

**CHRISTMAS - NEW YEAR SPECIAL****From the Editor's Desk****Hello everybody!**

The shroud of the recent terrorist attacks in Mumbai still looms large over the people of India. The citizens are absolutely livid at the administration & the political system which is to be blamed for the entire incident. A total failure of the intelligence system allowed a handful of terrorists to hold Mumbai to ransom for over 60 hours.

With the Indian tourism industry already grappling with global recessionary concerns, the recent terrorist attacks on Mumbai have added to their misery. Within 24 hours of Wednesday's attacks on the city, Australia cautioned its citizens about travelling to India. UK, Canada, USA & Singapore have issued similar alerts.

Market players now feel more countries could follow. Analysts expect hotel occupancy to fall by at least 50 per cent.

In the wake of the recent terror attacks on Mumbai, Ministry of Tourism (MoT) has issued a statement to reduce the impact of the attacks on the tourism industry and pacify foreigners travelling to India in the next few months. Most of the international and national media has reported extensively on the negative impact of the terror attacks on the tourism industry and have estimated a downturn of about 40 per cent in the coming weeks. MoT has taken feedback from tourists who are already in India and stated that most tourists currently travelling within the country feel safe and secure. MoT is closely monitoring the after effects of terror acts in the city and has coordinated with its overseas offices in order to induce foreign tourists to visit the country. We have to wait and watch to see real effect of this on the tourism industry.

Also, aviation companies are in for a rough ride ahead with overseas visitors canceling their trips to the country. A fall in tourist numbers would also hit retailers, as a good number of visitors come primarily to shop.

Moreover, the terrorist attacks have come at a critical time for the leisure industries. December is the most important month in the retail calendar, while hotels and airlines rely more heavily on tourists as corporate visits trail off. Inbound Tourism will be affected the worst. Outbound tourism & domestic tourism may continue as usual. In addition, the travel and tourism sector has already been having a tough time as consumers have reined in their spending.

The silver lining, at least for the airlines industry, is the recent dip in crude oil prices that could lead to lower ATF prices, which, in turn, could allow the operators to cut price of tickets to attract more travelers to fly.

The ongoing global meltdown and the recent attacks in Mumbai have brought the travel and hospitality industry on its knees and everybody associated is just hoping for a miracle to happen for a safe future.

Though the scenario at the moment looks very bleak, the Travel & Tourism industry has always been resilient and we hope that it will not be long before this industry bounces back.

Though celebrations for Christmas & New Year are bound to be low-key, I still take the opportunity to wish all our readers a very Merry Christmas & a prosperous New Year! And we wish 2009 brings all of us good cheer, hope and a new beginning, ending all the trying times that the world is going through.

**Happy Reading!**
**Kalpana Kulkarni**  
*Chief Editor*
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## Disaster Management – THE NEED OF THE HOUR

In the aftermath of the carnage in Mumbai, there are plenty of critical lessons to be learnt. The idea behind India's 9/11 was to do a Marriott at the Taj, i.e. like the Marriott was reduced to rubble in Karachi; the same was expected to be done at the Taj... To reduce India's symbols of economic strength, even as the country is struggling with a slowing economy... To hit hard the visible symbols of pride of our country, which the historic Taj was... & to create an atmosphere of insecurity in the country.



Terrorism is a reality in India, today. The Indian tourism industry, considered to be amongst the world's top three performers (behind China) - defined as countries set to grow fastest over 2007 and the decade to come - will be negatively impacted as tourists prefer to visit safe destinations. However, history shows that there are other popular tourist destinations such as New York, London, Madrid and Bali that have also suffered from terrorist attacks. These places and their countries have recovered from the sudden downturn in image that had a correspondingly negative effect on the international tourism industry and the country's economics.

The need of the hour is the formulation of a framework for disaster management for the hospitality industry. Security would obviously be the most important element of this disaster management plan and guests at five-star hotels should expect to be checked along with their baggages. The way luggage is scanned through x-ray machines in airports, it should be also done in hotels. The screening should start at the very entrance where minimum damage can be done. Since this iconic bastion of hospitality has been stormed, hospitality too should sit up and be hospitable to guests who do not abuse their name and premises and threaten their very existence. The terrorists were met with ill-equipped and thus inadequate initial resistance when they stormed in.

Hotels, thus, need to have their own effective security systems and intruder deterrents in place so that they can react immediately to the situation before essential time is lost in calling for help from external agencies. The security, especially, at the entry points and perimeters needs to be strengthened so that an easy walk in like at Mumbai is not replicated in future. Security should be supported by latest technology, for example a sensor like system by way of which the general manager would know that the security had been breached and immediate action may be initiated before being faced with terror at such close quarters. Since it was the National Security Guard (NSG) commandos who eventually evacuated the hotel, it maybe prudent to get them on board and learn from their experiences while formulating such guidelines.

A coordinated, team approach is required to be developed, given the range of private and public sector organisations directly and indirectly involved. While in the Mumbai case, the hospitality sector was the target, terrorism may be faced by any sector. Thus, it is incumbent to have a well coordinated security cover with a specified person 'incharge' and more importantly 'responsible and thereby accountable'. The government response and guidelines and the regulatory framework to provide the resources need to be put in place. The security agency has to have a person 'by name' made responsible to avoid having a typical scenario of passing the buck.

The maxim in preparedness for disaster management is not 'if' a disaster will occur, but 'when'. It is for the 'when' that we must be prepared. Disaster management needs to be consciously integrated into the hospitality sector.





## Opening of TIM's new Centres

TIM proudly announces the opening of 3 more new centres – Agra, Rourkela & Jammu

### TIM – Agra

TIM has recently opened a centre at Agra – the city of the Taj Mahal. It was formally inaugurated on September 05, 2008 on Teacher's Day with in-house cultural activities. On World Tourism Day, 27<sup>th</sup> Sep, an excursion tour to the Taj Mahal was organized for the students & faculty members.

### TIM – Rourkela

TIM's Rourkela centre was inaugurated on 14<sup>th</sup> October, 2008. It has always been TIM's mission to take affordable education to all parts of the country and our centre at Rourkela is a testimony to that. Our Rourkela centre is going all out to train students in backward areas to generate large scale employment especially to women, both educated & uneducated by developing their language skills, personality, professional skills and the ability to work in different cultures.

### TIM – Jammu

Jammu & Kashmir has been going through troubled times in the form of attacks by terrorists/border. People there sleep and wake up to the sounds of gunfire & shells. In such circumstances, TIM felt the need to do something for the student community in that area, so TIM Jammu was born. We hope the educated youth would be able to bring some semblance of peace in their lives as well as lives of others.

### Christmas celebrations at TIM Head office.



## Latest Industry news

### Zero to Hero – an update on the zero commission

Good news for the Travel agents fraternity! Jet Airways, Kingfisher, Paramount and Emirates have started paying Commission on the gross fare. Air India & Singapore airlines have taken up the matter and their decision will be known in a few days.

### Orissa Tourism keen on promoting ecotourism

Ecotourism is on the agenda for promotional activities planned by Orissa. The state tourism department has called for Expression of Interest (EoI) from private players to start eco-camps at various sites on Public-Private-Partnership (PPP) model.

A 22 room eco camp at Ramachandi, between Puri and Konark offers all modern ecological and hazard-free facilities to attract international tourists. Other destinations for tourism development include Tampara near Gopalpur on Sea, Bhitorkanika, Dangmala and Chatikona.

### New Kids on the Block

Five new entrants in the hospitality space in 3 cities (Mumbai, Delhi, Bangalore):

- Banana Leaf at Andheri in Mumbai- a new restaurant serving typical south Indian cuisine.
- Laika Resort, M G Road, Bangalore- eight room resort near city centre.





## Latest Industry news

- Grand Sarovar Premiere, Mumbai – A business hotel at Goregaon in Mumbai
- Tamaya, New Delhi- spa and wellness centre at Vasant Continental
- Ramada, Powai, Mumbai- 134 room hotel near Powai and Vihar lakes

### Lonavala Rail Museum

A 17-acre plot of land, now housing some residential homes and a few abandoned buildings, will soon make way for the biggest rail museum in the country which will display the historical significance and evolution of over 150-year-old Railways.

The Indian Railways is planning to build its largest Regional Rail Museum in the cool climes of the Lonavala hill station, about 120 km from Mumbai, and expects it to be ready in the next two years, a senior official said.

"A budgetary allocation of Rs 11.60 crore has been made for the work in this year's Rail Budget. Besides being the first-of-its kind in the Western region, the rail museum will be among the largest in the world," Rajesh Agrawal, Executive Director (Heritage), Ministry of Railways, said.

The proposed museum will be bigger than Delhi-based National Rail Museum which is spread over 13 acres. The museum will be created over a landscaped area and a large number of people are expected to visit it.

The museum's location was finalised at Lonavala since a large plot of land owned by Central Railways was available there and due to its proximity to Mumbai and Pune. The hill station is a popular picnic spot for people from both the cities.

Visitors to the museum can look forward to seeing railway artifacts from the 19th century, working models of trains, photographs, displays highlighting the change in technology used, press clippings, audio-visual exhibits and other historical material.

### Becoming a popular tourist destination for Indians – New Zealand

Indian visitors to New Zealand increased by 14 per cent for the year ending October 2008 with 23,920 visitors as against the previous year.

Leisure travel is the biggest contributor, making up almost 50 per cent of all arrivals into New Zealand. In the luxury travel segment, it has been observed that despite the economic crisis, the luxury consumer has not shown hesitation with their holiday plans. With Indians as some of the biggest spenders in the world and the increasing popularity of New Zealand as a luxury holiday destination, growth from this market will be sustained at a steady pace over the next few years. New Zealand offers good options in the area of luxury travel with products like luxury lodges, helicopter tours, gourmet alpine picnics, scenic aerial tours, indulgent spa treatments, chauffeur-driven tours and other high-end activities that has caught the fancy of Indian travelers.

For New Zealand, being at one end of the world does have its challenges for some of the global markets. But it's this secluded location that makes it an idyllic haven for leisure travellers. With India, while the demand and interest in New Zealand is there, the biggest concern has always been air capacity that has seen negligible improvements in the past years. That coupled with the current global economic slowdown, soaring prices and limited air traffic, business will be challenging. Despite that, Tourism New Zealand has performed well in the Indian market so far. The figures are up 14 per cent for the year ending October 2008 with 23,920 visitors as against the previous year with 20,983 visitors.



# Trade-wings

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