



(Established in 1988)
India Convention Promotion Bureau
(Sponsored by Ministry of Tourism, Government of India)

MICE Pulse™

An Initiative of India Convention Promotion Bureau (ICPB)

Vol I ■ Issue IV ■ JULY-AUGUST 2020 ■ 12 pages

Message

Dear Industry Friends,

I hope you are all safe and adhering to the “new normal” of social distancing and necessary precautions.



Rakesh Kumar Verma
(IAS)

The coronavirus pandemic has had a catastrophic effect on each and every sector – hitting the economy badly, but perhaps, the travel, tourism and hospitality sectors have been most severely hit. With the new normal as the accepted way of life, we are slowly and gradually witnessing

opening up of economic activities including the aviation sector. The government is taking the necessary measures and everyone is hoping and praying that the pandemic crisis will soon show signs of receding.

I am happy to note that the travel industry and the MICE sector are united and stand in solidarity to make the best of these hard times. The numerous webinars and social media campaigns have kept the industry active and all segments of the trade are charting out their strategies for the future. This is a good start as a domestic-focused approach is what we need and is what will pick up eventually. Realising the same, the Ministry of Tourism has also been successfully organising a series of Webinars under the overall theme of Dekho Apna Desh to bring the focus back on domestic tourism.

The MICE sector is poised for a paradigm shift. Going forward, the structure, format, protocols for meetings, incentives, conferences and exhibitions will witness a sea change. The new guidelines

for all the MICE activities will address the safety concerns and be the top priority of all stakeholders of the industry. One may take a cue from the hospitality sector, which has effectively adapted the new norms for safety and hygiene to bring in the much needed confidence and trust of the meeting planners. Opportunities for the sector will continue to increase and the domestic demand will help build confidence in the sector's revival.

-Rakesh Kumar Verma, IAS, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Tourism, Government of India and Chairman, ICPB



Preventing COVID-19 at Workplaces

- Make sure your workplace is clean & hygienic.
- Regularly disinfect surfaces (desks & tables) and objects (telephones, keyboards, etc.)
- Promote regular handwashing by employees.
- Put hand sanitizers in prominent places.
- Promote good respiratory hygiene.
- Ensure face masks & paper tissues are available.
- Refrain from unnecessary travel, both local & international.



#IndiaFightsCorona

@COVIDNewsByMIB

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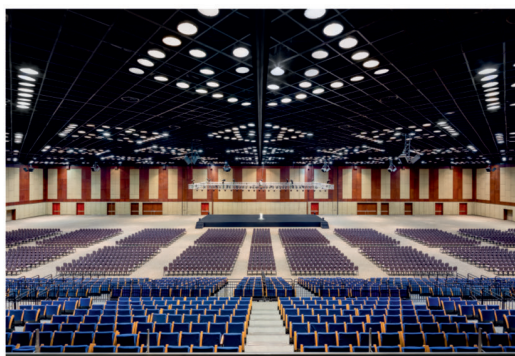
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- » 5th Largest Economy
- » Young Vibrant Nation
- » Land of Business Opportunities
- » Knowledge Hub

India Convention Promotion Bureau (ICPB)
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Trends & Statistics

ICCA REPORT – 2019

India Statistics

India's rank in the world – 28th

Total no. of conference – 158

India's rank in Asia Pacific – 7th

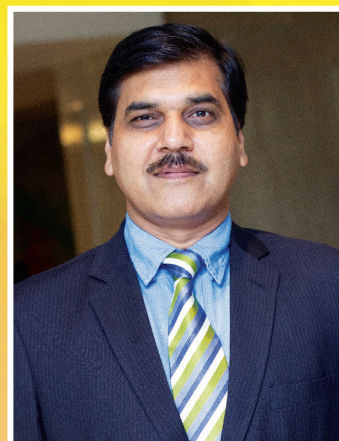
Total no. of meetings in the world – 13269

City wise international meetings

S.No.	City	No. of meetings
1.	New Delhi	37
2.	Hyderabad	19
3.	Bengaluru	14
4.	Mumbai	14
5.	Chennai	13
6.	Goa	8
7.	Ahmedabad	5
8.	Kochi	3
9.	Kolkata	3
10.	Lucknow	3
11.	Roorkee	3
12.	Varanasi	3
13.	Bhopal	2
14.	Bhubaneswar	2
15.	Gandhinagar	2
16.	Gurgaon	2
17.	Indore	2
18.	Jaipur	2
19.	Pune	2
20.	Allahabad	1
21.	Others	18
	Total	158

Vice Chairman Message

These are exceptional times – one that we will remember long after it is over. Tales of which will be narrated to the next generation – tales of grit, power and resilience. How many businesses had to close shop, how the migrant helpless workers had to struggle to reach their hometown and how 'lockdown' acquired an all new meaning... We would tell our younger generation how travel came to a halt – planes stood grounded and trains remained immobile; how cars were parked at home and cabs put to rest.... Exceptional and challenging times indeed.



Amaresh Tiwari

However, things have started to limp back their way to normalcy, or the "new normal" as people refer to it. Travel too has started – air travel with social distancing, hotels and resorts are opening with extra safe and sanitised measures and self-precautions such as mask and gloves, all well in place. For a foreseeable future, this is how travel will be and we will all have to learn to live with the norms of this "new normal".

The entire world is praying with the hope that the number of COVID cases come down in next two months' time and we in India are no exception. As the skies open up slowly and steadily to national flights, I am sure that domestic travel will gradually pick pace and once the international borders and skies open, people will come forward to meet and conduct business – with all necessary precautions in place.

Being a thorough optimist, I am hopeful that the meeting spaces will open too for conducting conferences from September 2020 onwards. We may start initially with state level meetings followed by zonal, and then national meetings could open, and thereafter as borders open, then international meetings may be opened. However, conducting meetings and events under the challenges of "new normal" will be an altogether different ball game. We would all have to be extra careful and ensure compete safety of not just our clients but also our staff and service providers.

So friends, the tough times are definitely not over but the water seems to have calmed a bit. Together, as an industry, who has an amazing product in their pocket – Incredible India – we can surely make MICE bounce again, with better planning and enhanced safety measures. We, at ICPB, are here to extend a hand to anyone who seeks our guidance and support and can assure you of our dedication to make MICE grow in India at all times.

-Amaresh Tiwari, Vice Chairman, ICPB

With world-class venues and infrastructure Bengaluru beats the **MICE** competition in India

The capital city of Karnataka – Bengaluru has been associated with ‘business travellers’ for quite some time now. Often referred to as the ‘Silicon Valley’ of India, the city witnesses’ huge amount of meetings, exhibitions, conferences and events given the presence of numerous multi-national companies in the area. Thus, it comes as no surprise that Bengaluru is also home to many plush, state-of-the-art and advanced MICE venues, fully adept to hold events of large magnitude. Here’s a look at some of them –

In the recent years India has emerged as one of the most sought-after MICE destination where not one but many cities are fast developing as popular MICE hubs and constantly upgrading their facilities and services to stay at the top. Bengaluru is among the fastest-growing metropolis of the country. Being a major IT hub, Bengaluru is home to multi-national companies and in terms of infrastructure, it offers one of the best amenities in the country. JW Marriott Hotel, The Ritz-Carlton Spa, Four Seasons Hotel Bengaluru, Shangri-La Hotel, The Leela Palace, The Taj are some of the few 5-star properties in the city with amazing banquet facilities for corporate events.

Bengaluru is a city of contrasts, going by several aliases: India’s Silicon Valley, pub city, shopper’s paradise, garden city and gourmet’s delight. The city not only plays host to several international IT companies, reputed educational and research institutions, public sector enterprises and defence organisations, but also lays claim to being the hub of India’s emerging biotech industry. From some beautiful tourist spots to hordes of eateries and restaurants, it has everything to keep your delegates entertained, besides being awed by excellent MICE venues.

Bangalore International Exhibition Centre (BIEC)

India's first "LEED - Certified" Green Exhibition & Conference Facility and an initiative of Indian Machine Tool Manufacturers Association (IMTMA), Bangalore International Exhibition Centre is India's premier international Exhibition-cum-Conference Facility and it is the only centre of its kind in India.

Exhibition and Conference facilities at BIEC are first of its kind in India which offer services and amenities of the highest quality at par with international standards.



Spread across 46 acres near Peenya industrial township of Bengaluru, this multi-purpose 34 acres beautifully landscaped complex has 40,000 sq. m. of covered column-less air-conditioned exhibition space (three exhibition halls), a multi-facility conference centre spread over 5,600 sq. m. including four Conference Halls, a Helipad, an Amphitheatre, VIP Lounge, Food Court of 7500 sq. m., a Machine Tool Training Centre, and large outdoor area. It also has an infrastructure to distribute 11 MW of power supply. BIEC is today the number one choice of all major exhibitions/events/conferences organizers from all over the world. Meanwhile, the venue is undertaking all the necessary precautions and following the government guidelines ensuring the safety of its staff and visitors alike.

Clarks Exotica – Convention Resort & Spa



The Clarks Exotica – Convention Resort & Spa is nestled amidst 70 acres of lush greenery in Bengaluru, India. This unique resort offers a relaxed yet sophisticated environment that embraces the natural beauty of the surrounding area. The resort has 141 well-appointed guest rooms in addition to conference halls with inviting banquet facilities, fine dining options, indoor



and outdoor sport facilities, and healing Wellness Centre.

Elegant dining can be experienced at the three on-site restaurants. It has an on-site fitness centre – an indoor/outdoor recreation centre, where you'll find table tennis, squash, indoor badminton, and basketball courts. The luxurious swimming pool and Seventh Heaven Wellness Spa offer a variety of massage therapies and treatments. One can host corporate and personal events of any size and occasion in one of the 11 artistically decorated banquet halls equipped with the best-in-class amenities. Clarks Exotica – Convention Resort & Spa was awarded as the The Best MICE Destination at the India Tourism Awards 2018 for its excellent work. Post COVID 19, the property is leaving no stone unturned in adhering to all protocols and norms of social distancing, sanitising and safety of its team members as well as guests.

Kempegowda International Airport

The Kempegowda International Airport has connectivity from all around the world. The airport has 40 gates and eight air bridges, including one double arm and nine remote bus bays. There are a total of 42 aircraft stands, all of which have a fuelling pit. It also has a car park for 2,000, built in front of the terminal building at ground level. A second runway commenced operations at the Kempegowda International Airport in December 2019. The airport is the first in the country to have parallel runways, which allow landing and take-off at the same time.

Places of Tourist interest

- **Vidhan Soudha:** Located at a distance of 20 km from Palm Meadows, Vidhan Soudha is considered as one of the most impressive as well as the most magnificent buildings in Bangalore. It is mainly famous for housing the Legislative Chambers of the state government.

- **Cubbon Park:** Cubbon Park, which is 16 km from Palm Meadows, has a plethora of plant life, stately historical buildings and statues like those of Queen Victoria, King Edward VII, Major General Sir Mark Cubbon and Chamarajendra Wodeyar. It is a place where nature-lovers, fitness enthusiasts and historians could spend hours.
- **Lal Bagh Garden:** Lal Bagh, easily one of India's most beautiful botanical gardens, is located at a distance of about 18 km from Palm Meadows. It has about 1000 species of rare plants and herbs. Set on a property of 240 acres, the garden has 4 approach gates and is well protected with stone walls which act as enclosures.
- **Jawaharlal Nehru Planetarium:** The Jawaharlal Nehru Museum which is 18 km from Palm Meadows, counts as one of the most popular tourist attractions in the city. There is a sky theatre inside the planetarium, with a huge dome that has a diameter of fifteen meters.
- **Bangalore Palace:** Bangalore Palace is situated in Palace Grounds, about 16 kms from Palm Meadows, in the heart of the city. Built in the year 1887, by the Wodeyar dynasty, it is adorned with magnificent woodcarvings and Tudor-style architecture on the inside.

India Expo Centre & Mart assures safety of all, adapting to the 'new normal'

India Expo Centre & Mart assures to prevent the spread of COVID -19 through its efforts and precautionary steps while adapting to the new normal as well as meeting the standard of a fully-equipped facility under the concept of smartness on top of safety. IEML has implemented precautionary and preventive measures and strictly adhered to issued guidelines to promote health and safety of customers, exhibitors, and visitors. It is proactively carrying out fogging, deep cleaning of floors, sanitisation of complex daily, mats at main entrance every two hours, sanitization of office area thrice a day, disinfecting of escalator handrails, door handles, lift and lift buttons, chairs, tables etc. at regular interval. Temperature checks (by infra-red thermometers), vehicle sanitisation at entry gate, movement of person through sanitization tunnel into complex and use of sanitisers placed at common areas, wearing of mask, social distancing is ensured.



Grand Hyatt Kochi Bolgatty introduces special 'staycation' offer

Guided by its Global Care and Cleanliness Commitment, the Grand Hyatt Kochi Bolgatty has announced a special Staycation offer. Under the scheme, along with every room purchased, comes a complimentary guestroom and meals for two children (12 years of age or under), 20% off on dining, 50% off on an upgrade to a Club room or suite, daily breakfast, one meal per day of the guests' choice, 1 hour Kayaking and complimentary access to kids play zone.



IHCL exceeds 2 million meals offered to healthcare providers and migrant workers

Through its program, IHCL has partnered with BMC in Mumbai to offer over 925,000 meals to the medical fraternity at seven key hospitals/COVID-19 centres. In Bangalore, the company has provided over 26,000 meals to staff at Victoria Hospital and Epidemic Diseases Hospital in partnership with Taj West End. While in New Delhi, IHCL has served over 191,000 meals to eight hospitals. Since March 31, 2020, in partnership with Tata Sons, TPSWT has also provided over 914,000 meals to migrant workers in Mumbai.



Tibet tours and travels provided logistic services to stranded British nationals

Tibet tours and travels provided logistic services to the British High Commission. There were British citizens stranded in India due to coronavirus and had to be dropped to Kolkata Airport from various destinations in India. Gangtok, Dooars Kalimpong, Odisha, Bihar, Patna and remote places, such as, Manipur, Meghalaya, Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Bhubaneshwar, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand and other destinations. They offered services to 256 guests. For this work, they were felicitated by International Hospitality Council, London.

Virtual Events introduces VIRTUAL Ex

In a matter of weeks, the global landscape has changed enormously, and professionals in the meetings industry now face the pressing need to make tough decisions quickly. Hence to cater to the need of the hour, the company has introduced a whole new segment of Virtual Events called VIRTUAL Ex, focusing upon virtually gathering masses together like never before. Over the past few weeks, a significant number of meetings and conferences have been redesigned as virtual events.

From the desk of Hony. Secretary ICPB

Dear Industry Colleagues,

As flights start to pick pace slowly, there is no denying that the future of tourism is domestic (which is a huge segment), atleast for the next one year, as international meets will be very small in size, not only because of fear of travel,



Girish Kwatra

but also because of financial crisis. However, I certainly feel there will be a big challenge in conducting the conferences in the 'New Normal way'. This pandemic will also affect the participation of the delegates in the conferences, even when they start to happen. Conferences will happen more in examination style rather than theatre or cluster style.

Venues will have to rework on their convention areas. They would need to provide a safe

conference environment and to ensure that people are not exposed to risks in terms of their health and safety. They will have to ensure that the event is safe and secure for all the staff and attendees.

As an ICPB Office Bearer, I am happy to share that we are constantly conducting Knowledge Sessions and Interactive Webinars for our members, not only for the current MICE business, but also on issues such as managing finances, general safety of homes and offices and surviving during these difficult times etc. We have seen great participation from the industry people and positive response to almost all our webinars and talks, be it on 'How do address the pandemic, while at work/ attending conferences/ hotel stays; 'Roadmap for recovery of MICE - post lockdown / COVID19 crisis' or our latest which ICPB hosted in association with Institute of Tourism Studies, University of Lucknow on 'Career Path in MICE: Adapting to the NEW Normal'.

Friends, we have to understand that India is a very complex country wherein the primary agenda is to feed people, sending them to their respective home places, etc. However, we strongly believe that Government will provide us solutions in the long run. We have been doing sessions with Ministry of Tourism and are very confident that MoT is considering our requests and our demand and will definitely provide some relief to the MICE Industry as well as ICPB members. Not long ago, MoT has already launched Champion Sector in Services Scheme (CSSS) in these difficult times, which will be a big boost to international tourism business, as the borders are open for global meets.

-Mr. Girish Kwatra, Hony. Secretary, ICPB

India's Digital MICE Planner

ICPB has developed an informative digital MICE planner, a comprehensive guide to the MICE facilities available in India. The Planner will serve as a ready reference for a conference organiser planning an event.

ICPB Digital MICE Planner provides information on the convention venues and meeting hotels across the country with details regarding the facilities available, capacity chart, layout plans, post tour options, new upcoming convention venues, India's incentive experiences, air connectivity details, convention support services etc. Planner is updated every quarter to include maximum and updated information on the MICE venues in India.

An all-inclusive document with rich content on MICE facilities in India makes this Planner most useful and an important source of credible information for international and domestic conference organisers. The Planner is available on the Bureau's website - www.icpb.in

ICPB busy hosting Webinars to keep MICE afloat

ICPB Governing Board members and team at the Secretariat has been busy during the last couple of months in hosting a series of Webinars and talks for the Industry in its endeavour to keep finding ways and means of reviving MICE again in the country. Here's a look at some of them –

■ The Profit & Loss of Digital Marketing in MICE

Date: May 11, 2020

The webinar was moderated by Mr. Amit Saroj, CEO, Indiattitude

Panellists:

- Ms. Mariska Kesteloo, Founder, Word of MICE
- Mr. Kamal Narayan, Co-Founder, Teamwork Communication Group, CEO - IHW Council
- Ms. Parul Thakur, Sr. Area Director Sales and Distribution - Marriott South Asia
- Ar. Sanjay Soni, Chief Knowledge Director, Incredible Design
- Mr. Tushar Kesharwani, Chief Visionary Officer, Vacation Experts Pvt. Ltd.
- Mr. Ajay Vinayak, CEO, Palomino Hospitality Pvt. Ltd.



■ Financial Management during Present Crisis and Way Forward

Date: May 20, 2020

The webinar was moderated by Mr. Anuj Wadhwa, Chief Operating Officer - Plan It! Meetings & Conferences

Panellists:

- Mr. Chander Mansharamani, Managing Director -Alpcord Network Travel & Conferences Management Company
- Mr. Amit Chopra, Chartered Accountant - Gopal Chopra & Associates

The objective of the webinar was to discuss and learn about the best practices in financial management from the experts during COVID19.



■ Reinventing Meetings - The NEW Normal

Date: May 26, 2020

Speakers representing Hotel Industry

- Mr. Mohammad Ali, Senior Director Meeting & Events - Accor India & South Asia
- Ms. Ritika Gupta, Vice President - Markets (North & West) - The Indian Hotels Company Limited
- Ms. Shampa Dhali-Member Governing Board, ICPB and Area-Director – National Sales India, Marriott India Hotels Pvt Ltd

Experts representing Bureau and Trade Industry

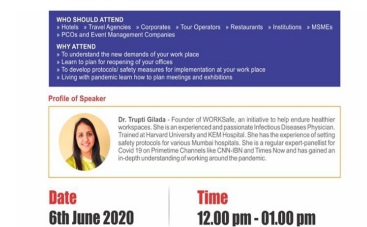
- Mr. Amaresh Tiwari, Vice Chairman – ICPB
- Mr. Girish Kwatra, Hony. Secretary – ICPB
- Mr. Anuj Wadhwa, Hony. Treasurer – ICPB
- Mr. Sanjoy K Roy, President, EEMA
- Mr. S. Balasubramanian, President, IEIA
- Mr. Sunil More, President, IESA
- Mr. Rohit Khosla, Executive Committee Member, HAI



■ SOPs on Reopening Workplace/Meetings Post COVID19

Date: June 6, 2020

This was an expert talk hosted by ICPB and FAITH jointly.



Speaker: Dr. Trupti Gilada – Founder of WORKSafe – an initiative to help endure healthier workspaces. Trupti is an experienced and passionate Infectious Diseases Physician Trained at Harvard University.

■ Roadmap for recovery of MICE - post lockdown / COVID19 crisis

Date: June 16, 2020

The webinar was moderated by: Mr. Nakul Anand, Chairman – Federation of Associations in Indian Tourism & Hospitality (FAITH); Executive Director – ITC Limited

Panelists:

- Mr. Suman Billa, Director - Technical Cooperation & Silk Road, World Tourism Organization (UNWTO)
- Mr. Ashwin Gunasekaran - Asia Pacific Chapter Chair - International Congress and Convention Association (ICCA); Chief Executive Officer - Penang Convention & Exhibition Bureau
- Mr. Puneet Chhatwal, Managing Director & Chief Executive Officer - The Indian Hotels Company Limited (IHCL)

The webinar presented an opportunity to the industry stakeholders to learn from the esteemed panel - global, regional and Indian perspective for revival of the MICE industry.

■ Reinventing Meetings - the NEW Normal Part - 2

Date: June 22, 2020

Speakers:

- Ms. Rajani Nair Deb, DOSM – MMCEC & The Leela, Gandhinagar
- Mr. Shailesh Bansal, Head of Sales (MICE) – ITC Hotels
- Mr. Julian Ayers, Area Vice President - North India; General Manager – Hyatt Regency Delhi
- Mr. Gaurav Aggarwal, Market Director, MICE India, National Sales –Marriott South Asia

The aim was to understand and discuss the measures taken by hotels and convention / exhibition centres to prepare for future meetings, post lockdown/COVID19.

■ Career Path in MICE: Adapting to the NEW Normal

Date: June 26, 2020

The Webinar was Moderated by Dr. Anupama Srivastava, Coordinator - Institute of Tourism Studies, University of Lucknow

Panelists:

- Mr. Rajeev Kohli, Jt. Managing Director – Creative Travel
- Mr. Chander Mansharamani, Managing Director - Alpcord Network Travel & Conferences Management Company
- Mr. Naveen Rizvi, Executive Director - ICE-Integrated Conference & Event Management
- Mr. Neeraj Dhawan, Director - Falcon Exhibitions Pvt. Ltd.

ICPB Experts:

- Mr. Amaresh Tiwari, Vice Chairman – ICPB
- Mr. Girish Kwatra, Hony. Secretary – ICPB
- Mr. Anuj Wadhwa, Hony. Treasurer – ICPB
- Mr. Dharmendra Kumar, MD, Geanis World



ICPB members spread positivity online with their #StayPositive Messages



AMARESH TIWARI
Vice Chairman, ICPB

Yes the meetings and exhibitions industry has taken a huge hit and it will be quite some time before it gets back to normal. But, trust me, it will be normal one day and when that will happen – people will be more than eager to host events, exhibitions, make up for their losses and build up their businesses – and that day my dear friends, will be the dawn of a new era of the MICE Industry. So have faith, stay positive and keep yourselves prepared for the future.



GIRISH KWATRA,
Hony. Secretary, ICPB

Even though the COVID-19 positive cases are growing in India, the optimist in me feels that it could have been much worse, like other countries around us. The early lockdown and its strict implementation stopped the virus from spreading like wildfire in our country, results of which will be visible soon. I am sure that the coming couple of months will require us to keep our patience and we can judiciously use them to plan our strategy for the future. We must stay safe and start the new normal way of living.



ANUJ WADHWA
Hony. Treasurer, ICPB

I know the condition and mood of the Travel Fraternity is grim at the moment. Nothing seems to be working in our favour. But friends, this is a phase, which will soon get over... In few months from now, people will be back in action and ready to travel like never before. Their pent up hunger for travel will provide a surge for the travel industry and give it the much-needed boost.



CHANDER MANSHARAMANI
Immediate Past Vice Chairman,
ICPB

The COVID-19 is a challenge, which we together need to overcome and move forward. We cannot let it discourage us and bow us down. We all have to stay positive. Let us look forward to New World Business opportunities and focus our energies towards building a stronger and a brighter future for everyone. In the meanwhile, I urge everyone to stay safe and stay healthy.



RAJEEV KOHLI
Former Vice Chairman,
ICPB

The concept of meetings has been around for thousands of years. It is a format of human interaction. Will it stop? Most certainly not! For those who think the likes of Zoom will replace travel are mistaken. Humans need to interact. They need to see, feel, touch and smell. No matter how much you sit behind a computer and speak, it will never replace the comfort of a handshake and a hug. That is in our DNA since time immemorial. There is simply no other way around this.



MADHU DUBEY
Executive Director,
ICPB

A crisis is an opportunity for innovations, adaptations and a positive response that motivates others who are looking for direction and possible solutions. As a united industry, we know and believe in our strengths and we will adapt to the new demands and create our unique space in the new world order.

ICPB members spread positivity online with their #StayPositive Messages



MADAN KAK

Governing Board Member, ICPB

The global outbreak of COVID-19 has brought the world to a standstill. Tourism has been worst affected of all major economic sectors. The Tourism industry, which contributes to about 10% to the country's GDP, has witnessed many setbacks in past though not as severe. The industry has always limped back to normalcy and done better after every such incidents. Track record of India in handling the COVID-19 crisis has been outstanding. The country as diverse and dynamic as India can emerge as a preferred destination in days ahead. Let us start again with a positive mind and start our preparations to welcome our guests in the best Indian traditions.



NAVEEN RIZVI

Governing Board Member, ICPB

This time is just a pause. Travelling and socializing is in our genes, it is addictive and contagious. We will have conferences and events happening again, people will start travelling again with a new mind set, new reason, new desire and new hopes. We just need to be positive now and wait with open hearts to serve our clients again.



NEERAJ DHAWAN

Governing Board Member, ICPB

In today's uncertain times, it is vital for us to stay optimistic and spread sunshine all across. Very soon, World 2.0 will be open for business and our customers will be back with us seeking solutions. As MICE Industry, we may have to offer new and innovative business models and this is the time for us to reskill ourselves. World 2.0 will surely be more exciting than before, and ICPB fraternity should be ready to climb greater heights!



RIPUDAMAN SINGH CHAUHAN

Governing Board Member,
ICPB

India is oldest civilisation with strong cultural values, believes & way of living. That is why it always survived from any crises – social or economic.

We have rich cultural and heritage sites, world class venues, experienced professionals & on top of it, Potential to grow faster than any other economy in the world. Moreover, Industry is coming up with positive attitude, innovative ideas, commitment towards safety, support to each other in this time of crises.

I am sure that our strength and positive attitude will play a vital role in bringing our industry back to normal, soon.



DHARMENDRA KUMAR

Member, ICPB

Doors of homes are surely closed now, but roads to heart are wide open; everyone who matters, young or old, seems to be standing besides. Distance of thousand miles isn't a question any more, when I close my eyes, I can find my own around. Indeed, the time isn't right, yet near and dear ones are together. Love and blessings are being shared on screens no matter. The happy days are surely gonna come sooner. The time, we are in, will be written in History. We won't lose, we won't get tired, we won't fall; we will rise again. Soon we will meet again, laugh again, make memories again and yes, travel again!



RAVINDRA PRASAD,

Member, ICPB

Covid 19 has come to challenge us all in our way of living. It is the right time to prove our strength. We are not afraid of anything. This time shall pass too. It has given us a break to make all of us feel what we are and what we can do. I am sure, we will all return to our new phase of life with new zeal and energy. Our industry gives a boost to the entire economy. It is very much needed for any other industry to function with the help of travel, conferences & tourism. During this time, just revive your skills, knowledge and be ready to move forward. Our combined efforts can help beat this pandemic.

MoT will provide Incentives under CSS Scheme for promoting **MICE Tourism** in India

In order to give a boost to the MICE tourism and attract more events and conventions to the country, the Government of India has decided to extend the benefits to the meetings / conference organisers under Champion Sector in Services Scheme (CSSS), administered by the Ministry of Tourism (MOT). For this purpose, a MICE fund has been set up under the CSSS. This move will surely boost MICE tourism in the country by encouraging the meetings / conference operators to bring more International conferences / meetings / seminars etc. to India. It will also lead to increase in foreign tourist arrivals, employment and foreign exchange earnings for the country.

As per the guidelines –

- The conferences will require a minimum of 500 participants and must comprise at least 20% foreign participants to be eligible for the incentive.
 - The financial incentive would be extended to international conference/ convention organisers in the form of reimbursing 50% of GST on hotel rooms for international / foreign participants / NRIs on actual basis subject to GST being paid to be not more than 18%.
 - The incentive of the GST incurred on hotel stay up to a maximum charge of Rs. 8,000/- per day per room would be made for 1 (one) night/ first night only.
 - The incentive would be made available for a period of three years.
- Also, it would be mandatory for the event organisers to obtain a prior approval of the Ministry of Tourism for seeking the financial incentive under the scheme. It would be mandatory for all the applications to have a letter of No Objection Certificate (NOC) / Letter of Support of the ICPB/IATO/Organisations/Associations recognised by the Ministry of Tourism.

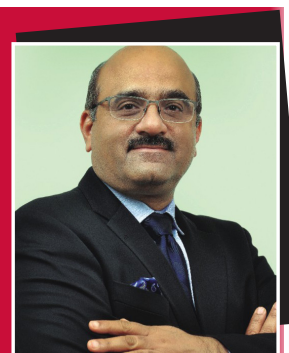
Ministry of Tourism has made India Convention Promotion Bureau (ICPB) as the nodal agency for steering and promoting the scheme who in turn would motivate Indian Travel Planners / Societies / Associations towards publicising the scheme.

Sharing his thoughts on the development, Mr. Amaresh Tiwari, Vice Chairman, ICPB shares, "ICPB has been pursuing this issue with the MoT for the past six to seven months now and we are delighted with the move, which couldn't have come at a better time. However, going forward, ICPB will be recommending / suggesting few alterations to the guidelines so as to broaden the scope the work. We would recommend inclusion of additional events such as weddings, corporate events, etc. and also pursue to bring other associations under the umbrella of the scheme. However, ICPB shall continue to remain the nodal agency for the implementation of the scheme."



Congratulations!

Mr. Abinash Manghani, Governing Board Member, ICPB has been promoted as Chief Executive Officer, WelcomHeritage. He was the Area Manager & Head Travel Industry Sales for ITC Hotels where he was responsible for the leisure & luxury verticals for ITC Hotels on a national basis and Area Manager for Hotels in North India. Speaking on his appointment, Abinash Manghani, CEO, WelcomHeritage said, "I am delighted to join 'WelcomHeritage' Hotels, which has a rich legacy of managing experiential luxury and leisure Hospitality experiences. WelcomHeritage Hotels are uniquely positioned and offer a relative "Safe Haven" during the pandemic. In addition, our Hotels, Palaces and Resorts rigorously follow 'Safety Ensured' initiatives to ensure cleanliness and disinfection as per WHO prescribed standards."



Abinash Manghani

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- **Mr. Girish Kwatra**
- **Mr. Anuj Wadhwa**
- **Mr. Abinash Manghani**
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