

# MYSTIC EAST

...an unexplored horizon

A Bi-monthly Magazine by HRAEI | Vol 10 | Issue 6 | November - December 2024



## FROM STEEL PLANTS TO LUXURY SUITES

Maverick industrialist Mr D.R. Patnaik's Atmosphere Core is all set to kick off 25 luxury hotels in 2025, across India. His first footprint: OZEN MANSION, KOLKATA





## VISION

- ✌ Make the Eastern Region comprising 12 States and a Union Territory a flourishing destination for domestic and foreign tourists by projecting their captivating tourism assets.
- ✌ Promoting best industry practices and setting benchmarks for industry constituents.

## MISSION

- ✌ A common voice for hotels, restaurants and associates for unhindered progress of the hospitality industry in the country's Eastern Region.
- ✌ Create value for members by ensuring government policies remain supportive of tourism and the industry.





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## PRESIDENT'S NOTE

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The Hotel & Restaurant Association of Eastern India (HRAEI) organized an exclusive 'Interaction Meet' with the members of the Hoteliers Association of Andaman & Nicobar Islands (HAANI) and Tourism Industry stakeholders in SeaShell Coral Cove at Minnie Bay last month. The meet was attended by the top administrators of the island along with members of HRAEI and HAANI.

The Chief Secretary, A&N Administration, Shri ASPS Ravi Prakash, the chief guest of the meeting, informed that a slew of large scale development projects by the Government of India will benefit all tourism stakeholders, especially the hospitality industry. Secretary, Tourism, Dr. Prashant Kumar, added there is a great potential in the tourism sector which is the main business and employability in A&N Islands. Efforts are on to connect new Islands where tourism infrastructure can be developed, he said adding that Wellness Tourism is another area where investments can be planned. He also informed about the operation of the upcoming International Flights which will start soon.

Highlighting the investment opportunities in A&N Islands, Smt. Nandini Maharaj, IAS, Special Secretary (Tourism), informed that UT of A&N Islands offers marvellous beaches, historical places and many more attractive places for the visitors. Tourists can enjoy snorkeling, scuba diving

apart from star gazing during the night, she said. Director, Tourism, Shri Amit Kale, IAS said that there is immense Tourism potential available in A&N Islands and it is hoped that in the next five to ten years, Andaman is going to be one of the leading places as a tourist destination in South East Asia.

To keep in tune with massive development projects, the hospitality and tourism sectors expect huge employment. To address this, HRAEI is going to provide a 100 percent internship to the students of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Institute of Technology (DBRAIT), Port Blair, in star category hotels in Eastern India under the fold of HRAEI. We shall also have a quota for two seats for students of A&N Islands in FHRAI Institute of Hospitality Management, Greater Noida, and scholarships for two Economically Weaker Section (EWS) students of A&N Islands in the institute. Apart from this, internship for students of hotel Management of A&N Islands in top Hotels of Kolkata, West Bengal, will be imparted, he added.

**Sudesh Poddar**  
President, HRAEI



# EDITOR'S MESSAGE



“

Indians seem to be falling out of love with global QSR brands... reflected in various companys' Q1 earnings as customers flow to the restaurants has somewhat petered down

The golden age of sit-down chain restaurants in the US is over. What's the scenario of some of the Indian franchises of big brand US quick service restaurant chains in India?

Big Brands of Quick Service Restaurants, such as McDonald's, KFC and Domino's Pizza, Subway, Burger King, Taco Bell and Pizza Hut haven't been hit as yet in the US, but some of their Indian franchises are going through rough weather.

A report in Times of India on August 29 says, "Indians seem to be falling out of love with global quick service restaurant (QSR) brands... reflected in company's Q1 earnings as customers flow to the restaurants have somewhat petered down."

The consumer today is spoilt for choice and can order a variety of food via food delivery aggregators like Swiggy and Zomato. To counter the slide, the QSR chains are offering discounted price and promotional offers. But such "desperate measures" are likely to impact their profitability or force them to compromise on the quality of the product.

Both food delivery and dine-in services face challenges due to weak demand, which can persist across categories in the first quarter of FY25, despite a high base.

## MYSTIC EAST

A BI-MONTHLY MAGAZINE BY HRAEI  
Vol 10 | Issue 6 | November - December 2024

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## THIS ISSUE OF MYSTIC EAST CONTAINS 56 PAGES INCLUDING COVER AND BACK COVER

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Andaman Islands beat many other island honeymoon destinations such as Bali, Phuket, Maldives and Lakshadweep

Andaman Islands beats other island honeymoon destinations, such as Bali, Phuket, Maldives and Lakshadweep.

Newlyweds want to go to such places for their honeymoon that don't have crowds and have immense beauty. The tropical weather and vibes of the Andaman Islands make it a perfect romantic spot. Andaman is generally less crowded and offers a quieter, more secluded atmosphere compared to above-mentioned destinations.

Its natural charm and incredible views are sure to fascinate newlyweds. Strolling on the seashore and cherishing the loveliest sunset together is a perfect way to bond over.

Thailand is a destination with a diverse range of experiences, but some expats may find it challenging to get used to the cultural differences, such as social customs and business practices. The bureaucracy of the visa system may also be frustrating and time-consuming. Bali is more pulsating in terms of movement, noise, music, number of tourists and vibrations of life – not suitable for those looking for seclusion. The Maldives is ideal for those seeking a high-end, indulgent, and secluded getaway. The Indian Ocean islands tend to be much more expensive, compared to Andaman. Moreover, a passport is required to travel to Thailand, Bali or Maldives, unlike in the Andaman Islands.

For a love trip, Lakshadweep in the Arabian Sea could be more secluded with its clean sandy beaches, clear water and peaceful environment. But to and fro transportation to Lakshadweep is costlier and it offers less variety in terms of biodiversity, culture or adventure activities.

When in Andaman couples can stay at a beachfront resort to enjoy the best romantic experience. One can spend time at the resort's private beach at any time and without any restrictions. There is a wide variety of seafood and other cuisines. I believe this is the best honeymoon destination to start the new chapter of life with a new partner.

### **Pranav Singh**

Honorary Secretary, HRAEI

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OFF

ON

Graphics: Bipul Bhattacharjee

## **BIG CHAIN RESTAURANT TOLL**

The golden age of sit-down chain restaurants in the US is over.  
What's the scenario of some of the Indian franchises of big  
brand QSR chains in India?





Sit-down chain restaurants may be the quintessential American business, beginning with the expansion of Howard Johnson's after World War II as families got in the car and started to travel. But the current economy in the US is challenging the business model. Although inflation is slowing, cost-conscious consumers are eating more at home or at lower-cost fast-food restaurants, where the average check is \$7.92 (Rs 650), about half the average check at a sit-down restaurant, according to CREST, a database from consumer insight firm Circana. Many sit-down (or full service) chain restaurants came into this economic climate deep in debt, and are now struggling to stay afloat.

It's been an especially terrible year for sit-down chain restaurants in the US. In the last several months alone, many beloved big-name chains have closed lots of locations, declared bankruptcy, or relaunched under new ownership in an effort to return to the black.

**Sample these:**

**Outback Steakhouse's Owner:** closed 41 locations of various restaurants in February, 2024.

**Applebee's:** announced plans in May to close up to 35 locations in 2024.

**Denny's:** announced plans to close up to 150 locations in 2024 and 2025

in an effort to revive their business.

**Hooters:** suddenly shut down nearly 40 locations across the U.S. in June.

**Boston Market:** closed more than 90% of their locations in the past 2 years.

**Red Lobster:** filed for bankruptcy in April 2024, but was recently bought by an investment firm. Maybe they'll make a comeback?

**Bucca di Bepo:** filed for bankruptcy in August 2024.

**T.G.I. Fridays:** filed for bankruptcy at the beginning of November.

"A whole lot of these companies are finding their sales aren't turning out to be as strong as expected," says Jim Sanderson, a restaurant industry analyst for Northcoast Research. Customer traffic at full-service restaurants in the third quarter of 2024 was down 3% from a year ago and is 17% below the same period in 2019, according to CREST.

Part of the problem is labor costs are continuing to grow but inflation-weary consumers aren't willing to pay more for restaurant food, says Sanderson. Nearly all restaurant owners surveyed by the National Restaurant Association this year said higher labor costs



were “an issue” for their business. Restaurants used to spend 30-35% of gross sales on labor. Now many spend 40% to 45%, according to Dave Foss, co-founder of hospitality group Maverick Theory.

Another issue is that many of these restaurants are now owned by private-equity groups that borrowed a lot of money for their acquisitions and are not seeing the cash flow they needed to come out even. TGI Fridays, Red Lobster, Hooters of America, and P.F. Chang’s were all purchased by private-equity groups in the last decade. TGI Fridays has 58% fewer restaurants than it did in 2019, and Hooters had 23% fewer,

according to data from industry research firm Technomic.

### India side story

Big Brands of Quick Service Restaurants, such as McDonald’s, KFC and Domino’s Pizza, Subway, Burger King, Taco Bell and Pizza Hut haven’t been hit as yet in the US, but some of their Indian franchises are going through a rough weather.

In 2023, India had more than 104,000 QSR outlets. The number of QSR outlets peaked in 2019, but decreased the following year due to the pandemic.

A report in Times of India on August 29 says, “Indians seem to be

falling out of love with global quick service restaurant (QSR) brands like MacDonal’d’s, Burger King and Pizza Hut, nudging companies to go aggressive on value offerings in the market.” According to the report, McDonald’s cian outlet in West and South India had faced pressure on company’s Q1 earnings as customers flow to the restaurants have somewhat petered down.

To draw more customers, the company launched McSavers which allows customers to get a chicken burger or a snacking item of their choice and Coke combo meal at just Rs 69! Burger King is offering customers two veg burgers for Rs 79 and two non-veg burgers for Rs 99. KFC and Pizza Hut are also in the ‘value-for-money’ queue, with meal options at Rs 99, Rs 149 and Rs 169. Domino’s is wooing customers with its Rs 99 lunch feast.

However, Ravindra Yadav, a partner at Technopak told TOI that these offerings are “desperate measures” that is likely to impact their profitability or force them to compromise on the quality of the product.

Another expert quoted in the articles said that the consumer is spoilt for choice and can order a variety of food via food delivery aggregators like Swiggy and Zomato. He pointed out that margins of the global brands have collapsed by 4-5 percentage points because of such discounting and promotions.

Any homegrown brand can today piggyback on Swiggy and Zomato to reach more customers and gain scale that offline stores alone may not suffice. Over the recent years,



homegrown brands like Wow!Momo, Burger Singh and Boba Bhai have grown manifold as compared to big global brands.

The expansion of Zomato and Swiggy is affecting the quick service restaurant (QSR) industry, as more consumers are opting for delivery over dining in, according to a report by MoneyControl, citing an analysis by the foreign brokerage firm BNP Paribas. This shift is intensifying competition in the food delivery market, presenting challenges for QSR chains.

Zomato's monthly active restaurant partners surged dramatically from 61,000 in FY19 to 276,000 in FY24,

significantly broadening its market presence. The company's 276,000 active restaurant partners far exceed the 5,500 stores of listed QSR brands in the first quarter of FY25.

This extensive expansion has provided consumers with more dining choices, leading to fragmented sales and further weakening the already struggling daily sales within the QSR sector, according to the report.

The number of restaurants active on Zomato increased to 51 times the total number of branded QSR stores in FY24, compared to 22 times in FY19.

The report suggested that with consumers having more options,

sales are likely to become fragmented, exacerbating the already weak average daily sales in the QSR industry amid generally sluggish demand.

In contrast, Jubilant FoodWorks, which operates the Domino's Pizza brand in India, has performed relatively better, partly due to initiatives such as free delivery. However, the increasing competition in the delivery segment is putting pressure on margins across the industry.

The aggregate revenue growth in recent quarters at 7-9 percent is lower compared to the 14 percent CAGR seen over FY19-24. The firm added that management attributed this slowdown to weaker consumption





amid a challenging macroeconomic environment.

The industry's revenue growth has largely been driven by the addition of new stores, but this has negatively affected profit margins. The report noted that market fragmentation caused by aggregators and increased competition has limited price increases.

### **QSR firms' performance**

In the first quarter of FY25, listed QSR firms reported an eight percent year-on-year increase in aggregate sales, aligning with the seven-to-nine percent growth observed in recent quarters. However, this growth lags behind the industry trend and coincides with a significant decline in revenue growth compared to the 15 percent year-on-year rise in store count. This has led to a substantial decline in Ebitda margins, with a 400-600 basis point erosion post-rent.

Despite aggregators' efforts to improve profitability, QSR chains continue to face margin pressures. The brokerage firm adjusted Ebitda margins for Jubilant FoodWorks to increase from 12.6 percent in FY24 to 15.1 percent in FY26, contingent on further improvements in same-store sales growth (SSSG).

The report also indicated that the increasing scale of aggregators might continue to shift bargaining power in their favour, and with slowing store additions and ongoing pressure on SSSG, a sharp recovery in revenue growth and margins appears unlikely, potentially leading to further reductions in consensus estimates.

Jubilant FoodWorks performed slightly better than its peers, supported by positive SSSG due to initiatives such as free delivery. However, the company also experienced lower gross margin expansion. In re-

cent quarters, QSR sales growth has lagged behind store additions, resulting in significant margin reductions.

Regarding capital expenditure and expansion, Jubilant FoodWorks plans to open 180 Domino's stores and 20-25 Hong's Kitchen outlets. Westlife Foodworld aims to establish 45-50 new stores in FY25, focusing on South India, smaller towns, and drive-throughs. Devyani International intends to open over 100 KFC stores and 50-60 Costa Coffee stores in FY25. Sapphire Foods India plans to maintain its target of adding three to four stores annually, while Restaurant Brands Asia aims to reach 510 stores by the end of FY25.

### **A turnaround in demand expected soon?**

As the first quarter of FY25 was weak for the industry, companies remain optimistic about the medium- to long-term potential. Jubilant FoodWorks, Devyani International, Sapphire Foods India, and Restaurant Brands Asia expect an uptick during the festive season, despite subdued consumer discretionary spending.

Both food delivery and dine-in services face challenges due to weak demand, which persisted across categories in the first quarter of FY25, despite a high base. The report highlighted that Burger King was an exception, with a 16 percent year-on-year sales increase on a base of 25 percent.

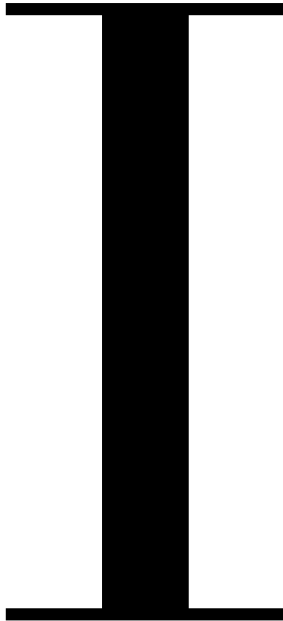
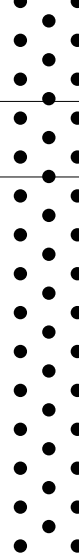
However, QSR firms are hopeful of a gradual recovery in the coming quarters, buoyed by the upcoming festive season.

Illustration: Bipul Bhattacharjee



# Land of • Festivals

**Festivals are a key part** of India's cultural tourism development



India's vibrant festivals are major attractions for tourists and have a direct impact on the hospitality sector. Festivals like Diwali, Holi, Navratri, Durgapuja, Rath Yatra, Bihu, Onam etc draw large crowds, leading to a surge in hotel bookings and related services. In 2023, the hospitality industry reported a 20 per cent increase in bookings during major cultural festivals, as per data from Yatra.com, one of India's leading travel portals.

Festivals have been generating a significant amount of tourists and are being recognised as a form of cultural tourism, by the Ministry of Tourism (MoT), Govt. of India as well as the state tourism boards, with millions of tourists attending major Indian festivals each year. Cultural tourism is one of the significant branches of tourism. The World Tourism Organization suggests that more than 40 percent of all international tourists are "cultural tourists".

The study of festivals and events is now an important and prolific area of tourism research enquiry. Festivals and events have flourished in recent decades and interest in understanding their significance in the tourism academy has risen. The festivals have changed over the years. Earlier festivals were associated with key calendar moments, linked specifically to particular seasons and heritage sites. Over the last decade these have been changed and developed, and there is now a broad and diverse range of festivals and events taking place all over India through the year.

When one observes the marketing campaigns used to promote India, the fairs and festivals of this country are







some of the key contributors to the image of Incredible India. Ministry of Tourism organised the 3rd Annual International Travel Mart at Shillong, Meghalaya, in October 2023 with the objective of promoting tourism from the world over, to the North Eastern region. The first edition took place in Guwahati, Assam, after which it moved to Tawang, Arunachal Pradesh.

Festivals have the potential to extend tourist seasons, peak seasons and introduce a “new season” for a destination. Events such as festivals not only attract tourists but also help to develop or maintain a community or regional iden-

tity. Festivals constitute one of the most exciting and fastest growing forms of leisure, business, and tourism-related phenomena.

Fairs and festivals are rising in popularity and are generating demand among tourists, along with creating trends in the niche tourism segment. Tourism boards across the world have used festivals for generating opportunities to promote tourism. It is time that India follows a similar trend and slowly makes its mark as a premier events and festival destination.

Local festival celebrations have generated great curiosity in the domestic and inbound markets. This

recent trend is turning into a big advantage for the Indian tourism industry and the major stakeholders believe that with the correct marketing and positioning of the festival or event, this particular segment may prove to be the biggest tourist pull for India.

#### **India: The Nation of Festivals**

In a nation as diverse as India, several cultures have, over the centuries, made India a land of everlasting festivals. Every small occasion, from welcoming the spring or rain and the harvesting of crops, to seeing the full moon, lends itself to joyous celebrations splashed with colours,

## EVENTS

music, folk dances and songs.

The Kumbh Mela festival is the largest gathering of religious pilgrims in the world and takes place at the intersection of the Yamuna, Ganges and Saraswati rivers. An increasing number of foreign tourists attend the Kumbh Mela to be part of the celebrations and witness religious practices. More than 120 million (12 crore) people visited this event, which is the largest number in any Kumbh in Allahabad so far. A tented township was set up for the pilgrims over an area of 2 hectares of land along the river. As many as five power substations, temporary police stations, hospitals and stalls were set up for providing various facilities to the visitors.

He further added that the state tourism board has also tied up with the travel trade and set up tour packages that are suited best for international as well as domestic tourists. The Pushkar Fair in Rajasthan, which had earlier begun as a means for trade in the deserts of the state, has now been popularised as a world-famous cattle fair. Hundreds of herders descend upon Pushkar in the state of Rajasthan for the five-day annual camel fair. The festival attracts 300,000 people and up to 20,000 camels, cattle and horses. The event, which sees tough bartering over livestock, has also become a major tourist attraction in recent years with a fair football match between the locals and visitors. The festival also includes music performances and competitions such as the 'matka phod', 'longest moustache' and 'bridal competition'. The

Rajasthan Tourism Development Corporation (RTDC) has been persistently promoting the Pushkar Fair, especially for the inbound market. Pushkar has now turned into a significant tourist attraction due to the footfall that the fair has witnessed. Pushkar now attracts tourists even during the non-festive season. There are plans to promote this festival in international markets on a much bigger scale as more international tourists can see how unique India is.

Gujarat is state that has made its mark on the international tourism map by predominantly promoting its fairs and festivals. The Navratri festi-

val and the Rann Utsav of Kutch are the most important and internationally renowned festivals. Gujarat has been aggressively promoting fairs and festivals in the state as there has been an increasing interest and footfall for the same in the state. In 2013-14 the Rann of Kutch festival saw in all 2.5 lakh tourists out of which 37 per cent were international travellers.

Other festivals gaining momentum in Gujarat include International Kite Festival (Uttarayan), Modhera Dance Festival, Bhavnath Fair, Chitra Vichitra Fair, Tarnetar Fair, Bhadrabad Ambaji Fair, Navratri Festival, Lili







Parikrama Fair, Shamlaji Fair, Vautha Fair, Kawnat Fair, Rann Utsav, Tanariri Festival and Dangs Darbar Festival, Gujarat is a delight for art and culture lovers. Festivals are a major part of Gujarat's promotional campaign and will remain a USP for the state.

Festivals are now being developed with the primary motive of promoting them as tourism products and also increasing tourist footfall for the destination. The Ladakh Festival, conducted for 15 days every year, is one such festival. Apart from music, folk dancing and archery competitions, one of the festival's main attractions are polo matches played in a dusty ground framed by the former royal palace and stark rocky ridges. Ladakh as a destination has grown in popularity, especially among domestic tourists due to the extensive promotion of festivals like the Ladakh Festival. Many tours for the La-

dakh Festival have been launched in the market.

Known for its elaborate carnivals, music festivals and food festivals, Goa is the 'It' place to visit from international as well as domestic tour-



**Festivals have been generating a significant amount of tourists and are being recognised as a form of cultural tourism, by the Ministry of Tourism (MoT), Govt. of India as well as the state tourism boards, with millions of tourists attending major Indian festivals each year**

ists. Touted as the Rio de Janeiro of India, Goa is on everybody's bucket list. Goa is much more than just a beach destination and moving forward we want to establish it as an events capital of India. The Carnival is the highlight of our state and our vision is to see it become as popular as the legendary Brazilian Carnival.

He further stated that, buoyant by the success of festivals in Goa last year, the state is also promoting and packaging festivals and events such as the Cashew & Coconut Festival, Shigmo, Sao Jao, Bonderam and Tirpurari Purnima. Every year nearly 2.5 lakh tourists participate in the carnival.

In South India, the Snake Boat Race Festival of Kerala is thronged with tourists every year. Conducted on the second Saturday of every August, the Snake Boat Race is one of the major tourist attractions in Kerala. Kerala Boat Festival is the





unique feature of the backwaters, has become an icon of the state and attracts lakhs of tourists every year. The Kerala Tourism Development Corporation builds marketing campaigns around the festival and package it along with other tourism products as Kerala is very rich in culture, art and history.

The Kerala Government also organises Grand Kerala Shopping Festival (GKSF) that starts from mid-December and ends in mid-January. The festival, organised by the government of Kerala in association with the state's Department of Tourism, offers 100 per cent VAT refund to tourists from outside the state who visit and shop in Kerala during the season.

### **New entrants cashing in on the segment**

West Bengal Tourism also focuses on its festivals and religious heritage. The West Bengal government has taken several initiatives to participate in all major travel and tourism festivals across India. Needless to say, the tourism industry contributes significantly to the foreign exchange earnings, and with the changing lifestyle pattern in the garb of modernity, this sector has been an area of much importance. West Bengal takes this opportunity to usher in a new era for a domestic as well as international travel market.

With West Bengal blessed with landmark pilgrimage sites and colourful festivals, the government

re-emphasises West Bengal and Kolkata as a destination made famous for its cultural and religious heritage. Major festivals such as the famous Durga Puja creates added value to the marketing effort of the department.

Chhattisgarh Tourism Board (CTB) organises the Sirpur National Dance and Music Festival at Sirpur near Raipur every year to showcase the cultural heritage of Chhattisgarh. This event is organised every year in the first week of January by Chhattisgarh Tourism Board in order to promote Buddhist sites in Sirpur. The Buddhist cultural heritage has a long and special history that dates back to more than 2,500 years and unites

most of South, South-East and East Asia. The influence of Buddhism can be seen across all Asian countries in terms of history and culture.

Uttarakhand hosts an Adventure Sports Festival at Koti Colony, Tehri. The event highlights the various adventure sports an adventure enthusiast would enjoy. Various activities of parachute jumping, para-gliding and water sports are showcased by the Indian Air Force personnel. Various amusement activities are organised at the Tehri Lake, such as laser light show, hot air balloon; boating and adventure water sports. Each of these will be showcased by experts.

A cultural programme is organised on the first evening of the two-day event. A workshop on the adventure tourism policy as well as on the plans for developing the Tehri Lake and its surroundings will be organised.

Addressing the gathering, Dhanai stated that Uttarakhand is to be developed for tourism, adding that the 45 km long lake at Tehri offers unlimited opportunities for water sports. The entire state will benefit and its impact will be felt across India, he opined.

The Maharashtra Tourism Development Corporation (MTDC) has recently started cashing in on this niche segment by developing festivals and fairs around its region all throughout the year by showcasing Maharashtra's rich heritage through festivals. Valsa Nair-Singh, Secretary – Tourism, Govt of Maharashtra, opined "Being a new entrant in the tourism side, I am glad that the

Maharashtra government has always come up with innovative and interactive tourism products for our travellers. Our new festivals such as the Elephanta Festival, the Pune festival, Ganesh Utsav, the Ellora Festival, the Kalidas Festival the Konkan and Strawberry Festivals are a part of our strategy to introduce new fac-



**Fairs and festivals are rising in popularity and are generating demand among tourists, along with creating trends in the niche tourism segment. Tourism boards across the world have used festivals for generating opportunities to promote tourism and hospitality**

ets of Maharashtra to the world. The Elephanta Festival 2014 witnessed an increase of 15 to 20 per cent in foreign tourist attendance as compared with last year.

The Andhra Pradesh Tourism Development Corporation (APTDC) has also kept up with the promotional march for their cultural fairs and festival offerings. Chandana Khan, Special Chief Secretary, Tourism & Culture, Archaeology & Museums, Archives & Youth Services & Sports, NCC, Govt. of Andhra Pradesh (AP), said, "Both domestically and internationally, culture is now an aspect people want to experience and understand rather just gloss over it. Festivals and fairs are the best place to participate in the cultural spectrum of our country. Both in terms of inbound and domestic travellers, there is an increasing interest due to exposure and global awareness about the cultural aspects of India."

#### **What more can be done?**

According to Goyal, there is incredible scope for Festival Tourism as there is a lot more in this segment to travel around. The right promotion is all it will take to put Fairs and Festival Tourism on the high-popularity map in the coming years.

However, safety and awareness still remain the two roadblocks faced by tour operators. "A suitable promotional strategy with special focus on Festival Tourism is necessary to create more awareness about the fairs and festivals of this country. Another important challenge is safety of travellers, especially women travellers," he concluded.



► Maverick entrepreneur Mr D.P. Patnaik's **OZEN MANSION KOLKATA** is going to be his flagship property in New Town, Kolkata



## COVER STORY

# *Determination Resilience Perseverance*

**The three qualities make the life story of Dipti Ranjan Patnaik (DRP). Now the serial entrepreneur dedicates himself in elevating the hospitality and tourism industry**

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**Mr Patnaik** is the chairman of Atmosphere Hospitality Private Limited, a promising new entrant in the Indian hospitality scene. Under his leadership, Atmosphere Hospitality Private Limited. In partnership with Atmosphere Core, is set to bring in a fresh and rejuvenating portfolio of resorts that stand out through a focus on hospitality real estate with soul. OZEN MANSION KOLKATA – a lifestyle luxury 5 star deluxe hotel will be Mr Patnaik's first venture with Atmosphere Core which is scheduled

to open during quarter 2 2024.

After having built a strong presence in the steel and mining industry, Mr Patnaik has now dedicated himself to elevating the hospitality and tourism industry in India through his focused and innovative vision. He has already made significant contributions to the industry by setting up exceptional hotels and resorts in eastern India viz. Bhubaneswar, Kalimpong, and Kolkata. And he envisions expanding to various locations in India, Nepal, and Bhutan with Atmosphere Core.







**His vision and ethics coupled with the entrepreneurial spirit have enabled him to grow his business to the size it is as of today. He has been actively associated with print, electronic and digital media. He also set up Padmanava College of Engineering to impart training leading to degrees in various branches of engineering, the first such institution in the private sector in the western part of Odisha**

DR Patnaik is a man of many traits. He is an entrepreneur, educationist, media personality, philanthropist, social reformer and activist and above all, a humanitarian. His life is a saga of struggle, determination, courage, and patience supplemented amply with moral fortitude. He is a self-made man who has weathered various storms in his life. His resilience and calm demeanor are a result of years of hardship and sacrifice.

#### **An engineer's foray**

Born and brought up in Rourkela, he completed his Bachelor's Degree in Chemical Engineering from REC, Rourkela (currently NIT Rourkela). Currently his business turnover is over INR 1500 crores. His primary focus is on mining with different business verticals. As an entrepreneur, he has had a career spanning over 40 years during which he has set-up and successfully run various

enterprises in different business verticals.

Born to a renowned business and political family of Keonjhar, Odisha, Mr Patnaik has had a remarkable career spanning over four decades during which he has set-up and successfully run various enterprises. A self-made man, Mr Patnaik achieved success through hard work and focused efforts. He ventured into the mining business in 1978 and was instrumental in setting up Tarini Minerals (P) Ltd and M/S D.R. Patnaik (OPC) Pvt Ltd which has earned a distinctive identity in the field of mining in Odisha.

Having established himself as an authority in mining, he has expanded his businesses into new domains like logistics, exports and financial management. He set up these business divisions, nurtured, and has brought them up to a respectable level. In his 4-decade long professional career, he has ventured into





various activities ranging from mining (soil) to aquaculture (water) and wind energy (air).

He is by nature a spiritual and sober person, inspired by the ideals of Bhagwad Gita and is a believer of Karma Theory. Currently both his sons are married and settled in their lives. Mr Dipti Ranjan Patnaik and his wife are also blessed with a granddaughter and a grandson, one each from his two sons.

### **Vision and ethics**

His vision and ethics coupled with the entrepreneurial spirit have enabled him to grow his business to the size it is as of today. He has been actively associated with Print, electronic and digital media. He also set up Padmanava College of Engineering, to impart training lead-

ing to Degrees in various branches of Engineering, the first such institution in the Private sector in the western part of the state, which came up in the industrial capital of the state and enjoys a position of rare distinction. Padmanava College of Engineering maintains the highest standards of quality education and discipline, two enablers of social and professional success. Thus, it has been producing leaders for the past 15 years. Besides that, he has been relentlessly working for the development of girls' education. He generously contributes to various schools and colleges in different parts of Odisha.

Mr Patnaik was nominated thrice as a Member of The Advisory Committee of Income Tax and was honoured with the prestigious Rastriya



Samman Award. He has also been very active in the field of social services and philanthropy, making valuable contributions to many social and business organizations such as the Rotary organization, the Rourkela Chambers of Commerce, and Residents Association of Civil Township, Rourkela.

#### **Awards and Recognitions**

D. R. Patnaik has awarded and honoured by different leading organizations of the country. Listing down the entire list of awards and honors would be a gargantuan task. Here we shall mention some of the notable ones. He was nominated as a Member of The Advisory Committee of Income –Tax and was honored with the most prestigious “RastriyaSamman Award”. He has also been nominated as a Member of The Advisory Committee of Income –Tax. Additionally, his organizations have been recognized for various facets such as market leadership, social contribution, etc.

Over the years he has been relentlessly and silently working in the field of social services and philanthropy. He has affiliations to various social, developmental

and progressive organizations such as the Chamber of Commerce and other industry bodies. Since 1987 as a Rotarian, he has proven his extraordinary leadership qualities by taking up various positions in the Rotary organization. Not only as a Rotarian, but also in his core business, he engages in continual CSR and philanthropic activities. He has also been associating with Lions Club and doing yeoman service for the downtrodden section of the people.

When it comes to games and sports, he has always been promoting games and sport. He has been the main driving force behind the inter-college cricket tournament in Rourkela. The tournament has been such a big attraction that the participation is always oversubscribed and additional elimination matches have to be organised to ensure the best teams are a part of the prestigious competition. He has also been instrumental in setting up Rourkela’s first full-fledged cricket coaching facility, which also comprises active involvement by current and former state level players.



After having built a strong presence in the steel and mining industry, Mr Patnaik has now dedicated himself to elevating the hospitality and tourism industry in India through his focused and innovative vision

# TROPICAL PARADISE

**HRAEI** and **HAANI** join hands with the Government of India to turn Andaman & Nicobar Islands into the world's top honeymoon destination

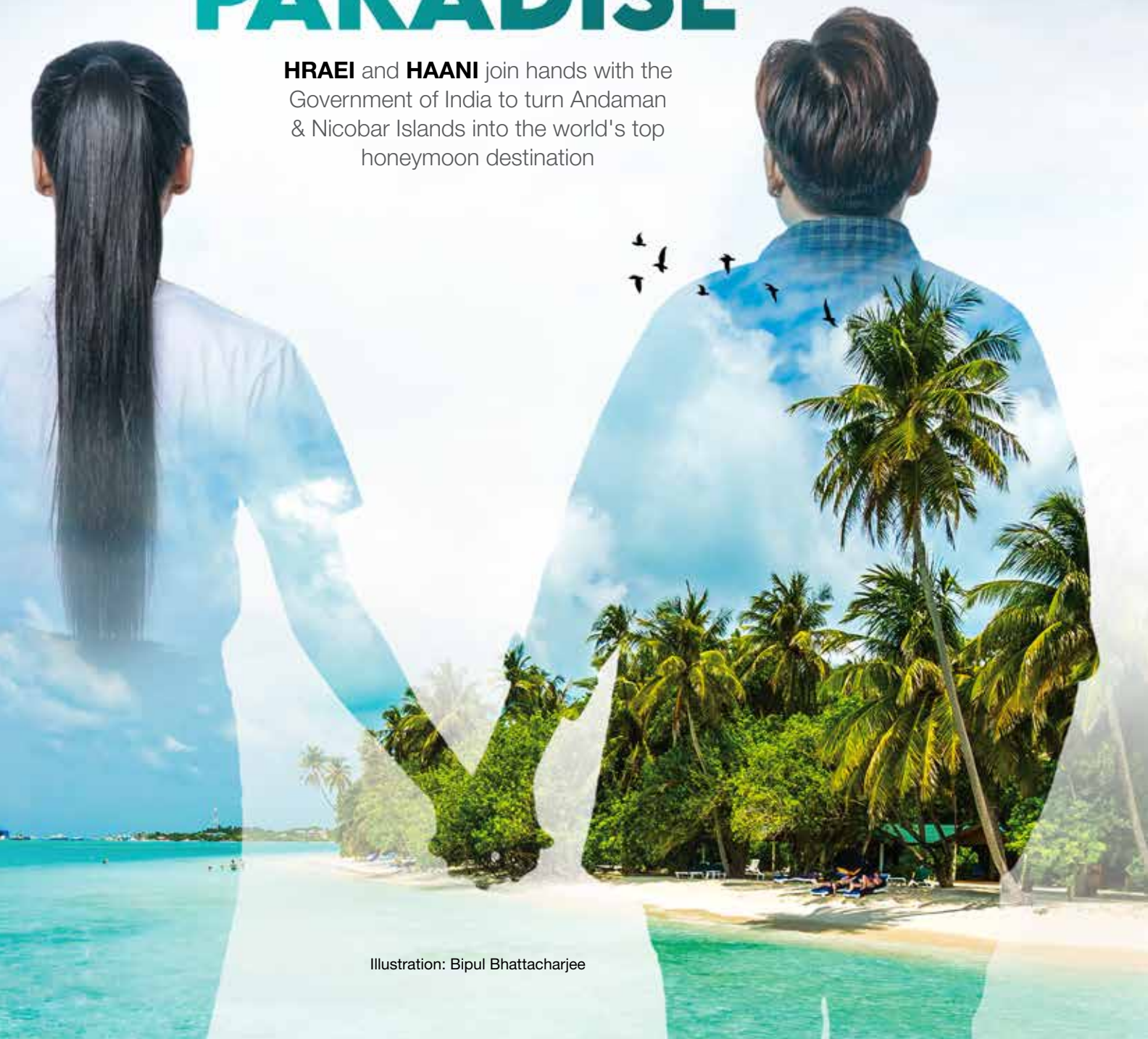


Illustration: Bipul Bhattacharjee





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**SHRI VIJAYPURAM:** The Hotel & Restaurant Association of Eastern India (HRAEI) organized an exclusive 'Interaction Meet' with the members of the Hoteliers Association of Andaman & Nicobar Islands (HAANI) and Tourism Industry stakeholders in the conference hall of the SeaShell Coral Cove at Minnie Bay here on November 11. The Chief Secretary (i/c), A&N Administration, Shri ASPS Raviprakash, IAS was the chief guest.

In his address on the occasion, Shri ASPS Raviprakash said, A&N Islands is an intoxicating place, bestowed with bounties of nature and there are many shades of greens and blues which makes A&N Islands one of the most sought after tourist destinations. Regarding the developments, he said many developmental projects by the Govt. of India and A&N Administration are being executed in A&N Islands and one can witness discernible progress being made here in many sectors. The development projects taking place in A&N Islands will definitely benefit the tourism stakeholders. He further stated that tourism stakeholders & A&N Administration jointly can take the Islands on the path of development.

In his address, the Secretary, Tourism (i/c), Dr. Prashant Kumar described A&N Islands as 'Mini

India' where people from different States reside here in a peace and harmony. He said, there is great potential in tourism sector which is the main business & employability in A&N Islands. He mentioned that e-visa facility is now in place which will boost cruise tourism and the Port Terminal project at Swaraj Dweep will be completed soon.

Efforts are also on to connect new Islands where tourism infrastructures can be developed, he said adding that Wellness Tourism is another area where investments can be planned. He also informed about the operation of International Flight which will start from November 16, 2024.

Trials of Sea Plane operation will also start soon which will help us to connect Swaraj Dweep,

Shaheed Dweep and Long Island, he said. Highlighting the investment opportunities in A&N Islands, Smt. Nandini Maharaj, IAS, Special Secretary (Tourism) informed that UT of A&N Islands offers marvellous beaches, historical places, Lime Stone Caves, Mangrove Creeks and many more attractive places for the visitors. Tourists can enjoy snorkelling, Scuba Diving apart from Star Gazing during the night, she said. The National Memorial Cellular Jail is revered and respected by the visitors as freedom fighters were



► SeaShell Coral Cove at Minnie Bay

incarcerated in this Jail. Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose Island, Viper Island, Chatham Island are the other historical places. Elaborating on uniqueness of Cinque Island which connects two Islands by a sand bar, she said that such type of topography is a unique experience for the tourists.

A&N Islands are also known for its high endemism, presence of a species or organism that is native to a specific geographic area, such as a country, island, lake, or mountain range. Smt Maharaj said adding that Narcondam Hornbill is endemic and only found in Narcondam Island and nowhere else. She further informed about the eco friendly policies for the promotion of Tourism which includes Bird watching, AstroTourism, House Boat Policy, Caravan Policy, Glamping etc.



**Newlyweds want to go to such places for their honeymoon that don't have crowds and have immense beauty. The tropical weather and vibes of the Andaman Islands make it a perfect romantic spot. Andaman is generally less crowded, quieter and more secluded than Bali, Phuket, Maldives or Lakshadweep**

In his address, the Director (i/c), (Tourism), Shri Amit Kale, IAS said that there is immense Tourism potential available in A&N Islands. Policies and decisions for the promotion of Tourism are being taken during the weekly meetings held by the Chief Secretary, A&N Administration and it is hoped that in next five to ten years, Andamans is going to be one of the leading places as a tourist destination in South East Asia.

In his address, the President, Hotel & Restaurant Association of India, Shri Sudesh Poddar informed that HRAEI established in 1961 represents the hotel and restaurant industry of twelve States and a Union Territory of Andaman & Nicobar Islands, in Eastern India. The aim of the HRAEI is to help those running Hotel & Restaurants and

people associated with Hospitality Industry. He said that 100 percent internship will be provided to the students of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar Institute of Technology (DBRAIT), Shri Vijay Puram, in star category hotels in Eastern India under the fold of HRAEI. He also announced that quota for two seats for students of A&N Islands in FHRAI Institute of Hospitality Management and scholarships for two Economically Weaker Section (EWS) students of A&N Islands in the institute. Apart from this, Internship for Students of Hotel Management of A&N Islands in top hotels of Kolkata, West Bengal, will be imparted, he added.

In his address on the occasion, the President, HAANI, Shri Girish Arora through a power point presentation titled 'A&N Islands beyond the Beaches' highlighted the investment opportunities available in A&N Islands. He said HAANI is working with motto of tourism promotion, service standards and sustainability advocacy. He also put forth the challenges faced by the Hoteliers.

### **New Initiatives**

The Andaman and Nicobar administration has taken numerous initiatives to attract more tourists to the archipelago, including granting access to uninhabited islands, allowing beaches to remain open till late night and reaching out to more airline operators, a top official said. There will also be eco-friendly tourism infrastructure in four islands and 11 tourist sites. The administration has taken various initiatives towards promotion of tourism... like development of a five-star property

at Megapode in Shri Vijay Puram in PPP mode, leasing out land at Radha Nagar Beach in Swaraj Dweep (Havelock Island).

Beaches are now being opened during late night hours for tourists to enjoy the heavenly sight of the landscape as well as the bio-luminescence. Efforts are being made to reach out to more airline operators that will lead to competitive and affordable pricing of tickets for tourists.

The administration is also exploring possibilities to have international connectivity from Shri Vijay Puram, especially the Southeast Asian countries where the tourism sector is a significant part of the economy. This could enable cheaper air connectivity to these countries owing to







their proximity to Shri Vijay Puram..

In a recent move, the local government revealed plans to allow tourists to visit the charming Aves Island in the North and Middle Andaman district. The administration has suggested the creation of a five-star eco-tourism resort through a public-private partnership to turn Aves into a popular tourist destination.

According to PTI, the local government intends to lease a 2.75-hectare land parcel under a Design-Build-Finance-Operate-Transfer (DBFOT) arrangement to the Andaman and Nicobar Islands Integrated Devel-



**The exclusive 'Interaction Meet' with the members of the HRAEI and HAANI and Tourism Industry stakeholders in the conference hall of the SeaShell Coral Cove at Minnie Bay on November 11. The Chief Secretary (i/c), A&N Administration, Shri ASPS Raviprakash, IAS was the chief guest**

opment Corporation Limited (ANIID-CO). A 50-room, five-star ecotourism resort is planned at Aves Island, It will feature a wellness centre, scuba diving, game fishing, hiking through the forest, nature camping, and a shopping area featuring locally made souvenirs.

The administration has also prepared a Project Information Memorandum (PIM) under the heading of Development of Eco-Tourism Projects in Andaman Islands – 2023 for the comprehensive development of 14 additional tourist destinations, including Lalaji Bay beach

at Long Island, Ross-Smith Island, and Shaheed Dweep spread across North Andaman, Middle Andaman, and South Andaman. This initiative aims to put the Andaman and Nicobar Islands on the map of world tourist destinations.

#### **About Pristine Aves**

Aves Island is part of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands' Indian union territory. Located in the North and Middle Andaman's Mayabunder tehsil, the Aves Island's village code is 645293, as per the 2011 Census. The distance from Mayabunder, the district and sub-district headquarters of Aves Island

village, is around 6km. The village is spread over 15.9 hectares of land. It is roughly 140 kilometres to the north of Port Blair, a well-kept secret due to its uninhabited status. It is known as Coconut Island because of its lush, green coconut plantation. The island's unique appeal lies in its coconut plantations and small jungle trails, providing opportunities for trekking enthusiasts to explore the island's natural beauty. Notably, a trek through these trails leads to a lighthouse on the southern point, offering panoramic vistas. Aves Island is going to turn into a haven for nature enthusiasts and campers, of-

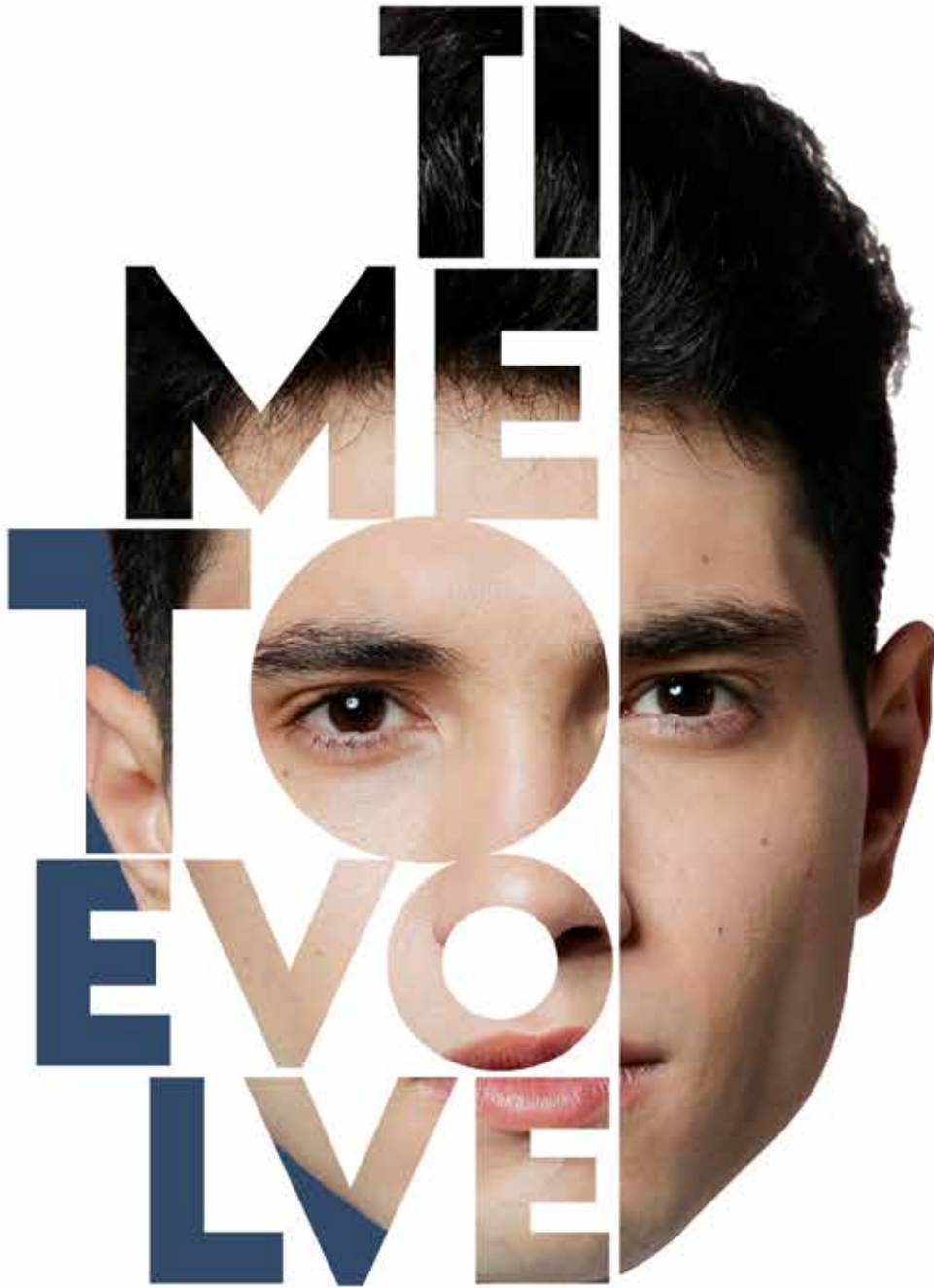
fering an ideal blend of tranquility and natural beauty.

Furthermore, the local administration has taken a comprehensive approach to boost tourism across the Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

The unveiling of the Project Information Memorandum (PIM) titled Development of Eco-Tourism Projects in the Andaman Islands – 2023 outlines plans for the holistic development of 14 additional tourist destinations. From the alluring Lalaji Bay Beach at Long Island to Ross-Smith Island and Shaheed Dweep, the administration is committed to enhancing the region's appeal.

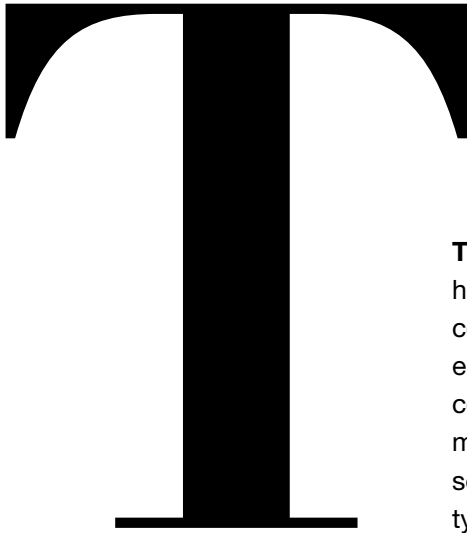


Illustration: Bipul Bhattacharjee



There is a strong need to make internship programs more attractive and lucrative for the **younger generation**.





Internships offer a hands-on immersion into the industry of hotels, restaurants, and events, where every task becomes a lesson and every challenge an opportunity for growth

**The Indian hospitality sector** has grown rapidly in the past couple of decades and is a key employment generator for the country. It is also one of the most labour-intensive services sectors, but shortage of quality skilled personnel has been a perennial problem for the sector. Several students graduate from specialized hospitality institutes in the country annually, but over the last decade or so, many of them have preferred to join other services sectors, as these sectors find hospitality graduates to be well-groomed with a positive orientation towards customer.

It is high time that the hospitality sector introspects on this challenge. An effective and fruitful internship experience, which in most cases is the first practical exposure to the industry for young students, can go a long way in overcoming this challenge by changing the perception that students have about working in the sector.

#### **The basics**

In an academic context, an internship is defined as a temporary period of work usually attached to a degree program, which is designed to give a student some relevant experience

in the field they've chosen to study. For hospitality business students, this usually involves time spent working in a hotel, restaurant or similar premises.

Having relevant work experience is a critical factor in finding the best possible role after graduation. That's why many hospitality degrees incorporate professional internships.

#### **Why intern in hospitality?**

There are many benefits to a hospitality internship program, but the most important is the work experience itself – no matter how hands-on and business focused your education, there is simply nothing to match having the opportunity to put what you've learned into practice in a real-world professional setting.

And not just any setting. Study with a highly regarded and well-connected hospitality school and you will have privileged access to internship opportunities at prestigious brands. These are rarely advertised to the general public; instead, brands come direct to the top schools, because they trust the knowledge, professional polish and work ethic of the students they'll encounter.

It doesn't mean securing your

# INTERNSHIP

dream job posting is easy – you still have to shine at your interview – but don't underestimate the value of a 'foot in the door'.

Let's take a look at some of the main ways that internships for hospitality students can help set you up for a successful career in the industry.

## **Practical experience**

Theoretical knowledge only gets you so far—practical experience is the true game-changer. Internships offer a hands-on immersion into the industry of hotels, restaurants, and events, where every task becomes a lesson and every challenge an opportunity for growth. Through practical experience, you not only get to practice your classroom learning but you can also develop invaluable skills that set you apart in the job market.

From mastering guest interactions to understanding operational intricacies, each day of your internship is a step closer to career readiness. On top of this, practical experience doesn't just end with skills—it builds confidence, adaptability, and a deeper understanding of industry nuances. Plus, it can help you find which area within hospitality you most want to work in.

## **Employability**

In today's competitive job market, securing a fulfilling career after earning a hospitality business degree is not just about academic achievement. It's also about demonstrating practical skills and industry readiness.

An internship plays a big role in

this as it adds a valuable endorsement to your resume – one that is certain to get you noticed by potential employers seeking recruits who can hit the ground running.

On top of this, the relationships and networks you cultivate during your internship are equally instrumental in shaping your career trajectory. The mentors, supervisors, and colleagues you connect with become invaluable resources, offering guidance, support, and professional insights. These relationships often extend beyond the internship period and can serve as the gateway to your first job after graduation. Whether it's through direct employment offers or valuable referrals, the connections forged during your internship can significantly enhance your prospects in the job market.

## **Networking**

Beyond the practical skills and industry insights gained, hospitality internships offer a unique platform for expanding professional networks—a crucial asset in today's interconnected job market. Whether you're working alongside seasoned industry veterans or collaborating with fellow interns, each interaction presents an opportunity to forge meaningful connections.

These relationships extend far beyond the confines of your internship period. The mentors and supervisors you engage with can provide invaluable guidance, career advice, and mentorship long after your internship concludes. Their insights and recommendations can open doors to new opportunities



and pave the way for career advancement.

Networking isn't just about collecting business cards or LinkedIn connections—it's about cultivating genuine relationships based on mutual respect and shared interests. By actively engaging with colleagues, attending industry events, and participating in professional development activities during your internship, you're laying the groundwork for a robust professional network that can support your career growth for years to come.

### **Personal growth**

One of the most enticing aspects of hospitality internships is the potential for travel. Whether you're interning at a luxury resort in a tropical paradise or gaining experience at a bustling city hotel, these opportunities allow you to immerse yourself in diverse cultures, cuisines, and traditions. From front-of-house interactions with international guests to behind-the-scenes insights into local customs, each day presents a new adventure and a chance to broaden your horizons.

This benefit extends beyond just seeing the world. Internships in the hospitality sector foster personal growth in a lot of ways. You'll develop resilience as you navigate challenging situations, adaptability as you acclimate to new environments, and empathy as you interact with guests from all walks of life.

These soft skills are invaluable not only in hospitality but also in any future career path you choose to pursue, making you more confident and capable when you look for a full-time



One of the most enticing aspects of hospitality internships is the potential for travel. Whether you're interning at a luxury resort in a tropical paradise or gaining experience at a bustling city hotel, these opportunities allow you to immerse yourself in diverse cultures, cuisines, and traditions





# INTERNSHIP

role. Plus, your internships will help you get a deeper understanding of your career aspirations, whether that's working in a remote resort or a high-end restaurant.

## **Skill development**

One of the most significant advantages of internships is the opportunity to hone skills specific to hospitality operations. Whether it's mastering point-of-sale systems, perfecting the art of mixology, or fine-tuning culinary techniques, interns gain hands-on experience in the tools and practices that form the backbone of hospitality establishments.

Beyond technical proficiency, you'll also cultivate essential soft skills crucial for professional success. Interns navigate a wide range of challenges, sharpening their abilities to thrive in fast-paced, customer-centric environments. This means that you'll be able to work on skills such as customer service, event management, communication, and problem-solving. These skills are transferable and valuable across various roles within the hospitality sector.

## **Resume building**

The skills and experience that you gain through an internship can be an impressive addition to your resume when you look for jobs. Employers like to see that you have real-world experience and advanced skills. A reference from an internship mentor or other people at the company could be helpful too.

These extras can help make your resume stand out compared to





others applying for the same job. This can make it easier to get interviews and eventually job offers. A 2019 study by NACE (National Association for Catering and Events) indicated that graduating seniors with internship experience received 20% more job offers compared to graduates without internships.

### Trying out career paths

Another big benefit of internships is having the opportunity to sample a role before you decide which career path is right for you. This could be through a range of internships at different companies, or you could have a longer internship that lets you work in different departments.

This can be very helpful if, for example, you are sure that you want to work in hotel management, but you don't know if you would prefer to work in boutique hotels or large chains. Or, you could find that you actually want to specialize in luxury management.

### Higher salary potential

With the experience, skills and increased job offers an internship can give you, it generally means that doing an internship can help you compete for roles with higher pay and higher salaries. This is important because some jobs with business degrees are highly competitive.

Why are internships important for employers?

**Recruitment:** Interns can be a valuable source of new talent for

your organization. By providing them with hands-on experience, you can evaluate their skills and determine if they would be a good fit for your company before extending a full-time job offer.

**Cost-effective:** Interns are typically paid less than full-time employees, so it can be a cost-effective way to bring in new talent. Additionally, most colleges and universities have programs that will cover the costs for that student intern to be at your organization.

**Increased productivity:** Interns can bring fresh ideas and new perspectives to your organization, which can lead to increased productivity and innovation.

**Training and development:** Interns can be valuable training and development resources. They can be trained in specific skills or areas of expertise needed within your organization.

**Branding:** Interns can help to promote your brand and attract new customers. By providing them with positive experiences, they can become advocates for your company and share their experiences with others. Also, students talk to other students and tell them if your organization was a positive experience or a negative experience.

**Networking:** Interns can also help to expand your professional network. By providing them with opportunities to meet and work with other professionals within your organization, you can create valuable connections for both the



intern and your company.

**Diversity and Inclusion:** Employers should consider building a robust internship program that is inclusive of a diverse student population. This can foster a more diverse and inclusive workplace and attract top talent from a variety of backgrounds.

**Compliance:** Employers should ensure that their internship program is in compliance with all federal, state, and local laws. This includes ensuring that interns are properly classified as employees or non-employees and that they are provided with appropriate compensation and benefits.

**Alumni:** Building a robust internship program can help to create a strong alumni network for your organization. This can be a valuable resource for future hiring and networking opportunities.

**Community engagement:** Employers should also consider building a robust internship program that engages with the community. This can help to foster positive relationships between your organization and the community and can also be a great way to give back and support local organizations.

Despite the increasing importance of internships in the hospitality industry, a few years ago an HVS ANAROCK Internship Study found that

percentage of students joining back the hotel industry has been decreasing over the years.

HVS ANAROCK conducted an anonymous Online Survey amongst Hospitality Students (who had completed their Internships) from four leading institutes in India to understand their experience during their Internships. The Online Survey was conducted in March 2020, with 338 participants responding to it.

Internships provide a wide range of valuable, hands-on experience to students across the different departments. After completing the Internship program, the students had mixed perceptions. Of the 323 respondents, 51 per cent of the respondents had positive experience pertaining to the Internship. However, it is remarkable to note that an almost equal number of students had a mixed or negative 80per cent Students have a good insight into hotel operations. 40 per cent Students were able to connect classroom learning with practical experience. 31 per cent Students would like to return & work for this hotel after completing the course. 31 per cent Students found a disconnect between classroom learning & the practical experience. 19 per cent Students were not keen to work for this hotel after completion





of the course, while as stated above 23per cent Students were not keen to work in hotels & will look for alternate employment opportunities outside this sector.

The Principals feel that only 50 per cent of their Students join the Hotel sector post completing their course, while the rest join other services sectors such as OTAs, Airlines, luxury and standalone Restaurant Chains, Retail and even eCommerce, as they offer higher pay scale and accelerated growth paths. Students are nowadays drawn to companies like Zomato, Swiggy, McDonalds and other QSRs due to higher compensation packages, conducive working hours and faster career and growth trajectories. As per the Principals, smaller properties invest more time with the Interns, providing them more expo-

sure and responsibility even on the client facing side. On the hand, the larger chains usually give Interns menial assignments and no exposure in both. The Interns are mostly given exposure in both in the production department. Larger properties don't even bother to conduct a proper orientation of Interns and send them to both straight away.

#### **What went well during the Internship?**

**Prepares them for the future:** Students felt that the Internship prepared them for their journey in the hospitality world, by giving them an effective practical experience. They are more aware of what to expect, including the challenges that they would face when they officially join the hotel Industry. It provided

them with a holistic perspective of the various departments and the day-to-day operations at a hotel.

**Detailed orientation:** Students felt that a detailed orientation conducted at the beginning of the Internship gave them a good direction.

**Adequate support from leaders/ other team members:** Employees in the department were supportive and gave meaningful work, treating the Interns with dignity and respect. The work culture was good and conducive.

**Regular feedback:** The Internship was fruitful due to the regular feedbacks that the Interns received from their mentors. Weekly / fortnightly meetings helped them to engage with their mentors, who were able to address their grievances in an effective way. The leadership team

# INTERNSHIP



also engaged with them and treated them equally and with dignity.

## **What did not go well during the Internship?**

***Being treated as cheap labour:*** Some Students felt that the Industry treated them as cheap labour by allocating them menial tasks. As a result, Students were not able to link the theoretical knowledge taught in college and its practical implementation. They felt that they did not receive any insights on managerial and supervisory functions. There was no focus on individual interest and development. Responsibility and accountability were limited, so the work given was not fulfilling.

***Longer work hours:*** The schedules were not implemented fairly, and the Interns were made to work

more than 12 hours in a day. They felt that they were underpaid

***Lack of exposure to all departments:*** There was unequal distribution of the departments, some Interns were allotted only BOTH departments. They were not exposed to FOTH departments and functional areas at all.

***Minimal interaction with Heads:*** The HR / Training department had minimal interaction with the Interns during training. Limited involvement and engagement by the senior leadership team

***Unequal treatment & discrimination:*** Some felt that discrimination towards women Interns made them feel that the Industry is unsafe for women.

In addition, there is a strong gulf between perception and reality between the students and employers.



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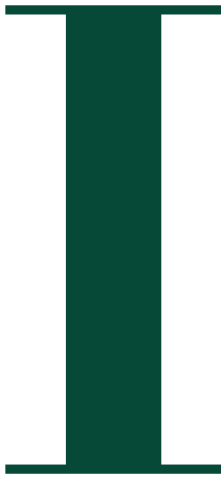


Illustration: Bipul Bhattacharjee



**UNESCO**  
**WORLD**  
**HERITAGE**  
**SITES**

The selection in the prestigious list helps preserve legacy and cultural treasures



India hosted the 46th session of the World Heritage Committee Meeting in New Delhi this year. The event brought together delegates from across the globe to discuss and collaborate on preserving cultural, natural, and mixed heritage. The meeting was a significant step towards fostering global cooperation and ensuring the protection of our World Heritage properties.

### **The Sites**

A World Heritage site is a landmark or area with legal protection by an international convention administered by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO). World Heritage sites are designated by UNESCO for having cultural, historical, scientific or other forms of significance. The sites are judged to contain “cultural and natural heritage around the world considered to be of outstanding value to humanity (OUV)”.

As of July 2024, a total of 1,199 World Heritage Sites (933 cultural, 227 natural, and 39 mixed properties) exist across 168 countries. The countries with the most sites are Italy (59), China (57), Germany (52), France (52), Spain (50), India (42), Mexico (35), the United Kingdom (33) and Russia (31).

India has 42 world heritage sites, out of which 34 are cultural, 7 are natural sites and 1 mixed category.

The first site listed as a World Heritage site in India was Agra Fort (1983). The same year, Taj Mahal (1983), Ellora Caves (1983) and Ajanta Caves (1983) were inscribed on the list by the World Heritage Committee. Considering that 57 more sites are on India's World Heritage Tentative list, the addition of India's heritage monuments will be a game changer in the tourism sector.

Following is the list from Eastern India with year of inscription.

### **1. Sun Temple, Konârak (1984) Category : Cultural Properties**

On the shores of the Bay of Bengal, bathed in the rays of the rising sun, the temple at Konarak is a monumental representation of the sun god Surya's chariot; its 24 wheels are decorated with symbolic designs and it is led by a team of six horses. Built in the 13th century, it is one of India's most famous Brahman sanctuaries.

### **2. Kaziranga National Park (1985) Category : Natural Properties**

In the heart of Assam, this park is one of the last areas in eastern India undisturbed by a human presence. It is inhabited by the world's largest population of one-horned rhinoceroses, as well as many mammals, including tigers, elephants, panthers and bears, and thousands of birds.



### 3. Manas Wildlife Sanctuary (1985)

**State: Assam**

**Category: Natural Properties**

On a gentle slope in the foothills of the Himalayas, where wooded hills give way to alluvial grasslands and tropical forests, the Manas sanctuary is home to a great variety of wildlife, including many endangered species, such as the tiger, pygmy hog, Indian rhinoceros and Indian elephant.

### 4. Sundarbans National Park (1987)

**State : West Bengal**

**Category : Natural Properties**

The Sundarbans covers 10,000 km<sup>2</sup> of land and water (more than half of it in India, the rest in Bangladesh) in the Ganges delta. It contains the world's largest area of mangrove forests. A number of rare or endangered species live in the park, including tigers, aquatic



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mammals, birds and reptiles.

### 5. Darjeeling Himalayan Railways of India (1999)

**Category : Cultural Properties**

This site includes three railways. The Darjeeling Himalayan Railway was the first, and is still the most outstanding, example of a hill passenger railway. Opened in 1881, its design applies bold and ingenious engineering solutions to the problem of establishing an effective rail link across a mountainous terrain of great beauty.

### 6. Mahabodhi Temple Complex at Bodh Gaya (2002)

**Category : Cultural Properties**

The Mahabodhi Temple Complex is one of the four holy sites related to the life of the Lord Buddha, and particularly to the attainment of Enlightenment. The first temple







was built by Emperor Asoka in the 3rd century B.C., and the present temple dates from the 5th or 6th centuries. It is one of the earliest Buddhist temples built entirely in brick, still standing in India, from the late Gupta period.

### **7. Archaeological Site of Nalanda Mahavihara at Nalanda, Bihar (2016)** **Category : Cultural Properties**

The Nalanda Mahavihara site is in the State of Bihar, in north-eastern India. It comprises the archaeological remains of a monastic and scholastic institution dating from the 3rd century BCE to the 13th century CE. It includes stupas,

shrines, viharas (residential and educational buildings) and important art works in stucco, stone and metal. Nalanda stands out as the most ancient university of the Indian Subcontinent. It engaged in the organized transmission of knowledge over an uninterrupted period of 800 years. The historical development of the site testifies to the development of Buddhism into a religion and the flourishing of monastic and educational traditions.

### **8. Khangchendzonga National Park (2016)** **Category : Mixed Properties**

Located at the heart of the Hi-



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malayan range in northern India (State of Sikkim), the Khangchendzonga National Park includes a unique diversity of plains, valleys, lakes, glaciers and spectacular, snow-capped mountains covered with ancient forests, including the world's third highest peak, Mount Khangchendzonga. Mythological stories are associated with this mountain and with a great number of natural elements (caves, rivers, lakes, etc.) that are the object of worship by the indigenous people of Sikkim. The sacred meanings of these stories and practices have been integrated with Buddhist beliefs and constitute the basis for Sikkimese identity.

## 9. Santiniketan (2023)

### Category : Cultural Properties

Established in rural West Bengal in 1901 by the renowned poet and

philosopher Rabindranath Tagore, Santiniketan was a residential school and centre for art based on ancient Indian traditions and a vision of the unity of humanity transcending religious and cultural boundaries. A 'world university' was established at Santiniketan in 1921, recognizing the unity of humanity or "Visva Bharati". Distinct from the prevailing British colonial architectural orientations of the early 20th century and of European modernism, Santiniketan represents approaches toward a pan-Asian modernity, drawing on ancient, medieval and folk traditions from across the region.

## 10. Charaideo Moidams (2025)

### Category: Cultural Properties

Charaideo Maidam will be North East India's first world heritage site receiving the status in the cultural

category and 43rd world heritage site of India. These are ancient burial mounds of the Ahom kings and nobles, built during the Ahom Kingdom's reign from the 13th to the 18th century. The Maidams, resembling large hillocks covered with grass, are revered as sacred sites by the Ahom community. Each Maidam represents the final resting place of an Ahom ruler or dignitary and is believed to contain their remains along with valuable artefacts and treasures. The Ahoms practised a unique form of burial where the deceased's remains were interred in an underground chamber, and the mound above ground served as a memorial and symbol of respect. These sites are not just burial grounds but are deeply entrenched in Assamese identity and history, reflecting the rich heritage of the region.



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