

# hoteliers'2024 conclave

*Hospitality –  
The Engine for GDP Growth & Employment*

## Speakers' Profiles



**Smt. Smriti Irani**  
Hon'ble Minister of Women and  
Child Development, Govt. of India

**Shri Vinai Kumar Saxena**  
Hon'ble Lieutenant Governor of Delhi

**Shri Amitabh Kant**  
India's G20 Sherpa and  
Former CEO of Niti Aayog

**Smt. V. Vidyavathi IAS**  
Secretary (Tourism)  
Government of India

**Shri Madan Prasad Bezbaruah**  
Secretary General  
Hotel Association of India

**Shri Puneet Chhatwal**  
Managing Director & Chief Executive Officer  
The Indian Hotels Company Limited

**Shri K.B. Kachru**  
Chairman Emeritus and Principal Advisor,  
Radisson Hotel Group South Asia

**Shri Nakul Anand**  
Former Executive Director  
ITC Limited

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## **Smt. Smriti Irani**

Hon'ble Minister of Women and  
Child Development, Govt. of India

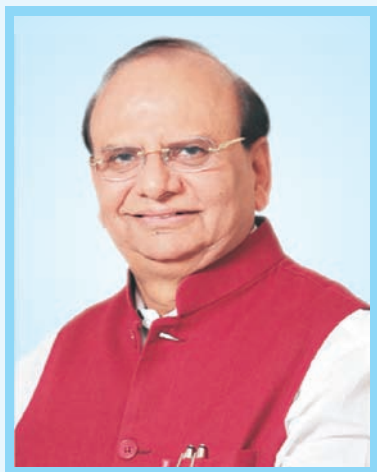


Smt. Smriti Zubin Irani has been Minister of Women and Child Development since 2019, and also Minister of Minority Affairs since 2022. She previously served as Minister of Human Resource Development (2014 to 2016), Minister of Textiles (2016 to 2021), and Minister of Information and Broadcasting (2017 to 2018). She was the youngest minister (at age 43) in Prime Minister Narendra Modi's second ministry in 2019.

She has been a member of parliament since 2011, serving in the Rajya Sabha from Gujarat from 2011 to 2019 and since 2019 serving as a member of the Lok Sabha from the Amethi constituency in Uttar Pradesh.

A prominent leader within the Bharatiya Janata Party, she was the National President of the BJP Mahila Morcha (the party's women's wing) from 2010 to 2013. In the 2019 elections she gained the Amethi constituency by defeating opposition leader Rahul Gandhi, then-president of the Indian National Congress., whose family members had represented the constituency for much of the previous four decades Smt. Smriti Zubin Irani is a former actress, fashion model and television producer. She speaks several Indian languages including Hindi, Bengali, Marathi, Gujarati, and Punjabi.

*Source - Wikipedia*



## Shri Vinai Kumar Saxena

Hon'ble Lieutenant Governor of Delhi

Shri Vinai Kumar Saxena took over as the 22nd Lieutenant Governor of Delhi on 26th May 2022. Shri Saxena comes with over three decades of vast experience in the corporate and social sectors and is the first corporate man ever selected for such gubernatorial post.

Prior to his appointment as the LG of Delhi, Shri Saxena served as the Chairman of Khadi & Village Industries Commission (KVIC) from October 2015 to May 2022. At KVIC, Shri Saxena diversified the Khadi and village industry sectors, employed scientific techniques and implemented several innovative projects that brought about a sea change in the lives of the Khadi artisans and strengthened several allied industries.

Born on 23rd March 1958 in an educated and reputed family of Uttar Pradesh, Shri Saxena graduated from Kanpur University in 1981 and holds a Pilot Licence. His leadership abilities on a diverse range of social and corporate matters fused with technical, legal, social and cultural skills make him a philanthropist in vision and corporate scientist in action. With his business leadership on a diverse range of corporate matters such as industries, MSMEs, petroleum and ports - fused with technical, legal, social and cultural skills, Shri Saxena has always led from the front in every issue related to social development like water resource development, fighting the social malpractices, disaster management support or clean development of the city space.

*Source -Delhi Govt. website*

## Shri Amitabh Kant

India's G20 Sherpa and  
Former CEO of Niti Aayog



Amitabh Kant is a governance reformer and a public policy change agent. He is presently G20 Sherpa to the Prime Minister of India. As India's Sherpa to the G20 during India's Presidency of G20 in 2022-23, he navigated the challenging geopolitical waters, steering the G20 towards a consensus on a decisive and action-oriented New Delhi Leaders' Declaration, an essential document that outlined a clear path for addressing pressing global issues.

Beyond his G20 role, Amitabh Kant's illustrious career spans key senior positions in the Government of India, where he spearheaded initiatives that reshaped the nation's economic landscape. His journey in public service includes serving as the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of National Institution for Transforming India (NITI Aayog) with Prime Minister of India as its Chairman. His tenure also saw him at the helm of the Department for Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP) in India and CEO of the Delhi-Mumbai Industrial Corridor Development Corporation (DMICDC) and Secretary, Tourism Government of Kerala. In these capacities, he demonstrated an unwavering commitment to pursuing reforms, driving economic growth and innovation in India.

Amitabh Kant is a true thought leader and has been a driving force behind numerous reforms and initiatives that have revolutionized India's landscape. Initiatives like Startup India, Make in India, Incredible India, Ease of Doing Business reforms and the Aspirational Districts Program and Production Linked Incentive (PLI) have left

an indelible mark on the nation. His books, including "Made in India," "Incredible India 2.0," and "Branding India - An Incredible Story," have helped shape India's narrative. He has edited The Path Ahead: Transformative Ideas for India.

Beyond India's borders, Amitabh Kant has been a member of the Steering Board of the "Shaping the Future of Production Systems" initiative at the World Economic Forum (WEF). He's also a Champion of the EDISON Alliance of the WEF, which focuses on deepening digital inclusion in areas such as health, education, and finance for developing nations worldwide. His contributions extended to the Management Board of the International Transport Forum (ITF), a unique inter-governmental agency for global transport.

He received the prestigious Sir Edmund Hillary Fellowship, conferred by the Prime Minister of New Zealand, is a Chevening Scholar and recipient of One Globe Award for leadership in Transforming Governance for the 21st Century. In the dynamic and ever-changing realm of global governance, Amitabh Kant stands as an unwavering beacon of leadership, innovation, and transformative change, not only for India but for the world. His journey is a testament to the power of visionary leadership and public policy in shaping the future of nations and the global community.



## **Smt. V. Vidyavathi IAS**

Secretary (Tourism), Government of India

Smt. V. Vidyavathi is a 1991-batch IAS officer of Karnataka cadre. She took over as Secretary of Ministry of Tourism in June 2023. Prior to that she was posted as Director General in the Archaeological Survey of India.

Smt. V. Vidyavathi joined the Indian Administrative Service in 1991. She belongs to the Karnataka Cadre. She has worked on various assignments across both at the State level and the Centre. Her early initial assignments were as Director of the Department of Women and Child Development, Panchayati Raj at Shimoga, Gulbarga, Mandya from 1993 to 2000. She has also worked in the Chief Minister's Office, Karnataka.

Moving to the Centre in 2004, Smt. V. Vidyavathi joined the Prime Minister's Office, where she worked till

2011. After a stint at International Finance Corporation as Advisor - Policy & Strategy, she served in the Department of Administrative Reforms, Personnel, Cabinet Secretariat as well as the Ministry of Environment & Forests and the Archaeological Survey of India as Director General.

Smt. V. Vidyavathi has joined as Secretary, Ministry of Tourism in June, 2023. Her areas of interest are Cultural Heritage and History. She is passionate about Temple & Temple Architecture and has worked extensively on around 800 temples. Smt. V. Vidyavathi has attended the Post Graduate Programme in Public Policy & Management from IIM, Bangalore. She is also an Eisenhower Fellow and is fluent in English, Hindi, Telugu, Tamil, Kannada and Malayalam.

## Shri Madan Prasad Bezbaruah

Secretary General  
Hotel Association of India



Mr. Madan Prasad Bezbaruah, retired as the Secretary, Ministry of Tourism, Government of India and was recently Member, North Eastern Council (in the rank of Minister of State). He is also honorary Permanent Representative of UN-WTO. During his career he held many important national and international assignments like Commissioner and Secretary to the Government of Assam in the Departments of Education, Health, Industries, Finance and Home, Chairman of the Assam State Electricity Board, Minister (Economic) in the High Commission of India, London (spearheading economic diplomacy during the first economic reforms programme of the government), Principal Adviser in the Planning Commission of India, Banking Ombudsman for the Reserve Bank of India.

He was Chairman of RBI's Committee on "Ways and Means Advances to the States" and member of the RBI Committee on "Credit Deposit Ratio", a member of the Niti Aayog's "Niti Forum for the NE", and was also a Consultant to the National Development Planning Commission of Ghana. Recently he chaired the committee of the Ministry of Home Affairs on the concerns of the people from the North East, generally referred to as the 'Bezbaruah Committee'.

The World Tourism Organization appointed him as Honorary Permanent Representative "in recognition of the valuable contribution made to the development of tourism". He served for several years as member of the Strategic Group of UN-WTO and is the only Indian civil

servant to be elected the Chairman of the Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA)—the largest travel industry body in the world.

A recognized international tourism expert, he has authored the report on Indian Outbound Tourism for UN-WTO, a report on SASEC regional tourism and was National Consultant of ADB's SASEC Tourism Development Project, phase I and II, and UN-WTO's project on Development of Coastal Tourism in West Bengal and Orissa.

Mr. Bezbaruah has written three books - 'Indian Tourism: Beyond the Millennium', "The Guest is God - Reflections on Tourism" and "Frontiers of New Tourism" and is the Chief Editor of five volume encyclopaedia - "Fairs and Festivals of India". He has also written book chapters in national and international books, written numerous articles in national and international magazines on tourism and on Northeast India and made presentations in many international conferences of UNWTO, World Bank, Canadian Tourism Commission, UNESCO, International Peace Institute etc.

He secured a first class Masters degree in Economics from the Delhi School of Economics and obtained the Master of Public Administration (MPA) degree from Harvard University, USA.





## Shri Puneet Chhatwal

Managing Director & Chief Executive Officer  
The Indian Hotels Company Limited

Mr. Puneet Chhatwal joined The Indian Hotels Company Limited (IHCL) as the Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer on November 6, 2017. He is a global professional with close to four decades of leadership experience at highly acclaimed international hotel groups.

Under his leadership, IHCL has been on a journey of re-imagination to achieve sustainable profitable growth. Mr. Chhatwal also serves as the leading voice of the industry in India in his capacity as the Chairman of the National Committee of Tourism and Hospitality, CII and President of Hotel Association of India.

Prior to this, Mr. Chhatwal was the Chief Executive Officer and Member of the Executive Board of Steigenberger Hotels AG - Deutsche Hospitality based out of Frankfurt, Germany. He was also the Chief Development Officer of The Rezidor Hotel Group - Carlson Hotels Worldwide based out of Brussels, Belgium. Mr. Chhatwal is a graduate of both, Delhi University and Institute of Hotel Management, Delhi. He has completed an MBA in Hospitality from ESSEC, Paris and an Advanced Management Program from INSEAD.

Across his global leadership career in hospitality, Mr. Chhatwal has received several acclaimed industry awards. He was honoured with the Carlson Fellowship in 2012 and he was also the First Alumnus included in the ESSEC-IMHI Hall of Honor 2014.





## Shri K.B. Kachru

Chairman Emeritus and Principal Advisor  
Radisson Hotel Group South Asia

K.B. Kachru is chairman emeritus and principal advisor of Radisson Hotel Group in South Asia and has played an instrumental role in building the Group's business in India since 1998. K.B. continues to be on the governing board of the Group's South Asia business entities including RHG's Joint Venture companies.

K.B. is an active member of various Tourism and Hospitality Advisory Committees at the state and national levels. He is presently a member of The Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), the National Tourism Committee, the Tourism & Hospitality Skill Council (THSC), and the Vice President of the Hotel Association of India (HAI).

He has been on the Board of Directors for the Tourism Corporation of various state governments and on the Board of Governors of the Institute of Hotel Management in New Delhi. He was also appointed to the Governing Board of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Trust, J&K, one of India's most prominent and visited Hindu religious destinations. He has served as an executive member of the Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA) India Chapter, the American Society of Travel Agents of

India, the Hotel Association of India (HAI), the Federation of Hotel and Restaurant Association of India (FHRAI) and India Convention Promotion Bureau (ICPB).

He spearheaded the formation of the Institute for International Management and Technology (IIIMT) in collaboration with Oxford Brookes University, UK. During his tenure at India Tourism Development Corporation, he led The Ashok Group of Hotels and introduced arrival duty-free shopping at all international airports in India.

He was awarded Global recognition for his contribution to Tourism at WTM London, UK, he is probably the only Hotel professional in India to have been awarded lifetime achievement awards by PATWA (PATA-Berlin), HICSA-South Asia, SATTE, Today's Traveller & Hotelier INDIA.

Recently, he was bestowed the 'Aathitya Ratna Award' by the Hotel Investment Forum of India and was also awarded the 'Hall of Fame' award at Business World - BW Hotelier's India Hospitality Awards 2022.



## Shri Nakul Anand

Former Executive Director  
ITC Ltd.

In a career that spans more than four decades, Nakul Anand, Executive Director, ITC Limited, has been acknowledged for his vision, commitment and his role as a thought leader to the tourism and hospitality industry.

Anand is an icon who has helped shape the company's strategic direction while being a driving force in unifying and promoting Indian hospitality and tourism. The G20 Summit held in New Delhi reflected this in full measure as he strategized the experiences ITC Hotels was entrusted with. Building on ITC's ethos as an exemplar in sustainability, he has passionately advocated the imperative for a sustainable business model of hoteliering. Leveraging the significant learnings of sustainable excellence within ITC, he has led the team at ITC Hotels to pioneer the concept of 'Responsible Luxury' in the hospitality industry. This commitment has won global recognition for ITC Hotels as the largest chain of hotels in the world having the maximum number of LEED® Platinum certified properties, twelve ITC Hotels have achieved World's First LEED Zero Carbon Certification (Net Zero Carbon Status) while the world's first two LEED Zero Water Certified hotels are ITC Hotels.

Referred to as the architect of Responsible Luxury, Anand was recognised as the 'Corporate Hotelier of the World 2019' by Hotels Magazine USA. In his own words, "I see red if I do not see green!"

Known for his collaborative leadership style, he places great importance on continuous learning and believes in reinforcing strengths and reimagining solutions to drive the evolution of the hospitality business.

### Success Mantras:

"I have always believed in the Power of Quotes. A few words can help you re-adjust your sails, redefine your objectives or encourage you to take a life-altering decision.

"In fact, I penned this quote that really defines who I am and what I do. 'If It Is To Be, It Is Up To Me'. This is perhaps the shortest ten to win story!

"Couch these words in the 10 alphabet 'DISCIPLINE' and you will have many wins in Life."

## Dr. (Ms.) Jyotsna Suri

Chairperson & Managing Director  
The Lalit Suri Hospitality Group



Dr. Jyotsna Suri has been associated with Bharat Hotels since its inception. In 2006, she took on the mantle of Chairperson & Managing Director. Under her stewardship, The Lalit Suri Hospitality Group became one of the leading privately-owned domestic hotel brands in India, with a focus on the luxury segment. The Group operates 12 luxury hotels, palaces and resorts under The LaLiT brand and two mid-segment hotels under The LaLiT Traveller brand across India's key business and leisure travel destinations. The Group holds exclusive rights to operate and provide management consultancy services to a hotel in London, The LaLiT London.

Dr. Suri has been conferred with the Order of The Rising Sun, Gold and Silver Star by Japan Government for her contribution towards strengthening strategic

ties between India and Japan in economic and tourism sectors. She is the first Indian Woman to have received the Imperial honour since its commencement for foreign nationals in 1981.

Besides this, she has been the recipient of over 30 National and International awards and recognitions. Dr. Suri holds various portfolios with Industry Associations - Past President FICCI; Chairperson FICCI Tourism Committee; Chairperson, Creative Industries Committee, FICCI; Executive Member of HAI; Council Member of World Travel & Tourism Council, India Initiative; Member of Board of Governors for National Council for Hotel Management and Catering Technology and Member of Board of Governors of Indian Institute of Corporate Affairs.



## **Mr. Vikram Oberoi**

Managing Director & C.E.O  
EIH Limited

Mr. Vikram Oberoi is the Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of EIH Limited. He holds a Bachelor's degree in Science from Pepperdine University, California, USA and has over 25 years experience in the hospitality industry. He joined the Board as a Non-Executive Director on 15th December, 1993. He became a Whole-time-Time Director and was designated Deputy Managing Director in July 2004.

In July 2007, he was re-designated as Joint Managing Director of the Company. On November 29th, 2010, he was re-designated Chief Operating Officer and Joint Managing Director of EIH Limited. He took up the role of Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer on April 1st, 2015.

## Mr. Patanjali (Patu) G Keswani

Chairman & Managing Director  
Lemon Tree Hotels Limited



Patu Keswani graduated with a Bachelor's Degree in Electrical Engineering from IIT Delhi in 1981. He subsequently received his Post Graduate Diploma in Business Management from IIM Calcutta in 1983.

Patu joined the TATA Administrative Service (TAS) in 1983 and worked with the TATA Group for 17 years. His last assignment was as Senior Vice President of the Taj Group of Hotels. He subsequently worked with management consulting firm, A.T. Kearney Inc. as an Associate Consultant and Director in their New Delhi office. Anticipating the enormous yet latent demand for mid-market and economy hotels in India, Patu promoted Lemon Tree Hotels in late 2002.

He is currently the Chairman and Managing Director of Lemon Tree Hotels Ltd. which owns and operates 100 hotels and has 55+ in the pipeline. Lemon Tree Hotels listed on the National Stock Exchange of India and Bombay Stock Exchange on 9th April 2018.

Patu is focused on offering opportunities to Indians with disability and people from the economically/ socially weak segment. Presently, ~13% of Lemon Tree employees are from this disadvantaged segment of the population. Lemon Tree Hotels has been presented the National Award by the President of India for 'Best Employer of Persons with Disabilities' in 2016 & 2011 and a third National Award in 2012 for being a 'Role Model in providing a Barrier Free Environment to Persons with Disabilities'.

Patu is a member of the Sector Skills Council for Hospitality, Travel and Tourism (NSDC). Patu was previously Chairman of the Skills Council for Persons with Disability (SCPwD), as well as a member of the University Grants Commission and the Board of Governors of IIT Delhi.

Patu has been awarded the Distinguished Alumni Award by his Alma Maters - IIT Delhi in 2011 and IIM Calcutta in 2012. Patu received the Lifetime Achievement Award in 2021 by IIHM (International Institute of Hotel Management) and IHC (International Hospitality Council). Patu was inducted into the IATO (Indian Association of Tour Operators) Hall of Fame in 2019; the 'Hotelier India' Hall of Fame in 2012 and into the FHRAI (The Federation of Hotel and Restaurant Associations of India) Hall of Fame in 2010. He received the Excellence Award (inclusion/diversity) at Conde Nast Traveller Readers' Awards 2018.

Patu is a first generation Indian entrepreneur. His father was an Indian Railway Service officer and his mother a doctor in the Indian Army. He has two children, a son Aditya and daughter Nayana. Keswani lives in New Delhi and is married to Heather Lynn Hughes. They have 4 dogs: B. Eagle (a beagle) and Mocha (a chocolate labrador) who live in New Delhi with Duke (a white labrador) and Oreo (a French bull) who live in Dallas, Texas.



## **Mr. Sanjay Sethi**

Managing Director & CEO  
Chalet Hotels Limited

Sanjay is the Managing Director and CEO of Chalet Hotels Ltd which owns several marque hotel and resort assets in Mumbai, Pune, Hyderabad, Bengaluru and Lonavala. The hospitality portfolio has over 2800 hotel keys and is rapidly expanding with new projects in hospitality and real estate.

Prior to joining Chalet, Sanjay founded Keys Hotels & Resorts in 2006. He had a fourteen-year stint with the Taj Group of Hotels and worked briefly with ITC Limited as Chief Operating Officer for their Hotels Division.

In February 2018, he returned to Chalet Hotels and took the company public in February of 2019.

Recognized as a thought leader in the hospitality industry, Sanjay is an active member and speaker at key industry bodies and events. He is an Executive Committee Member of the Hotel Association of India (HAI) and a special invitee to the Executive Committee of Hotel and Restaurant Association of Western India (HRAWI). Sanjay is also an Executive Committee member of the National Tourism Committee of CII and the real estate committee of FICCI.

**Mr. Rupak Gupta**  
Managing Director  
U.P. Hotels Limited



Born in 1970, Mr. Rupak Gupta is an alumni of Doon School and a graduate of Cyprus College, University of New Haven CT.

On completion of his education from University of New Heaven, Mr. Gupta initially joined his family business in 1993 with Banaras House Engineering Pvt. Ltd., who was the sole selling agent and representative of Wartsila Power Plants, Finland for the Indian Ocean Region.

Presently Mr. Gupta holds the position of Managing Director of Clarks Group of Hotels. He oversees the operations and development of the hotels. The Group owns and operates Five Star Hotels (Clarks Amer, Jaipur, Clarks Khajuraho, Clarks Avadh, Lucknow, Clarks Shiraj, Agra) in the northern region of India.





## **Mr. Murphy Mathew, CHBA**

Senior Regional Solutions Engineer APAC  
IDeaS Revenue Solutions

Murphy Mathew is the Senior Regional Solutions Engineer of Asia Pacific for IDeaS. He has over 15 years' experience in providing revenue management consultancy and technical advice to hoteliers across the globe.

At IDeaS, Murphy has been engaged in various roles over the years - from Data Analytics, Client Relations, Client Experience, Client Success to Business Strategy. His current focus is to empower hoteliers with effortless, efficient and successful revenue culture by aligning the hotel business practices, system capabilities and strategic vision seamlessly.

A proponent and firm believer in using technology as a team member in hospitality organizations to not just improve top line revenues, but to maximize profitability in quick time; you will find him sharing his thoughts on forums, blogs and industry events across Asia Pacific.

Prior to IDeaS, he worked for Hyatt International with extensive experience in hotel operations and management.





## **Mr. Behzad A. Patrawalla**

Vice President & Head - Institutional Sales, TCPL

Behzad currently leads the institutional business channel for Tata Consumer Products, one of the largest and most diversified consumer goods companies in India. Being a keen FMCG enthusiast, in his current role he is building this channel to provide multiple solutions to varied customers across the spectrum.

With a proven track record of driving growth and innovation in the fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) industry for the past 18 years, across both food and non-food categories he brings a rich and varied multi-channel understanding to the table. In the past decade he has honed his skills by developing and building systems and process in the alternate channel space.



## **Mr. Aniruddha Bhatnagar**

Senior Director, Franchise Operations  
Emerging Categories for India and South West Asia, Coca Cola

A competent professional with 16 years of accomplished career track in Managing large, scaled operations with strong expertise in Go to Market strategy, design and execution in Coca-Cola India and other Alco-beverage MNCs.

He is a Founding Team member of Coke's foray into Alco- RTD in India and Southwest Asia and has helped build a culture of a Start-up within a large organisation.



## Mr. Rohit Khosla

Member, Hotel Association of India  
Executive Vice President (Operations), IHCL

A passionate hotelier, an admired industry veteran and a revered leader. As Executive Vice President Operations IHCL Rohit Khosla leads and oversees operations for the North, East and West regions of South Asia's largest hospitality chain, The Indian Hotels Company Limited (IHCL) - A Tata Enterprise.

Over the course of the last two decades, Rohit has held several leadership positions within the organisation in India, Yemen, Maldives and Sri Lanka. Rohit has shown unwavering support and dedication to nurturing and growing the Taj brand. With strong relationships and execution skills, in his current role, Rohit looks after an expansive and diverse portfolio of over 150 hotels, palaces and resorts cutting across brands viz. Taj, SeleQtions, Vivanta, Ginger and ama.

His astute approach to business complemented by his unparalleled experience in building iconic brands has been his hallmark and has made him a leading voice in the Indian hospitality industry. His ability to build, lead

and mentor high performing, engaged teams and nurture talent has been his forte. Rohit is currently an Executive Committee member of the Hotel Association of India (HAI), Chairman of Tata Network Forum - North, member of the CII National Committee, SKAL and WTTCL and served as the past Chairman CII Northern Tourism Regional Committee.

Throughout his career, Rohit has received several industry awards, including the Young Hotel General Manager in 2006 by the Federation of Hotel & Restaurant Associations of India (FHRAI), the General Manager of the Year award in 2006 by ITM Institute of Hotel Management & DNA, and international recognition with the International Achiever of the Year award by PATWA at ITB Berlin, Germany, in 2019. In 2023, he was honoured with the Leadership Honour in Hotel Operations by PATWA at ITB Berlin, Germany. These awards reflect his steadfast dedication and meaningful contributions to the industry

## Mr. Satyajeet Krishnan

Area Director & General Manager  
Taj Mahal New Delhi



Satyajeet Krishnan has been with Indian Hotels Company Ltd. for 30 years and has held senior leadership positions in various prestigious Hotels of the Organization.

He began his professional journey at the Taj Mahal, New Delhi and spent his formative years in hoteliering at this very iconic hospitality destination and subsequently worked across various Palaces, Hotels & Resorts in Delhi, Rajasthan, Goa & Bangalore. He grew from the Accommodations vertical to move onto General Management and Area leadership.

In his current assignment as Area Director - Operations and General Manager of Taj Mahal, New Delhi, he proudly leads a team of highly committed professionals that strive to deliver world-class services, with the signature finesse and warmth of Tajness. An iconic landmark in the Capital, the hotel has undergone a distinctive transformation and returns to celebrate its legacy in a re-imagined avatar. The Hotel is a venue well known for iconic Food & Beverage brands and a patron for showcasing Fine Arts, Indian culture, Heritage and Literature to the citizens of Delhi. It is his strong belief that as a Tata entity, it is

our responsibility to provide differentiated experiences, spearhead sustainable initiatives, ensure synergies and be renowned as a Hotel beyond its highly acclaimed accommodations, services and culinary repertoire.

Satyajeet's keen focus on guest satisfaction, robust operations and financial prudence, hold him in good stead in overseeing the operations of the legendary Ambassador, New Delhi - IHCL SeleQtions and The Connaught, New Delhi - IHCL SeleQtions; a vibrant jewel in IHCL's crown in the heart of the city. He also guides and mentors Soulineaire- IHCL's path breaking Food Catering brand.

In 2023 after the Reimagined Taj Mahal, New Delhi opened, the Hotel has been awarded the "101 Best Hotels" in 2023 and World Award Winner of Leading Hotels 2023 at "World Travel Awards".

Satyajeet has overseen the successful repositioning and relaunch of the Taj Mahal New Delhi-an extremely key Hotel of the IHCL portfolio - after the culmination of a detailed and comprehensive Rs. 200 cr. plus renovation.



## Mr Atul Bhalla

Vice President Operations  
ITC Hotels, West and North

Atul Bhalla joined ITC Hotels in 1998 at ITC Kakatiya and in nearly 3 decades of his association with the group, Atul held senior management position at various properties in Mumbai, Delhi & Bangalore. He was an integral part of the pre-opening of ITC Grand Chola, Chennai, one of the grandest properties for ITC Hotels'. Later he served an indelible stint in Kolkata, where he directly oversaw the successful launch of ITC Royal Bengal and established a testament standing of complex destination with ITC Sonar- the two unique Hotels offering two distinct identities, with 693 keys, 15 F&B outlets and 22 banqueting venues.

In 2019, Atul on a portfolio elevation was given the office of Area Manager, West region for ITC Hotels; where he pivoted sustained pandemic and post revival for the group, some of the key initiatives introduced by him during this time were incubation and launch of Gourmet Couch by ITC Hotels (a premium home dine-in

program by ITC Hotels). Atul's expertise in new market adaptations and setting a roadmap for successful launch; had him directly oversee one of the most awaited opening and groups' newest entrant in Ahmedabad, Gujarat with ITC Narmada.

Continuing with his services in 2022, Atul was promoted as Area Manager for ITC Hotels in West and East India, where continued growing the groups portfolio and successfully mentored the teams to launch the newest lifestyle brands Storii & Mementos by ITC Hotels.

Now, as Vice President Operations - ITC Hotels, West and North, Atul is responsible for creating and executing a strategic road map working with the hotel Area Managers/General Managers and functional heads to drive stakeholders' value and establish brand equity.



## **Mr. Rohit Arora**

Vice President - North & Goa Operations &  
Head of Leisure Sales, ASPHL

Mr. Rohit Arora, Vice President- North & Goa Operations and Head of Leisure Sales has been associated with ASPHL since 1988.

As a visionary and market strategist with a holistic and exceptional skillset, Mr. Rohit Arora has proven to be an integral asset for Apeejay Surrendra Park Hotels Limited. During his tenure, he has spearheaded THE Park New Delhi in becoming one of the most successful five-star hotels in the heart of the capital of India. In addition to this, he has also successfully launched two premium hotels in Goa under ASPHL.

Throughout his career, Mr. Rohit Arora has been honored with several feats for his outstanding work in the industry. He was recognized as the 'Best General Manager' at India Hospitality Awards -North and East in 2016. Under his leadership, THE Park New Delhi won many accolades, including India's Best Business Hotel by Travel+Leisure, The Golden Key Award by Nearbuy, Travelers' Choice Award by Trip Advisor, Corona Warrior of the Year, etc. Mr. Rohit Arora was recently awarded for his exceptional contribution to the hospitality industry at the Times Business Awards.



## Mr. Vijay Bhalla

General Manager  
The LaLiT New Delhi

Vijay Ranvir Bhalla, with an illustrious career spanning over 23 years in the hospitality industry, currently serves as the General Manager at The LaLiT New Delhi. His journey with The Lalit Suri Hospitality Group, initiated in June 2008, has been marked by transformative leadership roles, including Hotel Manager at The LaLiT Chandigarh and National Head of Corporate Sales.

Vijay excels in orchestrating comprehensive sales and revenue strategies, evident in his successful tenure as the Head of Sales for prestigious hotel establishments. Known for thriving on challenges and leading by example, he has steered diverse teams to achieve remarkable sales growth and operational excellence.

His professional achievements include significantly increasing sales for various hotels, setting up successful corporate sales divisions, and driving strategic initiatives for substantial revenue growth. Vijay's leadership is characterized by a strong customer service orientation and excellent listening skills, making him a respected figure in the hospitality landscape.

Apart from his noteworthy professional accomplishments, Vijay showcases his dedication to on-going learning through the continual integration of new techniques and strategies in the workplace. His fervour for the industry, coupled with strategic insight, establishes him as a distinguished leader, leaving an enduring legacy of excellence and innovation in luxury hotel management.

## Mr. Rajesh Magow

Co-Founder & Group CEO  
MakeMyTrip Limited



Rajesh Magow is the Co-Founder & Group Chief Executive Officer of MakeMyTrip Limited, India's leading online travel company. He also serves as the Vice-Chairman for IAMAI, and Chairperson of ASSOCHAM's National Council on Travel & Tourism.

A believer in India's digital opportunity and a backer of many young Indian tech companies, Rajesh is passionate about transforming businesses and leveraging technology to create disproportionate value for customers.

Over the years, Rajesh has played a crucial role in multiple landmark events of MakeMyTrip, including its listing on NASDAQ in 2010, the merger of MakeMyTrip and Ibibo group, and most recently, played a pivotal role in ensuring MakeMyTrip showed resilience and bounced back stronger post the pandemic.

Rajesh has received multiple industry awards, including being recognized by The Economic Times Human Capital Awards as the People-Focused CEO of the Year and Bloomberg Best CFO Award. Rajesh has served as Director on the board of Flipkart.





## **Mr. Ajay Bakaya**

Chairman & Managing Director  
Sarovar Hotels Private Limited

A trailblazer in Indian hospitality. An experienced hotelier with 45 years of work in India, Africa, Australia, France & UK. Ajay has contributed to the phenomenal growth story of Sarovar since its early inception, beginning from a shared office table to over 100 hotels today. Ajay was Director Rooms at Australia's largest hotel, now the 878 room Hyatt Regency, Sydney. He was a GM with Oberoi Hotels at

31 years of age. An MBA alumni of IMHI (Cornell - ESSEC, France), Ajay is a graduate of the Oberoi School, and a Bachelor of Science. He leads with entrepreneurial zeal. He has been awarded 'Hall of Fame', 'Entrepreneur of the Year' and 'CEO of the Year' in India.



## Mr. Sanjay Bose

Executive Vice President and Head HR  
ITC's Hotel Group, Gurugram, India



Mr. Sanjay Bose currently heads HR for the hospitality and travel businesses of ITC Ltd. ITC Ltd is a USD 7.5 Billion conglomerate of India and its hospitality business is the third largest in the country with a workforce in excess of 16000 people.

During his 2½ decades in Human Resources, Mr. Bose has had extensive experience in the areas of organisation restructure, M&A, HR Transformation and Total Rewards. He also provides strategic leadership to the organisation as part of the Management Committee.

In his previous assignment, Mr. Bose headed global HR operations for Indian Hotels Company Ltd (The Taj Group), a part of Tata conglomerate, with responsibilities spanning 12 countries including US, UK and South Africa.

He has a MBA in HR (XIIS Ranchi) and has completed his Advanced General Management Programme from IIM Bangalore and Advanced Leadership Programme from Stephen Ross School of Business Management, University of Michigan.

Mr. Bose has served on various professional bodies and is currently on the CII Committees for IR and Skill Development at the national level and the Advisory Committee of NHRDN at regional level. At the global level, he serves on the Executive Committee of the Global Sustainability Hospitality Alliance, London -UK.

He is passionate about education and lends his expertise to institutions like MDI Gurgaon, IMT Ghaziabad, Tata Institute of Social Services, WGSMA - Manipal through participation in Governing Boards, Board of Studies and Admission panels etc.

His contributions in the field of HR have won him multiple accolades including CHRO of the Year -2019 by Business World and Best CHRO by W.E. Matter in 2022.



## Mr. Dilip Puri

Founder & Executive Chairman  
Indian School of Hospitality

Dilip Puri is the Founder & Executive Chairman of Indian School of Hospitality (ISH), an institution of higher education focused on reshaping hospitality, culinary arts and executive education for today's generation and tomorrow's businesses. Dilip served as the Managing Director of Starwood Hotels & Resorts, South Asia, from 2011 till the end of 2017 when he set out to be an education entrepreneur and founded ISH.

Dilip has over three decades of experience in the hospitality industry and has worked with brands such as Oberoi, Taj, IHG, and Starwood in India, Australia and Africa. He has an economics degree from the University of Delhi and he completed his postgraduate studies at the Oberoi Centre of Learning & Development (OCLD). Since founding Indian School of Hospitality, Dilip has been a mentor and leader for students and aspiring hospitality professionals. ISH is a part of Sommet Education and offers programmes in alliance with École Ducasse and Les Roches - two of the world's leading institutes for higher education in Hospitality and culinary arts.

## Mr. Rajan Bahadur

CEO  
Tourism & Hospitality Skill Council



An extensive cross-industrious exposure of over 35 years, has credited Mr. Bahadur with rich management experience and strong leadership skills from across sectors such as FMCG, Travel and Tourism, Financial services, Hospitality and Social Sector.

A graduate from the prestigious St. Stephen's College, University of Delhi, India, Mr. Bahadur completed his post-graduation in Business Management from Kolkata University, India. He has managed large cross-cultural teams across national and global platforms covering a wide range of senior positions in sales, marketing, PR, communication & general management.

A highly motivated individual with strong commercial acumen and inherent people leadership qualities, he has repeatedly demonstrated the ability to build high performance teams across both Corporate and Social Sectors that he has been associated with. His passion and motivation stems from creating solutions to leverage opportunities presented by market needs.

His well-established relationships in the corporate world as well as with Government bodies are a result of his hard work and splendid communication skills. His

previous assignments include being MD & CEO - CARE India, COO of Unison Hotels, MD at Lebua Hotels & Resorts, Regional Director (South Asia) - Sales, Marketing, PR & Communication at Starwood Hotels & Resorts, Director at American Express - Travel related services and National Sales head with Oberoi Hotels and Resorts.

In his current capacity as the CEO of Tourism & Hospitality Skill Council (a public private partnership under the aegis of Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, Govt. of India), Mr. Bahadur's vision is to bridge the increasing gap in the skill ecosystem. His focus is on empowering the youth with appropriate skills, so that they are ready to be placed in the Tourism and Hospitality sector as per the ever-growing industry demand/ requirement.

He is extremely passionate about creating business solutions, making the most of the opportunities presented by the market, delivering on stakeholder's expectations, reaching customer commitment targets, and enhancing employee engagement goals. His motto in life is to build capacity and bring change that can make lives better.



## **Mr. Natwar Nagar**

Founder of The People Network and The Job Plus

Natwar founded The People Network and The Job Plus with a clear vision to create the country's most revered human advisory entities. His long-standing relationships, industry knowledge, and commitment to excellence have contributed to creating a strong track record of being the preferred partner of choice. With an enriching understanding of Executive Search and HR Consulting, Natwar has successfully created an eco-system that offers an experiential service for providing superior talent across the service-hospitality sector.

Natwar is a passionate philanthropist and is currently on the Board of Kosish-The Hospice; is the Chief Advisor at the Clothes Box Foundation; and also serves as an Advisor to the School of Skill Development in India.

## **Mr. Achin Khanna MRICS**

Managing Partner - Strategic Advisory  
Hotelivate



Achin Khanna, Managing Partner at Hotelivate leads the firm's Strategic Advisory practice. His experience in the consulting field encompasses economic feasibility analyses, asset & large portfolio valuations, operator searches & management contract negotiations, master planning & strategic consulting assignments, both in India and globally. He is a Member of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) and had served over a decade with HVS South Asia before co-founding Hotelivate.

Earlier on, Achin spent 10 years in the United States with brands like Hilton, Wyndham & Homestead Studio Suites. Gaining valuable experience across professional roles ranging from hotel operations & revenue management to franchise relations and business development, he understands the hotel business from a holistic perspective. His keen interest in language and literature is amply visible in his inimitable style of writing and speaking across industry platforms.



## **Kumar Padmapani Bora IRS**

Secretary, Government of Assam and  
Managing Director, Assam Tourism Development Corporation

Padmapani Bora is an officer belonging to the Indian Revenue Service, 2009 batch, currently posted as Secretary to the Government of Assam, Tourism Department. He is also holding the post of Managing Director, Assam Tourism Development Corporation. Additionally, he is acting as Project Director of Assam Infrastructure Financing Authority and CEO of Chief Minister's Mega Mission Society, Govt. of Assam.

Prior to this assignment, Bora worked as Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Textiles, Govt. of India. He also served in various capacities as Assistant Commissioner, Deputy Director (Investigation), Joint Commissioner, and Additional Commissioner of Income Tax Department in Delhi, Guwahati and Mumbai.

Bora holds Master's Degree in Political Science and MPhil in International Relations from Jawaharlal Nehru University, Delhi, MBA (Finance) and Master's in Business Law & Taxation from NALSAR University, Hyderabad. He has also done short-term courses on Public Policy (Economics) from the University of Oxford and on Community Health from Harvard University on online mode.

Bora has authored two books, titled 'North-East India in Indian-ASEAN Relations: Problems and Prospects', published by Discovery Publishing, Delhi, and 'Discovering the Heritage of Assam'- a coffee table book on heritage sites of Assam by Penguin Publication.

## **Dr. Jitendra K. Mohanty MHCIMA**

Managing Director, Swosti Premium Ltd. and  
Chairman, Hotel & Restaurant Association of Odisha



Jitendra Kumar Mohanty, Chairman & Managing Director, Swosti Group (Hotels-Resorts-Travels-Hospitality Education), has been a successful entrepreneur in tourism, hospitality and education sectors since 1984. He owns a chain of organisations including Swosti Hotel Pvt limited, Swosti Premium Ltd, Bhubaneswar, Swosti Chilika Resort, on the banks of Chilika Lake, in Ganjam District, Odisha, Gopalpur Palm Resort at Gopalpur-on-Sea, a hospitality educational institute “Swosti Institute of Management & Social Studies”, a travel company “Swosti Travels & Exports Pvt Ltd,”. J K Mohanty is always keen to promote the state by putting up hotel and resort infrastructures in different destinations and is now coming up with luxury beach resorts at Puri and Gopalpur.

J K Mohanty is an active member of various travel trade and hospitality organizations and has been putting his continuous endeavour to promote vast tourism potential of Odisha as well as eastern region by closely interacting with Government officials for growth of the tourism sector. He is presently Chairman of Hotel & Restaurant Association of Odisha, Chairman Eastern Region of Indian Association of Tour Operators, Co-Chairman of National Tourism Committee of FICCI, Hon. Secretary of Hotel Association of India, EC Member of PATA India Chapter, President SKAL Bhubaneswar Chapter.

J K Mohanty has been bestowed with several awards and recognitions in India and Odisha province by Govt. and several agencies including international organisations like the United Nations etc.



## **Shri Hareet Shukla IAS**

Secretary (Tourism, Devsthanam Management,  
Civil Aviation & Pilgrimage, Industries & Mines Department)  
Government of Gujarat

Shri Hareet Shukla is an Indian Administrative Service officer of 1999 batch. Presently, he is serving in the capacity of Principal Secretary to Government, Industries and Mines Department (Tourism, Devsthanam Management, Civil Aviation &

Pilgrimage), Sachivalaya, Gandhinagar. Born in Fatehpur, Karchana, Prayagraj District, Uttar Pradesh in 1976, he holds a B.Tech. degree in Textile Technology (IITD) as well as a CIC and a Master's in Economics.



## **Mr. Harmeet Singh Bedi**

Senior Director, Hotels & Hospitality Group, India  
Jones Lang LaSalle Incorporated (JLL)



Harmeet Singh Bedi is Senior Director, Hotels & Hospitality Group at JLL India. He joined JLL in Mumbai in 2019 and is responsible for executing Sale, Lease, Structured Debt & Equity Transactions for hospitality industry in India.

Harmeet has over 27 years experience in the hospitality industry encompassing consulting, strategic and transaction advisory, asset management and capital markets.

Prior to joining JLL, Harmeet was Vice President with Brookfield Financial (BFIN) in Mumbai. Harmeet holds a Masters of Business Administration (M.M.S. Finance) from Narsee Monjee Institute of Management Studies (NMIMS), Mumbai and a Bachelors in Commerce (B.Com) from Sydenham College of Commerce and Economics, Mumbai.



## **Smt. Navika Kumar**

Group Editor-in-Chief  
Times Now and Times Now Navbharat

Navika Kumar has made remarkable contributions to the field of broadcast journalism. Currently she is working as the Group Editor of Politics at Times Network, and Editor-in-Chief at Times Now Navbharat. She is the host of the primetime show The Newshour on the Times Now news channel.

In addition to her television journalism endeavors, Kumar has carved out a prominent role as an opinion columnist for prestigious publications such as The Economic Times and The Observer.

She holds a Master's degree in arts, specializing in Political Science and Economics, from the Gokhale Institute of Politics and Economics. She enjoys reading books and traveling whenever she has free time.

*Source - Internet*

# EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS



**Mr. Puneet Chhatwal**  
*President*  
Hotel Association of India  
*Managing Director & CEO*  
The Indian Hotels Company Limited



**Mr. K.B Kachru**  
*Vice President*  
Hotel Association of India  
*Chairman Emeritus & Principal*  
*Advisor, S. Asia*  
Radisson Hotel Group



**Mr. Vikram Oberoi**  
*Corporate Member*  
Hotel Association of India  
*Managing Director & CEO*  
EIH Limited



**Ms. Priya Paul**  
*Corporate Member*  
Hotel Association of India  
*Chairperson*  
Apeejay Surrendra Park Hotels Limited



**Dr. Jyotsna Suri**  
*Corporate Member*  
Hotel Association of India  
*Chairperson & MD*  
Bharat Hotels Limited



**Mr. Patu Keswani**  
*Corporate Member &*  
*Hony. Treasurer*  
Hotel Association of India  
*Chairman and MD*  
Lemon Tree Hotels Limited



**Mr. Anil Chadha**  
*Corporate Member*  
Hotel Association of India  
*Divisional Chief Executive -Hotels*  
ITC Limited



**Mr. Ajay K. Bakaya**  
*Fellow Member*  
Hotel Association of India  
*Managing Director*  
Sarovar Hotels Pvt. Ltd.



**Mr. Sanjay Sethi**  
*Fellow Member*  
Hotel Association of India  
*Managing Director & CEO*  
Chalet Hotels Limited



**Mr. Rohit Khosla**  
*Member*  
Hotel Association of India  
*Executive Vice President*  
*(Operations), IHCL*



**Dr. J.K. Mohanty**  
*Member & Hony. Secretary*  
Hotel Association of India  
*Managing Director*  
Swosti Premium Limited



**Mr. R. Shankar**  
*Member*  
Hotel Association of India  
*President-Corporate & Legal Affairs,*  
EIH Limited



**Mr. Samir M.C**  
*Member*  
Hotel Association of India  
*Managing Director*  
Fortune Park Hotels Limited



**Mr. Rupak Gupta**  
*Member*  
Hotel Association of India  
*Managing Director*  
U.P. Hotels Limited



**Mr. Surinder Singh**  
*Member*  
Hotel Association of India  
*Area Director, IHCL*



**Mr. M.P. Bezbaruah**  
*Secretary General*  
Hotel Association of India

Title Partner

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