



## **Hotel Association of India calls for Tourism to be treated as a Common Agenda**

*Highlights the need to make tourism viable, sustainable, accessible and affordable for all*

**Delhi, 22 March 2021:** Indian tourism and hospitality industry is going through a bleak phase despite the resilient and brave front by hotel players. The constant pummelling from the pandemic has led to losses exceeding Rs. 1.25 trillion (40%) in revenue and 50 million jobs across the sector. While travel is still discretionary, for many people it is a necessity. In order to deal with the unprecedented crisis, there is a dire need to develop innovative strategies. **On behalf of the industry during the recent BITB conclave attended by 150 delegates and senior leaders from Travel & Tourism industry, the Hotel Association of India (HAI) called upon industry stakeholders to treat Tourism as a “Common Agenda” and also highlighted the need to make tourism viable, sustainable, accessible and affordable for all.** The apex industry body also suggested that the private sector and state governments should work together to usher the revival of the tourism sector and put it back on the track of recovery. HAI believes that the industry requires integrated and focussed efforts to ease domestic travel.

According to HAI, the ongoing crisis is posing to be an opportunity to plan a better future with people, society and community being at the centre of future growth. Some of the key initiatives that can be undertaken to catapult the industry into exponential growth are:

- Revisiting the current funding structure
- Providing institutional access to working capital which will enable liquidity and defer loans repayment for all segments
- Additional taxation relief to promote tourism
- Improve the pace of vaccination for speedy recovery
- Encourage education and wellness tourism
- Creating experiences
- Allow Tourism to form and lay down its own rules
- Integrated taxation policy

*“One of the biggest pillars of Indian tourism is its heritage. Today, more than 90% of the country’s heritage is in urgent need of revitalization. Its conservation is important for identifying, analysing, recording and protecting cultural resources. It is also an important tool for defining the landmark within the heritage area as well as to generate economic return and support the tourism industry. It not only preserves our historical legacy from further degradation but also strengthens the essence of the country’s rich past. Travel is not just about a destination; the journey is equally important. Attention to this will enhance tourism business.”, Mr KB Kachru, Vice President, Hotel Association of India and Chairman Emeritus & Principal Advisor-South Asia, Radisson Hotel Group.*

The Association believes that granting industry status to the Indian hospitality sector will enable hotels across the country to avail benefits towards power tariff at an industrial rate, lower property tax, investment subsidies & tax holidays, refinancing of existing debts, hassle-free loans at subsidised interest rates, simplified approval process for hotel projects and other benefits accorded to industries – thus helping in ushering transparency, reduce costs, and encourage reinvestment.



*“This will also help strengthen the sector to unlock its potential and generate employment to support the post-pandemic economic revival”, Mr Kachru added while speaking at the BITB conclave.*

The apex body has also requested for measures like uniform road tax structure, reinstatement of scheduled flights, restarting of E-Visas, promotion of cruise tourism, creation of additional destinations for domestic travellers and development of infrastructure support in taxation so that the industry can evolve from business slump. Analytical transformation through efficient coordination of marketing budgets, sector promotions and last mile connectivity will ensure sustainable revival for the travel and hospitality sector.

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

Established in 1996, the 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 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.

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