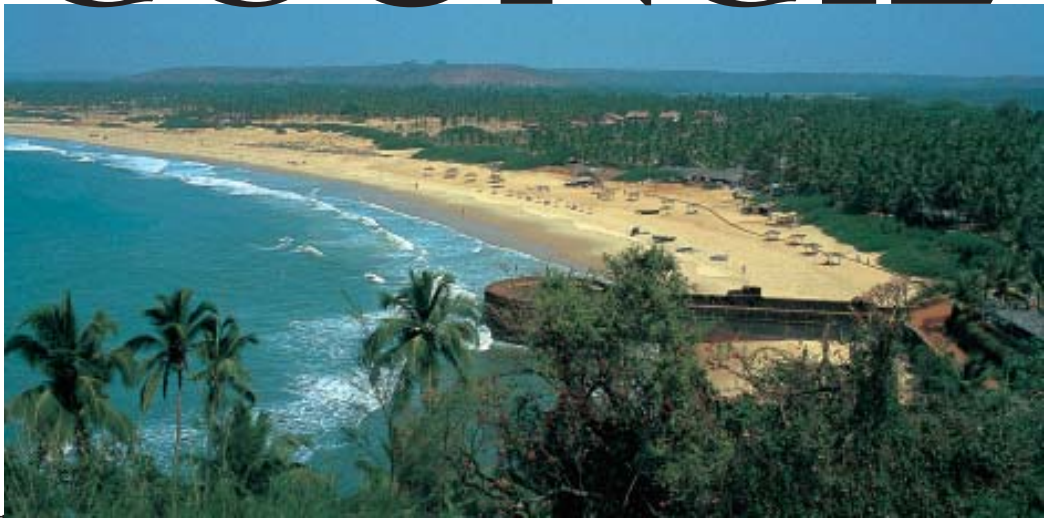


THE GOA RETREAT
A REPORT

WORLD TRAVEL & TOURISM COUNCIL



CHAIRMAN: Sir Ian Proser Chairman Six Continents PLC	Brett Tollman Vice Chairman The Travel Corporation	Laurence Geller Chairman & CEO Strategic Hotel Capital	Alan Mulally President & CEO Boeing Commercial Airplanes	Jose Antonio Tazon President & CEO Amadeus Global Travel Distribution
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Stephan Bollenbach President & CEO Hilton Hotels Corporation	Gordon Bethune Chairman of the Board & CEO Continental Airlines	Stephen Holmes Chairman & CEO, Hospitality Division Cendant Corporation	Fernando Pinto Chief Executive Officer TAP - Air Portugal	Lord Marshall of Knightsbridge Chairman British Airways plc
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Maurice Flaagan Group Managing Director Emirates	Marilyn Carlson Nelson Chairman & CEO Carlson Companies, Inc	Nuno Trigo Jordão President & CEO Sonae Turismo Gestao Services	Kurt Ritter President & CEO Rezidor SAS Hospitality	Tommaso Zanotto President TZ Associates Ltd
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Michael Frenzel Chairman TUI AG	U. Gary Charlwood Founder, Chairman & CEO Avis Europe Plc	Hans Lerch President & CEO Kosmi Travel Holding Ltd	Carl Ruderman Chairman Universal Media	IMMEDIATE PAST CHAIRMEN: Harvey Golub Retired Chairman & CEO American Express Co WTTC Chairman (1996 - 2001)
David House Group President, Global Network and Establishment Services American Express Company	Jeanie Chua President & COO Raffles International Ltd	Nigel Knowles Managing Partner DLA	Robert Selander President & CEO MasterCard International	Robert H. Burns Chairman Robert H Burns Holdings Limited WTTC Chairman (1994 - 1996)
Richard R. Kelley Chairman Outrigger Enterprises, Inc	David Clifton Managing Director Europe & Asia Interval International	Craig Koch President & CEO The Hertz Corporation	Per Setterberg CEO Global Refund Holdings A.B.	PRESIDENT: Jean-Claude Baumgarten
Geoffrey J.W. Kent Chairman & CEO Abercrombie & Kent	Glen Davidson Senior Vice President Worldwide Travel Insurance & Related Services American International Group Inc	Krishna Kumar Managing Director The Taj Group of Hotels	Eric Speck Executive Vice President Group President Travel Marketing & Distribution Sabre Holdings Corporation	
J. W. Marriott, Jr. Chairman & CEO Marriott International, Inc	Dinesh Dhamija Chairman & CEO eBookers plc	Hans Lerch President & CEO Kosmi Travel Holding Ltd	Barry Sternlicht Chairman & CEO Starwood Hotels & Resorts Worldwide, Inc	
David Michels Chief Executive Hilton Group	Lloyd Dorfman Chairman & Chief Executive Travelx plc	Paulo Mantegazza President & CEO Globus & Cosmos Inc	Ron Siringello Executive Chairman Southern Sun Group	
Curtis Nelson President & CEO Carlson Consumer Group	Rod Eddington Chief Executive British Airways plc	Manuel Martín Partner CyberDodo Productions Ltd	Lalit Suri Chairman & Managing Director Bharat Hotels Ltd	<i>As at March 2003</i>
P.R.S. Oberoi Chief Executive The Oberoi Group	Manuel Fernando Espírito Santo President Group Espírito Santo	Izao Matsumachi Chairman of the Board JTB Corp	Ian Swain Chairman & CEO Swain Travel Services Inc	
Henry Silverman Chairman & CEO Cendant Corporation	Sam Galotzer President & CEO Galileo International	David Mongeau Vice President CIBC World Markets	Kathleen Taylor President, Worldwide Business Operations Four Seasons Hotels and Resorts	
Jonathan Tisch Chairman & CEO Loews Hotels				

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President's Foreword

THE WTTC INDIA INITIATIVE WAS LAUNCHED IN FEBRUARY 2000 AS A MEANS FOR RAISING AWARENESS OF THE CRUCIAL ROLE THAT TRAVEL & TOURISM PLAYS IN THE INDIAN ECONOMY.

Now in its fourth year, we are delighted and encouraged that there has been a marked improvement in the Government of India's approach to Tourism. This was particularly evident in the Prime Minister's 2001 Independence Day Speech and in the recently announced 2003/04 National Budget for India.

It is apparent that for the first time the Government of India has recognised tourism as a generator of income and employment and we are proud to have contributed to this shift in thinking. It is only through the interaction of the public and private sectors and a shared commitment that we can bring about positive changes. The fastest and most efficient way to eliminate barriers is through working together and relying on each other's knowledge and expertise.

It was for this purpose that the WTTC 'Retreat' was conceived as a strategy for bringing together senior Members of India's Parliament and Government, leaders from the Indian tourism industry and key media from the region. The objective was to collectively identify the key weaknesses in India's tourism product and to find workable solutions to address these issues.

This Report details the findings of the second Retreat held in Goa from February 14 to 16, 2003. Five specific barriers to growth were identified and a large part of the Retreat was dedicated to discussing these issues. Recommendations for overcoming these barriers can be found on pages 10-17 of this report.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank everybody who participated in the Goa Retreat for their commitment to Travel & Tourism and for taking the time out of their busy schedules to work with us.

This report demonstrates our dedication to Travel & Tourism. India has an amazing and diverse tourism product. Developed in the right way, the Travel & Tourism industry can provide an important tool for tackling some of the economic, social and environmental challenges facing India today.

JEAN-CLAUDE BAUMGARTEN
President
World Travel & Tourism Council





WTTC is a non-profit making organization committed to making Travel & Tourism work for everybody. Our task would not be possible without the backing of our Members, all of whom have made a commitment to work with us to overcome the barriers to tourism growth. The WTTC India Initiative is backed by twenty-six of India's key players from some of the world's most influential Travel & Tourism Companies.

Mr Vikram Madhok*
Managing Director
Abercrombie & Kent India

Mr Sunder G. Advani
Chairman & Managing Director
Advani Hotels & Resorts (I) Ltd

Mr K. Roy Paul, IAS
Chairman
Air India Ltd

Mr Ankur Bhatia
Managing Director
Amadeus India

Mr Harsh Neotia
Managing Director
Ambuja Cement Eastern Ltd

Mr Runeep Sangha
Business Manager, India &
South Asia Travel Network &
Suppliers Relations
American Express
Travel Related Services

Ms Priya Paul
President
Apeejay Surrendra Hotel

Mr Shiv Kumar Jatia
Managing Director
Asian Hotels Ltd

Mr Alun Cathcart*
Non-Executive Chairman
Avis Europe

Mr Lalit Suri MP*
Chairman & Managing Director
Bharat Hotels Ltd

Mr Peter Kerkar
Managing Director
Cox & Kings India Ltd

Mr Maurice Flanagan, CBE*
Group Managing Director
Emirates

Maharana Arvind Singh Mewar
Chairman
Historic Resort Hotels Ltd

Mr Sunil Arora
Chairman & Managing Director
Indian Airlines

Mr S.S.H. Rehman
Managing Director
ITC Hotels Ltd

Mr Naresh Goyal
Chairman & Managing Director
Jet Airways

Mr Vivek Nair
Vice Chairman & Managing Director
Hotel Leelaventure Ltd

Maharaja Gaj Singh of Jodhpur
Chairman
Maharaja Heritage Resorts

Mr P.R.S. Oberoi*
Chairman
The Oberoi Group

Mr Hugh Hamilton Andrews
Advisor
PGF Nomura

Mr Uttam K. Bose
Chief Executive Officer
Sahara Airlines Ltd

Mr Arjun Sharma
Managing Director
Select Holidays Resorts

Mr Himmat Anand
Chief Operating Officer
(Inbound) Sita World Travel

Mr Chandan Kashikar*
Regional Director Operations
Six Continents Hotels

Mr R.K. Krishna Kumar*
Managing Director
The Taj Group of Hotels

Mr Ashwini Kakkar*
CEO & Managing Director
Thomas Cook India Ltd

Mr Adi J. Katgara
Director
Travel Corporation (I) Ltd

* Also Global Members

SECTION
2



The Delegates

MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT

Mr and Mrs Margaret Alva

Mr and Mrs Prithviraj Chavan

Mr and Mrs Ashwani Kumar

Mr and Mrs B.J. Panda

MEDIA

Dr Sanjay Baru
Chief Editor
The Financial Express

Mr and Mrs Harish Gupta
Editor
Dainik Bhaskar

Mr and Mrs Satish Jacob
Deputy Chief
BBC

Ms Bachi Karkaria
Editor-in-Chief
Mid-Day Multimedia

Mr and Mrs Chandan Mitra
Editor-in-Chief
The Pioneer

Mr and Mrs Vikram Chandra
Senior Editor
NDTV

Mr Vir Sanghvi
Editor
Hindustan Times

Mr Rabindra Seth
Freelance Journalist

Ms Seema Goswami
Feature Editor
The Telegraph

OPINION MAKERS

Mr and Mrs Shobha De

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

Mr and Mrs N.K. Singh
Member, Planning Commission

Mr and Mrs K. Roy Paul
Secretary
Ministry of Civil Aviation

Mr and Mrs V.Subramanian
Additional Secretary
Ministry of Civil Aviation

Mr and Mrs Rathi Vinay Jha
Secretary Tourism

Mr and Mrs Amitabh Kant
Joint Secretary Tourism

Mr and Mrs Ajay Prasad
OSD to Deputy Prime Minister
Ministry of Home Affairs

Dr Nasim Ahmad Zaidi
Joint Secretary
Ministry of Civil Aviation

INTERNATIONAL SPEAKER

Mr Stefan Pichler
Chairman and CEO
Thomas Cook A.G.

WTTC INDIA – MEMBERS

Mr Vikram Madhok
Managing Director
Abercrombie and Kent

Mr Ankur Bhatia
Managing Director

Amadeus India
Mrs Radha Bhatia
Director
Amadeus India

Mr Harsh Neotia
Managing Director
Ambuja Cement Eastern Ltd

Mr Runeep Sangha
Business Manager, India &
South Asia Travel Network &
Suppliers Relations
American Express
Travel Related Services

Mr Lalit Suri MP
Chairman and Managing Director
Bharat Hotels Ltd

Mr Sunil Arora
Chairman and Managing Director
Indian Airlines

Mr T.S. Chandrasekar
Deputy Managing Director
Indian Airlines

Maharana Arvind Singh Mewar
Chairman
Historic Resort Hotels

Mr Nakul Anand
Executive Director
Hotel Operations
ITC Hotels Ltd

Ms Nandini Verma
Vice President
Corporate Affairs and
Public Relations
Jet Airways

Mr Vivek Nair
Vice Chairman and
Managing Director
Hotel Leelaventure Ltd

Mr P.R.S. Oberoi
Chairman
The Oberoi Group

Mrs Ragini Chopra
Vice President
Business Development and
Corporate Communications
The Oberoi Group

Mr Uttam K. Bose
Chief Executive Officer
Sahara Airlines Ltd

Mr Alok Sharma
Vice President
Corporate Strategy and
Commercial
Sahara Airlines Ltd

Mr Arjun Sharma
Managing Director
Select Holiday Resorts

Mr Himmat Anand
CEO
Sita World Travel

Mr Ajoy Misra
Senior Vice President
Sales and Marketing
The Taj Group of Hotels

Ms Beate HK Mauder
Vice President – Marketing
The Taj Group of Hotels

Mr Ashwini Kakkar
CEO and Managing Director
Thomas Cook India Ltd
Mr Sunder G. Advani

Chairman and Managing Director
Advani Hotels and Resorts India

Mr J.N. Katgara
Co-Director
Travel Corporation (India) Ltd

WTTC TEAM

Mr Jean-Claude Baumgarten
President

Mr and Mrs Yogesh Chandra
Secretary General, WTTC India

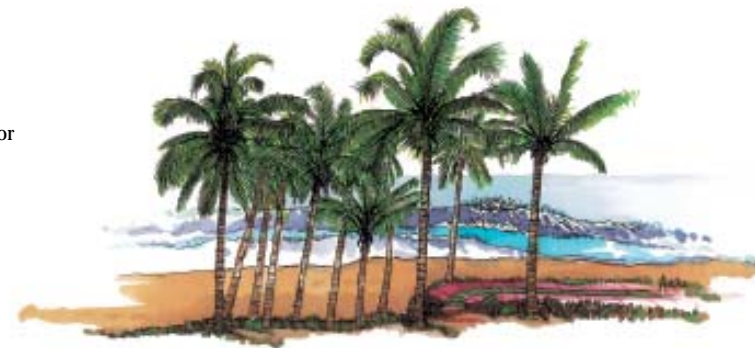
Ms Marianne Thompson-Hill
Director

Ms Joanne Fox-Mills
Executive Assistant

Ms Ritu Chatrath
WTTC India

CONSULTANT

Mr Suhel Seth
CEO
Equus Advertising Ltd



The Civil Aviation Policy

The Working Group

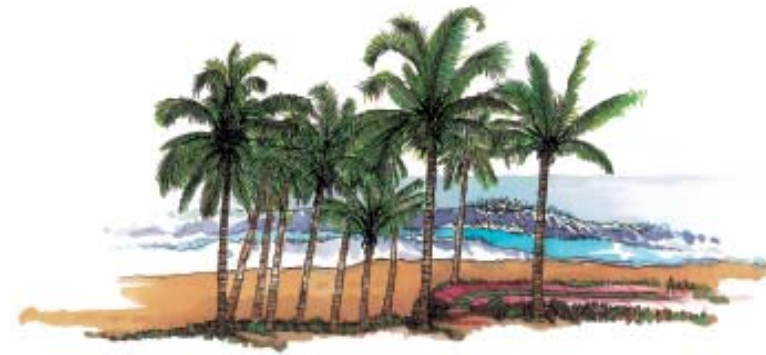
Mr K Roy Paul
Dr Nasim Ahmad Zaidi
Mr Alok Sharma
Ms Nandini Verma
Mr Prithviraj Chavan MP
Mr Vir Sanghvi
Ms T S Chandrasekar

Rapporteur

Mr V Subramanian

RECOMMENDATIONS

- In order to enable airlines to plan schedules for the peak seasonal foreign tourism traffic (November – February) the liberalized policy for granting capacity should continue.
- In order to achieve a target growth of between 5% and 9% of tourist traffic, an apex body should be set-up to represent every area of the industry. As well as representatives from the private sector, this body should include the Ministries of Civil Aviation, Tourism, Finance, Commerce and Petroleum.
- Transport facilities should be created at every airport to facilitate the transfer of passengers between domestic and international terminals.
- The state imposed sales tax on Aviation Turbine Fuel (ATF) should be rationalized. It should be re-categorised as 'declared goods' and subjected to a capped limit of 4% rather than swinging between 25% and 39% as is the present situation.
- Domestic travel tax (15% - introduced in 1992 during the Gulf War) should be abolished in an attempt to bring down the cost of travel.
- Airfields that are located close to important centres of tourism should be activated.



OBSERVATIONS BY:

Mr V Subramanian Additional Secretary Ministry of Civil Aviation

The WTTC could provide information on the following three issues:

- A report comparing air fares and taxes in India with those of competitive markets.
- An analysis of the liberalization of aviation policies and how these effect tourist arrivals.
- A study of the pattern of hub and spoke operations in large countries with significant tourism activities.

Mrs Rathi Vinay Jha Secretary Ministry of Tourism

- A queue management system should be put in place. This could involve separating queues into domestic and foreign passport holders.
- New Uniforms had been designed for immigration counter personnel. The Ministry of Home Affairs should ensure that these were worn.
- The observations/recommendations made by the working group should be taken up with the Ministry of Home Affairs.

Mr Yogesh Chandra Secretary General WTTC India Initiative

The privatization of airports had been identified at the Agra Retreat as an essential step to tourism growth. Mr Chandra requested that this item should be carried forward at Goa.

Liberalizing The Visa Regime

The Working Group

Mr PRS Oberoi
Mrs Radha Bhatia
Mr BJ Panda MP
Ms Shobha De
Mr Vivek Nair
Mr Ajay Prasad
Mr Amitabh Kant

Rapporteurs

Mr Roneep Sangha
Mr Nakul Anand

AGRA RECOMMENDATIONS

The following targets were set at the Agra Retreat:

- Visa on arrival -16 countries (December 2002) -Additional countries (March 2003).
- 72 hour visa as per laid down criteria
- High speed immigration check out for returning residents to decongest arrival halls.
- Faster issuance of visa abroad – within one working day/improve staff strength.
- Deploy Tourism friendly Immigration Cadres.

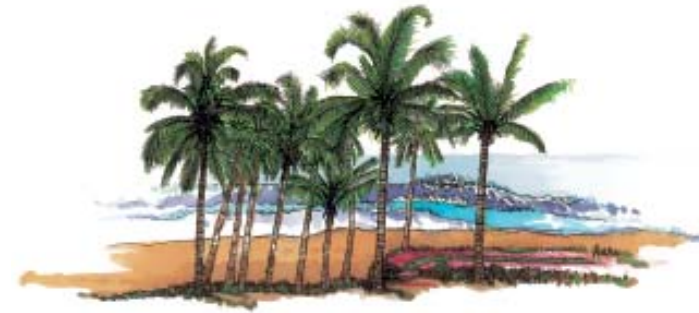
At the Goa Retreat it was noted that no significant progress had been made in any of the above areas since the Agra Retreat.

The present system limits tourism potential and creates hassle for visitors.

Competing destinations offer free visas.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Identify tourism source markets to be included for visa upon arrival. The list should include, amongst others, all EEC countries, USA and Canada, Switzerland, Norway, Japan, Singapore and China.
- The existing immigration staff should comprise quality personnel who provide a courteous service and a welcome orientation to arriving passengers and tourists.
- The immigration inspection for departing passengers should be abolished.
- In order to decongest the arrival hall, there should be a fast-track-clearance system for returning Indian Residents and First and Business Class passengers.
- An electronic advance visa processing system should be introduced to avoid the need to procure a visa prior to departure for India. This would result in faster clearance by immigration authorities on arrival of tourists in India.



OBSERVATIONS BY:

Mrs Rathi Vinay Jha
Secretary
Ministry of Tourism

- Separate counters/queues should be introduced at all international airports for foreign visitors and returning residents.
- The immigration personnel need to have a smart and tourism-friendly image.

Mr K Roy Paul
Secretary
Ministry Civil Aviation

- The Home Ministry should send study teams to visit selected countries to research ways of improving facilities in India. The Deputy Prime Minister has personally asked the Home Ministry to expedite this.
- A number of measures to facilitate the visa system have already been introduced. However, they are slow, partly due to the fact that the local police handle this. Cadres under Home Ministry should now handle the whole process.
- The immigration personnel should be equipped with the latest developments in information technology.
- Smart cards should be introduced for regular/frequent passengers to avoid them being subjected to the official procedure every time they travel.

Creating Better Infrastructure for Overseas and Domestic Tourists

The Working Group

Mr N K Singh
Mr Ashwani Kumar MP
Mrs Margaret Alva MP
Maharana Arvind Singh Mewar
Mr Vikram Madhok

Rapporteurs

Mr Himmat Anand
Mr Ajoy Misra

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Prioritize six or seven important tourist areas for intensive infrastructure development. Government/private sector investment should be concentrated in these areas until infrastructure reaches international standards.
- A systematic 'Clean India' campaign should be launched with political and media backing. It should be a grass roots movement designed to fulfill a primary Municipal function.
- A percentage of the national earnings from tourism should be set aside for infrastructure improvement.
- India has embarked on an ambitious programme for the development of its highways. Tourist support facilities should be provided along these routes.

OBSERVATION BY:

Ms Bachi Karkaria
Editor-in-Chief
Mid-Day Multi Media

- Each Council Member should take responsibility for the development of the infrastructure in a specific area. For example, Thomas Cook could look after Mumbai Airport.

Mrs Rathi Vinay Jha
Secretary
Ministry of Tourism

- International signage is insufficient at places of tourism interest. This is particularly true of airports, national highways and monuments.
- In an attempt to start their own tourist trains, the States of Maharashtra and Karnataka are joining forces with existing railway companies, like the *Palace on Wheels* in Rajasthan. Other similar ventures should be encouraged as they provide a means for developing and promoting rail travel in India.

Mr Amitabh Kant
Joint Secretary
Ministry of Tourism

The Indian Railways should modify their policies to enable the following:

- An increase in tourists trains. The possibility of allowing the private sector to operate on certain routes should be discussed.
- Improved infrastructure on trains, such as catering, ayurvedic treatment, massage and entertainment.
- Tour operators/travel agents should be able to access the Railway reservations system and sell railway tickets.

Mr V Subramanian
Additional Secretary
Ministry of Civil Aviation

Entry fees to national monuments should be increased to cater for their maintenance and for the development of the infrastructure around them.



Crisis/Oppportunity Management in Tourism

The Working Group

Mr Chandan Mitra
Mr Amitabh Kant
Mr Rabindra Seth
Mrs Rathi Vinay Jha
Mr Ajay Prasad
Mr Jean-Claude Baumgarten

Rapporteur

Mr Harish Gupta

RECOMMENDATIONS

- The Crisis Management Group (CMG) should meet at least once a quarter so that they are equipped to anticipate, as well as to actually handle, any given crisis.
- Past experience has shown that traffic from America, Europe and Japan tends to be dramatically affected by any crisis. India has to aggressively explore new markets in South East Asia, SAARC, China, East Asia, Middle East, South Africa and Australia.
- India is a large country, which means that tourist traffic can be diverted to alternative places in the country in the event of a crisis in any one part or region.
- In addition to the Buddhist circuit, other places of pilgrimage should also be developed.
- Aggressive marketing should be used to attract business tourism, for which the infrastructure already exists.
- A special cadre of tourist police should be created. Some States have already done this and all others need to follow suit.
- Developed countries should be made aware that travel advisories affect the return to normality after a crisis situation. In order to address this problem, the Government of India should approach high-level officials within the countries concerned and request them to be realistic and to avoid issuing unnecessarily negative messages.
- International organizations, such as WTTC, PATA, ASTA and WTO should devise a system of countering the negative advisories.
- The media in India should also be prevailed upon not to exaggerate local crises and blow them out of proportion.

The Marketing of Brand India with Specific Target Segments and Destination Marketing

The Working Group

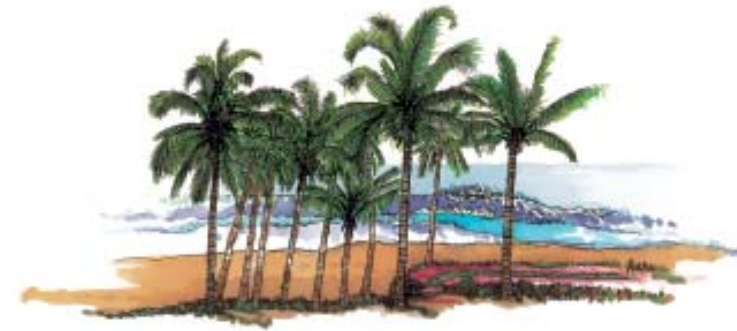
Mrs Rathi Vinay Jha
Mr Satish Jacob
Mr Amitabh Kant
Mr Lalit Suri MP
Ms Seema Goswami
Mr Jehangir N Katgara
Ms Bachi Karkaria
Ms Shobha De
Mr Sunder G. Advani
Mr Zom Hraga

Rapporteurs

Mr Vikram Madhok
Ms Ragini Chopra
Ms Beate HK Mauder

RECOMMENDATIONS

- The Ministry of Tourism has already embarked upon promotion of 'Brand India' in the electronic, print and internet media. The industry should be encouraged to match government spending on the promotion of Brand India abroad with a minimum of at least 20% of the budget. National as well as private carriers should contribute to this fund.
- We need to showcase Brand India through International Festivals. This proved a very successful system in promoting the image of India twenty years ago.
- A Task Force should be set up to identify unconventional means to promote Brand India.
- It is recommended that an advisory board be set up to give overall direction and to act as an International Brand Ambassador.
- The Secretary of Tourism, who was part of this Working Group, will constitute a Task Force that will focus on the implementation of these recommendations. The Task Force will also identify unconventional means to promote Brand India.



Mr Ajay Prasad
Officer on special duty to the
Deputy Prime Minister of India

I would like to congratulate the WTTC India Initiative for organizing this event at Goa. I found it a very rewarding experience as it gave us an opportunity to interact with the professionals in the industry, media and the Government. The recommendations that emerged provide a very useful roadmap for all of us to follow. I wish the initiative every success.

Mrs Rathi Vinay Jha
Secretary
Ministry of Tourism

I thought this second Retreat was a continuing dialogue between partners interested in taking tourism forward.

In comparison to the last Retreat, I felt that there was more openness and a better understanding of issues, as well as a stronger commitment to follow up.

Mr Satish Jacob
Foreign Editor
World Report

The discussions at the Retreat are a clear indication that the Captains of the industry and the officials of the Indian Government are not just aware of the problems, but that they have also clearly indicated that things are moving forward. Such meetings will eventually enhance the efforts to make the tourism industry one of India's major money spinners.

Dr Sanjay Baru
Chief Editor
The Financial Express

This event was unique in the sense that I have, for the first time, experienced a meeting that brings together Government, business, politicians and the media for two days to mix business and pleasure - both of which were taken seriously. It has been an interesting experiment.

Mr Himmat Anand
Chief Operating Officer (Inbound)
Sita World Travel

I am extremely satisfied with the progress made by the WTTC and encouraged that the Travel & Tourism industry in India is working together to bring about positive changes.

Mr Ajoy Misra
Senior Vice President
Sales & Marketing
The Taj Group of Hotels

The Retreat was very focused with a high level of participation. The consistent efforts of the WTTC India Initiative were effectively and positively summed up by Mr N. K. Singh, Member, Planning Commission.

Mr Nakul Anand
Executive Director
Hotel Operations
ITC Hotels Limited

WTTC is the only forum that represent every sector of the industry. It also benefits from its perception as a non-commercial and neutral body without any stake for personal gain.

Mr Runeeep Sangha
Business Manager
India & South Asia Travel
Network & Suppliers Relations
American Express Travel Related
Services

At this second Retreat there was a marked improvement in the reaction and interaction from the Government and Members of Parliament, which I consider to be a very positive sign.

Mrs Radha Bhatia
Director
Amadeus India Private Limited

The Retreat was an improvement on Agra and was more positive and focused.

Mr Alok Sharma
Vice President
Corporate Strategy and
Commercial
Sahara Airlines Limited

Represented by Members from every sector of the industry, WTTC has certainly proved to be the right forum to move tourism forward. However, in future we should aim to strengthen our arguments on Civil Aviation.

Maharana Arvind Singh Mewar
Chairman
Historic Resort Hotels

I believe that the Retreat was an improvement on Agra and that this was largely due to consistent meetings to follow up the Retreat objectives.

Mr Lalit Suri MP
Chairman & Managing Director
Bharat Hotels Limited

The Retreat has certainly helped to advance the WTTC objectives of promoting Travel & Tourism. It was obvious from discussions that important policy makers were now becoming aware of the role of Travel & Tourism in changing national perspectives.



The Group Photograph



Sitting: Seema Goswami, Maharana Arvind Singh Mewar, N.K. Singh, P.R.S. Oberoi, Shobha De, Stefan Pichler
Jean-Claude Baumgarten, Margaret Alva MP, Lalit Suri MP, Bachi Karkaria, K.Roy Paul, Rathi Vinay Jha
Prithviraj Chavan MP, Radha Bhatia, Marianne Thompson-Hill, Vandana Chandra

2nd Row: Yogesh Chandra, Ragini Chopra, Nandini Verma, Runeep Sangha, Amitabh Kant, Chandan Mitra
Rabindra Seth, Satish Jacob, Ajay Prasad, Harish Gupta, Syed Nasim Ahmad Zaidi, Ankur Bhatia, Beate HK Mauder
V. Subramanian, Ashwini Kakkar, Vivek Nair, Suhel Seth, Nakul Anand

3rd Row: Sunder Advani, Vikram Chandra, Himmat Anand, Zom Hrang, Ashwani Kumar MP, Vikram Madhok
J.N. Katgara, Ajoy Misra, T.S. Chandrasekar, Vir Sanghvi, Alok Sharma, Joanne Fox-Mills, Ritu Chatrath



SECTION

3



Concluding Remarks



MR N. K. SINGH
Member
Planning Commission of India

I AM HONOURED TO HAVE BEEN INVITED TO GIVE THE CONCLUDING REMARKS AT THIS PRESTIGIOUS RETREAT. I WAS DELIGHTED TO PARTICIPATE IN THE WTTTC AGRA RETREAT AND I AM ENCOURAGED TO SEE THAT, LIKE ME, SO MANY OF YOU HAVE RETURNED FOR THIS SECOND EVENT.

Those of you from the private sector must be wondering whether there has been any progress between the Retreat at Agra and now at Goa. In other words, are we getting any closer to putting Travel & Tourism on the Economic Agenda of the Nation?

Let me tell you clearly that your time and efforts have not been wasted. The Travel & Tourism industry has benefited enormously from these events. Bringing together select people from Parliament, the media, the Government and the industry for such intensive brainstorming meetings has served to convince policy makers of the economic importance of tourism as a creator of wealth and employment opportunities. It has raised awareness within the Government of the immense possibilities inherent in the sector

and of the need to change a number of policies in order to address the compelling issues that have been outlined during these meetings.

We must await the Budget which will be announced in twelve days, on February 28th to determine whether the high expectations, which have been raised in industry and elsewhere, can be fulfilled.

You will then be in a position to determine for yourself whether you have had adequate vindication of your efforts.

The Union Budget 2003/04



Extracts from the Speech of
Mr Jaswant Singh
Finance Minister of India

TOURISM, IN ADDITION TO GENERATING INCOME, IS ONE OF THE MOST EFFECTIVE EMPLOYMENT CREATING SECTORS. TO PROVIDE A SET OF INCENTIVES TO THE INDUSTRY, THE FOLLOWING PROPOSALS WILL BE IMPLEMENTED:

1. Withdraw expenditure tax;
2. Extend the benefit of Section 10(23G) to financial institutions that advance long-term capital to hotels in three-star and above categories;
3. The benefit of set-off of unabsorbed loss and depreciation on amalgamation will henceforth be available to hotels under Section 72A of the Income Tax Act;
4. Continue the exemption for the hotel industry from the levy of service tax;
5. Reduce basic customs duty on imported equipment for ropeway projects to 5 per cent without payment of CVD and SAD.

It is our hope and expectation that the States, on their part, will now give a commensurate boost to the tourism sector by abolishing the luxury tax that they charge.

AIRPORTS

In addition to the existing initiatives for the leasing of major airports, as well as the setting up of two private airports in Bangalore and Hyderabad, it has now been decided to take up the Delhi and Mumbai

airports, as the principal hubs of international travel to India, for modernization to international standards. Two separate companies will be formed with initial equal equity participation from the Airports Authority. These two companies could also take joint venture partners. On completion, the management will be leased out.

CONVENTION CENTERS

To redress the lack of convention centres of international standards in the country, the Government will enable the establishment of two such centres through public-private sector partnership, with the Government covering the viability funding gaps only.

PROMOTING INDIA: INDIA DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE

An initiative to promote India as both a production centre and an investment destination, called 'India Development Initiative', shall be established in the Ministry of Finance, with an allocation of Rs. 200 crore for 2003-04. This initiative will also leverage and promote our strategic economic interests abroad.



The Srinagar Retreat

THE RETREAT AT GOA WAS YET ANOTHER MILESTONE IN THE EFFORTS OF THE WTTC INDIA INITIATIVE. IT WAS CLEAR FROM THIS EVENT THAT THESE MEETINGS HAVE BECOME A SUCCESSFUL MEANS OF RAISING AWARENESS OF THE CRUCIAL ROLE THAT TRAVEL & TOURISM PLAYS IN THE INDIAN ECONOMY – PARTICULARLY IN TERMS OF ITS ECONOMIC IMPACT AND ITS POTENTIAL FOR JOBS.

As aptly summed up by Mr N. K. Singh, (Member, Planning Commission of India) these meetings are now recognized as important forums for promoting the cause of Travel & Tourism. The WTTC India Initiative would like to thank everybody involved for devoting their time to discussing with us the future of Travel & Tourism in India.

WTTC is delighted and encouraged to have been associated with the positive announcements made during the 2003/04 Budget. We would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the Finance Minister of India, Mr Jaswant Singh, for his progressive outlook.

Our mission is to raise awareness of the economic and social contribution of Travel & Tourism and to work with governments on policies that unlock the industry's potential to create jobs and generate prosperity. The WTTC 'Retreat' has proved to be an excellent forum for debate and this report provides a comprehensive

record of the Conclusions and Recommendations made in Goa. These suggestions are intended to help remove barriers to the sustainable development of the industry for the benefit of everyone.

The next WTTC India Retreat will be held in Srinagar from 6 – 7 September 2003. We hope that this will give us the opportunity to further spread our message and to tackle some of the outstanding issues that continue to stand in the way of tourism development. We are delighted to announce that the Srinagar Retreat will be hosted by Mr Lalit Suri at the Hotel Grand Palace.

YOGESH CHANDRA
Secretary General
World Travel & Tourism Council India Initiative



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1-2 Queen Victoria Terrace
Sovereign Court, London E1W 3HA
United Kingdom
Tel: +44 (0) 870 727 9882 or +44 (0) 207 481 8007
Fax: +44 (0) 870 728 9882 or +44 (0) 207 488 1008
Email: enquiries@wttc.org
Web: www.wttc.org

Yogesh Chandra
Secretary General

Ritu Chatrath
Executive Assistant

D-56 Malcha Marg
Chanakyapuri
New Delhi-110 021, India
Tel: +91 11 2410 9745
Fax: +91 11 2410 8464
Email: rchatrath.wttc@starith.net