



# RAJASTHAN THE GOLDEN DESERT

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## Vice President addresses BSF Sainik Sammelan

• Jaisalmer, June 14

Vice President Shri Jagdeep Dhankhar while addressing the BSF Sainik Sammelan in Jaisalmer today told the soldiers that I am feeling a new energy after coming among you and this moment will always be memorable for me.

Recalling his student life, Mr Dhankhar said, " I have been a student of Sainik School Chittorgarh. I wore a uniform in class 5. I know the power and importance of uniform. I have seen in my childhood how a uniform suddenly transforms you. " Praising the dedication of the Border Security Force jawans, he said, " I am overwhelmed to see you! The country's first line of defence - the Border Security Force is performing its duties excellently. Your work is highly praiseworthy and admirable. "

It is worth mentioning that yesterday evening, the Vice President visited the BSF 's Bawalianwala border outpost in Jaisalmer (Continued on page 7)

## IHCL TAJ HOTEL IN PANCHKULA

• Mumbai, June 11

Indian Hotels Company (IHCL), India's largest hospitality company, today announced the signing of a Taj hotel in Panchkula, Haryana. This greenfield pro-



ject will cater to the growing demand in the tricity of Panchkula, Mohali and Chandigarh.

Speaking on the occasion, Ms. Suma Venkatesh, (Continued on page 7)



## Paralympic Sport "Boccia" Technical Training Programme held at Solan

• RTGD, Solan (H.P.), June 20

Boccia Sports Federation of India (BSFI), in collaboration with Boccia Association of Himachal Pradesh and supported by the Indian Association of Muscular Dystrophy, organized a three-day Technical Training Programme in Solan. The program aims to train new coaches in the sport of Boccia, which originally catered primarily to athletes with cerebral palsy, spinal cord injury, Muscular dystrophy etc. but now includes athletes with various motor skill disabilities. Played from wheelchairs, athletes use techniques such as throwing, kicking, or employing a ramp with assistance. (Continued on page 7)

## Lords Celebrates Over 20 Prestigious Awards

• PR News, June 20



Lords Hotels and Resorts has marked a historic achievement at Asia's Biggest Tourism Awards 2024, securing more than 20 accolades in various categories. This success underscores the group's commitment to excellence, innovation, and leadership in the hospitality industry.

A Night of Accolades: The star-studded event, held in Gujarat, (Continued on page 7)

## "Pushkar will develop with everyone's consent"

• Jaipur, June 19

Water Resources Minister Suresh Singh Rawat assured that the development of Pushkar will proceed with unanimous consent. Emphasizing inclusivity, he stated that all stakeholders will be consulted, ensuring that decisions are made collaboratively and transparently. Rawat underscored the planning of essential infrastructure



such as electricity, water, and roads, guaranteeing uninterrupted services to the region. He emphasized timely completion of road surveys, construction, and maintenance to enhance connectivity. Conducting a comprehensive meeting at the Pushkar sub-division office, Minister Rawat engaged officials from multiple departments and held a public hearing. He instructed the water supply (Continued on page 7)

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*Editorial*

*NEET Exam Irregularities Lead to Cancellation of NET Exam*



Representation picture

**ABDUL NASEER**  
Editor - Publisher

The recent NEET exam results have raised eyebrows with 67 students securing the first rank, candidates from other states flocking to Godhra in Gujarat to take the exam, and grace marks being awarded due to time constraints. These anomalies have baffled students and parents alike. Despite NEET being a prestigious exam conducted by the NTA in India, issues of irregularities and paper leaks persist. In a significant move, the government has also canceled the upcoming UGC NET exam today, directly affecting the futures of 23 lakh NEET students and 9 lakh NET students. This situation highlights a major failure on the part of the Central Government, the Gujarat Government, and the Bihar Government. It is suspected that many such incidents may have occurred, warranting further investigation.

The BJP, which has consistently campaigned against cheating and paper leaks, faces a serious challenge. In the recent assembly elections, particularly in Rajasthan, the BJP had heavily emphasized its commitment to curbing cheating and paper leaks, promising strict laws upon forming the government. However, the current situation remains unchanged. The BJP-led Central Government, now in its third term, has yet to address this critical issue affecting the country's students. The question arises: can the government be trusted to implement such laws after failing to do so in its previous tenures?

The most concerning aspect is how such a significant oversight occurred in the BJP's home state. Currently, the BJP governs at the Center, in Gujarat, and supports the government in Bihar. If such an incident had occurred in an opposition-ruled state, it would have been widely publicized, with leaders voicing their opinions on the matter. Yet, despite the gravity of this situation, the Central Government, its ministers, and even the Prime Minister have remained silent.

Amid growing concerns since June 4, the anger of parents, student protests, and political pressure, Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan held a press conference on Thursday evening. He acknowledged the irregularities in the examination system and announced the formation of a high-level committee to investigate. Pradhan assured that strict action would be taken against any guilty officials, whether inside or outside the NTA. He also promised stringent measures for the NTA's structure, exam conduct, and data security. (Continued on page 7)

**IndiGo shifted International operations to terminal 3 at LKO**

• New Delhi, June 19

IndiGo, India's preferred airline, has announced that all international flights operating from Chaudhary Charan Singh International Airport will arrive and depart from the newly built terminal 3, starting from 06:00 hrs on June 19, 2024.

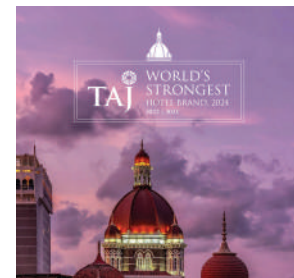
IndiGo has taken proactive measures to ensure that passengers are well-informed about this change. The airline is reaching out to all passengers and their respective travel agents through SMS, calls, and emails. To avoid any inconvenience, IndiGo has advised passengers to retrieve their PNR on the airline's website or mobile app to check their terminal (Continued on page 7)

**Taj Is World's Strongest Hotel Brand 2024**

• Mumbai, June 19

Indian Hotels Company (IHCL), India's largest hospitality company, announced that its iconic brand-Taj is once again the World's Strongest Hotel Brand by Brand Finance. The 'Hotels 50 2024' annual report by the world's leading brand valuation consultancy recognises the most valuable and strongest hotel brands across the globe.

Mr. Puneet Chhatwal, Managing Director & Chief Executive Officer, IHCL, said, "We are delighted for the iconic brand Taj to be honoured as the World's Strongest Hotel Brand yet again, in its milestone 120th year. Receiving this recognition for four years, thrice as number one in the world, is testament to the brand's century old legacy of pioneering destinations, setting global benchmarks and showcasing Indian hospitality to the world. This achievement underscores the trust and affection of our guests and the steadfast dedication and commitment of our colleagues in delivering warm and sincere service, a true hallmark of Taj."



**ITB India – 11 – 13 September in Mumbai**  
**Connecting you to the Indian Travel Market**

• PR News, Berlin / Mumbai, June 18

ITB India 2024 Conference will gather travel industry professionals from 11 – 13 September 2024, at Jio World Convention Centre in Mumbai, India. Under this year's theme "Future-Ready Travel: Embracing Innovation, Sustainability, and Global Connectivity", thought leaders and experts from the MICE, Corporate, Leisure and Travel Technology sectors will provide in-depth perspectives on trends, challenges, and the future of the fast-growing Indian and South Asian travel market across three conference tracks.

India's growing outbound and domestic travel

India's travel industry is on a remarkable growth trajectory, with total travel expenditure set to reach \$410 billion by 2030[1] and outbound travel expected to surpass 80 million travellers by 2040[2]. This growth in demand has reignited the industry's focus on targeting travellers from this dynamic region. In light of this, the conference agenda promises to guide the global travel industry on current travel expectations and future trends, focusing on Indian and South Asian outbound and domestic travel.

The second in-person edition of the ITB India Conference will cover a wide range of topics including adapting to changing contexts, emerging trends, and evolving consumer expectations, MICE tourism in South Asia in 2025, digital transformation in corporate travel, travel in the age of ChatGPT, the impact of smart technology on the hospitality industry, outlook and trends in the travel industry, as well as the interface between technology and the future of tourism.

Among the local and international heavyweights who have confirmed their attendance are Krishna Rathi, Senior Country Director - India Sub Continent & Maldives, (Continued on page 7)



Copyright: ITB India

**AIR INDIA UNVEILS ALL-NEW BUSINESS, PREMIUM ECONOMY & ECONOMY CABINS FOR A320 FLEET**

• PR News, Gurugram, June 19

Air India, India's leading global airline, today unveiled a three-class configuration on its newly inducted narrowbody aircraft. Air India's A320neo aircraft will now offer a new Business, an all-new Premium Economy and a new Economy cabin experience on domestic and short-haul international routes.

Air India has refitted two new A320neo aircraft – VT-RTW and VT-RTZ – in a three-class configuration featuring 8 luxurious

seats in Business, 24 extra legroom seats in Premium Economy and 132 comfortable seats in Econ-



omy, offering wider choice to its guests. With this, Air India introduces Premium Economy cabins for the first time on narrowbody aircraft.

Subtle cabin mood lighting, spacious legroom and wider pitch, and modern features, like portable electronic device (PED) holders and USB ports to charge

mobile phones, laptops and other gadgets, among others will contribute significantly to offer guests, in all three cabins, an in-flight experience that is tailored to the needs of today's discerning flyers.

Air India has plans to introduce the three-class configuration to its entire full service narrowbody fleet over the next year. Existing aircraft are now being progressively inducted for refit, while new aircraft joining the fleet will be delivered with the new Air India experience.

Campbell Wilson, Chief Executive Officer & Managing Director, Air India, said, "The introduction of (Continued on page 7)



**- International Yoga Day-2024 -**

**Officials took stock of the preparations for the celebration**

• Jaipur, June 19

In anticipation of International Yoga Day on 21st June, preparations are in full swing with a state-level event scheduled at the stadium. A comprehensive review meeting took place at the stadium to assess the event's readiness.

Led by Additional District Collector Suman Panwar, Deputy Government Secretary of the Ayurveda Department Sawan Kumar Chayal, Director Dr. Anand Kumar Sharma, and Additional Director (Administration) Meghna Choudhary, the meeting convened with committee heads responsible for various fac-

ets of the program. They provided essential guidelines and reviewed progress across 15 committees including the Executive Committee, Traffic Committee, and Ground Practice Committee.

Assistant Director Dr. Anshuman Chaturvedi highlighted the regular morning yoga practices underway at Ayurveda hospitals and dispensaries across Jaipur. Conducted under the guidance of yoga experts Dr. Kalpana Verma and Dr. Rahul Parashar, these sessions involve medical personnel, public representatives, district officials, and other department staff. The city's yoga enthusiasts are also encouraged to join in large numbers for the upcoming event.

**CM Approves Land Allocation**

• Jaipur, June 16

Under the leadership of Chief Minister Bhajanlal Sharma, the state government is making decisive strides towards positioning Rajasthan as a leading and self-sufficient state in the energy sector. In pursuit of this goal to achieve energy surplus, the Chief Minister has sanctioned the allocation of land for four solar projects.

As per the approved plan, 4780 hectares of land will be allotted to the Rajasthan Solar Park Development Company for establishing three solar parks totaling 2450 MW in Bikaner district. Additionally, the Chief Minister has endorsed the allocation of 910 hectares of land to NTPC Renewable Energy Limited for a 500 MW solar project in Phalodi district.

**“Stone industry will get international recognition”**

• Jaipur, June 14

A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between CDOS and Laghu Udyog Bharti on Friday at the Rajasthan International Center, under the chairmanship of Industry and Commerce Minister Colonel Rajyavardhan Singh Rathore, to organize the 13th edition of India Stonemart scheduled for February 5, 2026.

On this occasion, Minister Rathore stated that this MoU will elevate the organization of India Stonemart 2026, granting the state's stone



industry international recognition. He emphasized that this agreement will pave the way for the global development of Rajasthan's stone and related industries. Rathore highlighted that Laghu Udyog Bharti will be joining India Stonemart as a co-organizer for the first time, and with the enthusiasm of its members, the event is expected to set new benchmarks.

**Anasagar Lake Promotion and Conservation Campaign**

• Jaipur, June 14

The felicitation ceremony for the water hyacinth warriors was held on Friday as part of the Anasagar Lake Promotion and Conservation Campaign. Assembly Speaker Vasudev Devnani emphasized the importance of collective effort in keeping Ajmer city clean and beautiful. Deputy Mayor Neeraj Jain and Commissioner Deshaldan also commended the efforts of the water hyacinth warriors.

Assembly Speaker Vasudev Devnani reiterated that maintaining the cleanliness and beauty of Ajmer city is a shared responsibility. He acknowledged the Municipal Corporation and the government as essential partners in this endeavor. Devnani highlighted the challenging task of removing water



hyacinth from Anasagar Lake, praising the Municipal Corporation team for their commendable work. He noted that the success of this initiative was due to cooperation at all levels, and honoring the warriors is, in essence, honoring the city of Ajmer.

He further stated that the Municipal Corporation is a collective asset, and the task of cleaning drains during the monsoon season remains a significant challenge. However, the Municipal Corporation completes this task annually. Additionally, efforts have begun in Foyasagar to expand its catchment area, and connecting it with the ERCP will provide much-needed relief to Ajmer. He assured that an adequate budget will be allocated for Ajmer city and urged officials to meet public expectations by working sensitively and serving as public servants rather than merely salaried employees.

Municipal Corporation Mayor S. Brajlata Hada commended the team for their dedication, noting that they worked tirelessly for 18 hours a day to overcome this challenge.

**YADAV PARTICIPATED IN BHAGIRATHA JAYANTI**

• Jaipur, June 16

Union Forest and Environment Minister Bhupendra Yadav joined the commemoration of Bhagirath Maharaj's birth anniversary held at Govindgarh in Alwar district. Expressing his gratitude, Minister Yadav

reflected on his previous visit to Khedamahmood village during Bhagirath Jayanti, noting the honor of returning as both the area's Member of Parliament and Minister of Alwar. He acknowledged the warm reception from the Od Samaj, affirming his commitment to serving the community continuously.

leadership, he underscored the government's dedication to realizing India's development goals comprehensively, promising to engage local communities in Govindgarh's developmental initiatives.

He addressed public representatives, stressing the government's resolve to achieve the Jal Jeevan Mission's objectives, urging collaboration for universal water access. Minister Yadav also announced plans for initiatives like 'Lakapati Didi' to empower women and vocational training for youth. He pledged to establish an e-library and sports ground in the village.

The event culminated in a vibrant procession from Bhagirath Dharamshala, featuring various displays honoring Bhagirath Maharaj, organized by the Odd Rajput community.

Minister Yadav highlighted India's rich spiritual heritage, emphasizing its influence on global identity through numerous saints and ascetics. Under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's



**India's seafood exports touch all-time high**

• New Delhi, June 19

India's seafood exports touched an all-time high in volume during the financial year 2023-24 despite various challenges in significant export markets. India shipped 17,81,602 MT of seafood worth 60,523.89 crore (US\$7.38 billion) during 2023-24.

Frozen shrimp remained the major export item in quantity and value, while the USA and China became the major importers of India's seafood. During FY 2023-24, the export improved in quantity terms by 2.67%. In 2022-23, India exported 17,35,286 MT of seafood worth 63,969.14 crore (US\$8,094.31 million).

“India recorded an all-time high export in terms of volume by shipping 17,81,602 MT of seafood worth US\$ 7.38 billion, despite the several challenges in its major export markets like the USA, EU & the UK,” Shri D V Swamy IAS, Chairman, Marine Products Export Development Authority (MPEDA), said.

# Saudia concludes Hajj Season

• Saudi Arabia, June 19

Saudia, the national flag carrier of Saudi Arabia, has successfully concluded the first phase of operations for its Hajj season 1445H, marked by the completion of arrival flights. The last flight (SV5827), arrived today at King



Abdulaziz International Airport in Jeddah from Riyadh, carrying 445 Hajj pilgrims.

According to a report published by Kanchan Nath TDM Editor at indiaoutbound.info, During the arrival phase, which lasted 32 days, seamless cooperation between various government entities ensured a smooth experience for Hajj pilgrims. This integrated performance aligns with the directives of Saudi Arabia's wise leadership to provide the highest quality services to pilgrims.

In total, Saudia transported 509,000 Hajj pilgrims on 3,400 flights from over 150 destinations worldwide during the arrival phase. The operation achieved an On-Time Performance rate of 88%. Pilgrims benefited from a range of enhanced services, including digital services and inflight entertainment programs with educational

content on Hajj regulations and rituals in multiple languages.

Amer Alkhusail, Chief Executive Officer of Saudia Hajj and Umrah, said: "The operations during the arrival phase were excellent. The success of the process was due to a strategic plan that considered travel demand and fleet capacity, enabling smooth operational execution and high-quality service delivery. I would like to take the opportunity and extend my appreciation to the entire team in Saudia for their significant contributions in enhancing guest experience through providing high level air and on ground services."



# AIR INDIA LINKS VIJAYAWADA WITH MUMBAI

• PR News, VIJAYAWADA, June 15

Air India, India's leading global airline, has launched a direct daily service between Vijayawada and Mumbai enhancing their network connectivity in Andhra Pradesh.

A special ceremony was hosted at the Vijayawada Airport, Domestic Terminal at Gannavaram to mark the occasion of the inaugural flight. Hon'ble Member of Parliament from Machilipatnam Shri. Vallabhaneni Balashowry and Hon'ble Member of Parliament from Vijayawada Shri. Kesineni Sivanath graced the occasion.



The inaugural flight to Mumbai took off after passengers were greeted and felicitated by Air India's on-ground staff and airport authorities.

The direct service will enhance the connection between Vijayawada and Mumbai, meeting a long-standing need.

Operated by an A320 family of single-aisle aircraft, flight AI598 will take off from Mumbai at 1555 hrs to arrive in Vijayawada at 1745 hrs.



# RADISSON GROUP EXPANDS WITH NEW HOTEL IN MAKKAH

• PR News, Brussels, June 20

Radisson Hotel Group is proud to announce the opening of its newest hotel, Park Inn by Radisson Makkah Thakher Alsharqi. Strategically located in the heart of Thakher City, a mere 2.2 km from the revered Great Mosque, the hotel promises to set a new standard for contemporary accommodation in Makkah.

Park Inn by Radisson Makkah Thakher Alsharqi is nestled within Thakher City, an ambitious mixed-use development project which includes 97 towers, a mall, and a mosque to cater to the increasing number of Hajj pilgrims and Al Haram visitors. This notable addition to Makkah's hospitality scene is aligned with Radisson Hotel Group's plan to expand its footprint in the Holy City and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030. The Vision's forward-thinking strategy is focused on diversifying the country's economic resources with significant investment in entertainment and other projects to bolster tourism growth. One of the central pillars of

this vision is enhancing the experience and facilities for the millions who arrive annually for the Hajj pilgrimage.

Park Inn by Radisson Makkaj Thakher Alsharqi features 133 tastefully designed rooms that represent the brand's dynamic spirit and ensure guests experience a blend of comfort and modernity. Diners can enjoy an all-day dining restaurant and a welcoming lobby caffè which serves a diverse mix of international and local cuisines. The hotel's strategic location is ideal for visitors due to its proximity to the Holy Makkah Municipality (300 m) and the King Faisal Hospital (2 km). The hotel also offers free, 24-hour shuttle bus services to the Grand Mosque of Makkah for all hotel guests.

Tim Cordon, COO, MEA and SEAP, Radisson Hotel Group said: "The opening of Park Inn by Radisson Makkah Thakher Alsharqi represents a significant milestone in our expansion strategy in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. We remain committed to supporting the Kingdom's Vision 2030 by providing world-class hospitality experiences that meet the needs of both pilgrims and leisure travelers.

*"We are immensely proud to open Park Inn by Radisson Makkah Thakher Alsharqi. Makkah remains a key destination for religious tourists, and we aim to cater to the evolving needs of pilgrims and leisure travelers."*

**Bassam Khanfar**, General Manager, Park Inn by Radisson Makkah Thakher Alsharqi

# Qatar Airways Announces Partnership Renewal with UEFA

• Doha, June 20

Qatar Airways is gearing up for an exciting summer, expanding its sports sponsorship portfolio with UEFA men's national team competitions as the Official Airline Partner. The sponsorship, an extension of the previous partnership around UEFA EURO 2020™, will be kicked off with the upcoming UEFA EURO 2024. The tournament will take place in Germany, from 14 June through 14 July, with the final being held in Berlin.

Qatar Airways' history with UEFA EURO hails back to 2020 when the airline was the Official Airline Partner of the UEFA EURO 2020. This will be the 17th edition of the tournament, which will stage 51 matches across 10 cities in Germany, during which 2.5 million guests and fans are expected.



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Weekly on Travel, Tourism, Hotel & Heritage of Rajasthan



Tel.: 0141-4116437 | Mobile: 7738707494 / 7426873388 | Email: rtgdm@gmail.com | Website: www.rtgd.in



## “Holiday Inn Named #1 Most Trusted Travel and Brand”

• PR News, June 20

The Holiday Inn brand is not only one of the most iconic names in hospitality, but one of the world’s largest and most recognized brands. According to Morning Consult Intelligence data, the Holiday Inn brand is also the most trusted travel and hospitality brand in the country.

“Trust is invaluable,” said Raul Ortiz, Vice President, Global Marketing & Brand Management for Holiday Inn. “It’s something that’s earned year after year. We are continuing to build a brand that everyone can enjoy and depend on, and this recognition serves as a testament to our ongoing efforts. We are incredibly grateful to our guests who choose to stay with us and to our hotel teams whose unwavering care is the cornerstone of our guests’ experience.”

As the first hotel chain to have a footprint in all 50 U.S. states, the Holiday Inn brand has revolutionized travel through countless contributions to make hospitality more accessible. The brand pioneered the concept of hotel loyalty programs in February of 1983, setting an industry



standard that laid the groundwork for IHG Hotels & Resorts to establish one of the world’s largest loyalty programs, now known as IHG One Rewards. The brand also spearheaded the development of the first centralized hotel reservation system – Holidex, in collaboration with IBM – that paved the way for future technolog-



ical advancements across the hospitality sector.

Today, this legacy of innovation continues, and the brand is using its unrivaled heritage and unique position as a world leader in travel to shape a better guest experience.

With a commitment to evolve alongside the ever-changing needs of today’s traveler, the Holiday Inn brand unveiled a refreshed and modernized prototype for its Americas estate last year.

While the first hotel to fully showcase the brand’s latest design changes is scheduled for an early 2025 debut, the Holiday Inn design aims to integrate elements of the new prototype into more than 14 U.S. hotels by the end of 2024. These adaptations will include:

- A Stand-out Exterior: The timeless Holiday Inn sign remains a beacon of familiarity, but now complements a modern designed main building.

- Elevated Food and Beverage: The introduction of a more accessible F&B offering with a new counter service model.

# 10 Surprising Facts About the Holiday Inn Brand

From fun facts to pioneering moments, illuminating the brand’s ongoing leadership in mainstream hospitality

According to Morning Consult Intelligence data, the leading audience & brand tracking platform, the Holiday Inn brand is the most trusted travel and hospitality brand in the United States. To celebrate, IHG Hotels & Resorts looks back on the brand’s history and legacy of extraordinary stories and industry-changing success.

From offering first-of-its-kind services and amenities to groundbreaking technology, the Holiday Inn brand changed how people traveled and made travel more accessible for millions. Its contributions to the hospitality and travel industries are countless, and today, not only does it remain one of the most recognizable brand names in the world, but its legacy of innovation continues.

**1** On August 1, 1952 – with the opening of its first property in Memphis, Tennessee – Holiday Inns, Inc. became the first hotel company in the world where children under 12 years of age could stay for free. Kemmons Wilson, the founder of the Holiday Inn brand, was motivated to start the hotel chain after being forced to pay an additional \$2 for each of his five kids during a family road trip. Kids staying for free (if they are in the same room as their parents) is a Holiday Inn standard that continues to this day.

**2** The Holiday Inn brand was the first hotel chain to have an onsite restaurant at every property, one of its most popular offerings in the 1960s was a Sunday night chicken dinner served family-style. The price? \$1.95 for adults and \$1 for children under 12. Today, the Holiday Inn brand is debuting a new breakfast buffet with fresh, hot staples like eggs, potatoes and bacon – along with one regional item to reflect the culture and ambiance of the surrounding locale.

**3** In February of 1983, the Holiday Inn company established the first-ever hotel loyalty program and set an industry standard that served as a launchpad for IHG to have one of the world’s largest loyalty programs to this day – reimagined in 2022 as IHG One Rewards.

**4** The Holiday Inn brand was the first in the industry to have televisions and telephones in every room – providing technology and entertainment at a scale that had never been done. Today the world is busier than ever, and IHG launched its refreshed IHG One Rewards app (which has won three Webby Awards to date) to provide a redesigned mobile experience that unlocks access to its 19 brands, more than 6,300 hotels, and the IHG One Rewards loyalty program. Guests can find the best rates, book a room in seconds (including an ultra-fast quick book feature), sort results easily to find the information they need, enjoy exclusive benefits for IHG One Rewards members, and manage their stays all in one place.

**5** There was one thing all five of Kemmons Wilson’s kids had in common. According to Wilson’s family, the kids were always pestering Kemmons for a swimming pool. So, once again, Wilson drew inspiration from his kids – ensuring that every Holiday Inn had a swimming pool

at every hotel.

**6** As the Holiday Inn brand’s rapid growth continued with hotels opening in Europe and beyond, Kemmons Wilson reached out to IBM to create the first centralized hotel reservation system – Holidex. It revolutionized the industry, and according to insiders, once Holidex was in place, selling franchises was like “selling hot dogs at a baseball game.” While Holidex was phased out in the late 90s – it laid the foundation for tech innovation across hospitality.

**7** In 1971, the first black-owned franchise hotel in the country was a Holiday Inn hotel, a property in Tuskegee, Alabama. It was a monumental day for the company and the industry. Today, IHG has partnerships with two leading Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) – Clark Atlanta University and Morehouse College – both located in Atlanta, Ga., the home to IHG’s Americas region headquarters. Through these partnerships, IHG contributes resources and expertise to support students’ professional development, with a goal to inspire careers in hospitality and create a robust pipeline of future employment opportunities within IHG.

**8** Kemmons Wilson was an entrepreneur through and through – investing in an eclectic array of ventures. He even sponsored the Powder Puff Derby air races by female pilots. The two women who flew did so under the Holiday Inn brand name – they were an owner and Holiday Inn employee. A Memphis Holiday Inn property also housed the world’s first all-female radio\* station, WHER.

**9** Here’s a fun fact for sports buffs: Former New York Yankees player Mickey Mantle was a Holiday Inn property owner. The location was in Joplin, Missouri, and it was partially owned by the baseball legend. Today sports-related stays are one of the strongest segments for group travel at IHG Hotels & Resorts.

**10** By 1971, the first hotel and restaurant chain to have locations in all 50 U.S. states was actually the Holiday Inn brand. Soon after, the brand went global, and was the first international brand to open in China. Today there are nearly 1,200 Holiday Inn properties worldwide with plans to open more than 250 new properties.

# Hilton Accelerates Growth in South East Asia

• PR News, June 20

New projects, including the debut of Tapestry Collection by Hilton, will see more than 2,600 rooms added across various brand categories, bringing the global hospitality company closer to doubling its presence in South East Asia in the coming years

SINGAPORE – Leading global hospitality company Hilton (NYSE: HLT) today announced the signings of 11 new properties across Thailand, Indonesia, and Vietnam, including the debut of Hilton’s award-winning lifestyle brand, Tapestry Collection by Hilton in South East Asia.

The signings, which build on Hilton’s growth momentum across multiple brands and emerging destinations, are:

Hilton has more than 100 hotels

trading and under development in South East Asia, strengthening the company’s expansion in the wider Asia Pacific region, where it is well on track to surpass 1,000 trading hotels by 2025. As of the first quarter of 2024, Hilton continues to hold its largest development pipeline in company history with 892 hotels signed across Asia Pacific.

“With its beautiful destinations and resilient economies, South East Asia continues to be an important growth driver for Hilton in Asia Pacific,” said Maria Ariizumi, vice president, Development, South East Asia, Hilton. “We deeply value the trust that owners continue to place in Hilton’s managed and franchise models, robust commercial engine, and superior brand recognition, all of which have fuelled our sustained growth in this vibrant region. We look forward to introducing even more of Hilton’s re-

nowned brands to gateway and emerging destinations here.”

South East Asia continues to show long-term growth prospects for the travel and hospitality industry, buoyed by a growing middle class, strong domestic travel and the return of MICE and world-class entertainment events in the region. This optimism is further underlined by South East Asia’s consumption growth, where the region’s USD\$4 trillion economy is projected to experience an annual growth rate of 4.6% to 4.8% until 2029. The strength of South East Asia’s post-pandemic recovery has also prompted increasing owner, developer and investor interest in hospitality real estate, with four out of the top five APAC cities for development in South East Asia.

“Hilton’s latest signings and upcoming openings not only underscore the long-term growth opportunities

in this dynamic region, it also further cements our commitment to creating exceptional experiences for both our guests and team members,” said Alexandra Murray, vice president and regional head, South East Asia, Hilton. “Within South East Asia, we are proud to be recognized in eight out of the nine countries we operate in for our exceptional workplace culture by Great Place to Work®, and will continue with our journey to be the most hospitable workplace for all as we expand across the region.”

As of March 31, 2024, Hilton’s development pipeline totaled approximately 3,380 hotels representing 472,300 rooms throughout 119 countries and territories, including 31 countries and territories where Hilton had no existing hotels. Of the rooms in the development pipeline, nearly 60% are located outside of the U.S.

## Debut and New Projects

### Hilton Garden Inn Bangkok Silom

Opened December 2023

Located near Bangkok’s famed Chao Phraya riverside, the 216-room hotel features two dining concepts, meetings and event spaces, as well as an outdoor swimming pool and fitness center



### Hilton Hanoi West

Opening in 2027

Situated in West Hanoi, the capital’s emerging Central Business District and close to landmarks such as the Vietnam National Convention Center and the Hanoi Museum, the 253-room hotel will feature four dining concepts including a specialty restaurant and a pool bar, an Executive Lounge, meeting space, a spa, as well as an outdoor swimming pool and fitness center.



### Hilton Bangkok Grand Asoke

Opened December 2023

Set in the heart of Bangkok’s vibrant Sukhumvit district, the 325-room hotel features five distinct dining establishments, an Executive Lounge, 15 versatile MICE facilities, as well as an outdoor swimming pool and a 24/7 fitness center.



### Hilton Garden Inn Bangkok Riverside

Opening in 2024

Offering direct access to luxury shopping mall ICONSIAM in the Charoen Nakhon district, the 241-room hotel will feature an all-day dining restaurant, meetings and event spaces, as well as an outdoor swimming pool and 24/7 fitness center.



### KROMO Bangkok, Curio Collection

Opening in 2024

Signifying the debut of the Curio Collection by Hilton brand in Thailand, the 306-room hotel will be situated along Sukhumvit’s prime shopping belt and feature three world-class dining concepts, including an all-day dining restaurant, a creative social dining space and a bar, an outdoor swimming pool, as well as a fitness center.



### Waldorf Astoria Hanoi

Opening in 2027

Nestled in Hanoi’s historic city center surrounded by major tourist attractions such as the city’s famous Old Quarter and Hoan Kiem Lake, the 187-room luxury hotel, representing the debut of Hilton’s iconic Waldorf Astoria brand in Vietnam, will feature four world-class dining concepts including a rooftop lounge and two other distinct restaurants, beautiful event spaces, as well as the award-winning Waldorf Astoria spa.



### Hilton Bandung Padalarang

Opening in 2026

As an integral part of a mixed-used development featuring recreational, educational, and healthcare facilities in Kota Baru Parahyangan, the new hotel will be situated in an emerging city in Indonesia’s West Bandung Regency. The 200-room hotel will feature three distinct dining outlets, as well as meetings and event spaces.



### Hilton Garden Inn Mui Ne Beach

Opening 2028

Resting within the coastal resort town of Mui Ne in Southern Vietnam, a well-known beach and golf destination among local holidaymakers, the 214-room hotel will feature an all-day dining restaurant and bar, as well as an outdoor swimming pool and fitness center.

Continue from Page 1

**Vice President...**

and met the soldiers deployed there. On this occasion, he also paid tribute to the immortal martyrs on behalf of the grateful nation at the 'Tanot Vijay Stambh'.

Praising the valour of the BSF jawans performing their duties in difficult conditions, Shri Dhankhar said that it is difficult to stand in such scorching heat for even a few minutes. The environment all around is challenging and you don't even have time to blink your eyes at the border. He further said that the alertness of the BSF jawans in the high mountains of the Himalayas, the scorching desert of Thar, the dense forests of the North-east, and the swampy Rann Creek is unmatched.

The Vice President said that the soldiers of the Border Security Force are fulfilling their motto of "lifelong duty" every moment. Remembering the sacrifices of their families.

On this occasion, BSF Director General Dr. Nitin Agarwal, SDG of BSF Western Command Mr. Y B Khurania, Deputy Inspector General of Jaisalmer BSF Mr. Vikram Kunwar and other senior officers were present.

**IHCL TAJ...**

Executive Vice President – Real Estate & Development, IHCL, said, "The signing of a Taj in Panchkula, one

of Haryana's leading cities, aligns with our vision to further solidify IHCL's presence in the region. Given its proximity to Punjab, Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand, this addition will also create a new travel circuit. We are pleased to partner with Mr. Kuldeep Singh Makkar for this venture."

**Paralympic Sport...**

Jaspreet Singh Dhaliwal, President of BSFI, emphasized the significance of this training in expanding interest and participation in Boccia. Gurpreet Singh and Davinder Singh Brar, a seasoned coach with extensive international experience, led the training, which was attended by current and aspiring coaches. Notable attendees included Jagroop Singh (BSFI Treasurer), Dr. Ramandeep Singh (Head Classifier, BSFI), Amandeep Brar (BSFI Official), and Kuldeep Singh (BSFI Official). The participation of Nafeesa, President of Para Boccia Welfare Society of Rajasthan, and new coach Zoya Khan added to the program's diversity and inclusivity. Total 26 Coaches participated from all over India.

**Lords Celebrates...**

witnessed Lords Hotels and Resorts emerging as a dominant force. Among the numerous recognitions, Mrs. Bansal was honored with the

prestigious "Best Women Entrepreneur in Hotel Development Projects in Gujarat" award. Her visionary leadership and dedication have significantly contributed to the transformation of the hospitality landscape in Gujarat.

Similarly, Mr. Bansal was celebrated as the "Best Male Entrepreneur," reflecting his strategic acumen and outstanding contributions to the industry's growth. Together, Mr. and Mrs. Bansal have been instrumental in steering Lords Hotels and Resorts to new heights of success and innovation.

Winning over 20 awards at such a revered platform is a testament to the relentless efforts and commitment of the entire Lords team. These awards span various categories, recognizing excellence in service, innovative practices, sustainable initiatives, and guest satisfaction.

The accolades received include:

- Best Hospitality Management in Gujarat – Lords Hotels and Resorts
- Best Chain Hotel in Gujarat – Lords Hotels and Resorts
- Best Business Hotel in Rajkot – Lords Inn Rajkot
- Best Budget Hotel in Surat – Lords Plaza Surat
- Best 3-Star Hotel in Surat – Lords Plaza Surat
- Best 4-Star Hotel in Other City – Lords Inn Jamnagar
- Best Sea View Property – Lords Eco Inn Dwarka

- And many more

**Pushkar will...**

department to ensure consistent and high-pressure water supply to both urban and rural areas of Pushkar under the A it Yojana and Jal Jeevan Mission. Rawat further directed thorough assessments of rural roads in the Pushkar Assembly, prioritizing their reconstruction, patchwork, and repair. Contractors delivering substandard work were warned of potential blacklisting.

Addressing local water supply challenges, Rawat mandated strategic planning for tube wells and wells, along with efficient water storage and distribution systems. He stressed the need for officials to remain active in the field to promptly resolve community issues. Additionally, preparations for the upcoming Pushkar International Fair were initiated, with instructions for thorough pre-monsoon cleaning and maintenance tasks.

Regarding the Pushkar Corridor, Rawat reiterated that all developmental initiatives will proceed with community consensus, reassuring residents and stakeholders. Present at the event were Pushkar Municipality Chairman Kamal Pathak, Sub Divisional Officer Nikhil Kumar, and other public representatives, reaffirming commitment to inclusive and transparent governance.

Continue from Page 2

**NEET Exam...**

Moreover, based on recommendations from the Home Department, the decision to cancel the NET exam was made after it was discovered that the paper had been found on the dark net.

Questions remain regarding the roles of the Central Government, State Governments, and the NTA in this debacle. Will the culprits be caught and punished? Will justice be served to the students? Will parents' hard-earned money be accounted for? An impartial investigation into this entire episode is awaited, and these questions will linger until they are answered.

**IndiGo shifted...**

before heading to the airport. IndiGo remains committed to providing an affordable, on-time, courteous, and

hassle-free travel experience across its unparalleled network. For further queries or assistance, please contact the customer care team at +0124 6173838 or +0124 4973838. Additionally, passengers can also connect on 6ESkai available on the website.

**ITB India...**

Agoda; Harshad Donde, Country Director, India, BCD Meetings & Events; Atul Jain, Chief Operating Officer, BWH Hotels - India, Bangladesh & Sri Lanka; Santosh Kumar, Country Head - Indian sub-continent & Indonesia, Booking.com; Prahlad Krishnamurthi, Chief Business Officer, Cleartrip; Kiran Bhandari, Director, India Office - Dubai Business Events, Dubai Department of Economy and Tourism; Darshana Shirodkar, Se-

nior Director, Lodging Market Management - Southeast Asia and Indian Subcontinent, Expedia Group; Jude D'Souza, Meeting & Events Leader, India, FCM Meetings & Events; Vikram Cotah, Chief Executive Officer, GRT Hotels & Resorts; Neelu Singh, Senior Vice President APAC & Regional Lead Strategic Accounts, HRS Group; Mufaddal Dahodwala, Managing Partner, ICE India; Amaresh Tiwari, Vice Chairman, India Convention Promotion Bureau (ICPB); Indiver Rastogi, President & Group Head - Global Business Travel, Thomas Cook India Limited; Neil Patil, Founder & Director, Veena World; and Sunila Patil, Founder & Director, Veena World.

**AIR INDIA...**

a three-class cabin to Air India's narrowbody fleet and commencement

of interior refits are important steps in the journey of enhancing the flying experience. The upgrade of the narrowbody fleet, which operates on domestic and short-haul international network, complements the upgraded widebody experience now available on our A350 fleet and new B777s, and on all other widebodies as they are refitted over the next two years. This comprehensive upgradation of Air India's physical product is an important component of transforming into a world-class airline."

Customised by leading seat manufacturer Collins Aerospace, the seats in all three cabins combine unique ergonomic contouring and a patented comfort system to offer enhanced passenger comfort. All seats are equipped with literature pockets, charging ports, tray table and coat hooks, prioritising guest comfort.

Accor & Terres de Légendes announce the development of the

**First MGallery hotel in the Caribbean**



• PR News, June 17

The Whimsy Hotel & Spa Saint-Martin – MGallery Collection is a Dynamic New Development in the Caribbean

Accor, a world-leading hospitality group, in partnership with Terres de Légendes, is thrilled to announce the signing of a new hotel development, The Whimsy Hotel & Spa Saint-Martin – MGallery

Collection. Located in the vibrant heart of Saint-Martin, it will be the first MGallery hotel to open in the Caribbean, a strategic location for the ongoing growth and development of the boutique-hotel collection brand MGallery.

Nestled along the pristine beaches of Saint-Martin, close to Marigot on the French side of the island, the hotel serves as an enchanting coastal haven, celebrating the island's rich cultural heritage while drawing inspiration

from the natural beauty and local traditions. For over 20 years, the Beach Plaza Hotel has been an iconic symbol of tourism in Marigot. With its salt-dusted facade and feet in the water, this former Caribbean hotspot is now being revived as a luxury hotel, a stopover for Saint-Martin residents and travelers from around the world. It is a tribute to the French art of living and the vibrant local culture, where the rhythms of instruments intertwine with those of the waves.



## Governor met President

Jaipur, 18 June. Governor Kalraj Mishra paid a courtesy visit to President Smt. Draupadi Murmu at Rashtrapati Bhavan on Tuesday. They engaged in discussions covering various topics during the meeting.

## The Destination by Hyatt Brand arrives in Peru

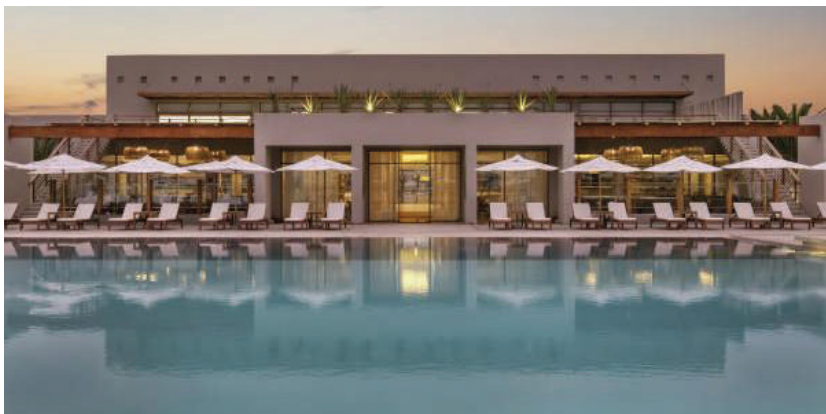
• PR News, CHICAGO, IL, June 19

Hyatt Hotels Corporation and El Pardo Hospitality today announced the debut of The Legend Paracas Resort, joining the Destination by Hyatt brand. The 124-suite resort invites guests and World of Hyatt members to discover the natural wonders and historical legacy of Paracas, located on the coast of Peru, about three hours south of Lima. The resort is nestled between the Paracas Nature Reserve and the Pacific Ocean, offering panoramic views of the Paracas Bay and desert hills, designed to be a place of immersive discovery, authentic design and warm, welcoming service.



The opening unveils a fully renovated reception desk and lobby, along with a number of enhancements designed to enrich the guest experience. The resort now offers a covered parking garage with two EV (electric vehicle) chargers and a redesigned restaurant and bar inspired by the Paracas culture that evokes the connection between the desert and the sea.

“It is a privilege to join forces with Hyatt to open The Legend Paracas Resort and connect guests with the people, place and culture of this unforgettable coastal town.



## Accor Launches Global Leadership Council

• PR News, paris, June 20

Accor, a world-leading hospitality group, together with executive travel managers and buyers from 17 leading international corporations, have launched the Accor Global Leadership Council (GLC), an innovative advisory board aimed at reimagining the future of corporate travel and meetings. Established to create a forward-looking vision for business travel and corporate meetings, the GLC connects business leaders responsible for corporate travel across diverse industries with senior executives from Accor. Council delegates include representatives from sectors such as financial services, engineering, manufacturing, transportation, energy, professional services and technology.

The first session, which was hosted earlier this month in Paris by Sophie Hulgard, Chief Sales Officer at Accor, discussed shifting corporate and traveler expectations; the importance of recognition, personalization and B2B-focused loyalty; the evolving importance of sustainability; emerging traveler trends; the role and impact of distribution and pricing; and a deep-dive on the hosting hotel brand, Sofitel.



The Council delegates, who have a combined employee base of over 2.7 million travelers, unanimously agreed the top three priorities for business travel are:



## We are dedicated to transforming Rajasthan into a developed and industrially prosperous state – CM

• Jaipur, June 19

Chief Minister Bhajanlal Sharma highlighted Rajasthan's vast industrial potential, emphasizing that industrial growth drives overall regional development. He underscored the pivotal role of entrepreneurs, not only as job creators but also as architects of Rajasthan's progress towards becoming a leading state. Sharma outlined plans for a budget aligned with inputs from industrialists, envisioning the state's trajectory up to 2047.

Addressing industry, trade, and tax advisory representatives at the pre-budget discussion in the Chief Minister's Office, Sharma noted widespread enthusiasm among national industrialists to invest in Rajasthan. He pledged to foster an environment offering comprehensive

facilities under one umbrella to attract and support industries, ensuring robust employment opportunities.

Sharma reiterated the state government's commitment to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 'Vocal for Local' initiative, prioritizing the growth of small-scale and cottage industries. Deputy Chief Minister and Finance Minister Diya Kumari emphasized collaborative efforts between the government and industrialists to establish Rajasthan as an industrial hub. Industries Minister Colonel Rajyavardhan Singh Rathore stressed enhancing ease of doing business and reducing industrial costs to spur employment generation. Minister of State for Industries K. Of. Vishnoi expressed confidence in propelling industrial prosperity by leveraging entrepreneurial experiences and insights.

## RAJASTHAN THE GOLDEN DESERT

Weekly on Travel, Tourism, Hotel & Heritage of Rajasthan

JAIPUR OFFICE:

24-25, Basement Floor, Orbit Mall, Near Civil Line Metro Station, Ajmer Road, JAIPUR (Rajasthan) - 302006  
Tel.: 0291-4062489 | Mobile: 7738707494 / 7426873388 | Email: rtgdmal@gmail.com | Website: www.rtgd.in



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E-mail: rtgdmal@gmail.com, Phone/Whatsapp: +91 7738707494, +91 7426873388 Website: www.rtgd.in