



INDIA CONVENTION PROMOTION BUREAU

Room No.233A, Ashok Hotel,
Chanakyapuri,, New Delhi-110021
Phone: (91-11) 26112264, 26873612, 26110101/3186
E-mail: connect@icpb.in Website: www.icpb.in

POST CONCLAVE REPORT Hybrid XIII Conventions India Conclave – 2020 October 30 -31, 2020 JW Marriott Aerocity New Delhi =====

The XIII Conventions India Conclave – 2020, was successfully held as a hybrid conclave with limited physical participation and large virtual participation was held on October 30 -31, 2020 at JW Marriott Aerocity New Delhi. Nearly 1000 participants attended the conclave, physically and virtually.

The theme of the Conclave was *“Physical & Digital Meetings: A Harmonious Blend”*.

The 13th CIC is an effort to kickstart the MICE activities complying with all safety protocols like masks, sanitization, social distancing etc. for a safe and enjoyable experience of the participants. This event is a testimony to the industry’s ability to adapt and successfully handle hybrid events complying with all safety protocols and adopting advance technologies for minimal human contact at various points.

The objective of the Conclave was to kickstart MICE activities with compliance to all safety protocols like mandatory wearing of masks, frequent sanitization, social distancing etc. for a safe and enjoyable experience of the participants. This event was a testimony to the industry’s ability to adapt and successfully handle hybrid events.

Highlights: Day-1- Friday, 30th October 2020

The XIII CIC event was enthusiastically participated by ICPB members, stakeholders of the industry, hosted buyers, visitors, delegates, speakers, students and media etc. All safety protocols were in place, right from arrival at the venue requiring thermal temperature check, status on Aarogya Setu app, electronic registration, seating arrangements applying social distancing, frequent sanitization at the venue etc. ICPB provided face masks to the participants for compulsorily wearing during the event.



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Mr. Girish Kwatra, Conference Co-Chair CIC 2020 & Hon. Secretary ICPB welcomed the participants and in his opening address observed, *“Reopening of MICE not only helps in reviving the MICE stakeholders but also the other sectors attached to it. Business events have multi sector impact and are an efficient means of supporting the recovery and advancement of a wide range of economic, professional, academic and business sectors. Therefore, reviving the MICE sector is like reigniting the whole economy.”*





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Mr. Amaresh Tiwari, Conference Chair CIC 2020 & Vice Chairman – ICPB



Mr. Amaresh Tiwari in his inaugural speech highlighted the importance of MICE to the national economy and outlined steps needed to revive the Industry. He remarked , *“To target global congress, conventions and conferences and social events we need to create a global mice bidding fund with a corpus for 500 crores to enable our entrepreneurs undertake techno economic bids for events which have a bid cycle of 2 years plus. We need to create city convention bureaus in each of our main cities which will work with ICPB as their hub to carry out a global bidding activity.”*



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Lighting of the lamp: The auspicious start to the conclave was with the traditional ceremony of lighting of the lamp by dignitaries on the dais - Mr. Rakesh Kumar Verma, IAS - Chairman (ICPB)/Jt. Secretary - Ministry of Tourism, Mr. Amaresh Tiwari, Vice Chairman - ICPB, Mr. Girish Kwatra, Honorary Secretary-ICPB and Mr. Chander Mansharamani - Past Vice Chairman ICPB and Capt. Swadesh Kumar - Member - ICPB.



Inaugural Session on 30th October 2020

Address by Shri Rakesh Kumar Verma, IAS, Joint Secretary - Tourism, Government of India & Chairman, ICPB:

Chairman ICPB congratulated the ICPB team for organizing 13th Conventions India Conclave, emphasizing on the importance of digital and communication technologies for a more satisfying and a holistic experience, transcending the limits of physical co-location. He also stressed on working towards sustainable and responsive policies for sustainable tourism. He reiterated India's huge potential as a MICE destination with ICPB playing a key role in marketing India's MICE strengths. Further he observed that we should work towards a single destination management organization to bring all stakeholders, public/private, to create synergy and integrating planning.



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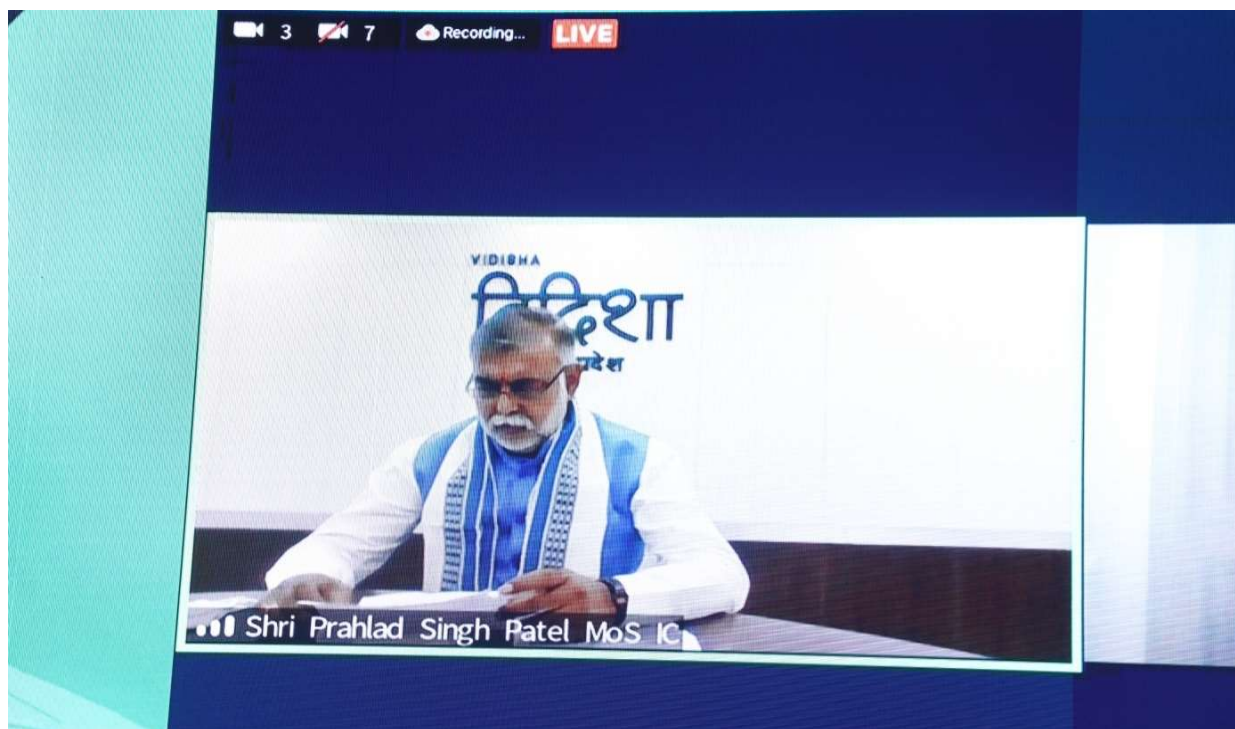


The hon'ble Minister for Tourism Shri Prahlad Singh Patel, the Chief Guest, joined virtually and applauded the efforts of ICPB as the front runner in hosting a hybrid event of this magnitude. He remarked that this hybrid Conclave would be a good example for upcoming events which will be held virtually due to the pandemic situation. He outlined the Government's policies and efforts to incentivize the industry by the Champion Sector in Services Scheme, E-conference Visa and participation at the international Trade shows. He mentioned the upcoming major conferences in India in the year 2021-22, which establishes India's strength as a MICE destination. In addition to MICE attracting large business opportunities, Hon'ble Minister observed that MICE also plays an important role in increasing India's reputation in the world.



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Chief Guest, Shri Prahlad Singh Patel Hon'ble Minister of State, Independent Charge, Ministry of Tourism & Culture (Independent Charge)





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ICPB MICE Film and digital MICE manual were globally launched during the inaugural session by the Hon'ble Minister. The objective of the film is to communicate a positive message for welcoming events to India. The tone of joy and confidence in getting back to business, warm hospitality, safety protocols in place and assurance of a delightful experience is the core message of the film.

The digital MICE manual will serve as a ready reference for a conference organiser planning an event in India. The digital MICE Planner includes information relating to convention venues and meeting hotels with details including facilities available, capacity chart, layout plans, post tour options, new upcoming convention venues, India's incentive experiences, air connectivity details, convention support services etc.



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- Keynote Address – Mr. Ori Lahav, President, IAPCO

Mr. Lahav delivered the keynote address virtually on the Conclave theme - “Physical & Digital Meetings – A Harmonious Blend. The interesting and informative presentation took the participants on a journey of technological evolution in each sector of the industry including telecommunications, financial services, airlines, automobile, electricity, computer, cellphones etc. He stated that in MICE industry, COVID19 accelerated the shift from physical gathering to virtual/hybrid events much faster. He mentioned the Kenses group survey which concludes that content, platform, activities and length are the crucial factors for an ideal virtual event. The survey also determines that the participant’s (including industry professionals from pharma, medical and biotech) would like to go back to physical interaction when the situation normalises post Covid19.



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The keynote address was delivered by Mr. Ori Lahav, President, IAPCO on the topic *“Physical & Digital Meetings – A Harmonious Blend”*.

Shri Rakesh Kumar Verma IAS, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Tourism and Chairman ICPB virtually inaugurated the ICPB exhibition with 26 exhibitors including nine support partners were also provided table chair space to showcase their products at the venue.



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Physical Exhibition at JW Marriott Aerocity New Delhi.



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The following 26 organizations exhibited virtually and showcased their MICE products during the event :

Sl. No.	Name of the Organisation
1.	Ministry of Tourism, Government of India
2.	JW Marriott Aerocity New Delhi
3.	Gujarat Tourism
4.	Grover Audio Visual Services
5.	Axis Communications
6.	Group Think
7.	India Expo Centre & Mart
8.	Crown Plaza
9.	Bangalore International Exhibition Centre
10.	India Convention Promotion Bureau
11.	Alpcord Network Events & Conferences



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12.	<i>Hyderabad International Convention Centre</i>
13.	<i>The Indian Hotels Company Limited</i>
14.	<i>Meetings & Incentives World (A Division Of A.T. Seasons & Vacations Travel Pvt. Ltd.)</i>
15.	<i>Mahatma Mandir Convention And Exhibition Centre</i>
16.	<i>India Tourism Development Corporation Ltd.</i>
17.	<i>Meetings & More</i>
18.	<i>Concept Conferences Pvt. Ltd.</i>
19.	<i>Falcon Exhibitions Pvt. Ltd.</i>
20.	<i>Grand Hyatt Kochi Bolagatty</i>
21.	<i>MM Active – SCi-Teach Communications Private Limited</i>
22.	<i>Gujarat University Exhibition & Convention Centre</i>
23.	<i>Vama Events Pvt. Ltd.</i>
24.	<i>Marundeshwara Enterprises</i>
25.	<i>Paras Art Studio</i>
26.	<i>Palomino Hospitality Pvt. Ltd.</i>





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The first Panel Discussion was on the topic “*Strategizing for Survival, Revival and Thrival of MICE in India*”, which was moderated by Mr. Nitesh Gandhi, General Manager – JW Marriott Aerocity and the panelists were Mr. Rakesh Kumar Verma, Chairman – ICPB & JS(T), Mr. Amaresh Tiwari, Vice Chairman ICPB, Mr. Girish Kwatra, Hon. Secretary ICPB and Capt. Swadesh Kumar – Member ICPB.



Mr. Gandhi, the moderator, opened the discussion requesting Mr. Rakesh Verma for his views on the opportunities for the industry and the strategies for survival and revival of the MICE sector in the context of the ongoing pandemic crisis.

Mr. Verma stressed on the need for strengthening ICPB and for positioning India as a strong MICE destination. Government is working on the formalizing policies/initiatives that will synergies govt. with the industry and will strengthen it.

Capt Kumar urged the industry to respond to the present crisis with all the resources available. He gave an example of the Swiss knife which has multiple solutions for every need. He also said that respect and cooperation with each other including govt. support, will boost the growth of MICE industry.

Mr Tiwari elaborated on the 3 major concerns that need to be addressed by event planners of the industry namely - safety, health and hygiene. He referred to 9/11 and 26/11 as events that made safety the top priority for organising events. India responded with strict measures for ensuring safety at all venues. With regards to health and hygiene, full compliance to the new protocols is imperative for building confidence of the clients.



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Mr. Kwatra emphasized on the importance of the MICE sector in the tourism industry. He stated that meeting industry contributes majorly to revenue generation compared to other sectors in the tourism industry. The MICE industry is adapting to the new trends as seen in the hybrid 13th CIC event.



Attendees Engagement: *How to make more effective And Engaging - A Tale from JW Marriott, New Delhi* - Presented by Mr. Nitesh Gandhi, General Manager - JW Marriott Aerocity.

Mr Nitesh Gandhi made a presentation, showcasing the facilities of the property - JW Marriott, New Delhi with focus on the safety protocols, new restaurant, international chefs, also sharing information regarding the major dignitaries who have visited the property in the recent past. The Marriott experience was the focal point of the presentation.



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An intro on Gastronomic Experiences in New Normal World at JW Marriott Aerocity by Chef, Mr. Sandeep Pandey under Marriott plan 'Commitment to Clean' was presented during the Conclave. He emphasized on the importance of safe and hygienic environment for F&B services. A new concept of 'assisted buffet' was followed at the Conclave during lunch and dinner wherein small individual portions were offered in the buffet served by the staff and more live stations to avoid keeping large quantity of cooked food.





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Panel Discussion II talked about “Critical path of Contracting: Event Risks, Attrition, Retention, Cancellation, Minimums, Concessions based on New Normal”. It was moderated by Mr. Amaresh Tiwari and had people join in both physically as well as virtually. Moderator- Mr. Amaresh Tiwari, Vice Chairman – ICPB Panellists –Mr. Chander Mansharamani, Managing Director- Alpcord Network, Mr. Aashish Gupta, Founder – Strategy Pluto, Mr. Christopher T. Viegas, Associate Vice President Sales: MICE & Social Events - Indian Hotels Co. Ltd. and Mr. Rohit Chopra- Regional Director of sales and distribution (India and South Asia) – Accor.

Mr Amaresh Tiwari , the moderator of the session introduced the panelists and gave the opening remarks, highlighting the need for making contracts more flexible in the present scenario hit by uncertainties when planning events / meetings .

Mr. Gupta outlined the key risks in the event contracts including performance & compliance by both parties to identify the contract violators, commitment risk from the company on delivery, identify the industries which have behavioral issues, training the executives for contracting to identify the best practices followed. Apart from the above, Mr. Gupta emphasized on the contract risks including revenue risks, Act of God clause etc.

Mr. Viegas said that contracts are the safeguards for all stakeholders in the industry. During the pandemic, event cancellations could mean postponement or delay considering the Govt. norms and relaxations without renegotiating the fresh contracts. Attrition in the contract caused by Govt. policies are accepted by both parties. He opined that flexibility should be added to the contracts along with some clauses to ensure win-win situation for both parties.

Mr. Mansharamani on the panel was of the view that a contract is a legal written document which defines the rights & responsibilities of both parties and is a roadmap for the execution of the event. A PCO should be prepared for crisis management to handle clauses in the contracts on insurance, health & safety measures, lessee economic condition and force majeure.

Mr. Chopra said that during COVID, one should follow govt. regulations to consider situations including lockdown as a risk factor while contracting. Generally, contracts in India are one way whereas it should be multi-way including the vendors to ensure satisfaction of all. He advised to form one advisory board with representatives from legal, law, govt., hotel, airlines to draft terms and conditions of the contract with some flexibility.



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MICE Infrastructure: *The Big Picture Gujarat Tourism* by Mr. Sandeep

Mr. Sandeep presented a film on Gujarat, a complete destination for the business and leisure travelers coming to India. The film highlighted the different aspects of Gujarat Tourism including Indus Valley Civilization, wildlife, Gandhi Ashram, The Ran of Kutch, Gir, temples, Buddhist caves, coastline, exotic food delicacy, handicrafts etc. which was highly appreciated by the 13th CIC participants presented physically and virtually.



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Panel Discussion III was on *“Innovative ways of executing MICE - New Normal”*, which was moderated by Mr. Girish Kwatra with Panellists, Dr. Deepak Govil, Director - Critical Care, Medanta, Mr. Roshan Abbas, President - Event and Entertainment Management Association (EEMA), Mr. Abinash Manghani, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) - Welcom Heritage - ITC Hotels and Mr. Sudeep Sarcar, CEO - India Exposition Mart Ltd.

Mr. Kwatra introduced the panel and initiated the discussion with focus on the current scenario, workforce training, contingency plans for medical arrangements and the way forward through partnerships & collaborations between meeting planners and executives from associations, corporates etc. and the role of technology.

The discussion started with Mr. Manghani's view on the new ways of executing events. He remarked that though hybrid events provide both physical and virtual experience, major events across the world are being organized only virtually considering the spike in corona cases. As for the hotel industry, there is surge in the social events like weddings compared to medical conferences during the pandemic.

Mr. Sarcar, quoting the UFI report, said that during the COVID19, exhibition is the worst hit segment of MICE but the sector is gradually opening up and India will be hosting 4 international major exhibitions in the coming year. He stated that strict compliance to the SOPs/guidelines issued by the Government of India, is the key to ensure the safety of participants and to showcase that the venue/hotel segment is ready to host MICE again.

Dr. Govil working in the healthcare sector explained the psychological effect of covid19 on people. He said people working tirelessly without any work break or people working from home during the pandemic, are looking for a getaway to socialize. He stated that if the conferences and events open up following all the safety measures and guidelines, people will certainly attend such events as they are waiting for this opportunity since the last few months. He also emphasized that the SOPs issued by Govt, must be followed strictly to ensure utmost hygiene, safety and security of all the participants.



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Mr. Abbas, who joined the discussion on virtual platform, said that event industry including entertainment and sports, contributes majorly to the economy and generates a good ratio of employment. He urged that all the segments of MICE industry including meetings, entertainment, conferences, incentives, sports, weddings etc. should come together to request for recognition and support from the government during the pandemic. He recognized the benefits from virtual participation as it connects the global audience at one platform through technology and minimizes physical contact.



Session: *Designing Digital Experience and creating value to stakeholders* –Grover Audio Visual Services by Mr. Abhishek Kumar



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A presentation was made by M/s Grover AV Services, the technology partner of 13 CIC on the topic to showcase how technology has become the most important pillar for virtual/ hybrid meetings. The presentation brought out the critical role of new technological advancement in virtual meetings for creating branding opportunities, online / onsite set up, live transmission of parallel sessions from multiple locations etc .



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Virtual ICCA session – *Pursuing the international association meetings business during the pandemic*
Moderator – Mr. Noor Ahmad Hamid, Regional Director (Asia Pacific), ICCA, with panelists, Ms. Keiko Nishimoto, Senior Researcher - MICE Research Institute- Japan, Mr. Bruce Redor, Partner (Europe) – Gaining Edge, Ms. Chloé Menhinick, Partner (Association Consulting) – Gaining Edge.

After the self-introduction of the panelists, Mr. Hamid opened the discussion with the panelists to understand the situation of associations across Japan, France and Europe and how they are dealing with these difficult times to survive. He also enquired about the international/national association meetings held during the pandemic.

Ms. Menhinick responded with her view that associations are utilizing this time in engaging with their members to deepen their relations through virtual meetings and sessions. Associations are proactively developing creative methods to stay in touch with members to understand their needs, issues during covid19, which is greatly appreciated by the members and prospective members. Regarding the international meetings, she stated that associations in Europe, are postponing their conferences to wait for the situation to get better as they are hesitant in adopting the virtual format and eager to have face to face interactions.

Mr. Redor agreed with Ms. Menhinick that associations are increasingly interacting with their members to remain in touch for a better understanding of the situation. He said that in France, associations are constantly expanding their base to reach a wider audience through virtual and hybrid mode which is resulting in increasing their memberships. As for the international conferences, the associations are adopting to the new normal of MICE, i.e. hybrid meetings.

Ms. Nishimoto said that physical activities are on standstill in Japan from the risk management point of view during covid19, however considering the benefits of online interaction, hybrid and virtual meetings are widely being accepted and adopted in the associations. The association meetings are being often held virtually, to avoid physical interaction, resulting in changing dynamics of the business model in Japan.



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JW Marriott Aerocity New Delhi hosted 'Networking Dinner' and cocktails on 30 October 2020 with full compliance to the safety protocols.

Live entertainment by SHWET Band at the networking dinner was hosted by Axis Communications to entertain the guests.



Live Entertainment performance by SHWET band enjoyed by buyers.



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Day-2- Saturday, the 31st October 2020

Panel Discussion IV - Gender Equality & Sustainability in MICE Industry.

Moderator, Ms. Madhu Dubey, Executive Director, ICPB along with panelists Ms. Meenakshi Sharma, Director General, Ministry of Tourism (who joined in virtually); Ms. Nidhi Sharma, Executive Director, IEIA; Ms. Punam Singh, Chief Happiness Officer and Founder Member – Indian Hospitality Network – IHN and Ms. Rakhi Nathawat, Executive Director – All India Ophthalmological Society. Live from pan India - Ms. Lalitha Kantham Rai, Partner, Marundeshwara Enterprises; Ms. Rajani Nair Deb, Director of Sales & Marketing, Mahatma Mandir Convention & Exhibition Centre and Ms. Dimple Peri, Chief Curator, Jamiti, joined in virtually.

Ms. Dubey opened the discussion with brief introduction of the panelists who had joined physically and some virtually. She emphasized on the importance of gender equality which is important for the development and realization of human rights. Further she invited views from the panelists on different aspects of the discussion including govt. initiatives for the gender equality, statistics available on the subject, women's representation in the hotel, exhibition, meeting industry etc.

Ms. Meenakshi Sharma started the panel discussion with her candid views on the topic. She mentioned that top management of tourism organizations lack women representation. The efforts and work contribution of the female is majorly overlooked both at office and home. The government is taking various initiatives like reduction on property tax if registered under woman name, mandatory empanelment of independent woman director on company management etc. She added that with the right thought process and a push by govt. policies, an improvement in gender equality and sustainability is achievable.

Ms. Peri gave references on the statistics available on the subject. She mentioned that as per the Global Gender Gap report by World Economic Forum, India stands at 112 rank amongst 150 participating countries in terms of gender parity. Also, as per the Global International Events study by Bizzabo shows that 70% share of the speakers ratio is male and women 30% only. These studies indicate the position of women at workforce. She stated that more and equal opportunities for women in every field with mentoring will improve the gender equality in the near future.

Ms. Nidhi Sharma agreed with the data represented by Ms. Peri. She added that women's share in the exhibition segment of MICE is relatively low compared to the meetings segment. This discrimination exists due to lack of opportunity, pay inequality, company policies etc. These issues should be taken under consideration at organization level and woman also needs to come forward to accept more challenging roles to prove themselves.

Ms. Nathawat, mentioned that 70% healthcare workers are female but only 25% women constitute the top management in this sector. She observed that women are expected to enter this sector because of attributes like care and compassion that women are known for, but should be given



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leadership role as well. Further she stated that many international associations are headed by women but still gender disparity exists and there is a need to work towards improving the situation.

Ms. Singh, representing the wedding segment said that event sector is a highly pressured zone. Majority of the workforce in this segment comprises of women who have assumed leadership roles and stand out for their creative inputs to any event. She remarked that woman enable woman and all women should support and empower each other.

Ms. Rai, from the virtual platform shared her perspective on the subject with her observation, that women workforce should be encouraged at the organizational level through flexible working hours, maternity leave, appreciating their hard work and potential.

Ms. Deb contributed to the discussion with her insightful views, mentioning that workforce discrimination based on pay, career choice, gender and region stereotypes should be stopped. The physical and mental harassment of both males and females should be eliminated at the workplace. There is a need to focus on developing resources to nurture the MICE industry, mentoring the females to level up from lower to middle to top management through training and learning sessions to maintain sustainability.





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Virtual Session Hybrid Hub, Gr. Noida – Crowne Plaza

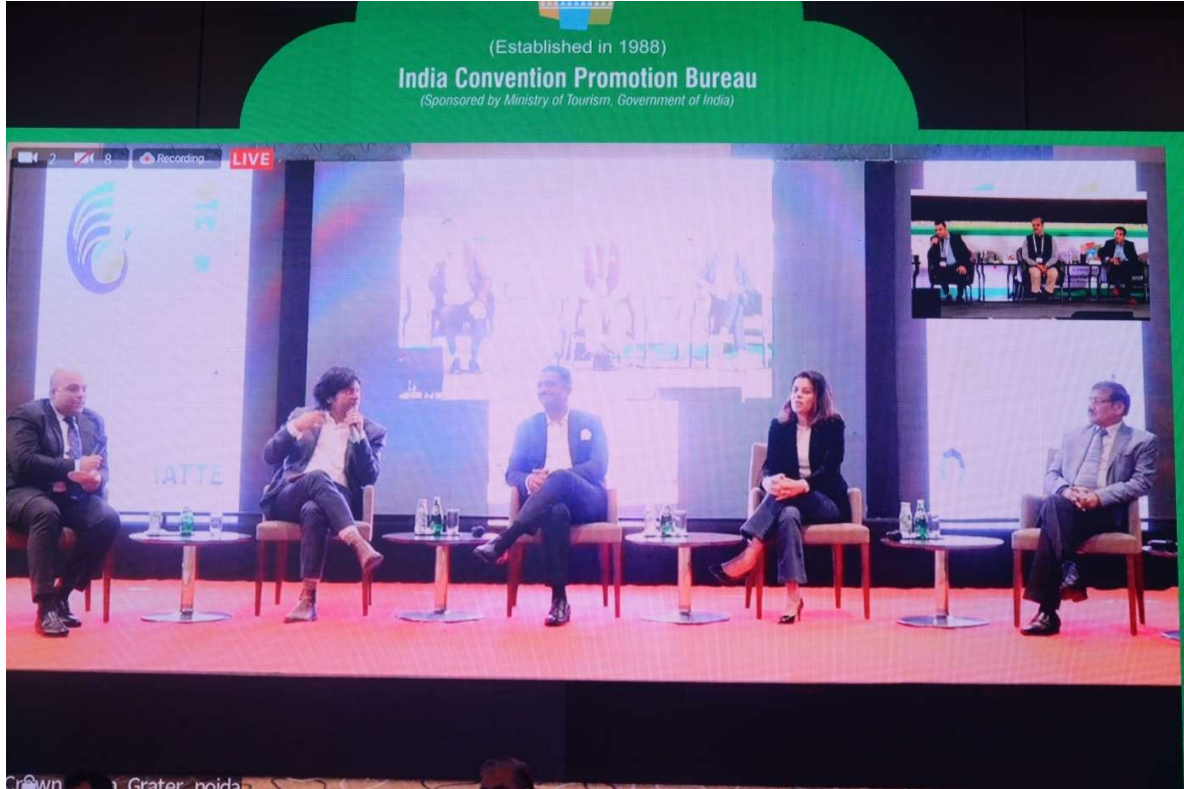
A unique feature of the Conclave this year was the Hybrid Hub session, organized at Crowne Plaza Gr. Noida. The session was transmitted live for the physical participants at JW Marriott and on virtual platform for all other participants. The objective of this session, was to showcase advanced technologies in promoting hybrid meeting hubs to all participants of the Conclave. Session included panel discussion on 'Crowne Plaza – a Planner's Paradise', moderated by Mr. Nitin Sachdeva – CEO – Venture Marketing, with panelist Mr. Ashwini Nair- GM – Crowne Plaza (Gr. Noida), Mr. Ajay Vinayak – CEO - Palomino Hospitality Pvt. Ltd., Mr. Naveen Rizvi - Executive Director – ICE, Mr. Kapil Arora – Managing Director – Wizard Events. Another Panel discussion was held at the hybrid hub venue on 'Destination Greater Noida- Fast Forward 2021', moderated by Mr. Barun Gupta -Director of Sales & Marketing - Crowne Plaza Greater Noida, with panelists Mr. Sudeep Sarcar- CEO- IEML, Mr. Ashwini Nair- GM – Crowne Plaza (Gr. Noida), Ms. Pallavi Mehra – Group Director & Publisher- Informa Markets and Mr. PP Khanna – President – ADTOI.





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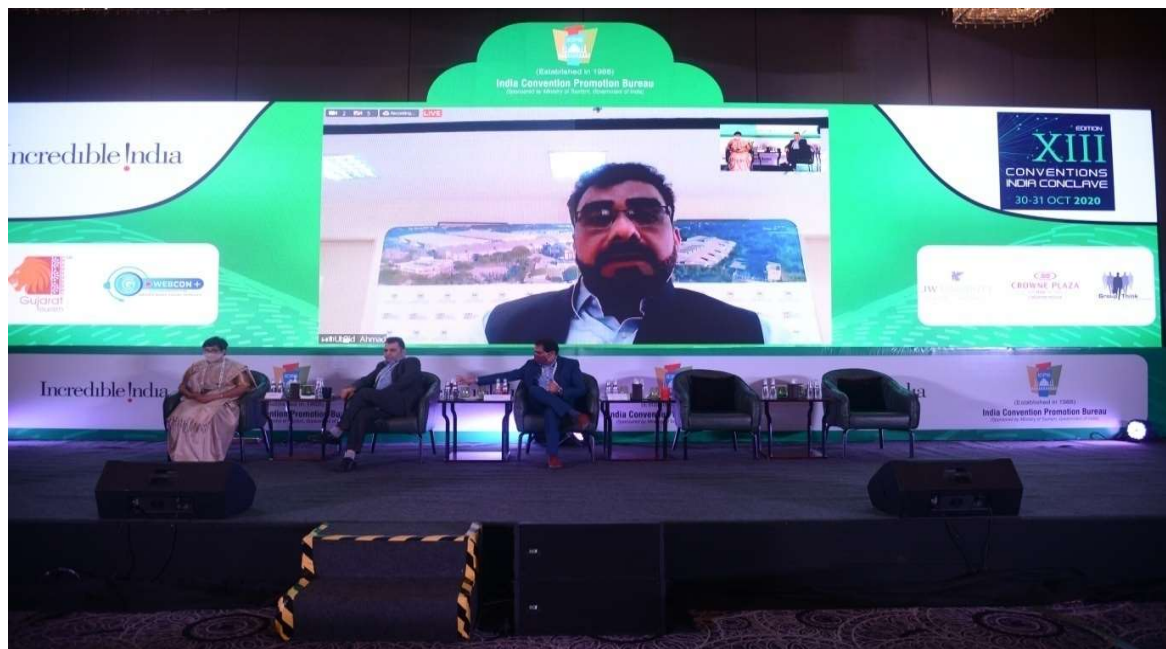
Presentation by Bangalore International Exhibition Centre by Mr. Ubaid Ahmad, Senior Director - Bangalore International Exhibition Centre & IMTMA

A presentation showcasing BIEC through a film focused on venue's meetings & exhibition facilities spread across 57 acres of land, 5 column-less exhibition halls, 6 conference airconditioned halls, food courts, Amphitheatre, 3000 cars parking, nearby tourist attractions in Bangalore making BIEC, a leading venue for international conferences and exhibitions.



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Virtual Session I - 'Role of Service Providers in meeting the demands of MICE industry post Covid-19'.

Moderator – Mr. Nimit Soni, Member, ICPB interacted with panelists Mr. Rohit Saraogi, Director & Co Founder – Design Desk; Mr. Santosh Kumar, Director – Violet Worldwide; Mr. Ravi Boratkar, Managing Director – MM Activ and Mr. Ashish Jagota, Executive Director – Concept Conferences Pvt. Ltd.

Mr Nimit Soni introduced the panelists and commenced the discussions outlining the importance of ancillary service providers in the MICE industry, mentioning the severe economic impact of the pandemic crises on the service providers in the changed environment.

Mr. Boratkar spoke of his experience with hybrid events. He remarked that hybrid events are a perfect solution when physical interaction is limited and a wide reach is targeted. After the complete halt of the industry, hybrid events will bring back the confidence of the industry to restart the MICE activities. He further stated that though virtual format is popular in the present times, but physical interaction and business networking in-person can never be replaced.

Mr Jagota shared his perspective on the subject observing that the industry is striving to survive and revive through various channels of communication like webinars, virtual meetings and hybrid events. The mindset is changing, things are improving and the industry is hopeful of a new phase, post Covid to open up once again.

Mr. Kumar, representing the exhibition fabrication segment, agreed with the views of Mr. Boratkar and Mr. Jagota. He said that the requirement of conference/exhibition hall space, with social distancing restrictions, will increase substantially and will affect the projected budget of

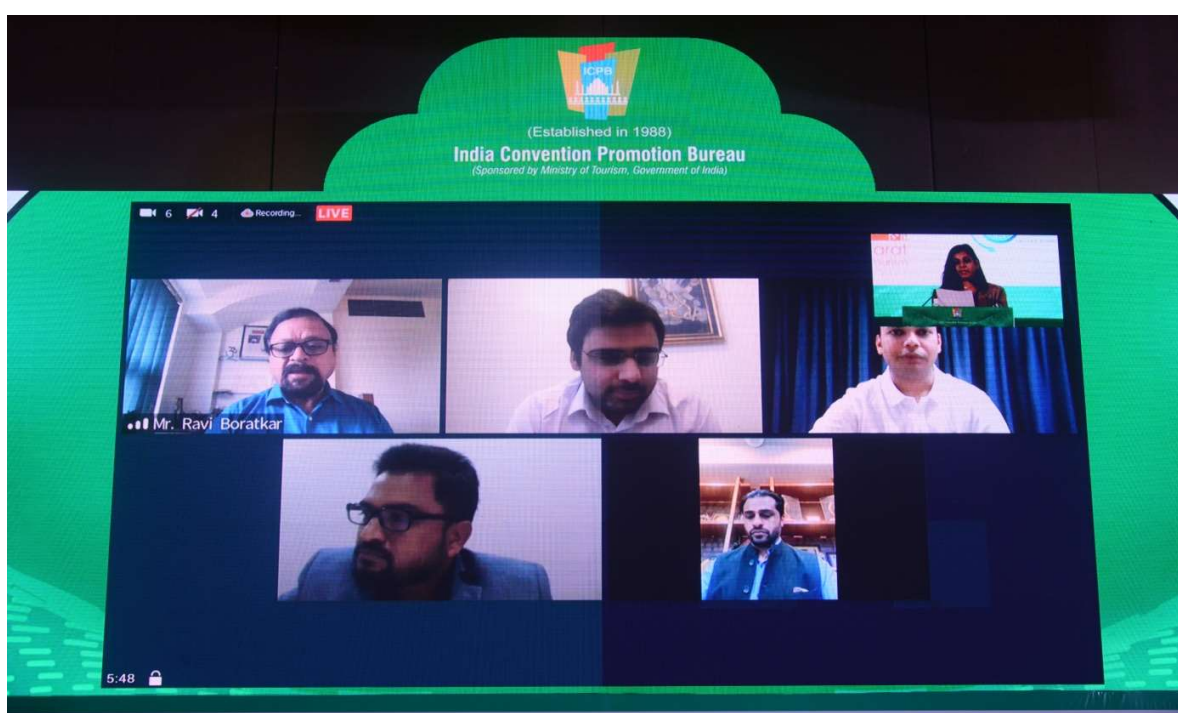


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any event. Earlier the purpose of the exhibition booth was to garner the maximum number of footfalls, however in the current situation, to maintain social distancing & adhering government SOPs will greatly affect the networking at booth. The exhibition and conference layouts will be restructured accordingly and will be an additional responsibility for the service providers.

Mr Sarogi referred to China's opening up the MICE industry, Europe still struggling and India gradually progressing, holding small events as per government guidelines .



Virtual Session II was on 'Building Human Capital: Capacity building, imparting professional skills through trainings, certification programme and its effectiveness.' Moderator Dr.Chandra Shekhar Barua, Assistant Prof & Placement Officer, IITTM interacted with panelists Dharmendra Kumar, CEO, Geanis World& MICE; Prof Dr. Anupama Srivastava, Coordinator, Institute of Tourism Studies, University of Lucknow; Prof. Dr. Sampad Swain, Professor & HOD Department of Tourism Studies – School of Management, Pondicherry University; Prof. Dr. Paramita Suklabaidya, Associate Professor – School of Tourism & Hospitality Services Management – IGNOU; Prof. Dr. Rajesh N. Ragde, Associate Professor and Director – Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Marathwada University; Prof. Dr. Sneha.N, H.O.D & Assistant Professor - Department of Travel & Tourism, Mount Carmel College and Madan Kak, COO, Minar Travels & Elbon Conferences.

Dr Barua introduced the panelist, thereafter Mr. Dharmendra addressed each of the panelist on their perspective regarding the importance of building qualified manpower for the MICE industry.



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Prof Srivastava, observed that MICE has not gained academic interest in universities and institutions offering tourism courses , though a few institutes are offering certification programs / masters in events. She elaborated on the course content of the master's program offered in Events Management followed in University of Lucknow.

Prof. Swain adding to Prof. Srivastava views, said that it is important to train the human resource required to work in tourism industry specially MICE. Academic institutions and universities should be prepared to develop industry and student-oriented curriculum regardless of budget, facilities, scope etc.

Prof. Ragde agreed with the panelists view on the requirement of developing more MICE focused curriculum and training of workforce. He advocated MICE to be a compulsory module in the institutes considering the growing opportunities in this industry in India.

Prof. Paramita stated that large number of students across India are interested in pursuing MICE as a career option. She said that many private institutes and universities are offering professional diploma and certification programs in events/MICE to the aspiring students but there is no standardization in the certificates.

Prof. Sneha added to the view presented by Prof. Paramita and said that certification standardization is very crucial in order to improve the quality of the students who are entering the workforce. It is important to update the course as per the latest trends in industry and Department of Travel & Tourism, Mount Carmel College has industry experts on the panel to keep a check on such developments to update the course curriculum accordingly.

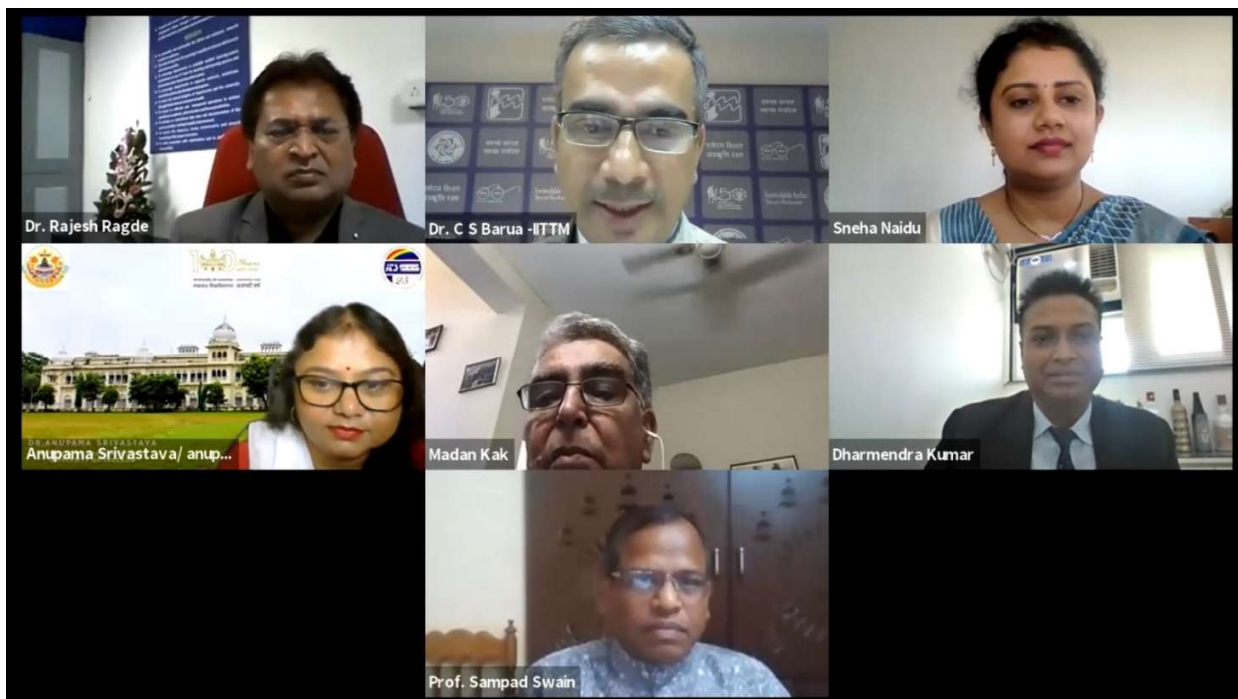
Prof Barua observed that that tourism is growing rapidly in the country and trained workforce is important to cater to the needs of the industry. He mentioned that in the long term with more and more companies handling increase in domestic and international MICE events, job opportunities will also grow for students. This will result in many institutes offering suitable courses in MICE for the students.

Mr. Kak emphasized on the need to work on the skill development and training at the basic level for the industry including language speaking guides to handle the business from different countries. He said that India is a diverse country and new destinations should be promoted in marketing the country as a tourism attraction.



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Virtual Session III was on 'ROI and ROO in Meeting Industry: How to measure and create value to stakeholders'. Moderator Mr. Neeraj Dhawan, Board Member, ICPB Governing Board interacted with panellists Ms. Neelanjana Singh, Executive Member, Indian Dietetic Association; Dr. Tilak Raj Raina, Deputy President – Indian Society of Blood Transfusion; Dr. Abhijit Ashok Sarkar, Vice President, Sharekhan Ltd. Mr. Riyaz UC, Managing Director – Spiceland Holidays and Entertainments Pvt. Ltd. and Dr. Kamlesh Sharma, National Institute of Ayurveda.

Mr Neeraj Dhawan the moderator, highlighted the importance of applying 'return on investment' and networking for both buyers and exhibitors attending conferences.

After introducing the panelists, the moderator invited Ms Neelanjana for her views on the topic. Ms. Neelanjana stated that there is increased usage of internet for meeting people virtually, sharing knowledge and staying in touch with each other. Virtual sessions with interesting content and global reach gives a good platform to the sponsors to attract a large potential audience with limited expenditure on speakers logistic arrangements, promotions etc. Hybrid format is a good way of conducting meetings allowing participants to attend the session at convenience either physically or virtually.

Dr. Raina , was also of the view that at present virtual meetings is the most practical option to conduct meetings . In view of the limited physical interaction permissible , hybrid meetings is the best way to go forward . He was hopeful that physical activities will resume soon .



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Dr. Sarkar, representing the corporate sector, said that since MICE activities are on hold due to COVID19, it has provided an opportunity for organizations to pay attention to other areas such as employees' wellness, protection, safety measures and the importance of technology in real time. He also pointed out that ROI is less in virtual meetings as compared to physical meetings, however also pointed-out major challenges of virtual meetings such as immediate connectivity problem, disturbance etc. He informed that as per MICE component, Meeting / Conference / Events / Exhibitions can be organised virtually but for the incentive segment, we need to have physical arrangements.

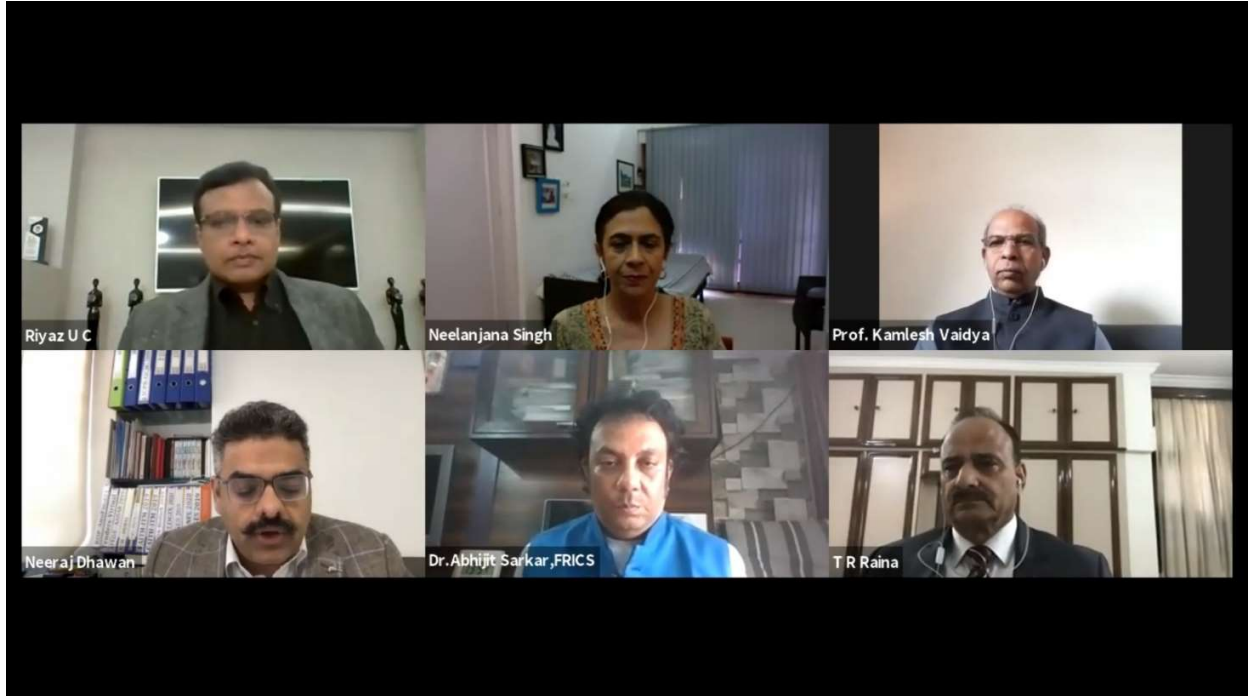
Prof. Vaidya mentioned that as an institute during pandemic-lockdown they used the crisis as an opportunity and opportunity as achievements, to best utilize available online technology to reach a wider audience through various virtual courses / workshops considering flexible timings. He highlighted that as compared to physical meeting/conferences, hybrid / virtual meetings are more focused, scientific, cost effective and opportunities are very high, however virtual meetings cannot replace the essence of physical meetings, as audience response and human interaction is found missing. He concluded that the spreading of knowledge activities should continue with available technology.

Mr. Riyaz said that in terms of global visibility and promotions, technology is a great platform to achieve both objectives. Since virtual platform gives a way to connect with global participants, the ease of doing conference is admirable. He mentioned that physical conferences are most preferred way of conducting meetings, but will be managed via hybrid/virtual modes during the pandemic times.



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An insightful talk was given by Mr. Rajeev Kohli, Joint Managing Director - Creative Travel on How to Brand INDIA as MICE destination.

The talk reflected optimism in a return soon to the conventional way of organising events. He stressed on the need for the industry to be working together with a holistic approach to effectively market all the segments of the MICE industry - meetings, conferences , incentives and exhibitions. MICE has to be branded as a distinct identity at all forums including branding at international MICE trade shows with global perceptive.



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Valedictory session & Vote of thanks :



The Conclave concluded with the **Valedictory session**. Mr. Amaresh Tiwari, Vice Chairman-ICPB summarized the highlights of the two day Conclave and thanked all speakers, participants, supporting partners, media representatives for the success of the event. ICPB felicitated the supporting partners, thanking them for their support and contribution in putting up a successful hybrid 13th CIC following all safety protocols. The supporting partners namely, Ministry of Tourism - Government of India; Gujarat Tourism; JW Marriott Aerocity; Grover Audio Visual Services; Crowne Plaza - Greater Noida; Axis Communications; Group Think; Falcon Exhibitions



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Pvt. Ltd.; India Exposition Mart Ltd.; Bangalore International Exhibition Centre were presented certificates recognizing their contribution to the success of the event.

Ministry of Tourism, Government of India 	Ministry of Tourism, Government of India 
JW Marriott Aerocity New Delhi 	JW Marriott Aerocity New Delhi 
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**Complete recording, session wise, of the Conclave is available on ICPB Youtube channel.*
