

**2021 HOSPITALITY**  
#BounceBack



**Hotels see high occupancy amid Covid hit year-end celebrations**



Christmas and New Year celebrations have come about as a silver lining for the hospitality industry which has been among the worst-impacted sectors due to the lockdowns and the pandemic. More and more people are moving outstation on staycations of three to four days, along with their friends and families.

**New wage rule may raise India Inc's costs**



Come April 2021, salary slips, provident fund (PF) and gratuity components, take home pay and even balance sheets of India Inc will be impacted, thanks to the government's new compensation rules which are part of the Code on ages passed by Parliament last year.

Source: The Economic Times

**Direct flight between Delhi and Shillong takes off**



The Delhi-Shillong service is being operated by regional airline- Flybig under the UDAN scheme and the flight frequency is expected to soon be increased to twice weekly

**IHCL signs three-hotel deal with Ambuja Neotia Group**



Indian Hotels Company (IHCL) signed a three-hotel deal with Kolkata-based Ambuja Neotia Group as it seeks to make deeper inroads into eastern India. The new projects in eastern India include two in Kolkata and one in Patna. The Ambuja Neotia Group has outlined an investment of Rs 800 crore for the project. IHCL already has a partnership with the Ambuja Neotia Group for two other hotels in the east in Darjeeling, and Gangtok. These five projects will result in a total of 500 rooms. The properties are likely to be completed over the next two years.

With these 5 properties, and partnerships with other players for another 900 rooms, IHCL will be able to double the number of rooms to around 2,400 over the next four years in the eastern region, which accounts for 10 per cent of its revenue at present.

Source: Business Standard

**President Speak: Time To Bounce Back & Build Better**



**Sudesh Poddar, President**



Wish all members a Happy NEW YEAR! Believe me, 2021 is going to be the year of sunshine. Sample these silver linings in the dark clouds of pandemic: First, two mRNA vaccines are ready to be rolled out. This new technology promises to tame any type of viral outbreaks in future. Second, Covid cases are in sharp decline. Third, the massive-pent up demand to explore outdoors is opening up the floodgate of 'revenge travel' among people.

That the confidence in air-travel is back is evident from rush to Goa. Last Sunday 50 domestic flights from Metro cities landed in Goa with revellers; room occupancy of hotels touched 90 per cent! Surveys show domestic leisure travel is high on agenda among travellers. Tourist spots in East—Gangtok, Shillong, Port Blair, Darjeeling, Puri and Kolkata—are coveted spots for travellers unable to travel abroad.

As there is an opportunity in every adversity, I believe this crisis will help galvanise efforts to grow domestic tourism. To seize the day, the government as well as the industry need to rise to the challenge of transforming top Indian destinations as world class tourist attractions. So friends, let's build our ecosystems the "Next Normal" and reshape the industry in a better way. Wishes for a Happy Journey ahead!!

The managing director of Apeejay Surrendra Park Hotels Ltd says his company has used the crisis of the pandemic as an opportunity to reduce cost and improve efficiencies. "We have used this crisis of the pandemic as an opportunity," Vijay Dewan, Managing Director of Apeejay Surrendra Park Hotels Ltd said while speaking about his group's performance and vision.

**We are EBITDA positive in Q3**

**Vijay Dewan, Managing Director**  
Apeejay Surrendra Park Hotels Ltd



**Maharashtra Announces License Fee Relief For Hotels, Restaurants**



In a major relief to the hospitality industry battered by the coronavirus pandemic, the Maharashtra government has announced a partial waiver of the excise license fee along with the roll-back of the 15 per cent annual fee increase for the year 2020. The eight odd months of lockdown has wrecked almost every other player in the hospitality industry.

**Blanket travel bans not an answer to the pandemic: WTTC**



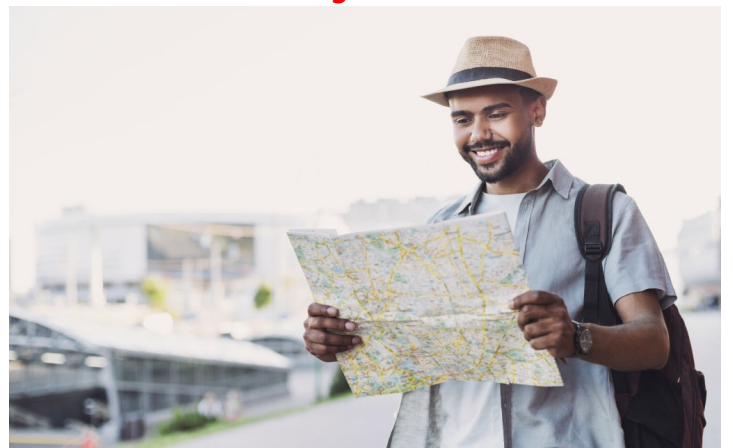
The global association of the private sector industry has said that while public health is paramount, blanket bans on travel by countries will prove counterproductive. In the wake of widespread travel bans being implemented by countries as the news about a new strain of Covid-19 virus has surfaced in the UK, the World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC) has come out with a statement against blanket travel bans by countries.

**Joy for travellers as Darjeeling toy train service resumes**



Much to the delight of tourists flocking to the hills in the festive season, joy rides of the famed toy train of Darjeeling Himalayan Railway (DHR) resumed from Christmas, a North-east Frontier Railway (NFR) official said on Thursday. Three daily joy ride services will be run between Darjeeling and Ghum stations from Friday, the NFR spokesman said from Maligaon.

**Domestic Leisure Travel high on agenda among travellers: eRevMax survey**



As per the Traveller Sentiment Survey conducted by leading hotel distribution technology company, eRevMax, 7 out of 10 people wish to travel within the next six months and 6 out of 10 are likely to travel for leisure. While leisure will remain a predominant trend, 61% will be exploring a domestic leisure trip than international travel, the survey states.