

Politics & Democracy

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Keep them Guessing!

Gujarat and Himachal Pradesh go to the polls and the results are to be declared on 8 December. Some say the winner is clear, others have their doubts.



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CONTENTS

Politics & Democracy

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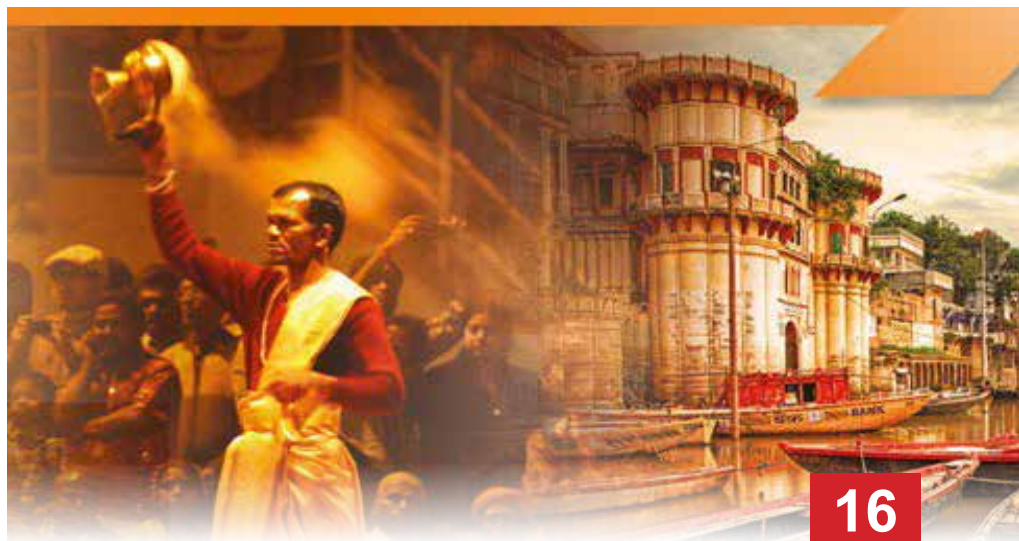
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10

Keep them Guessing!

Gujarat and Himachal Pradesh go to the polls and the results are to be declared on 8 December. Some say the winner is clear, others have their doubts. The picture in Gujarat



16

Burgeoning Travel & Tourism Scope in Uttar Pradesh

India is a land of marvels where each and every state has a distinct identity of its own owing to its culture, art and regional diversity. This is what makes India rank 7th in the world for tourism which contributes to country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) approximately Rs. 14 trillion which would be equivalent to 9.8% of India's GDP. Uttar Pradesh which ranks 2nd in terms of tourists influx in the state both domestic and international.



24

PASSION for RUM

Winters are around the corner. It's time for hot drinks that are not a soup, tea, or coffee. Think of a hot Rum Toddy or simply a Rum with hot water. But one need not wait all year for winters to arrive. Rum can be had through the year as a hot drink or as a regular drink – at parties or just as an evening drink to unwind. For the Rum lovers, there are a range of Rum Cocktails available. The Black Russian is a favorite of many across the globe. White Rums are more likely to be the mix of choice in cocktails.



26

Just the Right Setting!

Give a fillip to your romantic endeavours with the best surroundings

AFWWA receives Guinness World Record Award for 'Knittathon'

Air Force Wives Welfare Association (AFWWA) celebrated its 62nd anniversary. To commemorate the occasion, AFWWA organised a cultural program at Air Force Auditorium, Subroto Park, New Delhi. Union Women and Child Development and Minority Affairs Minister, Smt. Smriti Zubin Irani was the Chief Guest on the occasion and Raksha Mantri, Shri Rajnath Singh also attended the event as the Guest of Honour. Mrs Neeta Chaudhari, President AFWWA was present on the occasion.

The event also marked the culmination of a special drive by AFWWA called 'Knittathon', wherein approximately 3,000 ladies (all AFWWA members) had collectively knit over 41,000 woolen caps over a period of three months. AFWWA has made the Guinness world record for making a huge quantity of knitted caps (41, 541) in mere three months. The Award was announced by the Adjudicator, Guinness World Record on the occasion. Mrs Neeta Chaudhari, President, AFWWA received the award on behalf of AFWWA.

The awardees of Knittathon in different categories were also felicitated on the occasion by Smt. Smriti Zubin Irani.

Extending her greetings to AFWWA on the remarkable achievement, Smt. Smriti Zubin Irani said that precision based participation of Sanginis (Air Force Wives) in 'Knittathon' is really commendable. She said that its distribution to the underprivileged and poor by AFWWA

will provide relief and solace to them. She also promised to contribute a knitted woolen cap to AFWWA to boost the moral of Sanginis.

Mrs Neeta Chaudhari in her address stated that it is heartening that AFWWA has made a world record. She said, " the purpose of the effort is to help the underprivileged. All the members did their bit. The Guinness record is a pleasant by product. I am proud of being a part of it. And proud of AFWWA". She further said this has proved that focus and sheer dedication can make an ordinary housewife extraordinary. Knittathon became a community driven activity with an overwhelming response and revived the vintage art of knitting, She added.

'Knittathon' the unique idea of a special knitting drive, was conceptualised primarily to provide solace to the underprivileged and poor during harsh

winter and to revive the age old art of knitting. In the process, the Air Force ladies were skilled with a productive art, thereby empowering them in a true sense.

These knitted caps will be donated to the homeless and poor of the country to provide them comfort during the coming winter months. Knittathon commenced on 15th July 2022 all over India and culminated today with the AFWWA Day celebrations.

Air Force Wives Welfare Association is the core welfare organisation for the families of the Indian Air Force. Empowerment of its members known as Sanginis, holistic development of the children, extending helping hand to the needy sections of the society are few of its primary objectives. The Association's contribution to the senior citizens, special children and orphans over the years deserves special mention.



MBBS course in Hindi for the first time in India

Union Home and Cooperation Minister Shri Amit Shah launched the first MBBS course in Hindi in the country, in Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh. Many dignitaries including the Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh Shri Shivraj Singh Chouhan were present on the occasion.

In his address, the Union Home Minister said this day is very important for the Medical sector in the year of the Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav, and will be written in golden letters in times to come. He said this is the day of renaissance and reconstruction of the Education sector of the country. Shri Shah said that Prime Minister Narendra Modi has taken a very historic decision in the New Education Policy, by giving importance to the Mother Tongue of students in Primary, Technical and Medical education. He said Prime Minister Narendra Modi had given a call to provide Medical and Engineering education in regional languages such as Hindi, Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam, Gujarati, Bengali and the Government of Madhya Pradesh led by Shri Shivraj Singh Chouhan is the first to fulfil Shri Modi's wish.

Shri Amit Shah said today Medical education is commencing in Hindi and soon Engineering studies will also begin in Hindi and translation of Engineering books has commenced in eight languages across the country, and soon students across the Nation will be able to pursue Technical and Medical education in their Mother Tongue. He said that this day is important as from onwards, students will not only receive instructions in Technical and Medical education in their Mother Tongue, but also will be able to conduct Research in their own language.

The Union Home Minister said Madhya Pradesh is the first State to implement Prime Minister Narendra Modi's

New Education policy and is implementing it in a very good way. Shri Shah told students that the thinking process is done the best in the Mother Tongue and words spoken in the Mother Tongue touch the Heart. He said the Mind processes thinking, revision, Research, reasoning, analysis and arriving at a decision in one's Mother Tongue. He said if studies and Research are conducted in the Mother Tongue, then Indian students are no less competent than students from other countries, and they will bring laurels to India in Research.

Shri Amit Shah said in the 21st Century some forces adopted the Brain Drain Theory and today Prime Minister Modi is converting this theory into the Brain Gain Theory. He said today under the leadership of Shri Modi, the New Education Policy has begun to give importance to our languages. We have begun conducting the JEE, NEET and UGC examinations in 12 languages of the country. Similarly, the Common University Entrance Test is being conducted in 13 languages and 10 States have commenced teaching Engineering courses by translating them into Tamil, Telugu, Marathi, Bengali, Malayalam and Gujarati.

The Union Home Minister said studying in one's own language will definitely enhance the abilities of students. He told students across the country that they should come out of their linguistic inferiority complex, as today there is a government led by Shri Narendra Modi and they can showcase their abilities in their own language. He said Prime Minister Narendra Modi has a message for the world when he gives



speeches in global forums in the Official Language Hindi. He said when Shri Modi speaks in Hindi on the global stage, the confidence of the youth across the country increases.

Shri Amit Shah said the Government led by Shri Narendra Modi has made many changes in Technical and Medical education. Shri Shah said in 2014 there were 387 medical colleges and these have increased to 596, the number of MBBS seats have increased from 51,000 to 79,000. There were 16 IITs which are now 23, there were 13 IIMs which are now 20 and there were nine IIITs which are now 25. In 2014, there were 723 Universities in the country, which have been increased to 1,043 by the Government under the leadership of Shri Narendra Modi. He said there is going to be an educational revolution due to the restoration in the pride of our languages through the New Education Policy of Shri Modi and making arrangements for Technical, Medical and Legal studies in the country. Shri Shah said that those who spread the usage of English have associated language with intellectual ability, but there is no relation between language and intellectual ability. Language is only a medium of expression whereas intellectual ability is a natural gift which can be improved through education and if education is given in the Mother Tongue then it is very beneficial in improving intellectual ability. He said after today's launch, India will go a long way in global research and the intellectual potential of our students will also be placed before the world.

Air India boards industry bodies FIA and AAPA

Air India, India's leading airline and a Star Alliance member, has joined two key industry bodies so that it can better contribute to and help shape the future of the aviation sector.

In the domestic arena, Air India has rejoined the Federation of Indian Airlines (FIA). The FIA works with regulatory authorities, government departments and other stakeholders to highlight key areas of concern, including safety, passenger amenities, ground services and aviation protocols, among others, with an overall objective of fostering safety & growth in the Indian aviation sector.

Regionally, Air India has become the first Indian airline to join the Association of Asia Pacific Airlines (AAPA), a trade association for scheduled international airlines based in the Asia Pacific region. The primary purpose of AAPA is to articulate views on matters and issues of common interest for the Asia Pacific airline industry. On behalf of Asia Pacific air carriers, AAPA puts forward Asian perspectives when dealing with governments, aircraft manufacturers, airport authorities and other organisations on industry issues. Other AAPA members include major carriers from North East, South East and West Asia.

In addition to joining FIA and AAPA, Air India maintains membership in the International Air Transport Association (IATA), in which it will be taking a more active role.

Air India's active participation in these groups is a reiteration of its commitment to support the growth of the aviation industry and shape relevant policy.

Commenting on the initiative to join industry forums, Mr. Campbell Wilson, CEO and MD, Air India, said, "India is on the cusp of an aviation boom and, as a leading player, it is the responsibility of Air India to play an active role in helping realise this potential. Membership of FIA and AAPA, along with our existing role in IATA, allows us to work together with our domestic and international peers, as well as other stakeholders, to address issues for consumer, industry, national and international benefit."

New Terminal Building of Gwalior

Union Home and Cooperation Minister Shri Amit Shah laid the foundation stone of the new terminal building of Gwalior Airport in the presence of Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh Shri Shivraj Singh Chauhan, Minister for Civil Aviation & Steel Shri Jyotiraditya M. Scindia and Minister of Agriculture & Farmers' Welfare Shri Narendra Singh Tomar.

The design of the new terminal is based on the needs of the future. The current airport has a capacity to handle 200 passengers during peak hours, and the runway can accommodate A-320 and ATR-72 types of aircraft. The new terminal building will be developed on a land of 172 acres, at the cost of Rs 450+ crore, which is 6 times more than the present 29 acres of land. It will be able to handle 1400 passengers during peak hours which is 7 times more than the present capacity. The apron will have a parking capacity of 13 aircraft, which is 4 times higher than the current capacity. Apart from this, a cargo terminal will also be established to promote regional industries, which will help local production of the region reach every corner of the country and abroad.

In his inaugural address Union Home and Cooperation Minister, Shri Amit Shah appreciated the work of the Ministry of Civil Aviation and said that the way this airport has been planned it will be one of the best airports of the country.

Minister for Civil Aviation & Steel Shri Jyotiraditya M. Scindia said that under the leadership of Prime Minister Modi, a New India is being developed which leads to the development of a new Madhya

Pradesh and a new Gwalior. This terminal of Gwalior Airport will strengthen this development. In the last one year, the air activities of Madhya Pradesh have increased by 48%, where earlier there were 554 arrivals and departures every week in the entire state, today 821 aircraft are operating every week. Minister announced that Gwalior will be connected with Bangalore six days a week by SpiceJet aircraft and one day a week by Boeing 737. Moreover, Gwalior will be connected with Mumbai by Airbus 321 four days a week.

In the development of the new terminal building, technologies like rainwater harvesting and solar energy will be used to protect the environment. A 2.5 MW solar power plant will also be commissioned. The terminal has been designed in such a way that every traveller who comes here gets to see a grand amalgamation of Gwalior's cultural heritage and modernity.

The occasion was graced by Dr. Narottam Mishra, Home Minister, Govt. of Madhya Pradesh, Shri Vivek Narayan Shejwalkar, MP (LS), Shri Pradyuman Singh Tomar, Minister Govt. of Madhya Pradesh, Shri Tulsi Silawat, Minister Govt. of Madhya Pradesh, Bharat Singh Kushwah, MoS, Govt. of Madhya Pradesh. Moreover, Secretary of the Ministry of Civil Aviation Shri Rajiv Bansal, and other officials from MoCA, AAI, and Govt. of Madhya Pradesh were also present.

On the side-lines of this event, Home Minister inaugurated a permanent exhibition named "Gatha Swaraj Ki" in Jai Vilas Palace. This exhibition gallery is dedicated to the glorious history of Marathas.

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Keep them Guessing!

Gujarat and Himachal Pradesh go to the polls and the results are to be declared on 8 December. Some say the winner is clear, others have their doubts.

The picture in Gujarat

● Asheesh Bhandari



Gujarat Assembly Elections 2022 will be held in two phases on December 1 and December 5 and the result will be declared on 8 December. The contenders are the two National Parties, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and the Indian National Congress (Congress). But this time we have a new aspirant in the field, the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP). The big question on everyone's mind – Who will win Gujarat?

Recent opinion polls predict BJP in number 1 place, followed by Congress, and then the AAP. But an opinion poll is all about opinions and need not be correct always. Let's look at something more concrete.

BJP has governed the state for the past 27 years and lead it higher up the ladder of development. Controversies apart, the state has not seen riots during the reign of the BJP. Nor have the various communities faced disharmony in this

period, apart from some stray incidents here and there. On the economic front the numbers say it all. A phenomenal Gross State Domestic Product growth of 9% to 10%, significant increase in state per capita income, reduced joblessness, reduced crime, and better health conditions. Some of the economic averages achieved by the State are better than the national averages which speaks volumes of what the BJP has achieved in Gujarat. In addition, with the setting up of various Technology Parks and Financial Centres, and more recently, the announcement of new projects worth Rs 22,000 crore, tal ball Gujarat continues to flourish on the business front as well.

The party is likely to contest all seats and the current Chief Minister of Gujarat Bhupendra Patel will be running for his second term. At the time of going to press, the BJP had decided to seek public opinion for its poll manifesto.

The Congress on the other hand, has made

big promises in its poll manifesto:

- Ten Lakh jobs in the Government and semi-government departments
- Free medical treatment up to Rs 10 Lakhs
- LPG at Rs 500
- Free electricity up to 300 units per month
- Unemployment allowance of Rs 3,000 per month
- Putting an end to rampant privatization of Education and health sectors
- Pension of Rs 2,000 to divyangs, widows, senior citizens, and needy women
- Waiver of loans up to Rs 3 lakhs to all fishermen
- Replacing the New Pension Scheme with the Old Pension Scheme
- Scholarship up to Rs 20,000 to needy

students

- Reducing fees by 25% for schools and colleges
- Allotment of Rs 3,000 crore for upkeep of cow and cow shelters.

The AAP also has similar promises in its manifesto. In fact the AAP seems to want to implement the Delhi model in Gujarat and has promised the Delhi Education model, electricity subsidy of 300 free units, hike in salaries of government officials, a job for every youth, Rs 3,000 monthly allowance for the unemployed till they are employed or re-employed, and Rs 1,000 for all women older than 18 years of age.

AAP has a more visible campaign in Gujarat. They obviously wish to do away with their dismal performance in Gujarat in the 2017 elections. At least the campaign is better than that of the Congress party which is significantly focused on the “Bharat Jodo Yatra” being undertaken by Rahul Gandhi.

The Gujarat Assembly Election in 2022 is more about who will form the main opposition in the State – Congress or AAP. There is a strong possibility that AAP will gain significant ground in the State and dent the vote bank of both the BJP and the Congress. The Congress is likely to lose more ground because the people are looking for an alternative to the BJP and the Congress and probably view AAP as an alternative.

Unlike Punjab, where both the Congress and the BJP (and its allies) were weakened on account of charges of corruption and in-fighting, in Gujarat the BJP has a solid wicket. AAP is not likely to be able to dent the BJP popularity, although there may be some impact of its campaigns. The beauty of democracy lies in the fact that it is very difficult for any party to gain a 100% majority. The Congress, on the other hand, has nothing significant to show the people Gujarat in the past two and a half decades. It is approaching the Assembly election in Gujarat with charges of corruptions and a blame game as its main strategy – and of course big promises. However, it is still the Grand Old Party to many voters.

Corruption charges against the AAP

leadership in the Delhi Liquor Excise Policy and the pollution issues both in Punjab and Delhi go against the AAP in the Gujarat Elections. Also the source of funds for the election campaigns of AAP are a matter of concern. The larger population of Gujarat would shun a corrupt government and a party that is seeks to pass on the blame to others rather than take responsibility.

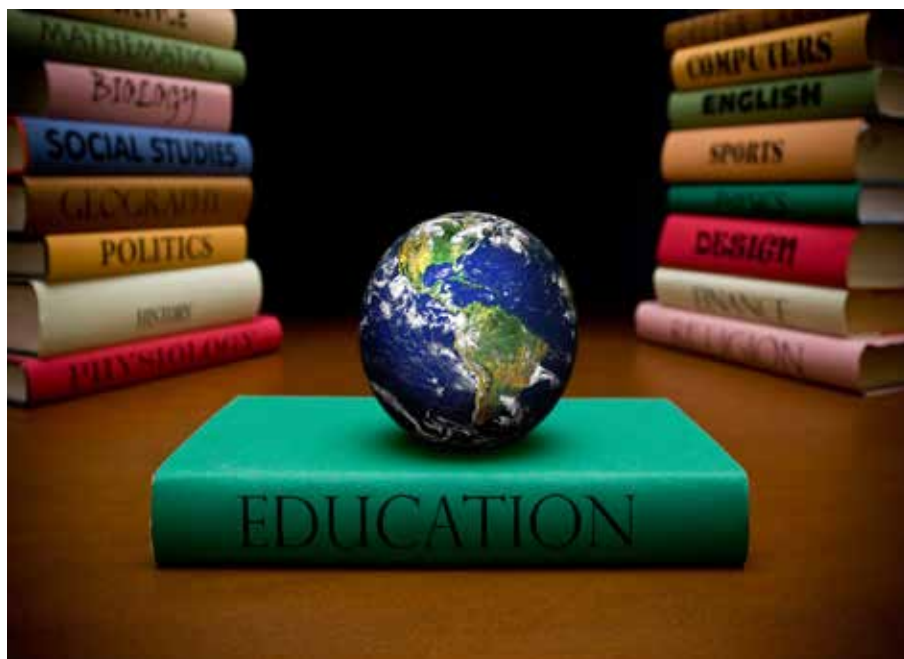
Should the AAP garner enough votes to form the main opposition in Gujarat, they would be a significant force to contend with. Let's not forget the background of the leadership of the party – they were protesters before they became politicians. Unfortunately they continue to remain protesters at heart. But that is the quality that will make them the strong opposition. In Indian politics, the opposition only tells the public what they think is wrong. Their thoughts and ideas for correcting that wrong is never shared with the Government; the opposition would rather wait to be brought into power before they correct the mistakes. That is the way AAP functions in Delhi and Punjab.

And so if we were asked to guess the outcome of the Gujarat Election on 8 December 2022, we would say BJP will win, AAP comes second followed by the Congress. It's just a guess!

Meet the returning Chief Minister of Gujarat



Bhupendra Rajnikant Patel is the current Chief Minister of Gujarat. He was sworn into office in September 2021 in place of the outgoing CM Vijay Rupani. A builder by profession, he represents the constituency of Ghatlodia in Gujarat.



Patel started his political career in the municipal bodies of Ahmedabad. He was the Chairman of the Ahmedabad Urban Development Authority from 2015 to 2017. In 2017 he became a member of the Gujarat Legislative Assembly for the Ghatlodia Constituency.

Following the resignation of Vijay Rupani as the Chief Minister of Gujarat in September 2021, Patel was sworn in as the new Chief Minister.

Apart from the role of the CM, Patel has retained the portfolios of Home, General Administration, Urban Development and Urban Housing, Narmada and Ports, Information and Broadcasting, Industries, Mines & Minerals, and Capital Projects.

During his short tenure of a little over a year, his major thrust has been the launch of the Gujarat IT/ITES policy. The policy seeks to increase IT exports from the state by 8 times from Rs 3,100 crores to Rs 25,000 crores and to generate over 100,000 new jobs in the sector.

The salient features of this policy are:

- Facilitate the creation of world class co-working spaces to enable any IT company to fast track their IT operations in the State.
- Establishing the Gujarat AI School / AI Centre of Excellence with the objective to become the foremost source of Industry ready skilled talent for the IT Industry.
- CAPEX support of 25% up to INR 50 Cr. for normal projects and INR 200 Cr. for Mega Projects. CAPEX support for Data Centre of 25% up to INR 150 Cr. and Power tariff subsidy of INR 1/unit for a period of 5 years. CAPEX support for Cable Landing Station (CLS) of 25% up to INR 20 Cr. and Power tariff subsidy of INR 1/unit for a period of 5 years.
- OPEX support of 15% up to INR 20 Cr. per year for normal projects and INR 40 Cr. per year for Mega Projects
- Special initiatives to boost IT employment in the state through Employment Generation Incentive and up to 100% reimbursement of employer's EPF contribution
- Financial support up to INR 50,000 per person through Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) to the graduate students

and working professionals for skill development

- Large-scale Information, Education and Communication (IEC) programs targeting school children and general public for improving digital literacy and enhancing awareness of Information Technology.
- Incentivizing the development of IT Cities / Townships with CAPEX support up to INR 100 Cr. and relaxations in regulatory & FCI norms.



There is more to come should Patel return as the CM.

Meanwhile in Himachal Pradesh

The casting of votes for the Himachal Pradesh Legislative Assembly elections took place on 12 November 2022. The results will be declared on 8 December 2022.

In the last Assembly Elections in Himachal Pradesh, the BJP formed the government with the Congress as the main opposition party. This time too it seems to be something similar as per the predictions of the Opinion polls. AAP has also entered the fray in Himachal Pradesh but its presence in that state is not yet significant. Nevertheless the ambitions of AAP to become a National Party is visible.

Since the last Assembly elections a large number of member of the Himachal

Pradesh Congress wing defected to the AAP and even more defected to the BJP. It was the defection of senior members of Congress to the BJP that came as a shock to supporters of the party.

It also seems to indicate that the Congress is unlikely to win the required 35 seats, with or without support, to form the government in the State. The party is still popular and for want of a third rival, the Congress will again be the main opposition party in the State.

AAP has made an obvious dent to the Congress numbers with the defection of a large number of Congress members to the party. This is probably not yet enough for it to wrest the position that the Congress commands in the State. In times to come AAP could be an important alternative to the Congress.

In its campaign in Himachal Pradesh, AAP promised 300 units of free electricity to every household, if AAP comes to power. It also published its 10 promises as guarantees of jobs for all youth, unemployment allowance, an advisory board for traders, end of "inspector rule", and corruption-free administration.

In its Manifesto AAP promised -

- Six lakh government jobs for the youth.
- Laws against exam paper leak, conducting all recruitment exams on time, and jobs will be given on merit, not recommendations.
- Unemployment allowance of ₹3000 per month and Implementation of the Old Pension Scheme.
- Minimum Support price (MSP) for agricultural products.
- Controlled atmosphere stores, markets, and food processing units; pesticides and fertilizers at cheap rates;

- Establish an apple packaging manufacturing unit.
 - An advisory board for traders, end of raid raj and "inspector rule"
 - An amnesty scheme for VAT refund.
 - Single window clearance system for tourism projects
 - Door step delivery of public services.
 - Mohalla clinics similar to Delhi and free healthcare.
 - Free education for all till tenth standard
 - Making temporary teacher posts permanent.
 - Building more schools with quality education. Prevent private schools from exorbitantly raising fees.
 - A monthly allowance of ₹1000 to all women in Himachal Pradesh and double to women above the age of 65.
 - Rs10 lakh annual grant to Panchayats and Rs10,000 salary for panchayat pradhans
 - Free pilgrimage scheme
 - Rs 1 crore compensation for soldiers killed in the line of duty.
- The BJP had launched 'Mission Repeat' with an aim to retain power in the State. BJP also launched a website to seek suggestions for its manifesto based on which the following salient points were included in the Manifesto.



- Set up of the "Him Start-up" scheme, with a corpus of ₹900 crore for the youth of the state.
- Amid criticism by the opposition on unemployment, it announced the creation of 8 lakh job opportunities.
- 5 new medical colleges.
- Number of mobile clinics in every assembly constituency will be doubled.
- All-weather roads will connect all villages with an investment of Rs 5,000 crore.
- Bicycles will be given to girls from class 6 to 12 to go to school.
- Setting up of two girls hostels in every

district.

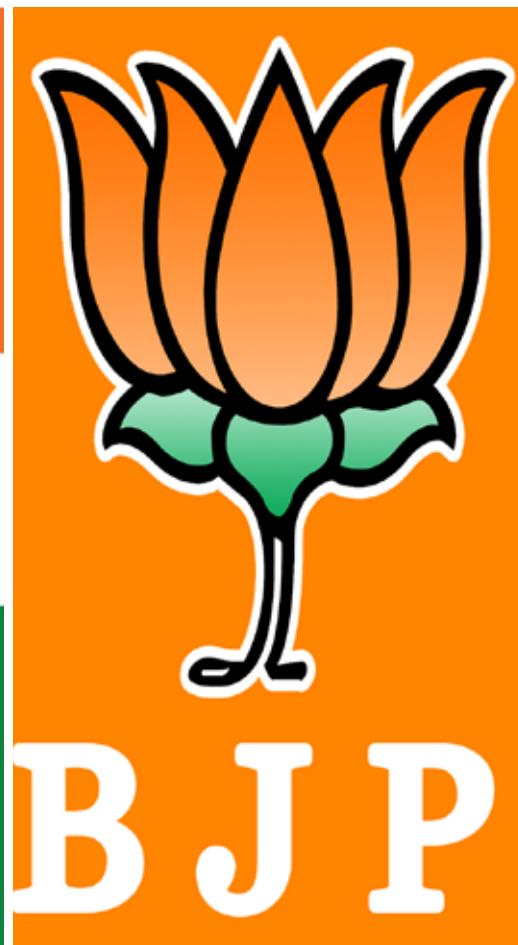
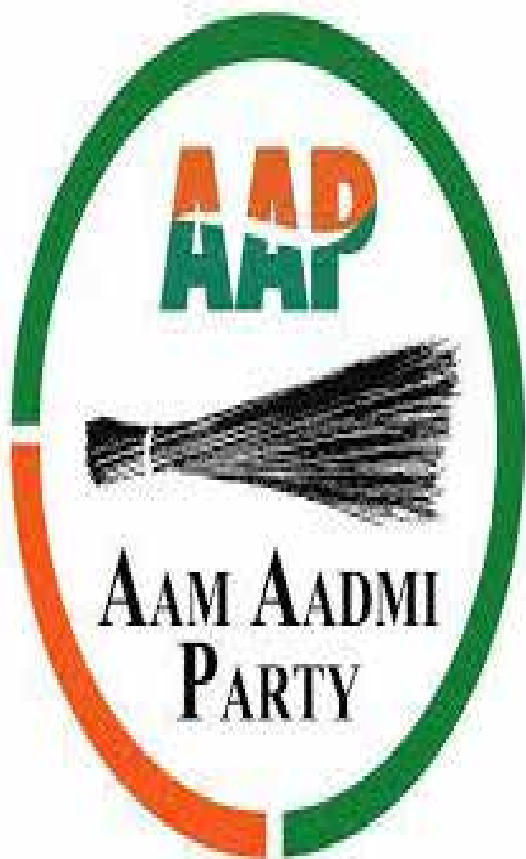
- Under the "Shakti" scheme, Rs12,000 crore will be spent over 10 years to develop infrastructure and transportation around areas of religious significance.
- An additional grant of Rs 3,000 annually under the PM - Kisan Nidhi Yojna, 10 lakh farmers will be added to the program.
- Investigation of Waqf properties as per law under a judicial commission.
- Discrepancies in disbursement of salaries to government workers will be removed.
- Increased compensation to families of soldiers killed in the line of duty.
- GST will be limited to 12% for apple growers.
- Implementation of the Uniform Civil Code

On 31 August 2022, the Congress launched its manifesto with its 10 guarantees in Himachal Ka Sankalp

Priyanka Gandhi addressed a rally in which she promised 1 lakh government jobs and restoration of the Old Pension Scheme in the first cabinet meeting if the Congress comes to power.

In its manifesto the Congress promised -





- 5 lakh jobs to Himachal Pradesh youth of which 1 lakh government jobs would be given in the first meeting of the cabinet after the formation of the government.

- Implementation of a Rs 680 crore startup fund, for which Rs 10 crore would be provided to all assembly segments in the State. Interest free loans to youth would also be given.

- Free mobile clinics and upgrade health facilities as a part of its 10 guarantees in Himachal Ka Sankalp. Mobile clinics will be opened in all villages.

- Quality education with English medium schools in assembly segments.

- Purchase of 10 litres of milk from locals who own cows and buffaloes besides purchasing cow dung for Rs 2 per kg. Apple orchardists, who have been growing increasingly restless due to diminishing returns, have been told that they would be given the freedom to fix the right price for their fruits.

- Free electricity up to 300 units monthly for all households.

- Monthly Rs.1,500 financial assistance to women aged 18-60 years

- Reimplementation of the Old Pension Scheme. Citizens above 75 years of age will be given special social security pension.

- A new policy will be started to promote tourism in villages, "Smart Village" project will be started

All this has been considered in the run up to the polling that was completed on 12 November 2022. The results will be declared on 8 December 2022 and our best guess is the BJP will form the Government, the Congress will be the main opposition party, and AAP will have to wait a little longer.

The BJP has already announced that the current Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur would continue when it comes to power again post 8 December 2022.

Meet the returning Chief Minister of Himachal Pradesh

Jai Ram Thakur has a long association

with the BJP. During his Graduation days he was associated with the Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad and held various positions with the Students organization till he was elected to the State Legislative Assembly in 1998.

He represented the Chachiot (now called Seraj) constituency and has won from this constituency in every election.

In the 2017 Assembly elections, BJP won a two-thirds majority but its Chief Ministerial candidate Prem Kumar Dhumal lost from the Sujampur assembly segment. Considering Thakur's long association and strong political profile, he was the favourite for the top post and was chosen to lead the state. He was the first to become Chief Minister from Mandi district and currently he is the 14th Chief Minister of Himachal Pradesh.

Lets' wait for 8 December 2022

Predictions and guesses are subjective and maybe biased. Many Opinion Polls have been proved wrong. So let us wait for the facts to show the true results on 8



Amigos Alliance

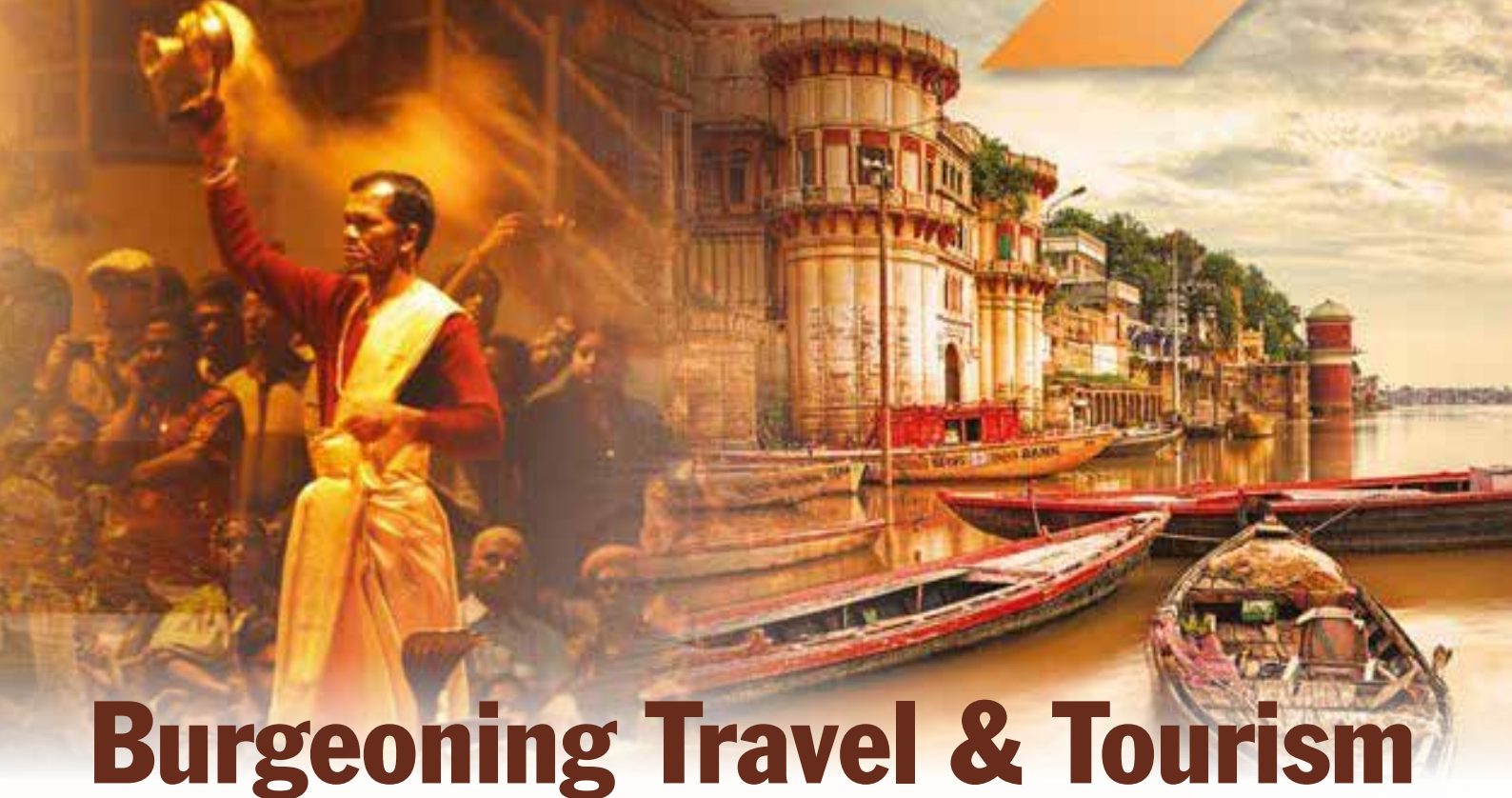
FROM STRESSED TO STRESS FREE



TRAVEL AGENCY

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TRAVEL AGENCY



Burgeoning Travel & Tourism Scope in Uttar Pradesh

India is a land of marvels where each and every state has a distinct identity of its own owing to its culture, art and regional diversity. This is what makes India rank 7th in the world for tourism which contributes to country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) approximately Rs. 14 trillion which would be equivalent to 9.8% of India's GDP. Uttar Pradesh which ranks 2nd in terms of tourists influx in the state both domestic and international.

• Tarsh Sharma

The Yogi Adityanath government has understood the importance of tourism and its contribution to the state's economic growth. It will also help in employment generation both direct and indirect and the government understanding the criticality of the segment has identified tourism as a priority sector. In its efforts to help tourism grow and thrive in the state, strategic and organized initiatives have been

taken up by the Yogi Adityanath government to make the state a major tourist attraction. The state government envisions a new tourism policy for the state, with a focus on establishing Uttar Pradesh as a Brand.

The objective of the policy is to create a long-term, pro-growth and pro-poor ecosystem. The policy is geared toward bold initiatives, attractive incentives and regulatory reforms

that will ensure large-scale investment support through private participation, this will also enable valuable partnership between public and private sector and among various sectors for achieving viable and tangible growth in the tourism sector.

The state government's tourism policy is based on inclusive tourism development of the local communities and make optimum



use of tourism experiences across vibrant cities, attraction, nature, wildlife, adventure, food, handicrafts (including the promotion of One District, one Product Scheme), heritage, region and culture of Uttar Pradesh.

In this regards, the UP government has set some benchmarks, through which it aims to achieve targets like-

- Become the most preferred tourist destination in the country by 2023
- Achieve an annual increase of domestic tourist by 15% and international tourist by 10%
- Attract investment with a target of about Rs. 5,000 crore per year
- Provide employment to 5,00,000 people of the

state per year

- Impart training to 10,000 tourism service providers over the next few years.
- Convert 10 heritage buildings to heritage hotels per year
- Attract 1,00,000 tourists to National Parks and Wildlife Sanctuary per year
- Improve regional connectivity to religious places and cultural centers through road, rail and air.
- Promote the state as leading MICE destination in the country.
- Elevate standards of public service facilities across the state and provide high quality visitor experience.
- Promote local entrepreneurship avenues through execution of tourism events and festivals

The state government taking cognizance has launched certain schemes like World Bank Pro- Poor Project, which is funded by the World Bank and aims

to unlock the potential of unique heritage of Uttar Pradesh through pro-poor tourism development for inclusive growth and poverty reduction in asset rich but particularly low-income areas of the state. This scheme will benefit the state's residents and its poor through provision of jobs. It will enhance the management of states unique natural and cultural assets as source of inclusive growth. It will enable private investments and associated job creation opportunities especially for youth and women. The other initiative is Braj Teerath Vikas Parishad, earlier known as Braj Planning and Development Board. The objective of this is to coordinate and monitor the implementation of plans for evolving policies for integrated tourism development, heritage conservation and management in the region. It also gives advice and guidance to any local body/ authority/ department in the district of Mathura with respect to any plan, project or development proposal, which affects the heritage resource of the Braj region.

There is a systematic sector-wise infrastructure plan, with the objective of offering visitor-friendly tourists services.





Spiritual & Religious Tourism

For spiritual engagement and a better understanding of Buddha's life & philosophy, the 'Sound and Light Show' has been launched at Dhamek Stupa, Sarnath with a cost of INR 7.88 crore under the Prasad Scheme of the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India. Under the spiritual circuit of Swadesh Darshan scheme, the 'Sound and Light Show' is already running at the Gorakhnath temple which is based on the spiritual journey of Saint Gorakhnath. Under the Swadesh Darshan scheme, public convenience facilities, development of pathways, tourist facilitation centre are being developed in Gorakhnath

temple. Development works at Kabir Dhuni/ Gorakh Taliya, Shaheed Smarak Chauri Chaura, Ramleela Ground, Munjeshwar Nath Temple are underway. An integrated tourism development plan at Kushinagar is under planning stages on a land parcel of 195 acres of the Department of Culture, which will enable a variety of experiences to the visitors at one place resulting in enhanced stay by the visitor. Under the PRASAD scheme, development of ghats, tourist facilitation centre, temple lighting works is underway in Varanasi. Improvement of the pedestrian walkways is being developed for the convenience of

pedestrians. Tourism development works under the Swadesh Darshan scheme include the development of ghats, tourist facilitation centre, last-mile connectivity, solar lighting, signages, etc for providing better experiences to the tourists visiting Shringverpur. Under the Swadesh Darshan scheme in Ayodhya, street rejuvenation work, improvement of pedestrian streets, multilevel car parking, development of Guptar ghat, tourist shelters at Panchkoshi parikrama and improvement of basic tourism infrastructure facilities is in progress. Special focus is on providing the public amenities to the tourist visiting these places.

Heritage Tourism

Kumbh which is recognized by UNESCO as the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, will be promoted extensively in the national and international markets. All UNESCO world heritage sites will be promoted through dedicated marketing channels, including participation in summits, fairs and roadshows in select countries. The Department will work with architects and Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) to undertake restoration projects of sites at Kushinagar, Kapilvastu, Sarnath, Shravasti, Agra, Fatehpur Sikri, Barsana, Gokul, Nandgaon, Vrindavan, Goverdhan, Ayodhya, Kashi, Chitrakoot, Vindiyachal, Devipatthan, Tulsipur and other under developed potential tourist sites in state.





Wellness Tourism

The Department will identify specialized centres for AYUSH- Ayurvedic, Yoga and Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha and Homeopathy and will collaborate with them for setting up units in Uttar Pradesh.

The Department is focusing on setting up International Yoga Conclave to promote wellness centres and resorts to draw more traffic in order position Uttar Pradesh as a wellness tourist destination.



Craft, Handloom and Textile Tourism

To promote regional crafts industry of various districts like Moradabad's craft, Bhadohi's carpet, Agra's inlay work and Zardoji, Varanasi's silk, Gorakhpur's Terracotta, Nizamabad and Khurja's pottery and Lucknow's Chikan.

Shilpgram and Shilp Bazaar will be established across the state to promote Uttar Pradesh's rich handicrafts legacy. The Department will develop textile tourism circuits including khadi to promote the indigenous art by linking it to major tourist destinations. The Department will organize thematic fairs and exhibitions to publicize the broad variety of handicrafts. Special visits to handicrafts units has been integrated in the itineraries created by travel agents/tour operators.



Ethiopian Commences Passenger Flight to Bulawayo

Ethiopian Airlines, Africa's leading carrier, has launched a new flight to Bulawayo, Zimbabwe, via Victoria Falls starting from 30 October 2022. Ethiopian has started four weekly flights to Bulawayo, a third destination city in Zimbabwe after Harare and Victoria Falls and a third new destination opened after the pandemic. With the addition of Bulawayo, Ethiopian global destinations reach 131. The new flight will be operated with B787 on Tuesdays, Thursdays, Saturdays and Sundays. Bulawayo, also known as "The City of Kings" is rich in cultural history and is the second largest city in Zimbabwe after the capital, Harare.

Bulawayo is an important trade and tourist hub for travelers from all corners of the world and Ethiopian will provide the best connectivity service along with African flavored hospitality. Ethiopian has been flying to two other cities in Zimbabwe – Harare and Victoria falls, with its first flight to Harare in 1980. The airlines' new flight to Bulawayo is aimed at providing convenient and affordable service to the growing post pandemic business and leisure travelers to and from Bulawayo and the Southern African region.



Mesfin Tasew, Ethiopian Airlines Group CEO

We are continually growing our network in Africa to provide affordable and convenient air connectivity and facilitate trade within Africa and beyond. The commencement of flights to Bulawayo is crucial in connecting Southern Africa to the world with our

130 destinations in five continents. We are glad to serve Bulawayo, the industrial hub of Zimbabwe and Southern Africa accelerating trade with our cargo and passenger services. Our flights to multiple cities in a country indicate our solid commitment to serve our customers and support our continent as the best pan African carrier.

Bulawayo is the second largest city with the second largest airport in the country. The suitable geographical location, road infrastructure and hotel businesses have made the city a center of tourism. The city also hosts international trade fair where people from different parts of the world gather attracting tourists and business travelers. However, the airport is underutilized with only few carriers operating to Bulawayo. Ethiopian Airlines commencement of flights brings about additional connectivity options with competitive fares for the people of Bulawayo and the southern African region.

Ethiopian Airlines growing connectivity is backing the utilization of the huge potential of the continents tourism industry. The new flight to Bulawayo will add convenience to travelers, thereby activating the trade activities in the industrial hub of southern Africa.

flydubai adds second destination in Kyrgyzstan

flydubai, the Dubai-based airline, announced the launch of flights to Osh in Kyrgyzstan from 03 November with a twice-weekly service, becoming the first UAE carrier to operate direct flights from Dubai. The addition of flights to Osh makes it the second point in Kyrgyzstan including the capital, Bishkek.

With the launch of operations to Osh, flydubai expands its network in Central Asia to eight points, providing passengers from the UAE with more options for travel to the region. This includes Almaty and Astana in Kazakhstan, Bishkek and Osh in Kyrgyzstan, Dushanbe in Tajikistan as well as Namangan, Samarkand and Tashkent in Uzbekistan.

Osh is the second-largest city in Kyrgyzstan after Bishkek and has a history spanning more than 3,000 years. The city is located in the Fergana Valley, a densely populated agricultural region which is home to more than 13 million people and is shared with neighbouring countries including Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.



Ghaith Al Ghaith, Chief Executive Officer at flydubai

Central Asia continues to be a fast-growing market and we are excited to see our network grow in Kyrgyzstan with the start of operations to Osh, a cultural melting pot with one of the most important and oldest bazaars in the region. flydubai is committed

to enhancing connectivity between different cultures and with a combined frequency of nine weekly flights to the market, we are confident that our new service will reinforce trade and tourism relations between the UAE and Kyrgyzstan.

JSW's Jindal Vijayanagar Airport Hosts Alliance Air's New Flights

JSW Group's Jindal Vijayanagar Airport in Torangallu, opened its doors to Alliance Air's new flight operations to Hyderabad and Bengaluru, under the Regional Connectivity Scheme (RCS). The Hyderabad flight was flagged-off by Chief Guest Sri. E. Tukaram, MLA, Sandur, Guest of Honour Sri. Pavan Kumar Malapati, IAS, Deputy Commissioner, Ballari, Smt Usha Padhee, IAS, Ex-Joint Secretary, Ministry of Civil Aviation and Sri. PK Murugan, President, JSW Steel Vijayanagar & Salem Works, in the presence of officials/guests from the Ballari Administration, Alliance Air and JSW Group. The formal launch of the flight operations was preceded by a ceremonial lamp-lighting ceremony joined by all the dignitaries.

The Prime Minister's UDAN (Ude Desh Ka Aam Naagrik) scheme has proved to be a convenient travelling option for the people of India. After having realised the noble intentions behind this ambitious UDAN scheme, JSW Group's Jindal Vijayanagar Airport was the first private airport in the country to accommodate flight operations during the launch of the UDAN initiative of the Ministry of Civil Aviation and has handled over one lac passengers in last three years.

Alliance Air is the only airline connecting Vidyanagar (districts of Ballari and Vijayanagar) to Hyderabad and Bengaluru through the Regional Connectivity Scheme (RCS) and is a keen participant in the Government of India's flagship UDAN initiative. Its new flights will not only be an impetus to the region, but also to the nation at large, in providing affordable and accessible air connectivity to all.

Ballari District and surrounding areas are important business and tourist destinations due to the presence of JSW Steel Ltd. and several other Steel & mining players based in the region. It also harbours Hampi, the seat of the erstwhile Vijayanagar Empire, which today is a marvelled UNESCO World Heritage Site besides Daroji Bear Sanctuary & Interpretation Centre, Sandur Iron-Ore Mines and Ballari Fort to name a few. This new destination connecting Hyderabad to Hampi, Sandur, Ballari and other adjoining areas, will enormously facilitate international tourists and entrepreneurs.

Sri. E. Tukaram, MLA, Sandur and Sri. Pavan Kumar Malapati, IAS, Deputy Commissioner, Ballari lauded JSW for hosting its private airport as a partner in the UDAN scheme.

They said that the much-needed connectivity will not only add convenience to travel to Hyderabad and Bengaluru but will also significantly reduce travel time.

Sri PK Murugan, President, JSW Steel Vijayanagar & Salem Works said: "JSW is committed towards the fulfilment of the government's noble & welfare schemes. JSW shall not shy away from extending its regular support to the government for any airport-related operations. Hyderabad and Bengaluru cities being important destinations for people in the region, these flights will ease the lives of the people of Kalyan-Karnataka & Kittur-Karnataka Region and will further improve the connectivity to the state capital." Sri Murugan thanked the Ministry of Civil Aviation and the Government of Karnataka for extending their earnest support and guidance. Jindal Vijayanagar Airport today is a state-of-the-art airport. To further strengthen the existing facility, JSW group has invested Rs. 48 crores in the last three years for airport expansion and the upgrading of its runway. In addition, Rs. 12 crores are also being invested to improve the passenger terminal facilities and safety initiatives, slated to complete in the next 6-8 months.

Easily booking tickets with Vietjet from now on

From now on people and tourists from Kazakhstan and Vietnam can travel easily when Vietjet's first route connecting the coastal city of Nha Trang to Almaty, Kazakhstan officially launches.

With just over 9 hours of direct flight per leg, 2 return flights per week, Vietjet's new route offers an unprecedented convenient flight option between the coastal city Nha Trang and Almaty, the largest economic center of Kazakhstan. Passengers flying with Vietjet will experience the A330 wide-body aircraft, along with modern utility products and services with a variety of tickets classes including

SkyBoss Business, SkyBoss, Deluxe, Eco and a menu of fresh & hot meals representing the world's famous cuisines, soft leather seats, health care products with friendly and professional cabin crews and especially enjoy special artistic performances right on the aircraft at altitude 10,000 meters.

With many promotional programs offered continuously attractive fares, passengers can easily book tickets at website www.vietjetair.com, on Vietjet Air mobile app or at Vietjet official agents or booking offices worldwide. Especially, passengers can enjoy free payment fees when booking and paying through Vietjet

SkyClub. The route connecting Nha Trang and Almaty offers the opportunity to discover Almaty, the economic center and famous tourist destination of Kazakhstan, experience the serenity of the plains, the majestic space of the mountains or the modern life's rhythm along with unique cultural and artistic space of the city. At the same time, bringing international tourists to the beautiful coastal city of Nha Trang, where the climate is mild and sunny, the long and worldwide famous coastline together with the friendliness and hospitality of the local people.



Air India Refurbish Existing Widebody Aircraft Cabin Interiors

Air India, India's leading airline and a Star Alliance member, has announced plans to refurbish its entire legacy wide body fleet, comprising 27 Boeing B787-8 and 13 B777 aircraft, committing over US\$400m for the project.

This refurbishment will see a complete overhaul of existing cabin interiors, including the addition of latest generation seats and best in-class inflight entertainment across all classes. In addition, the refurbishment will see the introduction of a Premium Economy cabin on both fleets. The First Class cabin will also be retained on the 777s. Air India has engaged leading London-based product design companies, JPA Design and Trendworks, to assist with the cabin interior design elements of this refurbishment programme. The collaboration brings together two experts in the fields of aviation and interiors that have produced designs for major brands including

Taj Hotels, The Orient Express and Herman Miller International.

With this significant investment, Air India is committed to providing its passengers with a comfortable, modern, and technologically advanced cabin to facilitate travel experience that is comparable with the best airlines in the world. The complete interior refurbishment entails significant regulatory and engineering preparation, which commenced earlier this year. This lengthy but necessary process, and the time required to manufacture seats, is expected to lead to the first aircraft entering service in mid-2024.

**Campbell Wilson,
MD & CEO, Air India said**

Under our Vihaan.AI transformation program, Air India has committed to attain the highest standards of product and service befitting of a world class airline. We know that, at present, the cabin product on our 40 legacy widebody aircraft falls short of this standard. Although the project commenced some months ago, we are delighted to now publicly announce this significant investment on a complete interior refit, and we are confident that, when revealed, the new interiors will delight customers and show Air India in a new light. We are working closely with partners to accelerate the refit process as fast as possible and, in the meantime, leasing in at least 11 new widebody aircraft with brand new interiors to improve our offering at the earliest opportunity.

Qatar Airways Flies Qatar National Football Team

Qatar Airways, the Official Airline of the Journey to the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022™ marks one week to go until the greatest sporting show on Earth, and flies the Qatar National Football Team back home.

The World's Best Airline will also fly 140 FIFA Legends to take part in the FIFA Fans and Legends tournament to be held at the FIFA Fan Festival™ in Al Bidda Park.

The reigning AFC Asian Cup champions arrived in Doha after completing a training camp in Spain, fully prepared to participate for their first time in the FIFA World Cup™. The Qatar National Football team will kick off its tournament play on 20 November in the opening match against Ecuador. The squad will also face other opponents in Group A, including Senegal and Netherlands.

Courtesy of Qatar Airways, FIFA is reaching all ticket holders with a chance to play for their national fan team in the FIFA Fan Tournament. Ticket holders

are required to join the airline's Frequent Flyer programme, Privilege Club, for a chance to win. Qatar Airways Group Chief Executive, **His Excellency Mr. Akbar Al Baker, said: "Qatar Airways, the Official Airline of the Journey for the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022™, is all set to welcome fans from around the world to the State of Qatar. Football fever is in the air and this is the moment we have all been waiting for."**

"This time next week, the first FIFA World Cup™ whistle will sound, marking the beginning of a truly extraordinary tournament that will be remembered for a lifetime. On behalf of the Qatar Airways Group, we are excited to welcome football fans on-board and at various key locations around the country."

In time for the biggest sporting event in football, the World's Best Airline has successfully completed the installation of a FIFA World Cup™ decal on 120 aircraft. The specially-branded aircraft include 48 B777s, 31 B787s, 21 A320s, 12 A330s, and eight A380s. The airline also operates three specially-branded Boeing 777 aircraft hand-painted in FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022™ livery.

Football fans in Qatar during the tournament are invited to visit the Qatar Airways Skyhouse, located at the FIFA Fan Festival™. Hosting a range of engaging activities, including a unique zipline experience, a Neymar Jr. interactive challenge, a swing photo booth, a face painting booth, a Qverse experience, and much more.

Tata Group to consolidate Air India & Vistara

The Tata Group announced the consolidation of its airlines, Vistara and Air India. With this consolidation, Air India shall be India's leading domestic and international carrier with a combined fleet of 218 aircraft, making it India's largest international carrier and second largest domestic carrier.

Air India, an airline fully owned by Tata Sons, has been the flag carrier of India. Tata Sons, via its fully owned subsidiary, Talace Private Limited ("Talace"), had acquired 100% stake in Air India on 27th January 2022.

Vistara, a 51:49 Joint Venture between Tata Sons and Singapore Airlines Limited ("SIA") was established in 2013 and is India's leading full-service carrier with international operations in Middle East, Asia and Europe.

Vistara shall be merged with Air India post receipt of requisite approvals. As part of the merger transaction, SIA shall also invest Rs 2,059 crore in Air India. Post the consolidation, SIA shall hold 25.1% shareholding in Air India.

The transaction is estimated to be completed by March 2024.



**N Chandrasekaran, Chairman,
Tata Sons**

The merger of Vistara and Air India is an important milestone in our journey to make Air India a truly world-class airline. We are transforming Air India, with the aim of providing great customer experience, every time, for every customer. As part of the transformation, Air India is focusing on growing both its network and fleet, revamping its customer proposition, enhancing safety, reliability, and on-time performance. We are excited with the opportunity of creating a strong Air India which would offer both full-service and low-cost service across domestic and international routes. We would like to thank Singapore Airlines for their continued partnership.



**Goh ChoonPhong, Chief Executive Officer,
Singapore Airlines**

Tata Sons is one of the most established and respected names in India. Our collaboration to set up Vistara in 2013 resulted in a market-leading full-service carrier, which has won many global accolades in a short time. With this merger, we have an opportunity to deepen our relationship with Tata and participate directly in an exciting new growth phase in India's aviation market. We will work together to support Air India's transformation program, unlock its significant potential, and restore it to its position as a leading airline on the global stage.

An Enterprise called LORDS HOTELS & RESORTS!!

The prolific journey of Mr. Pushpendra Bansal, COO, Lords Hotels & Resorts.

• Vedika Sharma

Mr. Pushpendra Bansal, a hospitality stalwart is a civil engineer by profession, who expanded his family business in construction, executing projects for L&T, ONGC, ESSAR, Food Corporation of India, Indian Railways, and many more.

Later, he moved to the USA in 2003 and it was there that he acquired hotels, motels, and resorts of reputed brands like Howard Johnson and Comfort Inn among others. He had a passion to give back to his homeland and ventured into the mid-segment hotel business in India. In due course of time, Lords Hotels and Resorts was formed. Now, a preferred choice of traveller's, whether for business or leisure. Lords has constantly strived for excellence, by providing Exhilarating hospitality to its guests. The confluence of traditional values and modern hospitality makes Lord's group extraordinary.

The actual journey began in 1990 when accidentally he became the owner of an under-construction Hotel in Surat. This was not the best period for the hospitality industry, as the country was going through turmoil. Surat in particular faced floods, and plague. The business had come to a standstill. In spite of such a challenging situation, Mr. Pushpendra Bansal completed the hotel in 1998 and tied up with Carlson to manage the hotel.

In 2001, he shifted base to the USA, where he owned and operated Harvard Johnson, Best Western, and Holiday Inn hotels. He learned a lot about hotel operations and management. Underwent hotel management courses from Cendant now called Wyndham. The time spent in the USA made him think of coming back home to India and giving back his hospitality services to his fellow countrymen.

In 2007, Lords Hotels and Resorts was formed with two owned hotels and other hotels in the construction stage. A new era in hospitality had begun.

It has indeed been a long journey and now he is an accomplished hotelier, operating 42 hotels and 15 more in various stages of completion. His dream is to be the largest mid segment market chain, operator.

What are the highlights of your business?

Coupled with our "Guest First" sensibility, we at Lords also believe that even in the new era of hospitality, the old charm still works. Our long-term relationship with the guest is the key element of our philosophy. Lords offer luxurious accommodations at "True value" prices for our guests as cater to business, religious, and leisure travellers. A warm Ambiance and an array of memorable touches served by a team of dedicated professionals to make the guest stay more memorable.

At Lords Hotels we make available state of art facilities in terms of infrastructure, standards, operating systems, and services, giving the organization a definitive edge over the others and ensuring that

every Lord's hotel is contemporary and highly efficient by mixing global standards with local flavours.

What are your expansion plans?

We are One of the fastest-growing mid-segment hotel chains in India and Nepal, Lords Hotels & Resorts has become an eminent name within a decade of its inception. As I stated before, we at Lords have always been exploring new territories to expand our growth in the Industry; and intend to do it in leaps and bounds. There are many more destinations to be explored and presented to enhance guest experiences. Our immediate expansion plan is to take the brand international with opportunities coming up in Southeast Asia, Africa, the Middle East, and the USA. In India, we are strengthening our presence in Key metro cities, besides expanding very rapidly in North-eastern states.

How do you look at competition?

Competitions are always healthy. The more competition, the more fun to do business, and it challenges one's own strength. We welcome and learn from competitors, and the challenges increase your own output in a positive way.

What are your views on the industry? How do you foresee the future?

After the pandemic turmoil, our industry has bounced back tremendously. This is the best time for hotels after a long time, Occupancies and room rates have seen a tremendous increase. We are very optimistic that this trend will continue in the future.

What challenges did you face in the year 2022 and what are your expectations from the upcoming year 2023?

Our industry is facing many challenges as it evolves out of the covid era. Global factors, leading to an increase in energy cost, and inflation, is also affecting our industry. Inbound travel has considerably reduced. Another challenge being faced by our industry is rising manpower costs and employee retention.

We are hopeful that in the coming days the government will come out with more friendly incentives for the hospitality industry, and rationalize the taxes, licenses, and other norms.



Asego: Travel Assistance and Insurance Solutions

"Right from the inception of Asego, our vision has been to bridge the gap between static offerings available in the market and the traveller's true needs." said Dev Karvat, Founder & CEO, Asego

• Vedika Sharma

What are the benefits offered by Asego to delegates attending the TAFI convention in Malaysia?

Ensuring a safe trip for travellers, be it on land, air or sea, has always been our foremost priority. Being TAFI's preferred travel protection partner for over a decade, Asego is offering complimentary global assistance with insurance to all delegates attending the upcoming convention in Malaysia.

With our exclusively curated protection cover, all delegates can avail of benefits such as medical emergency cover including COVID-19, emergency medical evacuation, protection against loss of valuables like passport and baggage along with relevant assistance services including doctor-on-call, medical services provider, referral and much more.

According to you, what is the vision that drives Asego?

Right from the inception of Asego, our vision has been to bridge the gap between static offerings available in the market and the traveller's true needs. We have always worked towards being a dynamic travel ancillary solutions provider not only to customers but also to our clients with a strong focus on their business growth. We aspire to lead product innovations beyond insurance and our experience in the global markets has been instrumental in achieving this for an emerging market like India. Moreover, we are constantly moving towards upgraded technology to empower our customers with dynamic offerings. We are also constantly enhancing medical assistance capabilities, which are at the heart of our business.

Could you share insights on some major

risks travellers are facing nowadays, what role does Asego play in mitigating them?

Recent travel volumes have skyrocketed with the gradual dissipation of COVID-19 around the globe, and so has travel related risks. Eventualities such as missed/delayed flights and hotel/ flight cancellations are inevitable when it comes to travel. However, we have recently witnessed a huge spike in newer travel risks such as loss and damage of gadgets, cyber security issues, identity theft, credit/debit card fraud, etc. amongst travellers.

Asego has been working tirelessly to identify and mitigate these risks with comprehensive travel assistance and insurance solutions. Our bouquet of offerings not only takes care of medical emergencies and other travel-related inconveniences but also ensures that travellers are protected against the aforementioned travel risks. Further, our carefully curated standalone products offer travellers an opportunity to customise their protection plans as per their needs and preferences, rather than opting for a plain vanilla travel insurance product.

What do you think are the differentiating factors that sets apart Asego from others in the Travel Protection domain?

Asego has always strived for customer delight. And to achieve that, it is imperative to understand the travellers' needs and provide them with tailor-made solutions to ensure a hassle-free trip. Some factors that differentiate Asego from the rest are:

Fast track claims support: Our travel assistance and insurance products are powered by 24/7 fast track claims support and expert teams present across the globe ensure that the travellers are fully protected, no matter where



they are. Customisable protection plans: Our bouquet of travel assistance services and new-age bundled products have always been customer favourites. Nevertheless, we realised that tailoring offerings at a micro level are the need of the hour. We are now offering an array of relevant standalone products, such as emergency OPD expenses, quarantine cancellations, cruise cover, and flight delay/ interruption covers, pertinent to the current scenario.

Cutting-edge technology platform: As we all know, AI and machine learning are key to the ever-evolving Insurtech market. Asego has been leveraging these tech capabilities to create a specialised system which helps us understand our customers more deeply and creates a customised user experience, helping them choose the right plan for their needs.

Could you elaborate on the various global assistance services that Asego offers?

We are one of India's leading global assistance and travel insurance providers. Asego's services are not just limited to facilitating claims processes, but also provide real-time assistance services to travellers. Our services include 24X7 global medical assistance, roadside assistance, family protection and concierge assistance, along with insurance. During these unprecedented times, we also provide doctor-on-call services, support during baggage loss, missed flights, advice on COVID-19 protocols in different countries and other related services.

Further more, we provide medical service-related referrals to customers requiring hospitals, clinics, chemists, diagnostic centres, etc. This is not just for the traveller but also for their family back home.

A large wooden barrel with metal bands is in the background. In the foreground, a glass filled with rum sits on a wooden surface. The title 'PASSION for RUM' is overlaid on the right side of the image.

PASSION for RUM

Winters are around the corner. It's time for hot drinks that are not a soup, tea, or coffee. Think of a hot Rum Toddy or simply a Rum with hot water. But one need not wait all year for winters to arrive. Rum can be had through the year as a hot drink or as a regular drink – at parties or just as an evening drink to unwind. For the Rum lovers, there are a range of Rum Cocktails available. The Black Russian is a favorite of many across the globe. White Rums are more likely to be the mix of choice in cocktails.

Rum is a distilled alcoholic beverage made from sugarcane's byproducts, such as molasses or jars of honey, or directly from sugarcane juice filtered by the process of fermentation and distillation. Rums are produced in various grades. Light rums are commonly used in cocktails, whereas "golden" and "dark" rums were typically consumed straight or neat i.e. on the rocks, or used for cooking. Premium rums are also available, made to be consumed either straight or iced.

In the years gone by, Rum was famously associated with the Royal Navy and piracy. Rum has also served as a popular medium of economic exchange, used to help fund enterprises such as slavery, organized crime, and military insurgencies.

Blessings comes straight from Rum

Rum has been around for longer than most modern alcoholic beverages. Its medicinal properties have especially been useful to

treat wounds in times of war, to treat the sick on board a ship when medical supplies ran out.

As we all love all the brands and types of rum, now let's know how it's beneficial for us and our health:

Rum for Heart: -

A few years back a survey on the co-relation between drinking alcohol and heart failure, was conducted on 60000+ participants who





had no incidence of heart failure at the time. The risk was highest for those who rarely or never drank alcohol, and for those who had an alcohol problem. Those who drank five or more times a month had a 21% lower risk compared to non – drinkers or those who drank little. Those who drank between one and five times a month had a two per cent lower risk of heart failure. In the case of heart attacks, the risk appeared to be reduced by 28 per cent with each additional one-drink increment.

Diminish the muscle pain: -

One of the main reasons, many people fancy alcohol is because of its ability to reduce stress levels. Alcohol actually acts as a muscle relaxant, which sounds great. When you're inebriated, you are not thinking as clearly and your physical pains seem to fade away. Alcohol lowers your inhibitions and may incite the desire to do something a little crazy such as moving heavy furniture, which

is definitely bad for your back. Alcohol affects your mood and physiology. The substance acts as a depressant that slows the body's natural processes such as circulation and breathing. Even more than that, alcohol can adversely influence your mood.

Rum for Longevity

Longitudinal studies have consistently shown that people who don't consume any alcohol at all tend to die before people who do. At first glance, this makes little sense. Doctors have long suspected that imbibing has health benefits. During the early years of Prohibition, a coalition of doctors went to the Supreme Court to fight for their right to prescribe alcohol for such disorders as upset stomach, chronic wasting disease, prolonged lactation, and tuberculosis. In 1926, just as the Supreme Court was rejecting the physicians' plea, a Johns Hopkins researcher named Raymond Pearl published a book showing that people

who drink a little bit of alcohol live longer than those who drink too much or not at all. Alcohol and longevity has long been a hot topic, both in the science world and on the news.

But its' not an elixir

Alcohol consumption is associated with a variety of short- and long-term health risks, including motor vehicle crashes, violence, sexual risk behaviors, high blood pressure, and various cancers. The risk of these harms increases with the amount of alcohol you drink. For some conditions, like some cancers, the risk increases even at very low levels of alcohol consumption. It is now also established that those who suffer from Type II Diabetes should avoid consumption of Rum mainly because of its high glycemic value.

And like they say everything taken in excess is harmful to health. So drink responsibly!



Just the Right Setting!

Give a fillip to your romantic endeavours with the best surroundings

Asheesh Bhandari

A honeymoon is all about building on your romance – it's about devoting time, attention, and energy to understand and know your partner better. You can do without the hustle-bustle of everyday life while on your honeymoon. You need the ambience, the comfort, the facilities and the surroundings to let your romance grow.

Here are our top 5 Romantic Honeymoon Locations (in no particular order) for you to consider:

1. The Suryagarh, Jaisalmer

At Suryagarh, in the heart of the Thar Desert, you experience a blend of the traditional with modernity. The rooms, suites, and Havelis are tastefully decorated in the traditions of times gone by, yet fitted with all modern conveniences. Roomy and cosy, they look out on to wide verandas and turrets, reminiscent of authentic palace architecture. The Thar Haveli has its own infinity pool. Imagine a breakfast together, in an infinity pool that overlooks the Thar Desert, with peacocks to keep you company.

Experience Dhanurvediya, the archery workshop or spend time doing the various yoga asanas. On other days be modern and use the Spa, the gym, or the swimming pool. Savour the Jaisalmer Kebabs and biryani, the Signature Thali, or the Thar Dinner at this venue. Then enjoy a cultural evening of Rajasthani songs and dance.

There is a lot to explore around Suryagarh. Curated trails include the Silk Route Exploration that takes you to the ancient sarais used by



the Silk Route traders on their way to the hinterland. There is the Thar Exploration, the Temple Trail, and the Mountain Bike Trail that don't need further elaboration. But try the Great Bustard Trail and capture some amazing pictures of this bird or see if your hair stand on end on the Chudail trail.

To get romantic, try the Sundowners, the Dinner on the Dunes, or Breakfast with Peacocks. All of these are out there in the dunes and beautifully arranged by the staff at Suryagarh.

Feel like royalty at Suryagarh!



2. The Oberoi Udaivillas, Udaipur

On the banks of Lake Pichola, sits the Oberoi Udaivillas, a luxury hotel that has been a popular honeymoon destination for many years.

With large spacious rooms, tastefully decorated with Mewar motifs, furnishing that reflect elegance, and modern day fittings, your stay is going to be comfortable and peaceful. The rooms look out on to lush green lawns, Mewar courtyards, or a view of the pool. The suites have their own private pools and dining areas. The Kohinoor Suite has a master bedroom and twin bedroom, a spectacular dining room, living room and private pool. Privacy and luxury combine well for a quiet romantic time together. Providing facilities like the lake view suites and couple spa therapies, the Oberoi Udaivillas marks a top spot in the list of best honeymoon resorts in India. From the royalty of Rajasthani Culture to the comfort of modern day amenities, everything is perfectly mixed in this beautiful resort.

Take a pause in the romance and be a part of the “Cook with the Chef” for an interactive session on cooking Rajasthani cuisine. Try your hand at painting a Rajasthani miniature, or just learn about the art and pick a souvenir. Or just spend an hour doing yoga in a private session.

There's luxury to experience on your honeymoon at the Oberoi Udaivillas!





3. Grand Mumtaz, Gulmarg

The Deodar trees and the beautiful mountains surrounding the resort make a picture-perfect backdrop at a height of 9,200 ft. above sea level. The Grand Mumtaz Resort is located close the Gandola Cable Car, which is the world's second highest and largest cable car project, and ranks

first in Asia.

Grand Mumtaz Resorts has 76 double rooms, 1 Executive Suite, and two Presidential Suites. The interiors are tastefully done up with hand-crafted Kashmiri chain stitched draperies. The rooms also have all modern facilities at your disposal. There's plenty to do at Gulmarg. Take a romantic ride on the

Gulmarg Gondola for the most beautiful views of the valley and the surrounding mountains. Try skiing on some of the best slopes in the country. And if you are not an ace already, Gulmarg can inspire both of you in that direction.

Add pristine surroundings to your Honeymoon at Gulmarg!





4. The Tamara, Coorg

The Tamara is a unique Eco-resort, nestled amidst the quaint plantations of Coorg at a height of 3,500 ft. above sea-level and exhibits enthralling panoramas. Experience the coffee, cardamom, and pepper plantation in the vicinity.

This eco resort offers you the privacy of separate cottages. Choose between the Luxury cottages, the Superior Luxury Cottages, The Suite Cottages, or the Eden Lotus Cottages. Each of the cottages has interiors that display warmth and comfort, a sun-deck to relax and laze in, and spectacular views of the surroundings.

Enjoy yourself at the in-house restaurant that serves arrange of Coorgi delicacies as well are multi-cuisine fare. The Deck is the in-house bar that serves a range of drinks to your liking in interiors that match up to the environment.

Coorg is the land of coffee plantations and The Tamara, Coorg facilitates an exceptional coffee experience from blossom to brew. Blend and brew your own coffee at the Verandah. Other curated experiences and activities include Plantation Tours, Bird watching walks, Treks, Forest Therapy, Yoga, and outdoor dining. Connect with nature on your Honeymoon at the Tamara, Coorg!





5. Elephant Court, Thekkady, Kerala

Close to the Periyar Tiger Reserve is the Elephant Court, a five-star resort surrounded by the greenery of orchards and spice plantations. The resort boasts of a palatial lobby, and the magnificence of traditional Kerala architecture with wooden work on teak. The interiors display exquisitely carved furniture with an antique finish and imperial chandeliers.

The Patio Rooms come with an attached balcony and the traditional Charupadi, a built-in wooden seat. Enjoy the sounds of birds chirping in the surrounding trees. Together with a garden and fish pond, the Garden Suite also has an attached balcony to enjoy the outdoors. There's a Jacuzzi in the bathroom!! The Honeymoon Suite, as the name suggests, is made only for the Honeymooners – what more can one say! The highlight of the Pool Studio is the private pool with a glass tiled roof that casts patterns of the wall with the diffused sunlight.

The Pebbles Specialty Restaurant serves scrumptious coastal food and mouth-watering continental cuisine. The Patio Restaurant is a hundred seater multi-cuisine restaurant with the pool and Garden on either open side. It serves delicious local cuisines and some delectable Mediterranean food. The Coffee Shop is open around the clock to satisfy your late night hunger pangs.



You can enjoy nature with one of the many curated walks and treks on the periphery of the Wild Life Sanctuary without contravening any of the laws. Check out the Jungle Scout, Jeep Safari, and Pug Mark Trail. Try boating on the Periyar Lake, or float on the lake on the Bamboo Raft. Spot some Elephants, Tigers, Nilgiri Langur, and Liontail Macaque. Periyar's rich bird life includes the Giant Hornbill, Cormorant, Darter, Osprey, and Racket-tailed Drongo. And you might come across the Indian Python and King Cobra on one of your excursions.

Go wild on your Honeymoon at Elephant Court at Thekkady!

Rock Painting

Earliest attempt by human beings to depict their natural world symbolically



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Courtyard by Marriott Pune Chakan raising the bar

Courtyard by Marriott Pune Chakan understands that a large part of the enjoyment of any celebration is the type of food served.

Ensuring the cuisine matches your vision for a successful and happy event is part of the commitment to you. Having handled a crowd of approximately 39,000 people, the team is an expert in managing both corporate and social events.

Whether you're planning an elegant late-night soiree, wedding or a laid-back brunch gathering, the team of expert caterers at Courtyard by Marriott Chakan are always available to help you execute your vision. Enjoy every second of your day while the

dedicated staff members take care all of the details- from set up, food service to clean-up.

The hotel catering offers a variety of dazzling menus for your evening meet ups. Start the night with a selection of sophisticated displayed sparkling sips. For the main course, treat your guests with stellar custom made cuisine and warm-intuitive service. Finish the night with handcrafted top-shelf cocktails and made-from-scratch wedding cake prepared by the master pastry chef.

Put a fresh twist on your wedding with the irresistible brunch menus, which feature a variety of juices and plenty of flaky pastries and colourful fruits. Savoury options include scrambled eggs, grits with cheddar cheese and fresh bagels with an array of flavourful spreads.

The team of culinary experts at Courtyard by Marriott Pune - Chakan, go above and beyond to make the guests' vision, tastes and dreams come true for an unforgettable experience that exceeds every expectation.





Alco Soft

DoubleTree by Hilton Goa – Panaji welcomes guests to enjoy a delicious and unique dessert combination, known as ‘Alco Soft’ at The Comida Bar.

As the name rightly suggests, the exquisite flavors of fine liqueurs like Bailey’s Irish Cream and Martini Fiero unveil into a delectable softy experience to create the exciting Alco Soft. It is beverage infused soft-serve ice cream popularly known as ‘softy’, curated by the mixologists at the resort, where one can enjoy the best of both worlds with every swirl!

The preparation of this experience has your choice of beverage infused in the softy cone, as swirls of the frozen dessert make

the top layers. The preparation of Alco Soft is a fun watch and bartenders at the resort effuse a sense of perfection as they blend your choice of liqueur to the cone and complete the process with effortless ease. The liqueur enhances the experience as you make your way to the innards of the dessert and leaves you wanting for more. You can choose between a range of liqueurs with varied flavor base to make your Alco Soft truly unique.

The Comida Bar at DoubleTree by Hilton Goa – Panaji, is well-known for its spirited

evenings and is the resort’s exclusive destination to enjoy a fine selection of hand-crafted cocktails, along with a scrumptious snack menu. The new addition of the specially crafted dessert, Alco Soft gives a unique twist by combining enhanced beverage flavors to a dessert experience.

So it’s time to take a selfie, as you hold the cone and dive in to the world of Alco Soft. Guests can visit the bar at any time of the day between 11:00 am to 11:00 pm to binge on these delights!



Portugal – A land of flavours

The cuisine of any location is a major factor in choosing a travel destination and there is no doubt that Portugal's cuisine is as rich and diverse as its landscape.

Portugal is home to amazing restaurants and world-class chefs. It is a hub to around 27 Michelin star restaurants across the country. Lisbon, the capital, boasts nine Michelin-starred restaurants. The presence of many Michelin-starred restaurants in Portugal's capital city speaks volumes about the country's booming culinary sector.

Portugal's cuisine is one of its best-kept secrets. There is something in Portuguese food for everyone's taste buds. The most distinctive feature of Portuguese cuisine comes from the sea. Portuguese olive oil is also of prime quality and is part of every dish, including cod (for which it is said that there are 1001 recipes!)

The Mediterranean Diet, classified as World Heritage by UNESCO, is part of the identity

of the Portuguese gastronomy. Its basis is plants, including vegetables, fruit, good quality bread and largely unprocessed cereals, dried and fresh legumes (beans, chickpeas, broad beans, etc.), dried fruits and nuts (walnuts, almonds, chestnuts, raisins, etc.), but also olive oil as the main source of fat, and fish at the expense of red meat.

Each dish is matched to the right wine. Portugal is a country of strong wine tradition. The whole country produces excellent quality of its wines which is recognised across the world, with numerous awards and distinctions won in international competitions. And wine is an excellent excuse to also discover the landscapes, heritage and culture. Portugal's wine routes will provide some excellent trips to discover a pleasure that has been perfected over time. From Port

wine to Douro, Alentejo, or Madeira, each wine has its own distinct flavour.

Portuguese sweets are a divine. The result of the balance between flavour, creaminess and crispiness is another icon of Portuguese cuisine, considered a truly heavenly sweet: the pastel de nata (custard tart)! It is a must. It is delicious with coffee, which we drink in the form of espresso.

One of Portuguese cuisine's best qualities is the close culinary ties it has to Indian cuisine. Indian restaurants can be found practically anywhere in the nation and are widely dispersed.

There is so much to see and do in Portugal that you will surely need to extend your trip there in order to experience the delectable local cuisine.

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Lazy Gardener

Diwali is just around the corner and with the global pandemic taking its toll, people are eager to adopt the greener side to the festival. Commemorating the concept of “Green Diwali”, say “Hey” to Lazy Gardener’s exclusive Diwali Gift boxes for people who nurture their plants and wish to keep an eye, wherever they are.

Lazy Gardener’s Diwali gift boxes are designed specially to spread positive vibes. The #GreenDiwali boxes have been crafted thoughtfully with Indoor gardening trends to suit the home decor and festive feels, keeping in mind the love for nature and to #PlantsformYourHome. It will urge you to adopt the essence of nature without compromising the pretty designs of artificial planters. These tiny planters will ensure zero mess and can be an ideal gifting solution for all nature enthusiasts as well as people who enjoy modern, innovative art.

The collection includes varieties of boxes, which have been designed to symbolize purity, originality, freshness, calmness, beauty, power, and emotions. The intricate artwork and differing assortment can be the “perfect box of happiness” to substitute the harmful box of loud noises.

The Diwali gifting options range from INR 399 - 2299 and will not hit your pocket hard as you will find something for every pocket size.

So what are you waiting for? Hit the cart button as this series is limited!

Comment: Celebrate #GreenDiwali

Rating: 8/10



The June Shop

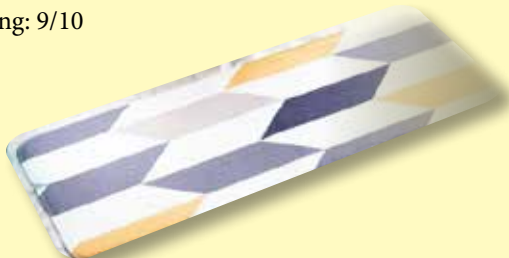
The festive season being around the corner not only calls for lighting up our houses with lights and Diyas but also enhancing its interior.

The June Shop has got you covered for this season by introducing its chic dinnerware, making your guests not only love your cultural recipes but, also appreciating the elegance of your Dinnerware by its choicest Sunset Orange Pattern Moroccan Bowl. A careful creation to host your guests with grace, these hand printed designs uplift the entire vibe. Now, ace your interiors game with the aesthetic Illusion Design Soft Feel Long Mat Runner perfectly made for bedrooms. Once they’re all glammed up by the bedroom look, the next plan should be to show-off the bathroom with the help of Waves & Breeze- Super Absorbent Anti Skid Bathroom Floor Mat that allows you to enhance your washroom the classic way for giving a comfortable experience to your guests.

Don’t wait and shop away such trendiest & functional designs for your home from The June Shop – <https://thejuneshop.com/>

Comment: Renovate your home this Diwali with The June Shop

Rating: 9/10



Vedic Nuts

Harshita Gupta and Saakshi Gupta established the brand in 2019 with a sole mission of providing the most premium gourmet products for everyone. Being travel enthusiasts, they explored different cultures & their cuisine which gave them the idea of starting the brand- Vedic Nuts.

The brand signifies authenticity and purity. They provide preservative free & color free premium dry fruits to their clients. Vedic Nuts aim is to keep transparency and loyalty with their beloved customers by creating valuable experiences through their scrumptious products & gifting range.

The brand is a perfect amalgamation of luxury yet tasty- which makes it different from the other in the market. From keeping a jar of Rose Petal Almonds or Masala Cranberries at your work desk to carrying a jar of Mint Dates for your on the go work meetings- Vedic Nuts is here to sort all our hunger pangs.

The premium range of Silver and Gold coated (99% & 24 karat edible silver & gold respectively) nuts are the top notch product of the brand.

Comment: Premium Tastes & Premium Aesthetics

Rating: 9/10



Fix My Curls

Fix My Curls come up with the FMC Hello Definition Box for Diwali. The Hello Definition box is perfectly curated for those who feel their curls are dry, damaged and limp. The blend of formulas in this box will not only provide strength & bond repair over time to your curls but will also give them bounce, definition and volume that curly hair needs.

Comment: Your hair companion

Rating: 9/10





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INDIA NAHI DEKHA TO KYA DEKHA

