



J&K Emerges as Top Domestic Destination, Booms with Special Potential, Says HAI President

Elevating infrastructure, economic growth, and environmental Preservation in paradise on earth

J&K, May 4, 2024: In 2023, J&K's tourism industry broke all records following the arrival of 2.11 crore tourists, including significant number of pilgrimage tourists. The successful conduct of the G20 Tourism Working group meeting in May 2023 in Srinagar proved to be a game changer to bring back foreign tourists to Kashmir.

With the support of the government, Jammu & Kashmir is reaching unprecedented heights. Under the Tourism Mission, the government of J & K intends to establish about 75 additional destinations. Approximately INR 447 crores were allocated to the tourism by Central Government to develop J&K in 2023. **"J&K is one of the preferred travel destinations, displaying abundant natural beauty, a vibrant culture, welcoming locals, and a unique Indian cuisine waiting to be discovered."** Says KB Kachru, President of the Hotel Association of India and Chairman - South Asia, Radisson Hotel Group, at the Federation of Hotel and Restaurants Association of India (FHRAI) conference held on May 3, 2024. The objective of the meet organised by FHRAI & J& K hotelier club is to propel the development of J&K.

Additionally, he emphasized on the recent efforts made to strengthen the valley's infrastructure. **"Over one crore lakh worth highway and tunnel projects are now under construction. For the purpose of bolstering and expanding several National Highway projects in J&K, the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways has approved INR 2,093 crore."**

While addressing the summit organised by FHRAI & Hoteliers club of J& K, KB Kachru, also discussed the current challenges the industry is facing and emphasized on the collective effort required to overcome them and foster improvement. **"Our main challenge revolves around foreign tourist arrivals, which in India remain 15% lower than pre-pandemic levels. It's imperative to work towards increasing this inflow. Tackling the shortage of trained tourism personnel and fostering collaboration among industry bodies and hospitality chains are essential steps to ensure the delivery of quality experiences to both domestic and international guests."**

While domestic tourism is growing there are further policy advancement that industry needs. Government should facilitate the support from various associations including Hotel Association of India (HAI), FHRAI, and Tourism and Hospitality Skill Council (THSC). Another aspect that needs to be addressed is the promotion and marketing of the state domestically and internationally, he stated.

He also highlighted the importance of Eco tourism, **"With its stunning natural beauty, Jammu and Kashmir encouraged ecotourism projects that supported regional economies and environmental preservation. Tourists engaged in animal safaris, nature hikes, and birding in protected regions such as Hemis High Altitude National Park and Dachigam National Park."**

HAI has emphasized its vision of making tourism and hospitality a driving force to achieve the national Vision 2047 for employment creation, inclusive growth to reach the 3rd largest GDP. HAI & FHRAI are closely working with industry and government to facilitate skill development and adoption of new efficient, sustainable technology. HAI is also trying to forge strong industry fraternity and collaboration for creating awareness about the role of Tourism and hospitality and a harmonious voice of the



industry. Each state has to be proactive in promoting their state and be transparent in communicating this to the industry. This will help us make a difference.

About HAI

Established in 1996, Hotel Association of India (HAI) has evolved as an integrated hospitality industry platform to keep pace with the growing buoyancy ushered in by the liberalization of the Indian economy in the mid-90s. With its membership extending from major hotel groups; boutique, heritage and small hotels, HAI represents the entire spectrum of the industry. Its Executive Committee is a potent combination of the commitment of hotel owners on one hand and hard-core professionalism of hotel managers on the other. As the apex Industry Body, HAI works in the areas of Promotion of Regional Cooperation and Hospitality Research & Education in addition to taking Industry centric initiatives. By launching Unprecedented 'Social Inclusion' initiatives, HAI also projects the 'Social Face' of the Indian hospitality industry."