

LeaderSpeak

JUN-JULY 2026



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The past few months have once again reaffirmed the remarkable resilience of India's hospitality and tourism sector. Despite global uncertainties, geopolitical developments and evolving traveller expectations, the industry has continued to adapt, innovate and grow with confidence. What was once viewed primarily as a service industry has today emerged as a strategic driver of economic growth, employment and regional development.

Domestic tourism remains the backbone of this growth story, while growing global interest in India presents an unprecedented opportunity to strengthen inbound tourism. With improving infrastructure, expanding connectivity and rising investor confidence, the foundation for the sector's next phase of growth is steadily taking shape. Yet, unlocking India's true tourism potential will require continued collaboration between government and industry, along with policies that encourage investment, improve ease of doing business and strengthen last-mile connectivity.

As an industry, we must also focus on building capacity for the future. Talent development, skilling and leadership development, along with meaningful career opportunities will be critical as hospitality expands beyond metropolitan centres into Tier II and Tier III cities, which are expected to drive the next wave of economic growth. Equally important is preserving the essence of Indian hospitality—our warmth, authenticity and spirit of service, which continues to distinguish us on the global stage.

The discussions at the recent FAITH Tourism Conclave reinforced a shared conviction that India is only at the beginning of its tourism journey. The ambition is not merely to increase visitor numbers but to position tourism as a cornerstone of the nation's economic aspirations. Achieving this vision will require a unified voice, sustained policy support and a collective commitment from every stakeholder across the tourism ecosystem.

As we move forward, HAI remains committed to working closely with policymakers, industry partners and our members to create an enabling environment that fosters sustainable growth. Together, we have an opportunity to shape India's emergence as one of the world's leading hospitality and tourism destinations while ensuring that our growth remains inclusive, responsible and uniquely Indian.

Warm regards,
KB Kachru, President

HAI NEWS

NEW MEMBER HOTELS

- **RADISSON BLU MUMBAI INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT,**
Andheri East, Mumbai
- **WOW CREST INDORE, IHCL-SELECTIONS,**
Indore, Madhya Pradesh
- **AMANORA THE FERN PUNE SERIES BY MARRIOTT CLUB HOUSE A-TC,**
Pune, Maharashtra

Hotel Association of India Celebrates the 28th HAI Environment Day Across Member Properties

The Hotel Association of India (HAI), the apex body of the Indian hospitality industry, celebrated the 28th HAI World Environment Day on 5th June 2026. With member hotels across the country, the initiative brought together hotel associates, guests, local

communities, NGOs, and other stakeholders through a series of awareness and engagement activities. The activities were aligned with this year's United Nations theme, "Inspired by Nature. For Climate. For Our Future" with the official hashtag #NowForClimate.



At FAITH Conclave, HAI calls for policy reforms and stronger infrastructure to unlock India's tourism potential



In a panel discussion on "The Next Frontier for the Hospitality Industry," at the FAITH Conclave, HAI President K.B. Kachru and Dr. Jyotsna Suri, Chairperson & Managing Director, The Lalit Suri Hospitality Group, shared key perspectives on unlocking the next phase of growth for India's hospitality and tourism sector. K.B. Kachru highlighted the need for policy reforms, improved last-mile connectivity and greater institutional investment to accelerate sectoral growth.

Domestic Demand Steadies the Ship

KB Kachru, Chairman Emeritus & Principal Advisor, Radisson Hotel Group – South Asia, said, “Given that parts of the Middle East and West Asia are major hubs of aviation, the geopolitical tensions and related airspace restrictions naturally impact travel sentiment, especially international travel.”



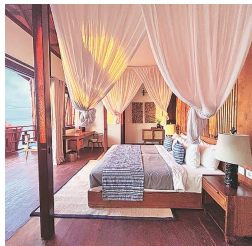
Beyond Metro Tourism: How Domestic Travel is reshaping India's hospitality landscape

“Domestic tourism has emerged as a driving force providing exponential growth for India's hospitality sector and has changed the way people travel, invest, and how hotels are creating memorable experiences for tourists.”
– M. P. Bezbaruah secretary-general of the hotel association of india (hai)



Dark cloud looms over hotel revenues amid drying reservoirs

“Some impact on hotel operating costs can be expected, especially as the water shortage comes at a time when fuel costs, including LPG (liquefied petroleum gas) prices, have increased due to the ongoing crisis in West Asia,” said K B Kachru, president, Hotel Association of India (HAI) and chairman, South Asia, Radisson Hotel Group.

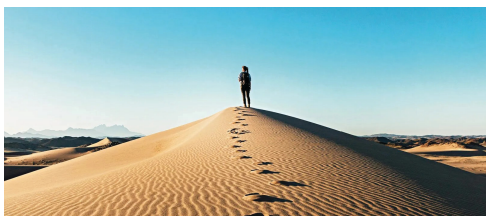


Global Wellness Day Special: Hotels Are Spending Millions On Wellness—Here's Why



“Wellness has emerged as a strategic business imperative rather than a niche offering,” says KB Kachru, president, Hotel Association of India (HAI) and chairman – South Asia, Radisson Hotel Group. “Hotels are creating holistic wellness ecosystems that integrate Ayurveda, yoga, meditation, nutrition, fitness, and mental wellbeing into their core brand proposition.”

How Young India Travels: The Voices Shaping The Future of Indian Tourism



India's relationship with travel is undergoing a quiet but consequential shift. For a new generation of affluent, mobile Indians, the annual holiday is no longer the defining unit of leisure. Shorter, more frequent escapes have taken their place, woven naturally into the rhythm of everyday life rather than treated as a rare reward at the end of a long year.

India's share of global arrivals is 1.4% but share of global earnings is 2.02%: President, HAI

KB Kachru, President, HAI, notes, “Value and volume has never been mutually exclusive in our thinking.” “However, there are several critical gaps in creating a total high value tourism experience in terms of cleanliness and hygiene, safety, maintenance, last mile connectivity.

Structural Changes Needed To Make Hospitality A Long-Term Career Choice

According to industry estimates, India's hotel market is projected to grow from approximately US\$ 24.6 billion in 2024 to nearly US\$ 31 billion by 2029. As per CBRE, listed hotel operators alone are expected to add over 70,000 keys by 2030.



India bets on BRICS for MICE boom

“BRICS adds a compounding layer: diplomatic, delegations, ministerial tracks, and business summits flowing through tier II and metro cities alike, each generating room blocks, F&B revenue, and ancillary spend. For cities like Indore and Thiruvananthapuram entering the international MICE circuit for the first time, the multiplier effect on local hospitality infrastructure is considerable,” Kachru added.



Hotel investors eye timelines, not just pipelines

“The hospitality sector is moving towards a more execution-driven phase of growth, which feels like a natural next step from the expansion cycle we've seen over the past few years,” said K.B. Kachru, president of the Hotel Association of India and chairman, South Asia, Radisson Hotel Group.

'Drone at St Petersburg airport changed our plan': How wars are reshaping Indian travel

“Recent travel disruptions have impacted international travel sentiment and demand, although the impact varies across business segments, source markets, and destinations,” says KB Kachru, President, Hotel Association of India (HAI).

From venue costs to insurance: What to keep in mind when planning a monsoon wedding

MP Bezbaruah, Secretary-General of the Hotel Association of India (HAI), said enquiries for monsoon destination weddings are increasing as couples seek greater flexibility, personalised experiences and better value.

Tourism cannot grow unless it becomes national priority, says FAITH, seeking urgent policy support

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Luxury hotels beyond metro cities: Unlocking India's emerging destinations

For a long time the story of Indian hospitality was focused mainly around the key big cities. Mumbai, Delhi, Bengaluru, Chennai and Hyderabad got most of the investments in terms of being a preferred location for new brand launches and expansion.

Building tomorrow's workforce

HAI's approach goes beyond creating more jobs to building a talent ecosystem equipped for evolving guest expectations. Through initiatives such as the HAI Image & Life Skills Lab, developed with The Lalit Suri Hospitality School, and its Industry Mentorship Programme, the association is strengthening communication, professional conduct, leadership, and other soft skills that are increasingly critical in hospitality,” he says.

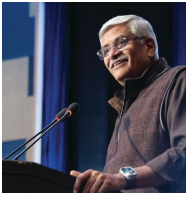
Hospitality as an economic engine: Driving jobs, investments and regional development in India

When a traveller checks into a hotel, the transaction rarely ends at the front desk. In India, hospitality operates as a powerful economic engine, driving jobs, investment and local enterprise far beyond its walls.



GOVERNMENT/POLICY NEWS

Tourism Minister Mr. Gajendra Singh Shekhawat highlights government's efforts to promote tourism



Tourism Minister Mr. Gajendra Singh Shekhawat has highlighted the Government's continued efforts to strengthen India's position as a preferred global tourism destination through coordinated promotional initiatives in collaboration with state governments, Indian Missions and industry stakeholders.

Ministry of Tourism Celebrates 12th International Day of Yoga Across the Country; Hon'ble Tourism Minister Performs Yoga at Karjat, Maharashtra

The Ministry of Tourism marked the 12th International Day of Yoga (IDY) 2026 with nationwide celebrations reaffirming its commitment to promoting wellness, holistic health and mindful living across the tourism and hospitality ecosystem.

Hindi Respects the Existence of Diverse Languages and Binds Everyone in a Common Thread of Unity: Shri Gajendra Singh Shekhawat

The Hindi Advisory Committee of the Ministry of Tourism met today at The Ashok Hotel, New Delhi, under the chairmanship of Shri Gajendra Singh Shekhawat, Union Minister for Culture and Tourism. The meeting was aimed at reviewing the use of Rajbhasha Hindi in the official work of the Ministry and deliberating upon measures to further promote its usage.

NITI Aayog and Ministry of Tourism Launch Report on 'Unlocking Growth in Tourism and Hospitality Sector'

NITI Aayog, in collaboration with the Ministry of Tourism, organised a National Workshop and launched the report titled "Unlocking Growth in Tourism and Hospitality Sector" at Hotel Ashok, New Delhi.

Tourism Ministry Sanctions 117 Projects Worth ₹5,756.62 Crore to Develop Tourism Infrastructure



Government Committed to Reforms to Make India a Globally Competitive Tourism Destination: Shri Gajendra Singh Shekhawat

An Interactive Session on Ease of Doing Business was organized by the Ministry of Tourism today in New Delhi with the representatives of tourism and hospitality industry under the chairmanship of Shri Gajendra Singh Shekhawat, Union Minister for Tourism and Culture.

Ministry of Tourism Signs MoU with Google India to Strengthen Digital Promotion of Indian Tourism

The Ministry of Tourism today signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Google India Pvt. Ltd. to strengthen the digital promotion of India's tourism destinations through the use of digital technologies, artificial intelligence, data-driven insights and capacity building. The MoU was exchanged in the presence of Union Minister for Tourism and Culture, Shri Gajendra Singh Shekhawat in New Delhi.

The Ministry of Tourism has undertaken several initiatives during the last two years to promote tourism through infrastructure development, digital promotion and expansion of basic amenities across the country.

STATE NEWS

South India emerges as key hub for hospitality industry

The southern states of India are emerging as vibrant centers for hospitality and tourism, fueled by a surge in travel enthusiasm and supportive governmental policies. Major hotel brands are snapping up new locations, while the rise in experiential travel and special occasion gatherings encourages a desire for exceptional accommodations. This trend signifies a notable transformation in travel behavior and consumer desires.

Karnataka Tourism Dept. recognises homestays, B&Bs separately to improve tourist experience

To encourage tourism entrepreneurs to invest in Karnataka's growing tourism sector while providing tourists with more accommodation options, the Department of Tourism has introduced a Bed & Breakfast policy.

UP to shift tourism focus from record footfall to higher eco value

Uttar Pradesh is transforming its tourism strategy to harness the benefits of growing visitor numbers for economic growth. The state intends to fast-track investment projects, upgrade infrastructure, and enhance the overall visitor experience. By shifting focus from proposals to implementation, expanding accommodation options, and boosting private sector participation, Uttar Pradesh aims to maximize tourism's role in the economy while fostering sustainable employment.

Infra push for religious, spiritual network across state

UP is enhancing tourism infrastructure at sites associated with gurus, saints and rishis across the state, as part of a broader effort to preserve spiritual heritage and widen the state's religious tourism network.

Odisha hotel, restaurant association proposes mega tourism, airport projects in state

In an effort to meet the goal, HRAO also appealed to BJP national spokesperson and MP Sambit Patra to take proactive steps in coordination with the Union Tourism Ministry to attract this transformational project to Odisha, leveraging the advantages of the present double-engine government.



Sundarbans To Become Global Eco-Tourism Hub: Minister

The state govt has planned to develop the Sundarbans as the second global eco-adventure and wellness tourism destination after Darjeeling, said tourism minister Shankar Ghosh.

Bengal looks to culture as engine for sustainable tourism growth

The state govt is aiming to build a sustainable tourism economy by blending Bengal's rich cultural, spiritual and intellectual heritage, state tourism minister Shankar Ghosh said at the inaugural session of the Maitri Cultural Economy Samiti (MCES) West Bengal Summit 2026, supported by the Ministry of Culture.



Bihar Chief Minister Samrat Choudhary launches heli-tourism scheme to put state on 'world tourism map'

Launching the scheme at the 'Samvad' Hall of the Chief Minister's Secretariat, Choudhary said the initiative marks the beginning of a new era for tourism in Bihar and reflects the government's commitment to placing the state on the global tourism map.

INDUSTRY NEWS

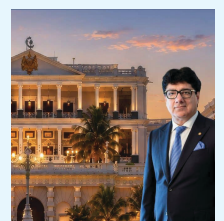
IHCL expands footprint with new hotel signings and launches across key growth markets



IHCL continued to strengthen its portfolio through new hotel signings and launches across Karnataka, Odisha, Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu. The expansion, spanning the Gateway, Ginger and Tree of Life brands, reinforces the company's focus on growing its presence in high-potential business, leisure and heritage destinations across India.

Taj named world's strongest luxury hotel brand for fifth time

Indian Hotels Company (IHCL) announces that its iconic brand Taj is the World's Strongest Luxury Hotel Brand by Brand Finance UK, for the fifth time. The 'Hotels 50 2026' annual report by the world's leading brand valuation consultancy recognises the most valuable and strongest hotel brands across the globe.



Lemon Tree Hotels accelerates expansion with new openings and signings



Lemon Tree Hotels continued to expand its footprint across India and Nepal through a series of hotel openings, new property signings and project extensions. During the period, the company strengthened its presence in Rajasthan, Maharashtra, Assam, Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh and Nepal, while adding new rooms to its development pipeline and advancing key projects, underscoring its continued focus on network expansion across high-growth leisure, business and pilgrimage destinations.

IHG Hotels & Resorts accelerates India expansion with new signings and strategic growth initiatives

IHG Hotels & Resorts strengthened its India growth strategy through new hotel signings and openings across Gujarat, Maharashtra, Himachal Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh. The company also reinforced its long-term expansion plans by focusing on luxury brands, airport-led developments, franchise opportunities and strategic partnerships to grow its footprint across the country.

Radisson Hotel Group strengthens India presence with expansion, workplace recognition and strong travel demand

Radisson Hotel Group reinforced its growth momentum in India through 10 new hotel signings across seven states, reported strong summer travel demand driven by domestic tourism, and earned recognition among India's Top 100 Best Companies to Work For 2026, underscoring its focus on expansion and a people-first culture.



Aishwarya Rai to promote JW Marriott

Hotel brand JW Marriott on Wednesday announced that it has appointed actor Aishwarya Rai Bachchan as its global brand ambassador. J W Marriott, part of Marriott Bonvoys global brand portfolio, operates over 130 properties worldwide, with India representing one of its most dynamic portfolios and development pipelines.

Chalet Hotels core EBITDA rises 15 per cent in Q1 FY27

Chalet Hotels Limited reported a resilient operational performance for the first quarter (Q1) of FY27, with its core hospitality and commercial real estate businesses driving growth despite geopolitical uncertainties and subdued international travel demand.

The Leela enters world's top hotel brands with second-place global ranking

The Leela Palaces, Hotels and Resorts has been ranked the No. 2 Best Hotel Brand in the World in the Travel + Leisure World's Best Awards 2026 Survey, bracing its position among the leading luxury hospitality brands globally.

Wellness travel boom: Why modern tourists are swapping shopping for slow living

According to market research by Mordor Intelligence, India is the most popular tourist destination in South Asia, rapidly expanding. Experts have predicted a 110% growth in medical tourism in India. Medical tourism is expected to grow to over USD 13 Billion in 2023.



Adventure Tourism Is Booming in India—Are Travellers Asking The Right Safety Questions?

India's adventure tourism numbers have been climbing steadily, and the range of experiences drawing travellers has expanded well beyond what it looked like a few years ago.

Hotels rebound in Apr-June quarter on travel demand

Hotel chains registered double-digit growth in the June-end quarter on the back of strong travel demand. Last year, properties in North India had seen a dip in business following the Pahalgam terror attack and Operation Sindoor. With no geopolitical headwinds this time, hotels are seeing a rebound.

Beyond destinations: Women discover themselves through travel

For many women today, travel is no longer just about ticking destinations off a bucket list. It has become a way to pause, breathe, rediscover themselves and experience life on their own terms.

IHCL's domestic hotel demand strong even as Middle East crisis drags on Dubai business: Puneet Chhatwal



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ITC Hotels accelerates expansion with new signings, acquisitions and portfolio growth

ITC Hotels continued to expand its footprint through new hotel signings, strategic acquisitions and brand growth across Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Gujarat, Rajasthan, Bihar, Karnataka and the Northeast, strengthening its presence in key business, leisure and pilgrimage destinations.

Sarovar Hotels plans to double branded residences portfolio

Sarovar Hotels is poised to expand its footprint in the branded residences sector, intending to double its portfolio within a year. With 800 units already secured and plans for an additional 1,300, this growth is fueled by mid- and premium-segment developers looking for hospitality alliances.

Beyond the room: Why India Inc's luxury hospitality bet is becoming an experience business

India's luxury hotels are evolving beyond just rooms. Companies are now creating immersive experiences that blend wellness, food, and culture. Affluent Indians are seeking authentic, personalized stays.

Incredible India, invaluable economics

India's tourism and hospitality sector is emerging as a powerful driver of economic growth, generating employment, fostering entrepreneurship and enhancing India's global standing. While the sector's achievements at 7% contribution to GDP and 9% share of employment are significant, its true potential lies in what is built over the

Fortune India: In Conversation | Tech, Bharat, and Luxury: Radisson's India Strategy

In the latest episode of Fortune India's In Conversation podcast, Radisson Hotel Group South Asia MD & COO Nikhil Sharma discusses the Bharat travel story, expansion into tier-II and tier-III markets, the rise of luxury hospitality, AI's role in hotels, talent challenges and where the industry is headed next.

Room for less: Could short-stay hotels be the next big thing in hospitality?

In a groundbreaking shift, Indian hotels are now embracing hourly stays, catering to the needs of modern travelers. Services like Bag2Bag and Brevistay are leading this charge by enabling convenient, flexible bookings. This innovative approach not only allows hotels to profit from previously vacant rooms but also enhances the accommodation experience for those seeking short-term options.

Spiritual tourism drives domestic travel growth as young and solo travellers lead demand: Cleartrip

Spiritual tourism is emerging as a key driver of India's domestic travel growth, according to Cleartrip's PeekABoo Trends Tracker. The report highlights rising demand from younger travellers, particularly solo women, across pilgrimage destinations such as Amarnath, Char Dham, Puri and Varanasi. Budget accommodation, multimodal transport and festival-led travel continue to shape booking patterns across the country.

The LaLiT Suri Hospitality Group unveils 'Hospitality With A Heart' purpose-led brand philosophy

The philosophy also reinforces The LaLiT's long-standing leadership in inclusive hospitality. Through its inclusive employment initiatives and in collaboration with the Keshav Suri Foundation, the Group has created opportunities for over 2,000 members of the LGBTQIA+ community through skilling, employment and empowerment programmes.

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