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COVER STORY

Decoding corporate travel in 2023



12

INTERVIEW

Exploring untapped markets



20

SPOTLIGHT

Indian weddings and MICE groups



22

DESTINATION

Promising end-to-end partnership



34

FOCUS

Safety and sustainability in MICE



37

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The new imperative: Responsible tourism and the ethical traveller



The year 2023 has been a year of interesting comeback for the MICE industry irrespective of the many challenges it faced, like geopolitical issues, climate change, inflation, challenges on quality resource hiring/ availability, increase in fuel cost, visa challenges, increase in airfares and hotel tariffs. It has shown resilience and determination in adapting to changing requirements and expectations. We have had an impressive

While we see the achievements, we cannot ignore the challenges created by over tourism, like strain on infrastructure, resources, local communities getting commercialized, and exposure to a lot of personal data, safety and security of data. These challenges also shown impact on workforce wellness, Business ROI, etc.

Some of these challenges have opened doors for better innovation in technology,

“We are also seeing industry focusing more on Sustainability, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) and Innovation on technology driven travel supports”

inbound foreign tourist of 6.4 million in first 6 months of this year and counting. And registering a FEE (Foreign Exchange Earnings) of ₹166.60 crores for the same period.

With these growths, we are also seeing industry focusing more on Sustainability, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) and Innovation on technology driven travel supports. Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Virtual Reality (VR) applications and experiences are adding value to the industry.

payment solutions, alternative travelling methods, alternative accommodation, etc.

In conclusion, summarizing my reflections, I believe that as progress brings forth challenges, the present moment calls for a shift towards responsible travel and conscientious travellers.

Wishing the **M!CEtalk** family all the best.

Warm Regards
Jyothi Varma, Consulting Editor

Tech meets sustainability in architectural harmony

Bharat Mandapam, a global exhibition and convention centre, plays a pivotal role in fostering the growth of India's trade and commerce on the international stage.



By **MT Bureau**

Bharat Mandapam is transforming the global conference and exhibition landscape, acting as a crucial hub for various industry services. It takes a leadership role in revolutionizing the global approach to conducting and experiencing conferences and exhibitions, marking a significant shift in the industry's dynamics and practices.

STATE OF THE ART INFRASTRUCTURE

The recently inaugurated Bharat Mandapam conference centre, covering an expansive 4.2 million square feet,

has emerged as a leading global venue. This architectural marvel can seamlessly accommodate 7,000 people in a single format, featuring six contemporary display areas spanning 1.5 lakh square feet each. Notable upgrades include 24 technologically advanced conference rooms, two spacious auditoriums accommodating 900 people each, and a parking structure capable of holding over 4,800 cars.

INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION CONFERENCE CENTRE (IECC)

The extensive redevelopment project at Pragati Maidan aims to host larger and more diverse events, with the creation of the International Exhibition Conference

Centre (IECC) at its core. Envisioned by the Prime Minister as a national project with an estimated cost of ₹2,700 crores, the IECC integrates top-notch facilities like exhibition halls, conference centres, meeting rooms, shops, hotels, and other essential infrastructure. This ambitious initiative positions Pragati Maidan among the world's premier convention and exhibition locations.

GLOBAL HUB FOR CONFERENCES

Post-renovations, Pragati Maidan is set to transcend its national stature, evolving into a global hub for conferences and exhibitions. The IECC's state of the art facilities play a crucial role in promoting India as a major international business destination. This strategic investment underscores India's commitment to providing world-class infrastructure for fostering international trade, commerce, and collaboration.

AN IDEAL VENUE

Occupying 149 acres of prime land, Pragati Maidan features 16 exhibition rooms of various sizes and permanent display pavilions erected by Indian government departments and state

governments. The complex boasts over 62,000 square metres of covered exhibition space, which is further complemented by an additional 10,000 square metres of outdoor display space. Bharat Mandapam caters to a wide range of exhibitions, from large-scale

machinery to delicate displays with handle-with-care labels.

EPICENTRE FOR EXHIBITIONS

Strategically located in the heart of New Delhi, Pragati Maidan hosts more than 80 exhibitions annually,

“Pragati Maidan is set to transcend its national stature, evolving into a global hub for conferences and exhibitions”



covering key sectors of the Indian economy. Specialized exhibitions range from information technology and communications to environment, machine tools, power, petroleum, water, hotels, garment machinery equipment, medical equipment & optics, mining and metallurgy, engineering goods, technology, services, and consumer products exhibitions. The venue also serves as a backdrop for international conferences, reinforcing its status as a dynamic global meeting point for industry leaders, professionals, and enthusiasts alike. ➔

INFRA PROWESS

Built-up area
4.2 million sq. ft

Exhibition area
1.5 lakh sq. ft

Capacity
7000 individuals

Parking
5000 vehicles





Revolutionizing travel industry with innovative solutions and safety

Sanjay Kumar, President and CEO, InterGlobe Technology Quotient, shares insights into Travelport's objectives, their approach to serving tourists and travellers, industry trends, and the technological impact on weddings and MICE industry.

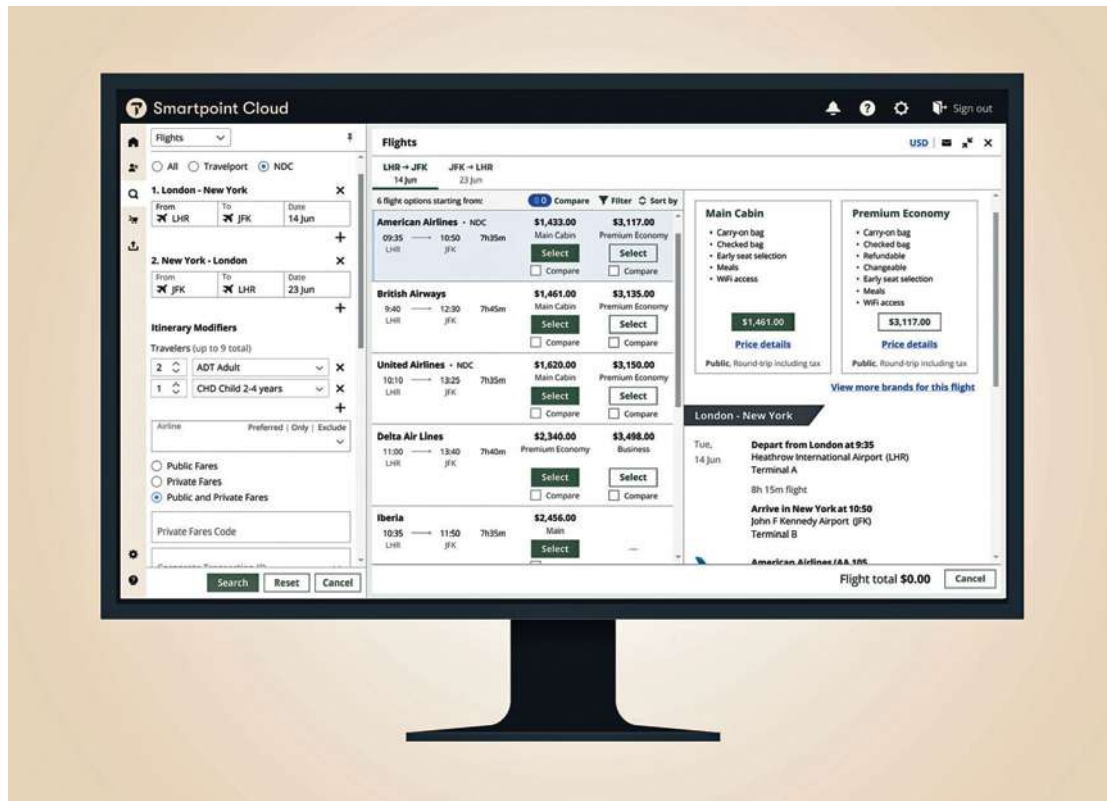
By **Suhani Sood**

Travelport is dedicated to simplifying the travel industry with its technical support. They continually innovate, adding new features and solutions, while relentlessly pursuing a future-focused approach. Their primary goal is to unite travel exhibitors and buyers through a single, independent marketplace.

For tourists and travellers, they offer state of the art technology solutions that emphasize on personalization, real-time information, safety, efficiency, exceptional customer service, and data-driven insights. Recognizing the unique needs of each traveller, they provide user-friendly platforms to travel partners, enabling them to deliver personalized recommendations with continuous real-time updates. Their unwavering

commitment to traveller safety ensures not only convenience but also security on our platform.

Sanjay Kumar, President and CEO of InterGlobe Technology Quotient, shares that their agenda for 2023-24 is centred on several key priorities. "First and foremost, we aim to continue investing in cutting-edge technology to stay at the forefront of the travel industry. This includes further enhancing our platforms



for user-friendliness, personalization, and real-time information. We're committed to expanding our services to offer travellers seamless and secure experiences," he says.

In both weddings and MICE industry, technology plays a pivotal role. Kumar highlights the usage of Virtual Reality (VR) and Augmented Reality (AR) to create immersive experiences, event apps that offer all necessary information, live streaming for remote participation, social media integration to boost engagement, contactless technology for registration and payments, and data analytics for understanding attendee behaviour.

SUBSTANTIAL SCOPE IN MICE

He believes the scope in MICE segment is substantial, and it will continue to expand as businesses recognize the value of such events for networking, education, and brand promotion, and MICE plays a crucial role in various industries. Also, with travel back to normal, corporate travelling for business events is on demand. Such events will substantially bolster the growth of the industry.

Praising governments' effort and initiative to promote India as MICE



SANJAY KUMAR
President and CEO
InterGlobe Technology Quotient

“We aim to continue investing in cutting-edge technology to stay at the forefront of the travel industry”

hub, he says, “It is expected to make India more appealing for MICE events, competing with places like Singapore and Hong Kong. This will benefit both, MICE and travel sector, as more and more business travel can be expected with the opening of such a huge convention centre.”

DESTINATION WEDDINGS GAIN TRACTION

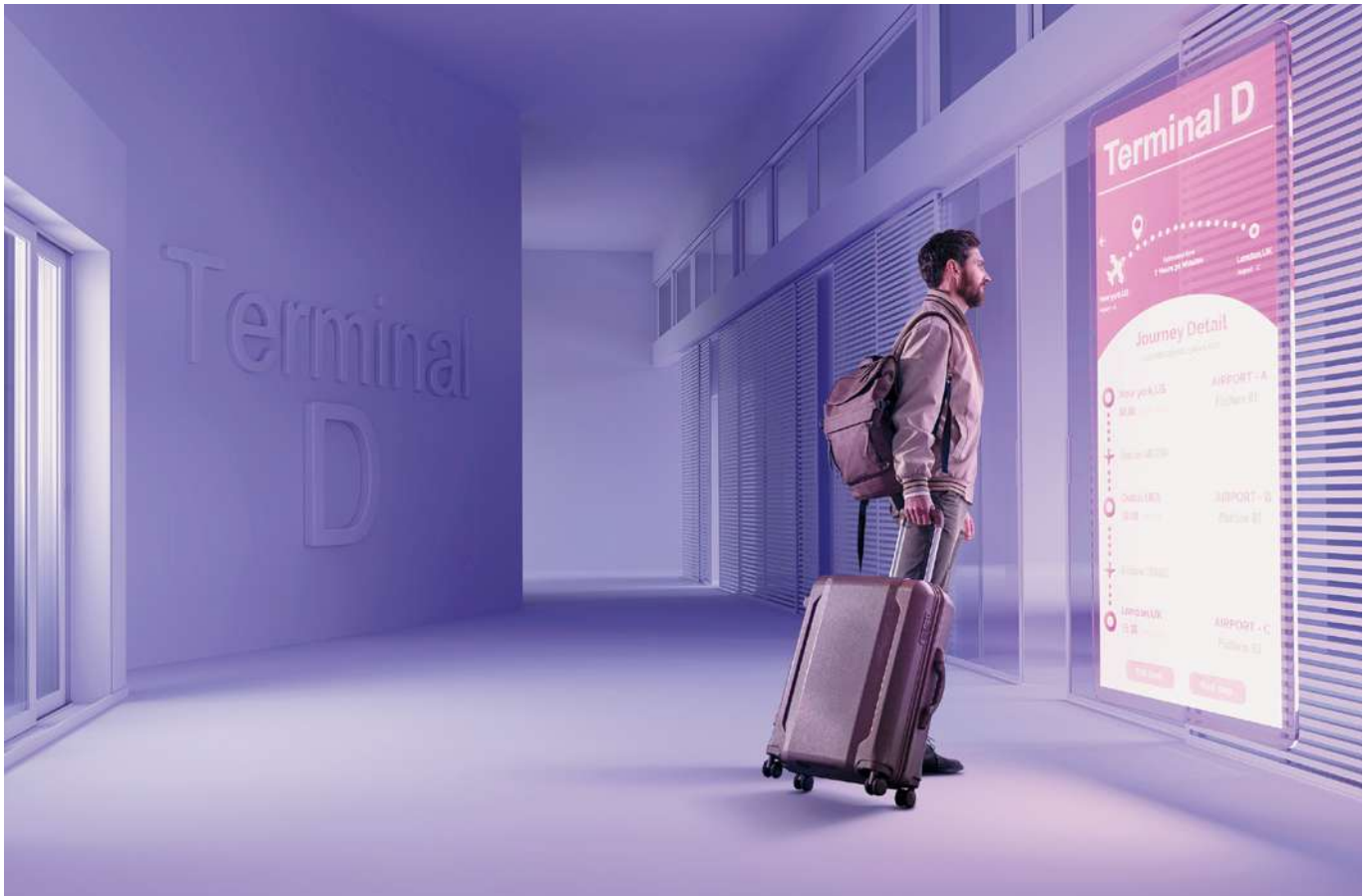
Conversely, as destination weddings become increasingly popular, there is a growing demand for leisure travel. People are now more inclined to organise their weddings in exotic locations, which necessitates travel and event coordination. This shift in preferences is poised to lead to substantial growth in the MICE industry, he believes.

When asked about a particular trend common to both weddings and MICE, he says, “Personalization is the key, with data and technology, both of which can be used to tailor content to individual preferences and ideas. Technology integration, unique destination and travel choices, flexible contracts, wellness initiatives, diversity and inclusion, and the evolution of content delivery reflect the changing landscape of both industries.”



Domestic tourism, digital advancements, and emphasis on sustainability ruled the roost for MICE travel in India this year. Corporate travellers too followed suit demonstrating resilience, adaptability and innovation.

Decoding corporate travel in 2023



By **Janice Alyosius**

The global travel and hospitality industry has undergone a monumental transformation over the last 12 months.

From unparalleled challenges to newfound opportunities, the sector has adapted to a new era marked by innovation, resilience, and an evolving landscape. **MICEtalk** reached out to industry leaders for their perspective on the benefits, challenges, strategies, and emerging trends that have shaped the industry's trajectory.

According to **P S Chandra Mohan**, Sr. Manager – Facilities & Travel, Tessolve Semiconductor, the past year has brought significant benefits to the travel industry. "This year, the travel industry has experienced significant benefits. Many people have begun to travel again, which is good news for airlines and hospitality sector, both of which had struggled for the past 2 to 3 years. However, the sudden surge in travel has led to increased costs for the airline and hotel industries, affecting companies' budgets and causing overruns," he highlighted.

“There was a noticeable gradual recovery within the industry, marked by an uptick in leisure segment bookings”

Shashikiran Parameshwaran, Global Front Office Lead T&E, ABB, delved into the multifaceted changes within the industry. He emphasized, “The last 12 months have been a transformative period for the travel and hospitality industry. Despite challenges, this sector has showcased its adaptability to evolving landscapes. The initial shock of the COVID-19 pandemic prompted an unprecedented shift, presenting both challenges and unique opportunities.”

He highlighted one noticeable benefit has been the surge in domestic tourism. “Travellers redirected their focus to local destinations, rediscovering the charm and cultural richness within their countries' borders. This shift not only supported local economies but also redefined travel preferences, likely to persist even as international travel resumes,” he said.



RAJDEV BHATTACHARYA
Global Head-Travel & Hospitality
Wipro Limited



“The last 12 months have been a transformative period for the Travel and Hospitality industry”

He also stressed on the rapid shift towards digital advancements, and the growing focus on sustainability and eco-friendly travel. “The travel industry swiftly adopted digital transformation, relying on online platforms, travel apps, and virtual tours,” he said.

Rajdev Bhattacharya, Global Head-Travel & Hospitality, Wipro, highlighted both the benefits and challenges faced by the industry in the past year. “There was a noticeable gradual recovery within the industry, marked by an uptick in leisure segment bookings and intermittent increases in international

business travel,” he said. However, these positive trends were accompanied by a set of challenges stemming from the aftermath of the pandemic.

These challenges encompassed uncertainties such as international travel restrictions enforced by companies, notable skill shortages in the industry—exemplified by strikes in Europe and the USA—escalating operational costs, leading to global fare and hotel rate hikes, and geopolitical tensions impacting business decisions. Bhattacharya also expressed concerns regarding potential repercussions of a



SHASHIKIRAN PARAMESHWARAN
Global Front Office Lead T&E
ABB



USA recession, which could potentially decelerate the industry's pace.

OUTLOOK OF BUSINESS TRAVEL

When discussing the current status of business travel compared to pre-COVID levels, Mohan observed a surge in personal/tourism travel during holidays and long weekends. "Most corporates have successfully managed assignments to be executed remotely. Corporations are planning cost-cutting measures and are authorizing only essential travel," he said.

Parameshwaran noted a significant rebound in business travel from 2020 lows but acknowledged lingering effects such as health concerns and remote work adoption, influencing a cautious travel approach.

According to Bhattacharya, business travel hasn't yet reached the heights seen

in 2019. It is lingering at about 45-65% of its former activity and business.

INDUSTRY DYNAMICS IN 2023 AND FUTURE PROJECTIONS

Regarding the evolution of the travel and hospitality industry in 2023, Mohan highlighted the absence of a revenue slump despite increased travel and hotel costs, signifying a positive comeback post-pandemic. Bhattacharya projected a continued focus on sustainability, digitalization, traveller experience enhancement, health, safety, and increased technology investment.

Parameshwaran predicted a sustained shift towards hybrid or remote work options, increased emphasis on sustainable travel practices, and a reshaped travel policy landscape which can prioritize employee health and mental well-being.

TECHNOLOGY AND APPS IN TRAVEL

In terms of technology, Mohan commended the advent of new applications that have simplified travel necessities, enabling them to be effortlessly met with just a few clicks. Bhattacharya highlighted platforms like TravelPerk, Egencia, SAP Concur, and TravelBank, emphasizing on their role in enhancing travel experiences.

Highlighting the convenience of travel apps, Parameshwaran said, "Travel apps have made it easier for travellers to plan and book their trips. With just a few taps on a smartphone, users can book flights, accommodations, car rentals, and activities, which has streamlined the booking process and made it more convenient."

He added, "Many travel apps use data and algorithms to offer



personalized recommendations for hotels, restaurants, and activities based on a user's preferences and previous travel behaviour. This can enhance the travel experience and help travellers discover new places and experiences."

With the resurgence of leisure travel, various applications have become increasingly popular, offering services such as language translation, mobile check-in, travel budgeting, and booking through platforms like booking.com, Airbnb, CheapOair, Skyscanner, Turo (a car-sharing app), kiwi.com (which enables travellers to book multiple airlines), and Hopper (providing fare predictions for optimal booking times).

SHIFT TO TECH-DRIVEN TMC PLATFORMS

Mohan underscored the benefits of tech-driven Travel Management

"Shifting to tech-driven TMC platforms is the current trend, offering several benefits, such as cost-effectiveness, real-time data and faster response times"

Company (TMC) platforms. "TMC platforms provide an opportunity to comprehend the entire scenario regarding costs and expenditures. They offer real-time data that allows us to manage the entirety of travel. This opportunity prompts traditional travel agents to seek improvements," he said.

Highlighting the advantages of tech-driven TMC platforms, Bhattacharya said, "Shifting to tech-driven TMC platforms is the current trend, offering several benefits, such as cost-effectiveness, real-time data, faster response times, personalized traveller experiences, and improved transparency in audit trails."

Parameshwaran elaborated on the efficiency, cost savings, transparency, personalization, accessibility, safety, compliance, integration, and data analytics offered by TMC platforms.



P S CHANDRA MOHAN
Sr. Manager – Facilities & Travel
Tessolve Semiconductor

“Many people have begun to travel again after the pandemic, which is good news for airlines and the hospitality sector”

SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVES

Sustainability adoption in the travel and hospitality segment is gradually becoming a pivotal focus for corporations. Mohan said, “This technological advancement not only streamlines the financial aspects but also lays a foundation for better monitoring and potentially reducing the environmental impact of travel.”

Bhattacharya emphasized on the significance of sustainable practices, and said, “A pleasant surprise has been that travellers are increasingly seeking eco-conscious choices, which align with corporate sustainability efforts. This revision adds the phrase ‘which aligns with corporate sustainability efforts’ to clarify how travellers seeking eco-conscious choices connect to corporate sustainability efforts.”

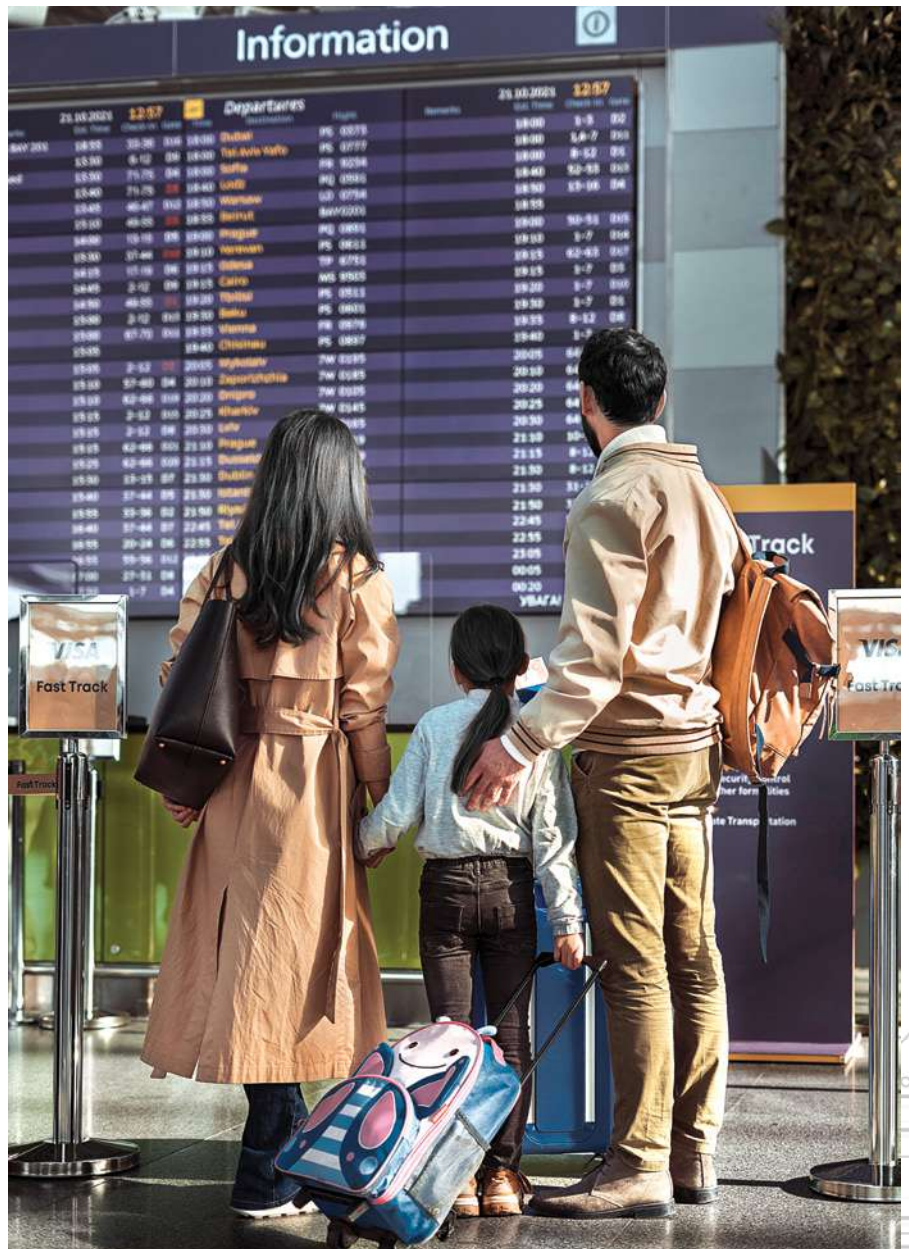
In Parameshwaran’s perspective, the adoption of sustainability within the travel and hospitality sector has been increasingly evident through several impactful initiatives. He highlighted initiatives undertaken by corporates and

shared, “Green Initiatives have been a significant focus for many establishments, encompassing energy-efficient technologies, waste reduction, water conservation, and embracing renewable energy sources.” He underscored the importance of certifications such as LEED, illustrating how they symbolize a firm’s dedication to sustainability and environmental accountability.

He also emphasized on the growing traction of sustainable tourism practices that prioritize preserving natural and cultural heritage while supporting local communities and minimizing adverse impacts of tourism. Efforts were being made to curb single-use plastics, with hotels and airlines phasing out items like

plastic straws and bottles. He shed light on initiatives like carbon offset programs introduced by some travel companies, allowing travellers to counterbalance their carbon emissions by investing in environmental projects.

Regarding educating travellers, Parameshwaran highlighted corporate strategies such as employee training programs focusing on sustainable travel practices, incentives for choosing eco-friendly options, and clear communication about sustainability expectations. These efforts aimed to empower employees to make responsible choices during business trips, aligning with the broader mission of sustainability in travel and hospitality. ➔





“FITUR 2024 offers a golden opportunity to show the world all the wonders that Ecuador has to offer”

become IFEMA MADRID’s main ambassador in the world and a major reference point for the Spain Brand.”

ECUADOR TO BE FITUR 2024 PARTNER COUNTRY

Ecuador has officially submitted a compelling proposal to become the ‘FITUR 2024 Partner Country’ at IFEMA. The enduring connection between Spain and Ecuador is evidenced by the substantial flow of nearly 75,000 visitors per year, a figure projected until 2023. Ecuador’s Minister of Tourism, **Niels Olsen**, stated, “FITUR 2024 offers a golden opportunity to show the world all the wonders that Ecuador has to offer.” →

Global tourism fair to unveil exciting future

FITUR 2024, planned in 1.5 million sq.ft. area, spanning 9 halls, aims to bring together over 9,000 companies and attract 150,000 professional visitors from 145 countries.

The 44th edition of FITUR, the international tourism trade fair organised by IFEMA MADRID, is scheduled to be held from 24 to 28 January 2024, at Madrid’s trade fair centre.

María Valcarce, Director, FITUR, has expressed optimism about the upcoming edition, expecting significant growth. Anticipated expansion plans project the fair to encompass more than 1.5 million square feet, spanning nine halls. This edition aims to bring together over 9,000 companies and attract more than 150,000 professional visitors from 145 countries within the global tourism industry. Additionally, it is estimated that approximately 100,000 individuals will attend FITUR over the weekend.

Emphasizing on the trade fair’s importance, **Jose Vicente de los Mozos**, Chairman, Executive Committee, IFEMA, said, “The role played by IFEMA MADRID as one of the major players and promoters of international tourism is important, as is the special significance of FITUR, which has





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Itinerary 2 (Indore to Indore and Bhopal to Bhopal)

Indore/ Bhopal - Ujjain –



Omkareshwar – Badwani – Rajpipla – Kathpor – Mithi Talai – Jhabua – Mandu – Maheshwar – Salkanpur – Jabalpur – Amarkantak – Mandla – Kareli – Hoshangabad – Omkareshwar – Indore/ Bhopal

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Exploring untapped markets & opportunities

With its strategic location, ExpoInn Suites & Convention holds substantial growth potential. In an exclusive interview, General Manager **Barun Gupta** discusses plans for next year, MICE prospects, and more.



By **Suhani Sood**

ExpoInn Suites & Convention is poised for remarkable growth, owing to its prime location in Greater Noida in the National Capital Region. In addition to its established customer base, the venue capitalizes on events hosted by India Expo Mart. With expansive facilities capable of hosting numerous guests, it's an appealing prospect for corporate clients seeking large-scale gatherings.

Furthermore, the burgeoning business community surrounding the hotel presents a wealth of opportunities. These new enterprises are expected to seek services, whether for meetings, conferences, or social gatherings, making ExpoInn Suites & Convention a pivotal hub in catering to diverse business needs. The strategic location and versatile offerings position the establishment as a thriving centre for events and a beacon for the evolving corporate landscape.

Recently appointed as the General Manager of ExpoInn Suites & Convention, **Barun Gupta** unveiled his ambitious agenda for the coming year. His vision underscores a commitment to evolving

BARUN GUPTA
General Manager
ExpoInn Suites & Conventions

and expanding the offerings at ExpoInn Suites & Convention, transforming the venue into a versatile hub that caters to a diverse range of clientele and event types, thus ensuring a vibrant and promising future for the establishment. He says, “My endeavour will be to introduce new avenues of business, explore untapped markets, and offer a world full of opportunities in terms of weddings, get-togethers and formal conventions.”

SALIENT FEATURES

ExpoInn Suites & Convention has a brand-new, luxury convention centre and, in consideration of its seamless connection with the exhibition halls, has the potential to emerge as the best located and the most sought-after business property in Greater Noida.

He says that the thriving commercial landscape surrounding the hotel justifies his assertion that the existing 134 rooms may soon prove insufficient. Therefore, they might need to consider the prospect of developing another property with a comparable inventory in the near future.

SEAMLESS CONNECTIONS

Gupta claims, “The smooth linkage between the event halls and our 134-room hotel provides patrons with the convenience to effortlessly traverse to their exhibition area, enabling them to network with buyers and potential clients within the hotel premises, extending well into the evening.”

coupled with the extensive parking areas which can accommodate thousands of vehicles (with electric vehicle charging station) and helipads for three copters, are the features that all MICE organisers usually look for,” he says.

Gupta emphasizes on the fact that a prominent and evolving trend spanning multiple sectors involves the focus on

“The expo centre consists of a wide range of air conditioned exhibition halls, broadcasting and secretarial facilities”

When asked about what exactly MICE organisers are looking for, he highlighted several demands. He emphasises on the features at the expo centre. “It consists of a wide range of air conditioned exhibition halls, parking areas, broadcasting and secretarial facilities, security, surveillance and are designed to handle masses of any magnitude. This,

directly presenting products or services to their specific audience. This holds true for both business-to-business (B2B) and business-to-consumer (B2C) interactions, highlighting the enduring principle that ‘Seeing is believing’. This underlines the importance of persuasive influence of first-hand encounters and visual demonstrations in building trust. ➔

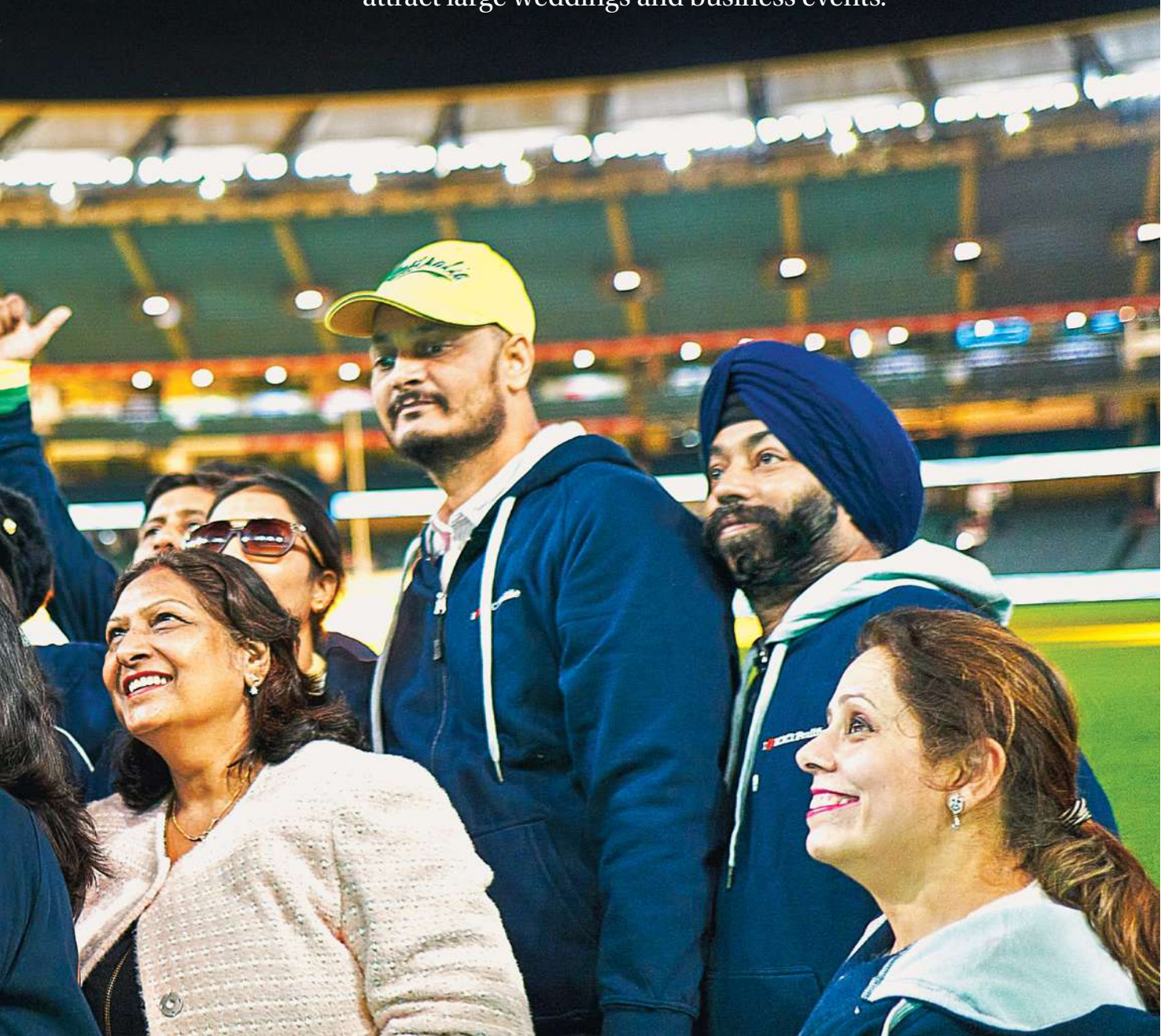




India's weddings and M!CE

engagements chart new territories

As India's MICE movement gains momentum, destinations are increasingly catering to the market, offering incentives to attract large weddings and business events.



By Hazel Jain

Indian businesses lead global optimism, with 72% of businesses expecting to increase spend on travel and entertainment. This finding were revealed in Trendex: B2B edition, a survey commissioned by American Express with the Centre for Economics and Business Research (Cebr). This bodes well for countries that are looking to attract more and bigger groups from India for not just their business travel but also for weddings.

Indonesia is a prime example. **Wisnu Sindhutrisno**, Director of Tourism Marketing for the Asia Pacific Region Ministry of Tourism & Creative Economy (MoTCE), Republic of Indonesia, states that Indian tourists are ranked sixth in the top 10 international arrivals in Indonesia and second for the most tourists visiting Bali. The arrivals are mainly dominated by weddings, honeymoons and MICE groups. The Indonesian MoTCE is, therefore, paying good attention to these two essential segments.

Sindhutrisno says, “Indian tourists adore various destinations in Indonesia, their favourite being Bali. Many of them come to Bali for wedding purposes, and as we know, Indian weddings are gala



WISNU SINDHUTRISNO
Director of Tourism Marketing for the Asia Pacific Region Ministry of Tourism & Creative Economy (MoTCE), Republic of Indonesia

“Indian weddings certainly have the potential for increasing tourist visits from India to Indonesia”

events with lots of music and dance. It certainly has the potential for increasing tourist visits from India to Indonesia.”

The MoTCE responded to the growing MICE trend, focusing on promotions and collaborations to enhance the segment, while emphasizing on Bali’s appeal for weddings and corporate events with competitive facilities. Incentives include support for large events, as exemplified by the recent TATA AIA India event featuring enhanced participant experiences.

The MoTCE strategically spotlights wedding and honeymoon destinations, particularly Bali, during international tourism exchanges and sales missions across Indian cities. This targeted approach aims to showcase Indonesia’s allure and diverse offerings in the wedding and honeymoon segment. Additionally, the ministry collaborates with Indian-focused travel agents, tour operators, DMCs, and accommodations, facilitating the promotion of their products and direct transactions with potential Indian buyers at international travel shows and sales missions.

Sindhutrisno adds, “We also encourage airlines to open direct flights from India to Indonesian destinations. In 2023, there will be IndiGo, which opened the Mumbai-Jakarta route last

“We have a focused strategy and action plan to further develop this segment alongside key stakeholders in France”



SHEETAL MUNSHAW
Director
Atout France India



August, and hopefully, in December 2023, Vistara Airlines will follow with the New Delhi-Denpasar flight. These routes are expected to support wedding and MICE groups from India.”

FRANCE EYES WEDDINGS & INCENTIVES

The incentive and wedding segments are two key growth areas for France and have seen a robust rebound since the pandemic. **Sheetal Munshaw**, Director, Atout France India, reveals that France has played host to five high profile weddings organised in Paris





“We are seeing exponential growth in MICE travel and have signed up a few incentive groups from India”



ANGELA BLAIR
GM International
Tourism New Zealand

and the South of France in the last two years leading to heightened visibility and a strong positioning of France as a premier destination for outbound Indian weddings and festivities.

She says, “We have a focused strategy and action plan to further develop this segment alongside key stakeholders in France. As far as the MICE segment is concerned, it is mainly incentives. In the last two years, France has received several incentive groups with sizes ranging from 200 to 2500 guests. In addition to Paris and the South of France, we have also had a renewed interest in French regions and

one such exclusive group chose Deauville in Normandy as their destination. These positive developments affirm that France is well equipped to cater to the demands of the incentive market and we are confident that the destination will receive many more weddings and incentives in the near future.”

As a national tourism board, Atout France serves as an intermediary, connecting key promoters in India with its network in France, including hotels, event companies, and local tourism boards. The goal is to facilitate exchanges assist with itinerary suggestions and ensure seamless coordination, including visa support for wedding and MICE groups. With years of focus on the MICE segment, Atout France actively promotes France as an incentive destination through events and participation in industry events like EPEX and ITB India.



the range of activities they take part in, how they travel across seasons and across regions, it's the way they engage with our culture and our community, as well as the care they show to our environment. Our Indian visitors are very much set in that. They participate in a high number of activities when they visit.”

WEDDING FOCUS FOR MALAYSIA

For Malaysia, weddings is also a huge focus right now. **Noriah Jaafar**, Director, Tourism Malaysia, says, “We



NORIAH JAAFAR
Director
Tourism Malaysia

Atout France India office also works closely with the Chamber of Commerce & Trade Commission to stay in touch with the French corporate community most susceptible to conducting their incentives in France, as well as conduct bespoke events/communication to EO/YPO groups and such organisations that have the propensity to choose France as their incentive destination.

HIGH-QUALITY VISITORS FOR NEW ZEALAND

Tourism New Zealand also has an incentive programme that it looks at on a case-to-case basis. **Angela Blair**, GM International, Tourism New Zealand, says, “We are seeing exponential growth in MICE travel and have signed up a few incentive groups from India. One of things we look for are high-quality visitors – and several things define them. It’s

“It is a primary and key market for Sydney. We are starting to see a lot more enquires now that airline capacity is returning”

want to promote Malaysia is a top wedding destination. Towards this, we will be participating in the Wedding Travel Show in Udaipur. We are ready to accept weddings as we now understand all the requirements that they need. We have already received some 3-4 weddings at Lexis luxury resort.” MICE, particularly incentive groups, is also key. “In the past, incentive groups would spend around three to four nights which has gone up to four to five nights in Malaysia. For the FITs, it has gone up to seven to eight nights now,” Jaafar adds. Malaysia has announced Visit Malaysia Year in 2026 and will soon begin promoting it in India.

AUSTRALIA SEES A LOT MORE INQUIRIES

Post-Covid India has been performing well and looking strong for Australia.



KRISTIAN NICHOLLS
Executive General Manager Bidding
Business Events Sydney

“We are seeing some significant growth in manufacturing and automotive clients”



JOANNA GARRIE
Director
(Corporate Meetings & Incentives)
Melbourne Convention Bureau (MCB)

“There are overarching numbers out of India, which is one of our largest markets at the moment”



Kristian Nicholls – Executive General Manager Bidding, Business Events Sydney, says that it was one of the first markets to bounce back with medium to large incentive group movements and inquiries. “It is a primary and key market for Sydney. Pre-Covid, around 20% of our incentive group business came out of India, generating around 10-12% of our total direct expenditure each year. We’ve also got an incredible events line-up. Australia is considered an aspirational destination, and there is a lot of pent-up demand for travel to Sydney, so we are projecting the numbers from India will continue to grow over the next two years.”

Incentive groups have traditionally been Sydney’s strongest MICE market from across Asia. “The insurance and financial sectors have dominated the market for some time, as has health and beauty. However, we are seeing some significant growth in manufacturing

and automotive clients out of India in particular. From markets outside Asia, Sydney is popular for association conferences and meetings,” he stated.

Meanwhile, **Joanna Garrie**, Director (Corporate Meetings & Incentives), Melbourne Convention Bureau (MCB), is also excited about the Indian market. “There are overarching numbers out of India, which is one of our largest markets at the moment – both from a leisure and MICE perspective. There is a big market opportunity for us here in India and we have a representative agency in India in Beautiful Planet. We noticed that the MICE side of the business from India was starting to increase and the bureau wanted to make sure that it got maximum business by being active in this market. We have a financial incentive programme for corporate clients. The scheme caters to at least 150 people or more who are travelling for at least two nights in Melbourne,” she explains.



MYONGKIL YUN
 Director
 Korea Tourism Organisation (KTO) India

“MICE traffic from India makes up for almost 70% of the total numbers”



NELISWA NKANI
 Hub Head – MEISEA
 South African Tourism

“We are aiming to achieve an increase of 35% in MICE travellers from India”

KOREA FOCUSES ON ‘BLEISURE’

Myongkil Yun, Director, Korea Tourism Organisation (KTO) India, says, “In 2016, we received 1.9 lakh arrivals from India but in 2019, it fell to 1.4 lakh. The good news is that the post-Covid recovery is close to 70% and we hope to reach 90% of the pre-Covid level by December 2023. Our target number this year is to cross 1.3 lakh arrivals from India. MICE traffic from India makes up for almost 70% of the total numbers. To encourage this, we will develop new packages targeted at bleisure travellers.” Seoul has the Han River, so there are a lot of Han River dinner cruise. It is also one of the unique venues for MICE.

SOUTH AFRICA BACK IN FAVOUR

India remains a core market for South African Tourism globally and holds much promise. **Neliswa Nkani**, Hub

Head – MEISEA, South African Tourism, says, “With our marketing efforts, we have managed to stay top-of-mind and excite Indian businesses, while also incentivizing them with some great deals. Our multi-pronged, experiential approach helps us directly dial-up decision makers, while also enabling our trade partners to sell the destination effectively. This year, we are aiming to achieve an increase of 35% in MICE travellers from India over the previous year’s arrivals. We witness huge demand for MICE tourism to South Africa from leading corporates in India and have had multiple groups travel to the country in the past on various occasions. More often, we receive long lead inquires from group sizes varying from 2,000 to 4,000 pax, especially from the financial, IT, beauty, insurance, coal, and mining, pharmaceutical, entertainment, and sporting sectors in India.”

In 2022, MICE and business travel motivated 41% of overall tourist visits to South Africa from India, out of which MICE alone encouraged 18% of travellers. Keeping up the momentum, this year South Africa Tourism hosted the second edition of the MICE Think Tank program for corporates in India to provide them with an in-depth understanding of the overall MICE market. Such programs, Nkani feels, help the NTO educate the decision-makers on various business-oriented facilities that the destination has to offer.

SIZE MATTERS

Ramon Julian S. De Veyra Jr, Market Specialist IV (Europe, Africa, Middle East, and India Division), International Promotions Department, Tourism Promotions Board Philippines, was part of a big delegation that was visiting India to meet the travel trade here and promote MICE among other things. He says, “The Mumbai response to the roadshow was overwhelming. The Filipino delegation was very happy with the response. Our MICE department also helps our



RAMON JULIAN S. DE VEYRA JR
Market Specialist IV (Europe, Africa, Middle East, and India Division)
International Promotions Department,
Tourism Promotions Board Philippines

“The Filipino delegation was very happy with the Mumbai response”

stakeholders with regards to souvenirs, meet and greet, entertainment, and even reception. This depends on the size and profile of the MICE guests. This is under our enhanced MICE Plus programme.”

While Philippines is still building its market share in India, there is Sentosa that has been a favourite among India leisure travellers for decades. Sentosa Development Corporation (SDC) is now looking to tap newer segments from India – namely MICE and the wedding segment. “While we have just started marketing weddings in Sentosa, we have seen Indian weddings take place in the past, but that happened very organically. We have now appointed an Indian wedding planner in India, so hopefully we will start to see more weddings take place at Sentosa. We also recently participated in a wedding roadshow along with Singapore Tourism Board and have engaged with many wedding planners and organised family trips for some of them. We can curate and organise weddings using our hotels. We also have caterers that specialise in Indian food,” **Chin Sak Hin**, Assistant Chief Executive & Chief





CHIN SAK HIN
Assistant Chief Executive &
Chief Financial Officer
Sentosa Development Corporation

“Hopefully we will start to see more Indian weddings take place at Sentosa”



SUNIL MENON
Country Manager – India
Tourism Fiji

“Tourism Fiji employs various strategies and initiatives to attract weddings and MICE segments to the destination”



Financial Officer, Sentosa Development Corporation says. To sweeten the deal for Indian couples, SDC will offer incentives which could range from complimentary pyrotechnic displays or drone light shows.

FIJI ALSO EYES THIS HIGH-VALUE SEGMENT

“Wedding and MICE groups contribute significantly to Fiji’s tourism revenue. These groups often spend more per capita than leisure travellers, as they book multiple rooms, hold events, and engage in various activities during their stay. Positive experiences from wedding guests and conference attendees can lead to repeat visits and word-of-mouth recommendations,” says **Sunil Menon**, Country Manager – India, Tourism Fiji.

Fiji’s tourism industry experiences seasonal fluctuations, with a peak during

the dry season. Wedding and MICE events help spread tourism demand throughout the year. Overall, while leisure tourism is still a core part of Fiji’s tourism industry, wedding and MICE groups play a vital role in diversifying revenue streams, attracting high-value visitors. Tourism Fiji together with the Tourism Vuvale often offer incentives to attract weddings and corporate events/ MICE groups.

Menon adds, “We do have an incentive programme and currently our team is working on putting together a new incentive for FY 2024-25 in tune with the global market requirements. Tourism Fiji employs various strategies and initiatives to attract weddings and corporate events/ MICE segments to the destination. These strategies are designed to promote Fiji as an ideal location for such gatherings.” ➔



Eco-luxe frontiers

MICE hospitality's trailblazing journey into sustainability

Spearheading sustainable luxury in MICE, Sands Macao sets the benchmark for eco-friendly practices in the hospitality industry.



By MT Bureau

For Sands Macao, world-class hospitality, luxury and sustainability initiatives go hand in hand. Starting with the first carbon neutral event in the country, Cotai Expo, held at the property last year, Sands Macao advocates for a responsible hospitality experience which also involves the guests, along with the hotel itself. **Kris Kaminsky**, Senior Vice President, Hotel Operations at Sands Macao, says, “Sustainability is of utmost importance to us. We have an Environmental, Social, and Governance Steering Committee (ESG Committee), which works for all the sustainable practices that we have adopted. All our clients for MICE are passionate, not only for exceptional services and amenities, but the tide has greatly



KRIS KAMINSKY
Senior Vice President - Hotel Operations
Sands Macao

turned also towards sustainability. We have partnered with agencies to track carbon footprint, are actively reduce single-use plastic waste, but mostly we have been focused on reducing food waste. We have, therefore, invested in technologies and initiatives that track and reduce food waste for every team.”

The USP of the hotel is its exceptional hospitality services that fulfil the unique requirements of every single guest. The team at Sands Macao is dedicated towards being very attentive to the minute necessities that a guest might have, even if the services are beyond the measure of expected duties of a butler. The team has Paul Brown as Director of Butler Services, with a rich experience that includes service in the Buckingham Palace. The kind of training that Brown brings into the foray is irreplaceable by technological processes that aid in hospitality services. “Our London Accord has one of the Grand Suites, which is ultra-luxurious. The London Accord has 368 suites, each with a personal butler; then we have the Venetian, which is 3,000 rooms, and a landmark of Macao. The team we have is very big, and is dedicated to operational excellence. And they also do a qualified audit, where they’ll come and check into the hotel, maybe stay for a couple of nights, and

“We have partnered with agencies to track carbon footprint, and actively reduce single-use plastic waste”

observe the guest experience, while experiencing it themselves,” he adds.

Further, looking towards India as a growing market for MICE, Kaminsky says, “The largest markets for us would be mainland China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Japan, Korea, and then Southeast Asia, and India. I think in terms of leisure, India is probably at the fifth position for us in terms of group activity. And we’ve been to India three times this year because we have been receiving a great response. So, we definitely have plans to expand in the Indian market.” ➔





Promising end-to-end partnership



Robin Mack, Executive General Manager – Commercial & Business Events Australia, Tourism Australia, shares that Indian market has largely recovered post-pandemic in numbers and is already ahead in spend as compared to 2019 figures.

By **Nisha Verma**

Adelaide was buzzing with energy as it hosted Dreamtime 2023, Business Events Australia's signature incentive showcase, which was held after a gap of four years, owing to the global pandemic. MICE operators and event planners from India attended the event alongside the delegations from Greater China, Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, South Korea, Japan, New Zealand, North America and UK, to reconnect with Australian industry sellers. From 2024, the event will be called Australia Next and will be held annually. The next edition is scheduled in Cairns.

4-YEAR GAP

Robin Mack revealed that since the last Dreamtime in December 2019, held at Perth, there has been a lot of unprecedented infrastructure development across the country. “Around 200 new hotels have opened across the country during that time, with 20,000 beds being put into the system, which is a good thing,” he said, insisting that events like Dreamtime work for the industry and leads coming for it.

“In 2017, Dreamtime was held in Brisbane. Around 200 business leads came from the event and 73 of those converted into business worth \$50 million. Even from Dreamtime 2019 in Perth, 36 business leads worth \$97 million were generated in a short window of time.

INDIA A PRIORITY

Claiming that India is an important market for Australia, Mack said, “India’s connection to major events, particularly cricket events, is full of passion and enthusiasm. Thus, the travel and incentive group travel around them is different than some of the other markets. Besides, we get huge VFR traffic from India too



ROBIN MACK
Executive General Manager –
Commercial & Business Events Australia
Tourism Australia

“We are blessed as a destination to have fantastic DMCs which personalise and meet the objectives of an incentive planner”

and we are seeing great potential and demand from incentive sector as well. Connectivity plays a huge role in this, driven by the appeal for Australia.

“In the quarter Apr-Jun 2023 v/s Apr-Jun 2019, Indian visitors for business events went 73% back and it’s growing faster than some markets. The spend is 91% back. However, leisure is already 100% back to pre-pandemic numbers,” he informed.

MEET INDIA DEMAND

Commenting on how Australia is well-equipped to cater Indian travellers, he shared, “We are blessed as a destination to have fantastic DMCs which personalise and meet the objectives of an incentive planner. We have a dedicated team that supports incentives and assists in visa process, trying to expedite and make it easy.”



Acknowledging that Indian incentive planners prefer major cities in Australia like Melbourne, Sydney, Brisbane, Perth and Adelaide, he said that they are also looking at regional areas.

INCENTIVES FOR GROUPS

To attract more Indian groups, Business Events Australia offers incentives too. “We have a Bid Fund Program, in existence since 2018, which supports partners in Australia to convert the business and win event bids. It gives us a strong pipeline for events in the future. We are accepting applications till 2029. We work with the bureaus and the centres in helping them convert that business and supporting them in their bid process,” he shared.

TRADE ENGAGEMENTS

Business Events Australia has a resourceful website with planning tools, tips, destination insights and fact sheets. “We launched a campaign in March 2022 called, ‘There’s Nothing Like Australia For Business Events’. We offer true partnership, right from the bid process till the end,” he concluded. ➔

Dream Incentives Down Under

Dreamtime 2023, Business Events Australia's signature incentive showcase, was held in Adelaide from 7-9 November. Indian MICE agents got a taste of various business and events product offerings in the vibrant host city first-hand. Starting with a grand welcome at the Adelaide Oval turf with their names flashing on the scoreboard, the Indian delegation did a roof climb at the iconic stadium, savoured a curated wine tasting and lunch experience at the local winery, and even got up close to Koalas and Kangaroos at the Cleland Wildlife Park. In a pre-famil, they explored Canberra and its MICE potential, which included a visit to the Parliament of Australia, an electric scooter ride around the city and even piqued their creativity at Canberra Glassworks. ➔



Empowering agents: Advocating safe travel with confidence

Sheraton Grand Bengaluru Whitefield Hotel and Convention Centre ensures trust with outstanding service. **Varun Mehrotra**, Director of Sales and Marketing, discusses MICE interactions and client preferences.

By **Suhani Sood**

Sheraton Grand Bengaluru Whitefield Hotel & Convention Centre innovates in hospitality, emphasizing on collaboration and connection. It hosts diverse events in a 15,000-square-foot convention centre, offering comprehensive services.

CUSTOMIZABLE PACKAGES

Mehrotra emphasizes on tailored packages for MICE groups, aligning with their budget and travel needs. “We engage with MICE agents to encourage MICE travel while assuring travellers about safety measures. We ensure travellers are well-informed about the security measures in place, including travel insurance and flights adhering to health protocols,” he says.

FOREMOST HOSPITALITY TRENDS

Mehrotra underscores a proactive hospitality marketing approach, leveraging social media, digital trends, mobile optimization, and virtual/augmented reality. He explained, “Artificial Intelligence and chatbots enhance guest interactions. MICE



VARUN MEHROTRA
Director of Sales and Marketing
Sheraton Grand Bengaluru Whitefield
Hotel & Convention Centre

“We engage with MICE agents to encourage MICE travel while assuring travellers about safety measures”

priorities include flexibility, technology, and sustainability, with emphasis on customizable spaces and integrated technology solutions. Staying updated on industry trends is crucial for competitiveness and success.”

Emphasizing on the importance and need of having sustainable practices, Mehrotra said, “Sustainability is a core

value for us. We’re committed to our vision of becoming a Net-Zero GHG Emission Company by 2050. To ensure sustainability in events, we follow a structured approach. This includes implementing residential bath amenities, sourcing cage-free eggs, offering a significant portion of plant-based food options, and tracking food waste.” →

Exploring India's potential as a MICE destination

India emerges as a prime MICE destination with world-class convention centers in major cities.



GAJESH GIRDHAR
President
Network of Indian MICE
Agents Association (NIMA)

By Sara Haque

The recently held Network of Indian MICE Agents Association (NIMA) convention, was the first ever held by any association on board Resorts World Cruises ship - Genting Dream, Ex Singapore. The convention received an overwhelmingly positive response, and was supported by Resorts World Cruises, Singapore Tourism Board, Singapore Airlines, IHG Hotels, Penang Convention & Exhibition Bureau & Yorker Holidays. Talking about India's potential as a MICE destination, **Gajesh Girdhar**, President, Network of Indian MICE Agents Association (NIMA), says, "Today we have world class convention centres with large capacities and India is well prepared to bid for any bigger international level conventions. Delhi, Mumbai, Goa, and Bangalore are already very popular MICE destinations in India, having all the infrastructure required for MICE groups."

Speaking about the developments within the MICE industry in the country, Girdhar added, "We need more MICE professionals to handle bigger conferences

"Today we have world class convention centres and India is well prepared to bid for international level conventions"



for which NIMA is contracting with the universities to provide MICE oriented training sessions. Recently, BLTM held in Delhi NIMA invited about 150 students to attend the technical session which was organized by NIMA."

He concluded, "In the making of Young MICE professionals & Specialists'

is the commitment by NIMA to the MICE fraternity, for which NIMA is regularly conducting education sessions with various reputed universities. Recently NIMA Advisor Mr. Vikas Khanduri conducted a technical session for 45 French students in association with Amity University, Noida." →



M!CE hospitality embraces sustainable luxury

Radisson Blu Kaushambi, Delhi NCR embraces cutting-edge MICE trends, enhancing its renowned status as a premier venue in the Indian capital.

By **Sara Haque**

Radisson Blu Kaushambi, Delhi NCR is one of the most preferred locations for MICE events in the National Capital Region of the country, due to its strategic positioning on National Highway 24, and its unwavering commitment to delivering top-notch

guest service. The property enjoys a high rate of repeat business for events that display the bond of trust they have developed with clients over the years.

Regarding the various pivotal demands of corporates for MICE, **Navneet Jain**, CEO, Radisson Blu Kaushambi, Delhi NCR & Radisson Blu Towers Kaushambi, Delhi NCR, highlights the growing corporate demands for MICE,

emphasizing on advanced technology, customization, and expanded spaces. The properties invest in cutting-edge technology, diverse catering options, and dedicated planning services to seamlessly meet these requirements, ensuring successful and tailored MICE events.

“In light of the growing focus on sustainability, Radisson Blu Kaushambi and Radisson Blu Towers have

“In light of the growing focus on sustainability, Radisson Blu Kaushambi and Radisson Blu Towers have incorporated eco-friendly practices into their M!CE offerings”



NAVNEET JAIN

CEO
Radisson Blu Kaushambi, Delhi NCR
& Radisson Blu Towers Kaushambi,
Delhi NCR



incorporated eco-friendly practices into their MICE offerings, working to minimize the environmental impact,” Jain says. He adds, “We’ve eliminated plastic water bottles, opting for reusable ones. Embracing digital materials, eco-friendly writing tools, and efficient waste management, we prioritize sustainability in MICE events. Our commitment is to offer exceptional experiences while minimizing environmental impact.”

For 2024, the team plans to expand their event portfolio, attracting larger and more diverse conferences, and enhancing services and facilities to provide an exceptional event experience. ➔

Himalayan Jewel

MICE & cultural splendour

Dusit Thani Himalayan Resort Dhulikhel, Nepal, fuses Thai-inspired hospitality with local culture, making it a magnetic haven for Indian vacationers and MICE events.



By **Janice Alyosius**

Nestled amidst the Himalayas and in close proximity to the Namobuddha Monastery, you'll find the captivating Dusit Thani Himalayan Resort Dhulikhel, awaiting your arrival. Under the expert management of Dusit International, this resort seamlessly blends Dusit's signature Thai-inspired warm hospitality with the rich local culture and traditions. Derived from the Thai language, 'Dusit Thani' translates to 'Town in Heaven', and as its name suggests, the resort truly embodies the irresistible allure

of its natural surroundings, where the splendour of nature and heritage combine to craft an unforgettable experience. **Kris Panya**, General Manager, Dusit Thani Himalayan Resort Dhulikhel, offers insights into the resort's remarkable success in attracting a substantial number of Indian guests.

Panya reveals that the Indian demography represents a substantial portion of their clientele, hailing from various market segments. He shared, "The Indian demography represents a significant proportion of our guests. They predominantly originate from the following market segments i.e.,

leisure travellers seeking a serene getaway, honeymooners looking for a romantic escape, wellness and spa enthusiasts, adventure and nature enthusiasts who want to explore the beautiful trails and Himalayan region."

While the resort's main focus lies in catering to the luxury segment, Panya tells about plans to explore other segments and shares, "While our primary focus is on the luxury segment, we do have plans to explore other segments such as weddings and MICE. Our venue boasts of cutting-edge conference facilities and event spaces, perfect for weddings and corporate gatherings. The



an authentic dining experience. Our menus feature popular Indian dishes, and we also cater to specific dietary preferences and requirements,” he says.

The resort promises an extraordinary stay with a variety of experiences both on-site and beyond. For those seeking serenity, tranquil hikes to the revered Namu Buddha Monastery, a spiritual haven, await. Travellers can explore the charming local villages and countryside via scenic trails. Adventure seekers can indulge in nearby bungee jumping and rafting activities.

Having opened its doors in July 2023, the resort has observed a growing interest among Indian travellers. Panya shares, “Indian guests are showing an increasing interest in wellness, spa, and cultural experiences, aligning with the resort’s focus. We also plan to improve wellness and event facilities, actively collaborate with the Indian travel industry through partnerships, exhibitions, and targeted marketing.”



KRIS PANYA
General Manager
Dusit Thani Himalayan Resort Dhulikhel, Nepal

“While our primary focus is on the luxury segment, we have plans to explore other segments such as weddings and MICE”

Lumpini Ballroom offers a spacious, adaptable setting, and the outdoor lawn provides a stunning backdrop for events, especially destination weddings.”

One of the highlights of the resort is its diverse range of dining offerings, featuring authentic Indian cuisine and flavours. The resort takes pride in its expert chefs specialising in various regional Indian cuisines, sourcing high-quality ingredients to ensure an exceptional dining experience. “We have expert chefs who specialise in various regional Indian cuisines, and we source high-quality ingredients to ensure



MOVEMENTS



JOHN BURKE
Board of Director
Union of International Fairs
(UFI)

John Burke, General Manager of the Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre, has been elected to the UFI Board of Directors for a three-year term. UFI, the global trade association for tradeshow organizers and exhibition centre operators, champions the interests of its members and the exhibition industry. Expressing gratitude for his election, John looks forward to collaborating with UFI's leadership to elevate the exhibition industry, delivering enhanced value for its members. His appointment underscores his commitment to advancing the sector.



SANJAY KUMAR GAUTAM
Chief Financial Officer
Onora Hospitality Pvt Ltd

Sanjay Kumar Gautam assumes the role of Chief Financial Officer at Onora Hospitality Pvt Ltd. With over two decades of experience in accounting and finance, Sanjay embraces the challenge of setting up accounting and finance processes, implementing new software, and centralizing operations for Onora Hospitality. Excited about creating the blueprint for the organization's financial systems, he anticipates successful implementation within the next 6 months. Sanjay's expertise and enthusiasm are poised to contribute significantly to its growth.



AMIT KUMAR
Area Manager &
General Manager
Welcomhotel Sheraton
New Delhi

Amit Kumar has been appointed as Area Manager (Welcomhotels-North) & General Manager, Welcomhotel Sheraton, New Delhi. Previously at ITC Grand Goa, he spearheaded initiatives that enhanced guest satisfaction and attracted new travellers. Amit, an alumnus of the Institute of Hotel Management, brings over two decades of experience from renowned brands like Taj Hotels, The Leela, Hilton Worldwide, and more. His focus is on customer acquisition through unique experiences across Welcomhotels' strong North footprint.



AMAAN KIDWAI
Area Manager
Luxury Hotels (North) &
General Manager, ITC Maurya

Amaan Kidwai has been appointed as ITC Hotels' Area Manager for Luxury Hotels (North) & General Manager of ITC Maurya, New Delhi. Tasked with overseeing ITC Hotels' operations in Northern India, Amaan will also lead operations at ITC Maurya and drive excellence across properties such as ITC Grand Bharat-Gurugram, ITC Mughal-Agra, and ITC Rajputana-Jaipur. Amaan's nearly three-decade career at ITC Hotels showcases his commitment to Responsible Luxury, marked by achievements like LEED Zero Carbon Certification for Sheraton New Delhi.



MANUJ RALHAN
General Manager
NJCC & JECC

Novotel Jaipur Convention Centre (NJCC) & Jaipur Exhibition and Convention Centre (JECC) welcomes Mr. Manuj Ralhan as the new General Manager. With over two decades of experience and a stellar track record, Manuj brings dynamic and visionary leadership to both venues. He aims to position Novotel Jaipur Convention Centre as the premier destination for events and accommodations in Jaipur. Manuj's distinguished career includes key roles at renowned brands, and he is acclaimed for successful pre-opening ventures in resorts globally.



SHIV BOSE
General Manager
Jaisalmer Marriott Resort
& Spa

Jaisalmer Marriott Resort & Spa is delighted to appoint Shiv Bose as its new General Manager, boasting over two decades of hospitality experience. Starting as a bell desk associate at JW Marriott Juhu in 2002, Shiv's diverse roles within Marriott shaped his career foundation. Notably, he held General Manager positions at Le Meridien Nagpur, Courtyard by Marriott Hebbal, Sheraton Grand Chennai Resort and Spa, and Double Tree by Hilton Panjim, Goa. Recognized for promoting diversity in his last role, Shiv aims to elevate the resort's luxury status.



MELANIE GURDEN
Marketing and
Communications Manager
Te Pae Christchurch
Convention Centre

Melanie Gurden has been appointed as the Marketing and Communications Manager at Te Pae Christchurch Convention Centre. With rich experience garnered from successful tenures in professional services organizations, Gurden is an adept strategist in brand management, marketing, and communications. Her impressive track record in executing strategic initiatives positions her as a pivotal force, set to play a central role in shaping and implementing Te Pae Christchurch's dynamic marketing strategies, ensuring heightened visibility and impact.



ISHITA NIGAM
Corporate Marketing Manager
Pride Hotels Group

Pride Hotels Group has appointed Ms. Ishita Nigam as the new Corporate Marketing Manager. With over a decade of experience in hospitality, Ishita joins from Holiday Inn Mumbai, where her impactful contributions in marketing and brand management stood out. Having held key roles at Marriott, Sterling Holidays, and Radisson Hotels Group, Ishita is dedicated to crafting strategies that enhance the unique qualities of the hotel. In her role at Pride Hotels Group, she will lead marketing efforts, aligning strategies with business objectives and elevating the brand's visibility.



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