Sustainable Tourism In India

Sustainable tourism is a concept that covers the complete tourism experience. All forms of tourism can be sustainable tourism if planned with that perspective in mind.

CONTENTS

Politics & Democracy

6

Sustainable Tourism In India

Sustainable tourism is a concept that covers the complete tourism experience. All forms of tourism can be sustainable tourism if planned with that perspective in mind.

24

Fossil No More

Electric vehicles are soon to become the craze among buyers of two, three, or four-wheelers. The "silent because electric" four wheelers are going to see a slew of launches in the near future in the luxury segment and in the mass market segment.

Glow Like A Goddess

Leading jewellery brand in India, Reliance Jewels has launched their special Varalakshmi Collection to commemorate the festival Varalakshmi Vratam,where women worship the Goddess Lakshmi in the southern states of India.

30

32

30 years of Israel-India ties

To celebrate 30 years of Israel-India diplomatic relations, the Embassy of Israel in India collaborated with Indian designer Sahil Kochhar to showcase a special collection for both men and women inspired by the beautiful landscapes of Israel.

Bethliving

Bethliving is a home decor company that prides itself for introducing furniture in steel and stainless steel with modern designs and utmost functionality.

Sustainable Tourism In India

Sustainable tourism is a concept that covers the complete tourism experience. All forms of tourism can be sustainable tourism if planned with that perspective in mind.

- Asheesh Bhandari

The Uttar Pradesh Expressways Industrial Development Authority, popularly known as UPEIDA, is gathering feathers in its cap. Its star project, the Bundelkhand Expressway was completed and inaugurated recently. And that too eight months ahead of schedule.

Sustainable tourism is a concept that covers the complete tourism experience. In addition to better tourist experiences and addressing the needs of the host communities, Sustainable tourism also includes economic, social, and environmental issues. All forms of tourism can be sustainable tourism if planned with that perspective in mind. A definition of sustainable tourism from 2020 is: "Tourism which is developed and maintained in an area in such a manner and at such a scale that it remains viable over an infinite period while safeguarding the Earth's life-support system on which the welfare of current and future generations depends."

Global economists forecast continuing international tourism growth, the amount depending on the location. As one of the world's largest and fastest-growing industries, this continuous growth will place great stress on remaining biologically diverse habitats and Indigenous cultures.

Sustainable Tourism could mean adopting more sustainable methods

of transportation, staying in more environmentally friendly accommodation, eating locally and ethically sourced foods, and avoiding harmful activities. Sustainable tourism can be related to leisure, business or event travel, and travel to visit friends and family.

According to critics true sustainability is likely impossible in all but the most favourable circumstances. Interests of equity, economy, and ecology often conflict with one another and require trade-offs. According to them many things are done in the name of sustainability to cover the desire to allow extra profits. Often local populations are separated from the tourists and exploitation of human and natural resources is common.

The roots of Sustainable Tourism lie in Sustainable development. Given the negative impact that Tourism often has on various aspects such as environment destruction, destruction of traditional values and practices etc., the principles of sustainable development were brought into tourism to give rise to the term Sustainable Tourism. Today tourism development organizations are promoting sustainable tourism practices to a larger extent.

The United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) promoted sustainable tourism as part of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Tourism is directly impacted by the following SDGs:

- SDG 8 (Decent work and Economic Growth)

o Target 8.9 of SDG 8 (Decent work and economic growth) states: "By 2030, devise and implement policies to promote sustainable tourism that creates jobs and promotes local culture and products". UNWTO, is the custodian agency to monitor the targets of SDG 8 that are related to tourism.

- SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production)

o Target 12.b of SDG 12 (responsible consumption and production) states: "Develop and implement tools to monitor sustainable development impacts for sustainable tourism that creates jobs and promotes local culture and products." UNWTO is the custodian agency for this target.

- SDG 14 (Life below Water)

o Target 14.7 of SDG 14 (Life below Water) states: "By 2030, increase the economic benefits to small island developing States and least developed countries from the sustainable use of marine resources, including through sustainable management of fisheries, aquaculture and tourism."

The government of a country has an important role in encouraging sustainable tourism. This could be through marketing, information services,

education, and advice through public-private collaborations. An important factor governments must consider is that of carrying capacity. This is the capacity of tourists or visitors an area can sustainably tolerate over time without damaging the environment or culture of the surrounding area. The carrying capacity can be altered and revised in time and with changing perceptions and values.

Another role of the government is for greater inclusion of diverse stakeholders. Partnerships or cooperation between private, public and civil society actors helps to implement sustainability policies. And good governance is essential in developing such partnership initiatives.

Developing countries are usually focussed on international tourism. Many believe it brings economic benefits which include employment opportunities, development opportunities for small businesses, and increase in foreign exchange earnings. India as a developing country has also sought out the international traveller particularly in view of its diversity in culture, destinations, cuisines, and local traditions. India also has a long history and some of the monuments of yesteryears still remain standing and are a potential tourist attraction.

In April 2022, India formalised its National Strategy for Sustainable Tourism

National Strategy for Sustainable Tourism, 2022

The National Strategy for Sustainable Tourism 2022 (NSST) recognizes tourism as an important sector for the advancement of the economy. As one of the fast growing sectors of the economy it has the potential for job creation, investment, promoting trade, infrastructure development, and social inclusion. It also recognizes that tourism has a major impact on the natural and built environment and the well-being and culture of the host populations. It puts pressure on fragile natural ecosystems and on the wild life, competes for scarce resources, and contributes to pollution and Green House Gases (GHG).

According to the NSST, sustainable tourism should follow three basic principles:

(a) Environmental Sustainability

(b) Socio-cultural Sustainability

(c) Economic Sustainability

NSST therefore aims to mainstream sustainability in the Indian tourism sector and ensure more resilient, inclusive, carbon-neutral, and resource-efficient tourism while safeguarding natural and cultural resources.

For the development of sustainable tourism in the country, following strategic pillars have been identified:

Promoting Environmental Sustainability

This entails the optimal use of environmental resources, maintaining essential ecological processes, and helping to conserve natural heritage and biodiversity.

Tourism is a significant user of resources in many areas and efficient use of resources is important both for the wellbeing of the local environment and host community and in maintaining global resources. An equitable balance between the needs of local communities and the tourism industry must be maintained. Resource efficiency in tourism requires the consumption patterns of tourists and tourism enterprises to be modified. Enterprises must establish environmental management systems to limit the impacts and to drive continual improvement.

GHG emissions arise due to the energy consumption in travel, transport, accommodation, and tourism-related activities. Dependence on fossil fuels, increases the vulnerability and uncertainty for future business and translates into important implications for GHG emissions and climate change.

To achieve absolute emission reduction, a reduction in overall energy use, and a switch to renewable energy sources is required. According to the NSST, the transformation to a low-carbon tourism economy will demand innovative research, major investments in technology, strong and integrative policies and new partnerships between governments and the tourism industry. Public education and enhanced consumer awareness will be required.

To reduce GHG emissions, the Ministry of Tourism will work with tourism stakeholders to capitalize on the vast opportunities to influence both sources of supply and consumption leading to emission reductions and economic gains.

Fresh water is a vital resource and the consumption of water by the tourism sector is high. States and the Industry must be on-board to minimize water consumption through:

1. Restricting water-hungry facilities such as swimming pools, golf courses etc.

2. Reusing and recycling water where possible, (e.g. use of greywater to irrigate parks and gardens).

3. Improving infrastructure and maintenance (e.g. reducing leakages).

4. Encouraging installation of water-efficient technology such as low-flow showers and toilets.

5. Persuading visitors to be responsible in their use of water.

With a growing population, the land is in short supply at many destinations. The NSST therefore states that it is important to carefully select sites for tourism development, taking into account alternative use and the needs of the local community. Although the

use of local materials can add to quality and distinctiveness, the design and construction of tourism facilities should avoid profligate use of naturally occurring materials such as timber, stone, sand and gravel, and should take account of the capacity of local supply and competing demands. Tourism enterprises will be encouraged to be efficient in their use of materials and their use of resources and generation of waste.

According to the NSST, tourism is a significant source of pollution. Tourism enterprises will be required to adhere to the norms and standards to minimize the pollution of air, water and land and the generation of waste. Waste and pollution control will be achieved largely by changing the consumption patterns of tourists and tourism enterprises and stricter enforcement of regulations regarding pollution norms.

Transport (mainly through air travel and the use of individual private cars) is one of the most significant sources of environmental pollution arising from

tourism. According to the NSST, Ministry of Tourism will work with the Ministry of Transport to find low-impact forms of transport for journeys to and from the destination, and within it. Walking and cycling will be facilitated through appropriate infrastructure, including trails and public transport services, more integrated timetables, and creative marketing. Tourists will be encouraged to offset the impact of their air travel by contributing to carbon sequestration projects.

The NSST also recognizes that water is an essential resource for both biological and human communities. The tourism industry needs to place a high priority on reducing, managing and treating wastewater and controlling sewage disposal. Wherever possible, a connection should be made to main sewage disposal systems that are designed to treat and discharge to the highest standards.

The tourism industry generates a significant amount of waste and disposal of non-degradable waste is an important

issue. Land is contaminated through the tipping of waste on landfill sites and landfilled biodegradable wastes can also release methane into the atmosphere. Such waste can cause visual intrusion, habitat damage, and can threaten wildlife. Tourism enterprises will be educated on reducing waste at the source and recycling wherever possible. Tourism enterprises must follow the relevant regulations and other guidelines in this regard. All construction work should take place with minimum disturbance to the environment.

Protecting Biodiversity and Natural Heritage

Protection of biodiversity is an important part of environmental sustainability. There is a need to support the conservation of natural areas, habitats and wildlife, and minimize damage to them. Positive and negative impacts of tourism can be felt most strongly in this area. All ecosystems have their specific sensitivities that must be considered when planning for tourism

activities.

While tourism may be a cause of loss of bio-diversity, income from tourism has proved to be a critically important component of funding conservation in many national parks, reserves and other protected areas. Sustainable and responsible tourism can provide both resources for conservation and also ensure that it does not harm bio-diversity.

The physical structure of places and their aesthetic quality and appearance is critical to the long-term health of the tourism industry. The physical attractiveness of a destination is a key element of its appeal to visitors. Land and coastal erosion are particular areas of concern where physical degradation is concerned.

State governments must ensure that new tourism development is appropriate to local environmental conditions. The NSST encourages the reuse and regeneration of existing buildings and previously used sites rather than new buildings on green field sites. The design of new buildings should be in harmony with the landscape, and where appropriate reflect traditional designs with the optimum amount of open space and the retention of tree cover.

The States and the local government in destinations will be encouraged to maintain the integrity and attractiveness of tourist destinations. Policies will stall activities that damage landscapes, such as mineral extraction or destruction of forests. Steps will be taken to maintain the fabric and facades of properties, especially historic buildings, maintain traditional rural landscapes and features, avoid the proliferation of advertisements and signage and maintain the quality of public open spaces.

Tourism provides a source of income and an opportunity for a sustainable livelihood for park-based communities. Following efforts will be made in this direction:

1. National guidelines on sustainable tourism in protected areas will be prepared.

2. Establishing structures for relevant stakeholders work together on tourism matters, including preparing sustainable tourism strategies that integrate with park management plans and link to regional and national strategies.

3. Guaranteeing the availability and use of financial resources for park management.

4. Optimizing the level and use of park admissions to support a range of objectives, including biodiversity conservation.

5. Developing partnership agreements and concession-based relationships with local communities and private sector operators that offer clear benefits to conservation and habitat management, as well as to communities and users.

6. Creating networks of protected areas, and their branding for sustainable tourism.

According to the NSST, ecotourism, by definition, is a form of tourism that entails

responsible travel to natural areas which conserve the environment and sustains the well-being of local people. It should therefore be encouraged in the interests of conservation. The Government will:

1. Bring together tourism and conservation stakeholders for the development and careful management of ecotourism at the national and the local level.

2. Ensure that products or new projects that are promoted as 'ecotourism' comply with standards and are certified.

3. Encourage well-planned and well executed ecotourism projects.

Rural landholders can earn additional income from tourism, either directly or indirectly. This may involve providing accommodation or other services on the land, income from the sale of produce into the tourism supply chain, or income from engagement in tourism off the land (e.g. acting as guides). Tourism can stimulate more sustainable land management by providing a new income source (as an alternative to unsustainable practices such as logging or slash and burn agriculture) and can encourage landholders to conserve wildlife or produce organic food, as these are valued by visitors. There is a need to provide support, advice and other incentives to encourage landholders to manage their land more sustainably.

Promoting Economic Sustainability

Economic sustainability is a key principle for sustainable tourism as laid down by UNWTO. In order to achieve economic sustainability, there is a need to ensure viable, long-term economic operations, providing socio-economic benefits to all stakeholders that are fairly distributed, including stable employment and income-earning opportunities and social services to host communities, and contributing to poverty alleviation.

The viability and competitiveness of tourism destinations and enterprises are important to ensure sustainable tourism.

This ensures prosperity and benefits in the long term. Visitor experience is key to long-term viability of a destination or enterprise. Satisfied visitors return to the destinations and also recommend others to visit. This means delivering an experience that meets or exceeds expectations.

The Ministry of Tourism will carry out market research on an ongoing basis to guide tourism development in the country. It will identify markets that will continue to deliver business in the long term, the needs of potential consumers, and develop the ability to adapt to trends and changes in source market conditions, travel patterns and tastes.

Strengthening the quality and accreditation systems for every component of the visitor experience, including mechanisms for checking, identifying and improving it will be encouraged. Regular feedback from the visitors will be obtained.

Necessary support on training, marketing and other enterprise requirements will

be provided, particularly to MSMEs. Schemes will be tailored to needs and aimed to avoid a culture of dependency on financial assistance. Funding schemes will be designed to help businesses and projects towards self-sufficiency.

Viability of individual enterprises is also considerably affected by how the destination as a whole is perceived by visitors. The government has a key role in maintaining an attractive destination. Three critical aspects of this are a positive and consistent image, safety and security, and overall environmental quality.
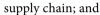
The Ministry of Tourism will work towards a positive and consistent image of India as a tourist destination. It will undertake effective destination branding, promotion of the brand and ensure that the nature and quality of experience match the brand image.

States will work towards safety and security-related issues and enhance the perception of India as a safe and secure destination. Required attention will be paid to matters such as levels of policing, health care available to visitors, quality of information available and support services for visitors in need of assistance. Travel advice related to safety, issued by governments in source countries, can have a considerable impact on the performance of the tourism economy in recipient countries.

An important principle of sustainable development is to maximize the contribution of tourism to the economic prosperity of the host destination. Local prosperity means ensuring that tourism is well integrated within the economy and is developed alongside other sectors. It is also important to avoid over-dependency on tourism while ensuring that it can provide a consistent and reliable source of income. The following measures will be taken to promote local prosperity.

(a) Reducing leakages

(b) Strengthening links between businesses by addressing the local supply chain; and

(c) Influencing levels of visitor spending

Increasing employment opportunities and the proportion of year-round, full-time jobs is essential for economic sustainability. To extend the tourist season, measures such as the following would be undertaken:

- Targeting markets most likely to travel in the offseason;

- Discounted seasonal offers;

- Organizing events at less busy times of the year;

- Encouraging attractions to stay open longer etc.

Enterprises will be encouraged to provide skills training programmes and career advancement opportunities to their employees for which the government will provide the required support. Enterprises will also be encouraged to offer formal employment contracts to their employees and focus on long term development.

The Ministry of Tourism will work towards ensuring the minimum age for employment or work in order to secure the effective abolition of child labour. Enterprises will also have to provide adequate safety and health standards and programmes for employees.

Tourism is well placed to reach disadvantaged people, mainly because

it is a labour intensive service industry with relatively low entry barriers and an activity that takes place in situ within communities. In addition to bringing income, the interaction it entails between people can bolster dignity and self-esteem. Tourism policies that benefit disadvantaged people by delivering economic and social benefits to them, will be formulated.

Tourism enterprises will be encouraged to pay particular attention to the nature of the sources, and to work with poor communities (e.g. marginal farming communities) on developing reliable supply streams for the tourism industry.

Disadvantaged people often gain access to visitors and seek to earn income from them through activities such as street trading, personal guide services or providing simple accommodation, etc. This can be strengthened through capacity building, attention to quality, licensing, better information for tourists, and supporting the development of enterprises by disadvantaged people.

Duty of care to visitors means being concerned for their safety and security in the destination and enterprises. Issues include fire prevention, health and hygiene, raising awareness, prevention and preparedness for disasters (natural and industrial) adaptation to the effects of natural hazards and protection from

crime and terrorism. There would be clear procedures for registering and handling visitors' complaints and for solving problems that they encounter such as loss of possessions or the need for emergency medical attention.

A regular survey of visitors to destinations will be carried out and enterprises encouraged to obtain feedback from their guests. Although tourists' motivations for travel vary, particular attention should be paid to encouraging and enabling them to learn about and appreciate the cultures and environments they visit. This is an important part of meeting the aim of visitor fulfilment; it also assists in meeting other aims relating to social and environmental impact within the host destination.

Promoting Socio-Cultural Sustainability

Sustainable tourism aims to respect and enhance the historic heritage, authentic culture, traditions and distinctiveness of host communities. Respect for, and understanding of cultural diversity between nations and people is a key principle of sustainable development. Tourism can be a considerable force for the conservation of historic and cultural heritage and can stimulate arts, crafts and other creative activities within communities.

By providing a source of income based on local culture, tourism can encourage communities to value their cultural heritage more. However, it is important to guard against the falsification and degradation of culture and heritage in the way they are promoted to tourists.

Significant historic and cultural sites appeal to visitors. Although conservation and management of such sites may depend on revenue from visits, many suffer from visitor pressure that threatens to damage their fabric and devalue the quality of the visitor experience. Following measures will be taken to prevent this:

a. Conserving historic and cultural heritage features and promoting their inclusion on the World Heritage Convention list in certain cases.

b. Effective visitor management.

c. Avoiding or managing intrusive collateral activities such as informal markets, street sellers and vendors whether local or from outside the destination.

d. Increasing revenue for conservation through well managed retail outlets, encouraging voluntary donations, etc.

e. Seeking ways to benefit the livelihood of local communities living close to heritage sites

Cultural richness can be strengthened and interpreted in a variety of creative ways. Greater respect and understanding for local cultures can be achieved through improved information for guests and hosts and the interaction between them. However, sensitivity is required and devaluing the local culture must be avoided. The focus would be on the following:

a. Developing interpretative programmes and events based on the heritage and distinctiveness of the area.

b. Conceiving creative, sensitive and viable visitor attractions where local culture and traditions can be showcased.

c. Incorporating aspects of local cultural heritage and distinctiveness into various elements of visitor experience, such as local cuisine in restaurants, traditional designs in architecture, and

art and sculpture in public spaces.

d. Capacity building with local communities regarding visitor interpretation and issues of quality and authenticity.

e. Capacity building with the private sector to help them and their guests to bridge potential culture gaps.

f. Informing tourists about local traditions and local culture before and during the trip.

g. Informing local communities about the culture of their potential visitors.

h. Guarding against the sale and purchase of items of cultural value as souvenirs.

The local community and local government institutions will be involved in the development of tourism policies and plans. There would be a process of wider consultation and participation for the community and other stakeholders. The capacity of local governance bodies would be improved as would their knowledge of tourism and its sustainability.

Tourism can impact the social well-being of communities in many ways, both positively and negatively. Tourism can provide jobs, bring the additional investment and spending brought by tourism can support a wide variety of amenities that add to the quality of local people's lives. These include essential services such as water and energy, roads and transport services, health services, shops, garages, leisure and entertainment facilities, and outdoor amenities.

Conversely, the presence of visitors can put pressure on facilities and services, adding to the costs of operation and maintenance, reducing their enjoyment by local people and making access to them difficult or even impossible. Tourism development and activities also sometimes interfere with other sources of livelihood and disrupt access to them.

The difference between a negative and a positive community reaction to tourism depends to a significant extent on the volume of visitors in an area at any one time and how this relates to the size of the local population. It may also be affected by the degree of concentration or geographical spread. The concept

of the social carrying capacity of a destination is relevant here, and policies should maintain an optimum number of visitors. This can be done by keeping abreast of community reactions and using appropriate indicators such as volume of visits, traffic counts, number of complaints from local people, level of litter, etc.

Congestion, especially at peak times, caused by the volume of visitors and/or their vehicles, can be a primary threat to community wellbeing. It is important to have effective visitor management policies and actions. There is a need for managing demand and reducing seasonality by marketing and pricing techniques to promote off-season visits, or by promoting alternative locations to spread visits within and outside of the destination. Traffic management can be improved through physical changes, signage, information, and promotion of alternative transport options.

Scheme for Certification of Sustainable Tourism

In order to mainstream sustainability in the tourism sector, it is important to measure the adoption of principles of sustainable tourism in various destinations, products, and industries whether accommodation providers or

tour operators. The Ministry of Tourism has adopted the Sustainable Tourism Criteria of India (STCI) based on global practices adapted to the needs of the country.

The Ministry has finalized the Scheme for Certification for sustainable tourism as per STCI principles and indicators for destinations, accommodation sector and tour operators in consultation with Industry. The Ministry will also initiate action to create STCI and Indicators for other tourism service providers that have not been covered so far.

The entire process of STCI certification shall be end to end digital. The Certification will have attractive branding and it will be aggressively promoted by the Ministry of Tourism through all its channels including the incredible India website and mobile application.

The Ministry of Tourism will work with the State Governments to build the capacity of the industry to prepare them for certification. The State governments will be encouraged to prioritize destinations for certification of sustainability.

The Ministry of Tourism will conduct a ranking of the States, with the key objective to foster competitiveness and encourage States to work proactively towards developing sustainable tourism.

It will be implemented as a capacity development exercise to encourage mutual learning among all states and to provide support in policy formulation and implementation. The States may be suitably classified into leaders, aspiring leaders and emerging States. The ranking exercise will be carried out with professional support and through independent experts from various Institutions both Government and Private. The Ministry of Tourism will provide necessary training to the officials and other stakeholders and handhold the States for their participation in the exercise.

IEC and Capacity Building

A well planned Information, Education and Communication (IEC) campaign to create awareness, understanding and acceptance of sustainable tourism amongst all stakeholders is the need of the hour. The campaign will have to be spearheaded by the Central Government and State Governments with full support of the industry and other stakeholders including local government functionaries, forest and wildlife officials, local communities and non-government organizations working in the field.

The Ministry of Tourism with the assistance of technical experts will devise overall IEC material, which can be customised and expanded by the State Governments keeping in view their specific needs and requirements. The

material will be both digital and print and will be made available on websites, social media and other channels.

In addition to IEC material being made available through various channels, the Ministry will work with the States to organize sensitization and training workshops for various stakeholders including Government and Private Sector officials, NGOs and local communities/ institutions. Apart from various aspects of sustainable and responsible tourism, it will also cover the need for enhancing the visitor experience and value chain enhancement for competitive advantage. This tourism focus should be an essential component of each destination.

The Ministry of Tourism will support the State Governments in building the capacity of the industry and government agencies for sustainable tourism. The Ministry of Tourism will support State Governments in undertaking various skill development and entrepreneurship development activities as identified for meeting the needs of the local community. The State Government will also facilitate them in placement and starting their venture.

A National Resource Centre, under the aegis of the Ministry of Tourism, will be set up as a source of capacity and expertise at the National level for sustainable tourism, adventure tourism and ecotourism. Similarly, the Ministry will also encourage the State Governments to set up State Resource

Centres. These resource centres along with other identified institutions will help in developing adequate material, preparing a pool of master trainers, training trainers and other capacity-building initiatives.

Education and Skill training will cover various aspects of sustainable Tourism such as awareness of the impact of "over-tourism", environmental impact and concept of carrying capacity, community participation, indigenous solutions and tourism offerings, entrepreneurship and community development initiatives at the local level (Vocal for Local).

There is a need to have a dedicated promotional campaign for positioning India as a sustainable and responsible tourism destination. India has to focus on utilising its natural heritage. These campaigns should be planned in partnership with Industry Stakeholders. Every State has its unique offerings and therefore the States have to plan their campaign to popularise the State as a sustainable tourism destination.

While supply side interventions are required, there is also a need to work on the demand side by making the traveller aware of sustainable and responsible tourism. Responsible behaviour by travellers and demand for more sustainable tourism will greatly influence the industry to adopt sustainability in their businesses. The Ministry in partnership with the States, Industry and Destinations will launch a campaign for

responsible travel.

Governance

The Ministry of Tourism will prepare a detailed National Action Plan in consultation with relevant Ministries, State Governments and Industry Stakeholders for implementation of the Strategy. The Action plan will be reviewed and monitored in accordance with the laid down governance mechanism for the same. State Governments will prepare State-specific policy and action plans for the development of sustainable tourism. The Ministry will help with model policies and action plans for the guidance of the States.

To ensure that the Strategy is effectively implemented, there is a need to review the progress and resolve the issues. Following institutional structure will be followed:

Vision Group under Union Minister for Tourism

A Vision Group on Sustainable Tourism under the Union Minister for Tourism will be set up. The Vision Group will include all the Stakeholder Ministries, States, industries, NGOs and Experts. It will provide an overall vision and guidance for the development of Sustainable Tourism in the Country.

IMCCT

The Inter-Ministerial Coordination Committee under the Cabinet Secretary is already in place, and will review and resolve inter-Ministerial issues, which may arise and provide guidance for greater convergence of Central Schemes.

National Board on Sustainable Tourism under Secretary (Tourism)

A National Board on Sustainable Tourism under Secretary (Tourism) will be set up. The National Board will include the representatives of the Key Ministries, leading States in sustainable tourism and representatives from Industry, NGOs, and Experts.

The Board will guide the operationalisation and implementation of various strategic initiatives to strengthen the ecosystem for the development of sustainable tourism in

the Country: (i) Certification Schemes (ii) Safety guidelines (iii) Capacity building (iv) Marketing and promotion (v) Private Sector Participation (vi) Specific strategies (vii) Any other measures for sustainable tourism

State Steering Committee under Chief Secretary

The States will set up State Steering Committee under the Chief Secretary. The Committee will have representation from all the relevant Departments at the State level, representatives of Industry, NGOs, and Experts.

The Committee will coordinate, review and resolve issues regarding the implementation of strategy and other State-specific issues for the development and promotion of sustainable tourism.

District level Committee

The States will set up a district-level Committee under District Collector to coordinate and review progress and provide impetus to the development of sustainable and responsible tourism at the district level.

National Nodal Agency

Ministry of Tourism will designate National Nodal Agency to support the Ministry of Tourism in coordinating and evolving strategy and actionable plans and schemes for promotion and development of Sustainable Tourism in the Country. The Nodal agency will in particular assist the Ministry in undertaking the following functions:

o Preparing a detailed Action Plan for the implementation of the Strategy.

o Identifying national and global best practices and preparing tool kits for their replication by the States

o Benchmarking State policies and standards and preparing model policies and standards

o Capacity Building measures including setting up Resource Centres and Centres of Excellence

o Facilitating the adoption of digital technologies for sustainable tourism

o Formulating a dedicated scheme to

support the development of sustainable tourism in the Country

o Any other support, which can facilitate the Ministry of Tourism in the development of sustainable tourism in the Country.

The Nodal agency will set up appropriate structures and appoint professional staffing to support the Ministry of Tourism in the implementation of the strategy. The Ministry will provide necessary budgetary support to the Nodal Agency through various schemes for the promotion and development of tourism.

State Nodal Agency

Each State/ UT may also designate a State Nodal Agency which can assist the State Department of Tourism in the promotion and development of sustainable tourism. The State Nodal Agency will assist the State Tourism Department in:

o Collaboration with the national nodal agency

o Replicating national and global best practices

o Framing State policies for sustainable tourism

o Facilitating the adoption of digital technologies for sustainable tourism

o Formulation of State schemes for the development of sustainable tourism

The Ministry of Tourism will work with the States and designated State Nodal Agency to provide necessary financial and technical support under various schemes of the Ministry.

Atithi Devo Bhava

India's age old tradition of treating the visitor as God continues to remain alive. In many respects it is reflected in the various policies and guidelines on Tourism. The NSST is just one such document.

Nevertheless, the NSST sets out all the operational contours, right down to the local government and tourist enterprise level. Everyone has their work cut out but the success of any strategy depends on how well it is executed.

Cathay Pacific Cargo introduces Fly Greener

Cathay Pacific is taking the lead in aviation's sustainability efforts in Asia with the extension of Fly Greener to its air cargo services.

Fly Greener is a carbon-offset programme powered by an integrated carbon emissions calculator, as part of the airline's commitment to tackling climate change by achieving net-zero carbon emissions by 2050. The new carbon emissions calculator works out the carbon emissions of shipments and the cost to offset them in just a couple of simple steps. Customers can then make a contribution to purchase carbon offsets that come from carefully selected carbon-offset projects. All selected projects are certified under the Gold Standard to ensure their carbon reductions are verified, and come with societal and developmental benefits. The carbon-offset programme follows the launch earlier this year of Cathay Pacific's Corporate Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF) Programme, which brings SAF into Hong Kong International Airport for the first time in history. It provides corporate customers the opportunity to reduce their carbon footprint from business travel and air cargo shipments by contributing to the use of SAF. Cathay Pacific was also among the first carriers in the world to announce a target of 10% SAF in its total fuel use by 2030. General Manager Cargo Commercial George Edmunds said: "The carbon emissions calculator is another tool we have made available to help our customers achieve their sustainability targets to make our business and our industry more sustainable. In tandem with our promotion and development of Sustainable Aviation Fuel capabilities, the calculator will give our customers flexibility to offset their carbon emissions via a suite of accredited carbon offset projects." Customers have already been able to estimate their potential carbon emissions by searching for flight connections with the emission calculator on cathaypacificcargo.com, but now registered customers using the website will be able to offset their shipments by air waybill (AWB) number. Users can enter five AWB numbers at a time, but can submit as many applications as required over any monthly period. The tool, which uses the latest IATA methodology, will show the volume of emissions and display the offset charge in local currency, calculated by weight, and aircraft type. This level of detail is central to the scheme, as explained by Simon Ng, CEO of Global Logistic System (HK) Co., Ltd (GLSHK), a Cathay Pacific-owned subsidiary that designed the technology.

Emirates to introduce Premium Economy to five more cities

Emirates announced plans to debut its newly retrofitted A380s featuring its latest Premium Economy cabins to five new cities from December - New York JFK, San Francisco, Melbourne, Auckland and Singapore.

The airline will also add more Premium Economy seats on services to London Heathrow and Sydney, as its newly enhanced aircraft sporting refreshed cabins roll into scheduled service. The airline aims to offer customers more opportunities to experience its highly acclaimed Premium Economy product, and its latest deployment plans will also see 85 A380s back in the sky by December, well-timed to serve the year-end travel demand. Emirates' enhanced A380s with Premium Economy to New York JFK, San Francisco, Melbourne, Auckland and Singapore will operate as follows:

- To New York JFK, Emirates will operate with its newly retrofitted A380 on EK203 and EK 204, starting from 1 December.
- To Auckland, Emirates will debut its Premium Economy cabin on EK 448 and EK 449, starting 15 January 2023.
- From 1 February 2023, Melbourne will become the second Australian destination to be served with the signature Emirates A380 featuring Premium Economy. Services will be deployed on EK 406 and EK 407.
- San Francisco will become the second US destination to be served by the retrofitted A380 with refreshed interiors on EK 225 and EK 226, starting on 15 February 2023.
- Emirates' enhanced A380 with Premium Economy will land in Singapore for the first time on 1 March 2023, operating as EK 354 and EK 355.

Emirates will also update its schedules to London Heathrow, Sydney and New York JFK with its retrofitted A380 aircraft operating on the following services:

- From 15 December 2022, Sydney will become the first city in the Emirates network to offer Premium Economy seats on all flights, with the introduction of the airline's retrofitted aircraft on EK 414 and EK 415.
- From 1 January 2023, London Heathrow will receive its third daily service with Premium Economy, with the new product debuting on EK 005 and EK 006.
- From 15 March 2023, Emirates will operate its second A380 with Premium Economy to New York JFK on EK 201 and EK 202.

AZAL Operates 1st Delhi-Baku Direct Flight

Azerbaijan Airlines launched its direct flights between Baku and Delhi, the Capital city of India since pandemic onset.

While welcoming the passengers on their arrival by the first direct flight from Delhi to Baku, at Heydar Aliyev International Airport on 10 August 2022, Charge d'Affairs of India in Baku Vinay Kumar informed that the flights will operate two times a week, on Tuesdays and Fridays from Baku to Delhi and on Wednesday and Saturdays from Delhi to Baku.

The flight from Delhi's Indira Gandhi International Airport to Baku's Heydar Aliyev International Airport takes around 4 hours.

A number of Bollywood celebrities came on the first flight from Delhi to Baku. They were welcomed at the Heydar Aliyev International Airport with the traditional Azerbaijani dances. On the occasion, Vinay Kumar noted that the two countries enjoy strong historical and cultural ties, adding that the opening of the direct flight between the two countries will further strengthen the bilateral cooperation in various sectors, including economy, culture and tourism.

Charge d'Affairs highlighted that with the faster and convenient connections as well as easy e-visa procedures, more Azerbaijani tourists can enjoy the vast diversity of attractive tourist destinations in India including land and water bodies, rich national heritage and history, and geographic and cultural diversities.

The bilateral trade between India and Azerbaijan in January-December 2021 was $739.10 million. The trade has witnessed a huge increase during January-June 2022 amounting to $895.95 million with an increase of 107.7% in comparison to the same period of last year. India is now the fourth largest export destination for Azerbaijan. The direct flight between the two countries is expected to further promote bilateral trade, Vinay Kumar added.

BLR Airport invites artists to submit entries for a Monumental Sculpture

Bangalore International Airport Limited (BIAL) announced an open call inviting artists and art groups to submit proposals for a 20-meter-high monumental sculpture at the Forest Belt Area in the upcoming Terminal 2 (T2) of Kempegowda International Airport, Bengaluru (KIAB/ BLR Airport). The Art Programme in T2 at BLR Airport will mirror two themes – Karnataka's rich heritage and culture and Naurasa – the nine emotions highlighted in Bharata's Natyashastra.The shortlisted proposalwill be commissioned anddisplayed at the forest beltarea that is located between the main terminal building and the boarding gates. The proposals must be original and not a replica of previous work. It should be inspired by the rich art and cultural heritage of Karnataka or South India. The proposalswill be reviewed by an independent advisory panel and BIAL stakeholders.

"This initiative is our endeavour to provide travellers with an authentic experience that captures the rich heritage and essence of Karnataka. Through this programme we intend to support and showcase the talent of the artists and make every journey a memorable one using art as a medium," said a BIAL spokesperson. The airport's first open call for the art programme in 2020 was a massive success andreceived 300 entries. This second open call for a monumental sculpture is one-of-its-kind and offers a great opportunity for artists to showcase their talent.

All submissions must be emailed toartprogramme@ bialairport.comby23:59 hours on September 15, 2022. The winner will be announced by October 10, 2022

Lot Polish Airlines Will Move to The New Terminal 1 at New York's JFK Airport

The construction of a new Terminal 1 is planned at John F. Kennedy International Airport (JFK). Once completed, the New Terminal One (NTO) will serve LOT Polish Airlines as its hub at the biggest commercial airport in the New York metropolitan area.

Central Europe's leading airline and the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, the airport's operator, have agreed on this after two years of negotiations. Along with Etihad Airways and Air France, Star Alliance member LOT Polish Airlines will be one of three anchor airlines of the new terminal. The new "state of the art" terminal is designed exclusively for international flights and will feature 23 gates. Construction of the 220,000 sqm NTO is scheduled to begin this summer. The construction, which will take place in several phases – the first is a new arrivals and departures hall – is estimated to cost about 9.5 billion USD. The costs are borne by a private consortium with numerous well-known companies, including Ferrovial, Carlyle, JLC Infrastructure and Ullico. Upon completion, scheduled for 2030, the NTO will be the largest terminal at JFK Airport. Guests will appreciate that LOT Polish Airlines will have its own two-storey flagship LOT Business Lounge in the NTO, offering direct access to the aircraft. "We are very pleased to be part of this great and in many ways groundbreaking terminal," said RafałMilczarski, CEO and President of the Management Board LOT Polish Airlines. "We also see this as recognition of our partnership with John F. Kennedy International Airport, which now spans almost 50 years."

Flight LO 007 as reference to James Bond LOT Polish Airlines flies from Warsaw to New York since 1973. In the same year, the James Bond classic "Live and Let Die" with Roger Moore in the role of the British secret agent was released in cinemas, which is set in New York and also at JFK, among other places. Since then, the LOT Polish Airlines flight from the Polish capital to the Big Apple traditionally features flight number 007. Latest information on LOT Polish Airlines' flight services is available through all distribution channels or via the Gurgaon office.

Virgin Atlantic and IndiGo announce new codeshare agreement

Juha Jarvinen, Chief Commercial Officer at Virgin Atlantic

We're thrilled to launch a new codeshare partnership with IndiGo. This summer marks our largest ever flying programme from India with three daily direct services to London and our new partnership takes our commitment to even greater heights. IndiGo is India's largest airline and its extensive network will offer Virgin Atlantic customers even more choice when travelling between the UK and India, as well as offering seamless connections for onward travel across our extensive US route network. It's great news for our Flying Club too, by providing more opportunities for members to earn valuable points. This new partnership aims to respond to the large, fast-growing demand for visiting friends & relatives, leisure as well as business travellers looking for more choice between UK and India.

Virgin Atlantic and IndiGo are delighted to announce a new codeshare between the UK and India, offering seamless connections and increased opportunities for frequent flyers to earn more points than ever before. The codeshare partnership will mean customers booking a Virgin Atlantic ticket will be able to fly on the airline's London Heathrow to Delhi and Mumbai flights and connect to and from 7 additional cities in India. Later this year the agreement will be expanded to cover a total of 16 destinations throughout India, as well as connections onto Virgin Atlantic's extensive US network operated via London Heathrow. The agreement will allow Virgin Atlantic to sell seats to passengers connecting onto IndiGo flights. The initial codeshare destinations in India include Chennai, Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Kolkata,

Juha Jarvinen, Chief Commercial Officer at Virgin Atlantic

We are pleased to announce our codeshare with Virgin Atlantic to provide enhanced connectivity to the passengers. This will not only help offer a seamless travel experience from London to as many as 16 destinations in India, but also open up international trade opportunities throughout the country via enhanced accessibility. We look forward to having Virgin Atlantic's customers on our lean clean flying machine, as we extend our on-time, affordable, courteous and hassle-free travel experience.

Oman Air Match Day Shuttle Flights Ready for Take-off

Oman Air, the national airline of the Sultanate of Oman, continues to facilitate travel for football fans to this year's FIFA World Cup in Qatar. The airline will operate 48 Match Day Shuttle flights between Muscat and Doha from 21st November to 3rd December 2022. The airline offers wide-body service, including Boeing 787 Dreamliner between Muscat and Doha. Passengers on shuttle flights will enjoy Oman Air's exceptional award-winning products and services, both in the air and on the ground, and its signature Omani hospitality accessible to guests on every flight. Return Match Day Shuttle flights can be booked on the Oman Air website (omanair.com) with prices starting from 49 OMR for Economy Class and 155 OMR for Business Class. Fares include fees, taxes, airport charges, and hand baggage allowance. Passengers are advised to arrive in Doha at least four hours before the start of a match due to the high frequency of flights each day. In addition, all passengers must register for a Hayya card (fan ID) prior to their flight, as this is required for travel on all Match Day Shuttle flights and for entry into Qatar. Throughout the tournament, football fans can book their Match Day Shuttle flights, which provide a smooth and comfortable 24-hour experience between Muscat and Doha. The service is intended to seamlessly connect fans to Qatar so that they can attend their respective matches. A no-check-in baggage policy also allows passengers to plan an easy-in, easy-out travel itinerary.

Vistara's non-stop service to Jeddah

Vistara, India's finest full-service carrier and a joint venture of Tata group and Singapore Airlines, successfully inaugurated non-stop flights between Jeddah (Saudi Arabia) and Mumbai (India). The inaugural flight departed from Mumbai on August 2, 2022 at 1805 Hours (IST) and landed in Jeddah at 2050 Hours (AST). The airline now flies thrice a week between the two cities on its Airbus A320neo aircraft. Commenting on the launch of the new international route, Mr. Vinod Kannan, Chief Executive Officer, Vistara, said, "We are delighted to launch services to Jeddah, and to add Saudi Arabia to our growing international network. Given the multitude of upcoming futuristic projects in Saudi Arabia, strong trade ties with India and presence of large Indian diaspora, there is growing traffic between the two countries. We are confident that travellers will appreciate having the choice of flying India's best airline on this route." Vistara is India's highest-rated airline on Skytrax and TripAdvisor, and it has been the winner of several 'Best Airline' awards, besides being lauded for world-class cabin cleanliness and upholding high safety standards. In a short span of seven years since starting operations, Vistara has raised the bar for operations and service standards in the Indian aviation industry to become the country's most loved airline and has recently crossed the milestone of flying 35 million passengers.

Air New Zealand announces science-based emissions reduction target

The interim target, validated by the Science Based Targets initiative (SBTi), requires a 28.9% reduction in carbon intensity by 2030, from a 2019 baseline. This equates to a 16.3% reduction in absolute emissions over the period.

Science-based targets validated by the SBTi show companies how much and how quickly they need to reduce their greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions to prevent the worst effects of climate change. Setting a science-based target allows businesses to set a robust and credible carbon reduction target that is independently assessed to ensure it aligns with the latest climate science. Air New Zealand Chief Operational Integrity and Safety Officer David Morgan says this is a critical milestone on the airline's journey to net zero carbon emissions by 2050 as it provides a clear signal of where we need to be by 2030, in order to meet the 2050 goal. "This interim target will drive activity today and set the airline up for success in achieving its net zero 2050 target."

"Getting the target validated by the SBTi was a rigorous process and something we are incredibly proud to have achieved. Our GHG emissions were reviewed in detail by the SBTi to ensure we had an accurate emissions baseline and science-based target set. "This target makes us accountable today. Implementing our decarbonisation roadmap will be critical to achieving this target - with sustainable aviation fuel (SAF), continued fleet renewal, operational efficiency, and zero emissions aircraft technologies all playing a role. "Our key focus areas are SAF and the adoption of zero emissions aircraft technologies as they have the potential to reduce our

emissions by approximately 70% by 2050. We already have several initiatives in the works including a partnership with the Government to scope the feasibility of a SAF production plant in New Zealand and our world-leading Product Requirements Document currently in market to accelerate the development of hydrogen, electric, and hybrid aircraft. These are the initiatives that will drive real change in reducing our emissions and we're incredibly focused on delivering them as quickly as possible." Chair of Air New Zealand's external Sustainability Advisory Panel Sir Jonathon Porritt says there are two things all passengers should look to when assessing an airline's response to accelerating climate change: ambition level and trustworthiness. "In a sector where it will be challenging to make rapid and authentic change, Air New Zealand is to be congratulated on setting this science-based target to demonstrate its sincerity of intent. A 16.3% absolute reduction by 2030 is certainly achievable, but it will be hard. And its readiness to be held to account by the SBTi (and other stakeholders) is significant. "As the world continues to understand the full extent of the climate emergency, every airline will need to set equivalent targets - and then deliver on them, come what may."

80% Increase in Saudia's Passenger Traffic

Saudi Arabian Airlines (SAUDIA), the national flag carrier of Saudi Arabia experienced strong passenger growth in the first half of 2022. Carrying with 11.6 million passengers in this period represents a 80% increase over the same period in 2021.

The number of scheduled and chartered flights increased by 33% to reach 80,500, while total flight hours were measured at 212,000, a rise of 71%.

During the first half of 2022, nearly 4.8 million international guests flew SAUDIA, an increase of 242%. SAUDIA operated 28,600 international flights during H1 2022, an increase of 156%.

SAUDIA's global network continued to expand in the first half of 2022 with direct flights to new destinations including Amsterdam, Bangkok, Entebbe, Marrakech and Malaga. This remarkable growth embodies the objectives of Saudi Arabia's National Aviation Strategy, which aims to connect the Kingdom to the world.

Domestically, SAUDIA transported 6.2 million guests around the Kingdom on more than 52,000 flights, an increase of 32% and 5%, respectively.

"These achievements are the culmination of the efforts of every SAUDIA employee, be it in the planning, implementation, or operational stages," said Eng. Ahmed Alwusiyah, Chief Operating Officer at the national airline. "These special accomplishments also reflect our guests' confidence in our air and ground operations, which we are constantly working to refine and streamline for an ever-better traveling experience."

To help welcome visitors to the Kingdom, SAUDIA has been sponsoring major events and activities such as Formula E Racing, the Riyadh Season and Jeddah Season. SAUDIA will continue its efforts to promote the rich culture and tradition in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to achieve the aspirations of the Saudi tourism ecosystem, which is in harmony with Saudi Vision 2030.

SAUDIA currently flies to more than 100 destinations across four continents. Leveraging its extraordinary operational track record, the airline plans to add significantly more destinations while updating and expanding its current fleet of aircraft.

The award-winning airline has also made plans to further enhance its automated airport processes, online booking and flight management systems. SAUDIA has developed its smart applications to ensure a convenient, secure, and effortless booking service for the guests.

Ethiopian Airlines Advances Customer Functionalities with CHAMP Technologies

Ethiopian Airlines, a CHAMP customer for 30 years, has extended its partnership agreement with the cargo IT solutions provider for an additional 5 years.

Under the agreement, Ethiopian will continue to benefit from its use of the acclaimed Cargospot suite of applications to manage the airline's day-to-day sales and commercial activities and to support its Addis Ababa hub handling operation. Addis Ababa cargo terminal is Africa's largest and most advanced and automated cargo terminal. In addition to the Cargospot suite, Ethiopian will continue to operate other CHAMP solutions to manage its business, including ULD Manager - to control the airline's ULD assets, Weight & Balance - to ensure safe and efficient load planning of the airline's large and growing fleet of freighter aircraft, CHAMP's Regulatory Compliance services to meet customs and security reporting requirements across the airline's network, and CDMP – essential for members of the IATA interest group Cargo iQ to measure performance in line with worldwide quality standards. By extending the relationship with CHAMP, Ethiopian Airlines will benefit from a range of new services and IT opportunities, including CHAMP's end-to-end air mail solution and Cargospot Portal, to supplement Ethiopian's excellent track-and-trace application. "CHAMP's IT solutions are vital components to our daily cargo operations," says Abel Alemu, Managing Director of Ethiopian Cargo and Logistics Services. "Our growth in the industry requires a strong IT provider that can adapt to our evolving needs, while maintaining high standards. With this partnership renewal, we gain new capabilities to better support our business and to provide our valued customers with an even better level of service." "We are very pleased to have been able to continue to support Ethiopian Airlines," says Nicholas Xenocostas, Vice President Commercial & Customer Engagement at CHAMP Cargo systems. "Important advancements in customer focused features mean that our partners will streamline their customers' workflows, as well as their own."

Fossil No More

Electric vehicles are soon to become the craze among buyers of two, three, or four-wheelers. The "silent because electric" four wheelers are going to see a slew of launches in the near future in the luxury segment and in the mass market segment.

Asheesh Bhandari

India has promises to keep – not least of which is the promise to the world of reducing its carbon emissions. We have already initiated the effort of reducing our dependence on coal for power generation and are taking the lead in renewable energy sources. Solar power generation is going great guns and solar power plants are being installed in almost every state. Cities are trying to go solar and reducing their dependence on the grid by permitting solar panels to be installed on rooftops. In

some cities the government buildings are entirely solar powered now. Then there is the wind-power generation and the hydro-electric generation that is catching on slowly but steadily. Bio-gas has been around for a few decades and more bio-gas plants are being set up in rural areas.

Yet, Delhi tops the list of cities in the world with the most polluted air and Mumbai comes a close second. Local administration and government in Delhi are quick to blame neighbouring states and the wind direction for all their air pollution woes. Repeated studies show that the gradual process of shifting desert sands is a cause for the particulate matter in the air in Delhi. Other studies show that construction works are also big contributors to air pollution. And with highways and infrastructure being constructed furiously across the nation, there is bound to be air pollution for some time to come.

The other cause of air pollution is vehicular exhaust fumes. With the increasing density of vehicular population on the roads and highways, successive governments have put together schemes and issued directives to reduce the emission levels from vehicles. This includes introducing improved quality of fossil fuel and restricting older vehicles from plying on the roads. And more recently the government has sought to incentivise buyers to purchase Electric Vehicles.

Electric vehicles are soon to become the craze among buyers of two, three, or four-wheelers. The "silent because electric" four wheelers are going to see a slew of launches in the near future in the luxury segment and in the mass market segment. All the automobile majors will be adding Electric Vehicles to their stable with a launch starting in September this year. Here are some slated to be launched soon.

On road price below INR 50 lakhs

In the passenger segment Tata Motors is a clear leader. It already has the Tata Nexon EV and the Tigor EV targeted at the mass market. Up next are three more EVs; Tiago

EV, Sierra and Altroz.

The Altroz is likely to be launched in the next few months at an ex-showroom price of INR 14 -15 Lakhs. The Atroz EV will be a 5-seater Hatch Back with an automatic transmission. Initially the EV will be available in the electric blue colour. In a single charge, the Altroz EV can travel a distance of 250 to 300km. In one hour, the battery will be charged to 80% capacity.

The Tata Sierra EV would be available in the first three months of 2023 at an ex-showroom price similar to the Altroz EV. With a name of the iconic Tata model, this EV looks modern and progressive while retaining the spirit of the original. The interiors offer a unique and pioneering lounge layout for the rear passengers and for the front passenger to rotate and share in this space. Unlike the Altroz EV, the Sierra EV has a manual Transmission and is a fully Electric SUV. The Tata Sierra EV SUV will have a range of 400 km on a single charge. In one hour, the battery will be charge to

80% capacity.

Tata's Tiago EV will be a hatchback with an automatic transmission. The EV will be in the price range of INR 5.5 lakhs to INR 6.5 Lakhs. The car battery can be charged to full capacity in 8 hours and will run a distance of 306 km in a single charge. The expected launch is in the first quarter of 2023.

Mahindra Motors plans to launch its eXUV300 in the first few months of 2023 at an ex-showroom price of INR 13 Lakhs. The auto transmission, 5 seater, eXUV300 is built on the Mahindra Electric Scalable and Modular Architecture (MESMA) platform. There are two Battery options. The more affordable version will have a range of 300 km on a single charge while the long-range model will have a 60kWh battery pack that will deliver a 400 km range. The touch-screen infotainment system with connected technology will adorn the interiors of the XUV.

Hyundai Motors India was one of the first

to launch an EV with a real-world usable range of around 300 km with the Kona EV. The carmaker has plans to refresh the Kona EV with a facelift launch planned during the third quarter of this year, priced at around Rs 25 lakh ex-showroom. Expect this modified version to be in the showrooms in the second half of 2022.

French carmaker Citroen has EV plans and could launch the C3 EV in India late next year. The C3 EV, if built in India, can be a great alternative to the Tata Nexon EV and the Mahindra EXUV300, but there are no solid confirmations yet. If Citroen does decide to launch the C3 EV, it could be priced at around Rs 14-15 lakh, ex-showroom.

On road price above INR 50 Lakhs

Hyundai will also launch its Ioniq 5 EV at an ex-showroom price of INR 60 Lakhs sometime towards the end of 2022. Built on the same platform as the Kia EV 6, the

Ioniq 5 EV will be made in India instead of being imported as a Completely Built Unit.

According to the manufacturer, "IONIQ is the ideal representation of Hyundai's commitment to sustainable and innovative mobility solutions. Under the aegis of Beyond Mobility, IONIQ 5 will set a new benchmark that redefines electric mobility lifestyle in India with synergies of intelligent technology, sustainability and innovation."

This CUV is built on Hyundai Motor Group's Electric-Global Modular Platform (E-GMP), an innovative system that was exclusively developed for next-generation battery electric vehicles and will usher in a new era of clean mobility for Hyundai.

In some international markets, the Ioniq 5 is powered by two battery packs: 58kWh and 72.6kWh, with up to 385km and 481km travel range on a full charge, respectively. Both the powertrains come with two drivetrain choices — rear-wheel-drive and all-wheel-drive.

The Ioniq 5 uses a unique 800-volt charging architecture. Thus, a 350kW ultra-fast charger can charge it from 10 to 80 per cent in just 18 minutes. In fact, this charger also provides about 100km range within five minutes.

The CUV gets a host of features, including full-LED front and rear lights, vehicle-to-lead (V2H), a suite of Advanced Driver Assistance Systems (ADAS) with Level 2 Autonomy, a Bose sound system, a 360-degree camera setup, two-zone temperature control, hands-free boot opening, seven airbags, a 12.25-inch driver display, a 12.25-inch infotainment touchscreen, and more.

VW-owned Skoda Motors has plans to launch the Enyaq iV in India around the first half of 2023. The Skoda Enyaq iV is the carmaker's first electric SUV and promises a range of 520 km on a full charge. The Enyaq iV will be powered by an 82.0 kWh battery pack. When launched, expect Skoda to price the electric SUV at around INR 60

lakh (ex-showroom), as this will be brought to India as a CBU.

Volvo has announced its plans to debut the XC40 Recharge in India. The XC40 Recharge will be built in India. The price is expected to be around INR 65 lakh (ex-showroom) to rival the Kia EV6 and the Hyundai Ioniq 5 when launched.

The Volvo XC40 will be powered by a 78 kWh battery and gets two electric motors on each axle, delivering 402 bhp and 660 Nm of torque. Volvo claims a range of 418 km – on par with its competition – and can be fully recharged in two and a half hours using a 50kW DC fast charger.

Using automatic steering assistance, the Volvo XC40 will help avoid collisions with oncoming vehicles. If the driver drifts across the lane markings in the way of an oncoming vehicle, the car will alert the driver and gently help steer back to the correct path. The technology will also enable the car to maintain a safe distance from the

traffic in front by adapting the speed.

German luxury carmaker, Mercedes-Benz, has two launches planned, the EQS and the EQA, priced at around Rs 1.75 crore (ex-showroom) and Rs 60 lakh (ex-showroom) respectively. The third launch will be the EQS SUV, planned around the second quarter of 2023. The Mercedes-Benz EQS SUV could carry a price tag of around Rs 2 crore (ex-showroom).

EQA is the entry-level model of Mercedes-EQ vehicles. Smart assistants support the driver in many areas. With respect to accident avoidance, the anticipatory and particularly efficient operating strategy, and Navigation with Electric Intelligence are examples. The EQA is a member of the successful compact car family from Mercedes-Benz. A close relation of the GLA, it delivers all the thrilling characteristics of that vehicle, combined in this case with an efficient electric powertrain.

The EQS SUV will include the Mercedes-Benz User Experience (MBUX) multimedia system. In the cockpit, the MBUX Hyperscreen stretches the entire length of the dashboard. In the rear, passengers can optionally access content via two high-resolution 29.5 cm (11.6 inch) displays.

All three models will be built/assembled in India by the carmaker, and when launched, the EQS will compete with BMW's upcoming i7, while the EQA will compete with the upcoming BMW iX1.

Hot on Mercedes' tail is BMW with plans to launch the i7 and the iX1 EVs in India.

The BMW i7 is expected to carry a price tag of around Rs 2.5 crore (ex-showroom), as it will be a Completely Built Unit, while the iX1 is expected to be priced at ~Rs 60 lakh (ex-showroom), which will compete with the Mercedes EQA and the Volvo XC40 Recharge. Both vehicles from BMW are expected to be launched in India in early 2023.

The i7 will be offered as a high-performance, automatic transmission, dual-electric limo run on a 101.7kWh battery pack. It has a WLTP certified range of 625km. Its battery can be topped up from 10 to 80 percent in 34 minutes using a 195kW charger. Features in the luxury electric limousine include a 31.3-inch 8K touchscreen display for the rear passengers, a 12.3-inch curved digital cockpit, a 14.9-inch infotainment system, powered front and rear seats with massage function, and ambient lighting.

The BMW iX1 is the first all-wheel-drive BMW

taxation, and a lack of clarity about making in India or importing from the USA. If all goes well, Tesla could look at launching four models in India late this year or early next year.

American carmaker Ford recently wound up its operations in India. However, it also announced that it will focus on bringing EVs to the country. This could begin with the launch of the Mustang Mach E EV later this year. The Ford Mustang Mach E EV will be imported as a Completely Built Unit and could carry a price tag of ~Rs 70 lakh (ex-showroom).

electric vehicle in the premium compact segment. The SUV gets an electric motor on the front and the rear axles. The drive unit delivers an output of 313 hp accelerating the car to 62 mph in just 5.7 seconds and can hit a top speed of 112 mph.

BMW iX1 uses a 64.7 kWh (usable) battery that gives a total driving range of 252-272 miles on the WLTP cycle. The 11 kW AC charging unit can fully recharge the battery in 6.5 hours.

The interiors of the iX1 EV include a navigation system, dual-screen layout, dual-zone automatic climate control, a suite of new driver assistance systems, Park Assist, including reversing assist camera, and numerous other digital features.

Audi is also on the list with the launch of its e-Tron. Expected to launch during the first half of 2023, the e-Tron could carry a price tag of around Rs 1.01 crore for the e-Tron 50 and Rs 1.17 crore (ex-showroom) for the high end e-Tron 55. Both versions will be imported as

Completely Built Units.

The Audi e-Tron is a 5-seater all-electric SUV with an automatic transmission and a driving range of 379 km on a single charge.

Tesla plans to enter India with four models – Model X, Model Y, Model 3, and Model S. It is facing hurdles however. These include

Glow Like A Goddess

Leading jewellery brand in India, Reliance Jewels has launched their special Varalakshmi Collection to commemorate the festival Varalakshmi Vratam, where women worship the Goddess Lakshmi in the southern states of India.

The brand's campaign for the collection 'Glow Like A Goddess', aims at celebrating every woman who is like a reflection of the goddess herself.

Inspired by the divinity, grace and shine of the Goddess, this collection is a reminder for all women to embrace their inner goddess. Bringing out the rich cultural heritage and traditions of South India, the jewellery has been designed with regional tastes, cultural nuances and styles in mind. Both the campaign and designs are inspired by the sacred "Kalpavruksh Tree", which is believed to possess deep spiritual intent and mythical powers and originates from the ancient lore of Samudra Manthan.
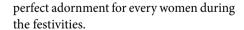
An assortment of intricately crafted traditional jewellery including necklaces, earrings, bangles and rings will be a part of the collection. Crafted in 22kt yellow gold & antique gold temple designs and embellished with colourstones, each gold jewellery design stands apart from the other, making the collection unique in every way. The stunning diamond collection includes chokers and haram sets and with closely set diamonds, colour stone & pearl drop accents on the pendants. Grace, poise and divinity of the Goddess are beautifully imagined in every piece and it's a

perfect adornment for every women during the festivities.

Commenting on the launch of the collection, Sunil Nayak, CEO, of Reliance Jewels said "Our vision for the entire collection is to celebrate and capture the essence of the auspicious festival. We are pleased to bring these distinct styles which are in sync with the tastes of customers from the region. Our extremely passionate design teams from South India worked meticulously on
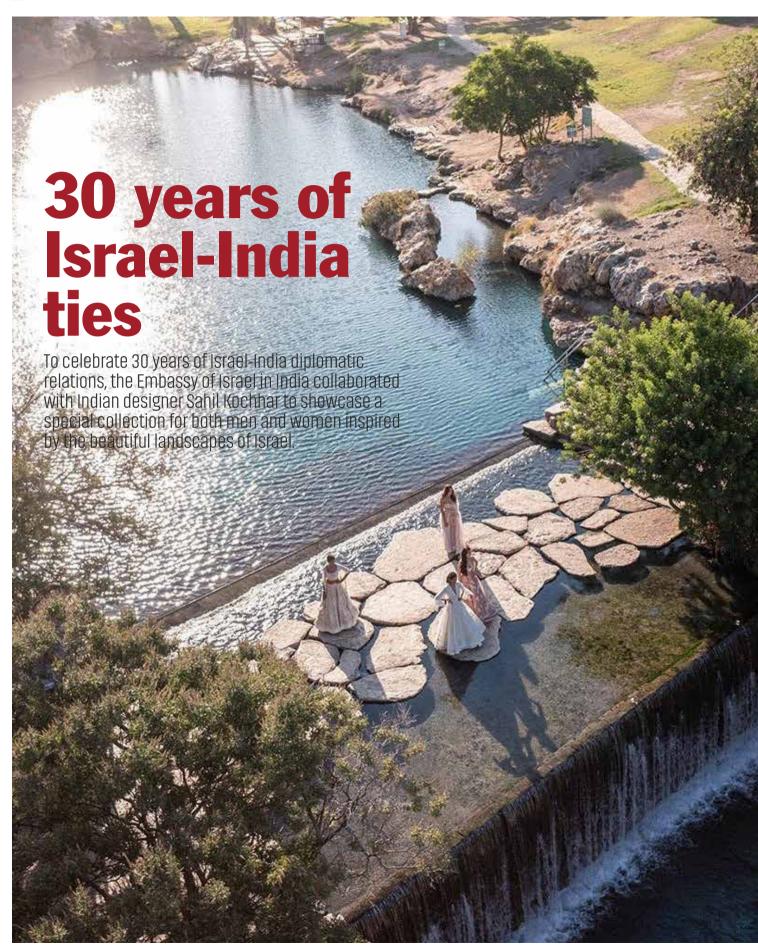
the collection to ensure that every intricate design detailing and elements came together to create beautiful designs"

This year marks the 15th Year Anniversary of Reliance Jewels which has become a much-loved and popular part of so many lives, homes, festivals and occasions. Each year the brand has focused on creating an emotional connection through its Jewellery for every occasion and moments of our customers lives. This year too, with

collections like the Varalakshmi collection, Reliance Jewels continues its journey of lighting up every occasion and inspiring people to 'Be The Moment'.

In addition to the exquisite range of designs in the Varalakshmi collection 2022 that patrons can choose from the brand is also extending a special offer of up to 25% off on Gold jewellery making & Diamond jewellery value for all customers until 31st August.

30 years of Israel-India ties

To celebrate 30 years of Israel-India diplomatic relations, the Embassy of Israel in India collaborated with Indian designer Sahil Kochhar to showcase a special collection for both men and women inspired by the beautiful landscapes of Israel.

This project is part of a campaign titled 'Yachad' - a Hebrew word meaning 'together'. An event was organized in Delhi on August 17 to celebrate the occasion, where Israeli Embassy diplomats and project members from India came together to exchange ideas and share their experiences.

On this occasion, the Ambassador of Israel to India H.E. NaorGilon said, "This is a first-of-its-kind project which we hope will open doors for future possibilities and collaborations between the people of Israel and India in the diverse fields of culture, fashion and lifestyle. Showcasing Indian designs inspired by Israeli landscapes led to this beautiful project, which has further strengthened the close friendship and growing partnership between our two nations."

Designer Sahil Kochhar said, "Yachad, means coming together and that is the essence behind this special collaboration. It is a celebration of 30 years of friendship between Israel and India. This collection and campaign we have shot around it are very special to me as it represents two beautiful cultures coming together. The collection is inspired by the diverse landscapes of Israel, incorporating the same as artwork on the clothes."

For this campaign, the designer and his team spent several months scouting talents from Israel who are the best at their craft. The models that were selected were not just professional models but also included local talent from all over Israel, including the younger generation from different walks of life, athletes, artists, surfers & the parkour community of the country.

Through this project, the Embassy showed an Israel that may be less known to the Indian public. The fashion shoot took place in several parts of Israel including the Dead Sea, Eilat, Gan Hashlosha, Tel Avivand Jerusalem.
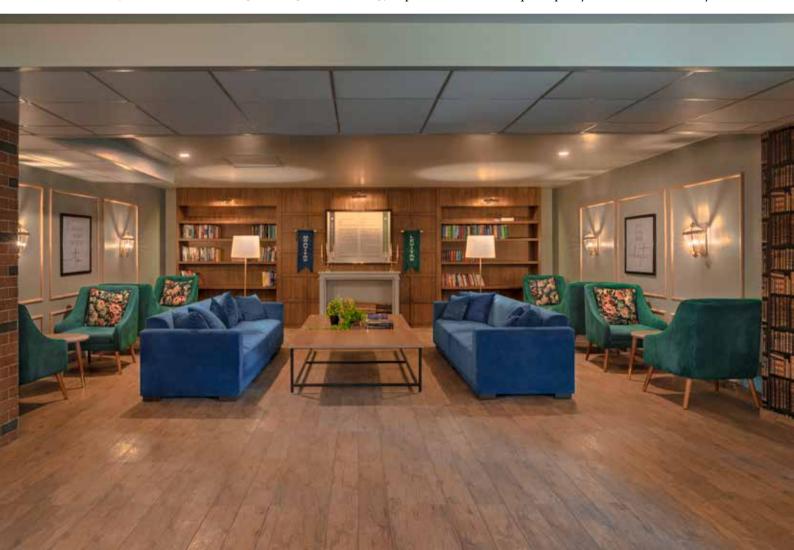
Bethliving

Bethliving is a home decor company that prides itself for introducing furniture in steel and stainless steel with modern designs and utmost functionality.

The company aims to deliver modern alternatives for homes with their holistic approach. Bethliving is fire resistance, water sensitivity, poor pest resistance, eco-friendliness and durability that concern customers while purchasing furniture. The company has successfully built and introduce the product which satisfies the needs of consumer of giving the entirely new look to their home which is fire safe, pest safe, water-resistant, eco-friendly, pre-engineered, maintenance-friendly and durable.

Bethliving has brought huge transformation with technology in the way the business is conducted. the consumers can connect with them from anywhere in the world using this integrated technology platforms. At the same time, they are offering a touch-and-feel experience at different store locations. The home decor company has established an exclusive network of 32 outlets across metros, tier 1, 2 and 3 towns to operate as a hybrid node for the retail process. Bethliving even has stores in South India and Gujarat, but they have been looking at Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh as immediate markets by the next year. the company also has an expansion plan across the country in different regions like Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Gujrat, Maharashtra, and Rajasthan To stay ahead of the competition. Specifically Madhya Pradesh would be the most likely to be the next location for manufacturing the product as it has an equal capacity to built within next 2 years.

The ecosystems of product the company has created help consumers pick, choose and customize home decor interiors as per their needs. All this is made available in three layers of technology platforms. The top layer is where they have the front end designing interface where consumers can interact with a team for designing the kitchen, bedrooms and the entire home room wise. Here the consumer details are received and processed by their team. The second layer looks after commercial plans. The third layer is the SAP based manufacturing software which interacts with the first two layers to complete the ecosystem and make sure the consumer gets exactly what they want from our manufacturing.

The company's strengths lie in being the first mover in products with over 9000 installations. It is ahead of other companies in the market in the number of the franchisee. It has perfected franchising experience with relevant IPR. Bethliving has developed a cost-effective vendor ecosystem and a scalable manufacturing process.

Bethliving's mission is to continuously deliver world-class home décor products

addressing every functionality and being sustainable at the same time. The company promises to use the best technology to design, manufacture and deliver its products and services to its customer, by enabling BLPL franchisees. Bethliving is also looking for the funding to strengthen the production capacity technology (AI) and marketing to increase the production capacity. It also prioritizes customer delight and ensures the satisfaction of its employees, business partners and stakeholders.

In future, Bethliving intends to scale its business 11x in three years and be an INR 100 crore company and an INR 250 crore company in next five years. The company is also planning to achieve the same by expanding its business across 540 district headquarters. Currently, it has a presence in 21. The company is optimistic that the D2C hybrid model through brand stores and FICOO is well poised to drive volumes.

Comment: Perfect destination for your home decor.

Rating: 8/10

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