



## Former Tourism Secretary, Madan Prasad Bezbaruah joins Hotel Association of India as Secretary General

**New Delhi 6<sup>th</sup> July 2020:** The Hotel Association of India (HAI), the apex body of the hotel industry in India and an integrated hospitality industry platform, has embarked on an extensive restructuring exercise to aid the resurgence of India's hotel industry in a post pandemic world. As part of the strategy, HAI today inducted Retired IAS Officer and Former Secretary, Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, Shri. Madan Prasad Bezbaruah as the Secretary General of the industry body. The appointment of Shri Bezbaruah comes in the backdrop of the industry's worst ever crisis that has left the sector in one of the most difficult and untenable circumstances. Shri Bezbaruah succeeds the eminent Founder Secretary General of Hotel Association of India, Shri R. K. Puri, a Senior Bureaucrat himself, the First Director of Tourism, Railway Board and instrumental in the conceptualisation and launch of the popular "Palace on Wheels".

The impact of Covid on the hospitality sector across the world is one that tells a tale never heard or seen before. It is also well known that the revival of the industry will perhaps take longer than most anticipate. In such an environment, HAI has taken upon itself the task to develop critical strategies that will help in the long term revival and ultimately, sustenance of the most dynamic industry, over 60% of which caters to the wider sections of the society through the upper mid-market, mid-market and budget segments.

### The worst economic downturn since Great Depression



**-3%** Contraction of global economy



**\$9 Tn** Cumulative loss to Global GDP over 2020 - 2021



**\$2.7 Tn** Loss in Travel and Tourism GDP in 2020



**100 Mn** Global Travel & Hospitality jobs at risk

Source: International Monetary Fund (IMF) | International Labour Organisation (ILO) | World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC) | World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO)

Shedding light on the HAI 2020 strategy while welcoming Shri Bezbaruah, **Mr Puneet Chhatwal, President of Hotel Association of India and Managing Director & CEO, Indian Hotels Company Limited** said, "The last three months have been the most difficult for industries across; some may have been hit more compared to others, but there is no denying that the impact has been felt by one and all. We believe it is now time to devise ways in which the hotel industry can evolve from the crisis and work towards building a roadmap that helps in the recovery of business and long-term sustainability. Over the last 3 months, HAI has been extremely active in trying to find lasting solutions that will aid this recovery. As an industry body, I am glad that we are taking the first steps in implementing the HAI 2020 strategy. It gives me immense pleasure to

welcome Former Tourism Secretary and Senior Bureaucrat Shri. Bezbaruah as the Secretary General of HAI. I am sure, with his vast experience dealing with the complexities of the tourism industry, he will be able to guide the association in the right direction and help us achieve our collective aim to resurrect the Hotel industry in India.”

“We would also like to thank Shri. RK Puri for not only leading HAI as its Secretary General for last 23 years but also his exemplary contributions for the evolution of HAI”, **Mr Chhatwal** added.

The three-pronged HAI 2020 Strategy is based on a solid foundation that stems from years of experience and expertise of the Executive Committee of HAI. Broadly, HAI’s vision for the industry’s resurgence will rest on three pillars : creating an ecosystem that works on greater collaboration with influencers and opinion makers; deepening reach through a hub-and-spoke model to establish presence and prominence for HAI in regional markets thus creating influence for the benefit of the local economy; initiate inclusive programs that protect and promote the interests of small, medium operators and the larger employee base of the hotel industry contributing to the survival and thus revival of the hotel industry.

Shri. Bezbaruah is a senior bureaucrat with close to four decades of experience working in the circle of power – both at the Centre and State. He holds a Masters degree in Arts from Delhi University as well as Masters in Public Administration from Harvard University and has held important government positions nationally and internationally like Home Secretary Assam, Minister (Economic) in the High Commission of India, London, Principal Adviser in the Planning Commission of India and Secretary in the Ministry of Tourism for five years—the longest for any tourism secretary. He is the only Indian civil servant to be elected Chairman, PATA . After his retirement he was member of the Strategic Group of UNWTO, Banking Ombudsman for the Reserve Bank of India and Member North Eastern Council. Author of four books on Tourism, an international tourism consultant for UNWTO, ADB etc, Chairman and Member of many national committees like the "Bezbaruah Committee" of the Ministry of Home Affairs, Shri Bezbaruah was made Honorary Permanent Representative of UNWTO for his "contribution to international tourism".

#### **About Hotel Association of India**

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 Indian economy in the mid-90s. With its membership extending from the major hotel groups, boutique hotels, heritage hotels and small hotels, it represents the **entire spectrum** of the industry. As the apex Industry Body, HAI works in the areas of Promotion of Regional Cooperation among hospitality industries, Hospitality Research and Education and Social Inclusion Programs in addition to taking Industry centric initiatives.