 2017 Lucknow
- July 18, 2017 Kolkata
- July 19, 2017 Hyderabad
- July 20, 2017 Chennai
- July 21, 2017 Bangalore
- July 22, 2017 Coimbatore
- July 24, 2017 Mumbai
- July 25, 2017 Indore
- July 26, 2017 Nagpur
- July 27, 2017 Pune
- July 29, 2017 Goa



## Durban to host Africa's Travel INDABA for the next five years

Durban is fast emerging as a venue of choice for all MICE-led events, promising a winning combination of large convention centres and diverse experiences across wildlife, adventure as well as attractions for shopping and nightlife. This was further reinstated with the city being named as the host city for Africa's Travel Indaba for the next five years.

Africa's Travel INDABA 2017 boasts large numbers of delegates, tourism industry decision-makers from all over the world and excellent year-on-year growth in numbers. The event drew the presence of President Jacob Zuma who announced at the inauguration that following a comprehensive bid process, Tourism KwaZulu-Natal and Durban had been awarded as the annual event's venue for the next five years.

KwaZulu-Natal's MEC for Economic Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs, Sihle Zikalala said, "We are thrilled that the province has won the bid to host INDABA for the next five years. This will give

us an opportunity to further invest in the show and ensure that it continues to grow, thereby increasing its contribution to the province's GDP. Furthermore,



it will allow us the opportunity to engage tour operators to partner with us in growing intra-African travel into KwaZulu-Natal."

Phillip Sithole, Acting Deputy City Manager, eThekweni and Head of Durban Tourism, said, "It is evident that robust engagements need to take place between the public and private sector to grow tourism together. We look forward to the innovation and transformation of Africa's Travel INDABA over the next five years."

Hanneli Slabber, Country Manager - India, South African Tourism, said, "It is great that Durban has been awarded INDABA for the next five years. As a destination Durban has lots of potential for the Indian market. It is excellent that we will have the chance to continue to showcase Durban to the Indian travel trade through the INDABA platform. We hope that it will cement their belief in the city's tourism potential and help Durban enjoy recall value among travel."

## Tourism Australia rolls out the second edition of Australian Airfare Sale



After a successful round one of the Great Australian Airfare Sale in November 2016, Tourism Australia has unveiled the second chapter of Great Australian Airfare Sale 2.0. The campaign is aimed at encouraging inbound tourism from India to Australia with airline partners like Air India, Air Asia, Cathay Pacific, Malaysian Airlines, Qantas, Scoot, Singapore Airlines and Thai Airways offering Indian travellers with lucrative airfare deals to travel to Australia.

Sharing more details about the campaign, Nishant Kashikar, Country Manager- India & Gulf, Tourism Australia, said, "Since the beginning, we have identified aviation access as the key to the success of a destination. The first phase of this campaign presented Indian travellers with a unique opportunity to travel

to Australia at unbelievable airfares. We are confident that version 2.0 of the Great Airfare Sale will surpass this set benchmark. The sale allows Indian travellers to secure great deals while providing them sufficient time to plan their holiday well-in-advance. We will continue to partner and work closely with our airline partners to accelerate market demand and create more enticing opportunities hereby encouraging Indians to visit Australia."

Phase one of the campaign recorded over 10,200 bookings within a three-week activity period. The second phase of the campaign commenced on May 22, 2017 and lasted till June 11, 2017, covering digital, social and print verticals. The advertised fares will be valid for travel until March 2018.

## Metropolis AVANI Residences set to enter New Zealand in 2017



AVANI Hotels & Resorts, a part of Minor Hotels, currently with a portfolio of 18 hotels and resorts in 12 countries across Asia Pacific, the Middle East, Africa and Europe, has announced the acquisition of the Metro Suites business in Auckland, New Zealand.

Located in Auckland on New Zealand's North Island, the 370-key property was built in 1999 at a reported NZD 180 million and occupies a prime CBD position in the 'City of Sales' – the country's largest and most populated city.

Commenting over the development, Alejandro Bernabe, Group Director, AVANI Hotels & Resorts, said, "We are delighted to reach agreement with the Metropolis body corporate to secure this hotel business in the

very strong Auckland hotel market, as well as launch our AVANI brand into New Zealand. Metro Suites presented itself as a compelling acquisition opportunity to expand our foothold within the Asia Pacific region, and we look forward to introducing the AVANI brand into this market later this year following a significant refurbishment programme."

In a deal worth over NZD 11 million, the Metro Suites business currently operates in the luxury 40-storey tower and will be transformed through a major room refurbishment programme. Upon completion in October 2017, the property will be rebranded as Metropolis AVANI Residences, signalling the AVANI brand's debut in New Zealand.

## Tourism for Tomorrow provides a roadmap for upcoming tourism campaign in New Zealand

The incoming government to supercharge the tourism industry's success has recently unveiled Tourism for Tomorrow, the 2017 Tourism Election Manifesto during TRENZ 2017, the industry's most important international trade show being held in Auckland.

"Our Tourism 2025 goal is to build an industry that is socially, environmentally and economically sustainable. We can do this with political and policy recognition, backed by a supportive environment for infrastructure investment," said Chris Roberts, Chief Executive, Tourism Industry Aotearoa (TIA).

He mentioned that the 29 priority actions for the incoming Government have been grouped under three themes:

- A sustainable industry, for New Zealand's tomorrow
- Invest in infrastructure, for New Zealand's tomorrow
- Support tourism, for New Zealand's tomorrow

"These themes are closely interlinked and build on the work that TIA and the current Government have undertaken to grow the value of our tourism industry. We will look to make further progress with whoever is in charge of the Treasury benches post the election," said Roberts.



## Bollywood actress Ileana D'Cruz to promote Fiji Tourism

Tourism Fiji and Fiji Airways is hosting Bollywood actress Ileana D'Cruz on a trip to Fiji as part of the Travelogue which is being produced by the Times of India. The travelogue will feature D'Cruz's experiences in Fiji.

The two companies have indicated that the trip is part of a wider marketing campaign that Tourism Fiji and Fiji Airways have undertaken and would showcase Fiji's culture and scenery through video, images and social media to strengthen Fiji's market relations with India.

D'Cruz would travel with the Times of India film crew who would capture her exploring different aspects of Fiji's tourism products. Shooting would take place in the Mamanuca's Pacific Harbour, the Coral Coast, Suva and Denarau.



# Caribbean Tourism welcomes a new record of tourist arrivals



The Caribbean witnessed a record 8.7 million long-stay international tourist arrivals for the first quarter of this year. This represents an increase of 150,000 or 1.8% increase for the same period in 2016.

Speaking at a media conference at Caribbean Week in New York recently, Caribbean Tourism Organisation (CTO), Secretary-General, Hugh Riley said that the other Caribbean market, which includes Cancun, Cozumel, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Haiti and Suriname, led growth across the sub-region for the period under review with arrivals up 6.3% as at the end of March 2017.

Riley said cruise passenger arrivals for the first three months of this year increased by an estimated 4.5% to

reach ten million, compared to last year.

The tourism official also pointed out that the CTO had embarked on a five-year plan to grow the organisation and better assist members, adding that CTO was also looking at the possibility of expanding its membership to countries outside the traditional Caribbean region but washed by the Caribbean sea and seek membership in the organisation.

“The Council of Ministers and Commissioners endorsed a joint CTO/CHTA collaboration to put together for the consideration of Caribbean Community heads of government, a framework for the development of a Caribbean public/private sector tourism marketing and development initiative,” he added.

## Antigua-Barbuda introduces new digital summer campaign

The Antigua and Barbuda Tourism Authority (ABTA) (US Office) has launched a new digital summer campaign called ‘Summer Lovin’ which would run from May 15 to September 15 for an early start to the busy summer season.

The tagline ‘Summer Lovin’ acts as the perfect umbrella for encouraging visitors to embrace their joy and love of the summer and follow their heart, whether it is a romantic trip enjoying the sun, sand, sea; adventurous, adrenaline filled vacation; multi-generational and family fun; long-weekend holiday getaways; relaxing and luxurious vacations to recharge or serenity and natural beauty of the country.

Minister of Tourism, Economic Development, Investment and Energy, Asot Michael, said, “Tourism is the driving force of our economy and the United States continues to be a market that shows amazing growth potential for us. There is never a shortage of

passion about our twin island destination, and through this exciting new campaign, we are sharing that passion to this key market and the world, with exciting deals and packages where visitors can save up to 50%.”

The goal of the campaign is to drive engagement with a continued conversation about Antigua and Barbuda that will lead to an increased awareness and bookings and build on the year over year growth.

Kim Jack Riley, Director of Tourism, US for the ABTA, said, “We’ve specifically chosen this integrated marketing campaign to increase awareness of Antigua and Barbuda. Our message is purposefully playful, inviting our audience to come and join in on the fun. To maximise impact and results, the campaign will target several consumer and trade touch points that will include email marketing, public relations, social media, offline activations and digital advertising campaigns.”



## Jamaican Tourism Minister urges for more tourism investment in the Caribbean

The Jamaican Tourism Minister Edmund Bartlett has urged financial institutions, including the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) for establishing opportunities for small and Medium Tourism Enterprises (SMTEs) and to invest more in tourism in the region.

Bartlett said, “Even though one in 11 workers in the world work with the tourism industry and some \$7.6 trillion of tourism expenditure happened last year globally, only a very meagre 0.15% of multilateral and donor agency funds go into tourism globally— that is less than a quarter of one percent. This amounts to less than \$250 million of all the loans provided went to the sector. There has to be a change therefore in that whole attitude towards the industry so that more can be provided for the people who can contribute to the development of the region.”

Minister Bartlett said that the banking system in the Caribbean is yet to come to terms with the demand for tourism and development that will allow SMTEs to have access to the necessary funds. The Caribbean is the most tourism-dependent region in the world, with more than 50% of GDP and one in five workers being tourism related for at least 16 of 28 nations in the Caribbean.

A 2014 report conducted by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) showed that the Caribbean, though being the most tourism-dependent region on earth, had the highest level of leakage of tourism expenditure.



## Expedia announces expansion in the Cuban market

The Expedia Group has announced its expansion into the Cuban market, which will allow Cuban hoteliers to sell inventory through global Expedia group sites as well as allow travellers to book hotels in the island destination.

The addition of Cuba’s hotel inventory in Expedia’s Caribbean portfolio will open new possibilities for inter-Caribbean and multi-destination travel that may boost growth throughout the region. The Expedia group works closely with partners throughout the Caribbean to ensure that they thrive as the region evolves using tailored strategies and regional data to take advantage of the fast-changing market.

According to the Caribbean Tourism Organisation’s 2016 Industry Performance Report, travel within the region increased for the second straight year, a clear sign of interest by Caribbean travellers in exploring their neighbouring countries. Over four million tourists visited Cuba in 2016, up 13% from the previous year. Among those visitors were over 614,000 Americans, up 34% from the year before.

Demetrius Canton, Director, Market Management for the Caribbean, Expedia, said, “We’ve been working around the clock with Cuban hoteliers to offer this iconic, culture-rich destination to our global consumers, with the added convenience of online booking through a trusted travel partner. We are excited to finally announce our expansion into Cuba, which will hopefully allow us to dive deeper into the Caribbean region and help our partners thrive. By further strengthening the value proposition that we offer, our local teams will continue to help hotel partners set their distribution strategy and take advantage of trends to reach and surpass their bottom line.”





India's Biggest Travel Trade Show



www.otm.co.in

MUMBAI, 18-20 Jan'18

FOCUS ON BUSINESS VISITORS

## OTM is the leading travel trade show in India

With more than a thousand exhibitors from 60 countries, OTM is the largest travel trade show in India, on the basis of number of sellers, buyers and rented area.

OTM is held every year in Mumbai - the largest travel source market of India. Mumbai, together with its hinterland markets of the West and South India, potentially caters to 61% of all outbound travellers from India. In comparison, New Delhi, the national capital, accounts for just about 22%.

## Participation Package

	Per sq m Tariff *	Early Bird Offer **	
		Before 31 May '17	1 June to 31 Oct '17
<b>OTM Mumbai</b>	US\$ 395 INR 24,000	US\$ 295 INR 18,000	US\$ 345 INR 21,000

Firm contract for 3 years with rate freeze: US \$ 275 per year\*\*\*

\* Service Tax extra

\*\* Payment is due at the time of booking

# Early Bird Offer is strictly as per date of payment

\*\*\* 3 year firm rate contract on the basis of negotiated advance payment terms

To book your vantage stand at OTM write to us at [contact@fairfest.in](mailto:contact@fairfest.in) or visit [www.otm.co.in](http://www.otm.co.in)

## Some of our Partners & Supporting Organisations at OTM 2017

<p>Focus Country</p>	<p>Premium Partners</p>	<p>Partner Countries</p>
<p>Host State</p>	<p>Partner States</p>	<p>Official Travel Partner</p>
<p>Feature Countries</p>	<p>Feature States</p>	<p>Hospitality Partners</p>
<p>Supported by</p>	<p>Partner Airlines</p>	<p>Official Publication</p>
<p>Organised by</p>	<p>TV Partner</p>	

OTM is a trade show, visitors below 15 years are not allowed during Trade Hours. Rights of Admission reserved with Fairfest Media Ltd.

For More Details Please Contact : Harsh Agarwal +91 - 98306 88685

## OYO enters Bengaluru with its mid-market centric, Townhouse

OYO has introduced its mid-market offering OYO Townhouse in Bengaluru. After its maiden Townhouse in the Garden City at Indira Nagar, OYO plans to expand Townhouse hotels at other popular locations in the city including Koramangala, MG Road, Trinity Circle and Marathahalli.

Speaking at the occasion, Abhinav Sinha, COO, OYO, said, "OYO Townhouse utilises our



state-of-the-art technology and patented processes to deliver a unique hospitality experience. Townhouse's neighbourhood connect is a result of understanding that millennial likes to switch seamlessly from work to play."

Priced at ₹2500 and upwards, Townhouse provides a unique hospitality experience in the heart of popular neighbourhoods. By the end of year 2017, OYO will establish 25 Townhouse properties in and around Bengaluru.

Sinha further added, "We pride ourselves on our innovation-first approach to enabling greater convenience and predictability in the accommodation sector. We are extremely excited about this opportunity to present the modern face of hospitality to travellers in Karnataka. One just has to think of breaking away from routine on impulse and with Townhouse, a neighbourhood destination is there in one's reach. It gives me great pride to share today that we are also entering into a partnership with Karnataka Tourism Development Corporation to operate a few of the Jungle Lodge Resort (JLR) properties."

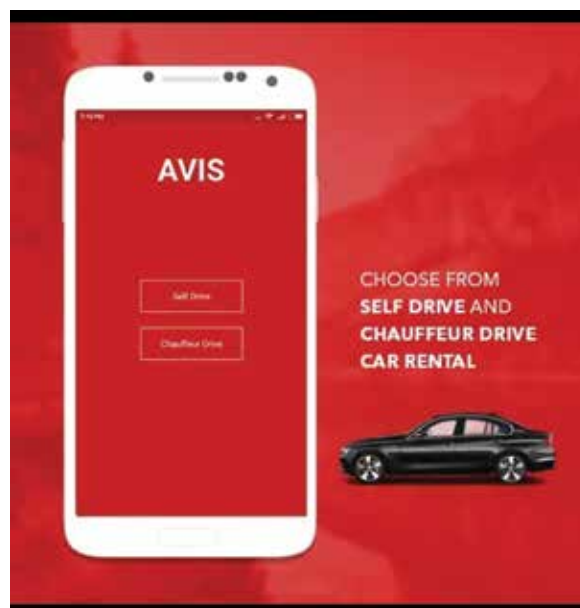
## Avis India introduces Self & Chauffeur Drive rental services through its mobile app

Avis India has launched its Mobile Application to enable Chauffeur Drive & Self Drive rentals in India.

Speaking about the new application, Sunil Gupta, Managing Director & CEO, Avis India, said, "We're always looking for ways to save our customers time and enhance the rental experience and that starts with the reservation process. Soon the Avis India App will also power our international self-drive bookings to Avis worldwide network of 168 countries. The App will also enable chauffeur drive bookings to its large network of corporate customers."

The new application, available online through the iOS App Store and Google Play Store features multi-touch booking, so customers can easily point and click on a vehicle for rent. Along with a simplified booking process, the App has multiple features such as managing bookings, 24\*7 Customer support, exploring latest offers, sharing with friends and family, etc.

"We use sophisticated telematics solutions to enable all cars to be available on a single web and mobile platform. The Mobile application becomes the navigation and key to your car once it has been booked," further added Gupta.



## Idea Money announces partnership with OYO to enable seamless hotel-booking

Idea Money, the digital wallet service from Idea Cellular has announced an exclusive partnership with OYO to offer standardised affordable stays through its Retailer Assisted Model (RAM) via Idea Money retailers. The partnership is aimed at supporting Idea Money customers with limited or no internet access, to book hotels online with OYO at their nearest Idea Money Retail store.



This partnership will allow users to seamlessly book an OYO across 200 cities in India for their leisure, pilgrimage and business travel needs. Idea's network together with OYO's network spread ensures that this collaboration benefits both retailers and end customers.

The Idea Money RAM will enable Idea Money retailers to access OYO and assist customers in viewing, selecting and book hotels online at a pocket-friendly cost. Additionally, Idea Money through its RAM and network will enable OYO to extend its standardised offerings to Tier 3 and Tier 4 markets.

Commenting on the partnership, Sudhakar Ramasubramanian, Designate CEO, Aditya Birla Idea Payments Bank, said, "We are happy to partner with OYO and add yet another service offering to our portfolio under the Idea Money RAM. This partnership is aimed at simplifying the hotel booking process for our customers and bring more online services to our offline customers."

Abhinav Sinha, COO, OYO, said, "Our network is spread across 200 cities including all major metros, regional commercial hubs, leisure destinations, and key pilgrimage towns, serving a variety of travel needs. With this partnership with Idea Money, we will further extend our offerings to the offline customer base in Tier 3 and 4 towns."

## Amadeus introduces Destination Insight taking travel to the next level



The latest product suite from Amadeus' Travel Intelligence division, Destination Insight, aims to put Destination Marketing Organisations (DMOs) in the know with analysis of up-to-date travel data, removing some of the guesswork often involved when making key marketing decisions.

By analysing billions of up-to-date global air travel transactions in near real time, the suite can reveal hidden opportunities for DMOs to boost their destinations' growth.

Steven Valcke, Business Intelligence- Marketing, Visit Flanders, said, "It's becoming increasingly necessary for DMOs to be flexible in their strategies. Thanks to Amadeus Destination Insight, the way we use data has changed significantly. We can monitor, on a weekly basis, the impact of factors such as currency changes on traveller demand in our target source markets and adjust campaigns in response."

Destination Insight is flexible, scalable and can be used by both emerging and mature DMOs, whether they are monitoring travel at city, country or region levels. Destination Insight has two modules, Top View and Navigator, which can be used together to maximise actionable insights and equip DMOs to compete for traveller attention in the right place at the right time.

Adding further, Pascal Clement, Head-Travel Intelligence, Amadeus, added, "One of the most game-changing aspects of big data is that it enables organisations to look into the future and anticipate the needs of customers. Destinations that can understand today's travellers through data and respond with targeted, effective campaigns will be well-placed to capitalise on changing traveller preferences."

## Lufthansa rolls out Book-a-Group facility

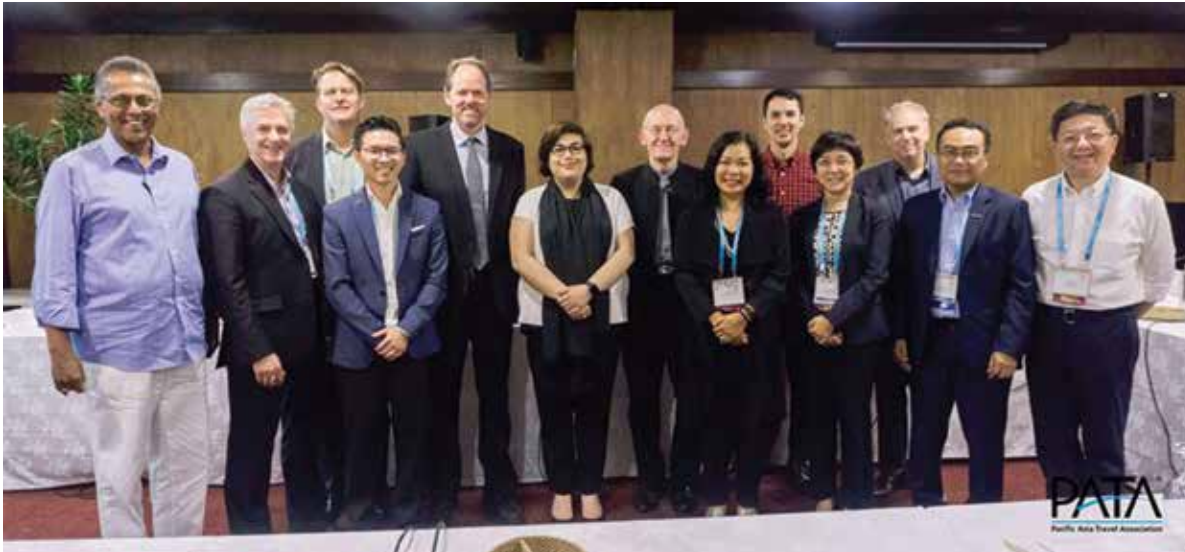
Lufthansa Group has recently launched 'Book-a-Group', its integrated group booking tool. It is exclusively accessible to tour operators, consolidators and travel agents. With just one online tool, they will be able to request group journeys for ten persons or more with the three network airlines- in any combination and bookings can then be made with immediate confirmation. It does not make a difference whether it is groups of private individuals, business travellers or tourist groups.

"With the new, integrated 'Book-a-Group' tool, we have been able to implement a further step in the harmonisation of our products and services across all network airlines. This will make it even easier for our ticket intermediaries to make group enquiries and bookings with the Lufthansa Group," said Dieter Vranckx, VP- Sales Asia-Pacific, Lufthansa Group Airlines.



Following the enquiry, the tool which is available in 14 different languages, will then deliver an offer and price quote in real time. It will likewise be possible to use the 'Book-a-Group' tool to make enquiries for bookings involving combinations of flights with further members of Lufthansa Group Airlines (Brussels Airlines and Eurowings), as well as with many other Lufthansa partner airlines.

## PATA elects a new Executive Board



The Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA) recently announced the election of Sarah Mathews, Head of Destination Marketing Asia Pacific-TripAdvisor based in Hong Kong SAR as Chairperson of the Association's Executive Board. She replaces Andrew Jones who was elected Chairman in May 2016 and who remains a member of the Executive Board as Immediate Past Chairman.

On her appointment, Mathews, said, "I'm honoured to take on the role of Chairperson for PATA's Executive Board 2017/2018. Our Executive Board this year is an example of PATA's diversity and expertise. With experts from both the private and public side on this year's board, we will continue the efforts of PATA across the world."

During the PATA Annual Summit 2017 in Negombo, Sri Lanka, PATA also elected a five new members to its Executive Board including Dr Chris Bottrill, Dean at the Faculty of Global and Community Studies, School of Tourism Management- Capilano University, Canada; Hiran Cooray, Chairman, Jetwing Hotels Sri Lanka; Jon Nathan Denight, President and CEO, Guam Visitors

Bureau, USA; Mohamed Sallauddin H j Mat Sah, General Manager Marketing, Malaysia Airports Holdings Bhd, Malaysia; and Peter Semone, Senior Advisor, Lao National Institute of Tourism and Hospitality (LANITH), Lao PDR.

Other Executive Board members include Stephen Pearce, Vice President- Marketing at Tourism Vancouver; Maria Helena de Senna Fernandes, Director, Macao Government Tourism Office, Macao SAR; Pilar Laguaña, Chairperson, PATA Micronesia Chapter, Guam; and Ben Montgomery, Director of Business Relations Management, Centara Hotels & Resorts, Thailand.

Dr Chris Bottrill who was elected as the new Vice-Chairman of PATA at the Sri Lanka meeting. The Asia-Pacific region is the most dynamic area of tourism growth which makes the role of PATA all the more important in the years ahead. I am looking forward to working with our exceptional board and dedicated members on a wide array of initiatives to further strengthen and engage our global network."

## Wyndham makes its mark on soft brands with the Trademark Hotel Collection



As part of strengthening its position, Wyndham Hotel Group, with an unparalleled portfolio of more than 8,000 hotels globally has launched a new independent concept for upper-midscale and above hoteliers: The Trademark Hotel Collection.

Trademark is designed for independent entrepreneurs who have built an iconic hotel and are looking to boost its distinctive legacy with unmatched support. The brand invites hoteliers who operate landmark 3-4 star hotels to maintain their individual spirit while taking advantage of Wyndham's scale, distribution, services and loyalty programme.

Lisa Checchio, Vice President of Brand Marketing and Insights, Wyndham Hotel Group, said, "Trademark isn't just another brand, it's a rally cry for independent entrepreneurs who aren't afraid to make their own mark. The Trademark Hotel Collection is the next step in our mission to flip the script on existing expectations and champion all hoteliers by offering them an independent choice outside the current luxury and upscale

options available."

The brand's pipeline includes more than 50 hotels and interested owners of both existing hotels and new construction opportunities in top urban markets around the world. The collection becomes Wyndham Hotel Group's 19th hotel brand, positioned among the company's smart and stylish brands alongside TRYP by Wyndham and the company's newly acquired Dazzler and Esplendor brands which embody boutique and lifestyle travel experiences.

Philippe Bijaoui, Chief Development Officer- EMEA for Wyndham Hotel Group, said, "Launching a soft brand that supports independent hoteliers was a logical step in our quest to ensure there is a Wyndham hotel for every traveller. Combining the support of a world-class hospitality organisation with the flexibility to meet the needs of independently-minded, entrepreneurial owners, the launch of Trademark makes Wyndham the only hotel group focused on enabling independent hoteliers to thrive in the midscale- and-above segment."

## CKGS announces Algeria Visa Application Centre opening at six locations in India

Cox & Kings Global Services (CKGS) recently announced the opening of Algeria Visa Application and Information Centres (AVAIC) at six different locations in India including Mumbai. The main centre is located in Mumbai while others are based in Pune, Ahmedabad, Goa, Indore and Chennai respectively.

The Centres will cater to all categories of visa such as tourism, business, work, family, cultural and press, accepting applications from states like Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Maharashtra, Goa, Gujarat, Karnataka and Madhya Pradesh. With this move, CKGS will become the main service provider for Algeria Visa in West and South India.

The Mumbai VAC was inaugurated recently by H.E. Hamza Yahia-Cherif, Ambassador of Algeria to India in presence of the senior CKGS officials. Speaking on the occasion, Hamza Yahia-Cherif, said, "We are pleased to appoint CKGS as our representative to manage the Algeria Visa Application Centre in India. We want to encourage more and more Indians to consider travelling to Algeria and at the same time provide a seamless experience in applying for visas. These centres will ensure that Indian travellers find a faster and reliable way to obtain a visa to visit Algeria."



Commenting on the new mandate, Venku Murthi, COO, CKGS, said, "We are happy to know that the Embassy of Algeria has put their trust in our proven expertise. All six centres in India will be committed to ensure excellent visa services to applicants who want to travel to Algeria. We are confident this partnership will make visa processing quicker and easier for travellers."

## Raffles, Hinduja Group & OHL D sign a historic property in London

Raffles Hotels & Resorts recently announced the signing of an historic partnership with the Hinduja Group and Obrascón Huarte Lain Desarrollos (OHL D) to transform the iconic Old War Office building in Whitehall into the most unique hotel and deluxe residences in London. The Raffles Hotel in London will be the heart and soul of this exciting landmark destination.

Commenting on the new partnership, Sebastien Bazin, Chairman and CEO, AccorHotels, said, "I am delighted to announce this long-term management contract with the Hinduja Group and OHL D. This is the start of an important partnership for Raffles Hotels & Resorts and will create a new and vibrant landmark for London. We remain committed to providing guests with unparalleled service and experience."

Speaking upon the development, Gopichand P Hinduja, Co-Chairman, Hinduja Group, added, "Our new partnership with Raffles Hotels and Resorts is a significant milestone in our vision to transform the Old War Office into London's finest luxury destination. Raffles brings a unique understanding of British heritage and tradition that will help revive this great British landmark."

Juan Villar-Mir de Fuentes, Chairman, Group OHL D, mentioned, "The OHL Group is extremely proud to be part of, in partnership with the Hinduja Group, this exciting project which, reinforced with the Raffles brand, is now fully aligned with OHL Desarrollos's strong commitment and strategy to develop unique projects around the world."

# Mission Vision

*A responsible approach to make our planet abled*

**Responsibly Yours- Guest Column**

A Lajwanti Naidu

According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), 15% of the world's population- approximately one billion people are estimated to live with some form of disability. UNWTO is convinced that accessibility for all to tourist facilities, products and services should be a central part of any responsible and sustainable tourist policy.

The UNWTO recommendations on 'Accessible Tourism for All' are meant to be used as a general, basic mainstreaming framework for ensuring that people with disabilities have access to the physical environment, the transportation system, information and communications channels, as well as to a wide range of public facilities and services. The recommendations incorporate the most relevant aspects of the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities of 2006 and the principles of Universal Design.

The International Year of Sustainable Tourism 2017 aims to support a change in policies, business practices and consumer behaviour towards a more sustainable tourism sector that can contribute effectively to the Sustainable Development Goals. According to UNWTO Secretary-General, Taleb Rifai, "This is a unique opportunity to build a more responsible and committed tourism sector that can capitalise its immense potential in terms of economic prosperity, social inclusion, peace and understanding, cultural and environmental preservation."

Sustainable Development Goal 4 strongly supports the reduction of persistent disparities among citizens be it in Education or Disability. Worldwide, in 2016, two thirds of the 957 million adults aged 15 and over who were unable to read and write were women. Children below age group of 6-13 years of age do not have an access to formal schooling and elementary education. Now if this is the scenario of normal population, what about that section of society which are suffering from some form of disability? These questions chanced upon me to contemplate on the Vocational Skills to be imparted to people suffering from certain disability.

Can Accessible Tourism be a part of Responsible Tourism? How can this planet be made abled from disabled? With several of these considerations and contemplations, my encounter with National Association of Blind along with Open Eyes made me understand the importance of education in Accessible Tourism.

Sensory organs play a pivotal role and of all of them eyes is probably the most important symbolic sensory organ. They can represent clairvoyance, omniscience and or a gateway into the soul. Other qualities that eyes are commonly associated with are: intelligence, light, vigilance, moral conscience, and truth. Not every soul is Hellen Keller nor our Tourism Policy is designed to make to visually challenged centric to access all destinations.

My interaction with Neha and Lakshmi at National Association of Blind gave me different perception to life. Both are trained therapist from University of Tokyo, Japan were clueless how to empower themselves economically with their inherent talent and skill. Open Eyes, a social Enterprise proposed a training session to bring these therapists to main stream tourism with certain skill development programme.

To integrate them into main stream tourism a workshop has been conducted to train 29 visually challenged students. That was the day I realised not them but I am visually impaired who could not perceive the importance of vision. Keeping in view of the above, I would



like to discuss two organisations as case studies which are contributing to the concept of Accessible Tourism.

Le Travel World of Sanjay Dang has created sensation who contributed more than 80 crores to the travel industry. His vision is to envisage a new chapter in tourism and travel. Dang's vision impairment has never slowed him down. His degenerative vision disorder started when he was just two years old. He was diagnosed with congenital myopia and had completely lost his vision by the age of 25. Always positive in outlook, Dang took this as a challenge. He started listening to international radio broadcasts to learn about developments the world over. He attended the Army Public School in New Delhi and then went on to study at the Kendra Vidyalaya in Bareilly and Dehradun. Cultural and extracurricular activities became an intrinsic

part of his life. Dang won awards in dramatics and also contributed to the school magazine. Travel and tourism fascinated him and began to dominate his inner world. His desire to learn more about the culture of India and other countries grew. This prompted Dang to work with the General Sales Agent of Pan Am for a couple of years where he learnt the intricacies of the travel trade.

Le Travel World was the path he chose when he decided to do it alone. The appreciation and accolades that followed made it all the more rewarding for him. He has received major awards from international airlines. Dang is quick to attribute this success to his family's support, the focused outlook of his team and to some out-of-the-box thinking on his part. He has also evolved skills that he explains, are normal for a person with vision impairment but come as a real surprise to others. Dang elaborates, "It is a fact that you will have enhanced memory retention and recall, as other faculties become stronger when your visual functions are not normal. A lot of friends and colleagues tend to ask me for information, such as phone numbers and addresses, which I am able to recall instantly. In general, one tends to have a better voice recognition capability than most others."

Voice recorders and other gadgets have helped him along the way. Dang relies on technology and is well-versed with the latest developments that serve as aids to the visually impaired. "It is prudent to keep checking at frequent intervals," he advises, "if these products have come out with newer improved versions as technology is ever changing." For someone who is busy at work organising trips for others, Dang is quick to confess that he is himself not much of a traveller. Given a chance, though, it is India where he would travel and more specifically, to two totally different destinations, Rajasthan and Kerala. Sanjay Dang is characteristically full of plans and projects for the growth of his business. On the agenda is an online portal that will help increase his agency's market share. And the waves of World Space Radio fill his moments of leisure, bringing rhythm to a life of enterprise and endeavour; a life that has translated into moments of reaching out to people all over the world.

Neha Arora of Planet Abled has brought a paradigm shift in the lives of people who are disabled and challenged. The very idea behind this initiative is that travel is not a privilege, it's a basic human right, says Neha. The differently-abled don't want sympathy but need empathy - they just want to be treated like normal people. "As a society we lack both sensitivity and awareness. As people with disabilities are seen around more, it may create awareness in society. Instead of staying inside, they should come out in the open and be seen in malls, stadiums, etc and travel like everyone else. Once, twice, maybe thrice people will pass comments or give those strange looks; but eventually seeing the disabled everywhere would become a normal sight. In this way, over time, acceptance and sensitivity would develop among the regular population," Neha adds.

As the adage goes Loka Samastha Sukhino Bhavantu, thus the above cases gives us an 'insight to sight' and 'mission to vision' to make the world accessible, sustainable and responsible planet to live and let live.



part of his life. Dang won awards in dramatics and also contributed to the school magazine. Travel and tourism fascinated him and began to dominate his inner world. His desire to learn more about the culture of India and other countries grew. This prompted Dang to work with the General Sales Agent of Pan Am for a couple of years where he learnt the intricacies of the travel trade.

Le Travel World was the path he chose when he decided to do it alone. The appreciation and accolades that followed made it all the more rewarding for him. He has received major awards from international airlines. Dang is quick to attribute this success to his family's support, the focused outlook of his team and to some out-of-the-box thinking on his part. He has also evolved skills that he explains, are normal for a person with vision impairment but come as a real surprise to others.

Dang elaborates, "It is a fact that you will have enhanced memory retention and recall, as other faculties become stronger when your visual functions are not normal. A lot of friends and colleagues tend to ask me



## PATA reaffirms support to Paris Accord on Climate Change



The Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA) has reasserted its commitment to sustainable development across the entire spectrum of travel and tourism with a renewed pledge to support the Paris Accord, within the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

Embedded within this PATA advocacy theme is an acknowledgement and recognition that tourism must play an influential role in preserving the planet's natural resources by adopting effective, sustainable practices.

PATA CEO, Dr Mario Hardy said, "Our members, both public and private sector, are leading by example. They recognise that responsible business practices must embrace practical measures to offset the potentially

irreversible damage to our planet caused by climate change."

He has welcomed the responses and statements of leading business figures such as Apple CEO Tim Cook and Tesla Inc; Co-Founder Elon Musk as well as the Governors of several U.S. states that have also reaffirmed their commitment to combating climate change.

Dr Hardy further added, "Now is the time to reinforce our determination for the principles and objectives of the Paris Agreement under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. This agreement has now been ratified by 147 nations and territories. We encourage more nations to sign and to support practically the efforts to reduce carbon emissions."

## Hotel Marine Plaza celebrates World Environment Week

Every year in the first week of June, Hotel Marine Plaza celebrates 'World Environment Week'. The day is celebrated globally on June 5 to raise awareness to take positive environmental action to protect nature and the planet Earth. It is run by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

Speaking on the occasion, Sanjeev Shekhar, GM, Hotel Marine Plaza, said, "Our environment week celebration is very close to Hotel Marine Plaza's heart as we truly believe in keeping our environment clean and safe. Every year, we pledge to strive towards a better tomorrow for our generations to come."

As a part of the celebration the following activities were lined up for their employees:

(a) Drawing Competition: All the HODs were encouraged by their team to

participate in drawing and poster making competitions with environment-related topics to show their creativity.

(b) Cleanliness Drive (Swachh Bharat Abhiyan): An awareness drive was held for the staff with an aim to address issues like clean, green and healthy environment.

(c) Environment Quiz: An environment quiz was held to create awareness and also included the questions on the initiative taken by the hotel to maintain a healthy and clean environment.

(d) Guest Speaker: Experts were invited to deliver a meaningful lecture on the value of the environment. A presentation about various environmental issues was shared with the staff.

(e) Sapling plantation: The staff participates in the plantation drive to make their surrounding green.



## Many facets of positive hospitality at AccorHotels

A year ago, AccorHotels unveiled its new, ambitious CSR commitments for 2020. The group's sustainable development program, Planet 21, focuses on four fields of action, namely employees, guests, partners and local communities, as well as two priority issues, food and sustainable buildings.

### Over 500 urban vegetable gardens

AccorHotels, which is present in 1,700 cities worldwide has committed to developing urban farming and to planting 1,000 vegetable gardens by 2020. Through the initiative, the hotel provides its guests with healthy and fresh produce which is grown organically and in-house. This initiative allows the hotel to provide guests with the best gastronomical experience, while also fulfilling responsibilities towards environmental conservation.

All the produce generated is scientifically cultivated using natural farming techniques with no use of artificial chemicals and pesticides. To sensitise the guests about the initiative and create awareness about the importance of environmental protection and sustainable agricultural practices, the hotel encourages guests to try their hand at farming as well.

### Less Food Waste

38 hotels in 13 countries are already using connected solutions to fight food



waste in their kitchens and restaurants. The initiative has cut food waste by nearly 60% in the pilot hotels' kitchens. That's a total of €540,000 in estimated savings.

To minimise wastage of food, ibis and Novotel Bengaluru Techpark and Pullman and Novotel New Delhi Aerocity have installed an Organic Waste Composter within the hotel premises. With the help of this composter, spoiled and left-over food scraps are composted which in turn provide nutrition to the soil and enhance its quality.

One of Planet 21's two priorities is to achieve carbon neutral buildings. In 2016, the Group cut its energy consumption by 2.4% and CO2 emissions by three percent. These results are even more encouraging because they were achieved despite particularly unfavourable world weather conditions in 2016 compared with 2015 since demand for heating and air-conditioning increased more than four percent.

## India's Only Global Travel Trade Publication

# travel News Digest

NOW ONLINE



[www.travelnewsdigest.in](http://www.travelnewsdigest.in)

For regular newsletters, email: [info@travelnewsdigest.in](mailto:info@travelnewsdigest.in)

follow us



**FAIRFEST**  
MEDIA LIMITED

## Sri Lanka hosts the PATA Annual Summit 2017

The PATA Annual Summit 2017 (PAS 2017), under the theme 'Disruption. Innovation. Transformation: The Future of Tourism', opened in Negombo, Sri Lanka on May 18 with 406 delegates from 191 organisations representing 39 countries attending the four-day event.

PATA CEO, Dr Mario Hardy, said, "The PATA Annual Summit brings together international thought leaders, industry shapers and senior decision-makers who are professionally engaged with the Asia Pacific region. Providing a catalyst for closer cooperation is one of PATA's key roles. Through such partnerships between private and public sector members, we stand on much firmer ground when seeking to enhance the sustainable growth, value and quality of travel and tourism to, from and within the region."

The Summit began with 130 students, alumni, lecturers and industry professionals from Sri Lanka and overseas participating at the PATA Youth Symposium 2017 with the theme 'No Barriers: Millennials and the Future of Tourism'. The symposium was hosted by the Sri Lanka Institute of Tourism & Hotel Management (SLITHM).

Opening remarks were given by the John Amararatunga, Minister of Tourism, Lands and Christian Religious Affairs, Sri Lanka and by UNWTO Secretary-General Taleb Rifai. The conference keynote address on 'Managing disruption through innovation' was given by Rafat Ali, CEO & Founder of Skift.

Pioneering publication designed to help the travel and tourism industry meet the United Nations Sustainable



Development Goals (SDGs) was launched at the PATA Annual Summit in Sri Lanka. Sponsored by Jetwing Hotels of Sri Lanka, this new publication 'The Olive Tree' is a joint effort between PATA and Bangkok-based Travel Impact Newswire.

PATA CEO, Dr Mario Hardy, said, "The publication's

title reflects the concept and thinking of peace and understanding. We must remember that travel and tourism provide the perfect opportunity for people from various backgrounds to share their stories with each other in the hope that they may better understand each other as human beings regardless of race, faith or religious beliefs."

## Bahrain hosts the 2017 Skal International Asia's Annual Area Congress

The 46th Skal Asian Area Congress was held in the Kingdom of Bahrain from May 12-15, 2017. This is the fourth time Skal Bahrain hosted the Asian Area Congress. The first was in 1983 followed by congresses in 1991, 2000 and now in 2017.

The Asian Area Congress 2017 in Bahrain was well attended with Skal leagues from all corners of the world. Skal leagues from Argentina, United Kingdom, Canada, Spain, USA and the Asian Area clubs under the Presidency of Asian Area President Robert Sohn attended the Congress.

The Congress took place at the Gulf Hotel with Sheikh Khalid Bin Humood Al Khalifa, Chief Executive of the Bahrain Tourism and Exhibition Authority



making the address during the Opening Ceremony of the Congress. Sheikh Khalid in his address pointed out that the tourism developments such as the \$1 billion dream project of a new Bahrain Airport, a six percent increase in the tourism sector in Bahrain, 12.2 million arrivals last year, five new five-star resort and hotels being built and that Skal has provided a good platform for the tourism sector in Bahrain and around the globe.

In his speech, Skal Bahrain President, Mohd. Buzizi, said, "We have put together an interesting and comprehensive program for all of the 125 delegates attending. There is growing interest in the heritage, history, culture and cuisine that makes Bahrain such a special destination."

Other speakers at the conference included David Fisher, President of Skal International and the Asian Area President Robert Sohn. The Congress programme also included the Skal Asian Area Annual General Meeting for the election of the Board of Officers for the period 2017 to 2019. The Skal Asian Area President Robert Sohn was re-elected unanimously along with the other Board members.

## Bhubaneswar to host IATO's Annual Convention from September 7-10, 2017

Indian Association of Tour Operators (IATO) has been proactive in raising industry concerns time to time and organise interactive activities to have the travel and tourism industry under one roof. The Association will be hosting its 33rd Annual Convention from September 7-10, 2017 at the Mayfair Convention Centre, Bhubaneswar, Odisha.

This year the tour operator's national body aims to provide an opportunity for the members to update themselves with new tourism product offerings by the state of Odisha. Ever since IATO's last convention in Bhubaneswar in 2008, the city had drastically improved in terms of infrastructure and its tourism products, creating an open window for tourism to grow.

Recently, IATO organised its interactive luncheon meeting at The Ashok Hotel, New Delhi. During this meeting, IATO welcomed Rashmi Verma, Secretary (Tourism), Government of India and bid farewell to Vinod Zutshi, Former Secretary (Tourism) in the presence of Meenakshi Sharma, Additional Director General

(Tourism) and Suman Billa, Joint Secretary (Tourism). The meeting also aimed to initiate and address the policy making initiatives undertaken by IATO and how the travel trade fraternity looks forward to seek the support from the new secretary.



## Thailand CONNECT launched at IMEX 2017

The Thailand Convention and Exhibition Bureau (TCEB) has recently unveiled the latest strategic marketing initiatives to attract business events travellers from Europe with the launch of Thailand's brand campaign entitled 'Thailand CONNECT: Your Vibrant Journey to Business Success', together with a strategic collaborative campaign, 'Thailand's MICE United IV'.

These two campaigns target the country's long-haul markets and aim to draw more business events from Europe. The campaign was launched at IMEX Frankfurt 2017 to international MICE delegates and media representatives from all over the world.



Throwing light upon the same, Vichaya Soonthorn-saratoon, Director of Convention, TCEB, said, "Europe continues to be an important growing market that contributes to the extraordinary success of Thailand's business events industry. During the fiscal year 2016, Thailand welcomed 106,501 business events visitors from Europe with earnings reaching 251 million euros. Globally, Thailand's business events sector enjoyed an impressive performance, welcoming 1,273,465 business events travellers that generated 102,936 million baht in revenue (3.85 million euros).

Throughout this year, all of TCEB's marketing activities will be implemented under the new Thailand brand campaign, entitled 'Thailand CONNECT: Your Vibrant Journey to Business Success'. The campaign showcases the legacy of three fundamental pillars of Thailand's MICE industry which are Diverse Destinations, Myriad Business Opportunities and the People of Thailand. These key elements are the highlights which differentiate Thailand from other MICE destinations."

Additionally Thailand through TCEB has been endorsed by the 100-year old Union of International Associations to host the prestigious UIA Associations Round Table Asia Pacific 2017 for the second time in Thailand in Chiang Mai from September 21-22.

## ATE 2017 witnesses participation from over 20 Indian travel companies

Tourism Australia in partnership with Destination New South Wales marked the 38th year of Australian Tourism Exchange (ATE) an annual travel and tourism business-to-business event, which took place from May 15-18 at the International Convention Centre (ICC) in Sydney.

The event was attended by over 2,500 travel industry delegates from over 30 countries, with participation from 20 Indian travel companies.

ATE focuses on building future tourism opportunities for the country. The event was kicked off with an objective to showcase products directly to tourism wholesalers and retailers from around the world, through a combination of scheduled business appointments and networking events.

Commenting on the occasion, Nishant Kashikar, Country Manager- India & Gulf, Tourism Australia, said, "Arrivals from India have seen a significant hike in the last few years and platforms such as the ATE play a huge role in making that happen. Over 20 buyers representing as many companies from India attended ATE17 providing them an incredible opportunity to connect with Australian tourism businesses. We believe this



platform will help them curate the best of Australian holiday experiences for our Indian travel enthusiasts."

Companies that represented India at ATE17 included Ascon Travels, Cox & Kings, Cutting Edge, Discover your World, FCM Travel Solutions, Grand Travel Planners, Pathfinders Holidays, Peekay Holidays, Pristine Travels, SOTC, Vibrant Holidays, Voyageur Lifestyles, among others.

Currently, India is Australia's ninth largest inbound tourism market, with over 260,000 visitors spending AUD 1.24 billion as at December 2016. The country has also recorded a double-digit growth in tourist arrivals over the past three years.

## ICPB Convention to take place in Mumbai from August 17-19

India Convention Promotion Bureau (ICPB) is going to host its annual Convention India Conclave from August 17-19, 2017 in Mumbai. This convention, also the flagship event of the association, will be the 10th edition which will offer a platform for all key industry stakeholders to come together and deliberate on making India a hub for international MICE events.

This was announced by Chander Mansharamani, Vice Chairman, ICPB, who said, "This year, we are also inviting heads of associations which are responsible for organising large-scale conventions in India across fields like medicine, science etc. We aim to aid the various associations in their bidding processes and hope that through this platform we are able to inform them about the procedures in order to get more international MICE events to India."

He further informed that Maharashtra Government is the Platinum Partner for the show.

## Philippines to host the 6th UNWTO Conference on Tourism Statistics

Policy leaders, statisticians, academicians and private sector will convene in Manila in the Philippines, from June 21-24, 2017 to discuss new methodologies to measure the full impacts of tourism. The sixth edition of the World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) International Conference on Statistics, an official event of the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development 2017 will address the topic of 'Measuring Sustainable Tourism'.

Supported by the United Nations Statistics Division, the UNWTO initiative 'Towards a Statistical Framework for Measuring Sustainable Tourism' (MST) underlines the need to measure the full effects of the tourism sector. The UNWTO International Conference to be held in Manila will serve as a platform to discuss the first draft of the MST framework and its future implementation.

A Ministerial Roundtable will inaugurate the conference in order to align efforts to advocate among governments, the relevance of integrated and reliable data to manage and promote a more sustainable tourism sector. Afterwards, a panel of statistical institutes will provide the opportunity to share experiences and practices implemented at global, regional and national level.

Besides policy leaders, statistical experts and private sector, representatives from international organisations such as the International Labour Organisation (ILO), the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD) and Eurostat will also contribute to the discussions.

# NO ONE CONNECTS AFRICA TO THE WORLD LIKE WE DO



Book | Pay | Check-in Online  
[www.ethiopianairlines.com](http://www.ethiopianairlines.com)

**Ethiopian**  
 የኢትዮጵያ

A STAR ALLIANCE MEMBER 



**Hyderabad, South India : 14, 15 July '17**  
 Novotel HICC  
**Delhi NCR, North India : 26, 27 Oct '17**  
 Hyatt Regency Gurgaon



## India's definitive trade show on Business, MICE and Luxury Travel

India is the fastest growing business travel market in the world.

Mumbai, Hyderabad and Delhi are major business hubs of India, with decent buyer potential of Business, MICE and Luxury Travel spending.

India being a continent size country the market is huge and distributed in different geographical regions. That is the reason why BLTM is organised in three cities in 2017, to tap the top markets of West, South and North India.

At the BLTM you will meet India's leading business, MICE and luxury travel buyers, and some of the high profile media editors. Our team is rigorously qualifying and personally inviting up to 500 top hosted buyers from all over India and additional 500 local buyers, in the top business travel and MICE travel markets in West, South and North India.

**BLTM is brought to you by Fairfest Media Ltd, the oldest and the leading travel trade show organiser in India.**

**BLTM Mumbai was co-located with OTM-India's biggest travel trade show, with participation of 1,000+ sellers from 50+ countries. BLTM South-India is co-located with TTF Hyderabad, with hundreds of buyers and sellers already committed to visit. The Delhi NCR edition of BLTM is being repeated at the Hyatt Regency Gurgaon, after the spectacular debut in 2016.**

### Seller Space Rate (for each show venue)

	Tariff *	Early Bird Offer **	
		Before: Later of 31 Dec'16 or 6 Months prior to show dates	Before: Later of 31 Jan'17 or 3 Months prior to show dates
<b>Shell Scheme</b>	US\$ 495 / sq m INR 29,700 / sq m	US\$ 395 / sq m INR 23,700 / sq m	US\$ 445 / sq m INR 26,700 / sq m

- Add 10% for Corner, 20% for Peninsula and 30% for Island locations. Add 25% surcharge for extra upper floor area. Deduct US\$ 10 per sq m for bare space. \* Service Tax extra  
 \* Payment is due at the time of booking # Early Bird Offer is strictly as per date of payment  
 Subject to terms and conditions of participation

### Entry Level Package

- 9 Sq m walk-in booth
- 3 nights Single / Double Room
- 30 appointments
- Mounted Flex branding

**Artwork Dimension:**

117 inch (W) X 96 inch (H)

**File Format:** JPG / TIFF

**Resolution:** 72 DPI **Colour Mode:** CMYK

**\*US\$ 5000 / INR 3,30,000**

To book your vantage stand at BLTM write us to [contact@fairfest.com](mailto:contact@fairfest.com) or visit [www.blm.co.in](http://www.blm.co.in)

### Some of our Partners & Supporting Organisations at BLTM 2016



**For More Details Please Contact : Harsh Agarwal +91 - 98306 88685**