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# M!CEtalk

A DDP Publication

Meetings • Incentives • Conferences • Events

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Winter 2020



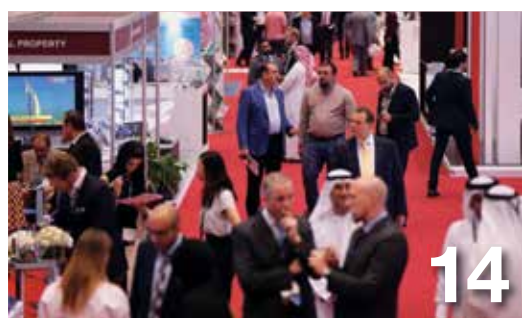
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# NEWS



## Hyatt Regency Portland at the Oregon Convention Center opens

with 600 well-appointed guestrooms and 16 suites, each guestroom features stunning views.



## The best cities in the world to work and live abroad in 2020

The Expat City Ranking 2019 by InterNations, the world's largest expat community with more than 3.5 mn members, reveals how expats rate life in 82 cities around the world. The annual ranking names Taipei (1st), Kuala Lumpur, Ho Chi Minh City, Singapore, Montréal, Lisbon, Barcelona, Zug, The Hague, and Basel (10th) as the best cities to move to in 2020.



## Oman Air extended its code share with Gulf Air to include Tbilisi, Baku, Gassim, Beirut, Salalah, Khasab and Nairobi

Shahzad Naqvi  
Country Manager for UAE, Oman Air



## TCEB unveils 2020 strategy

Chiruit Isarangkun Na Ayuthaya, President, TCEB, disclosed that the "Exhibition Redefined; 360° Exhibition Success", & hosting of The 86<sup>th</sup> UFI Global Congress in Bangkok contribute to growth." TCEB believes the revenue target will be directly achieved through exhibitions, which will worth 21 billion baht in 2020.



## More than 27,000 business appointments made at ITB Asia 2019

Over 13,000 participants from 132 countries attended the record-breaking show. In its twelfth year running, the conference programme brought together thought leaders from across the MICE, Leisure, Corporate, and Travel Tech sectors to explore how businesses can turn creative ideas into bold, yet practical, initiatives.

## Expo 2020 teams up with Informa



Dubai Exhibition Centre will host a number of events organised by Informa during Expo 2020, including the 20<sup>th</sup> Cityscape Global (November 10-12, 2020), Middle East Film and Comic Con (March 4-6, 2021), and the inaugural Games Con (March 4-6, 2021), dedicated to the growing online gaming community in the region.



# WHERE BUSINESS GOALS, FUN AND MOTIVATION MEET.

Mix business and pleasure in Singapore, with over 60 unique complimentary experiences to enhance your business event. Qualified groups can choose to enjoy dining and social networking experiences, thematic tours, attraction visits and team-building activities.



### Beachfront Dining on Sentosa Island

Create unforgettable memories by dining along the waterfront at Palawan Beach



### S.E.A. Aquarium, Resorts World Sentosa

Explore the aquatic realm at S.E.A. Aquarium, home to more than 100,000 marine animals



### Dragon Boating

Challenge each other in an exhilarating dragon boat race at Sentosa Island



### Gardens by the Bay

Be entertained by a private after-hours Garden Rhapsody show, complete with unrivalled night views of the city



### Sunset Cruise

Set sail on a relaxing getaway and take a scenic sunset tour around Singapore's Southern Islands



### Floating Donut in Marina Bay

Enjoy an innovative dining experience in a floating "donut" at Marina Bay



### Coffee Appreciation Workshop with a Cause

Enjoy kopi or specialty coffee masterclasses at social enterprise Betr Barista, paired with kueh tasting and hands-on latte art



### Immersive Tour of Chinatown

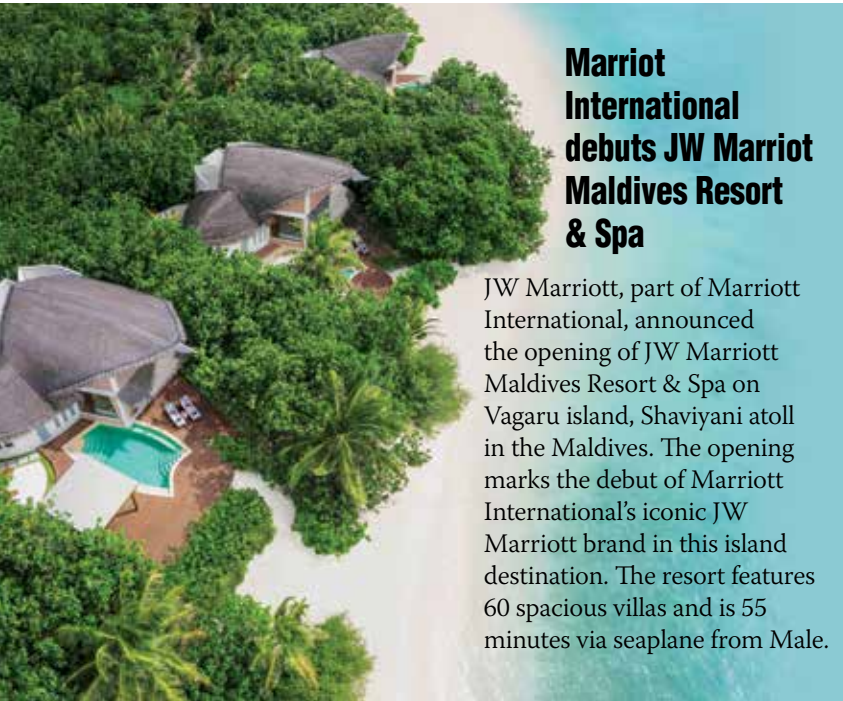
Join Mr Tan Ah Huat, a Chinese immigrant, as he retells the story of 1920s Singapore on an immersive walking tour



Register your interest and sign up by 31 March 2021 to qualify for this offer. Groups must complete travel by 31st December 2021, have 20 or more foreign attendees and stay in Singapore for 3 or more days. Send in your applications to [secb@stb.gov.sg](mailto:secb@stb.gov.sg). For more information, please visit <https://www.visitsingapore.com/mice/en/inspire>. Terms & conditions apply.



# NEWS



## Marriot International debuts JW Marriot Maldives Resort & Spa

JW Marriott, part of Marriott International, announced the opening of JW Marriott Maldives Resort & Spa on Vagaru island, Shaviyani atoll in the Maldives. The opening marks the debut of Marriott International's iconic JW Marriott brand in this island destination. The resort features 60 spacious villas and is 55 minutes via seaplane from Male.

The International Congress and Convention Association (ICCA) and the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) have begun to collaborate on a series of initiatives named Masterclasses on the Meetings Industry for tourism stakeholders in UNWTO member states

## Holiday Inn Resort Phuket announces re-opening after makeover



As part of its re-launch, the hotel features a total of 104 studio rooms, including 17 new poolside rooms. The new refurbishments also offer an adult-only villa area with pool access and poolview rooms, new facilities and exclusive indulgence packages. "We are thrilled to unveil the newly renovated Busakorn Wing where tropical sophistication meets traditional Thai luxury. The Studio Rooms and Villas meld heritage-inspired décor but with Modern Thai elegance," said **Bart Callens**, General Manager of the resort.



## Pullman Huizhou Kaisa debuts at the east coast of the Greater Bay Area

Pullman, Accor's upbeat and contemporary premium brand, announced the opening of Pullman Huizhou Kaisa. The hotel offers 307 well-appointed guestrooms, including 13 suites and 14 family rooms. "I anticipate promising business prospects from the leisure, corporate and M!CE business markets, as they experience firsthand the latest breathtaking landmark in the strategic location of Huizhou," said **Geoffrey Huang**, General Manager of Pullman Huizhou Kaisa.



## 'Team Spirit' in Seoul

Seoul's team building programmes with a leap aided by Korean culture is bringing more people into the city. With the richness in contents and ability to satisfy diversified preference, team building programmes are becoming a must-have for incentive groups coming to Seoul. In Seoul, team building is 'seollem'-meaning gentle excitement.

## New 'Flugzug' rail service between Lugano and Zurich Airport

Swiss International Air Lines (SWISS) and Swiss Federal Railways (SBB) now offer customers a 'Flugzug' rail service between Lugano Station and Zurich



Airport. Selected SBB rail connections between Lugano and Zurich Airport will be issued with a SWISS flight number, and the cost of the rail journey is included in the SWISS flight ticket price.

# Quality management

This study by the Association of Corporate Travel Executives in collaboration with BCD Travel talks about metrics positioned to evaluate the success of a holistic travel experience

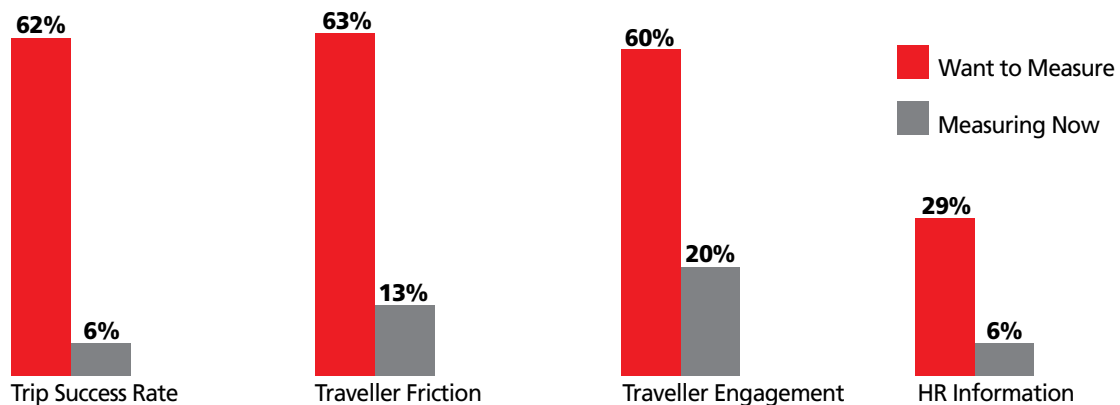
Travel buyers suggest that lack of reliable data is a key obstacle to better quality measurement in business travel. Almost 62% of the respondents find that many important metrics are difficult to measure accurately: available

data can be fragmented (29%) and unreliable (21%). As a result, buyers are left having to draw conclusions from incomplete data sets, creating a greater margin of error when making changes to the travel programme.

## HOW ARE TRAVEL MANAGERS CURRENTLY TRACKING PROGRAMME QUALITY?

We asked travel managers what they would ideally want to measure and compared it to what they are currently measuring. We found that metrics such as trip success, traveller engagement, and traveller friction are crucially underutilised. For example, while nearly two-thirds of those surveyed would ideally be measuring trip success rate, only 6% of travel managers are currently measuring it. This is a clear indication that despite recognising their importance, there are specific barriers that might be preventing travel managers from evaluating these metrics.

### THE CONSISTENTLY OVERLOOKED METRICS



## MOVING TOWARDS COMPREHENSIVE QUALITY

Travel managers highlighted the various benefits of using metrics such as trip success, travel friction, and traveller engagement in order to gain a more complete picture of programme quality. For example, 52% said that using metrics such as trip success and traveller friction can help the organisation understand traveller needs better.

### BENEFITS OF MEASURING OVERALL PROGRAMME QUALITY



Source: ACTE & BCD Travel

# M!CE fun in Philippines

At the recently-conducted session in Delhi, Philippines Tourism Marketing Office, India, kept participants engaged with special focus on Manila and Cebu islands

## Kanchan Nath

Philippines Tourism Marketing Office, India, recently conducted a series of trainings for destination managers in the trade, educating them on the unique offerings of the archipelago for all types of travellers, while also elucidating on visa policies for Indian passport holders and encouraging experiential travellers who already have an AJACSSUK visa. The first among these trainings was hosted at The Park, New Delhi; a total of 123 agents marked their presence at the event. Sharing some details, **Seema Datt**, Account Director, Philippines Tourism Marketing Office, India, said, "This is a series of destination trainings in five different cities, to give an in-depth knowledge to the trade. For instance, if a client were to visit Manila, we would provide the agent details on the attractions there, activities their client can participate in, getting there, etc., thereby helping

them make interesting itineraries. Such destination knowledge will equip the trade to revert to all queries their clients may have. Having begun in Delhi, the trainings will move on to Mumbai, Chennai, Ahmedabad, and Kolkata."

Soft adventures in the Philippines have become very popular with millennials. Datt said that so far, she has seen that the trade is very happy with this new format of in-depth information about the destination. "Since the generic view has been going around in the market for quite some time, everyone knows the Philippines.

Such trainings help them build exclusive itineraries and even minute details about the destination are on their fingertips

**TREND** Soft adventures in the Philippines have become very popular with millennials



Seema Datt

**The trainings will move on to Mumbai, Chennai, Ahmedabad, and Kolkata**

by the time they walk out of these trainings," she added. Outbound tourism from India to the Philippines has seen constant rise and has been growing at the rate of 20 per cent a year, which is quite a large number, Datt shared.

## WHAT THE TRADE SAYS

**For Rajeev Sabharwal**, Chief Executive Officer, Gaurav Travels, the destination attracts a lot of tourists primarily because of its pristine beaches. "There is Bohol, Cebu, Boracay, and even Palawan which has an excellent beach resort," he shared.

**Rajiv Narula**, Founder, Managing Director & Chief Operating Officer at The Comforts, said, "There has been a definite change in the mindset of the traveller and in the perception of hospitality as a profession, emphasising on the need to stay updated with the nuances of a destination. This is another reason for us to come and be part of such training programmes."

**Saurabh Tuteja**, Joint Secretary — North India Chapter, Enterprising Travel Agent's Association (ETAA), spoke of the destination as a must-visit for M!CE tourism. "M!CE needs a destination that is completely flexible and also offers nature and nightlife, both fun and ideal places for meetings. In my opinion, the Philippines has everything to offer for M!CE guests," he said.







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# Why visit Japan for M!CE

**Etsuko Kawasaki**, Director, Japan National Tourism Organisation shares insights on what makes Japan an attractive M!CE destination in Asia Pacific

**Yogita Bhurani from Japan**

**How do you see Japan as a M!CE destination?**

We have a lot of research institutes and academic associations which help international organisations to hold conferences and meetings in Japan. Also, it's a safe country with hospitable people who like to accommodate visitors from overseas, making it an attractive destination for the M!CE industry.

**How has the year been for M!CE business?**

In a couple of years, we have increased the number of



Etsuko Kawasaki

summer, colours in autumn, and snowboarding & ski in winter. These seasons provide a good opportunity to lure corporate clients. Our unique cultural assets – pre-sanctuaries, buildings, Japanese gardens – offer much by way of additional value to visitors coming to the country on business trips.

international conventions as well as corporate meetings from overseas. In 2019, global tours increased by 20 per cent as compared to the year 2018. With 492 international conferences in 2018, we were ranked first in Asia Pacific.

**What are your expectations from the next financial year?**

In 2020, we will be hosting the Olympics in Tokyo, which will enable us increase awareness of Japan as a global M!CE destination. We can expect more business events not

only in Tokyo but Kyoto as well. Sapporo, which is in Northern Japan, is very popular. We also have Kyushu, the third-largest island out of Japan's five islands, and Okinawa, which is the southernmost prefecture of Japan. All these places will accommodate visitors from all over the world.

**What makes you different from other countries in terms of M!CE?**

In Japan, each season offers different attractions, for example, cherry blossom in spring, marine desert in

**EVENTS**

- Olympic Games - July 24 - Aug 9, 2020, Tokyo
- Paralympic Games - Aug 25 - Sep 6, 2020, Tokyo
- Kansai World Master Games, May 15-30, 2021, Kansai region
- World Expo 2025 in Osaka, Kansai
- Asian Games 2026 in Nagoya, Aichi

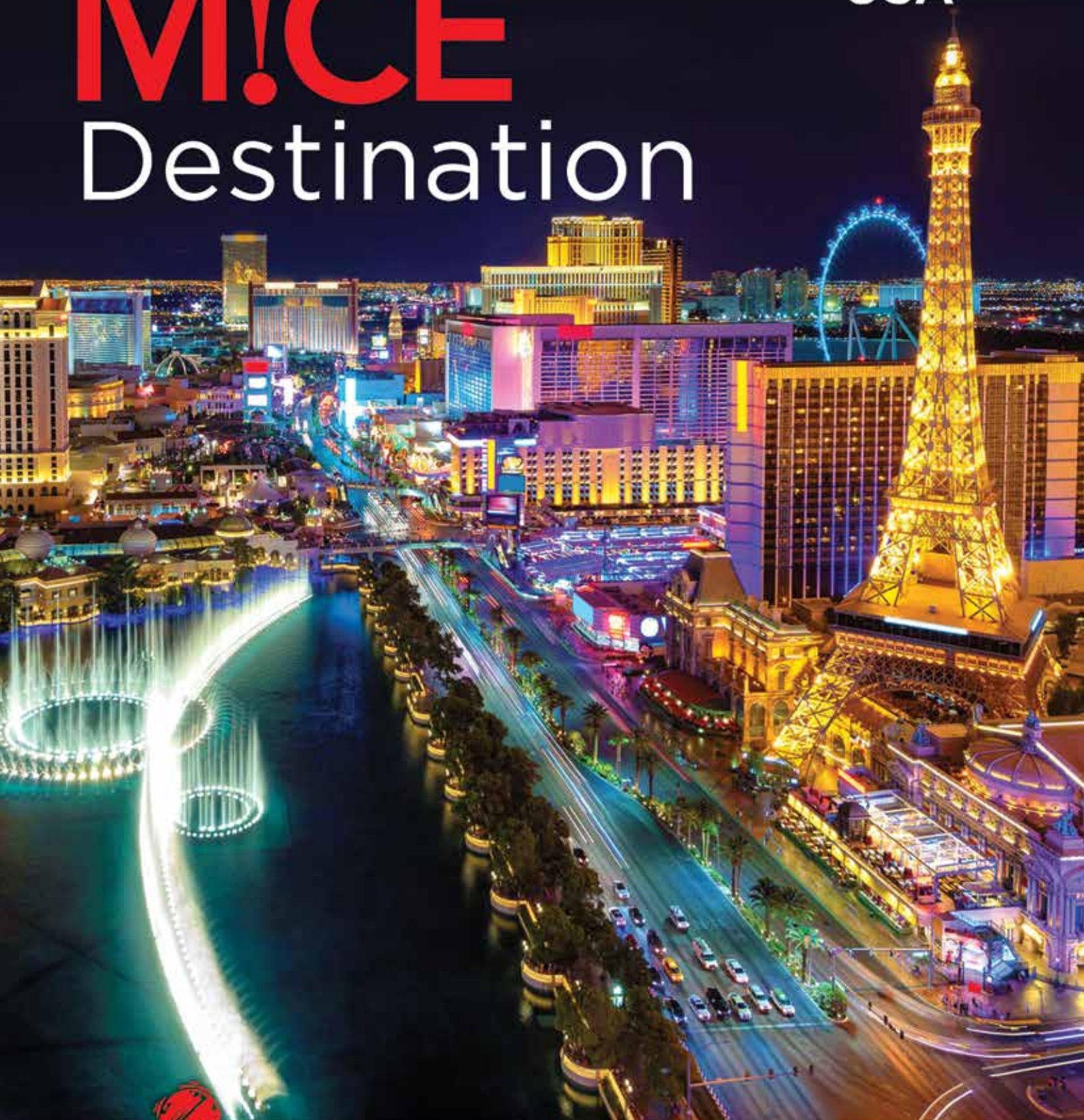
**How do you think of Japan as a destination for Indian travellers?**

We know that Indians are keen on doing destination weddings in different places. I believe we need to focus on the M!CE market in addition to leisure travellers from India.

**Is there anything else that you'd like to add?**

Probably many people know about the major destinations like Tokyo, Kyoto and Osaka. However, Japan offers a lot of other attractive cities like Shikoku, Mountain Fuji, and Kyushu, to name a few.

# Your Perfect **M!CE** Destination



# Turkey: M!CE for every size

Istanbul and Antalya, the former especially so, are considered as ideal destinations for M!CE groups looking to have excellent events and plenty to do

## Tripti Mehta from Turkey

Steeped in history, Turkey is not just the perfect amalgamation of European and Asian cultures, but also a country where the old meets the new. Natural and

manmade wonders, as well as shopping districts and abundant nightlife make Turkey's two prominent cities – Istanbul and Antalya – perfect M!CE destinations.

## Properties in Antalya for M!CE



### Rixos Premium Belek

Rixos Premium Belek's bed capacity is 1,700 in 700 rooms. With seven halls and a spacious foyer area, Rixos Premium Belek provides opportunities for events and organisations such as business meetings, conferences, seminars, and workshops. With conference halls and the convention centre on 2,300 sqm as well as magnificent halls of up to six metres in height, it hosts perfect organisations. Covering an area of 1,500 sqm with a capacity for 1,400 people in theatre order, Diamond Hall is the largest hall at Rixos Premium Belek.



**Ashish Gupta**  
Manager Finance  
Bajaj Allianz General Insurance



**Istanbul is the perfect destination with one foot in the East and the other in the West. Currently, direct flights to Istanbul are operating from Delhi and Mumbai, but not for Antalya. A group size of 150 Pax will be ideal for a single movement to Turkey, for top management as an incentive trip of intermediaries with their family, or for employee meetings**



### ADVANTAGES

- A nature lover's paradise
- Some of the best all-inclusive resorts
- Historical and heritage sites



### Rixos Sungate Hotel

Set in a 250,000 sqm resort with a one-kilometre-long private beach, an extensive spa centre and an outdoor pool with an aqua park, Rixos Sungate Resort is in the Gulf of Antalya coast. The extensive leisure facilities at the Rixos Sungate include a gym, tennis courts, and a four-lane bowling alley. It offers rooms, suites, and villas to cater to every type of M!CE traveller. The property offers 20 meeting rooms with a maximum size of 1,724 sqm and can accommodate a maximum of 2,800 people.

### The Land of Legends Kingdom Hotel

The Land of Legends is a theme park in Belek that serves within the body of World Parks & Entertainment. The Land of Legends rooms and suites are punctuated by whimsical touches of fantasy as well as modern conveniences like PlayStations and dual-screen LED TVs. Room types include Deluxe, Deluxe connected, as well as Junior and Family suites, and guests staying at Rixos Premium Belek can enjoy free admission to the theme park.



# Properties in Istanbul for M!CE



## Fairmont Quasar Istanbul

The property offers 209 guest rooms, including 25 suites and 40 Fairmont Gold Rooms, with additional 64 Fairmont Residences. Offering over 2,000 sqm (21,520 sqft) of meeting and event space backed by a team of experienced meetings professionals and an extensive technical staff, Fairmont Quasar Istanbul has the space, resources and experience to organise major events successfully, whether that's a conference, an industry event, a product launch, or a major salesforce incentive.



**Capt Sudeep Ghoshal**  
Head – Administration & Infrastructure  
Reliance Capital



Turkey has gained quite a bit of popularity among tourists and as a M!CE destination for groups from India. Therefore, it can be considered for both top management meets and incentive trips. A group size of 100-200 Pax should be good as it would enable us to provide more personalised experience to guests. If it is a management group, then the size would be approx. 30-40 Pax



### ADVANTAGES

- Direct connectivity from India (Delhi & Mumbai)
- Availability of Indian/Jain food is not a challenge
- Ample venues for any kind of event
- Great sightseeing destinations, good nightlife, varied shopping districts
- Events can be planned on-board ships on Bosphorus river

## Swissôtel The Bosphorus, Istanbul

The property offers 566 guest rooms and suites across five categories of rooms. These include Swiss Advantage Garden View room, Swiss Advantage Bosphorus View room, Corner Room Bosphorus, Corner Room Garden King, and Pool Room. Swissôtel The Bosphorus, Istanbul also provides a total of 5,900 sqm of meeting space and 29 function rooms, including three ballrooms. Professional planners assist with arrangements for meetings/ social functions.



## Raffles Istanbul Zorlu Center

The hotel offers rooms, suites, and residences divided across 17 categories. With spaces large enough for a car launch, yet small enough for the most intimate social gathering, Raffles Istanbul is ideal for any kind of event. With dedicated meeting planners, a Meeting Concierge, and a specialist AV team, guests have everything they need to make the event run perfectly. It offers seven meeting rooms that range in size from 33 to 328 sqm and can accommodate up to a maximum of 200 people.

## Pullman Istanbul Hotel and Convention Center

With its 403 rooms, Pullman Istanbul offers its guests the luxury they deserve. The property offers 51 meeting rooms with a maximum size of 7,500 sqm and can accommodate up to 1,750 people. In banquet style, the property can accommodate up to 1,300 people.



## Sofitel Istanbul Taksim

The newly-opened Sofitel Istanbul Taksim, in the heart of the city at Taksim Square, offers six meeting rooms with a maximum area size of 533 sqm. It can accommodate a maximum of 370 people in banquet-style.



# Exploring Qatar's M!CE business

**Ahmed Al Obaidli**, Director of Business Events, Qatar National Tourism Council, talks about the prime convention facilities and how state-of-the-art technology is making a difference to M!CE

**Anupriya Bishnoi from Qatar**

**Could you tell us about Qatar's main M!CE-convention centres?**

Qatar's main conference and exhibition venues offer PCOs and event organisers state-of-the-art facilities and great flexibility to modify the venue to meet their needs and save on set-up costs. Our two main convention centres are Qatar National Convention Centre (QNCC) and Doha Exhibition and Convention Center (DECC).



QNCC is one of the world's most sophisticated convention and exhibition centres, with a multi-purpose 4,000-seat conference hall, 2,300-seat theatre, and 3 auditoria along with a number of meeting spaces. It offers 40,000 m<sup>2</sup> of column-free exhibition space including 9 halls, which are adaptable to provide seating for 10,000 delegates for a conference or banquet.

In the heart of Doha's commercial district, DECC is a few minutes away from both the Corniche waterfront and many of Qatar's five-star hotels and only 20 minutes away from the airport by car. The exhibition area covers

29,000 square meters including five vast, pillar-free halls, capable of seating over 34,000 visitors at one time. Its facilities include a mobile modular wall system, high-tech meeting and conference rooms, a VIP hosting suite and vast underground parking.

DECC boasts an 18-meter high ceiling supported by a revolutionary cantilever roof, making it more versatile than standard exhibition halls. In terms of accommodation, Qatar has



Ahmed Al Obaidli

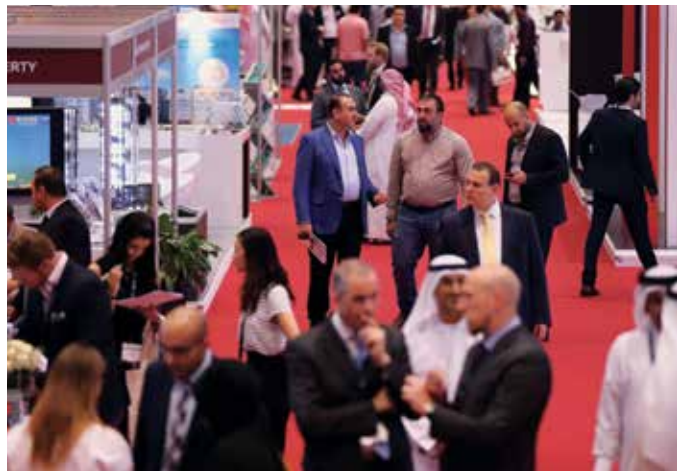
**EVENT SPACES** An exhibition area covering 29,000 sq m is capable of seating over 34,000 visitors



a wide range of offerings to suit all budgets. Qatar's hospitality sector is ranked first in the Middle East, according to the Guest Experience in the Middle East Report, released by hospitality and travel data providers Olery.

With more properties coming into the market, room supply continues to increase, across Qatar's accommodation market, growing by 4% in the first three quarters of 2019.

The total accommodation offering currently stands at 26,778 rooms across 128 properties. With everything from 4 and 5-star hotels to budget accommodation, we have a wide range of



hospitality offerings to suit all needs.

**And the current Incentive Programs and Support Factors available in India Market?**

QNTC is keen to ensure international event organisers, businesses and associations feel at home when doing business in Qatar. Our services include:

- Providing guidance and support to help PCOs and event organisers deliver their events in Qatar at the highest standards
- Connecting event organisers with government and private entities that can contribute to the success of the event

- Establishing connections with Qatar Financial Centre to allow international associations and businesses to establish local chapters or businesses
- Financial & in-kind support; assessed and given based on case needs and requirements

**How important Qatar is in M!CE offerings?**

As a rising destination, Qatar is gaining traction for its authentic yet modern offerings across hospitality, tourism and business.

Qatar is the most open country in our region, and we welcome the world to experience a unique destination where

**CONNECTIVITY**

Qatar Airways has 102 direct flights connecting 13 major cities in India to Doha to every week, making it easier to travel between the two countries. An additional 100 flights per week connect Qatar and India via the Indian carriers Indigo and Air India. This accessibility, coupled with visa-free access to Indian nationals, makes it easier than ever for Indians to visit Qatar.

that end, we opened a dedicated tourism office in Mumbai, which is now a year old. Its primary role is to educate Indian M!CE players (corporates and tour operators) with a focus on building strong relationships with corporates.

As a large market which continues to grow, India holds great potential as a source for business events. Its education and bio-medical research institutions are well known, aligning with some of Qatar's own priority sectors.

cultural authenticity meets modernity. Visitors can experience unique offerings in business, sports, culture and family entertainment, rooted in authenticity.

In addition to its authentic tourism experiences, Qatar benefits from a high safety record, easy access, growing event management services, exhibition capacity of 98,000 square metres and an expanded transport network.

**What about M!CE business potential from the Indian market?**

We are committed to facilitating access to and spreading awareness about Qatar's M!CE offering in the Indian market. To

Qatar's ability to host large-scale events, in sports, business and entertainment, and its ease of access from major Indian cities, including visa-free entry for Indian citizens, makes it a natural fit for hosting business events for the Indian market.

**Could you please share insights about M!CE movements from India (Biggest and largest pax last year)**

As we have just recently started working with the Indian M!CE industry, we continue to educate stakeholders about our range of offerings. We remain in discussion with stakeholders, and are slated to host events in 2020.

Sri Lanka is showcasing a variety of M!CE and events spaces for the Indian market and is keen on tapping the same, reveals **Kumar De Silva**, Chairman, SLCB

**Nisha Verma**  
from Sri Lanka



# Sri Lanka means business

**K**umar De Silva, Chairman, Sri Lanka Convention Bureau (SLCB), shares that after the April 21 attacks in Colombo, they want to showcase that the island is ready to receive tourists and there is no issue of safety and security in the island nation. “India is our largest source market for M!CE, both for us and from the Indian tourist point of view. We have a lot more to offer and it is a good time to show the agents the potential and diversity.”

He stressed that they see a lot of untapped potential in the Indian market. “It’s not just Mumbai or North India, but we are focusing a lot on Southern India as well, which has got great

potential. Recently we had roadshows in Chennai and Bengaluru. We are also going to Kolkata & East India, because we believe that there is a lot of traction we can gain from these events,” said De Silva.

Insisting that the primary role of the SLCB is to facilitate and support events, he said, “We primarily offer incentives which we believe could support the events, like a city tour or a dance troupe. But, recently we have introduced a proportional assistant scheme. However, that comes into effect only after the conference is confirmed in Sri Lanka. Otherwise, it becomes a part of the negotiating tool and then it gets diluted.



Kumar De Silva

Hence, there is a minimum three-night stay requirement in Sri Lanka. Also, they need to operate through registered agents in Sri Lanka and stay at registered hotels. After that we will look at a reimbursement of the event, which will be around 8-10 per cent of the accommodation cost, based on the criteria that the event is directly related to M!CE.”

Another highlight is weddings, for which India is a huge market, and De Silva claims that Sri Lanka does become a venue for many of them. “The wedding industry is primarily being handled by the Sri Lanka Tourism Promotion Bureau (SLTPB), but we are one product. When we have the opportunity of bringing in people to do M!CE as well as weddings, we want to showcase the combination of what they are also marketing, which could work for building the business for us.”

## QUICK FACTS

- India is the largest source market for M!CE
- Roadshows were held in Chennai and Bengaluru in 2019. Roadshows are planned in Kolkata & East India
- Another highlight is weddings, for which India is a huge market

**POTENTIAL MARKETS** Besides Mumbai & North India, we are focusing on Southern India as well



# The event biz in Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka possesses a host of state-of-the-art meeting and convention facilities across the island, right from Colombo to leisure destinations like Negombo, Kandy & Bentota



## BMICH International Convention & Exhibition Centre

Situated in the heart of Colombo, Sri Lanka, Bandaranaike Memorial International Conference Hall (BMICH) International Convention & Exhibition Centre is one of the most prestigious M!CE facility in Sri Lanka and has a variety of venues to offer for business events. The highlight is the main conference & concert hall, which is meant for international level events with the capacity to seat 1,600 people. It is used for conferences, conventions, convocations, award ceremonies, drama, ballet, and concerts.

## Heritage Negombo

Located only 20 minutes from the Bandaranaike International Airport and 40 minutes from the capital of Colombo, Heritage Negombo Sri Lanka, has a total of 139 rooms. Apart from its vicinity to the airport, it stands apart because it offers the ambience of a beach resort, making it the perfect venue to host any kind of corporate, business, social and private events. Offering a professional team to manage the event, world-class technology, dedicated service and tasteful designs, the meeting and convention facilities at the property take the experience of an event a notch higher.



## Jetwing Hotels, Negombo

Offering an amalgamation of corporate and leisure facilities for guests to experience sun, sand and discuss effective business strategies, Jetwing Hotels has five properties in Negombo, Sri Lanka, out of which four can be used as business-cum-leisure properties, while one is an Ayurveda hotel. Jetwing Beach, Jetwing Blue, Jetwing Lagoon and Jetwing Sea, are situated not too far from each other, but offer state-of-the-art conference facilities for India corporates. In fact, they are idyllic for Indian weddings as they present the best background and stay options for the guests, with all venues close to each other.

## Taj Samudra, Colombo

The iconic Taj Samudra overlooks Sri Lanka's historic Galle Face Green, and offers enchanting views of the mesmerising Indian Ocean, and the vibrant city of Colombo. With 300 rooms, it is the ideal choice for any corporate or even private event. The property offers multiple private halls and spacious boardrooms, ideal for annual meetings or training programmes, which can then be converted into a sit-down dinner. The Samudra Ballroom can be used for a wedding or corporate event, allowing guests to enjoy a mesmerising view of the ocean. Other venues on offer include, Regency Room, On Golden Pond, Longdon Room, Gregory Room and The Grand Marquee. Many of these venues are housed in the dedicated heritage wing of the hotel.





# Weddings take centrestage in Turkey

Inventum Global, Turkey's largest M!CE & wedding inbound B2B service provider, held roadshows in Delhi & Mumbai. **Necip Fuat Ersoy**, Managing Partner, IMWF shares more

**Kanchan Nath**

Since the company is expecting a higher demand from India to Turkey in 2020, they have invested in technology. Elaborating further, **Necip Fuat Ersoy**, Managing Partner, International M!CE and Wedding Forum (IMWF), said, "We have invested big on technology in the last couple of years. We are here to share our plans for the future and also to give our partners the opportunity to understand how to use the new technology. It's the most convenient way to book either a wedding or a corporate event. We have already packaged certain items like accommodation, flight, transfer, catering, excursions, and are listing more than 100 properties all around Turkey. Istanbul, Bodrum, Antalya and Cappadocia have the ability to list every property with

the technical details, plus the all-inclusive seasons rates along with the flight and transfer etc. So, it's a one-stop-shop and it has never been given to the industry for any destination or product."

On their growth he added, "We have an average growth



Necip Fuat Ersoy

ratio of 60 per cent every year. We want to improve that further. We have 85 per cent of the market share from India to Turkey for weddings and corporate events."

On the popularity of Antalya as a wedding destination, he said, "Antalya is getting more weddings, because of an all-inclusive concept. The hotels are new, big and the service standards are high. We have Indian chefs exclusively working for us."



**NEWS FLASH** We have 85% of the market share from India to Turkey for weddings and corporate events

Elaborating on the trends for destination weddings, he said, "Now brides and grooms are asking for things as per their taste. The next gen loves Turkey because it's colourful and exciting. Even as parents pay up for a destination wedding elsewhere, the youngsters insist on coming to Turkey."

# LA big on Indian weddings

The first US destination to open an office in India, Los Angeles is keen on tapping the M!CE market, especially the wedding and events segment from India

## Hazel Jain

**E**rnest Wooden Jr, CEO and President, Los Angeles Tourism, was on a flying visit to Mumbai recently to open the tourism board's India office, making it the first US destination to do so. It is headed by Seema Kadam, Los Angeles Tourism's first Regional Director for India. Along with her were Doane Liu, Executive Director at City of Los Angeles Department of Convention & Tourism Development, as well as Curren Price, City Council Member, Los Angeles. The delegation's focus was hugely on M!CE from India, particularly weddings and events.

Wooden Jr said, "We are very excited about M!CE from India to Los Angeles and one component which is attractive to us is the huge business of weddings. We have a particular interest in the wedding business from India and are currently trying to size the market. For now, we are going to spend majority of our time in our new office in a B2B effort to educate our travel partners in Mumbai and New Delhi as well as some secondary cities about LA."

Los Angeles has also seen a lot of interest from the incentive market, especially due to the Hollywood angle. Speaking about M!CE facilities, Liu says, "We have venues that can handle all group sizes and can offer unique itineraries. We have one large convention center called the Los Angeles Convention Center (LACC)



## WEDDINGS VENUES

- World's most expensive stadium, the SoFi Stadium, will be opening by October 2020. It will be an ETFE roof-covered stadium and entertainment complex in Inglewood and can be used as a M!CE venue
- Paramount Pictures Studio grounds
- Universal Studios grounds in Hollywood
- The Academy Museum of Motion Pictures to open in 2020



Ernest Wooden

in Downtown LA which is just under a million square feet when you combine the exhibition and meeting rooms. The challenge is that it was built in the 1970s and two major halls are not connected. This project to build in between the two buildings will start next summer. We are also constructing new hotels in the area. There are approximately 5,000 rooms right now and the goal is to reach 8,000 by 2021."

He assured that Indian food in LA is not a problem. While the Los Angeles Department of Convention & Tourism Development doesn't have any incentive scheme in place for M!CE groups, they consider discounts and special add-ons on a case-to-case basis. It has a M!CE-specific portal for agents and planners called 'Meet LA' that has all related information.

**PLANS** We will educate our travel partners in Mumbai & New Delhi as well as Tier-II cities about LA

# NEWS



## OTOAI elects new team; Riaz Munshi is the President

Outbound Tour Operators Association of India, OTOAI, has elected a new team. **Riaz Munshi** has been elected as the President; **Himanshu Patil** is the VP; **Shravan Bhalla** is the General Secretary; **Siddharth Khanna** is the Treasurer and **Vineet Gopal** has been elected as the Joint Secretary.



**PATA has forecast that India will receive 20 mn**

**tourists by 2024. John Koldowski, Special Advisor to CEO,**

**PATA, said that if the scenario remains the same, it**

**will reach the 20 mn mark in the next five years.**

## Penang to hold roadshows in India in January

Penang Convention & Exhibition Bureau (PCEB) will be holding roadshows in India to promote Penang as the preferred location for business events activities in the region. The tentative dates for the same are Mumbai, Jan 13, 2020; New Delhi, Jan 15, 2020; Chennai, Jan 17, 2020 and Kochi, Jan 20, 2020. Penang Convention & Exhibition Bureau (PCEB) is a state bureau established in 2016 to develop the Business Events and Meetings, Incentives, Conventions and Exhibitions (M!CE) industry in Penang.

## Indians can now apply for Polish visa from Delhi and Mumbai

Indian residents can now apply for a Polish visa through VFS Global with the inauguration of Visa Application Centres in New Delhi and Mumbai. VFS Global will soon offer Polish visa services in eight other cities — Ahmedabad, Bengaluru, Bhopal, Chandigarh, Chennai, Hyderabad, Jaipur, and Kolkata. Customers applying for their Polish visa through VFS Global can opt to submit their applications through the Premium Lounge.

## Russia to extend eVisa facility to Indians for all its regions

Russia is set to offer e-Visa facility to all regions of the Russian Federation by 2021, after offering free e-Visa to Indian tourists travelling to four regions of the Russian Federation — St. Petersburg, Leningrad, Kaliningrad, and Far East region. India is placed third in terms of growth in tourist flow from the Asian region, at 47.8 per cent.



## SriLankan Airlines commences flights with Air India from Delhi

SriLankan Airlines has commenced a codeshared, non-stop service between Toronto and Delhi with Air India, providing seamless connection to Colombo. The Delhi-Toronto flight AI187 will have the UL code UL3640; while the Toronto-Delhi flight AI188 will have the code UL3641.





# Decorum for coworking spaces

Counsellor **Shivani Misri Sathoo** shares tips on behaviour while taking up coworking spaces

**W**ith a boom in start-ups and independent professionals across various parts of India, coworking is attracting them for various reasons. Shared spaces are way economical compared to the traditional offices. Generally, they provide better amenities and give a better opportunity for social interaction. When compared to working from home, coworking spaces promote productivity and let workers connect with each other. It is no surprise that they are taking the working world by storm. As in the case with large organisations, a shared workspace depends on a code of conduct, which can be either understood or clearly laid out. If you are new to the world of coworking, you need to follow some simple ground rules.

## BE RESPECTFUL AND MINDFUL OF THE BOUNDARIES

Both in terms of the physical and emotional level, one should be mindful of other people's space. For instance, ensure that you are leaving enough room for other people in communal spaces, particularly when you have a load of items with you.

## KEEP YOUR NOISE DOWN

If you have to make a phone call, use the designated phone booth, step into the hallway or take a stroll. While in a group or teamwork, be aware to keep your noise to a respectful level because other people are using the same area for individual work.

## STICK TO THE ROUTINE OR SCHEDULE

By extending your client meeting or taking too much time to wrap up a call, you are probably causing a delay for others as well who need to use that rented space. While some hurdles on the road are expected, it is never acceptable to delay a fellow co-worker's schedule.

## CLEAN UP AFTER USING THE SPACE

Because workers come and go the entire day, you must ensure to keep your workstation clean. No one likes handling a mess left behind by a previous occupant of the coworking space, so make sure to put your coffee cups and napkins before leaving, in their designated slots.

## USE YOUR COMMON SENSE

If your coworking office space has a set of guidelines, follow them without any misses. This means eating only in designated spots, brushing up on the visitor policy and smoking outside the premises. And, avoid discriminatory conduct toward your fellow users, it is their space as well.



**Shivani Misri Sathoo**  
Founder  
Saarthi Counselling  
Services

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**GROUND RULE** While in a group, keep your noise to a respectful level because other people are using the same area for individual work

# Movements **Abroad**



**Adel Al Redha**  
Chief Operating Officer  
Emirates

Adel Al Redha has been appointed Chief Operating Officer at Emirates. He is responsible for Flight Operations, Service Delivery, Airport Services, Emirates Engineering, Crew Manpower, Aircraft Procurement and the Emirates Flight Training Academy; as well as Worldwide Network Operations including Crisis Response. During his 31-year career with Emirates, he has been instrumental in implementing Emirates' global strategy.



**Puneet Saxena**  
VP, Int. Business, Mountain  
Valley Travel & Tourism

Puneet Saxena has been appointed as Vice President, International Business and Head, Business & Marketing Globally for inbound and outbound Oman tours at Mountain Valley Travel & Tourism, one of the leading destination management companies in Oman. He has 20 years of experience working across different segments of travel, including leisure, MICE, corporate travel and special interest tours, with leading offline and online travel companies in both the B2B and B2C segment.



**Massimiliano Zanardi**  
General Manager  
Atlantis, The Palm

Kerzner International Holdings, the owner of the iconic Atlantis Resort and Residences, ultra-luxury One&Only Resorts brand worldwide and Mazagan Beach & Golf Resort, announced the promotion of Massimiliano (Max) Zanardi as General Manager, Atlantis, The Palm in Dubai. Focused on guest experience, this key role is critical to delivering the vision of Kerzner International – Amazing Experiences and Everlasting Memories.



**Mustafa Abu Al Ainen**  
General Manager  
Grand Millennium Business Bay

Grand Millennium Business Bay announced the appointment of Mustafa Abu Al Ainen as General Manager. An Irish-Egyptian national, Ainen has 25 years of experience in hotel management and operations in which he has worked for many international hotel chains such as IHG, Hilton and Rotana in the Gulf region and UK. In his new role, he will be focusing on elevating Grand Millennium Business Bay's reputation as a preferred hotel for both leisure and business travellers.



**Sergio Pereira**  
General Manager, Mazagan  
Beach & Golf Resort, Morocco

Kerzner International Holdings, the owner of the iconic Atlantis Resort and Residences, ultra-luxury One&Only Resorts brand worldwide and Mazagan Beach & Golf Resort, announced the promotion of Sergio Pereira. He has been designated as General Manager of Mazagan Beach & Golf Resort, where he will be responsible for the overall operations and strategic development of the award-winning destination resort.



**Hazem Aouad**  
Director of Sales and Marketing  
Mövenpick Hotel Ibn Battuta Gate

Mövenpick Hotel Ibn Battuta Gate, Dubai, has appointed Hazem Aouad as its new Director of Sales and Marketing. He will be leading the growth of the 396-key property with a steady focus on corporate business, strengthened leisure partnerships, and a strategic approach on meetings and events. He has 20 years of experience having worked in five-star luxury resorts & city properties across the ME. He holds a bachelor's degree in Hotel & Tourism Management from the Notre Dame University in Lebanon.



**Rene Meyer**  
Director of Sales & Marketing,  
Grand Hyatt Abu Dhabi

Grand Hyatt Abu Dhabi hotel and residences Emirates Pearl welcomed Rene Meyer as Director of Sales and Marketing. He has been involved in the hotel industry from the age of 17 and has worked with international companies. After moving to Asia in 2011 as Director of Sales and Marketing at Sofitel Hanoi, he became the Director of Global Sales for Regent Hotels & Resorts in Taipei. Mayer spent the past five years with Fairmont Hotels in Indonesia.



**Sherif El Mansoury**  
Director of Sales  
H Hotel Dubai

The H Hotel Dubai has appointed Sherif El Mansoury as Director of Sales. Moving from The H Resort Seychelles to Dubai, El Mansoury will be responsible for leading the hotel's sales team and will play an integral role in the development and implementation of strategic sales plans and initiatives to maximise all revenue streams. He will identify new business opportunities for The H Hotel Dubai and will represent the property at conferences and trade shows.

**CALENDAR**

## Mark your calendar for events to attend!


**FEBRUARY 2020**

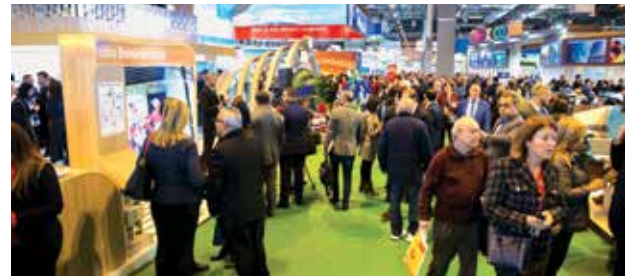
<b>2-4</b>	<b>MCE Central &amp; Eastern Europe</b>	Vienna, Austria
<b>9-11</b>	<b>BIT Milano</b>	Milano
<b>12-13</b>	<b>Convене</b>	Vilnius-Lithuania
<b>12-14</b>	<b>PATA Adventure Travel Conference &amp; Mart</b>	Sabah, Malaysia
<b>18-19</b>	<b>Aviation Festival Asia</b>	Singapore

**MARCH**

<b>4-8</b>	<b>ITB</b>	Berlin, Germany
<b>8-10</b>	<b>Routes Asia</b>	Chiang Mai, Thailand
<b>17-19</b>	<b>MITT</b>	Moscow, Russia
<b>15-18</b>	<b>OTOAI Convention</b>	Turkey
<b>24-25</b>	<b>Rendez-vous en France – Atout France</b>	Nates, France
<b>24-26</b>	<b>IT&amp;CM and CTW</b>	Shanghai, China
<b>25-27</b>	<b>UITT 2020</b>	Kiev, Ukraine
<b>31-April 3</b>	<b>PATA Annual Summit 2020</b>	Ras Al Khaimah

**APRIL**

<b>1-3</b>	<b>COTTM</b>	Beijing China
<b>6-8</b>	<b>IBTM Asia Pacific</b>	Singapore
<b>16-18</b>	<b>KITF</b>	Almaty, Kazakhstan
<b>19-22</b>	<b>Arabian Travel Mart (ATM)</b>	Dubai, UAE
<b>20-22</b>	<b>Digital Travel Summit APAC 2020</b>	Sentosa
<b>21-23</b>	<b>WTTC Global Summit</b>	San Juan, Puerto Rico



## FITUR 2020 celebrates 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary

Focus on strengthening International Guest Programs

The next edition of FITUR, organised by IFEMA will take place at Feria de Madrid, from January 22-26. The sustainability, technology and expertise, will remain principal axes of FITUR, to which the momentum of the shares will add, targeted to grow in professionalism and inter-nationality and thus overcome the results of the last edition, which brought together more than 11,000 exhibiting companies from 160 countries, and 253,000 participants. For this, the FITUR organisation has paid special attention to strengthening its International Guest Programs as well as the agenda of B2B meetings.



## COTTM, promoting outbound tourism

COTTM from April 1-3, 2020 at Beijing

Entering its 16<sup>th</sup> year, China Outbound Travel & Tourism Market (COTTM) is regarded as the industry's most important platform and remains the only business to business event that focuses purely on the burgeoning outbound market. Recent statistics from China Travel Guide state that by 2022, outbound trips by Chinese tourists will have reached 178.4 million and the total expenditure to \$179 billion. COTTM attracts over 4,000 Chinese trade buyers. The 2019 show witnessed new destinations such as Bhutan, Cuba, Dusseldorf and Ethiopia and welcomed back the Dominican Republic, Fiji and Montenegro, which demonstrates the truly international reach of the event with over 450 exhibitors from 70 different countries. COTTM's seminar programme for both visitors and exhibitors, as well as extensive knowledge of operating in the region, ensures that by being at the show you can improve your knowledge of Chinese travellers' preferences and requirements.

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the **INBOUND** business magazine

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Meetings • Incentives • Conferences • Events

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INTERVIEW  
**Tourism with M!CE**



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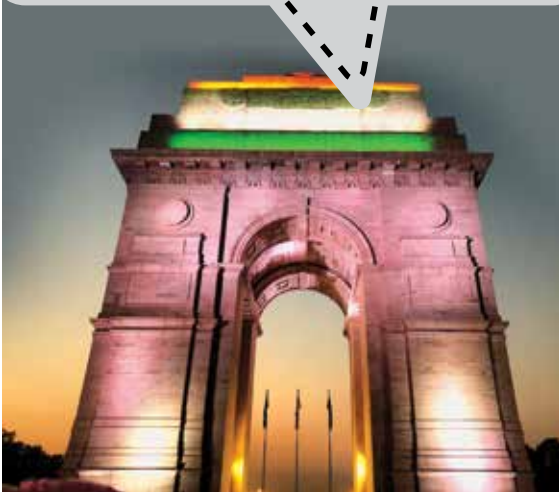
# NEWS

Over the last four years, domestic aviation traffic has grown at a CAGR of 18.6 per cent, rising from 89.6 million in FY2015 to 137.6 million passengers in 2019.



## Delhi in top 10 of world's most popular city destinations in 2019

Delhi is all set to enter the list of top 10 most popular destinations in the world, according to a recent report by Euromonitor International. Currently, the city ranks at the 11<sup>th</sup> position in the list of world's top 100 destinations.



## Indian LCCs to grow domestic passenger traffic by 25-30% in fiscal 2020: CRISIL

Firmer fares and strong passenger-traffic growth are estimated to propel the earnings before interest, tax, depreciation, amortisation and lease rentals (EBITDAR) margin of India's low-cost carriers to 24-25 per cent this fiscal, compared with 15-16 per cent in the last.



## Our upcoming properties for 2020 include the launch of Raffles Udaipur, Novotel Mumbai International Airport and ibis Mumbai LBS Road

Jean-Michel Cassé  
Chief Operating Officer –India & South Asia, Accor



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## 25 Indian tour operators attend Incredible India roadshow in Singapore

The first of the three-city Incredible India roadshow was held at Shangri-La Hotel in Singapore and witnessed participation from 25 Indian tour operators and DMCs along with representations from the state governments of Punjab and Madhya Pradesh. India Tourism Office in Singapore said that the roadshow provided a platform to the stakeholders of India's tourism industry to position India as a preferred destination for tourists of Singapore.

## ITDC to develop 5-star hotel at Pragati Maidan for ₹ 611 crore



The government has approved transfer of 3.7 acres of land at Pragati Maidan to ITDC and ITPO on a 99-year lease for ₹611 crore to set up a five-star hotel. India Trade Promotion Organisation, which manages Pragati Maidan, will undertake a mega project to redevelop the land into a world-class International Exhibition and Convention Centre.



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# NEWS



## International Buddhist Travel Mart & 2<sup>nd</sup> ABTO convention

At the inauguration of the International Buddhist Travel Mart and second ABTO convention in Bodhgaya, Bihar., **Vinod Zutshi**, Former Secretary, Ministry of Tourism, said, "I congratulate ABTO for conducting this event and it's great to see participants from 17 international countries. It's great to see private players promoting tourism in such a manner."

## Kerala Travel Mart 2020 from September 23-27

The 11<sup>th</sup> edition of the Kerala Travel Mart (KTM) 2020 will be held in Kochi from September 23-27. The venue will be Sagara and Samudrika convention centres of Cochin Port Trust in Willingdon Island. Announcing the event, **Kadakampally Surendran**, Tourism Minister, Kerala said that KTM 2020 will aim at exploring new markets for Champions Boat League (CBL), adventure tourism and M!CE (Meetings, Incentives, Conventions and Exhibitions) along with finding excellent global buyers.



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# Tourism with M!CE

**Amitabh Kant**, CEO, Niti Aayog, stresses on the importance of M!CE to grow tourism in India. IICC and Pragati Maidan are being developed to drive the M!CE market in the country

**Nisha Verma**

**A**mitabh Kant said that for India to become a \$5 trillion economy by 2025, the tourism sector can be one of the biggest drivers of India's growth and jobs. "Tourism has immense multiplier impact in the economy but its impact as far as direct and indirect job creation is concerned, is truly formidable. Therefore, if there's one sector which greatly creates jobs, it is the tourism sector and that's what India needs, growth with jobs," he stated.

He added, "I think there is a huge possibility of M!CE tourism in India and therefore the government is creating two global scale products for this sector— IICC near Dwarka, which is about five minutes from the airport, and I have been personally involved in it with

an aim to create probably the biggest exhibition and convention centre there. It will be an iconic exhibition and convention centre and will be the largest in Southeast Asia, at par with what exists in Shanghai. It should be ready in about a year's time as 50 per cent of work is already complete. We will also have around 14 hotels there. It will have a large-scale shopping and commercial development. It's like creating a completely new city in the heart of Delhi in Dwarka.

It will also have two metros linked to it, and the roads have been widened for the same. It will be the biggest M!CE destination in Delhi and the government has taken the initiative of giving this land of around 350 acres at just ₹1. In addition to this, Pragati Maidan has



Amitabh Kant

**I think there is a huge possibility of M!CE tourism in India and the govt is creating two global scale products for this sector**

been completely redeveloped again into a global scale product to drive the M!CE market. We have requested all other states to take similar initiatives to develop M!CE tourism and create similar kind of global scale infrastructure."

He also mentioned that there is a huge opportunity for cruise tourism. "We'll do everything possible to open it up further. I feel that essentially, other than Rajasthan, Kerala and MP, there are very few states which have realised the significance and importance of tourism and therefore the private sector needs to work with state governments.

If there are 10 state champions who drive tourism and take it to high levels, then Indian tourism will automatically grow. Hence, there is a need for state politicians and administrators to realise that this is the sector that is going to provide key growth, and in turn jobs will be created."

**FACTS** IICC is slated to be the biggest M!CE destination in Delhi, spread across 350 acres



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# S Mumbai's M!CE hub

In an interview, **Rupa Naik**, Senior Director, World Trade Center Mumbai, elaborates on the exhibition and event spaces available at WTC Mumbai

**Kanchan Nath**

## What facilities are provided by World Trade Center Mumbai?

World Trade Center (WTC) Mumbai is strategically located in the heart of the financial and commercial capital of India, providing an array of state-of-the-art venues to hold meetings, exhibitions and conferences, catering to all business requirements. The location is a two-hour flight distance from any major city and in close proximity to state government offices, major business hubs, hotels, entertainment zones and famous tourist spots. Our USP lies in providing the ultimate experience in organising business-to-business and business-to-consumer meetings in South Mumbai. Our facilities offer well appointed, centrally air-conditioned rooms and halls and are available in various settings, from large conference venues of 300 persons to small ones of 10 persons as per the organisation's specifications. The banquet rooms serve as an ideal venue for hosting corporate meetings, annual general meetings, press conferences, seminars, workshops, training programmes, arbitrations, business and educational interviews, among others.

The venues are well packaged with value-added services such as internet wi-fi service, electrical and engineering support, ample car parking, air-conditioning, 24x7 security arrangements with CCTV surveillance, empanelled contractors for stall design and construction, catering services, branding spaces within the complex, store rooms, telephone facilities, freight elevators and in-house audio-visual facilities.

## Please tell us something interesting about the inception of your venue as a M!CE destination

WTC Mumbai venues for M!CE were constructed with a view to draw the crème-de-la-crème institutions and organisations to organise international meetings and conferences. Besides, WTC Mumbai is a premier World Trade Center in India and a member of World Trade Centers Association, New York (WTCA, NY). WTCA has an unparalleled network of 326 World Trade Centers connecting trade



Rupa Naik



**We plan to use Artificial Intelligence and Data Analytics to help organisers in optimising M!CE events**



globally across 91 countries representing over 1 million businesses across sectors. The venues are in an ideal location and are constantly upgraded to meet the business needs of emerging entrepreneurs, overseas commercial and trade offices. Located in a prime business surrounding, the venues have easy access to hotels, restaurants and public transport system, most importantly the upcoming metro line three.

## What differences do you see between the M!CE sector in India and abroad?

In the Indian scenario, development of M!CE venues is yet in the nascent stage which is now gaining recognition as an emerging area. There is an urgent need to scale them up into convention centres. Internationally, convention centres are built to house huge M!CE venues with all facilities and services under one roof.

## How do you see the Indian M!CE industry?

This industry offers tourism services in which organisers and suppliers manage and deliver meetings, conferences, exhibitions, and other related events to achieve a range

**EVENTS** 100+ exhibitions and over 600 meetings & conferences are held at WTC Mumbai in a year



of professional, business, cultural, or academic objectives. Therefore, there is huge potential to promote the M!CE industry in India. There is an urgent need to identify cities that have the potential to promote M!CE events.

**How many M!CE events are organised at WTC ?**

About 100+ exhibitions and promotional activities and over 600 meetings and conferences are held at WTC Mumbai throughout the year.

**Which challenges in the M!CE sector would you want the government to address urgently?**

The government must provide incentives to the M!CE sector as a result of policy changes such as Goods and Services Tax (GST). It must relax visa norms through the introduction of eVisas for M!CE events and also conduct M!CE promotions through roadshows. Easing regulations that govern M!CE businesses would provide necessary thrust to the industry. There is a need to develop suitable exhibition spaces and related infrastructure in areas in and around large cities and areas where exhibitions can be held. There is a need for convention bureaus to register M!CE events as is done in states across

Maharashtra and cities such as Hyderabad.

**As a venue, how much of your business comes through M!CE?**

WTC Mumbai is primarily a trade promotion and support organisation which offers trade infrastructure that includes commercial spaces for both public and private sectors to conduct meetings, conferences and exhibitions, and also undertake trade promotion activities, research and education on international trade. It also provides commercial spaces for M!CE events. Approximately, 20-25 per cent of business comes from M!CE events. This confirms that there is huge potential to enhance revenue under M!CE.

**What are your future plans?**

We review and strategise campaigns for our venues as per industry standards. We resort to digital marketing and social media campaigns to create business models to achieve greater targets, so that there is 100 per cent occupancy. In order to keep up to M!CE industry standards, WTC Mumbai upgrades its existing venues on a periodic basis. Industry 4.0 offers excellent opportunity to use the content and data generated from various M!CE events. We plan to use Artificial Intelligence and Data Analytics to help organisers in optimising the marketing and infrastructure cost to organise M!CE events and thereby enhance competitiveness.

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# Weddings on A Dot

In an interview **Vinod Saini**, Director, GNH, shares details of their one-year-old venue A Dot, which has become a hotspot for weddings and corporate events in Delhi-NCR

**Kanchan Nath**

Sharing how business has been, Saini says, “The A Dot venue located at Ambience Golf Drive Gurgaon started operations in January 2019 and over the last year we have held 60 plus weddings here and over 25-30 large corporate events, many of which took place across two to three days.” On the USP of A Dot, he adds, “We are the only ones to provide such a large pillarless venue for conventions/weddings and events in the whole of NCR with ample parking space. Also, the glass wall facing the golf

course, promises a feel of the green landscape which one is starved for in the city. The venue has already become very popular with the automobile sector, we have had a lot of events from this segment including the launch of KIA motors, BMW, Honda, Maruti, among others.

We have also been working with other corporate clients like HMSIL, Gourmet Show, Make Me Up, British Telecom, EEMA, Amdocs and Entertainment Premier League.” “Some of the big event management



Vinod Saini

companies like Wizcraft, Touchwood Entertainment, Vibgyor, Gravity, Communicate and Expndt, among others have brought to life many events here. In terms of upcoming events we have a huge Ophthalmology conference lined up wherein 25,000 eye specialist doctors will be here for a conference between January 12-17, 2020.” On the popularity of the multipurpose event space as a wedding destination, he adds, “For weddings we are fast developing as the best venue in India. Many NRIs are looking at our event spaces as the suitable venue for weddings. Recently we held a huge destination wedding here by an NRI from Singapore. We have had other high-profile weddings like Haldiram and Bikanerwala. The advantage of having weddings here at A Dot is the flexibility we offer to our clients in terms of décor and opting for their own caterings. They can hire whichever lavish specialised caterings they want, we have high walls and strong ceilings that can hold up any major décor that they may be looking at.”


On newer projects that GNH hospitality has in the pipeline, he says, “We have an upcoming project on Sohna road. The event space is coming up in 2.5 acres, it will cater to groups up to 1,000 Pax, corporates as well as the social and weddings segment. Also, we will be aggressively pushing sales to further popularise our multipurpose event space venue, A Dot, for corporate events as well as weddings.”

**USP** We are the only ones to provide such a large pillarless venue for conventions/weddings

## A Dot FACT FILE

- 2,00,000 sq. ft. of banqueting space
- Pillarless Hall of 60,000 sq ft
- Clear height of 35 ft.
- Venue can accommodate 400 - 12,000 guests in a single gathering
- Experience hall, convention hall and Club Xs alongside vast space for breakaway sessions
- Parking for up to 1,500-1,800 cars





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# One fine rate for all M!CE planners

Onefinerate.com offers M!CE bookers access to hotels matching their event criteria. **Ravish Swarup**, Founder CEO of Onefinerate.com, shares insights on the travel portal

**Kanchan Nath**

## Kindly share the USP of your company.

Onefinerate.com or OFR is one-of-its-kind travel marketplace designed for both B2C and B2B business. At this stage, OFR is being introduced with B2B/M!CE offering only. As a revenue enhancing business model, it allows forging of new relationships where none existed before. The hotels can distribute contracted rates directly to travel agents that they wish to work with, who in turn get rates and inventory to reserve a hotel room. The transactions take 45 seconds to conclude.

'Quote Your Rate' is another industry first feature that allows travel agents to submit their preferred rate to the hotel for consideration. Notifications of such sales enquiries are sent instantly to the hotel who either accepts, rejects or gives a counter offer with or without inclusions, all in a matter of a few seconds. The portal provides travel agents / M!CE planners / conference organisers / event & wedding planners the ability to send Request for Proposal (RFP) instantly to shortlisted hotels based on their requirements and room budget.

## What do you offer to your travel agent partners?

Onefinerate.com gives its travel agent partners & M!CE bookers easy & direct access to hotels that match their event criteria. RFP is



Ravish Swarup

sent instantly to the selected hotels for them, with a prompt, to respond to the booker at the earliest.

## What do you offer to your hotel partners?

By enabling rates and inventory to travel agents across the length and breadth of the country, Onefinerate.com will introduce points of sales that hotels had never known or worked with before. Equipped with distribution savviness, hotels can engage in frequent marketing campaigns of their electronic brochures, special offers which can be delivered to the mailbox of the travel agents instantly. Should a hotel decide to offer override commission to a set of agents for the next three hours only and then withdraw the offer, the model allows the possibility.

## How does the technology that you offer help to grow your clients' bottom line?

Onefinerate.com addresses the key pain points of both the M!CE bookers & hotels



## TECHNOLOGY Complex algorithms identify & match the bookers requirements with hotel rates

### QUICK FACTS

- OFR is one-of-its-kind travel marketplace designed for B2C and B2B business
- 'Quote Your Rate' allows travel agents to submit their preferred rate to the hotel
- OFR addresses key pain points of M!CE bookers & hotels like lead generation, access & faster response times

like lead generation, access & faster response times. The OFR team has developed complex algorithms that identify & match the bookers requirements with the availability & rates offered by hotels. This leads to a shorter 'selling cycle' thereby helping both parties to close deals in a shorter window of time. Incremental sales & revenue for hotels with minimal use of their resources adds to their bottom line and at the same time gives the bookers an opportunity to secure business faster.

## What plans do you have lined up for 2020?

2020 will be all about adding hotel partners & M!CE bookers to the platform.

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# Innovate to evolve

In an interview, **Debasish Bhowmik**, COO, Clarks Shiraz, Agra, elaborates on M!CE trends and facilities that the hotel offers for events and conferences

**What are the latest trends on technology for M!CE across India as well as globally?**

The latest trends in M!CE are facial recognition, one voice command on all equipment, Google glasses connection to your laptop (augmented reality), planners of social media for an event (pre and post event marketing), restricted usage of drones, and 360 degree feedback system (immediate response, live poll etc).

In the M!CE race, the ones leveraging technology to innovate and create an indispensable experience stand tall, making the ground much harder to cross for others who are stuck with traditional methods of execution.

**What is the new kind of technology that your venues offer for M!CE events?**

The venues are equipped with all modern-day technology like Wi-Fi-Bluetooth-voice command



Debasish Bhowmik



## VENUES

- **Shehnaz A**  
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Theatre: 96 pax
- **Shehnaz**  
Area: 5,000 sq. ft.  
Theatre: 525 pax
- **Shehnaz Lawn**  
Area: 12,000 sq. ft.  
Reception: 1,000 pax
- **Akbar**  
Area: 2,940 sq. ft.  
Theatre: 300 pax
- **Akbar Lawn**  
Area: 8,400 sq. ft.  
Reception: 700 pax
- **Arjumand**  
Area: 780 sq. ft.  
Boardroom: 36 pax
- **Maryam**  
Area: 2,200 sq. ft.  
Reception: 100 pax

AV kits and can be modified/installed with every technological aspect as per the current trend.

**How do you provide special customisation for specific events?**

We have always felt that human connect is still the best and believe in creating memories rather than considering it as an event. For best customisation we believe in empathy and step into the shoes of our guest to know views regarding food menus or setups including the technical part as well.

**Kindly elaborate on how Agra is developing as a M!CE and wedding destination.**

Agra is a popular M!CE

destination and has the best to offer in terms of any event, whether corporate or social. The city of Taj is already much in demand for destination weddings as it offers unmatched hospitality and curations. The government has also helped by connecting Agra to nearby major cities and opening sites suitable for weddings and M!CE.

**What infrastructure and venues does UP offer for M!CE?**

Uttar Pradesh has a lot to offer in terms of hosting an event, the state has better connectivity to NCR and also has well-known historical as well as new venues to host any occasion or corporate affair.



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The Petrotech 2019 event which was curated by Paras Art Studio

# Paras: ‘Stand’ing tall

In an interview, **Nimit Soni**, Business Head, Paras Art Studio shares insights about his company, trends in technology, soundproof halls, 2020 lineup and more

**Kanchan Nath**

**Kindly share the USP of your company.**

We at Paras Art Studio specialise in providing turnkey services for exhibitions, events and conferences in India and abroad. We have been in this business for more than 60 years now and have one of the largest infrastructure/production based out of New Delhi. We have the expertise to provide services for stand construction in India and abroad, large scale outdoor construction, events and conferences setups across India.



Nimit Soni

**What have you done in terms of technology?**

We have started integrated technology solutions for our different services. We strongly believe in the power of technology and the need to upgrade ourselves on a daily basis. We are capable of providing technology at



**INNOVATION** We were one of the first companies in India to design and produce makeshift washrooms

par with any global company at a much lesser cost.

**What are the trends in terms of temporary soundproof halls?**

These days a lot of large-scale events have the requirement to build soundproof halls and most of the venues in our country today don't have many existing built-up soundproof hall facilities. That's where the need arises, building soundproof halls of different capacities in one single hall.

Depending on the budget and event requirement we have in the past built 100 per cent soundproof halls of capacities up to 1,000 pax.

**What are the trends in building hygienic temporary bathrooms for tented events?**

A lot of events happen outdoor in complete makeshift infrastructure. Earlier companies used to provide chemical washrooms also commonly called as porta loos. There used to be a lot

of complaints about the hygiene for these kind of washrooms. This problem made way to find a solution. And hence luxury toilet vans were introduced. But these vans had limited capacity and hence we had to overcome the problem for capacity. About five years ago, we were one of the first companies in India to design and produce makeshift washrooms. These washrooms are as good any five-star hotel washrooms in terms ambience, hygiene and functionality.

**What are the projects that you have lined up for 2020?**

We are ending 2019 on a good note with large scale projects like Petrotech 2019, AIOC 2019, India Pavilion at EEF2019, to name a few. We are all geared up to welcome 2020 with projects lined up for Auto Expo, Elecrama, and Convergence. We are the official show contractor for a medical conference with over 8,000 Pax to be held at an outdoor venue in Agra.



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# ‘42% of tourism coming to India is M!CE’

In an interview, **Amaresh Tiwari**, Vice Chairman, India Convention Promotion Bureau (ICPB) tells us about the association’s plans and past year’s achievements

**Kanchan Nath**

**E**laborating on the plans for ICPB in 2020, Tiwari said, “We are planning on conducting international roadshows in 2020 along with IMEX Frankfurt to London, Paris, Amsterdam and Brussels. We will also focus on domestic seminars, regional conferences, knowledge hubs and monthly meetings for the members. We will be starting our research and development wings where we are going to have the publications as well as research studies. We will also be engaging with the academy and institutions.”

He added, “My agenda is to make the bureau more efficient and give more value proposition to the members, to market India as a M!CE destination at the right platform, to engage the various stakeholders, create a positive image about India, and dispel the notion that we are not capable of holding large conferences and events.”

On the M!CE market, he added, “The GST getting reduced from 28 per cent to 18 per cent has also given a boost to the M!CE industry. As per International Congress and Convention Association (ICCA) data, 42 per cent of tourism coming into the country is because of M!CE. The M!CE travellers spend three times more than the other travellers. This is because when the M!CE travellers come they are hosted by the

associations, corporates, or their companies, so they have a lot of money at their disposal and hence spend more. M!CE is the key for growth to any country and India being the sixth largest economy, as well as a knowledge hub with more than 400 universities, technical universities,



Amaresh Tiwari

bigger conferences we are building the infrastructure.” On achievements of ICPB in 2019, he said, “In 2019 we successfully concluded the Conventions India Conclave which we did at the Grand Hyatt Kochi Bolgatty in Kerala. We had about 39 international buyers and nearly 150 domestic buyers.

Among the buyers we had a mixed lot of association members, medical, non-medical, corporates. We had around 75 exhibitors that participated there as well. In all we had around 300 participants and Senthil Gopinath, CEO, ICCA came in as a keynote speaker.

We had the domestic buyer roadshow for Odisha and Goa as well as other parts. Along with ICCA we had also organised project management and bidding training programme which went off really well. We also held international roadshows to promote India as a M!CE destination.”

“Last year we worked quite hard to get the e-Visa for the conferences. Earlier it was only allowed for the government conferences, now it is also allowed for the private conferences. We have been trying to get across to the Ministry to give us more of bidding support for big inbound conferences. The Ministry of Tourism also commissioned a study on the size of the M!CE market. We want to work to help it grow further,” he concluded.



**QUICK BYTE** As per ICCA report, more than 80 per cent conferences are held for less than 500 people

large number of doctors, engineers, the future for M!CE in the country is huge. ICPB has a key role to play for the same. The way the membership is coming up, it bodes well for the association. As per ICCA report, more than 80 per cent conferences are held for less than 500 people. For 80 per cent people in India we already have the infrastructure and resources available. For the



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CALENDAR

# Mark your dates for upcoming M!CE events



FEBRUARY 2020

1	Nepal Sales Mission	Kochi
3-5	OTM	Mumbai
11	Visit Finland Sales Mission	Mumbai
13	Visit Finland Sales Mission	Delhi
14-16	India Travel Mart	Goa
17-18	ONYX Hospitality Sales Mission	Delhi
19	ONYX Hospitality Sales Mission	Kolkata
20	ONYX Hospitality Sales Mission	Mumbai
21-23	India International Travel Mart (IITM)	Kolkata

MARCH

13	International Travel Roadshow	Chennai
14	International Travel Roadshow	Bengaluru
17	International Travel Roadshow	Hyderabad
18	International Travel Roadshow	Mumbai
18	Outbound Travel Roadshow	Ahmedabad
20	Outbound Travel Roadshow	Delhi
21	International Travel Roadshow	Delhi
20-22	India Travel Mart	Chandigarh
20-22	India International Travel Exhibition (IITE)	Bhubaneswar

APRIL

1-2	HICSA	Mumbai
2-3	Medical Health Tourism	Mumbai
8-9	3 <sup>rd</sup> Edition M!CE Conclave	Mumbai
15-17	ITB India	Mumbai
19-21	Great Indian Travel Bazaar	Jaipur



Picture Courtesy: Le Meridien Goa, Calangute

## Goa's performance ranked best in tourism: WTTCII

The World Travel & Tourism Council India Initiative (WTTCII) and Hotelivate has released the sixth edition of the India State Ranking Survey along with an award ceremony to felicitate the best-performing states. Goa has been awarded the 'Destination Leadership Award 2019 for the overall best performance in 2019 where the state has managed to score 121 points out of 165, followed by Tamil Nadu which scored 111 points and Delhi which managed to fetch 110 points.

**Rajeev Talwar**, Chairman - WTTCII & CEO, DLF, adds, "We are delighted to present to you the sixth edition of WTTCII-Hotelivate State Ranking Survey 2019. Back in 2009, with the launch of the first State Ranking Survey, the basic premises behind this endeavour was to encourage the state governments to take cognisance of the Tourism industry, which can contribute significantly towards the State's GDP, employment, infrastructure, as well as have tangible social impact. It is encouraging to see the progress made by certain states."



## Four-fold jump in cruise tourism at Indian ports

Cruise is a popular option for M!CE clients. Corporates are often looking for innovative and different experiences. In the last two years, almost a four-fold jump in cruise callings on Indian ports has been recorded as a result of initiatives undertaken to bring in synergy in the functionality of various stakeholders, revealed **Mansukh Mandaviya**, Union Minister of state for shipping. The total cruise callings on five ports including Chennai, Cochin, Mumbai, Mangalore and Mormugao were 138 ships carrying a total of 1.76 lakh passengers in fiscal 2017-18, which increased to 285 callings in FY19 and is projected to rise to 593 cruise traffic in the current fiscal. This number increased to 285 callings in FY19 and is projected to rise to 593 cruise traffic in the current fiscal, he further said.

# Movements in India



**Vikas Agarwal**  
Chief Financial Officer  
AirAsia India, Bengaluru

Vikas Agarwal has been appointed as Chief Financial Officer at AirAsia India. A Chartered Accountant, Agarwal has 27 years of experience with large businesses in engineering, FMCG, apparel and retail industry, where he has demonstrated his ability to turnaround business, drive growth, and improve efficiency and profitability with adoption of technology and through change management. In his previous role, Agarwal was Vice President at Titan, a TATA group company.



**Kerrie Hannaford**  
VP Commercial, Accor India & South Asia, Gurugram

Accor has appointed Kerrie Hannaford as Vice President Commercial for Accor India & South Asia. An industry sales and marketing veteran, Hannaford has been part of the Accor family for the past 15 years. After holding positions at IHG and Starwood Hotels in Australia, she joined Accor in 2005. In her current position, Hannaford works as Area Director of Sales and Marketing at Accor New Zealand, Fiji and French Polynesia, leading the sales, marketing and distribution direction for all brands and hotels within the region.



**G. Kamala Vardhana Rao**  
Chairman & MD, India Tourism  
Development Corporation

A 1990 batch IAS officer of Kerala cadre, Rao is Additional Secretary, Government of India. His last assignment was as Principal Secretary, Public Works Department, Govt. of Kerala. Rao also served as the Secretary of Kerala Tourism in the year 2014-15. In a span of close to three decades, Rao has served multiple positions. He brings with him rich experience, having held key posts as MD of SC JST Corporation in Andhra Pradesh and in the Ministry of HRD, Govt. of India.



**Rohit Dar**  
Regional Director - Operations,  
India, Hilton, Gurugram

Hilton has announced the appointment of Rohit Dar as Regional Director of Operations in India. Dar brings with him over 25 years of experience in the hospitality sector with a strong all-round knowledge of hotel operations, with his most recent position being as General Manager of Westin Hyderabad Mindspace. As Director, Operations for Hilton India, Dar will be based in the India Regional Office (Gurugram) and will report to Navjit Ahluwalia – SVP and Country Head, Hilton India.



**Jameson Solomon**  
General Manager  
Swissôtel Kolkata

Swissôtel Kolkata has appointed Jameson Solomon as General Manager. He has more than two decades of experience in hotel management, pre-opening, strategic planning, client relationship, and training & development. Prior to joining Swissôtel Kolkata, he was working with Leela Palaces, Hotels and Resorts as Head of Operations. He has also worked with Sheraton Grand Bangalore Hotel, Grand Hyatt Mumbai, Park Hyatt Dubai and Hyatt Regency Dubai.



**Rakesh Upadhyay**  
General Manager  
Le Méridien Hyderabad

Rakesh Upadhyay has been appointed as General Manager at Le Méridien Hyderabad. He is a seasoned hospitality professional with over a decade of experience in the industry. With a core competency in food and beverage, his perspective on strategy, design, and execution has enabled him gain expertise across all verticals of the sector. Prior to joining Le Méridien Hyderabad, he was the GM at Courtyard by Marriott Bhopal. He has previously been associated with The Oberoi Hotels & Resorts, Starwood Hotels, and ITC.



**Shahrom Oshtori**  
General Manager  
The Park Hotels, Mumbai

After working his way up from various managerial and senior managerial positions, Shahrom Oshtori is ready to lead a team providing personalised service and the most luxurious experience to the hotel's high-profile guests. He began his career in 2004 at the JW Marriott Mumbai as Food and Beverage Associate. He has also worked as the Assistant Restaurant Manager and later as Restaurant Manager at the Grand Hyatt Mumbai.



**Barun Gupta**  
Director of Sales & Marketing  
Crowne Plaza Greater Noida

Crowne Plaza Greater Noida has appointed Barun Gupta as Director of Sales & Marketing. Gupta is a hospitality and MICE sales professional with over 13 years' experience and a proven track record in sales and marketing, hotel operations, events and special projects. He will be spearheading Sales & Marketing operations for IHG's largest Crowne Plaza in South West Asia. With a focus on customer experience, his role would be to drive commercial excellence for the property. Gupta holds a graduate degree from IHM Bhubaneswar.