



ENGAGE

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RESPONSIBLE TOURISM & HOSPITALITY

“Sustainability and growth are not competing priorities”

Anil Chadha,
Managing Director, ITC Hotels





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FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK



K.B.KACHRU
President, Hotel Association of India
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Radisson Hotel Group

Hospitality is all about creating experiences that linger long after a journey ends. Today, however, the industry is being called upon to do something more profound—to create value that endures not just for guests, but for communities, the environment and future generations. Sustainability is no longer a peripheral initiative or a marketing promise. It is becoming the defining lens through which the future of hospitality will be shaped.

This Issue explores that transition. From greener buildings and resource-efficient operations to responsible tourism, community engagement and climate-conscious innovation, sustainability is emerging as a business imperative as much as a moral one.

India's hospitality industry is entering one of the most exciting phases in its history. Buoyed by robust domestic travel, rising incomes, improving connectivity and growing demand for leisure, business and wellness tourism, the sector is poised for remarkable expansion. Industry estimates project the hotel market to approach US\$31 billion by 2029, while the broader Vision 2047 aspires to build a US\$3 trillion tourism economy with the hotel industry projected to contribute \$1 trillion and create nearly 200 million tourism-related jobs.

Yet, behind every hotel, resort and destination lies the industry's greatest strength—its people. Hospitality remains, above all else, a people business. Technology may transform operations and artificial intelligence may personalise guest journeys, but warmth, empathy and service excellence will always be delivered by skilled professionals. As the industry grows, investing in talent, continuous learning and leadership will be as important as investing in physical infrastructure.

Encouragingly, the ecosystem is evolving. Industry-academia partnerships, apprenticeship programmes, women's leadership initiatives and the proposed National Institute of Hospitality promise to create a stronger pipeline of future-ready professionals. Equipping them with skills in digital technologies, sustainability, wellness and commercial excellence will ensure that India's hospitality workforce remains globally competitive.

As you browse through these pages, we hope this Issue sparks conversations that go beyond sustainable buildings to sustainable businesses, sustainable careers and sustainable communities. Because the future of hospitality will ultimately be measured not only by the guests it welcomes, but also by the legacy it leaves behind. **HAI**

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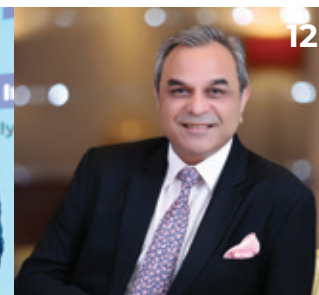


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39 THE LAST WORD RESPONSIBLE TOURISM: WHOSE RESPONSIBILITY?

Responsibility has a much wider connotation. It is the totality of all different activities that make up what a tourist looks for—a unique experience. And in the broader context it is a conscious action by all stakeholders to contribute to the goal of sustainability.
By M. P. Bezbaruah,
Secretary General, HAI



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Ladakh plans high-altitude wildlife safari



Ladakh is set to launch India's first high-altitude wildlife safari, with Lieutenant Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena approving an eco-tourism initiative featuring guided jeep safaris along snow leopard and birdwatching trails. Cleared at the first meeting of the Snow Leopard and High-Altitude Nature (SHAN)

Conservation Society, the project aims to promote sustainable tourism while creating livelihoods for local communities. The Forest Department will introduce specially designed open-back safari vehicles, operated by trained local drivers and guides, on the lines of wildlife safaris in Kaziranga and Ranthambore.

Goa pushes for easier global access

Goa is set to join India's Fast Track Immigration-Trusted Traveller Programme (FTI-TTP) after Union Home Minister Amit Shah approved its rollout, promising faster immigration clearance for eligible travellers. At the same time, the state has urged the Centre to introduce visa-on-arrival, a digital nomad visa and greater international air connectivity to strengthen Goa's position as a global tourism destination. The proposals were discussed during meetings between Goa Tourism Minister Rohan A. Khaunte, Amit Shah and Union Tourism Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat, with a focus on improving ease of travel and boosting tourism infrastructure.

Bihar eyes heritage-led tourism boost

The Bihar government is preparing a comprehensive plan to transform its archaeological and cultural heritage into a major tourism driver. Chief Minister Samrat Chaudhary has directed officials to prepare detailed action plans for the conservation, scientific

survey, excavation and integrated development of key sites, including Bodh Gaya, Sultanganj, Mandar and the Kesaria Stupa. The initiative also seeks to secure UNESCO recognition for eligible sites, positioning Bihar as a leading destination for heritage and cultural tourism.

Glaw lake earns Ramsar recognition

Arunachal Pradesh's picturesque Glaw Lake has been designated the state's first Ramsar Site and India's 101st wetland of international importance, marking a significant milestone in biodiversity conservation. Located within the Kamlang Tiger Reserve in Lohit district, the freshwater lake supports

rich wildlife while creating opportunities for sustainable livelihoods for local communities. Chief Minister Pema Khandu said the recognition would strengthen conservation efforts and promote eco-tourism, while Union Environment Minister Bhupender Yadav described the designation as an important step in protecting India's ecological heritage.

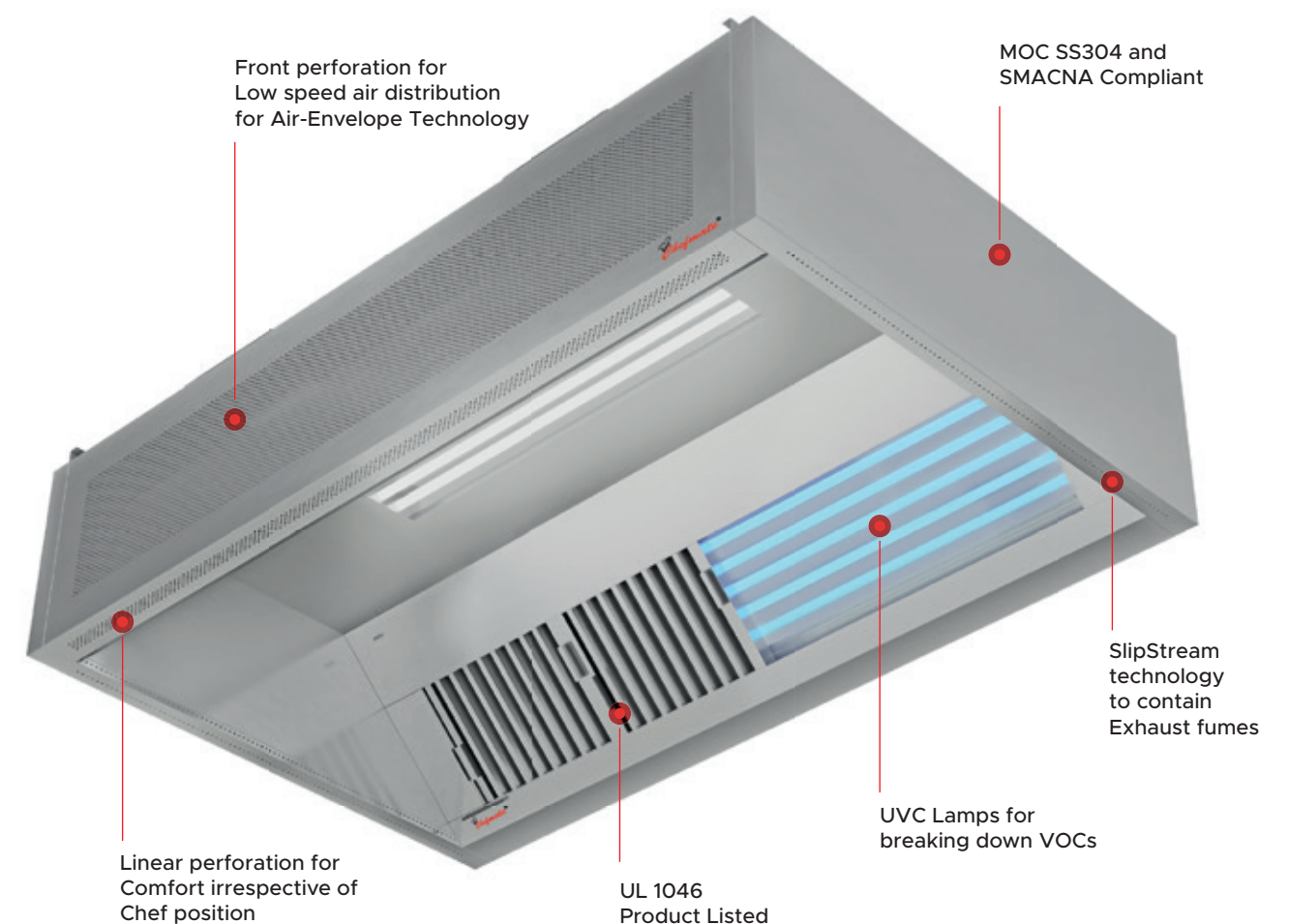
Uttarakhand targets global spiritual tourism

Uttarakhand is positioning itself as the world's spiritual capital, with the state government accelerating the development of major pilgrimage destinations and integrating them into tourism circuits. Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami said initiatives such as the Manaskhand Mandirmala Mission, improved road connectivity, expanded transport services and

upgraded infrastructure are driving a surge in pilgrim arrivals. The Char Dham Yatra has already recorded over 4.58 million pilgrims in its first 105 days this year, while destinations including Jageshwar Dham, Triyuginarayan Temple, Purnagiri Dham, Dhari Devi Temple, Kainchi Dham and Adi Kailash Dham have also witnessed record visitor numbers.

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HOSPITALITY VETERANS SEEK INDUSTRY STATUS, STRONGER POLICY PUSH

Speaking at the FAITH Conclave 2026, sector leaders urged reforms to attract investment, create jobs and make India a global tourism powerhouse.

Panel Discussion: The Next Frontier for Indian Hospitality



Hospitality leaders have called for greater policy support, improved last-mile connectivity and a nationwide campaign to attract talent, arguing that tourism can become one of India's biggest engines of employment and economic growth if longstanding bottlenecks are addressed.

Speaking at a panel on 'The Next Frontier of Hospitality' at the FAITH Conclave 2026, held in New Delhi, industry veterans Dr Jyotsna Suri, Chairperson and Managing Director of The Lalit Suri Hospitality Group, and K.B. Kachru, President, Hotel Association of India (HAI), said the sector's contribution to jobs remains its most underappreciated strength.

Moderated by Mandeep Lamba, President, HVS South Asia, the discussion focused on the policy and investment priorities needed to position India among the world's leading hospitality markets.

"The most underappreciated contribution of hospitality is employment generation," said Suri. "The industry creates a vast ecosystem of direct and indirect jobs, and this contribution needs to be recognised much more prominently."

Kachru agreed, saying the sector continues to suffer from inadequate policy recognition



"FAITH has set itself an ambitious vision for 2047. We believe tourism can become a US\$3 trillion industry, welcome 100 million international visitors, and create livelihoods for 200 million Indians, directly and indirectly. These are

ambitious aspirations, but entirely achievable if the government and industry work together."

AJEET BAJAJ,
Vice Chairman, FAITH & Chairman,
FAITH Conclave



"The question is no longer whether India has the potential. The real question is how quickly we can unlock that potential in a sustainable and responsible manner. In the last 15-16 months, we have faced one disruption after another.

There were aviation accidents, unprecedented rainfall, floods and landslides. Geopolitical developments in West Asia affected international connectivity and travel plans. Every few months, a new challenge comes up. And yet, our sector continues to move forward. That is the true strength of Indian tourism. It is resilient. It adapts. It recovers. Most importantly, it continues to grow."

PUNEET CHHATWAL
MD and CEO of
The Indian Hotels Company Limited (IHCL)



Throughout my career, whether in government or the private sector, I have always believed that good decisions begin with good data. Data tells stories, and reveals opportunities. And when we combine data with vision, we create growth. From the outside, what

we see is not simply an 'Incredible India' campaign. We see an incredible country. There are broadly 8 priorities. The first is seamless travel. The second is destination stewardship. The third is climate and environmental sustainability. Fourth is technology, fifth is crisis preparedness, sixth is connectivity, seventh is workforce development, and finally, there is policy and investment."

GLORIA GUEVARA
President & CEO, World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC)

despite being one of the country's largest employers.

"We are accepted as a major contributor to the economy, but we are still not fully treated as an industry," he said. "We don't want subsidies. We want policies that allow hospitality to stand on its own and contribute even more to the national economy."



"India possesses a unique form of capital that no factory can manufacture and no artificial intelligence can replicate—its civilisational heritage, cultural diversity, spiritual traditions and extraordinary natural landscapes. In the years ahead, India's greatest strength will not lie only in its GDP growth or economic scale, but in the enduring power of its civilisation. The world is beginning to view India through this broader lens, and it is important that we recognise and harness this unique cultural advantage."

GAJENDRA SINGH SHEKHAWAT
Union tourism minister

While commending the government's investments in airports and highways, Kachru said the next challenge was improving last-mile connectivity to tourist destinations.

He also questioned why India was not attracting greater institutional investment into hotels despite strong global interest in the country's tourism story.

"India has everything—our culture, heritage, monuments and food—but we need to package these strengths better," he said. "Tourism must become a much larger pillar of the economy."

Lamba noted that India has become one of the most talked-about hospitality markets globally, yet branded hotel penetration remains low.

"Global hotel CEOs increasingly see India as the next big hospitality opportunity," he said. "The challenge is translating that interest into scalable investments."

Kachru said the next wave of growth would



“Arunachal Pradesh is a biodiversity hotspot. We are home to more than 600 species of butterflies and over 600 species of orchids, accounting for

nearly 40% of India's orchid diversity. Our greatest strength is our cultural richness. We have more than 23 major tribes and over 100 sub-tribes, each with its own distinct dialect and traditions. Yet, despite this diversity, we live in remarkable harmony.

Conservation is deeply embedded in our tribal way of life. Protecting nature is not just a policy—it is part of our culture.

Beyond eco-tourism, we are positioning Arunachal Pradesh as the ‘Adventure Capital of India’. The state offers immense potential for white-water rafting, kayaking, mountain biking, downhill racing and road biking. Our vision is to promote tourism sustainably, preserving the serenity of our natural environment while allowing visitors to experience its extraordinary beauty.

In Arunachal Pradesh, hospitality is not a skill that needs to be taught; it is a way of life. Our people are naturally warm and welcoming, and our doors are open to all who wish to partner with us in unlocking the state’s tourism potential.”

PASANG DORJEE
Minister for Tourism, Education, Rural Works, Parliamentary Affairs and Libraries, Government of Arunachal Pradesh

come from Tier-2 and Tier-3 cities, which are expected to account for more than half of India’s economic growth over the next decade. Realising this opportunity, however, would require better connectivity and a stronger talent pipeline.

Talent shortages emerged as another key concern during the discussion.

Suri described it as an anomaly that an industry capable of generating millions of jobs continues to struggle to attract young professionals.

“There is still a mindset that favours careers in engineering, medicine, administration or technology,” she said. “The government and industry need a large-scale campaign to showcase hospitality as an attractive long-term career.”

She also highlighted the industry’s growing focus on diversity and inclusion.

The Lalit Group has employed 200 transgender persons, 25 women who are acid attack survivors, along with members of the LGBTQI+ community and differently abled individuals, taking the total workforce from these groups to more than 2,000 employees. The company’s hospitality school focuses on strengthening their communication and professional skills to help them build successful careers.

Kachru said industry bodies were now presenting a unified set of priorities to policymakers, including better infrastructure, greater ease of doing business and policies that encourage investment.

He pointed out that India currently has only about 2,00,000 branded hotel rooms, far below its tourism potential, underscoring the need for faster capacity creation.

Looking ahead to 2036, Suri said she hoped to see a smaller gap between branded and unbranded hotels, a better-trained workforce and stronger last-mile connectivity that would encourage international travellers to choose India not just for its destinations but also for the quality of its hospitality.

Kachru’s vision was for India to emerge among the world’s top five hospitality markets while preserving the country’s distinctive hospitality ethos. “Indian hospitality is among the best in the world,” he said. “As we grow, we must retain our Indianness rather than simply copying Western models.” **HAI**



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“SUSTAINABILITY AND GROWTH ARE NOT COMPETING PRIORITIES”



*By embedding sustainability into business strategy, we are able to drive growth while creating long-term value for all stakeholders, says **Anil Chadha**, Managing Director, ITC Hotels*

What does responsible tourism mean for your organisation?

For ITC Hotels, responsible tourism means creating memorable guest experiences while ensuring that our growth contributes positively to the destinations in which we operate through environmental stewardship, community & value chain engagement, and inclusive economic development. ITC Hotels Limited is a global exemplar in Sustainability with 25 Hotel buildings LEED Platinum certified, 13 LEED Zero Carbon and 13 LEED Water Hotels (as per USGBC). In practical terms, it means conserving water and energy, increasing reliance on renewable energy, minimising waste, supporting local livelihoods,

preserving cultural heritage, and integrating sustainability into every aspect of the guest experience. Responsible tourism is not a standalone initiative for us; it is embedded in how we design, build, operate, and grow our businesses.

How do you balance commercial growth with environmental and social responsibility?

We do not view sustainability and growth as competing priorities. Responsible business practices

Responsible tourism is not a standalone initiative for us; it is embedded in how we design, build, operate, and grow our businesses

create stronger and more resilient businesses over the long term. Investments in resource efficiency reduce operating costs, responsible sourcing strengthens supply chains, and community engagement enhances social value. By embedding sustainability into business strategy, we are able to drive growth while creating long-term value for all stakeholders.

What does success in responsible hospitality look like five years from now?

Success would mean that sustainability is no longer viewed as a differentiator but as a baseline expectation across the industry. For ITC Hotels, it would mean continuing to grow while substantially reducing our

Investments in resource efficiency reduce operating costs, responsible sourcing strengthens supply chains, and community engagement enhances social value

environmental footprint, further increasing renewable energy adoption, strengthening climate resilience, and creating greater shared value for communities. Equally important, success would be reflected in guests increasingly choosing hotels that demonstrate genuine environmental and social responsibility.

How can hotels ensure that tourism creates meaningful economic opportunities for local communities rather than just attracting visitors?

Hotels have a significant role to play as economic anchors within their destinations. This can be achieved through local hiring, skill development, sourcing products and services from local enterprises, supporting artisans and farmers, and creating market access for community-based businesses. When local communities actively participate in and benefit from tourism, the economic impact extends far beyond hotel premises and contributes to more inclusive and sustainable destination development.

Can tourism help preserve local culture and heritage, or does it inevitably commercialise it? Tourism can be a powerful force for preserving culture and heritage when approached thoughtfully. Responsible hospitality can create demand for traditional crafts, regional cuisines, local art forms, and heritage conservation. The key is to ensure authenticity and respect for local traditions. Hotels should act as facilitators that showcase and celebrate cultural heritage rather than commodify it. When done responsibly, tourism can strengthen cultural pride and support the preservation of traditions for future generations.

When local communities actively participate in and benefit from tourism, the economic impact extends far beyond hotel premises and contributes to inclusive and sustainable destination development





Which sustainability initiative has delivered the biggest measurable impact, whether in water, energy, waste, or carbon emissions?

Energy transition has arguably delivered the most significant measurable impact. Through investments in energy efficiency, renewable energy, and green building practices, we have been able to substantially reduce our carbon footprint while improving operational efficiency and energy security. At the same time, our long-standing focus on water stewardship and waste management has demonstrated that environmental responsibility and business performance can advance together when backed by sustained commitment and innovation.

What are the biggest barriers to adopting sustainable practices across the hospitality sector?

One of the biggest barriers is the perception that sustainability

One of the biggest barriers is the perception that sustainability requires significant upfront investment without immediate returns

requires significant upfront investment without immediate returns. Another challenge is the lack of consistent data, expertise, and capacity across the value chain. However, these barriers are steadily diminishing as technology becomes more accessible, regulatory expectations evolve, and guests increasingly value responsible business practices. The industry now has a strong opportunity to accelerate adoption through collaboration and knowledge sharing.

How is technology, from AI to smart building systems, helping hotels become more resource efficient?

Technology is becoming a critical enabler of sustainability. Smart building systems allow real-time monitoring and optimisation of energy, water, and equipment performance. AI-driven analytics can identify inefficiencies, predict maintenance requirements, and support better operational decisions. These capabilities help hotels reduce resource consumption while maintaining high standards of guest comfort and service. The future of hospitality will increasingly combine human-centric experiences with data-driven efficiency.

Can digital tools enhance guest experiences while reducing environmental impact?

Absolutely. Digital solutions such as mobile check-in, digital keys, paperless guest communication



and smart room controls can improve convenience while reducing resource consumption. The most effective technologies are those that seamlessly enhance the guest journey while operating efficiently in the background. Sustainability should never come at the cost of guest experience; rather, technology enables us to deliver both.

Are travellers today willing to pay more for sustainable accommodation, or is price still the overriding factor?

Price remains an important consideration, but traveller expectations are clearly changing. Guests are seeking transparency, authenticity, and responsible business practices from the brands they engage with. Sustainability alone may not always justify a premium, but it significantly influences trust, brand preference, and long-term loyalty. Ultimately, travellers expect hotels to provide both value and responsibility rather than asking them to choose between the two.



Simplified regulations through single-window clearances and streamlined approval processes would further encourage sustainable investments while maintaining compliance standards

What policy changes would accelerate responsible tourism in India?

India has made significant progress, but greater momentum could be achieved through stronger incentives for renewable energy, resource-efficient buildings, circular economy initiatives, sustainable mobility, and responsible destination development. Simplified regulations through single-window clearances and streamlined approval processes would further encourage sustainable investments while maintaining compliance standards. Greater collaboration between government, industry, and local communities, supported

by consistent policy frameworks, can help scale best practices and accelerate responsible tourism across the country.

What is one misconception about responsible tourism that you would like to dispel?

One common misconception is that responsible tourism is only about environmental conservation. In reality, it is equally about people, livelihoods, culture, ethical governance, and inclusive economic development. Responsible tourism encompasses the full spectrum of ESG, ensuring that environmental stewardship is complemented by social responsibility and strong governance practices. It is not about asking travellers to compromise their experience; rather, it is about delivering enriching experiences in a way that creates long-term value for destinations, communities, businesses, and future generations through transparent, accountable, and sustainable decision-making. **HAI**

RESPONSIBLE TOURISM NO LONGER A CHOICE, BUT A CALLING

Today, responsible tourism sits at the centre of every serious conversation about the future of hospitality; not as a compliance exercise or a marketing footnote, but as the defining lens through which destinations, operators, and travellers are beginning to measure the true value of a journey. Read on for expert views.

Team HAI Engage



There was a time when responsible tourism was the language of niche eco-lodges and well-meaning NGOs—a fringe conversation at the edges of an industry preoccupied with occupancy rates, RevPAR, and room nights. That time has passed. Today, responsible tourism is central to hospitality. The shift has been driven from multiple directions simultaneously. Travellers — particularly younger ones — are asking questions that hotel lobbies were not always designed to answer. Where does the food come from? Who made the amenities? What happens to the waste? Does my presence here help or harm the community outside the gates? These are no longer edge-case concerns of a niche traveller segment,



they are entering the mainstream with a speed that has caught many operators unprepared.

For India, the stakes are high and the opportunity is rich. A country of extraordinary biodiversity, layered cultural heritage, fragile ecosystems, and

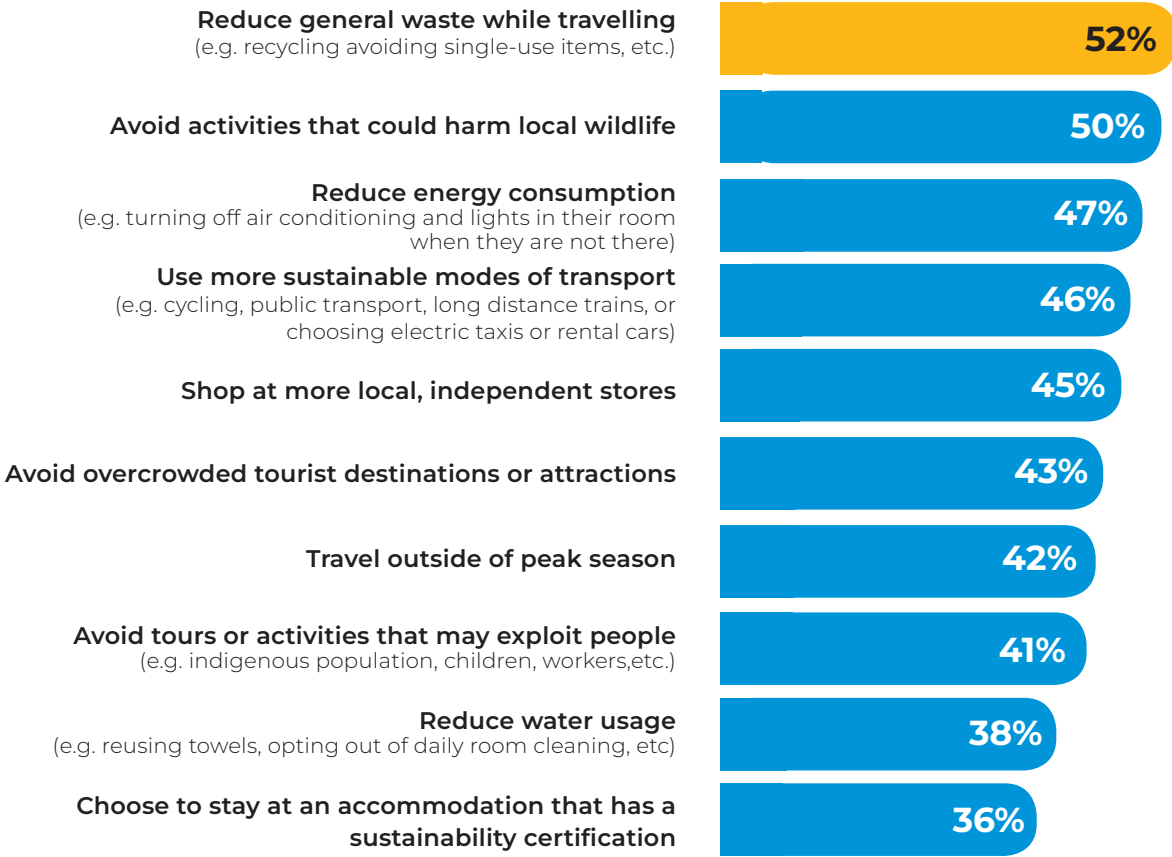
communities whose livelihoods are intimately tied to the land that tourism seeks to monetise—India has more to lose from irresponsible tourism and more to gain from getting it right.

The future of luxury is increasingly defined by purpose and responsibility. Guests today appreciate experiences

that are authentic, thoughtfully designed, and environmentally conscious. Responsible tourism is not about limiting experiences—it is about creating richer, more meaningful journeys that benefit both travellers and the destinations they visit.

For **Anand Nair**, General Manager of InterContinental Chennai Mahabalipuram Resort, responsible tourism is about ensuring that every guest experience leaves the destination better than it was found. “It means operating our resort efficiently, conserving natural resources, supporting local livelihoods and celebrating the cultural heritage of Mahabalipuram,” he says. “Sustainability is not a standalone initiative; it is embedded in how we design

Top 10 Ways Travellers Plan to Travel More Sustainably in 2026



Source: booking.com Travel And Sustainability Report 2026



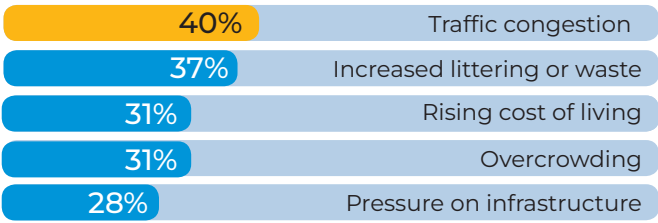
“Responsible hospitality should become the industry standard rather than a niche differentiator, where environmental stewardship and exceptional guest experiences naturally coexist.”

Anand Nair
GM, INTERCONTINENTAL CHENNAI MAHABALIPURAM RESORT

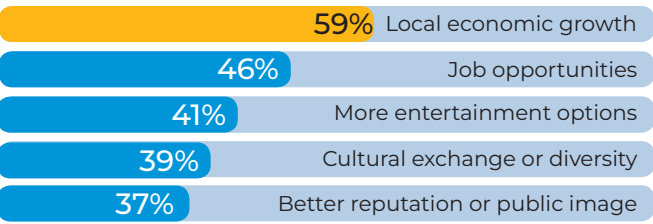
Perception of Inbound Tourism

Key benefits, challenges, and where communities would like to see additional support so that destinations can grow at a healthy pace and continue to be enjoyed.

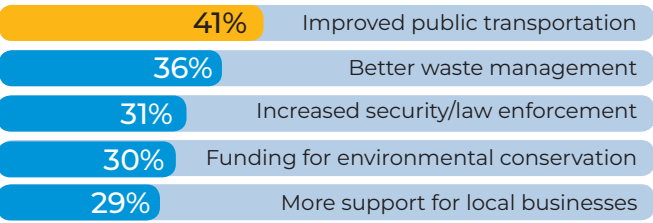
Top 5 Challenges of Tourism



Top 5 Benefits of Tourism



Top 5 Areas Where Communities Want Support



Source: booking.com Travel And Sustainability Report 2026



experiences, manage operations and engage with our community.”

Nair believes responsible business practices and commercial success are closely intertwined. Investments in energy-efficient infrastructure, water conservation, waste reduction and local sourcing not only reduce environmental impact but also strengthen operational resilience. “By partnering with local artisans, suppliers and businesses, we ensure that the economic benefits of tourism extend beyond the resort. Sustainable growth is about creating value for guests, employees, stakeholders and the wider community.”

Hotels, he says, play an important role in strengthening local economies by creating employment, sourcing locally and showcasing regional culture. “When guests engage with local crafts, cuisine and traditions, tourism becomes a catalyst for inclusive economic growth rather than just a transactional experience.”

At InterContinental Chennai Mahabalipuram Resort, that philosophy

is reflected throughout the guest experience. The property’s architecture, interiors, culinary offerings and storytelling draw inspiration from the Pallava dynasty and the nearby UNESCO World Heritage monuments. “Tourism has the power to preserve culture when approached with authenticity and respect. Rather than commercialising heritage, it can sustain traditional crafts and local artistry by creating appreciation and economic opportunities for the communities that keep them alive.”

Among the resort’s sustainability initiatives, water stewardship has had the greatest impact. Treated waste water is recycled for landscaping, significantly reducing dependence on freshwater resources. Energy-efficient lighting, intelligent building management systems and waste reduction programmes have further improved operational efficiency. “Our biggest achievement has been creating a culture where sustainability is part of everyday operations rather than a separate initiative,” he says.

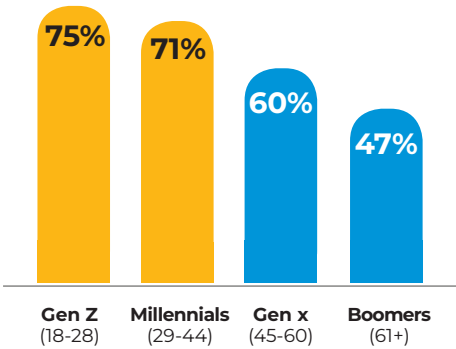
Technology is becoming an increasingly important enabler of responsible hospitality. Smart building systems optimise energy use, while AI and data analytics help forecast demand, manage inventory, reduce food waste and improve operational planning. Digital services such as mobile check-ins, electronic billing and paperless communication enhance convenience while lowering resource consumption. “Technology allows us to personalise the guest experience while using resources more responsibly,” says Nair.

Consumer expectations are evolving as well. Travellers today are more conscious of sustainability. Guests increasingly expect responsible practices to be seamlessly integrated into a high-quality hospitality experience.

Looking ahead, Nair believes success will be measured not only by occupancy and revenue but by the long-term legacy hotels create. “Responsible hospitality should become the industry standard, not a niche differentiator,” he says. Achieving that, however, will require

Intention to Travel More Sustainably in 2026

For 85% of travellers more sustainable travel is important to them



stronger collaboration between government, industry and local communities. Incentives for renewable energy, green buildings, water conservation and waste management, together with common sustainability benchmarks and greater traveller awareness, can accelerate adoption. “Sustainable tourism,” he concludes, “requires collective action across the ecosystem.”

India stands at an important moment in its tourism journey. As one of the world’s

fastest-growing travel markets, it is also pursuing ambitious sustainability goals through initiatives such as the National Green Hydrogen Mission, renewable energy expansion, Green Open Access Regulations, ESG disclosures and its commitment to achieve net-zero emissions by 2070. For the hospitality industry, this presents both an opportunity and a responsibility.

“Hotels are not just places where travellers stay; they are economic anchors within communities,” says **Akanksha Singh**, Global Senior Manager, Sustainability, Radisson Hotel Group. “They create jobs, influence local supply chains, consume natural resources and shape visitors’ perceptions of destinations. Responsible

tourism is no longer a niche concept—it has become a business imperative.”

At Radisson Hotel Group (RHG), sustainability is embedded across the guest journey through its global Think People, Think Community, Think Planet strategy. Singh says the industry’s mindset has evolved over the past decade. “Sustainability was once viewed as a cost centre. Today, it is recognised as a source of resilience, innovation and competitive advantage. Rising energy costs, water stress, changing traveller expectations and growing sustainability requirements from corporate clients are transforming the way hotels operate.”

The group’s own experience reflects this shift. Since 2019, the group has expanded its global portfolio while reducing its Scope 1 and Scope 2 emissions.

To ensure consistency across its portfolio, every Radisson Hotel Group

“Through our global Think People, Think Community, Think Planet strategy, sustainability is integrated into every stage of the guest journey and hotel lifecycle. Also, practical innovations such as Water-from-Air technology at Radisson Blu Plaza Delhi Airport demonstrate how hotels can reduce dependence on conventional water sources.”

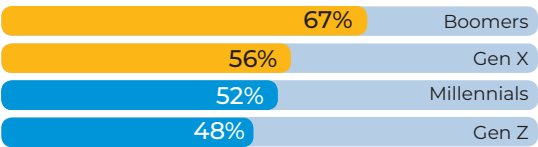
Akanksha Singh

GLOBAL SENIOR MANAGER SUSTAINABILITY,
RADISSON GROUP OF HOTELS

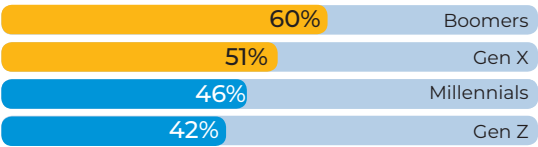


Older Generations Show Stronger Commitment to Taking Action

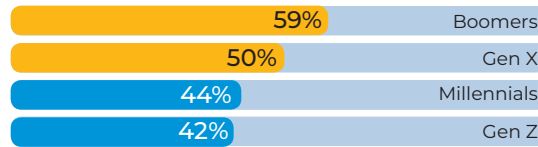
Plan to Reduce General Waste on Trips



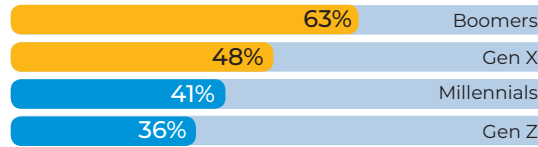
Plan to Reduce Energy Consumption on Trips



Plan to Shop at Local Stores on Trips



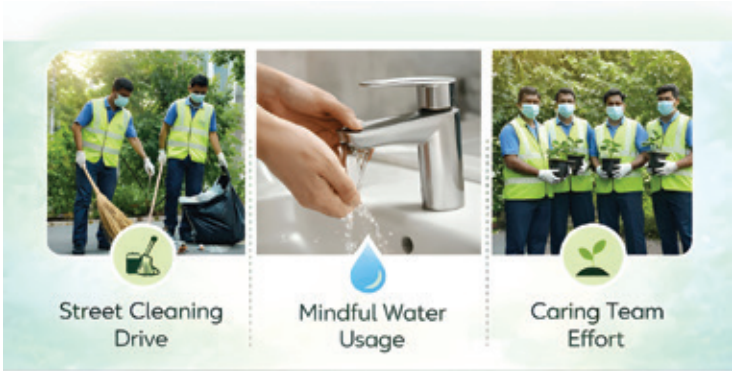
Plan to Travel Outside of Peak Season



property is required to achieve independent third-party verification under the Hotel Sustainability Basics framework developed by the World Sustainable Hospitality Alliance. Covering energy efficiency, water stewardship, waste management and community engagement, the framework establishes a common sustainability baseline rather than limiting best practices to flagship hotels.

Technology is emerging as a key enabler of responsible hospitality. Artificial intelligence, building automation, predictive maintenance, smart metering and advanced analytics allow hotels to optimise energy consumption, improve HVAC performance, detect water leaks, reduce food waste and manage resources with far greater precision. At the same time, practical innovations such as Water-from-Air technology at Radisson Blu Plaza Delhi Airport demonstrate how hotels can reduce dependence on conventional water sources while building greater resource resilience.

Beyond environmental performance, Singh believes responsible tourism



must strengthen local economies. Hotels can generate inclusive growth through local sourcing, employment, skill development and partnerships with artisans, farmers and small enterprises, while promoting regional cuisine, crafts and culture. “The future of tourism cannot simply be measured by visitor numbers. It must also be

Source: booking.com Travel And Sustainability Report 2026

measured by the value it creates for local communities,” she says.

Looking ahead, Singh believes hospitality is moving beyond sustainability towards regenerative tourism—an approach that seeks not merely to reduce environmental impact but to leave destinations better than they were found by restoring ecosystems, supporting biodiversity, strengthening communities and creating long-term economic value.

“Responsible tourism is often seen only through an environmental lens,” she says. “In reality, it is about creating balanced and enduring value for guests, employees, hotel owners, communities and the environment.”

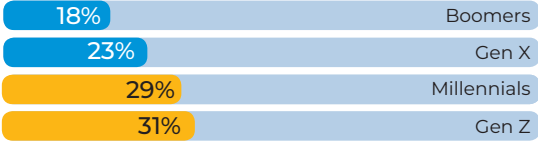
Michael Dominic, MD, CEO of CGH

Earth Experience Hotels says that sustainability is not an added layer to hospitality but the foundation on which every experience is built. “The group has shaped its philosophy around simplicity, authenticity, and a deep respect for nature and community. Guided by the principles of environmental sensitivity, local engagement, and cultural integrity, CGH Earth has consistently approached tourism as a means of creating value that is both meaningful and responsible.”

At Coconut Lagoon, he says, for instance, heritage homes have been carefully relocated and restored, preserving Kerala’s architectural traditions. Organic waste is converted into biogas for cooking, wastewater is reused for the gardens, and the

Areas Where Younger Travellers Take the Lead

Participation in Local or Indigenous Cultural Experiences



Participation in Wildlife Conservation Activities



Source: booking.com Travel And Sustainability Report 2026

backwaters are treated as a living ecosystem that must be sustained. The experience remains immersive, yet grounded in balance, allowing guests to engage deeply with the landscape without disrupting it.

Across the portfolio, similar approaches shape each property in ways that are



contextual and enduring. At Spice Village, cottages are thatched using elephant grass sourced from the indigenous Manan community, creating a direct connection between ecological management and local livelihoods. What was once a recurring environmental concern has been transformed into a sustainable resource that supports both the forest and the people who depend on it. At Visalam, sustainability is expressed through preservation. A century-old Chettinad mansion has been restored with care, retaining its architectural integrity while continuing to draw from the region’s living traditions in both space and cuisine.

“Waste is treated as a resource through composting, biogas generation, and water recycling systems. The adoption of renewable energy and efficient technologies helps reduce overall consumption. At the same time, the elimination of single-use plastics and the introduction of glass water bottling have significantly lowered the environmental footprint. These interventions are embedded in daily operations, ensuring that sustainability remains seamless and unobtrusive,” he says.

“

Guided by the principles of environmental sensitivity, local engagement, and cultural integrity, CGH Earth has consistently approached tourism as a means of creating value that is both meaningful and responsible.”

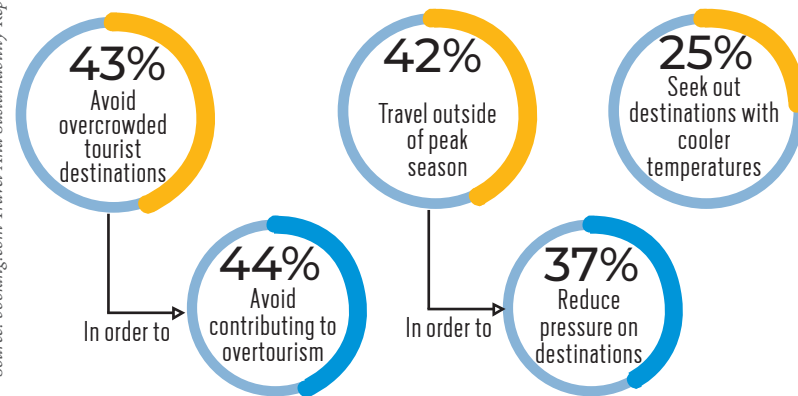
Michael Dominic

MD, CEO OF CGH EARTH EXPERIENCE HOTELS



Travellers Plan to Make Conscious Destination Choices in 2026

Participation in Local or Indigenous Cultural Experiences



Also, he says, local farmers, artisans, and knowledge keepers are integral to each experience, contributing not only to supply chains but also to the identity of every property. “Their involvement ensures that economic value is shared while cultural practices remain relevant and alive,” he adds.

“Sustainability cannot be a distant aspiration; it must be a continuous commitment protecting our planet for generations to come.”

Rakesh Mathur

PRESIDENT, RESPONSIBLE TOURISM
SOCIETY OF INDIA (RTSOI)

Rakesh Mathur, President, *Responsible Tourism Society of India (RTSOI)*, lists out the prescription for holistic tourism. Sustainability, he says, must be a continuous commitment protecting our planet for generations to come. Unchecked tourism accelerates climate change. A global temperature rise of two to four degrees Celsius risks the extinction of human, animal, and plant life. "We must act with urgency. Tourism directly impacts several United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, from preserving life on land to fostering responsible consumption." To protect our future, the industry, he says, must take these decisive steps:

- First, we must transition to renewable energy, using technology to cut carbon emissions across hotels and transport.
- Second, luxury must be redefined. Conspicuous consumption must give way to meaningful experiences.



- We should encourage local products and discourage high-carbon imports which leaves high carbon footprint.
- Operationally, hotels must adopt the RTSOI Environmental Charter, while architects must design eco-friendly buildings.
- We must eradicate single-use plastics. The ubiquitous plastic water bottle—especially the 200ml bottle—must be eliminated. Refillable glass bottles and water dispensers must return as the industry standard.
- Robust waste management is essential for destination preservation.
- Sensitisation and education are vital to change the mindsets of both service providers and travellers, who are often the worst offenders.
- Implementation is where our resolve is tested, and strong action against violators is now overdue.
- At tourist sites, clear rules must be displayed, and violations must attract

strict fines. Tourism wardens should work alongside guides to check and retain plastic pollutants at entry gates. Stakeholder workshops at high-density tourism monuments will help spread best practices.

- The Unorganised sector, which constitutes 70% of tourism service providers, must be brought under a regulatory framework.
 - Mandatory energy and environmental audits should be linked to hospitality classifications. Carrying capacity studies must dictate the development of new destinations to prevent exploitation.
 - Zero tolerance for environmental harm is our only path forward.
- Sustainable tourism is a moral obligation. It demands conscience, courage, and immediate collective action.

Finally, responsible tourism is not about travelling less; it is about travelling with enough awareness to leave a place better than you found it. **HAI**



UNLOCKING INDIA'S TOURISM POTENTIAL

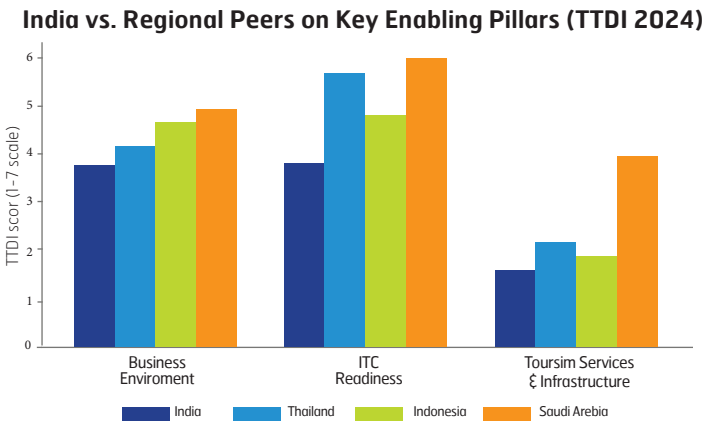
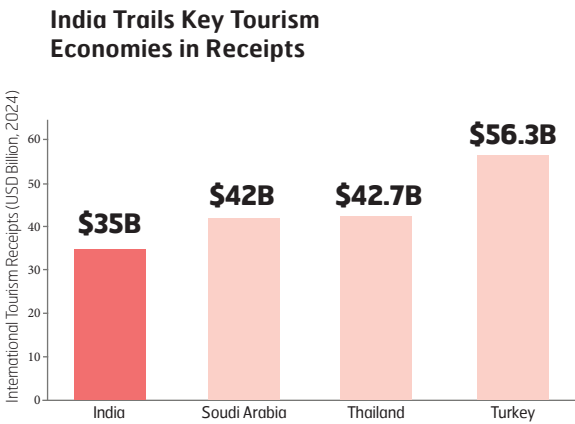
A joint report by NITI Aayog and the Ministry of Tourism argues that India's biggest tourism challenge is no longer its attractions, but creating the right policy, infrastructure and business environment to convert world-class assets into global tourism leadership.

India possesses some of the world's richest tourism assets—from UNESCO World Heritage Sites and pristine biodiversity hotspots to spiritual destinations, wellness traditions and vibrant cultural experiences. Yet, despite these strengths, the country continues to underperform as a global tourism destination. According to a joint report by NITI Aayog and the Ministry of Tourism, *Unlocking Growth in Tourism and Hospitality Sector*, the next phase

of growth will depend less on creating new attractions and more on improving the conditions that allow tourism to flourish. The report notes that tourism has emerged as one of the world's fastest-growing economic sectors. In 2024, global travel and tourism contributed nearly 10% of world GDP, supported one in every ten jobs and generated USD 1.87 trillion in international visitor spending. By 2035, the sector is expected to contribute USD 16.5 trillion to the global economy, growing faster

than overall world GDP. For India, tourism is already a major economic engine. In FY24, it contributed ₹15.73 lakh crore, or 5.22% of GDP, while supporting 84.6 million jobs. Domestic tourism has powered much of this growth, with 2.9 billion domestic tourist visits in 2024, well above pre-pandemic levels. International tourism has also recovered, generating around USD 35 billion in foreign exchange earnings. Yet India's global performance remains modest relative to its potential. Foreign Tourist Arrivals (FTAs) stood at 9.95 million in 2024, accounting for less than 1.5% of global international tourist arrivals—well below regional peers such as Thailand, Malaysia and Vietnam. Even India's tourism receipts lag countries with significantly smaller tourism asset bases, including Turkey, Thailand and Saudi Arabia. According to the report, this is not because India lacks attractions. The country ranks among the world's best on natural and cultural resources, placing 6th globally in Natural Resources and 9th in Cultural Resources in the World Economic Forum's Travel & Tourism Development Index (TTDI). Instead, the gap lies in enabling conditions—business environment, tourism infrastructure, digital readiness, workforce skills and ease of doing business. The report identifies ease of doing business as one of the biggest

structural constraints. Tourism projects require multiple approvals across central, state and local governments, ranging from land use and environmental clearances to construction and operational licences. Delays increase project costs and discourage investment in a sector characterised by high capital expenditure and long payback periods. Improving the business environment could significantly accelerate investment. The report recommends harmonised regulations, single-window clearance mechanisms and more predictable approval processes to reduce compliance costs and improve investor confidence. Infrastructure remains another priority. While India scores strongly on tourism resources, it performs poorly on tourist services infrastructure. Expanding quality accommodation, improving signage, visitor amenities and last-mile connectivity at heritage sites, pilgrimage centres and coastal destinations would substantially enhance the visitor experience. Digital readiness also needs attention. The report advocates wider use of digital visas, integrated booking and payment systems, and better destination-level connectivity to make travel easier for both domestic and international visitors. Equally important is building a skilled workforce. Hospitality is one of the world's largest employment generators



across a broad spectrum of skills, yet India's ranking on human resources and labour market readiness remains relatively weak. Expanding hospitality education, vocational training and service certification can improve

service quality while creating inclusive employment opportunities across urban and rural India.

The report also draws attention to the rapid rise in outbound tourism. Spending by Indian travellers abroad now exceeds pre-pandemic levels by around 15%, indicating that a growing share of travel demand is being met outside the country. Developing high-quality domestic destinations—particularly around heritage towns, coastal regions, wellness circuits and pilgrimage centres—could help retain a larger share of this expenditure within the Indian economy.

Sustainability, the report argues, should become a competitive advantage rather than merely a compliance requirement. As global travellers increasingly seek responsible tourism experiences, India can differentiate itself through environmentally sustainable hospitality, community-led tourism and low-impact destination development that protects natural and cultural assets while creating local livelihoods.

The report concludes that India has already solved the hardest part of the tourism equation—it possesses world-class attractions and a large domestic market. The challenge now is execution. By improving ease of doing business, investing in infrastructure and digital connectivity, strengthening hospitality skills and promoting sustainable tourism, India can bridge the gap between its extraordinary tourism assets and its economic performance, positioning tourism as a powerful engine of inclusive growth over the coming decade. **HAI**

India's TTDI Performance Compared to Regional Peers (2024)

Indicator	 India	 Thailand	 Indonesia	 Saudi Arabia
Enabling Environment				
Business Environment	3.79	4.15	4.67	4.95
Safety & Security	5.06	4.87	5.77	6.36
Health & Hygiene	3.47	4.31	3.78	4.79
Human Resources & Labour Market	2.85	4.06	4.13	4.59
ICT Readiness	3.84	5.68	4.81	6
T&T Policy and Enabling Conditions				
Prioritisation of T&T	4.11	4.14	6.03	4.43
Openness to T&T	4.13	4.34	3.83	3.1
Price Competitiveness	5.66	4.96	5.44	4.52
Infrastructure and Services				
Air Transport Infrastructure	4.59	4.89	4.34	4.96
Ground & Port Infrastructure	4.43	3.76	3.97	3.84
Tourist Services & Infrastructure	1.6	2.18	1.9	3.96
T&T Resources				
Natural Resources	5.8	4.55	5.43	2.99
Cultural Resources	5.62	2.86	3.98	2.58
Non-Leisure Resources	5.05	4.17	3.06	3.33
T&T Sustainability				
Environmental Sustainability	3.64	4.13	4.34	3.87
T&T Socioeconomic Impact	4.01	3.3	5.41	2.96
T&T Demand Sustainability	4.55	3.67	4.84	4.69

Source: World Economic Forum, Travel & Tourism Development Index 2024 (scale: 1-7, higher is better).

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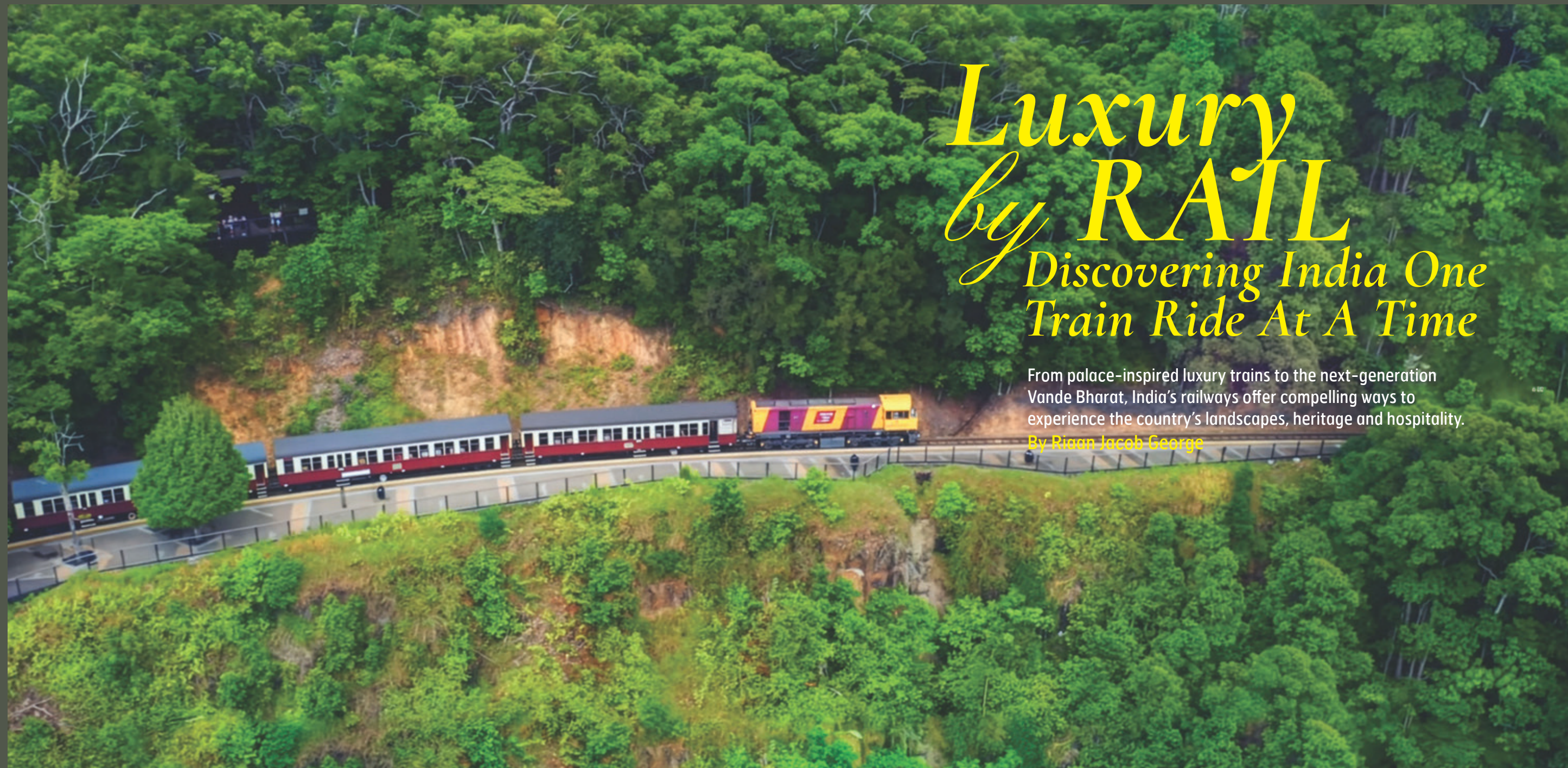
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Luxury by RAIL

Discovering India One Train Ride At A Time

From palace-inspired luxury trains to the next-generation Vande Bharat, India's railways offer compelling ways to experience the country's landscapes, heritage and hospitality.

By Riaan Jacob George





(IRCTC), the train features elegantly designed cabins, attentive butler service, lavish lounges, and a Presidential Suite that rivals the finest hotel accommodations.

Dining is central to the experience. The two beautifully appointed restaurants, Mayur Mahal and Rang Mahal, serve an extensive menu spanning Indian, Continental, and French cuisines. Guests can enjoy regional specialties including authentic Mewar delicacies and elaborate Rajasthani thalis alongside internationally inspired dishes, allowing every meal to become part of the cultural journey.

The train offers multiple itineraries suited to different schedules. The compact Treasures of India itinerary covers three nights and highlights destinations such as Delhi, Agra, and Jaipur. For travellers seeking a more expansive exploration, The Indian Splendour extends to six nights, weaving together forts, palaces, wildlife reserves, and heritage cities into one seamless experience.



Each year, from September through April, India's luxury train services combine the elegance of a bygone era with contemporary five-star hospitality

There are only a few countries where slow travel feels as rewarding as it does in India. While the nation has embraced faster rail technology in recent years, some of its most memorable journeys are still those that encourage passengers to linger, watch landscapes unfold, savour regional cuisine, and experience history at an unhurried pace. Luxury trains have become the pinnacle of this philosophy, embracing a slower pace and inviting travellers to savour every moment rather than simply reaching the next destination.

Each year, from September through April, India's luxury train services combine the elegance of a bygone era with contemporary five-star hospitality. Spacious suites, fine dining, personalised service, curated excursions, and cultural performances come together to create what is effectively a moving luxury hotel. Depending on the itinerary and accommodation category, fares generally range from around USD 4,000 to above USD 25,000 per person, placing these experiences among the world's most exclusive rail journeys.

THE MAHARAJAS' EXPRESS: ROYALTY ON RAILS

Often regarded as India's flagship luxury train, the Maharajas' Express captures the grandeur associated with the country's royal past while delivering contemporary comfort. Operated by the Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation





PALACE ON WHEELS: RAJASTHAN'S ROYAL LEGACY

There are few luxury trains as iconic as the Palace on Wheels. Developed through a collaboration between the Rajasthan Tourism Development Corporation and Indian Railways, it was among the first services to successfully revive the romance of royal rail travel in India.

Its interiors draw inspiration from the former princely states of Rajasthan, with each saloon reflecting distinctive regional aesthetics through handcrafted décor, rich textiles, and traditional artwork. The result is an atmosphere that feels more like travelling through a collection of heritage residences than aboard a train.

The signature seven-night, eight-day itinerary journeys through Jaipur, Jaisalmer, Jodhpur, Udaipur, Chittorgarh, Bharatpur, Sawai Madhopur, and Agra, combining architectural marvels with wildlife encounters and cultural experiences.

Cuisine reflects the diversity of North India. Guests can indulge in aromatic Rajasthani curries, Mughlai kebabs, Chinese favourites, and Continental classics. A memorable feature of



the itinerary is the inclusion of off-board banquets hosted within historic palaces and heritage venues. These experiences extend the sense of royal hospitality beyond the train itself.

DECCAN ODYSSEY: A JOURNEY THROUGH WESTERN INDIA

While Rajasthan often dominates conversations about luxury rail travel, the Deccan Odyssey offers an equally compelling perspective by showcasing India's western coastline and the Deccan plateau.

Its seven-night itineraries, including Maharashtra Splendor and Indian Odyssey, explore destinations ranging from Mumbai and Nashik to Goa, Kolhapur, Hampi, and beyond. The routes blend UNESCO World Heritage Sites, vineyards, beaches, temples, and vibrant



cities, creating an itinerary that feels refreshingly varied.

On board, the train balances elegance and relaxation. Two refined dining cars serve regional and international cuisine, while a lounge bar offers an inviting setting for evening conversations after a day of sightseeing. A dedicated spa carriage adds another layer of indulgence, allowing passengers to unwind between excursions.

The culinary programme celebrates Western India's remarkable diversity. Menus feature fresh Konkani seafood, fragrant Goan curries, and inventive interpretations of Maharashtrian street food favourites. The dishes introduce guests to flavours that are deeply rooted in local traditions while maintaining the presentation expected of luxury hospitality.

GOLDEN CHARIOT: SOUTH INDIA'S CULTURAL SHOWCASE

For travellers drawn to the temples, coastlines, and lush landscapes of southern India, the Golden Chariot offers a distinctive alternative to northern itineraries. Its five-night journeys, including Pride of Karnataka and Jewels of South, explore an impressive cross-section of the region, from royal palaces and wildlife sanctuaries to ancient temple complexes and coastal heritage destinations. Dining takes place in the elegantly designed Nalapaka and Ruchi restaurants, where regional culinary traditions take centre stage. Breakfasts may feature freshly prepared dosas and idlis, while lunch and dinner showcase coastal curries, Hyderabad biryani, and other celebrated South Indian specialties. The emphasis on authentic regional cuisine allows passengers to experience the area's cultural diversity without leaving the train.



Dining beyond expectations

Food has become one of the defining elements of India's luxury rail journeys. Rather than offering standard hotel buffets, each train embraces the regional identity of its route, creating menus that reflect local ingredients, culinary traditions, and historic influences.

Equally important is the flexibility offered to international and domestic travellers alike. Most luxury trains accommodate vegetarian, vegan, Jain, and low-spice dietary requirements when communicated in advance, ensuring that guests with specific preferences or dietary restrictions can enjoy the experience without compromise.

INDIA'S RAIL STORY ALSO INCLUDES SPEED

While India's luxury trains continue to champion slow, experience-led journeys, the country's rail network has also undergone a remarkable transformation in recent years. At the forefront of this shift is the Vande Bharat Express. Designed and manufactured domestically, these semi-high-speed trainsets represent one of the country's most significant railway modernisation initiatives.



Vande Bharat represents efficiency, innovation, and connectivity, demonstrating how modern engineering can reshape everyday mobility

Operating at speeds of up to 160 kilometres per hour on suitable routes, they feature automatic sliding doors, ergonomic seating, onboard Wi-Fi, modern passenger information systems, and regenerative braking technology that improves energy efficiency.

By early 2026, the Vande Bharat network had expanded to 164 services across the country, connecting major cities with significantly reduced travel times while offering a premium inter-city experience.

The service now operates in three distinct formats. The original Chair Car configuration continues to form the backbone of the network, serving daytime routes between major urban centres. In January 2026, India introduced the long-awaited Vande Bharat Sleeper, extending the concept to overnight travel with enhanced comfort for longer journeys.

Complementing both is the Namo Bharat, also known as Vande Metro, designed for shorter, high-frequency commuter services

linking neighbouring cities and rapidly growing urban corridors.

Although these trains pursue a very different objective from India's luxury rail offerings, they reflect the same ambition, reimagining rail travel for a new generation of passengers.

Two ways to experience India

India's railway story today is defined by two contrasting yet complementary philosophies. Luxury trains preserve the romance of travel, where handcrafted interiors, regional cuisine, heritage hotels, and leisurely itineraries invite travellers to experience the country at an elegant pace. Vande Bharat, meanwhile, represents efficiency, innovation, and connectivity, demonstrating how modern engineering can reshape everyday mobility.

Together, they illustrate the remarkable breadth of India's railway network. Whether one chooses to spend a week crossing princely kingdoms aboard a palace on wheels or a few hours travelling swiftly between cities on a next-generation train, the experience is united by one enduring truth. In India, the railway is far more than transportation. It remains one of the country's most compelling ways to discover its landscapes, cultures, and stories. **HAI**



RESPONSIBLE TOURISM: WHOSE RESPONSIBILITY?

Responsibility has a much wider connotation. It is the totality of all different activities that make up what a tourist looks for—a unique experience. And in the broader context it is a conscious action by all stakeholders to contribute to the goal of sustainability.

By M.P. Bezbaruah

Secretary General, Hotel Association of India

Sustainability was the guiding star for the Tourism Policy of 2002, the last tourism policy for India. And as it always happens, sustainability subsumed attention to the nuances of its vital part, responsible tourism.

Responsible tourism did not find a place in the policy. The policy did suggest that a Code of Ethics should be voluntarily adopted by the travel and tourism industry. In essence, the responsibility was restricted to one of the stakeholders.

But responsibility has a much wider connotation. It is the totality of all different activities that make up what a tourist looks for—a unique experience. And in the broader context, it is a conscious action by all stakeholders to contribute to the goal of sustainability. In a sense, one can liken this responsibility to what Prime Minister Narendra Modi said about India's LiFE initiative, that it links the future of the planet to the action of the smallest but the strongest player—the human being.

What he said In COP 26 Summit in Glasgow to the world community can be said of responsible tourism as well. "These are subjects," he said, "where each of us has to make a conscious choice every day. These choices exercised by billions

of people daily around the world will take the flight billions of steps forward every day. And I consider it as a movement on all grounds, like on economic grounds, on scientific grounds, based on the experiences of the past century, it meets every criterion. This is the path of self-realisation."

In fact, as early as 1999 the UN-WTO had adopted a Code of Ethics to promote "responsible, sustainable" tourism and India had adopted the Code. Responsible and sustainable tourism was considered in the same bracket, and the subsequent UN Resolution in 2001 endorsed the same when it said recognising the important dimension and role of tourism as a positive instrument towards alleviation of poverty and the improvement of the quality of life for all people...emphasises the need for promotion of responsible and sustainable tourism."

It is heartening to find that the draft National Tourism Policy carries this emphasis and puts responsible tourism as its mission. "The vision of the policy is to transform our tourist destinations to provide world-class visitor experience, making India one of the topmost destinations for sustainable and responsible tourism," it says.

It is one of the key guiding principles

of tourism policy, and it tries to explain the interconnection between sustainable and responsible tourism. The guiding principle of the policy is to promote sustainable, responsible and inclusive tourism, it says, which will cut across all the initiatives under the policy. The objective is to promote sustainable tourism by minimising the negative impact of tourism on social, environmental and economic aspects, and maximising the positive impact where responsible tourism helps to bring all stakeholders together for taking responsibility for achieving sustainable tourism.

Responsibility becomes diluted if there is a lack of clarity about the role of the stakeholders. The Code of Ethics identified the key stakeholders--national, regional and local administrations, enterprises, business associates, workers in the sector, host communities, the media, and the tourists, all organisations and bodies in the tourism industry. They have, it said, different but interdependent responsibilities.

Around 2005, the government launched a very popular campaign with Aamir Khan on "Atithi Devo Bhava" highlighting the role of various service providers like the taxi driver, the tour operator, and the guide in creating a good image about India. Such awareness campaigns



All, particularly the service providers, can be flag bearers of responsible tourism

should be a continuous process. But such a campaign will fall short of the total objective if it does not include the tourists as well.

I remember a pleasant experience on a visit to Sikkim as Secretary of the Ministry of Tourism. The Tour Operators Association invited me to their monthly meeting and requested me to award a prize to a taxi driver for setting an example of responsible behaviour. He was taking a tourist family on tour, and the children, after eating chocolates and popcorn, were trying to throw the empty packets and bottles through the car window. He asked them to give the packets to him and told them that it was the responsibility of everyone to keep Sikkim clean. The tourists appreciated his dedication and conveyed it to the association.

This little story has some implications. First, all, particularly the service providers, can be flag bearers of responsible tourism. Second, tourists also have a responsibility, as does the host community.

It is encouraging to see that the draft National Policy of 2022 recognises this need for sensitising tourists. It says, "apart from the 'Atithi Devo Bhava' campaign for the residents, the Ministry of Tourism will also strengthen the 'Responsible Traveller' campaign to make the visitors aware about their responsibility to keep the destination clean and follow other responsible travel practices." In fact, such responsibility extends to tourists' sensitivity to the ethos of the culture and traditions of the place. It is very important because many travellers tend to behave irrationally – a tendency often described as "away from home syndrome."

The hospitality industry has a big role in spreading and spearheading responsible tourism in India. For the tourist, the place of stay is the unavoidable first impression. As is often said "you do not get a second chance to make a first impression", hotels and resorts can effectively guide and educate the tourists about local customs, art and craft, and cuisine and can integrate them into an authentic and unique guest experience. In fact, in an ideal situation of strong interface with the local communities, the hospitality industry can emerge as the champion of local heritage and cultural preservation.

Indian hospitality industry is aware of this responsibility, and most of them are at the forefront. But some of the

Hospitality industry's most valuable and visible contribution to the economy will be its capability to provide financial benefits to the local communities

key areas where hospitality has to give attention and plan its strategy can be briefly mentioned.

The most important is its role in adopting and practising the principles of the Green Economy. Hotels and resorts can take the leadership in environmentally sensitive green operations which can include waste reduction and phasing out single-use plastics, smart energy management leading to energy and resource conservation and adopting green certification.

As India's 2047 vision would imply huge investments to boost the supply side of accommodation, adoption of green building and architecture norms and eco-friendly designs, and sustainable materials may go a long way not only to promote sustainability but also favourably impact the local economy and enterprise.

The hospitality industry's most valuable and visible contribution to the economy will be in its capability to provide financial benefits to the local communities through the local supply lines, patronage of local micro-businesses, local hiring and initiatives in local skill development.

Robert Swan, who walked to both the poles, famously summed up responsibility: "The greatest threat to our planet is the belief that someone else will save it." **HAI**

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