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Foreword



JYOTHI VARMA
CONSULTING EDITOR

India Tourism **Aspiration vs Action**

India's travel & hospitality sector is shifting toward experience-driven, sustainable, and wellness-focused tourism, supported by government infrastructure initiatives. Hybrid stays, local immersion, and luxury wellness escapes are redefining demand, while hotels expand aggressively across segments. Though growth is strong, challenges remain in execution, workforce skilling, and balancing supply–demand. Turning aspirational intent into actionable policy in tourism means moving from broad visions or ideals about what tourism should achieve, to concrete rules, programmes, and measurable steps that governments, organisations, or communities can implement.

enabling better business outcomes, stronger relationships, and smarter decision-making. Corporate Travel Influencers are playing stronger roles in moving from just execution to strategic roles with the organisation thus adding in saving and building stronger ROE for the Travel spend.

Travel insurance has become essential today. With rising medical costs, unpredictable weather events, tighter airline policies, and global uncertainties, travel protection offers peace of mind and financial security for every trip. Companies like Asego are working along with TMC to ensure the end traveller is protected and stress-free.

The travel industry in 2026 is shifting from chasing sheer numbers (“volume”)

“
**Value over volume is the new
mantra because travellers want
meaningful, sustainable, and
personalised journeys.**

”

Another progressive initiative is the introduction of a mandatory digital E-Arrival Card (effective October 1, 2025) that replaces the old paper disembarkation form. This system streamlines immigration, reduces wait times, and makes travel into India smoother for foreign nationals and Overseas Citizen of India (OCI) cardholders.

Corporate travel has traditionally been seen as a cost centre — something to minimise and control. Digital transformation flips that perspective, positioning travel as a value creator by

to prioritising meaningful, high-value experiences (“value”). Travellers are demanding personalisation, sustainability, and quality over mass tourism, and businesses are adapting by focusing on curated journeys, deeper engagement, and long-term loyalty rather than short-term gains. “Value over volume” is the new mantra because travellers want meaningful, sustainable, and personalised journeys. Businesses that embrace this shift will thrive in 2026's competitive travel landscape.

Happy Reading!

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Why city-led convention bureaus could be India's missing MICE link?

India has the infra and ambition to lead MICE tourism globally, but lacks structural readiness. These gaps can be addressed by building strong, city-level convention bureaus, says Dr Suman Billa.

By MT Bureau

Speaking at the PATA India Tourism PowerHouse 2026, **Dr Suman Billa**, Director General and Additional Secretary, Ministry of Tourism (MoT), Government of India, said the tourism conversation must move beyond budget constraints and headline infrastructure spends. In his view, India has already crossed that stage. World-class convention centres, hotels, and connectivity are now in place, demonstrated by the country's ability to host large global events at scale. The real gap, he stressed, lies elsewhere.

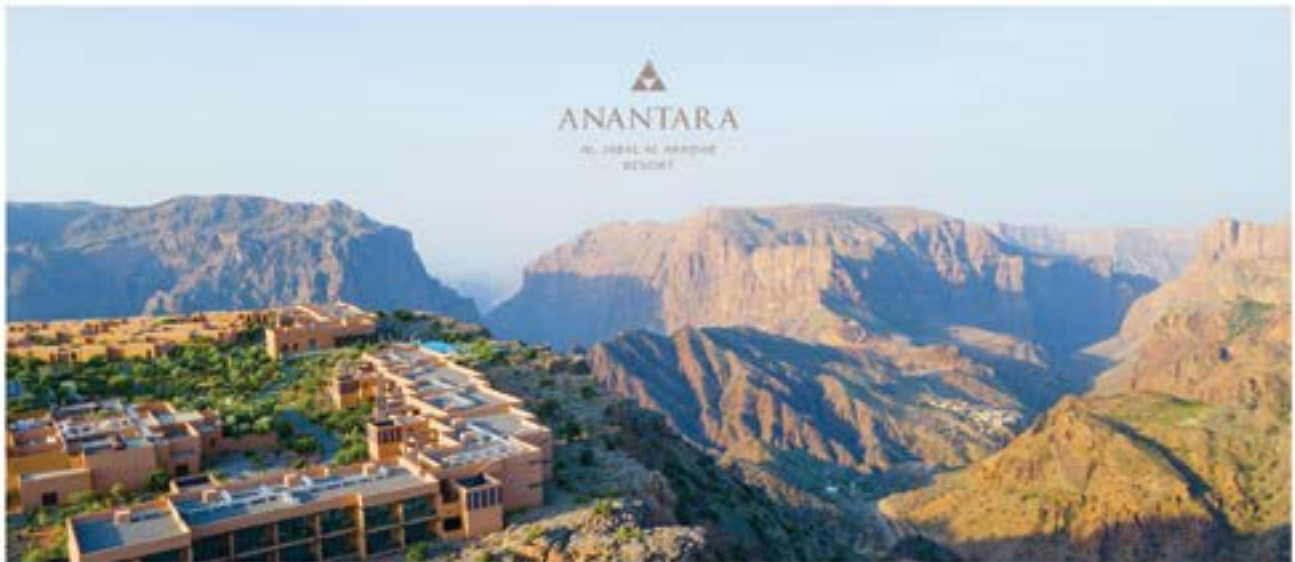
His assessment of infrastructure was unambiguous. "Ten years ago, we did not have the infrastructure. Today, we do," he said, pointing to India's proven capacity to deliver major international events. "The challenge is not facilities. The challenge is that we are not structurally ready for MICE."

Globally, Dr Billa explained, cities compete through convention promotion bureaux that mobilise the entire destination. "All across the world, how does MICE work? You have a city convention promotion bureau," he said. "They get the city to start rolling." In India, however, this approach remains limited. "Except for Hyderabad, and now Mumbai, there is no other city which has a city convention promotion bureau."

The absence of such bodies, he said, places an unfair burden on professional conference organisers. "Today it has become the Professional Conference Organiser's problem," Dr Billa remarked. "I have to run around to the hotel, the florist, the government, and everybody treats it as if it is my business and not their business." This fragmented system, he warned, weakens India's competitiveness in global bidding.

Dr Billa also highlighted how mature destinations use incentives





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DR SUMAN BILLA
 DG AND ADDITIONAL SECRETARY
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“
Except for Hyderabad, and now Mumbai, there is no other city which has a city convention promotion bureau.
 ”



more strategically. “Across the world, there are ways in which organisers are incentivised,” he said. “You bring down the cost for the organiser, but you make up the cost through the delegates.” India, he admitted, is yet to adopt this collective mindset.

To address this gap, the MoT plans to introduce a new support framework from the next financial year. “We are going to set up a corpus,” Dr Billa said. “We

will support states to bid for MICE, but the prerequisite is that you need to have a city convention promotion bureau.” Under this model, state contributions will be matched by central funding.

Beyond competitiveness, Dr Billa placed MICE within a larger tourism philosophy. “It is not about creating work. It is about creating worth,” he said, adding that when communities feel enriched, visitor experiences become

deeper and more meaningful. MICE is one of the few segments that enables dispersion, year-round visitation, and repeat travel.

Giving an example, he said, “Most of the pathways are already there. What we need to do now is the push. Let us capitalise on what we have done.” For India’s cities, that push begins with speaking in one voice through strong, accountable convention bureaus. **MT**



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India needs a convention bureau playbook

International conventions are won long before the first delegate arrives. Hyderabad stands out with a proven convention bureau model where PCOs and partners align to win international congresses and deliver sustained economic impact.

By **MT Bureau**

Winning international conventions is not about having the biggest ballroom or the newest hotel. It is about trust, preparation, and a city's ability to deliver collectively. Hyderabad understood this early, and built a system that many Indian cities are only just beginning to consider.

At the heart of this approach is **Prithvi Pal Singh Anand**, Director of Sales & Marketing, Novotel Hyderabad Convention Centre and Hyderabad International Convention Centre, managed by Accor. "When Accor entered India in 2006, this integrated hotel and convention complex became its flagship. But infrastructure alone was never the end goal," says Anand.

Explaining the success story, he shared, "When we started participating in international trade shows, it became very clear that selling one hotel or one venue was not enough. International associations want confidence in the destination, not just the building."



PRITHVI PAL SINGH ANAND
DIRECTOR OF SALES & MARKETING
NHCC & HICC

That realisation led to the formation of the Hyderabad Convention Visitors Bureau in 2008, just two years after HICC opened. The bureau was born out of partnership, bringing together hotels, professional conference organisers, and destination stakeholders, to position Hyderabad competitively on the global MICE map.

The bureau's role is deliberately facilitative rather than commercial.

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It supports international associations across logistics, permissions, planning, and coordination, ensuring that conferences run smoothly from arrival to departure. Over the last 18 years, this approach has helped attract and support more than a dozen international conventions across the city. “These events do far more than fill hotel rooms,” Anand points out. “When you bring in 3,000 or more delegates, you activate transportation, restaurants, local shopping, sightseeing, and multiple service industries. The economic impact spreads across the city and the state.”

Governance has been a key strength. The Hyderabad Bureau comprises of a Special Chief Secretary to the state government, 4 key MICE hotels and convention centres, city airport leadership, and the key PCOs in the city, HICC as founding member, along with the state government. This ensures decisions are destination focused and not driven by any individual commercial interests.

Bidding for the international conventions is a structured, researched exercise. The process begins with identifying potential congresses globally, followed by a strategic focus on APAC chapters, where opportunities are often more accessible than global rotations. Trade shows and B2B platforms may help initiate conversations, but data drives decisions.

“
The Hyderabad Bureau is structured in a manner that ensures decisions are destination focused and not driven by any individual commercial interests.
 ”

HICC and the bureau have been long standing members of the International Congress and Convention Association, giving them access to a comprehensive database of associations, bidding cycles, and destination preferences. “ICCA’s business intelligence tools help you understand which associations are open to new destinations and how to approach them,” Anand explains. “The bid itself is always collective, involving hotels, PCOs, and the convention bureau.”

This city level effort is closely aligned with national initiatives through ICPB. State bureaus like Hyderabad work alongside ICPB to strengthen India’s overall presence, ensuring that international bids are coordinated rather than fragmented.

For Anand, visibility remains one of India’s biggest opportunities. Active participation in global trade shows is essential. Every successful bid strengthens India’s reputation.

He believes that financial support mechanisms can accelerate growth. Incentives for airfare, participation fees, and accommodation can encourage hotels, PCOs, and allied industries to invest in international networking. “These expenses are enablers that help bring long-term economic returns into the country,” he said.

Hyderabad’s experience proves one thing clearly. When cities move beyond individual assets and build collaborative convention bureaus, they start attracting business. For India’s MICE ambitions, this shift makes all the difference. **MT**



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Payments now decide travel efficiency

Corporate travel may look seamless on the surface, but behind every trip lies a complex payments engine now redefining control, compliance, and the business traveller's experience.

By **Janice Alyosius**

During the Global Business Travel Association (GBTA) India Summit, a panel on Streamlining Corporate Travel and Expense Management made one thing clear: payments are no longer a back-office necessity but a strategic lever shaping control, compliance, and traveller experience. As Indian corporates push for transparency and automation, payment networks are emerging as the quiet enablers of smarter travel ecosystems.

Opening the discussion at the Summit, **Gaurav Shekhar Nagwekar**, Head – Travel Logistics & Corporate Service Administration, Reliance Industries, framed the conversation around how corporate travel payments are fundamentally changing. “We are discussing how travel payments are going to change the way it was happening earlier and how corporates are looking at it today,” he said, setting the stage for a debate that spanned digitalisation, data visibility, security, and ground transportation challenges.

For corporates, payments are increasingly embedded into travel strategy rather than treated as a standalone process. **Dr Sanjay Pai**, Vice President & Head – Corporate Travel, Aviation & Facility Management, Larsen & Toubro, noted that digitalisation and frequent system upgrades have become unavoidable. “Payment gateways have helped travel managers and organisations in multiple ways — funding turnaround expenses, improving transparency on refunds, and enabling credit cycles of 42 to 53 days,” he said, calling the shift a “win-win” for corporates, TMCs, and travellers alike.





For corporates, payments are increasingly embedded into travel strategy rather than treated as a standalone process

Dr Pai also addressed long-standing myths around digital payments. Concerns about delays and high query volumes have largely been resolved with mature platforms, he said. “What earlier took 20–30 per cent effort manually is now significantly streamlined,” he added, urging organisations to embrace digital platforms to unlock efficiency and savings.

COMPLIANCE

For global companies, payment data has become central to compliance and programme optimisation. **Mritunjaya Mohan**, Senior Manager – Corporate Travel, Palo Alto Networks, said his organisation mandates corporate or virtual cards globally. “The data you get from card platforms helps in compliance, RFPs, and negotiations. It gives insights into leakages, especially in hotel programmes, and shows where corrective action is needed,” he explained.

Integration between card data and ERP systems is reducing reconciliation effort and manpower. “The data now flows directly into expense systems, allowing tighter control on where

money is spent, and even blocking non-compliant merchants,” Mohan added, noting that automation and AI are accelerating this shift.

From the TMC perspective, adoption of card programmes is still uneven. **Prasad Shriyan**, Vice President & Head – Business Transformation, Thomas Cook (India), acknowledged that while

large clients are moving to card-based payments, a significant segment still isn’t. “This means we carry the working capital burden and spend disproportionate time on reconciliations instead of focusing on traveller experience,” he said. Robust payment programmes free up operational bandwidth and allow TMCs to deliver greater value.

SECURITY, SCALE & TRUST

Addressing concerns around security and data privacy, **Dhaval Chheda**, Product Lead – Visa Commercial Solutions, South Asia, emphasised that trust underpins digital payments. “Every transaction on our network uses tokenisation and end-to-end encryption. The card number never travels,” he said, explaining how Visa’s systems monitor transactions round-the-clock using AI.

Chheda revealed the scale at which these systems operate. “Visa processes around 300 billion transactions annually and prevents close to \$40 billion worth of attempted fraud,” he said, adding that the company is aligned with India’s DPPP Act and RBI cybersecurity guidelines. Visa is also preparing to introduce biometric-based authentication through Visa Payment Passkeys to further enhance security and user experience.

FRAGMENTATION

Despite progress, fragmentation remains a key challenge. **Aneesh Batra**, Head – Customer Success, India & SEA, SAP Concur, pointed to the lack of a single source of truth. “Data is fragmented





There is need of a consolidator for payments and data in corporate travel. While UPI has improved acceptance, credit card use remains uneven

across payment partners and systems. Getting it into one place, normalising it and making it usable is the biggest hurdle,” he said, noting that OCR, AI, and standardised feeds are helping ease reconciliation.

Ground transportation emerged as a particularly complex area, especially

in India’s tier II and III cities. Dr Pai highlighted the absence of a “common switch” across stakeholders. “Just like BSP once became a single window for airlines, we need a similar consolidator for payments and data,” he said, warning that integration challenges discourage smaller organisations from adopting corporate travel accounts.

Mohan added that while UPI has improved acceptance, credit card penetration remains uneven in remote locations. “A blended approach — virtual cards, prepaid cards, CTAs and UPI — is the reality today,” he said.

FUTURE OF BIZ TRAVEL

As the discussion closed, panellists agreed that the future lies in integration, real-time data, and traveller-centric design. Dr Pai summed it up succinctly, saying, “Digitalisation should control the process, not burden the traveller. AI should help, not arm-twist. The goal is compliance with user experience.”

With India’s fintech and travel tech ecosystems evolving rapidly, corporate travel payments are no longer just about settling bills. They are becoming the backbone of smarter policy, better data, and resilient travel programmes — quietly reshaping how business travel works. **MT**





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Hacks to sidestep corporate transaction gaps

The recent VISA report highlights Indian organisations' payment methods and tech adoption practices, which need immediate attention in 2026 to avoid hindrance in the growth of business travel market.

By **MT Bureau**

As the business travel world gets its nose pressed against the window of 2026, it is buzzing with curiosity about how the market tides of 2025 will sculpt the future of India's corporate travel scene. To add insight to this intriguing air, the Global Business Travel Association (GBTA)'s latest report titled '2025 India Business Travel and Payments Study', in partnership with Visa — a global leader in digital payments — reveals trends

related to digital payment methods and technology adoption that can make or break the business in 2026.

According to the report, India's business travel market is one of the fastest growing globally, with annual spend reaching US\$ 37.2 billion in 2024 and projected to increase 15.5 per cent for 2025 — more than double the expected global growth rate of 6.6 per cent. However, it also reveals the payment gaps that are hindering the travel expense management for the corporates increasing the compliance challenges.



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TRAVEL TREND

Reflecting the market’s continued expansion, 70 per cent of Indian travel buyers reported an increase in both domestic (69 per cent) and international (68 per cent) business travel within their programmes. However, the study also found that market maturity still has room to grow.

About 77 per cent respondents rated the maturity of their travel programme seven out of 10 or higher. Additionally, 38 per cent rate maturity at nine or 10, indicating additional opportunities for programme enhancements.

PAYMENT ADOPTIONS

Corporate payment adoption remains inconsistent across organisations. The study highlights a notable gap between travel growth and payment processes:

- 30 per cent of organisations don’t use any corporate payment methods for travel within India
- 51 per cent use corporate cards
- 30 per cent use Central Travel Accounts (CTAs)
- 7 per cent use virtual card numbers
- 7 per cent use prepaid cards

The Indian travel buyers surveyed cite lack of issuance and limited merchant acceptance as the most common reasons for non-compliance with corporate payment policies.

When selecting payment products or vendors within India, programme management considerations took precedence. Top priorities include merchant acceptance, protection from fraud, misuse, global spend visibility, and the expense reimbursement process.



30 per cent of companies do not use any corporate payment methods for travel within India

ADOPTING TECHNOLOGY

With the advancement in technological innovations, a strong inclination has been seen towards digitalisation. Despite the country’s past reliance on offline, assisted booking practices, the study finds robust adoption of core travel technology within the market:

- 76 per cent use the self-service Online Booking Engine (OBE)
- 91 per cent use an expense management system
- 63 per cent use risk-management or traveller-tracking technology

LOCAL AUTONOMY

More and more travel buyers in India feel they have local autonomy. Among multinational companies (MNCs) headquartered outside the country, the report indicates the importance of local expertise in navigating India-specific regulatory and operational considerations:

- 55 per cent say India-based teams have primary responsibility for managing in-country travel
- 41 per cent feel that staff within India have to share this responsibility with staff outside of the country

PAYMENT DECISIONS


The study further highlights Indian travel teams have broader responsibilities related to both travel and payment decisions:

- 72 per cent say the staff managing travel also manages payment product decisions
- 42 per cent say the travel team has primary responsibility for payment decisions

Overall, it is evidential that to accelerate their growth, corporates buyers need to pay heed to the effective payment processes in order to manage their spending in 2026 for better cost control, compliance, and real time spend visibility. **MT**



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India's MICE ambition vs reality

India talks big on MICE and the ambition is real. But behind the growth headlines lies an uncomfortable truth: the country is still struggling to convert scale into global relevance.



By **Janice Alyosius**

For years, India has spoken confidently about becoming a global meetings, incentives, conferences, and exhibitions (MICE) powerhouse. The economy has surged into the world's top five, aviation orders are breaking global records, and new convention centres are finally entering the conversation. Yet, when international association calendars are drawn up and mega conventions decide where to go, India continues to sit on the sidelines. That disconnect between macro strength and micro readiness

defines India's MICE paradox — a theme that ran through a conversation with **Rahul Agarwal**, Senior Director – India Operations, Boston Consulting Group, exclusively for **MICEtalk**.

Despite scale, growth, and visibility, India remains a marginal player in a trillion-dollar global industry — and unless structural gaps are addressed urgently, growth alone won't change that.

SMALL MARKET SLICE

“India probably has captured 1% of the MICE market, ranking some 28th or 29th in the overall global positioning, despite being an economy which is in the top

“

If India increases average spend by just 20 per cent to around \$360 per day, it could unlock an additional \$8–10 billion annually.

”

RAHUL AGARWAL
SENIOR DIRECTOR – INDIA OPERATIONS
BOSTON CONSULTING GROUP



five across the globe,” Agarwal said.

India today hosts nearly 35,000 corporate events annually, yet fewer than 500 qualify as global association meetings. India’s share of global MICE events remains close to just one per cent.

Global MICE spend is projected to reach \$1.5 trillion by 2030. India currently contributes around \$49.4 billion. Agarwal believes the ambition must be far sharper. “By 2030, we want to achieve a target of about \$50 billion, but I think we have not been able to sell ourselves very positively in the MICE market. And I think this is due to a few inherent constraints,” he said.

INFRASTRUCTURE

The first constraint Agarwal highlights is infrastructure — not merely the presence of convention centres, but their ability to function within a complete ecosystem.

“First is our infrastructure. We do not have infrastructure which can hold major international conventions, which can accommodate a population of anything from 2,000 upward, going up to 20,000, 25,000. We need to create more hubs like Yashobhoomi, it doesn’t really have still the associated infrastructure going with it,” he said.

Convention centres cannot operate in isolation. They require seamless aviation access, last-mile transport, surrounding hotels, and city-level coordination.

“Today probably the number of hotel rooms, which the quality hotel rooms, when I talk about grade A, are close to anything from, 170,000 to 200,000, which is less than the number of quality rooms available in the city of Las Vegas,”

“

Perhaps the most critical weakness is yield. India attracts delegates, but fails to monetise them. The underperformance lies in ancillary spend.

”

he noted. “So, if you really want to become a world destination and we have to attract all those conferences, we should have close to about 1.5 million room keys.”

COSTS - TAXES - BARRIERS

Beyond physical infrastructure, procedural complexity continues to undermine India’s competitiveness. “The second challenge

would be on the visa part. We do not have a smooth mechanism around group or conference visa issuance. Third would be our complexity around GST, because while locally I’m able to get input credit, I do not have any mechanism where international conventions or organisers can get input tax credit on that, a case in point being F1 races that used to happen





in India and are no longer happening,” he added.

EVOLVING CITY BUREAUS

Agarwal also pointed to the absence of empowered, professional city-level MICE councils that can act as single-window facilitators.

“We do not have city-specific councils. I think a combination of last mile connectivity, aviation, and the number of keys that we should have in terms of quality hotels, would support the convention.”

Agarwal is clear that city convention bureaus, if done right, could materially shift India’s global positioning. “Am I able to eliminate all the red tape which is associated? And probably have a single window clearance where the city-based council is able to provide me end-to-end all the approvals that may be required, and give me a one-stop solution?” he asked.

Drawing a contrast with Abu Dhabi, he added, “The agency over there will appoint one single point of contact, which will then take care of all the internal requirements from the perspective of travelling to Abu Dhabi.” In India, Agarwal sees clear readiness across cities, but only if empowered structures replace fragmented execution.

“**Despite being one of the top-five global economies, India has captured barely one per cent of the global MICE market.**”

HIGH VOLUME, LOW YIELD

Perhaps the most critical weakness is yield. India attracts delegates, but fails to monetise them. The underperformance lies in ancillary spend — retail, premium dining, entertainment, and curated experiences. Data shows that if India improves yield by just 20 per cent, lifting average spend to around \$360 per day, it could unlock an additional \$8–10 billion annually without increasing event volumes. “If I’m spending \$250 a day, I can actually take it up to between \$500 and \$1,000,” he said.

HOLISTIC EVENT SUCCESS

Success metrics must move beyond event counts. According to Agarwal, one needs

to ask questions, such as “How seamless is my approval and the turnaround time to get the approval for any conference? What infrastructure is available? How am I able to facilitate that infrastructure, or local transport? Am I able to create a green corridor — especially when I have a large ticket conference happening, and I don’t want to spend half my time on the road?”

An important question for visitors then becomes, “If I want to spend some time in India as a tourist destination — pre- or post-conference — what kind of package is available to me?”

INBOUND TOURISM

The same structural issues spill into inbound tourism, even as the global



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“
India lacks large-scale convention infrastructure supported by seamless hotels, aviation connectivity, and last-mile transport.
 ”



leisure economy is projected to triple to \$15 trillion by 2040. “India’s market is close to about \$180 to \$200 billion, which is actually nothing compared to the overall market,” Agarwal said, noting that sustaining a 12 per cent CAGR for 15 years is essential to gain share.

Leakages are evident everywhere. “Today we have close to about 800 aircraft in the country. We probably need close to three and a half thousand... we need to grow to about 350 airports across the country,” he said.

REFORM FUELS GROWTH

Despite the gaps, Agarwal remains optimistic about India’s trajectory. “All my interactions that I’ve had, they are very bullish about India. There is major money that is flowing into the country,” he said, pointing to institutional investments and more than 200 new hotel projects across metros and emerging cities.

India’s MICE future hinges on a simple but demanding question,

from the moment a delegate considers India to the moment they leave, “has everything been taken care of — and how seamless is it?”

Answering that question — with policy, infrastructure, and execution — will determine whether India remains a fast-growing outlier or finally becomes a serious global MICE destination. **MT**

(The views expressed in the article are those of the contributor in his personal capacity.)



Empowering India's travel community

For over two decades, Dev Karvat, Founder & CEO, Asego, has been a trusted name across India's travel fraternity. His journey goes beyond entrepreneurship — it is rooted in vision, resilience, and an enduring commitment to the travel community.

Born into a family deeply linked to the insurance business, **Dev Karvat** was inspired by his father, Late Ashokbhai Karvat, whose integrity and work ethic shaped his values. From an early age, he absorbed the principles of service and protection that would later define his career. At 16, Dev Karvat had set his sights on entrepreneurship, blending his passion for travel with protection solutions for Indian travellers. What began with 10 people and one office grew into a nationwide mission to make travel safer and simpler. "Protection should be part of the journey, not an afterthought," says Karvat.

TRAVEL ASSISTANCE

In the early 2000s, Dev Karvat launched TrawellTag, India's pioneering travel assistance brand. The company introduced innovations such as India's first metallic luggage tracking tag, emergency medical assistance abroad, concierge, and family protection services. From a small team, TrawellTag expanded to 450 employees across 47 offices,



DEV KARVAT
FOUNDER, ASEGO

becoming a trusted partner for agents, corporates, and travellers. In 2012, he partnered with a leading Australian-based travel insurance firm, bringing global expertise, advanced operational practices, and global standards to Indian travellers. This phase strengthened his understanding of large-scale operations, technology integration, and service excellence.

ASEGO: THE NEW CHAPTER

When the global partner exited the Indian market in 2020, Dev Karvat

regained ownership and reimagined the enterprise as Asego. Today, Asego has more than 510 assistance experts across 60 offices, serving millions of travellers and partnering with 22,000 travel agents. Beyond insurance, Asego focuses on creating a holistic protection ecosystem driven by innovation, empathy, and collaboration.

Asego introduced Travel Business Protect — India's first comprehensive liability cover for travel agencies — protecting against legal, professional, and operational risks. Alongside this, Asego also runs nationwide training programmes across tier II and III cities, empowering agents with skills to grow revenue and customer confidence.

DOLPHIN: TECH FOR TRADE

Asego's proprietary platform, Dolphin, enables policy issuance, endorsements, and claims in under two minutes. With features, such as OCR scanning, real-time dashboards, and built-in claims support, Dolphin helps agents operate faster, maximise business, and grow confidently and sustainably. **MT**

Travel
& CORPORATE SHOW

PANEL
DISCUSSION

FROM COST CENTER TO VALUE CREATOR:
THE PURPOSE OF DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION
IN CORPORATE TRAVEL

Travel
MICE & CORPORATE SHOW



Value creation replaces cost cutting

Corporate travel conversation are shifting. Leaders debate outcomes, data intelligence, and traveller experience are redefining travel.

By **Janice Alyosius**

The Travel MICE & Corporate Show in Bengaluru is the sounding board on how India's corporate travel ecosystem is evolving, less about product showcases, and more about conversations shaping boardroom decisions.

This year, one such conversation took centre stage in a panel titled 'From Cost Centre to Value Creator: The

Purpose of Digital Transformation in Corporate Travel'. What unfolded was a grounded, experience-led discussion that reflected how travel, once viewed as an expense line, is now being re-evaluated as a business lever across large Indian organisations.

Dr Sanjay Pai, Vice President & Head, Corporate Travel, Aviation & Facility Management, Larsen & Toubro, moderated the session, which brought together senior leaders from the corporate industries. What appeared was not a futuristic vision, but experience-led reality of how digital transformation is reshaping travel's strategic role inside large organisations.

TRAVEL AS AN ENABLER

Dr Pai opened the discussion by reframing the role of corporate travel and positioning it squarely on the strategic agenda rather than the cost ledger.

"Corporate travel is no longer just a cost centre now. Digital transformation in whatever we do is a strategic enabler. Today when we speak about travel, we are not just talking about bookings or approvals — we are talking about





DR SANJAY PAI,
VICE PRESIDENT & HEAD – CORPORATE
TRAVEL, AVIATION & FACILITY
MANAGEMENT, LARSEN & TOUBRO



“
Earlier, the question used to be how are we spending? Today, the question is what is the business outcome from travel and what value are we getting from it.”

technology, experience, sustainability, and governance. The question organisations are asking is how travel supports business outcomes and leadership decisions, not how money is being spent.” This shift, he suggested, is being driven as much by leadership expectations as by technology itself.

BUSINESS OUTCOMES

Ajay Bhatt, Group Head, Corporate Services, Godrej Industries Group, described how digital transformation has changed the very lens through which travel is evaluated. “Digital transformation has fundamentally changed the way we view corporate travel. Earlier, the question used to be how are we spending? Today, the question is what the business outcome from travel is and what value are we bringing out of it. That shift has come because of digital

platforms and the kind of visibility they provide. We are continuously evolving — technology keeps changing rapidly — and as we enable digital transformation in corporate travel, we are also aligning travel much more closely with revenue generation, business growth, and strategic goals.”

Bhatt said this evolution is not theoretical. Travel data is now regularly shared with managing directors and business heads, feeding directly into leadership conversations rather than staying confined to back-office reports.

INDIA'S DIGITAL MATURITY

Drawing from recent international exposure, Bhatt made a case of India's growing leadership in corporate travel technology and scale. “My recent visit to Australia was a kind of an eye-opener for us — and for them. I can say this with pride that the Indian market is far ahead in terms of technology, the kind of business volumes we handle, and the nuances of travel that we manage. The scale at which Indian corporate houses run is the talent available and the solutions we can create to make a difference. The world cannot take the Indian market lightly. If someone is not taking India seriously, that is their problem, not ours.” A similar confidence resonated across the panel.

INTELLIGENT DASHBOARDS

Gaurav Shekhar Nagwekar, Head – Travel Logistics & Corporate Service Administration, Reliance Industries, brought a practitioner's point of view on how data expectations have transformed





AJAY BHATT
GROUP HEAD – CORPORATE SERVICES
GODREJ INDUSTRIES GROUP

over the years. “If I look back 20 years to when I was a travel manager, data was only about what spends had been done — nothing more, nothing less. Today, everything has evolved. The expectation from corporate managers and Chief Financial Officers is that you get the data right, and you get it right now. At Reliance, we have created real-time dashboards that are automatically presented to segment heads across businesses. These dashboards clearly define outliers, spending patterns, hotel usage, and other indicators, enabling leaders to take decisions quickly and with clarity.”

For Nagwekar, the value of technology lies not just in visibility but in actionable intelligence — data that directly informs business behaviour, enabling timely decisions, accountability, and measurable operational improvements.



GAURAV SHEKHAR NAGWEKAR
HEAD – TRAVEL LOGISTICS & CORPORATE
SERVICE ADMINISTRATION
RELIANCE INDUSTRIES

EXPERIENCE, PREDICTION

While data and control are crucial, the panel was clear that traveller experience cannot be compromised — especially in a digital-first environment.

Rahul Agarwal, Senior Director – India Operations, Boston Consulting Group, illustrated this through a real-life scenario familiar to frequent business travellers. “For adoption of digital tools, trust and efficiency matter. Let me give you an example: A particular airline flying from India to the USA lands at different terminals. One terminal has no lounge, while another has full facilities. For a business traveller taking a red-eye flight and heading straight into a client meeting, that difference matters. The question is whether the tool is intelligent enough to guide the traveller proactively, because time is money. We are quite far from a stage where predictive insights

“
The question organisations are asking is how travel supports business outcomes and leadership decisions, not about how money is being spent.
”

fully prevent disruptions, but that alignment between experience and efficiency is where the industry needs to move.”

Agarwal’s honesty underscored an important reality, digital transformation is progressing, but predictive intelligence is still a work in progress.

AN UNCERTAIN WORLD

With global disruptions becoming more frequent, duty of care appeared as a key area where technology is making a tangible difference.

Shashikiran Parameshwaran, Global Front Office Lead, Travel &





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RAHUL AGARWAL
SENIOR DIRECTOR – INDIA OPERATIONS
BOSTON CONSULTING GROUP

Expense, ABB, explained how specialised tools are integral to corporate travel management. “There are agencies and tools, such as Crisis24, SOS, and ISOS that allow organisations to track travellers globally and provide real-time alerts during disruptions. These tools help us understand where our employees are, what risks exist in that geography, and how we can respond proactively. At the same time, technology must be connected to the systems you already use; it cannot run in isolation.”

However, Bhatt warned, while travellers can be tracked through bookings, employees based permanently in overseas markets still rely heavily on local management and embassy reporting, highlighting the limits of technology alone.

MOBILITY CHANGES

One of the most compelling insights came from **Rituraj Chaturmohta**,

Sr. Country Manager, Uber for Business - India & South Asia. “When organisations start using our platform, they suddenly get access to detailed dashboards. In one case, we saw that 60–70 per cent of female employees were leaving the office at around 7 or 7.15 pm. What the data revealed was that employees were waiting that extra half hour instead of leaving earlier, because the company-sponsored cabs arrived after a certain time. This kind of insight allows companies to rethink policies — not just from a cost perspective, but from a safety, flexibility, and employee wellbeing standpoint.”

For Chaturmohta, this is where digital transformation truly delivers value — by enabling informed decisions rather than assumptions.

SUSTAINABLE COSTING

On sustainability, the panel was quite pragmatic. “You do not have to compromise on business goals just



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**SHASHIKIRAN
PARAMESHWARAN,**
GLOBAL FRONT OFFICE LEAD
TRAVEL & EXPENSE, ABB

because you are adopting sustainable practices,” Chaturmohta said. “In various markets, including Europe, customers use more sustainable mobility options that cost the same as standard services. In our portfolio, we offer CNG, electric, and diesel vehicles depending on requirements, and we are scaling electric vehicles and CNG fleets much faster. Sustainability and cost efficiency can go hand in hand.” This grounded approach resonated with a market where ESG goals are rising but commercial realities are paramount.

REAL BARRIERS

As the discussion turned reflective, the panel unanimously agreed that technology itself is rarely the biggest obstacle. Parameshwaran said, “The biggest barriers in digital transformation come down to three things — people, policy, and partners. Tools evolve faster than people’s mindsets. Policies may not keep pace with technology. And one mistake organisations must avoid is translating a manual process into an online tool. Transformation requires rethinking processes, not just digitising them.”

Bhatt added a generational lens — pointing out that organisations are currently navigating a complex mix of baby boomers, millennials, and Gen Z employees. “The challenge is how quickly we can adopt technology as it evolves. Over time, this will become easier, but right now we are in a transition phase.”

Nagwekar reinforced the buyer’s expectation bluntly, “We want technology that is real and works — not something that looks good on a presentation slide.”

ONE SIZE DOES NOT FIT ALL

The closing theme was the need for flexibility — particularly in India. “Indian customers have evolved

“
Organisations must avoid translating a manual process into an online tool. Transformation needs rethinking processes, not just digitising.
”

significantly,” Nagwekar said. “We are looking for API-driven integrations where data flows seamlessly into our ERP and finance systems. The days of file uploads are gone.”

Echoing this sentiment from a supplier’s perspective, Chaturmohta said, “We may have a single global technology stack, but that does not mean every country or customer

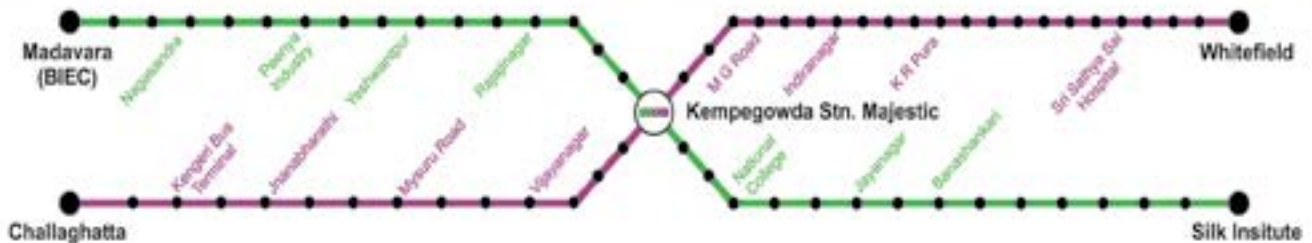


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needs the same solution. What works for one organisation may not work for another. However, flexibility and localisation are critical.”



RITURAJ CHATURMOHTA
SR. COUNTRY MANAGER
UBER FOR BUSINESS - INDIA &
SOUTH ASIA

REAL TAKEAWAY

As the session concluded, Dr Pai summarised, “The goal for organisations today is not to spend less on travel. It is to gain maximum value from the travel we do. Transformation must be dynamic, relevant, and continuously evolving with market conditions.”

The panel made one thing clear: Corporate travel’s digital transformation is not automation or compliance alone. It is about insight, integration, and impact — recognising travel as a strategic lever that directly and measurably supports growth, employee experience, and resilience. **MT**





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In an era where meetings are expected to inspire as much as they inform, Le Méridien Khao Lak Resort & Spa presents a refreshing alternative to conventional event destinations. Positioned along Thailand's unspoiled Andaman coastline, the resort invites planners to rethink how and where people come together, replacing enclosed environments with a sense of space, connection, and purpose.

At the heart of the resort meeting offering is the Merlin Grand Ballroom, which accommodates up to 420 guests in a theatre-style setup and is supported by a selection of flexible breakout rooms. Complemented by an experienced Events Team, each event is thoughtfully planned and tailored to individual preferences, ensuring smooth execution from concept to completion.

Culinary experiences form an integral part of every gathering. Guided by a well-experienced Indian leadership team, **Suyash Kumar**, General Manager, **Manish Hegde**, Director – Food & Beverage, and **Vijay Kumar**, Director – Sales & Events, alongside a globally inspired culinary brigade, the resort offers a diverse range of cuisines, from authentic Indian and

Thai specialities to international selections, thoughtfully tailored to each event.

The resort design allows events to extend naturally into the outdoors. Five dedicated event venues are complemented by beachfront lawns, open-air spaces, and three swimming pools, enabling programmes to transition effortlessly beyond the meeting room. With 269 guest rooms featuring private balconies and seven dining venues across the property, delegates enjoy both comfort and flexibility throughout their stay.

The destination itself becomes part of the agenda. Curated group experiences range from Le Méridien's Unlock Art Programme in Takua Pa Old Town to island excursions in the Similan and Surin Islands. Mainland adventures, including eco explorations in Khao Sok National Park and visits to ethical elephant sanctuaries, offer meaningful balance to structured meeting programmes.

At Le Méridien Khao Lak Resort & Spa, meetings are shaped by their surroundings, enriched by culture, and delivered with thoughtful service. The result is a destination where gatherings feel purposeful, experiences unfold naturally, and lasting connections are made. ■



Beyond araat & udget

India's destination weddings are entering a sharper phase — smaller guest lists, earlier bookings, and bigger expectations — forcing hotels and planners to rethink pricing, planning, and performance.



RAJEEV JAIN
DIRECTOR & FOUNDER
RASHI ENTERTAINMENT

lakh per wedding. Since 2023, both resorts have seen steady year-on-year growth, driven by increased guest counts, multi-day formats, and higher demand for curated experiences.”

What is more telling is the revenue mix. “Weddings now account for approximately 75% of total room-night and banquet revenue at both KLR and CWR,” Thayil says. “Corporate events and other social functions together make up the remaining 25%.”

Peak auspicious dates continue to stretch inventory and pricing. “On peak auspicious dates, rates typically increase by 40–45% due to heightened demand. Couples show very low-price sensitivity at the upper end. These dates are often booked nine to twelve months in advance,” he adds.

Despite smaller guest lists, overall yields have improved. “Moderate guest counts are being offset by higher per-

By **Janice Alyosius**

India’s destination wedding boom is no longer driven by spectacle alone — it is being powered by strategy. What stands out from conversations with hoteliers and wedding planners is not just the size of budgets, but how deliberately those budgets are being deployed. Guest lists are shrinking, but timelines are getting longer. Bookings are being locked in earlier, but expectations are sharper. Hotels are recalibrating inventory and pricing models around weddings, while planners are navigating a far more complex ecosystem shaped by social media, rising vendor costs, technology adoption, and a new generation of decision-makers.

The result is a destination wedding market that is more mature, more demanding, and significantly more lucrative — but also far less forgiving of inefficiency or poor execution.

SEASONAL TO REVENUE

For leisure and resort hotels, destination weddings have shifted from being high-profile events to becoming core commercial pillars. **Shelley Thayil**, Executive Director, Paul John Resorts & Hotels, says the numbers reflect a structural shift rather than a post-pandemic spike. “At Kumarakom Lake Resort, the current average wedding revenue ranges between ₹85 lakh to ₹1 crore per event, while at Coorg Wilderness Resort it averages ₹70–75

“
Weddings now generate up to ₹1 crore per event and contribute nearly 75 per cent of total revenue.
”



MUKESH PAREWA
GENERAL MANAGER
CHOMU PALACE JAIPUR

guest spend across premium food and beverage, bespoke décor, and curated experiences. The focus has clearly shifted to quality, personalisation, and immersive guest journeys.”

SCALE AND SPEND

If resorts are benefitting from volume and frequency, heritage hotels are pushing the ceiling on per-event revenue. **Mukesh Parewa**, General Manager, Chomu Palace Jaipur, places destination weddings at the centre of the property’s business strategy.

“At Chomu Palace Jaipur, the average wedding revenue per event currently



VIKAS SOOD
GENERAL MANAGER
THE LEELA GANDHINAGAR & MMCEC

ranges between ₹1.25 crore and ₹1.75 crore. Since 2023, we’ve seen year-on-year growth of approximately 20–25%, driven by multi-day celebrations, immersive décor, curated experiences, and premium hospitality services,” Parewa says.

Weddings contribute close to 80% of the palace’s overall revenue. “Destination weddings remain our strongest revenue driver due to longer stays, full property buyouts, and high ancillary spend,” he adds.

On peak auspicious dates, pricing rises by 20–30%, but Parewa says demand remains resilient. “Couples prioritise exclusivity, availability, and flawless execution over cost, especially for milestone celebrations.”



“
**Destination
 weddings now
 contribute 20–25
 per cent of total
 banqueting
 revenue at
 unified luxury
 convention hotels.**
 ”

The shift toward curated guest lists has only strengthened margins. “Per-guest spend has increased by 25–30%. Couples are investing in bespoke menus, premium beverages, themed functions, live entertainment, heritage storytelling, and personalised gifting. Every element is designed to elevate the guest experience,” he explains.

INTEGRATED LUXURY

At the Leela Gandhinagar, destination weddings are growing steadily alongside large-scale conventions. **Vikas Sood**, General Manager, The Leela Gandhinagar





AKSHAY THUSOO
SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT – COMMERCIAL
SAROVAR HOTELS

and Mahatma Mandir Convention and Exhibition Centre, says weddings now contribute around 20–25% of overall banqueting revenue.

“The luxury wedding segment is undergoing a dynamic transformation. Couples are no longer looking for just a venue. They are curating immersive, multi-day celebrations that reflect their personal story, cultural roots, and aspirations,” Sood says.

“There is strong demand for privacy, exclusivity, and seamless service, combined with authentic local

experiences presented through a lens of luxury. Weddings are becoming more intimate yet more impactful,” he adds.

The advantage of an integrated convention-hotel destination lies in operational depth. “The planning rigour and scale management refined through conventions translate seamlessly into weddings. Recognising and designing for that difference is key.”

MID-MARKET LIFT

For domestic hotel chains, destination weddings are delivering consistent

“
Average destination wedding value stands at ₹30–50 lakh, driven by premiumisation and longer stays.

”





growth through premiumisation rather than sheer scale. **Akshay Thusoo**, Senior Vice President – Commercial, Sarovar Hotels, says the average destination wedding across Sarovar properties is currently valued between ₹30–50 lakh.

“We saw strong growth of around 15–18% in 2023–2024, followed by a further 10–12% increase in 2024–25. This growth has been driven by longer stay durations, higher room block pick-up, and increased premiumisation of food and beverage, décor and curated experiences,” says Thusoo.

Weddings now form a significant share of room nights at leisure and destination hotels during peak seasons. “While guest lists may be smaller, per-guest spend has increased noticeably. Couples are willing to pay more when they see differentiation in experience and execution,” he adds.

WEDDINGS REIMAGINED

Destination weddings are also expanding beyond traditional resort towns. **Padmi Fernando**, Director – Sales & Marketing, Cinnamon Life – City of Dreams, says Colombo is now attracting Indian destination weddings — a shift she describes as unprecedented.

“Destination weddings traditionally never came to Colombo. It was always resorts. Since opening, we have already handled five destination weddings, with more confirmed in the coming months,” Fernando says.

Average revenue per wedding at the property is around US\$ 200,000 for



PADMI FERNANDO
DIRECTOR – SALES & MARKETING
CINNAMON LIFE – CITY OF DREAMS

150–180 rooms. “We have multiple arrival lobbies, pools, and banquet venues, which allows us to dedicate spaces and create a sense of exclusivity for wedding families,” she explains.

Interestingly, auspicious dates are less restrictive. “Indian and Sri Lankan auspicious days don’t usually clash, which actually helps with inventory planning,” Fernando adds.

“

Each destination wedding generates nearly \$200,000, with 150–180 rooms committed per celebration.

”

MEASURED OPULENCE

While hotels are seeing strong topline growth, planners are navigating a more intense environment. **Rajeev Jain**, Director & Founder, Rashi Entertainment, provides an insight into evolving premium wedding budgets.



SHELLEY THAYIL
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
PAUL JOHN RESORTS & HOTELS

“Wedding budgets in India are moving upward because families are increasingly prioritising immersive, personalised celebrations. At the premium end, especially for destination weddings, a significant proportion of clients today fall into the ₹1 crore-plus category,” says Jain. He explains that spending patterns have changed fundamentally. “In today’s luxury weddings, guest experience is no longer an add-on. A typical allocation for entertainment, bespoke décor, curated activities and guest hospitality can easily be 30–40% of the overall wedding budget.”

The fastest-growing categories include hospitality, décor narratives, entertainment

and performances, immersive guest experiences, and curated culinary journeys.

Technology has also reshaped planning workflows. “Technology now underpins nearly every stage of planning. We use QR-code digital invites, AI-assisted scheduling tools, and immersive previews to streamline coordination across vendors and enhance guest experiences. Automation has reduced planning timelines by 10–20%,” Jain explains.

Looking ahead, a shift is already underway. “2025 has been dominated by showbiz-style, high-budget domestic destination weddings with multi-day immersive experiences,” he says.

“But moving into 2026, there is a clear move toward smaller, guest-centric, and more meaningful weddings — what I would call micro-luxury — where couples focus on personalisation, smarter budgeting and alternative venues without sacrificing quality.”

PLANNER REALITIES

Vandita Bawa, Senior Vice President, WDNE paints a more cautionary picture of the market’s structural changes.

“With many new planners entering the market, rates have been affected significantly. Smaller planners are ready



VANDITA BAWA,
SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT
WDNE

to pick up anything and everything, which has impacted established players,” she says.

She also points to social media as a double-edged sword. “Instagram and Pinterest have changed decision-making completely. Couples see visuals but don’t understand the actual cost. They want what they see online, but when pricing comes in, it becomes an issue — especially when parents are paying.”

On destinations, Bawa believes infrastructure matters more than marketing. “Delhi is a big market, but hotel rates have become exorbitant and infrastructure is limited. Destinations



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“
Budgets of ₹3 crore now serve 150 guests instead of 300, intensifying experience-led spending.
 ”



VARUN VIG
 DIRECTOR, CAAIR TRAVELS PVT LTD &
 CREATIVE DIRECTOR
 CEED VENTURES & CEED WEDDINGS



like Jaisalmer and Jodhpur have really picked up in the market, especially with improved air connectivity.”

INBOUND DEMAND

For inbound and NRI weddings, India’s appeal remains deeply emotional. **Varun Vig**, Director, CAAIR Travels Pvt Ltd & Creative Director, CEED Ventures & CEED Weddings, says many overseas couples return to India for reasons that go beyond cost. “It’s about reconnecting with roots. It’s a story

of homecoming combined with a royal or luxury experience that very few destinations globally can offer,” he explains. Guest lists may have reduced to 100–150, but budgets often remain unchanged or even increase. “The spend capacity doesn’t drop — it gets redirected toward deeper, more immersive experiences and higher-quality execution.”

Rajasthan continues to dominate, while Kerala, Dehradun, and Jodhpur are gaining traction as accessibility and vendor ecosystems improve.

EXPERIENCE-LED FUTURE

What emerges clearly is a destination wedding market that is growing not just in size, but in sophistication. Early bookings, higher per-guest spend, and longer stays are reshaping hotel revenue models. For planners, the opportunity is significant — but so are the demands on expertise, transparency, and execution. Destination weddings in India are no longer about excess alone; they are about intent, experience, and emotional resonance — and that shift is redefining the business of celebrations. **MT**

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Delhi weddings get a makeover

From 'cookie-cutter' to custom, Le Méridien New Delhi is redefining luxury weddings by applying the precision of large-scale events to deeply personal, dream-led celebrations.

By **MT Bureau**

Luxury weddings in India are becoming more experiential and tightly planned. To capitalise on this trend, Le Méridien New Delhi is positioning itself at the intersection of weddings and large-format events.

Its latest showcase, The Great Delhi Dreams, reflected a shift in how the capital's wedding market is evolving — away from standard formats and towards personalised, long-gestation celebrations.

Meena Bhatia, Vice President & General Manager, Le Méridien New Delhi, talked about how execution has become the defining factor. "In weddings, what matters most is how the wedding is executed. Money is important, but value for money is equally critical," she said. While budgets have risen, Bhatia believes this is driven as much by changing expectations as by inflation.

This thinking underpins The Great Delhi Dreams, hosted across the hotel's Desire and Sovereign Ballrooms. Conceptualised as a narrative-led experience, the showcase highlighted Le Méridien's belief that no two weddings should look alike. "There is no cookie-cutter approach to a wedding. Every wedding is a dream," Bhatia said. Instead of limiting engagement to the wedding day, the hotel has built dedicated teams that work closely with families well in advance. "We collaborate with them to



“Weddings today are defined less by spend and more by execution, personalisation, and meaningful experiences.”

understand what they need, and curate the wedding according to that dream.”

Bhatia drew clear parallels between weddings and conferences. "Weddings need to be booked 10 months to a year in advance. That is important, because that is how MICE is booked as well," she said. With wedding planners increasingly influencing venue decisions, Le Méridien focuses on partnership rather than transactional incentives. She also pointed out that a generational shift is reshaping India's wedding landscape.



With its Wedding Ambassador and Shadow concepts, strong advanced planning focus, and collaborative approach, The Great Delhi Dreams reinforces Le Méridien New Delhi's relevance as a serious player in complex, MICE-scale celebrations. **MT**



Tourism takes wing with Madhya Pradesh's heli services

As spiritual journeys soar, the state lifts elderly pilgrims skyward with swift, affordable helicopter connectivity.

Since pilgrimage tourism is taking a leap and Indian travellers seek spiritual circuits for their devotional souls, Madhya Pradesh offers PM Shree Paryatan Helicopter Sewa for pilgrims, with fast and affordable aerial linkage between major attractions, replacing long road journeys with short flights. Here is a snapshot of how this network will bring destinations closer to each other.

SEAMLESS SPIRITUALITY

Indore – Ujjain – Omkareshwar

Hop on to a chopper at Indore and cut travel time to Ujjain by an hour. After *darshan* at the Mahakaleshwar Temple, pray at the Kaal Bhairav and Harsiddhi shrines and walk through the Bhartihari Caves. You can even enjoy an Ujjain thali and then fly by chopper and save three hours to land at Omkareshwar for a *darshan* of the state's other Jyotirlinga.

NAVIGATING NATURE

Bhopal – Madai – Pachmarhi

A weekend getaway from Bhopal to Madai and Pachmarhi involves over five hours of driving on roads. Turn this into an affordable journey via just an hour of

helicopter hopping. Enjoy a 45-minute ride over Pachmarhi Biosphere Reserve, touching nature-based experiences.

WILDLIFE & WORSHIP

Jabalpur – Maihar – Chitrakoot – Kanha – Bandhavgarh – Amarkantak

Base yourself in Jabalpur to explore the Mahakoshal region. Helicopter rides make tiger spotting in the flora and fauna of Bandhavgarh and Kanha sanctuaries easier. Taking the aerial route empowers

visitors with fast trips to pray at Sharda Devi Shaktipeeth at Maihar, or at Narmada's mouth at Amarkantak. Relive the Ramayana with a flying visit to the pilgrim town of Chitrakoot.

HERITAGE HOPPING

Bhopal – Khajuraho – Singrauli

Beyond choppers, use the PM Shri Vayu Paryatan Seva and hop from Bhopal to explore temples, palaces, and Khajuraho, Rewa, Satna, and Singrauli. **MT**

Cut travel time, avail great rates, easy to book!

Destinations	Travel Time	Price per flight
Indore – Ujjain	20 min	₹ 5,000 – 6,500
Ujjain – Omkareshwar	40 min	₹ 5,000 – 6,500
Bhopal – Madai	40 min	₹ 4,000
Madai – Pachmarhi	20 min	₹ 3,000
Bhopal – Pachmarhi	60 min	₹ 5,000
Jabalpur – Maihar	TBC	₹ 5,000
Maihar – Chitrakoot	TBC	₹ 2,500
Jabalpur – Kanha	TBC	₹ 6,250
Jabalpur – Bandhavgarh	TBC	₹ 3,750
Jabalpur – Amarkantak	TBC	₹ 5,000

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Bahrain makes moves to win India's MICE leaders

As Indian corporates scale globally, Bahrain is positioning itself as a strategic MICE partner combining world-class infrastructure, strong connectivity, and a clear focus on India as a priority growth market.

By **Meetu Malhotra**

Indian corporates are expanding faster than ever and they are hungry for new destinations that can match their ambition. While the Kingdom of Bahrain has stepped forward with a clear answer, **His Excellency Sara Ahmed Buhiji**, Chief Executive Officer, Bahrain Tourism and Exhibitions Authority (BTEA), and Chairperson, Exhibition World Bahrain (EWB), puts it, “India is not just important. It is central.”

“India is one of the five priority markets identified under Bahrain’s Tourism Strategy 2022–2026, and it plays a central role in our overall tourism and MICE growth plans,” she said. For a country that is now one of the world’s fastest-growing outbound markets, this recognition matters. The Kingdom sees India not simply as a source market, but as a strategic partner for long-term MICE expansion.

At the heart of Bahrain’s pitch to Indian planners sits Exhibition World Bahrain. Indian organisers want venues that can scale, adapt, and deliver reliably under pressure. EWB has already proven that it can. “EWB’s ability to host mega-events, exhibitions, and conferences, simultaneously, positions it as one of the most versatile venues in the region,” Buhiji explained. For Indian companies eyeing the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) for regional editions, satellite shows, or fresh launches, this kind of infrastructure changes the game.

Access is another advantage that Bahrain is using smartly. A well-connected hub in the Gulf, it is closer to India than many realise. With direct flights from important Indian metros and a modern airport designed for





“

EWB’s ability to host mega-events, exhibitions, and conferences, simultaneously, positions it as one of the most versatile venues.

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HE SARA AHMED BUHIJI
CEO, BTEA &
CHAIRPERSON, EXHIBITION
WORLD BAHRAIN



quick movement, organisers do not have to worry about logistical setbacks. “Bahrain’s location at the heart of the Gulf region makes it a natural gateway between Asia, Europe, and Africa,” she said. With the Kingdom’s strong road network and proximity to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia through the King Fahad Causeway, Indian delegates gain easy access to a wider regional market.

For corporates, Bahrain has built out a strong, customised offer. Buhiji highlights the approach clearly. “We work closely with travel and tourism agencies, airline partners, and tour operators in India to develop tailored MICE packages that combine business needs with leisure experiences.” These range from special hotel and venue rates to curated cultural and marine activities

that Indian groups tend to enjoy. In short, corporates get the convenience they expect and the experiential depth they seek.

The destination’s long-term vision is becoming ambitious too. Bahrain wants to build a global identity through sustainable infrastructure, diverse tourism products, and stronger global collaboration. “Our long-term vision focuses on positioning Bahrain as a global tourism and MICE hub by enhancing sustainable infrastructure, expanding target markets, and developing new tourism products and experiences,” says Buhiji. Bahrain offers room to grow, tools to scale, and a partner that is clearly invested in the journey. **MT**

India fuels 50% business travel to South Africa



Long-haul MICE is back on Indian corporate agendas, and South Africa is moving quickly — cutting visa friction, strengthening trade relations, and sharpening its value proposition.

By **MT Bureau**

Indian corporates are rethinking long-haul destinations through the lens of value, ease, and experience. Backed by data, visa reforms, and sustained engagement with decision-makers, South Africa is quietly recalibrating its MICE pitch for India. The strategy appears to be working. India's MICE and corporate travel demand to South Africa has shown strong resilience, reaffirming the

country's position as a priority long-haul destination despite post-pandemic visa challenges.

Throughout 2025, South African Tourism has doubled down on engagement-led growth through platforms such as its flagship Corporate Think Tank initiative, now in its fifth edition. The four-city India series covering Hyderabad, Chennai, Pune, and Kolkata focuses on dialogue with corporate decision-makers, blending thought leadership with immersive destination showcases. This is supported by the Annual India Roadshow and the expanding Learn South Africa (Learn SA) training programme, reaching tier II cities to fortify trade capability across leisure and MICE segments, **Mitalee Karmarkar**, Marketing and Communications Manager, MEISEA, South African Tourism.

As per South African Tourism and Statistics South Africa, Indian arrivals stood at 75,541 in 2024, with business and MICE travel accounting for 50 per cent of total arrivals — indicating a



MITALEE KARMARKAR
MARKETING AND
COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER
MEISEA – SOUTH AFRICAN TOURISM

surge in demand. “This clearly reinforces India's role as a priority corporate and MICE source market rather than a leisure-led one,” said Karmarkar.

“The quality of demand from India remained robust, with business and MICE travel accounting for around 49.6 per cent of Indian arrivals in 2024,” she said. From a competitive standpoint, South Africa continues to position itself strongly against long-haul rivals such as



Visa facilitation has been a turning point. The rollout of the Trusted Tour Operator Scheme has reduced group visa timelines

Europe, Australia, and the Middle East. Karmarkar said that the country offers world-class convention infrastructure across Cape Town, Sandton, and Durban, while remaining cost-efficient across venues, accommodation, and ground logistics allowing Indian corporates to deliver high-impact events without premium pricing pressures.

A key differentiator remains South Africa's ability to integrate business with incentive and leisure experiences. "Over 30 per cent of Indian delegates extend their trips for leisure," Karmarkar said, pointing to wildlife, culture, adventure, and gastronomy as value drivers that enhance delegate satisfaction and returns on investment.

Visa facilitation has emerged as a critical turning point. The rollout of the Trusted Tour Operator Scheme (TTOS) in early 2025 has reduced group visa timelines. "In many cases, visa outcomes are now delivered within hours rather

than weeks," Karmarkar said. Within three months of launch, over 11,000 tourists from India and China secured digital visas under TTOS, with daily applications increasing fourfold.

Sustainability is gaining traction within Indian MICE programmes, with corporates integrating community-led experiences that deliver measurable social impact. "We measure success beyond traditional KPIs by tracking local employment, income distribution, and sustainable business opportunities," she said, adding tourism contributes R618 billion to South Africa's GDP.

In 2026, South African Tourism plans to deepen engagement through expanded Corporate Think Tanks, scale up Learn South Africa training across tier II cities, and spotlight lesser-known provinces, broaden options for Indian planners, reinforcing South Africa's long-term commitment to the India MICE market. **MT**



Malaysia's faster clearance window for Indians

As Malaysia eyes the short-haul segment in 2026, the destination is sharpening its strategy around MICE and incentive travel prioritising faster decision cycles to capture higher-value business from the Indian market.

By **MT Bureau**

Malaysia is no longer pitching itself to India on promise alone. With Indian arrivals already surpassing 2024's numbers well before 2025-end, Tourism Malaysia is now recalibrating its India strategy around structured MICE incentives, destination weddings, and short-haul business travel segments that deliver higher value and repeat traffic. The emphasis is clear; make it easier, faster, and commercially viable for Indian planners to choose Malaysia.

Ahmad Johanif Mohd Ali, Director, Tourism Malaysia New Delhi, underlined the strength of the India market and the rationale behind Tourism Malaysia's renewed push. "In 2024, we achieved 1.13 million Indian visitors to Malaysia. In 2025, up until October, the number reached 1.3 million," he said.

At the core of Tourism Malaysia's MICE strategy for India is a joint promotional budget programme, which Mohd Ali described as a practical, results-driven model. "We work on a 50:50 basis with our partners. If the total budget is one crore, Tourism Malaysia pays half and the partner pays half. The aim is to push tactical campaigns that convert into actual arrivals," he explained. Importantly, these investments are tracked closely. "We calculate our return on investment based on cost per pax, usually around ₹2,000 per passenger, to ensure accountability on both sides."

For MICE agents bringing large groups, Malaysia's support extends well beyond marketing. Mohd Ali outlined a series of destination-level incentives aimed at improving delegate experience. These include group welcome amenities, coordinated fast-track immigration clearance — provided passenger details





AHMAD JOHANIF MOHD ALI
DIRECTOR
TOURISM MALAYSIA NEW DELHI

are submitted in advance — and sponsored cultural performances for gala dinners. “When they arrive in Malaysia, we work with our immigration department to ensure smooth entry for the group. If they have a dinner, we often support it with cultural performances to uplift the event,” he said.

State tourism bodies and sector-specific programmes add another layer of value. Destinations such as Penang, and initiatives such as MyCEB, offer additional incentives, including payback mechanisms linked to group spend. “Agents need to register and share full information with us, and then we support them as per the applicable terms and conditions,” Mohd Ali said.

Destination weddings, which increasingly overlap with leisure and MICE travel, are also a priority area. Tourism Malaysia extends group incentives to wedding planners, while hotels provide their own benefits. “The incentives we offer for groups apply to wedding planners. On top of that, hoteliers offer many additional benefits, sometimes even cashback, because wedding planners introduce the property to the client.” Mohd Ali added that the tourism board actively encourages hotels to recognise planners as key business partners rather than intermediaries.

Ease of travel has fortified Malaysia’s appeal. Visa-free entry for Indians has significantly shortened booking windows. “Earlier, travellers took one or two months to decide. Now, within two or three days, they can decide to travel. Last-minute bookings have increased,” said Mohd Ali.

With connectivity from 14 Indian cities, Malaysia is positioning itself as a viable short-break and incentive destination, including niche segments such as golf-based corporate travel.

Looking ahead, Tourism Malaysia plans to intensify engagement through four-city roadshows early this year, additional programmes later in the year, expanded joint promotions, and more familiarisation trips for agents and

A series of destination-level incentives include group welcome amenities, coordinated fast-track immigration clearance, and gala dinners

media. “We will bring more Malaysian players to India and work closely with airlines. With this level of connectivity, we need to ensure demand remains strong,” concluded Mohd Ali.

For India’s MICE and wedding planners, Malaysia’s message is business-focused — competitive incentives, operational ease, and a destination strategy tailor-made to cater to Indian travel behaviour. **MT**



City of Dreams scales up Colombo's MICE offering

In the heart of Colombo, a new icon has risen. Cinnamon Life — City of Dreams is more than a hotel. Padmi Fernando, Director, Sales & Marketing, underlines its appeal as a magnet for regional tourism, particularly from India.

By Hazel Jain

As part of the pre-opening team, the journey of **Padmi Fernando**, Director, Sales & Marketing, Cinnamon Life — City of Dreams, Sri Lanka, hasn't been without challenges. "Covid hit us all, after which Sri Lanka saw political and economic crises, followed by the pandemic. So, it has been a journey of resilience," she explained.

The ambition for the parent company 'John Keells Holdings' was always to create a legacy for the next hundred years, something uniquely Sri Lankan that would become an icon for the nation's economy. "That is why it had to be more than just a hotel; it is a integrated mixed-development project, proudly funded by our parent company, which has a 150-year legacy. When we conceived Cinnamon



PADMI FERNANDO,
DIRECTOR, SALES & MARKETING
CINNAMON LIFE — CITY OF DREAMS,
SRI LANKA

Life, we had the Indian market in mind. We tell our Indian customers, 'This is your hotel.' The property caters to leisure, but its heart beats for MICE. And the response from the India market has been phenomenal," she disclosed.



LUMINA BALLROOM

- A vast pillarless ballroom fitted with chandeliers that provide over 2,500 captivating colour combinations.
- Banquet Style – 990



CUMULUS BALLROOM

- A glass box ballroom up in the clouds adorned with a custom-made crystal reflecting chandelier.
- Banquet Style – 360



THE FORUM

- A pillarless ballroom with its own lobby, where expos, showcases, and unforgettable moments come to life.
- Banquet Style – 600

EXPECTATIONS

“In December 2025, India contributed 48 per cent of our total business. When we started operations in October 2024, it was in single digit around 8 per cent. Month after month, it climbed to 20 per cent, then 40 per cent, and peaked at 48 per cent. That growth tells us India finds us unique and relevant. Of that 48 per cent, MICE contributed 65 per cent. In fact, roughly 70 per cent of our total MICE business comes from India. Currently, we are attracting the right decision-makers — C-Suite corporates and procurement managers,” revealed Fernando.

“

In December 2025, India contributed 48 per cent of our total business. When we started operations in October 2024, it was in single digit around 8 per cent.

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DREAMS & BEATS

- Infinity pool offers breathtaking views of Colombo’s oceanfront. Most magical at sunset, it’s the kind of view you won’t want to miss.



CELESTINE BALLROOM

- A truly celestial space, nestled 100 metres up in the sky, with panoramic 180 degree views of the ocean and the city.
- Banquet Style – 220



THE STUDIO

- A pillarless ballroom with modern and plush interior, which is designed for unique celebrations.
- Banquet Style – 380

In November, the hotel hosted top Indian brands for an 1,800-person event, where Cinnamon Life was the anchor hotel. “In January 2026 alone, we had six conferences scheduled from India alone. These are never less than 100 people; typically, it is around 150 rooms, meaning 250–300 delegates. We have seen an interest from finance, agriculture, and manufacturing, mostly incentive-driven groups. Our average

rates are strong, at US\$ 200 and above; during Christmas, they were about US\$ 350 and above. However, for MICE groups, we maintain flexibility to build these long-term partnerships,” said Fernando.

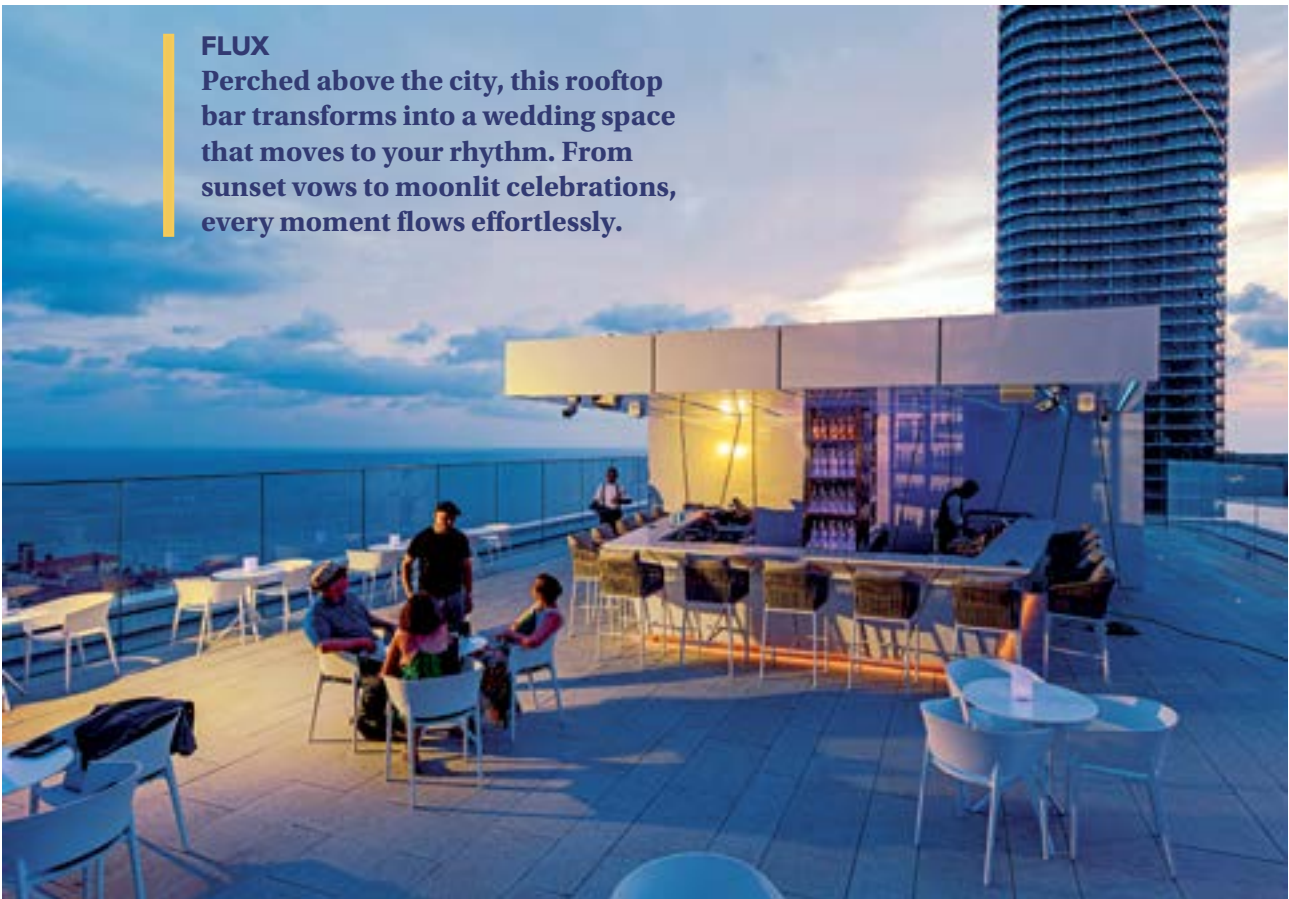
EYE ON GUJARAT

“India is our top market. In terms of volume, no one can beat India. My goal is consistency. While 48 per cent is

fantastic for a month, our expectation is to achieve 50 per cent of our business from India year-round. While metro cities are crucial, we see immense potential in smaller cities. Gujarat, for instance, is a largely untapped goldmine. They are waiting for better flight connectivity, but even without it, groups are coming via Chennai. It is a market just sitting there — ready for engagement, and we are keen to tap into it,” she concluded. **MT**

FLUX

Perched above the city, this rooftop bar transforms into a wedding space that moves to your rhythm. From sunset vows to moonlit celebrations, every moment flows effortlessly.



India gains strategic ground at AIME 2026



Returning to Melbourne in February 2026, AIME positions India within its largest-ever edition, reflecting surging global participation and growing Asia-Pacific demand for strategic business events partnerships.

By **MT Bureau**

The Asia Pacific Incentives and Meetings Event (AIME) will return to the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre from 9–11 February 2026 with its largest and most internationally diverse edition to date, reinforcing India's growing strategic presence within the global business events landscape.

AIME 2026 will host more than 750 exhibitors, reflecting strong momentum across Asia Pacific and beyond. With such a broad array of exhibitors, India is poised to engage directly with a global community of partners, encompassing everything from world-class venues to innovative production specialists.

India will feature alongside a wide spectrum of established and emerging destinations including New Zealand, Singapore, Indonesia, Thailand, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Hong Kong, Macao, Canada, and the United States, as well as new entrants such as South Africa, the UAE, Uganda, and Egypt. With 36 countries represented, the show floor signals expanding cross-border opportunity and deeper regional collaboration.

The format is designed to accelerate conversations, strengthen pipelines, and convert engagement into tangible outcomes. This focus is reinforced through AIME's hosted buyer program, with more than 700 highly vetted buyers expected and over 20,000 pre-scheduled meetings taking place across the two-day trade show on 10 and 11 February.

AIME 2026 underscores India's relevance in global MICE, as exhibitors and buyers converge to accelerate cross-border deal-making

Silke Calder, Event Director, AIME highlights, "AIME continues to be a catalyst for connection, ideas, and long-term partnerships," she says. "We are creating the biggest show yet delivered by our team, and that growth is driven by a community that recognises the importance of coming together." **MT**

Yashobhoomi spruced up in preparation for SATTE 2026

A month ahead of SATTE 2026, Yashobhoomi has been given a much-needed facelift — with advanced infrastructure and flawless connectivity — equipping the world-class business centre for better outcomes.

By **MT Bureau**

To ensure a seamless, business-ready experience for the global travel industry ahead of its 2026 edition between 25–27 February, the South Asia's Travel and Tourism Exchange (SATTE) has further strengthened the infrastructure and connectivity at Yashobhoomi (India International Convention & Expo Centre), New Delhi.

In collaboration with venue authorities and telecom partners,

significant mobile connectivity upgrades have been implemented, including the installation of additional mobile towers and in-hall network boosters across all exhibition halls.

These technical enhancements are specifically designed to support high visitor density and peak data usage. By ensuring uninterrupted communication, the upgrades enable smooth networking, digital transactions, and real-time business engagement.

The infrastructure's robustness was recently proven at scale during the PAPEREX event, which hosted over 1,000 exhibitors and 30,000 visitors. Seamless connectivity was maintained even during peak footfall hours, reinforcing outcomes that were favourable for the businesses.

Pallavi Mehra, Senior Group Director, Informa Markets India, stated, "At SATTE, our focus has always been on delivering a world-class marketplace that enables meaningful business outcomes. Infrastructure plays a critical role in this experience. The successful performance of enhanced connectivity at an event the scale of PAPEREX reinforces our confidence

With upgraded infrastructure in place, the exhibition promises a seamless, connected, high-performance experience

in the readiness of Yashobhoomi for SATTE 2026."

With upgraded infrastructure in place, the exhibition promises a seamless, connected, high-performance experience, SATTE's position as India and Asia's most trusted travel and tourism platform bringing together global destinations, tourism boards, travel professionals, and industry leaders will be strengthened. **MT**





Thailand sets 5-year carbon cutting goals

Thailand Convention and Exhibition Bureau (TCEB) has unveiled a sustainability mission from zero-carbon apps to revised bidder guidelines aimed at steering the Thai MICE industry towards carbon neutrality future.

By **MT Bureau**

Demonstrating leadership in sustainable development, the Thailand Convention and Exhibition Bureau (TCEB) has announced a new sustainability mission to steer the Thai MICE industry toward carbon neutrality and a net zero carbon future, aiming to reduce emissions by 20,000 ton CO₂e by the year 2030.

This ambition reflects the Thai MICE industry's growing resolve, having collectively reduced and avoided 2,445.97 ton CO₂e across 232 events in FY 2025, compared to 780 ton CO₂e in FY 2024. The 313 per cent increase underscores the industry's rising commitment to environmentally responsible event management.

Supawan Teerarat, President, TCEB, said that creating a greener footprint for Thailand's events aligns with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) initiatives set by the United Nations and supports the government's national development strategy. "Thailand is advancing sustainability from aspiration to achievement, turning long-term commitments into measurable impacts. Building on TCEB's long-standing focus on eco-friendly growth and proactive green initiatives, we are fully prepared to help clients host meaningful and sustainable events."

To achieve this goal, TCEB has updated its Terms of Reference for bidders and proposal submitters, requiring organisers to plan carbon-neutral events. Event organisers are required to calculate

the carbon footprint of their events and implement measures to achieve carbon emissions, obtaining certification, or following additional guidance from TCEB. Organisers are also encouraged to offset emissions by sourcing carbon credits from greenhouse gas reduction projects in Thailand, ensuring that the event's net greenhouse gas emissions are reduced or fully neutralised.

TCEB provides practical tools to support organisers in meeting these sustainability goals. These resources include a carbon footprint avoidance calculator for event planners, the Zero Carbon application developed by the Thailand Greenhouse Gas Management Organization (TGO), for tracking emission reductions, a comprehensive network of auditing and verifying bodies, and access to domestic carbon credit projects to facilitate effective offsetting. By empowering organisers with these innovative tools and support systems, TCEB is not only making sustainable event management more accessible but also encouraging a culture of accountability and continuous improvement across the industry. **MT**

MOVEMENTS



SAKSHI SEHDEV DOGRA
 Director-Area, Marketing & Communication, South Asia
 Radisson Hotel Group

Radisson Hotel Group has appointed Sakshi Sehdev Dogra as Director Area Marketing & Communications, South Asia. With two decades in the game – most recently leading sales and marketing for 78+ Wyndham properties – Dogra’s expertise spans the India and Eurasia markets. Her mission? Integrating creative excellence with commercial discipline to elevate brand visibility and guest engagement. She aims to sharpen the Group’s market presence through digital innovation and enhanced consumer connection.



GAURAV VASHISHT
 General Manager
 Ramada Encore by Wyndham,
 Gurugram

Gaurav Vashisht joins Ramada Encore Dwarka Expressway, Gurugram, as General Manager. A 2004 BCIMCT alumnus, Vashisht arrives from Yashail Hotel Haridwar to helm the 91-key property at Elan Miracle Mall. Because of his robust experience, he is charged with integrating sales strategies and operational excellence. His expertise will be pivotal in capturing market share within Gurugram’s aggressive corporate landscape, ensuring the asset delivers premium value to stakeholders and MICE travellers alike.



SOMRUP CHANDA
 General Manager
 Fairfield by Marriott Kolkata

Somrup Chanda has been appointed General Manager at Fairfield by Marriott Kolkata. He’s a seasoned veteran with expertise that spans hotel operations, marketing, revenue maximisation, customer experience, and pre-openings. In 2023, Chanda assumed the role of Director of Operations at the iconic Bangalore Marriott Hotel Whitefield. Known for his expertise in pre-openings and revenue maximisation, he is expected to leverage his deep local market knowledge to drive performance at this key Marriott asset.



KAMALJIT SINGH
 General Manager
 Westin Jaipur Kant Kalwar
 Resort and Spas

Kamaljit Singh is now a part of The Westin Jaipur Kant Kalwar as General Manager, arriving just as Marriott marks its 200th India opening. An SCHM Mangalore alumnus, Singh’s career has navigated city-centre hotels, luxury resorts, and high-stakes corporate environments. He now aims to anchor the property as Rajasthan’s wellness capital. By aligning Westin’s renewal pillars, the resort’s massive sports turf, and the Heavenly Spa, Singh brings his signature focus to this landmark chapter.



SV SATHYAM
 Director of People & Culture
 NHCC & HICC

SV Sathyam has been appointed as Director of People & Culture for Novotel Hyderabad Convention Centre (NHCC) and Hyderabad International Convention Centre (HICC). Moving from his previous role at Novotel Hyderabad Airport, this “homecoming” leverages his deep familiarity with the brand. In his new role, he will be responsible for scaling talent pipelines and refining organisational culture at the dual-complex, ensuring their people strategy keeps pace with the intense demands.



GRANTH KAPOOR
 Associate Director, Sales
 The Ajit Group

Granth Kapoor has been appointed as Associate Director of Sales at The Ajit Group, bringing 15 years of luxury experience from brands like IHG and Marriott. An ITC and Metropolitan veteran, his current focus shifts to the Group’s heritage icons – Ajit Bhawan and Rawla Narlai. He is now steering the brand’s market development, positioning, and revenue growth. Kapoor’s goal? Ensuring that Rajasthan landmarks keep their edge within a crowded, high-stakes luxury landscape.



UTSAV SHARMA
 Corporate Learning and
 Development Manager
 OPO Hotels & Resorts

OPO Hotels & Resorts bolsters its human capital strategy with the appointment of Utsav Sharma as Corporate Learning and Development Manager. An Oberoi and Marriott veteran with nine years of Indo-Canadian experience, Sharma transitions from luxury and co-living sectors to lead OPO’s multi-property training. His mandate targets service transformation and future-ready scaling – a critical move as OPO sharpens its competitive edge in the evolving South Asian hospitality landscape.



DEPINDER PAL SINGH
 Sales Manager
 The Ajit Group

IHM Pusa alumnus Depinder Pal Singh has moved to The Ajit Group as Sales Manager, based in Delhi. Singh’s decade-long track record includes luxury turns at The Lodhi, Hyatt, and ITC Maurya. Most recently with Amritara, he now shifts focus to the heritage circuit. He’ll be driving brand visibility and corporate partnerships for Ajit Bhawan and Rawla Narlai – bringing a sharpened, market-specific lens to the Group’s historic Rajasthan portfolio.



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