

GLOBAL FEATURES

Disseminating Information Across The Globe

Incorporating

Global Technologies

Your Window To The Tech and Startup World

Global Destinations

A Guide To The World of MICE and Tourism

- CES 2024
- FinBlue
- SRM
- Macao
- Sayaji, Pune
- Mercure



Empowering Readers: Our Most Precious Asset

HOSPITALITY

like never before only at

AMANORA
THE FERN
PUNE

A leading environmentally sensitive hotel & club

Trust us for all your celebrations
and a comforting staycation



Luxurious
Rooms & Suites



Lavish
Weddings



Corporate
Events



Amanora The Fern caters to all your occasions like Corporate events and Weddings with our lavish banquets at the service of you and your never-ending guest list! Our newly added luxurious rooms and suites would make your workday feel like a holiday. Come & experience the ferntastic style of living, only at Amanora The Fern.



Consistently rated as No.1 on  from past 6 years |  Multiple award winning Hotel & Club

FOR DETAILS, CONTACT: +91 91686 81678 | +91 96647 95785

Amanora Park Town, Magarpatta Road, Hadapsar, Pune - 28 | Tel: 020-6740 9888
Email: sales.tf.amanora@fernhotels.com | Visit us: www.fernhotels.com



Dear Friends

As always we start our new year by visiting the city of Las Vegas to cover the most influential tech show CES. Infact every January technocrats, gadget freaks, innovators all converge into Las Vegas to make their gracious presence at the biggest electronics show in the world CES.

CES is growing, expanding and certainly on an upward trend as this was clearly visible when I visited the show in January 2023 (16th year). COVID had its issues (not just CES but literally for every trade shoe) but now CES is back in full flow - flourishing, intensifying, and thriving as the tech fever is seeing no end. It was and today also is seen as the launching pad for innovators. Over the years tech innovators have launched 700,000 + products and 20,000 + product have debuted during CES.

CES is the most powerful tech event in the world — the proving ground for breakthrough technologies and global innovators. This is where brands get business done; meet new partners and where the industry's sharpest minds take the stage to unveil their latest releases and boldest breakthroughs. Owned and produced by the Consumer Technology Association (CTA), CES is the only trade show that showcases the entire tech landscape at one event.

Headquartered in Chennai SRM Institute of Science and Technology has already created a niche for itself as a premier university in India. With the dynamic Prof. C. Muthamizhchelvan, Vice Chancellor, SRM Institute of Science and Technology at the helm of affairs the university is on the path for rapid growth and expansion. He has been associated with SRM Group since its inception and has served in various academic and administrative roles. He has led the institution on international and national accreditation processes like ABET (USA), IET (UK) and NAAC. He has successfully adopted technology and e-governance initiatives in the Academic environment. A professor in Nanoscience and Nanotechnology with over 180 research publications, he has been recognized as an Honourable Guest Professor in the Shizuoka University, Japan since April 2014. In a tête-à-tête with our editor he opened up on various horizons talking passionately about his university, importance of R&D, his future plans and much more.

Software Technology Parks of India (STPI) is a premier S&T organization under Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) engaged in promoting IT/ITES Industry, innovation, R&D, start-ups, product/IP creation in the field of emerging technologies. Till date, STPI has launched the following 22 Centres of Entrepreneurship (CoEs): One such is FinBlue -FinTech CoE based in Chennai, headed by the dynamic Dr. Sanjay Tyagi, Jurisdictional Director STPI, MeitY and CEO FinBlue and N. Gopu, COO, FinBlue.

FinBlue offers an integrated program to start-ups to scale through its incubation facility by providing access to SandBox, an environment that consists of APIs of different participating banks, NPCI products, Core Banking Software and other enabling services through various stakeholders. Recently FinBlue had taken 9 companies to exhibit at the 8th edition of Singapore Fintech Festival (SFF). We spoke to some of the exhibitors and their success.

Recently our special correspondent, Pooja was invited by Sands Resorts Macao to promote MICE and the destination. Macao is a seamless blend where East meets West in a spectacular fusion of culture and architecture. I had the privilege of exploring the marvels of Macao with Sands Resorts Macao. This five-day Familiarization trip, aptly labelled 'Rediscover Macao', was organized for over 200 MICE professionals and media from all over the globe and multiple events were held in the Sands integrated resorts – The Londoner Macao, The Venetian Macao and The Parisian Macao to showcase their exceptional facilities and services. In a travelogue she highlights her experiences.



Chandragupta Amritkar
 Editor
 chandraguptaa@hotmail.com
 editor@globalfeatures.info

Editor - Chandragupta Amritkar, Consulting Editor - Varsha, Special Correspondent - Pooja, Design - Manoj Durgam
 Contact - Global Features, B-701, Customs Colony, Military Road, Marol Maroshi, Andheri(E), Mumbai-400 059, India.
 Mobile - 91 9969935878/91 8850614577 e-mail: editor@globalfeatures.info/chandraguptaa@hotmail.com

Annual Subscription Rates - India: Rs. 1200; Overseas: US\$ 60 (Rates include airmail charges).

Printed and Published by Chandragupta Amritkar on behalf of Global Features B-701, Customs Colony, Military Rd, Marol, Andheri(E), Mumbai-400 059 and Printed at Sumangal Press Pvt. Ltd. "Sumangal" G-8 Cross Road "A", Near Marol Bus Depot, MIDC, Andheri (East), Mumbai - 400 093.


Global Features makes all efforts to ensure that the information published is correct and reliable. However the publication holds no responsibility for any inadvertent errors, commissions or opinions expressed.



SRM

INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY
(Deemed to be University u/s 3 of UGC Act, 1956)



 **Education**
guides us to
fly beyond
boundaries

NO. 1 AMONG TOP 125 PRIVATE ENGINEERING INSTITUTES

TIMES - I3RC ENGINEERING INSTITUTES RANKING SURVEY 2023

SRMIST a unique large pioneering Multi-disciplinary University

GLOBAL RECOGNITION

VERY GOOD



2021

2024



One among 45
Indian Universities Ranked



NAAC A++
ACCREDITED

2023



One among 75
Indian Universities Ranked



SHANGHAI
RANKING

One among 14 Universities
from India in ARWU2022-
Shanghai World University Rankings



RANKINGS 2023

University
18th Rank

nature index

Nature index ranking reflects SRMIST's
Research excellence and institutional performance.

38

Overall

35

Chemistry

35

Physical
Sciences

37

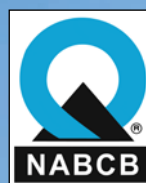
Natural
Sciences

24

Earth &
Environmental
Sciences



ISO 14001:2015



EM009

Offers UG/PG/PhD Programs in

Engineering and Technology | Medical & Health Sciences
Science & Humanities | Management | Law
Hotel Management | Agricultural Sciences

www.srmist.edu.in

☎ Helpline : 080 690 87000

✉ Email : admissions.india@srmist.edu.in





Cover Story

CES 2024

.....06



Education

SRM

.....16



Fintech

STPI

.....10



Hospitality

Mercure Hyderabad

.....20



Event Review

IT&CMA

.....25



Travelogue

Macao

.....26



“We can accommodate a floating crowd of 3000 guests”

One of the few hotels to have steadily maintained its position in the top 2 hotels (out of 2006 properties) in Pune on TripAdvisor is Amanora The Fern, Pune. A truly amazing feat for any hotel. Spearheading the success story is **Amit Kumar Sharma, GM, Amanora The Fern**. An IHM graduate from IHM Lucknow he has 22 years' experience across various levels in India and internationally. He is also currently the President- Poona Hoteliers Association. He was the pre-opening GM of this hotel and has been involved from the start. He has been responsible for raising the bar for his guests in terms of innovation and excellence in service making sure that the hotel remains a force to reckon with in Pune. To get an insight into this success we interacted with him. **Excerpts**



What makes a hotel with limited inventory among the top 2 hotels in Pune on TripAdvisor and that too for several years?

It is somewhat an understatement when you refer to our property as with limited inventory. What is inherently missing from the statement is that it is a value addition to a premium township that is on the cutting edge of the smart city concept with eco-friendly practices.

When we took over the property to operate, we realized the intrinsic value of the venue which is Ionian Greek Colonnade in the form of an Amphitheatre. It is an ancient architectural elegance that is different from the modern properties and endears any visitor. Therefore we had a tremendous advantage to start with. With limited inventory we are able to give every in-house guest a far more personalized service that any regular size hotel as they would find difficult if not impossible. This is one of the main reasons why our guests rate us highly and remain among the top on TripAdvisor beating several top brands.

How do you maintain top notch service standards?

From its inception, our training curriculum built in the ethos that every guest is a VIP and it is our utmost responsibility to make him/ her feel so. Obviously discerning guests rated us highly.

What about MICE and weddings?

That's our strength. If you notice our lawns, they are ideal for a grand wedding and can accommodate a floating crowd of 3000 guests. Apart from that our indoor halls can accommodate 700+ guests. While weddings and wedding-related functions (like engagement) are quite popular we have been able to use our venue spaces to organize corporate events, family get-togethers, birthdays, anniversary celebrations, social functions, community events and even Christmas and New Year celebrations.

Moreover, whenever we had an opportunity to host any corporate or an individual event, we went out of way to assist the organizers in every way (I was witness to such a conversation the GM was having

with a client and I totally agree on this fact). We made sure that our marvellous ambience provided the perfect backdrop for their treasured event. This brought us tremendous word of mouth publicity. It goes to the credit of my entire team from managers to every associate of our team who identified with the vision and performed accordingly.

F&B is vital for the success of any hotel.

True and that's where I believe we beat our contemporaries. Our Vista - Multi Cuisine restaurant at Lobby Level is a favourite among not just hotel guests but also many walk-in guests. The restaurant provides vegetarian, non-vegetarian, vegan, fusion, and even Jain food. Due to our variety of cuisine options like Indian, Italian, Continental, Chinese etc we are a favourite option for corporate.

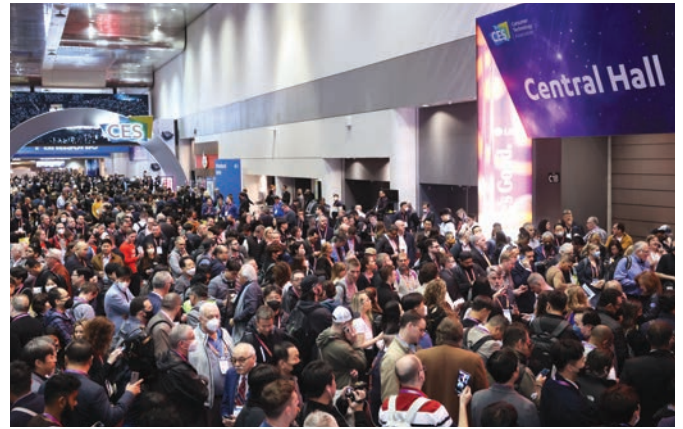
How do you highlight the location advantages?

Amanora The Fern Hotel and Club is extremely well thought out entity. There are three aspects of our location advantage namely central location ie, we are located strategically in East Pune, within 15 minutes of driving distance to Koregaon Park, Magarpatta software Park, Eon Free IT Park, World Trade Centre Kharadi and Hadapsar Industrial Estate. Secondly is the approach and ambience where our venue is a value addition to a four hundred acres township which has won numerous awards in managing green cover, eco practices, architecture and town planning as also digitally enabled services. Even in this premium township our venue is integral part of central green zone and leans onto a manmade lake. In

fact each room has a sit out balcony offering a fabulous view, a feature not really available in modern properties. Thirdly we are within 30 minutes of driving distance to the airport as well as railway station therefore access to our location by outstation guests is really convenient.



CES: The most influential tech show



Come January and technocrats, gadget freaks, innovators all converge into Las Vegas to make their gracious presence at the biggest electronics show in the world CES. And this January 2024 will be no different for the most influential tech show feels **Chandragupta Amritkar**

CES is growing, expanding and certainly on an upward trend as this was clearly visible when I visited the show in January 2023 (16th year). COVID had its issues (not just CES but literally for every trade shoe) but now CES is back in full flow - flourishing, intensifying, and thriving as the tech fever is seeing no end. It was and today also is seen as the launching pad for innovators. Over the years tech innovators have launched 700,000 + products and 20,000 + product have debuted during CES.



CES is the most powerful tech event in the world — the proving ground for breakthrough technologies and global innovators. This is where brands get business done; meet new partners and where the industry's sharpest minds take the stage to unveil their latest releases and boldest breakthroughs. Owned and produced by the Consumer Technology Association (CTA), CES is the only trade show that showcases the entire tech landscape at one event.

Product Categories

CES showcases companies including manufacturers, developers and suppliers of consumer technology hardware, content, technology delivery systems and more. Exhibitors feature products from all facets of the consumer technology industry, including 5G connectivity, artificial intelligence, augmented and virtual reality, smart cities, sports, robotics and more.

CES 2024 Innovation Awards Honorees

The Consumer Technology Association (CTA) has announced its CES 2024 Innovation Awards honorees – including 36 products recognized as the year's 'Best of Innovation.' The CES Innovation Awards is an annual competition honoring outstanding design and engineering in consumer technology products across 29 product

The first Consumer Electronic Show kicked off in 1967, with 250 exhibitors and 17,500 attendees in New York City. Since then, CES has grown by more than 10-fold and now encompasses both traditional and non-traditional tech industries. The first CES demonstrated products such as transistor radios, stereos and small-screen black-and-white TVs, including the first solid-state TV. Over the years CES has showcased some world-changing innovations such as the VCR (1970), the DVD (1996), digital radio (2000) and Blu-ray recording standards released (2002), as well as more recent technologies - consumer 3D printers, tablets and 4K Ultra HD Television. CES has also driven the market growth in pioneering technologies such as autonomous cars and drones.

"Only a few events and tradeshow have 50 years of success, and we are humbled to be in this elite group," said Gary Shapiro, president and CEO, Consumer Technology Association. "Over the past 50 years CES has evolved as the industry has changed, reflecting and helping drive the ever expanding consumer tech landscape. We have succeeded throughout the years due, in large part, to our loyal customers, partners and the deep relationships we have made along the way. This anniversary is the perfect milestone to thank and celebrate our incredible industry partners and the individuals and companies who have been with us for five decades."

**LATIN
AMERICAN
ELECTRONICS**

eletrolarshow
ALL CONNECTED

**17th EDITION OF THE LARGEST TRADE SHOW
OF CONSUMER ELECTRONICS
IN LATIN AMERICA**



36,000 SQM
EXHIBITION AREA

+700 EXHIBITORS
2024 EDITION

**THE BIGGEST
PLAYERS ARE HERE!**

JULY 15TH TO 18TH, 2024
SÃO PAULO - SP - BRAZIL

As IFA and CES the ELETROLAR SHOW & LATIN AMERICAN ELECTRONICS is the main B2B fair in Brazil and Latin America with the opportunity to gather and meet potential buyers, importers, distributors, large retail chains, e-commerce, corporate market and more.

SOME EXHIBITORS IN 2023

TCL • WHIRLPOOL • KODAK • GUZZINI • RED DRAGON • KONKA • AIWA • MONSTER • XT RACERX-ONE
MAERSK • POSITIVO TECNOLOGIA • RED DRAGON • BLAUPUNKT

ORGANIZERS:

azuloplay
Feiras e Eventos

Contact: +55 11 3197-4949 | comercial@grupoeletrolar.com.br | access our website: latinamericanelectronics.com

categories. The program was ALL ON for CES 2024, receiving more than 3000 submissions, a record high and a 40% increase over CES 2023.

Each year, an independent panel of industry expert judges, including members of the media, designers and engineers, reviews and rates submissions based on innovation, functionality, aesthetic, and design. Those rated the highest across all categories receive the Best of Innovation designation.

For the CES 2024 program, the top two categories by number of submissions were ‘digital health’ and ‘sustainability, eco-design & smart energy.’ This trend underscores the rapid pace of innovation in sectors that promise to solve big global challenges and improve human lives – a major theme at the show as CTA partners with the UN Trust Fund for Human Security and World Academy of Art and Science (WAAS) to advance human security. For the first time, the Best of Innovation list for CES 2024 includes a product from the ‘Human Security’ category, introduced at CES 2023.

The CES 2024 Innovation Awards also features a new category – artificial intelligence (AI). The AI category received 7% of all applications, underscoring that innovators are increasingly recognizing the transformative potential of AI in shaping the future of technology. AI will also be pervasive throughout the CES 2024 show floor and conference programming.



The full Best of Innovation list and all 522 Innovation Award honorees will be announced during CES 2024, where many of the products will appear in the Innovation Awards Showcase at CES, located in the Venetian Expo.

CES 2024 Keynotes

CES 2024 keynote addresses will showcase global industry leaders and offer insider insights into the technologies changing our industry and our lives.

Monday, January 8 | 6:30 PM

Siemens Keynote Dr. Roland Busch, CEO, Siemens Venetian, Level 5, Palazzo Ballroom

Siemens CEO Dr. Roland Busch will showcase technology that is enabling leading brands to improve the way we live, work, move, and make.

Roland Busch will delve into the profound potential that unfolds when we harness the digital world to improve the real one and advocate for a future that's not just innovative but also sustainable. “Our technologies operate behind the scenes enabling everyday

life—in the factories that create the cars we drive, in the buildings where we work, in the grids that feed green energy to our cities and in the trains that connect them,” said Roland Busch, President and Chief Executive Officer of Siemens AG. “I am excited to address



Roland Busch

the global tech community at CES 2024 and highlight how the latest digital technologies are enabling companies to transform our everyday.”

As a company with a 175-year history in innovative technology, Siemens continues to evolve and flourish in today’s changing world. Siemens has recently announced more than \$2 billion in investments in its own operations and R&D as it serves economies

across the globe. As the worldwide leader in industrial software and automation, Siemens’ expertise in technologies such as AI, blockchain, cloud, edge computing, and digital twin software converge to create an innovative portfolio that is being used by businesses of all sizes to revolutionize the industries, infrastructure and mobility that surround us every day. Its vision extends into pioneering the forthcoming industrial metaverse.

Tuesday, January 9 | 8:30 AM

Gary Shapiro, President and CEO, Consumer Technology Association (CTA) and Kinsey Fabrizio, Sr. VP, CES and Membership, Consumer Technology Association (CTA) and L’Oréal CEO Nicolas Hieronimus Keynote Venetian, Level 5, Palazzo Ballroom

CTA’s State of the Industry Address will shine a spotlight on how technology helps people tackle the world’s most pressing problems. L’Oréal CEO Nicolas Hieronimus will share the role that sustainable, accessible and inclusive beauty tech plays in driving positive impact.

Tuesday, January 9 | 2 PM

Walmart CEO Doug McMillon Venetian, Level 5, Palazzo Ballroom

Walmart CEO Doug McMillon will share Walmart’s vision to design and build technology that will usher in the next generation of retail.

Tuesday, January 9 | 5 PM

CES Keynote Conversations Venetian, Level 5, Palazzo Ballroom

Intel CEO Pat Gelsinger will sit down for a keynote conversation, alongside CNBC Nasdaq correspondent Kristina Parsinevelos, discussing the critical roles that silicon and software play in making AI more accessible, providing powerful compute and enabling modern economies. Followed by Elevance Health president and CEO Gail Boudreaux for a keynote conversation discussing the company’s use of technology to make healthcare more proactive, predictive and personalized.



Pat Gelsinger

Gelsinger will discuss the critical roles that silicon and software play in making AI more accessible, providing powerful compute and enabling modern economies. “AI is fueling a fundamental shift, driving interconnectivity between technology and humanity,” Gelsinger said. “At the center of this transition is silicon. Whether it is your PC, the checkout at your local retail store or your personal automobile, semiconductors are essential to maintaining and enabling our modern economies and lifestyles. At CES 2024, we will explore how these chips – amplified by innovative and open software – are enabling AI capabilities for consumers and business alike, creating a better, more sustainable and inclusive future for all.”

Wednesday, January 10 | 9 AM

HD Hyundai CEO Kisun Chung Keynote
Venetian, Level 5, Palazzo Ballroom

HD Hyundai CEO Kisun Chung will showcase how comprehensive innovation in building smart infrastructure will shape a more sustainable future.

Wednesday, January 10 | 2-3 PM

CES Keynote Conversations
Venetian, Level 5, Palazzo Ballroom

Qualcomm CEO Cristiano Amon and FOX Business Network’s Liz Claman sit down for a CES keynote conversation highlighting how we will interact with our devices in the AI age. Followed by Nasdaq Chair Adena Friedman for a CES keynote conversation discussing how the financial industry is leveraging technology to solve major societal issues.



Cristiano Amon

Qualcomm is a leader in on-device generative AI technology delivering solutions with high-performance, low-power accelerated computing,



coupled with unrivaled connectivity to drive new experiences across devices. Snapdragon platforms integrate intelligence on the device, whether a smartphone or next-generation laptop, XR device, or new software-defined vehicle, and will enable generative AI experiences to scale and reach their full potential.

“We’re entering the age of generative AI, and on-device generative AI has the potential to profoundly impact how we interact with our devices,” said Amon. “Running AI pervasively and continually on the device will transform our user experience, making it more natural, intuitive, relevant, and personal, with increased immediacy, privacy, and security. I’m excited to share more about how our devices will be seamlessly integrated into our lives at CES.”

Wednesday, January 10 | 6 PM

Best Buy CEO Corie Barry at LIT Dinner Keynote
Invitation Only

Best Buy CEO Corie Barry will share how Best Buy is meeting the changing consumer demands for technology. Fortune CEO Alan Murray will host this one-on-one discussion.

Partial List of Indian exhibitors

Alignminds Technologies Pvt. Ltd	Venetian Expo, Halls A-D — 55344	Kochi
Brenin Technologies Pvt. Ltd	Venetian Expo, Halls A-D — 55344	Jaipur
ESC	Venetian Expo, Halls A-D — 55344	New Delhi
Kody Technolab Limited	Venetian Expo, Halls A-D — 55344	Ahmedabad
Nichi-In Software Solutions Pvt. Ltd.	Venetian Expo, Halls A-D — 55344	Bengaluru
OEPP Innovations Pvt. Ltd	Venetian Expo, Halls A-D — 55344	Indore
Rajesh Laboratories Pvt. Ltd	Venetian Expo, Halls A-D — 55344	Alwar
Success Ladder Technologies	Venetian Expo, Halls A-D — 55344	Aurangabad
Syscort Global Services Pvt. Ltd	Venetian Expo, Halls A-D — 55344	Ahmedabad
WebMobTech Solutions Pvt. Ltd	Venetian Expo, Halls A-D — 55344	Gurugram
Everywhere As A Service Pvt Ltd	Venetian Expo, Hall G — 61436	Noida
Oakter Venetian Tower	Venetian Tower Suite 29-123	Gurugram
VVDN Technologies Pvt. Ltd	Venetian Tower — Suite 35-305	Pune
Artificial Machines Pvt. Ltd	LVCC, North Hall — 9173	New Delhi
CMAI Association of India	LVCC, North Hall — 8576	Chennai
e-con Systems India Pvt. Ltd	LVCC, North Hall — 9566	Hyderabad
Sai Ganga Panakeia Pvt. Ltd	LVCC, North Hall — 8353	Bengaluru
Ultrahuman Healthcare Pvt. Ltd	LVCC, North Hall — 8937	Hyderabad
Virtual voice technologies pvt ltd	LVCC, North Hall — 9373 — FinTech	

FinBlue offers global opportunities



Software Technology Parks of India (STPI) is a premier S&T organization under Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) engaged in promoting IT/ITES Industry, innovation, R&D, start-ups, product/IP creation in the field of emerging technologies like IoT, Blockchain, Artificial Intelligence (AI), Machine Learning (ML), Computer Vision, Robotics, Robotics Process Automation (RPA), Augmented & Virtual Reality, Animation & Visual effect, Data Science & Analytics for various domains like Gaming, FinTech, Agritech, MedTech, Autonomous Connected Electric & Shared (ACES) Mobility, ESDM, Cyber Security, Industry 4.0, Drone, Efficiency Augmentation, etc. STPI is establishing CoEs/Technology incubators for building India's leadership in the above mentioned technology areas across the country in a collaborative manner. Till date, STPI has launched the following 22 Centres of Entrepreneurship (CoEs): One such is FinBlue -FinTech CoE based in Chennai. Headed by the dynamic Dr. Sanjay Tyagi, Jurisdictional Director STPI, MeitY and CEO FinBlue and N. Gopu, COO, FinBlue.

FinBlue offers an integrated program to start-ups to scale through its incubation facility by providing access to SandBox, an environment that consists of APIs of different participating banks, NPCI products, Core Banking Software and other enabling services through various stakeholders. The FinBlue Incubation program is a premium plug and play co-working space for tech start-up. It offers access to the FinTech startup ecosystem that consists of user bankers, financial institutions, mentors, investors and a platform supporting GoToMarket strategy.

Recently FinBlue had taken 9 companies to exhibit at the 8th edition of Singapore Fintech Festival (SFF). We spoke to some of the exhibitors and their success.

SWOMB Technologies



SWOMB Technologies is a Chennai-based Deep Tech Startup Enabler that distinguishes itself through rapid development, specializing in delivering Minimum Viable Products (MVPs) within 14 days and full-scale enterprise applications in just 45 days. Central to their efficiency is the proprietary Artificial Intelligence (AI) Platform, "TYMEBOT," which seamlessly integrates, AI, Machine Learning, Data Science, and Cloud Computing.

SWOMB excels in Product Technical Modernization, transforming legacy applications into contemporary platforms through comprehensive data and deployment migration. The company addresses business bottlenecks with innovative solutions, swiftly positioning clients in competitive market landscapes. Their clientele spans innovators, startups, and enterprises seeking rapid technical and business turnarounds.

Offerings include expediting time-to-market, facilitating investor connections for startups, and supporting scalable company growth. TYMEBOT, the in-house AI platform, enables rapid development across various sectors, utilizing frameworks like Angular, React, Spring Boot, Express Js, Flutter, Docker, Kubernetes, and cloud services from Azure, AWS, and GCP.

SWOMB stands out by offering flexibility, sharing source code with clients, and accommodating preferences in architectures, languages, frameworks, and deployments, providing a tailored and transparent development experience.

"We have experienced a significant boost in market visibility, which has served as a source of inspiration for our team. This heightened visibility has motivated us to further enhance and innovate in our respective field, driving us to create even more robust and advanced technologies," says Rajanandini Venkataraman, CEO, SWOMB Technologies.

Contact - Rajanandini Venkataraman, Email : nandy@swomb.app • Website : www.swomb.app

PaySmart Payment Technologies

In today's fast-paced world, seamless and efficient payment solutions are no longer a luxury, but a necessity. That's where PaySmart Payment Technologies Private Limited steps in, empowering businesses with innovative payment services that simplify transactions and unlock unparalleled efficiency. They focus on growing clients business while they handle the intricacies of settlements seamlessly.

But PaySmart goes beyond just settlements. They are pioneers in Low Code, No Code platforms, putting the power of app creation in your hands. Whether one is a tech wizard or a complete beginner, their user-friendly interfaces and pre-built components make building customized applications effortless. Reduce development time and costs, accelerate digital transformation, and stay agile in the competitive landscape. Product / Services include Prepaid Cards, QR – Based Cashless Campus, Bulk Settlement, PayIn, Payout, Digital Wallet Solution.

"Our participation in SFF proved invaluable crucial connections with industry leaders, fostering innovation through insightful discussions, and unveiling cutting-edge solutions. The event served as a dynamic platform to showcase our technological prowess, attracting potential collaborators and investors. The exposure gained elevated our brand, positioning us at the forefront of fintech advancements. This immersive experience not only enriched our knowledge base but also opened doors to strategic partnerships, propelling our company towards greater heights in the dynamic landscape of financial technology," said Shiva Ganesh P, CEO, PaySmart Payment Technologies.

Contact - Shiva Ganesh P, CEO and Satheesh Kumar R S T

Email: shiva@paymartpayment.com, satheesh@paymartpayment.com • Website: www.paymartpayment.com



FinanceKaart

FinanceKaart is an AI-driven next generation Credit-led Neo-Bank for small business owners / MSMEs to provide access, choice & control of Financial Services who are under-served / un-served from the formal sector and work as a financial match-making platform with unique algorithm along with psychometric based alternative credit score.

FinanceKaart offers small business owners a digital Khata, customized business loans, Zero Balance digital current a/c, and customized insurance, to make their small business big. The mobile app places the power of managing day-to-day financial transactions in the hands of small business owners, as well as providing them access to a diverse range of financial products on-demand and on-the-go, helping save valuable time, effort, and money as they grow their businesses.

“The festival provided an exceptional networking opportunity. Our team engaged in meaningful conversations with industry leaders, potential partners, and fellow fintech enthusiasts. These connections will undoubtedly contribute to collaborative efforts in the future. We also actively participated in thought leadership sessions, sharing insights on emerging trends, regulatory landscapes, and the role of technology in reshaping financial services. FinanceKaart is committed to leveraging the insights gained to continue driving innovation, fostering collaborations, and contributing to the transformative journey of the financial sector where finance is inclusive, accessible, and technologically advanced” said Ganga Ram Gupta, CEO, FinanceKaart.

Founder & CEO- Mr. Ganga Ram Gupta

Email id- info@financekaart.com / gangagupta@financekaart.com • Website- <https://financekaart.com/>



INOCYX



Based in Chennai, INOCYX is a cutting-edge cryptocurrency exchange platform and has been redefining the landscape of crypto trading since its inception last year. Operating primarily in India, its innovative software is accessible globally through live web portals and mobile apps, providing users with an unparalleled trading experience. Having multiple products in exchange like Trading, P2P, swap and multi chain, INOCYX is more than just a platform; it's a gateway to the future of crypto trading and technology.

With 16 advanced features that surpass the offerings of top crypto exchanges in the country, INOCYX is proud to stand out in the Indian market. INOCYX commitment to innovation and the distinction of being the first company in the world to offer Exchange, NFT, Land NFT, and Metaverse functionalities, all within a single integrated ecosystem.

INOCYX has also launched a dedicated learning website where users like you can expand their understanding of cutting-edge technologies such as Blockchain, AI, and Web3.

“It was indeed a remarkable experience for our team, and I am pleased to share that our participation yielded fruitful contacts and meaningful connections. It was a valuable platform to showcase our efforts in the Fintech industry. The festival also served an excellent forum for establishing and strengthening connections with prominent venture capitalists,” said Mohanbabu Velusamy, CEO, INOCYX.

Contact – Mohanbabu Velusamy, Email : support@inocyx.com • website : <https://inocyx.com/>

OneNDF: Revolutionising MSME Credit Access through Technology

OneNDF is redefining how Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) access credit in today's dynamic financial landscape. The platform, powered by advanced API technology, offers a unique blend of financial insights, tailored recommendations, and a comprehensive loan marketplace. Their vision is to enhance the financial health and empower decision-makers within MSMEs.

Key Offerings include A detailed assessment of a business's financial health, providing actionable insights and strategies for improvement; Focus on financial literacy and enhancing the bottom line for each enterprise; Empowering SMEs to access suitable credit facilities and loans, improving their financial metrics; Caters to both 'Fundable SMEs' (eligible for traditional credit) and 'Unbanked & Underbanked SMEs' (those usually ineligible); Partnerships with Non-Traditional Lenders to expand credit access; Proprietary machine learning-based rule engine for efficient lead filtering; Aims to enhance lender portfolio quality while reducing lead maturation costs and time.

“Our participation at SFF proved to be an invaluable experience providing us with a platform to engage with industry leaders, experts, and fellow participants worldwide. This opportunity allowed us to not only represent OneNDF but also cultivate meaningful connections and discussions that we anticipate will positively contribute to our organization's growth. The event significantly broadened our perspectives and unveiled new avenues for potential partnerships and collaborations,” said Nitin Khandelwal, CEO, OneNDF.

Contact – Nitin Khandelwal, email : nitinkhandelwal@onendf.com • website : <https://onendf.com>





AI Product Range



Laptop



AIO PC



Tablet PC



Mini PC

AIoT Product Range



OPS 1.0 / 2.0

(Options for Intel Core i7 / Core i5 / Core i3)



2-in-1 Tablet PC



Education Laptop



Panel PC

Design Manufacturing



Digital Signage



Solar Solution



Point of Sale



Self Checkout Kiosk

Annual Production Capacity
1 Million Devices and
Adding ...

Selected for :

- The Make in India Scheme, IT Hardware PLI 2.0
- Intel's Make In India Initiative

OEM / ODM for AI & AIoT Design & Manufacturing Services Company

Disclaimer :

© 2024 Panache DigiLife Limited. All Rights Reserved. Panache reserves the right to alter product offerings and specifications at any time, without notice. Panache makes every effort to ensure accuracy of all information and is not liable or responsible for any editorial, photographic or typographic errors. All images are for illustration purposes only. Reproduction in part or in whole, without the written permission from Panache, is strictly prohibited. "Panache" & "Making Human Life Easy" are trademarks licensed to Panache DigiLife.

AN ISO 9001 : 2015 Certified AND ISO 14000 : 2015 Certified Company



Certification Capabilities :



A Public Listed Company

India is one of the largest hubs of VLSI Chip design

With CES, Las Vegas the largest tech show globally around the corner we thought it best to focus on a topic, VLSI, that's making a big difference in numerous tech fields. To enlighten our readers we got **Dr. Satya Gupta, President, VLSI Society of India** who is also Founder of IESA (India Electronics & Semiconductor Association), Member, CII National Committee on Electronics Manufacturing and Board Member, CREST, BITS Pilani to contribute a column on VLSI

VLSI scenario globally and in India

VLSI and Semiconductor are one of the fastest growing industries and are the foundation for every new technology field ranging from AI, EV, Autonomous Vehicles, Space, mobile phones, internet, Telecom, Infrastructure, railways etc. For example, today we are able to train very large AI models with Trillions of parameters primarily because of progress in semiconductor & VLSI design technology which provided processing power and memory storage for these very large applications. India is becoming a very prominent market and technology provider in these areas. Today India consumes \$200 Billions of Electronics and more than \$25 Billions of semiconductors and growing very fast. By 2030, India will be consuming more than \$400 Billion of Electronics and more than \$100 Billion on Semiconductors. On technology side India is one of the largest hubs of VLSI Chip design with almost 20% of engineering workforce in India.

Considering the strategic and economic importance of this field, government of India came out with comprehensive semiconductor policy with \$10 Billion incentives for Semiconductor manufacturing, product design, research and talent creation which are best in the world. To drive these initiatives government of India has setup India Semiconductor Mission.

New trends in VLSI

As demand of processing power and storage is continuously growing and there is a need to come-up with newer technologies to improve density, speed and energy consumption of the semiconductor chips. To continue this unparallel growth and scaling, newer technologies are being developed in different dimensions as such as newer transistors structures, 3D packaging, manufacturing technology and design architectures. Some of the latest technology trends in Semiconductors and VLSI Design are:

- Chiplets and 3D Integration, Glass Substrate, Photonics & Backside power delivery, Through Silicon Vias, etc. These developments are enabling creation of larger chips with better efficiency, by horizontal and vertical integration of chips coming from different technologies.
- The quest to pack more transistors in the given space continues with the technologies like High NA-EUV Equipment which will enable less than 2nm technology and newer transistor structures like Gate All Around (GAA) and vertically stacked transistors (CFET) which will help in increasing transistor density.
- In-Memory computing, Neuromorphic chips and RISC-V based processors are few examples of newer architectures for various applications and creating new avenues for innovative solutions which are more efficient technically and economically.

Major events in VLSI globally and in India

India has more than 300 semiconductor companies and more than 400 Academic institutes which are engaged in VLSI Design and Semiconductor activities. To support this, there are more than 20 conferences that happen every year in the VLSI Design and Semiconductor area. The most prominent ones are SemiconIndia organized by the government of India, VLSI Design Conference organized by VLSI Society of India, Vision Summit Organized by IESA and India Mobile Congress. These are global events with participation from leaders from global semiconductor companies and thousands of participants.



Career opportunities

India is one of the largest hubs for semiconductor design activities. It is typically said that there is not a chip in the world which does not have participation from an Indian chip designer. There are more than 1.25 Lakh engineers currently working in various global and domestic semiconductor companies. Based on the current estimates propelled India Semiconductor Mission, there is going to be a requirement of more than 1.25 Lakh chip design engineers and more than 10,000 semiconductor manufacturing professionals in the next 5 years. These jobs are premier high-end jobs and provide high end career opportunities and compensations.

Future scope for the industry

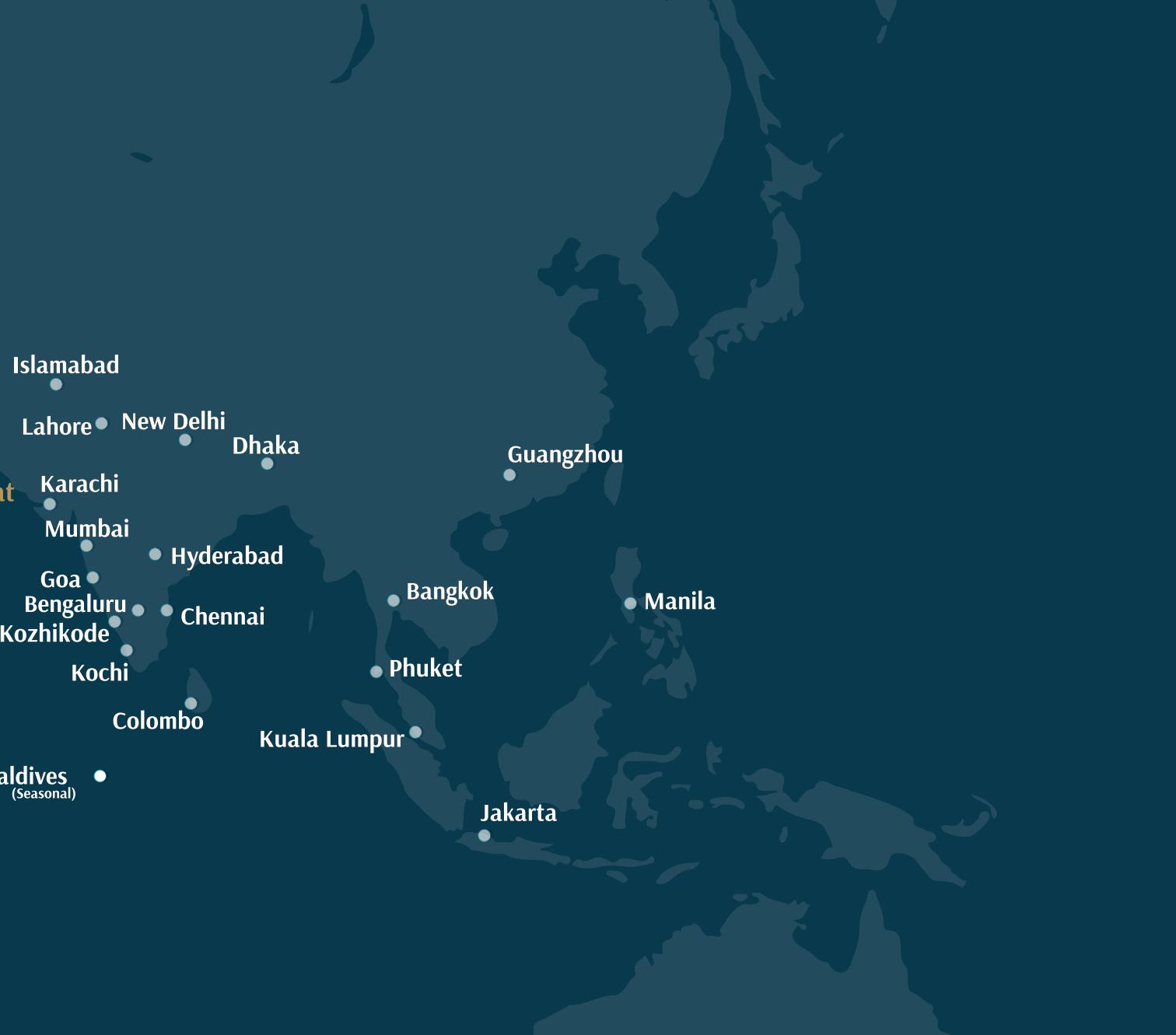
VLSI and Semiconductor industry is the foundation for almost all the technologies which are driving the future development. Currently the semiconductor Industry \$535 Billion, which is going to grow to \$625 Billion in 2024 and expected to grow beyond \$1 Trillion by end of the decade. The involvement of systems and application companies like Microsoft, Google, Amazon, Meta, Apple etc. designing their own custom chips has opened new avenues. The focus on energy efficient computing for AI and other tasks is opening new vistas for innovative technologies and architectures. Electrical and Autonomous vehicles will drive wider adoption of semiconductors including compound semiconductors in passenger and commercial vehicles. Overall, the development and adoption of VLSI Design and Semiconductors will see unprecedented growth in the coming years and will become ubiquitous across all the important engines of economic growth and strategic importance.



CONNECTING YOU TO THE WORLD

Enjoy an elevated travel experience to a growing range of destinations

Oman Air flies to over 40 destinations across Europe, the GCC, Middle East and Africa, Far East and Indian Subcontinent, as well as domestic flights to Salalah and Khasab. With frequent timings and convenient connections, our guests can enjoy award-winning service and signature Omani hospitality throughout every journey.



WORLD

✉ res.del@omanair.com | res.bom@omanair.com | res.hyd@omanair.com
res.maa@omanair.com | res.goi@omanair.com



الطيران العماني
OMAN AIR

“We aim to become an Institution of Eminence”



Headquartered in Chennai SRM Institute of Science and Technology has already created a niche for itself as a premier university in India. With the dynamic **Prof. C. Muthamizhchelvan, Vice Chancellor, SRM Institute of Science and Technology** at the helm of affairs the university is on the path for rapid growth and expansion. He has been associated with SRM Group since its inception and has served in various academic and administrative roles. He has led the institution on international and national accreditation processes like ABET (USA), IET (UK) and NAAC. He has successfully adopted technology and e-governance initiatives in the Academic environment. A professor in Nanoscience and Nanotechnology with over 180 research publications, he has been recognized as an Honourable Guest Professor in the Shizuoka University, Japan since April 2014. In a tête-à-tête with our editor he opened up on various horizons talking passionately about his university, importance of R&D, his future plans and much more. **Excerpts**

SRM University has already created a niche for itself. What are the core strengths of the university?

The core strengths of an institute depends on how we embrace the vision, values, commitment, future oriented & receptive approach, global collaborations and the ability to adapt & innovate with the global trends.

SRM being a multidisciplinary University, we are committed to be a leading player in the academic world through excellence in teaching and research, while placing utmost value on the accountable freedom that subjects to the highest standards of academic integrity.

If you ask me the USPs of SRM, I say

- Diversely Skilled and Highly Engaged Faculty Members and Researcher Scholars
- Strong International and Industrial Alliances
- State of the Art Academic and Research Infrastructure
- Sustained Brand Identity

You offer quite a range of courses. Any unique courses that you would like to highlight?

SRM's commitment to innovation extends beyond individual courses to our Interdisciplinary Experiential Active Learning (IDEAL) program. This unique approach empowers students to design their own degrees, breaking down traditional silos and combining subjects like AI and robotics to create personalized learning pathways.

Imagine a B.Tech student passionate about both AI and robotics. IDEAL allows them to combine these interests, taking courses in computer science, machine learning, and mechatronics. They can then utilize the state-of-the-art Fablab to build their own robots, applying their theoretical knowledge to real-world projects. This hands-on experience, fuelled by IDEAL's flexibility, fosters innovation and prepares students for diverse career paths in fields like intelligent automation, human-robot interaction, and autonomous systems.

Not just the IDEAL program, we have - Design Thinking as a Core course for Engineers to drive innovation, Industry-led Credit Courses, Minor Certificate Program for enabling Cross-disciplinary knowledge and approach, Experiential Learning through Industry supporting labs with a theme “IET; Inspire – Engage – Transform”.

R & D is very important for the success of any university. What is the scene at SRM?

At SRM, research and development aren't just about groundbreaking discoveries; it's about driving real-world change. Take, for instance, our Establishment of Holistic Electric Mobility Infrastructure and Supporting Networks, to Promote Research and Start-ups towards National Electric Mobility. This ambitious project, backed by the prestigious DST PURSE grant, isn't just a state-of-the-art research facility; it's a launchpad for India's transition towards a cleaner and more sustainable future.

Some of our core R&D Strengths include average of 5 Research Publications per faculty, Patents Published - 800+ Granted – 200 as on date, 228+ Crores of External Funded Research Projects undertaken. We have a dedicated infrastructure of over 1Lakh sqft of Dedicated Research Infrastructure and 13 Future Tech Research Centres.

Scholarships are vital, especially for EBC students? What provisions do you have?

We offer an array of scholarships. With reference to economically backward class we instituted the Socio-Economic Scholarship way back in 2012, it aims to encourage academically good and deserving students but who do not have the financial background to pay academic and non-academic fees.

We also have the Unnat Bharat Abhiyan Scholarship which was instituted in 2020, the scholarship aims to provide free education to poor students up to UG level, to improve the quality of education of rural students in the adopted villages and encourage them to pursue higher studies.



We also have the Differently-Abled Scholarship, SRM Arts and Culture Scholarship, Employee ward scholarship (EWS), Defence Scholarship, the Chancellor's Constituency Scholarship, the Founder's Scholarship to name a few.

How do you strategize about the key programs and plans for the marketing and administration of your university?

Our students and alumni are our ambassadors.

Apart from them we do have a few strategies in place that project our unique selling propositions (USPs) thus enabling us to establish a strong brand identity that reflects the institution's values, mission, and commitment to excellence.

Establish more partnerships and collaborations to foster Research. Implement sound financial management practices. Develop a long-term strategic plan that outlines the university's goals, priorities, and initiatives.

Enhance student services, including academic advising, counselling, career services, and extracurricular activities.

Invest in faculty development programs to ensure the continuous improvement of teaching methods, research capabilities, and industry relevance, regularly review and assess academic programs to maintain high standards, implement a culture of continuous improvement through regular assessments, feedback mechanisms, and strategic adjustments.



What type of campus events do you have? Any prominent guest lectures that you would like to highlight?

Our campus is busy throughout the year... some prominent events include -

- Nobel Quest at SRM is a part of our Science Education Initiative, designed to inspire the next generation of young scientists. It is an inspirational forum where our students and researchers get an opportunity to interact with living Nobel Laureates.
- Dr. Paarivendhar Research Colloquium annually, a unique platform to foster interdisciplinary research and encourage research scholars to present their research findings. The objective is to provide an exclusive opportunity for research scholars working in various disciplines.
- Aarush is the student-run, official Annual Techno-Management Fest. It is an ever-expanding family of talented individuals, who are on the path to becoming pioneers in their fields. Aarush comprises 14 domains, which provide a platform to showcase and innovate a multitude of ideas which range from Architecture to Medical Sciences, Entrepreneurship to Robotics, and Game Development to Aeromodelling. Several workshops, expos, conferences,

luminary hours and non-profit initiatives are organized to facilitate the general progress of human society with a footfall of 72,000+ and an online following of 60,000+.

- Milan is the annual national-level cultural festival with a footfall of about 70,000 students, it is one of the most successful cultural fests in the nation today. The four-day cultural extravaganza extensively spans multiple varieties of events, which include music, dance, dramatics, and creative arts, just to name a few. Each year, in addition to these events, it also organizes extravagant pro shows, live concerts, music bands, and international DJ performances. We also have the Paari Vendhar Lecture HYGIEA is an intercollegiate sports competition and PANACEA is an intercollegiate cultural fest for medicos. Students from around the country take part with great enthusiasm every year and this year looks more promising than ever with many enticing prizes.
- One recent event that I would like to highlight is the Special Convocation held on 3rd Oct where we had Dr.P.Veeramuthuvel, Project Director, Chandrayan-3, ISRO, Govt. Of India as a special invitee

Placement office plays a vital role. How does this important office help students to get internships and proper placement?

Our Placement Office is the focal point of career development, interpersonal skills and placement activities. It is a target recruiting ground for all major recruiters, has strong linkages with industry and is highly regarded by employers. The Career Centre besides, placement and training holds workshops, events like Hackathons, quizzes, conferences, talks by experts, internships, industrial visits to enable students to be up-to-date with contemporary trends and be 'Market Ready' by the time of graduation. The holistic development of the students makes SRM graduates stand apart. This office plays the centre for skills development by optimum utilization of the understanding gained from company internships, the hands-on practice, the foreign languages learned and the orientation on entrepreneurship and innovation all combine to give students the experience to succeed in life. Intensive coaching and training are provided in personality development and in shaping their leadership qualities.

How do you plan to build on the success of SRM for a global presence?

Based on our vision, mission and resources we take unique approaches and actively participate in global initiatives, community outreach, sustainable development projects, innovation and entrepreneurship challenges, research pursuits etc. All these demonstrate our commitment to making a positive impact on a global scale. We aim to further enhance our collaborations with industries, engage in international internships, research projects and many more by focussing more on

- International Accreditations
- Joint research and Collaboration
- Semester Abroad Programs (SAP)
- Faculty Abroad Program (FAP)
- Engagement with Global Alumni community

What opportunities do you see for SRM on the national or international stage?

A National

- Addressing societal challenges
- Nurturing innovation and entrepreneurship

- Shaping National Education Policy – With the expertise & experience of our alumni
- Research & Innovation Leadership
- Promoting social mobility and inclusivity: Indian universities can play a crucial role in ensuring equitable access to quality education. Multidisciplinary approaches can be used to design innovative learning methodologies and outreach programs that cater to diverse backgrounds and learning styles, making higher education more accessible for underprivileged communities.

B Global

- Building international partnerships and collaborations
- Joint Research
- Student Exchange Programs
- Dual Degree Programs etc
- International Research Collaborations
- Becoming a destination for international students

With your vast experience how do you see the changes in our Indian education system, especially higher education, over the years?

Current Trends:

- Rise of interdisciplinarity: Highlight the growing demand for graduates with cross-disciplinary skills and knowledge. Showcase how your university is addressing this through innovative curriculum design, collaborative research projects, and interdisciplinary programs.
- Technology-driven learning: Discuss the increasing role of technology in education, from online learning platforms and AI-powered tutors to immersive VR experiences and personalized learning tools. Mention how your university is leveraging technology to enhance and personalize the learning experience.
- Focus on skills and employability: Emphasize the shift towards skill-based education and its relevance to a rapidly changing job market. Outline your university's efforts to equip students with marketable skills, including industry collaborations, career development programs, and internships.
- Lifelong learning and reskilling: Discuss the growing need for continuous learning and upskilling in a dynamic job market. Share your university's initiatives in providing accessible and flexible learning opportunities for professionals seeking to upgrade their skills or transition to new careers.
- Addressing societal challenges: Illustrate how your university is contributing to solving critical societal problems like climate change, healthcare disparities, and social inequality through research, community engagement, and interdisciplinary projects.

Future Forecasts:

- AI and personalization: Predict the increasing integration of AI in personalized learning, curriculum adaptation, and career guidance. Share your university's vision for how AI will shape the future of education.
- Virtual and augmented reality: Discuss the potential of VR and AR in enhancing learning experiences, providing immersive simulations, and creating virtual classrooms.



Share your university's plans for incorporating these technologies into the curriculum.

- Micro-credentials and bite-sized learning: Anticipate the rise of micro-credentials and bite-sized learning modules for upskilling and acquiring specific skills in demand. Outline your university's role in providing these flexible and career-oriented learning opportunities.
- Global collaboration and mobility: Address the increasing importance of international collaboration and student mobility in a globalized world. Share your university's initiatives in forging partnerships with international universities, promoting student exchange programs, and preparing graduates for global careers.
- Education for sustainability: Emphasize the need for education that fosters environmental awareness, social responsibility, and sustainable practices. Highlight your university's commitment to sustainability through its campus operations, curriculum design, and research initiatives.

What do you think should be the university's top priorities over the next 5 years?

- We aim to become an Institution of Eminence (IoE)
- To make SRM a destination for grass-root level to Future Tech Innovators and Start-up Aspirants
- Enable Socially relevant and impactful programs to achieve the UN SDGs
- Expand international collaborations, study abroad programs, and global research initiatives, foster a global perspective among students and faculty members and persistently strive to be top-notch.

Any suggestions, you would like to give to the current youth and the aspiring students?

To the young minds out there, the aspiring students dreaming of shaping their future: I say, embrace the whirlwind of change! The education landscape is evolving at a dizzying pace, and that's not a cause for worry, but a call to adventure.

Don't get caught in the rigid confines of single disciplines. Seek the fusion point, the crossroads where knowledge collides and sparks innovation. Learn languages that whisper of different cultures, weave science with art, and blend technology with compassion. The world needs multi-faceted minds, problem solvers who can bridge the gaps, not build walls.

Technology is your canvas, not your cage. Use it to personalize your learning, explore uncharted territories, and connect with peers across the globe. But remember, the human touch, the spark of a shared classroom, the messy magic of collaboration – these are irreplaceable.

This journey you're on is not a race to a finish line, but a continuous exploration. Embrace lifelong learning, be curious, be restless, and don't be afraid to stumble. Every misstep is a stepping stone, every detour a hidden path.

This, dear students, is not just education, it's an expedition. So gear up, pack your spirit of adventure, and be ready to rewrite the map of your future. The world awaits your unique blend of knowledge, passion, and purpose. Go forth, and make it your own!

Chennai International Book Fair



Frankfurter Buchmesse again proved its unique position in the international publishing industry as 4,000+ exhibitors from 95 countries showcased their products and services to over 215,000 visitors from 130 countries but what caught my attention was the humungous presence of Tamil Nadu at the fair says **Chandragupta Amritkar**

Celebrating its 75th year Frankfurter Buchmesse (Frankfurt Book Fair) attracted the who's who from the publishing industry and India was no exception. Ranking fifth overall in the world, with an estimated value of US\$10–12 billion and growing at a CAGR of 19 per cent, India remains an important growth market for publishing.

Apart from the India National Stand there were several solo Indian exhibitors too. But one of the largest solo stand was from Tamil Nadu (TN). “After the success of our first Chennai International Book Fair (CIBF) we are now in the process of holding the second edition of CIBF. And what better venue to project and brand it than the world's largest book fair- Frankfurter Buchmesse,” said K. Elambahavath, IAS, Director, Public Libraries.

The seriousness of the government was noticeable as it looked like the whole team of CIBF-2024 had descended in Frankfurt from Chennai – Apart from K. Elambahavath, IAS, Director, Public Libraries there was T.S. Saravanan, Joint Director, TN Textbook Corporation, Dr. C. Amuthavalli, Joint Director, Directorate of Public Libraries, S. Senthilnathan, International coordinator, CIBF, Organisation committee member, and Ival Bharathi, CIBF event executive committee member to promote CIBF at the Frankfurt Book Fair.

The event is organized by the Tamil Nadu Textbook Corporation and Educational Services, an enterprise of the Government of Tamil Nadu. The first edition of CIBF was an incredible success,

garnering praise from both Indian and international participants. An impressive 365 Memorandums of Understanding were signed between primarily Tamil publishers and their global peers. The international pavilion created for the fair provided a unique experience to visitors as they experienced a truly international book fair for the very first time.

“We have launched a translation grant program for non-Tamil publishers who wish to translate Tamil works into several International as well as Indian languages,” said T.S. Saravanan. The aim is to promote Tamil literature worldwide and helping it reach a wider audience. Through this grant, non-Tamil publishers in India as well as foreign publishers will be able to translate and publish Tamil titles into their languages, thus making these works accessible to readers everywhere. This includes Tamil fiction, nonfiction and children's literature etc. The grant provides financial assistance to foreign publishers for translation, publishing, and even distribution of copies to public libraries in their countries / regions.

CIBF also offers fellowships to selected publishers/publishing professionals around the world. “As CIBF Fellowship aims to foster professional and cultural exchanges, I would invite and encourage publishing professionals from around the world to apply. The fellowship includes travel and local hospitality during the fair dates,” said K. Elambahavath.

Chennai International Book Fair 2024 is scheduled in Chennai from Jan 16 - 18, 2024

Frankfurter Buchmesse:Tastes Success Again

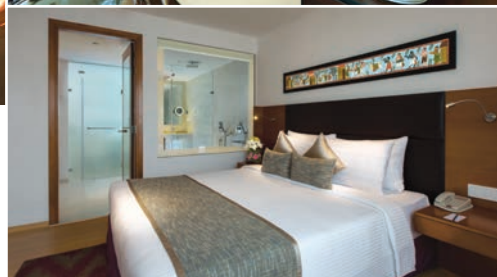
What a show it was as publishers, booksellers, literary fraternity, authors, tech innovators, creative geniuses, digital content creators, leading thinkers, celebrities all converged in Frankfurt for the Frankfurter Buchmesse (Frankfurt Book Fair). It again demonstrated its unique position as the most important meeting place for the international book and media industry. Over 4,000 exhibitors from 95 countries presented their products and services in the exhibition halls. The Literary Agents & Scouts Centre (LitAg) experienced record occupancy. With 548 reserved tables, rights professionals from a total of 324 agencies and over 35,000 entries, the LitAg was busier than ever before.

Indian presence

India also had a great presence. Ranking fifth overall in the world, with an estimated value of US\$10–12 billion and growing at a CAGR of 19 per cent, India remains an important growth market for publishing. With the Government's focus on multilingualism under National Education Policy where in addition to Indian languages and English, foreign languages such as Korean, Japanese, Thai, French, Spanish, Portuguese, German and Russian have been introduced in secondary education, there is a huge opportunity for publishers, authors and illustrators across the globe to work with India.

Frankfurter Buchmesse will take place from 16-20 October 2024.

“We give utmost importance to sustainability in our day-to-day operations”



When in Hyderabad have always been fortunate to stay atleast a night at Mercure Hyderabad KCP – a delightful hospitable property. Over the years the hotel has truly churned out some of the best GMs in the hospitality industry and the present GM, Parag Shah, is no exception as it was quality time spent.

Ranked as one of the best 4 star hotels in Hyderabad, Mercure Hyderabad KCP is centrally located (in the posh locality of Banjara Hills) and is a preferable option for business professionals, with close proximity to corporates and a 30 min drive from HITEC city. On the other hand for tourists both domestic and International plenty of tourist attractions Birla Mandir, Golconda Fort, Hussain Sagar Lake, Salar Jung Museum and Charminar are in the vicinity. For medical tourism the hotel is one of the few located within the radius of 5kms to hospitals, like CARE, Star, Virinchi, Yashodha, Asian Institute of Gastroenterology.

Mercure Hyderabad KCP features 127 spacious rooms including some out of the box room experiences with their uniquely designed eco-friendly rooms. Already renowned for its top-notch service and par excellence F&B due to its popular Cayenne - an all-day dining restaurant and the recently opened roof top restaurant have added feathers to their cap.

To get more insights we spoke with **Parag Shah, GM, Mercure Hyderabad KCP.**
Excerpts



What are the USPs of Mercure Hyderabad?

Mercure Hyderabad KCP is designed keeping in mind global preferences & local flavours. The hotel features 127 spacious rooms, with 4 different room categories (Superior, Lake view, Deluxe and Suite) to meet the traveller's expectations.

Considered as one of the best 4-star hotels in Hyderabad, apart from containing comfortable and spacious rooms it has two F & B outlets - An all-day dining restaurant “Cayenne” and a Rooftop lounge & bar as “Terrace”, multiple banquet menus, SPA etc. Both our restaurants offer unique experience in terms of their ambiance and offerings. We offer centralized AC banquets for hosting corporates and wedding events. We have Somara Wellness SPA which gives the best therapy in the town.

Hotel is in centre of the city with ease of connectivity 45 Min journey from Airport and 15 minutes from Secunderabad Railway Station, Two minute's drive from Metro station and surrounded by Historical and Tourist places Like Hussain Sagar Lake, NTR gardens, Lumbini Park, Secretariat Building, Charminar, Salar Jung Museum, Birla Planetarium, Golkonda Fort Etc.

The current focus for most hotels is MICE. What facilities do you have for the same?

We have 5 different venues in the hotel to host MICE. Our ball room can accommodate 200 pax in theatre style attached with the exclusive pre function area. If guests are opting for breakout halls we can accommodate them in different venues with varied



combinations including common lunch and/or dinner space. If some is looking for theme dinners, we can arrange it in our Terrace Open lounge where we can create unforgettable experiences to our esteemed customers.

How do you and your team cater to expectations of the new gen customers?

Today's market is dynamic. We understand the guest expectations and update ourselves with detailing based on experiences. We ensure to be careful and consider any last-minute guest preferences also to meet their expectations. We collate the customer preferences from the tool called ACDC (Accor Customer Digital Card) and keep updating for future reference. Whenever guest travels to any of the Accor property, hotels will have guest preferences readily available. This helps us to deliver the services as per the guest expectations.

F&B is vital. What type of restaurants do you have?

We have 2 restaurants, "Cayenne" a Multi-Cuisine all day dining restaurant and "Terrace" a premium rooftop open air lounge & bar serves Asian cuisines. We are offering "Thali" in room for In-house guest which is cost effective in comparison to buffet and encourages guest to experience variety of food.

Can you talk about how sustainable is your property?

Accor's one of the core value is sustainability. We give utmost importance to sustainability in our day-to-day operations. To conserve the environment, we have moved to non-usage of single use plastic in guest areas. With great pride I can say we have eliminated single use plastic in the hotel premises by replacing



the plastic water bottles with glass water bottles. Also our bathroom amenities have been replaced with eco-friendly products. We monitor the food wastage on daily basis and work towards minimizing it. We have formed Green Key Committee; the committee works towards the sustainability measures to be taken for overall development of the property.

Tell us a little about your experience in the hospitality sector.

Been in the hospitality sector for almost 2 decades. It has been a journey of growth, adaptability, and a relentless pursuit of excellence. I am eager to leverage this wealth of experience to contribute to the success of the organization and continue to elevate the standards of hospitality.

In the initial phase of my career, I immersed myself in frontline operations, working in roles such as front desk management and guest services. This period equipped me with a solid foundation in understanding customer needs, problem-solving, and honing interpersonal skills.

As I progressed, I transitioned into managerial roles, overseeing the day-to-day operations of hotels and resorts. This involved responsibilities such as staff management, budgeting, and ensuring the seamless functioning of various departments. I developed a knack for optimizing operational efficiency while maintaining a high standard of service.

Now as a General Manager of the hotel I've had the privilege of leading and managing various aspects of hotel operations, contributing to the overall success and reputation of the hotel. My role entails overseeing day-to-day operations to ensure seamless and efficient functioning across all departments, including front office, housekeeping, food and beverage, and maintenance. Implementing best practices and optimizing workflows has been a priority to enhance guest satisfaction and employee productivity.

Accor is a committed, inclusive company that strives to limit its carbon footprint and impact on the planet, and to respond to travellers' concerns about social and environmental responsibility. Accor's sustainability approach includes initiatives at hotels to help them continuously advance. Both guests and employees will welcome commitment to the WATCH (We Act Together for Children) program, which combats the sexual exploitation of minors.

Currently 10% of hotels are with on-site renewable energy, 17% of hotels are collecting and reusing rain water while 99% hotels are participating in WATCH.

Some of the milestones that Accor aims by 2025 includes

- Eliminate remaining guest-facing single-use plastics in Accor hotels
- Reduce carbon emissions - Further reduce carbon emissions by 25,2%, as part of Accor's commitment to achieving net zero emissions by 2050.
- Further increase of women representation in Senior Leadership Positions & Hotel General Managers
- Adherence to the Group's Responsible Procurement Charter

“The recent opening of a mall has helped us increase our occupancy”

Sayaji hotels have been doing extremely well across numerous locations in India and expansion in tier 2 cities is on their agenda. Currently the group has 3 hotel brands – Sayaji, Effotel by Sayaji and Enrise by Sayaji under its umbrella. Its Flagship hotel Sayaji Hotel, Pune is taking the lead. Located bank on the Mumbai-Pune express highway and right adjacent to the IT hub – Hinjewadi, one cannot miss this iconic structure – Sayaji hotel a nine storied hotel. Sayaji Hotel Pune has created a reputation of outstanding service accompanied by delicious food. The excellent ambience and spacious rooms with warm hospitality makes it a desirable property for both leisure and MICE. Taking it a notch up is **Ajay Kanojia, the dynamic and innovative GM at Sayaji Hotel, Pune** who has been a driving force. In a tête-à-tête with our editor he spoke about his hotel with great passion. **Excerpts**



How has the past year been?

It's been good a year for most Pune hotels. Revenge travel is truly taking shape (post covid) as both leisure and business tourism has picked up. Marriages are happening on a grand scale and MICE is generating good business.

For Sayaji it's been a rocking year and in my region we have recently opened Sayaji Sarola, a 50+ room hotel with board rooms, a spacious banquet hall and the Saaj Lawn ideal for hosting lavish weddings and large gatherings. The lawn is spread over 40,000 sq ft and can accommodate 2500 guests.

Apart from this we are in pre-opening stage of three hotels in Lonavala, Khandala and Dahisar. In Pune apart from our flagship hotel Sayaji Pune that has garnered iconic status amongst the 5-star hotels of Pune, we also have Enrise by Sayaji Pune. Total room capacity of all hotels put together will be 400+ rooms.

Many hotels are looking at tier two cities for growth?

True. We also have noticed tremendous growth potential in tier two cities. There is plenty of untapped business opportunities and requirements of hospitality services in these regions. Pune region is no exception. Our aim is to get a foothold in the region.

Since our Pune property is already well known for its par excellence hospitality and magnificent fine-dining experiences I think we are on the right track.

As hotel markets are witnessing traction in Tier – 2, as I mentioned we are also in an expansion spree. We are in the process of coming up with all our three brands (Sayaji, Effotel by Sayaji



and Enrise by Sayaji) in different cities in Maharashtra.

How has the occupancy been?

Occupancy has increased substantially and on many occasions we are literally sold out. The recent opening of a mall has helped us increase our occupancy. The mall with plenty of retail outlets located just behind our hotel has also helped us a lot. I and my team have been regularly interacting with the outlets and most of the senior managers prefer to stay at our hotel. We have also held a lot of get-togethers, functions on our premises.

Which are your popular rooms?

We currently have 5 categories of rooms - Grande Room, Studio Room, Premium Grande Room, Suite Room and Premium



Suite Room. Our studio rooms are quite popular among our long staying guests especially expats and foreigners as we have tried to provide all necessary amenities including a kitchenette. The suites are another popular option for high end MICE and destination weddings.

What keeps Sayaji at the top?

Quite a few plus points. First it's our F&B followed by our superior service. While the ADR has improved in the entire city and two more hotels have opened in close vicinity, I can proudly say that our F&B has not been impacted at all. And this is where I feel quality of food matters a lot.

We have a fabulous and a huge spread for our buffet – and one of the few to have a lunch buffet too. Our prices are also very competitive. As our team serves live snacks on the table it has been much appreciated.

We have also improved our room service controls, so none of our orders are missed or delayed (I experienced this service for not just room service but also housekeeping). We have also renovated all the rooms and the next step is our restaurants.



What about MICE and wedding?

With such a huge inventory we are the best option in PCMC area. But we have become selective so we don't have to compromise on our ADR as well as on maintaining our superior services and F&B. Our halls Pearl and Ruby can cater to 1000+ people and is quite popular for evening events. Parking is not an issue as we have 50,000 sq.ft. area including valet parking.

We are known for our banquets and food, so guests have better options on such locations for comfortable stay. We are also setting our sub brands at industrial hubs and corporate belts where corporates are on the lookout for comfortable accommodation services away from city. We will be having MICE facilities too so corporate can have their meetings and events in our premises.

On the wedding front we did numerous weddings which included a substantial residential wedding. This also shows our popularity in Pune region. Our hotel is conveniently located from Mumbai, right on the highway and can be also a destination wedding. Our Subh Vivah by Sayaji is a one-stop solution for dream destination weddings. Our wedding venues include beautifully decorated Outdoor and Indoor wedding halls, signature Food and memorable services. Also, Pune weather is much pleasant

What about F&B?

As I mentioned it remains a major plus point for us. Our all day dining restaurant is very popular among the locals who come with



their families. Our Sunday brunch (11am – 3 pm) has picked up well. Apart from an elaborate buffet with a huge desert section, we have live music.

Sustainability is the buzz word. Your views?

I have always believed that sustainable practices make hospitality organizations stand out. The goal of sustainability is to minimize your hotel's impact on the region by reducing their environmental impact through green best-practices. Post COVID many travellers don't mind spending more to support an eco-friendly hotel, as long as the hotel also delivers a top-notch guest experience.

We have a strong vision to shift our operations towards sustainability. Many things we have scaled up our operations with decomposition methods of wastage, bottle crushers installed for recycling the plastic waste, and saving on electricity. The EV charging stations for guests has become quite popular.

Any CSR initiatives?

Plenty. During road safety week in co-ordination with the traffic police we created helmet awareness and those who were without helmets we provided them with helmet from our side. When we make new uniforms for our staff, the old ones, without logo, are distributed to poor people. We invited blind school kids over lunch to give them a feel of a hotel. Blood camps are also done regularly.

Staff welfare is a priority and apart from normal care, we have started a monthly cafeteria festival where a set of staff plan, design, decorate and create a themed meal. This brings forward their creativity. Periodically we have day trips with staff and seniors are sent for relaxation and to better connect among themselves to other destinations.

Sustainability initiatives at Sayaji Hotels Pune Ltd –

Waste Management –

- a. OWC for wet garbage
- b. Bottle crusher Machine

Energy Conservation –

- a. Solar & Wind

Water Conservation –

- a. Rain Harvesting

Green Energy –

- a. EV Charge station

Food Practices –

- a. Wet & dry garbage segregation

“We follow our brand culture commonly defined as Ascott CARES”

Having been invited to cover IT&CMA, Bangkok, I decided to extend my stay to experience another property in Bangkok this time the awesome Oakwood Hotel & Residence Bangkok, says **Chandragupta Amritkar**.



Kaustubh Sur

What a lovely property - centrally located with a unique combination of hotel and residence facilities together. The hotel has 142 rooms out of which 12 rooms are designed as residences with furnished kitchenette facilities suited for long stay guests and 130 rooms are suited for leisure / business travelers for short stays. I was provided a nice apartment with a fully equipped kitchen and apart

from a nice king size bed, a large sofa and two bunker beds (ideal for Indian families). The bathrooms are also quite spacious with a nice bath tub. The Treat restaurant provides a mix of International, Thai cuisines including several desi (Indian) dishes and good vegetarian options – I thoroughly enjoyed the idlis. Infact in the menu Indian food is prominently displayed. They have a travel desk and they were kind enough to drop me to the airport. But meeting an interacting with the dynamic **Kaustubh Sur, GM, Oakwood Hotel & Residence Bangkok** was such a delight. A hospitality professional with 15 + years of experience he strongly believes in creating memorable experiences for his esteemed guests, team members and naturally his family. In a tête-à-tête he passionately talked about his hotel. Excerpts

What is so unique about Oakwood Hotel & Residence Bangkok?

The unparalleled combination of hotel services supported with latest technologies, a great location and service minded attitude of our associates is what makes us unique.

How do you and your team cater to expectations of the new gen customers?

Willingness to serve our guests with a touch of hospitality while delivering to their requests promptly is one of the key attributes that our team mates exhibit. Providing information of facilities and services in and around the hotel is a key aspect as mostly

the travelers are visiting Thailand for the first time. We do have a dedicated travel desk team in house to assist our guests curate tour packages which suits best their needs and schedule. Providing a healthy food and a sustainable environment also adds on to the brownie points while catering to the needs of the Gen Z guests.

Any specific plans to attract Indian guests?

We do have partnership with online and offline business partners who actively support us in targeting the travelers from the Indian market. One key aspect that needs to be focused on while catering to Indian guests is food and beverage services. Indians are highly fond of their own cuisine when they travel to other countries. Hence, considering this fact, we have implemented an Indian corner in our daily breakfast buffet which serves many Continental, Oriental, Asian and bakery products as well. In room dining options also offer a wide range of variety and a section for Indian cuisine as well.

How do you compete with other hotels in close vicinity?

Competition is never between two individuals. It is always between the skills of two individuals. Similarly, the competition is never between two hotels. It is always between the skills, services, quality and hospitality delivered by the hotels. We tend to focus on these aspects while ensuring that we take care of our team mates well who in turn ensure that the guests and our business aspects are well taken care too. We follow our brand culture commonly defined as Ascott CARES. Ascott CARES is centered around five pillars representing the acronym CARES – Community, Alliance, Respect, Environment and Supply Chain.

ESG is the buzz word. How is your hotel positioning itself?

ESG (Environmental, social, and corporate governance) – We as an organization deeply believe in contributing towards the wellbeing of the community, people and the environment. In fact, this is an integral part of our sustainability approach of Ascott CARES as explained above. To name a few of the initiatives that we as a team have taken while contributing towards a sustainable environment - Creating our organic garden to grow vegetables and using food waste to create organic manure to nourish these plants and herbs; Using glass water bottles in all guest rooms instead of the regular plastic bottles; Promoting gender equality at work place; Using solar lights in the hotel; Promoting nearby tourist destinations in order to help the community grow; Participating in marathons with team mates as well as participating in regular blood donation camps.

What are your plans in the next 3 years?

In the next few years, we plan to contribute more towards creating a sustainable environment and grow our business simultaneously while focusing on maximizing on guest satisfaction index which will also have a direct positive impact on the profitability of our business.

Sustainability was the buzz word @ IT&CM Asia and CTW Asia Pacific 2023



As always a TTG Event made sure exhibitors, buyers and media benefit from its networking and knowledge sessions feels **Chandragupta Amritkar** after attending IT&CM Asia and CTW Asia Pacific 2023

It was a delight to experience, interact and network during the 31st IT&CM Asia and 26th CTW Asia-Pacific 2023 that brought back the good old memories of an in-person event. Aside from business and knowledge components, this year's programme featured a wide array of activities, in and outside of booths, including targeted networking and knowledge sessions. Sustainability/ Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) was at the forefront – not just in the events agenda but even when I conversed with the exhibitors they felt that ESG was quite critical in today's world.

The Opening Keynote by Mr Bhummikitti Ruktaengam, President of Sustainable Tourism Development Foundation; Adviser of Phuket Tourist Association shared insights on the positive impact of tourism/MICE partnerships help Thai communities. Bringing communities together to support tourism and MICE Partnerships was one of the key focus of the event this year.

During the event Daniel Chua, the Co-Founder, of MICECarbon, spoke on 'How MICE can Decarbonize'. The presentation elaborated the vital role, the MICE industry can play in combatting climate change. At the CTW Conference there was focus on "Accelerate the Decarbonization of Business Travel – Role of ESG, Technology, and The Traveller Experience". The session explored innovative strategies that leverage Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) principles, cutting-edge technologies, and a focus on enhancing the traveller experience to create a sustainable future for business travel. Together, we can accelerate the decarbonization journey and pave the way towards a more environmentally conscious and responsible business travel ecosystem.

This year the show welcomed more than 240 new and returning destinations and brands along with more than 400 MICE, Association and Corporate Buyers from over 50 countries/territories, who took advantage of the bountiful procurement and networking opportunities.

A New Start at IT&CMA and CTW Asia Pacific

Asia Ability brought the delegates together during the "Say Hi to Everyone" ice-breaking which allowed new meetings and deeper connections.

Delegates also had a chance to view Bangkok with a tour around The Chaopraya Charming and Saneh Bangkok. Pre-registered delegates were also treated to a fun time at Topgolf Megacity.

The evening of day one culminated with the Opening Ceremony and Welcome Reception, co-hosted with by destination partner, Thailand Convention and Exhibition Bureau. The extravaganza featured a delectable variety of Thai foods accompanied with performances by the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration (BMA) traditional dance troupe and The SwingKings.



Exhibition and Appointments

"Pattaya City is a world destination that's known for its location and pricing, amazing activities from local to luxury, beautiful beaches, and many more. This clearly means that your MICE trips to Pattaya City would not only be a business trip because visitors can enjoy the city anywhere anytime in their own way." PATTAYA MICE CITY, Thailand.

Destinations and organisations also displayed experiential elements at their booths with activities, giveaways, and entertainment. The highlights included food tasting from MEET TAIWAN; a Lion Dance Performance, destination showcases and lucky draws by Macao Trade And Investment Promotion Institute & The Economic Development Bureau of Hengqin; Augmented Reality by Thailand Convention and Exhibition Bureau (TCEB); and a Lucky draw by The Mulia Hotel & Resort Bali.

Initial delegate feedback indicated that the multiple networking and education opportunities combined with targeted scheduled meets were a key highlighted for many. The expanded appointment sessions allowed delegates greater flexibility and time to visit the different conferences, knowledge sessions, brand engagements, and showcases, as well as the various booths.

Travel and corporate fraternity will look forward to the next event scheduled from 24 – 26 September 2024.

Marvels of Macao with Sands Resorts



My trip to Macao and time spent at Sands Resorts Macao in their luxurious 807 sq. ft Louis Suite was nothing short of a captivating journey, an unparalleled adventure that I wholeheartedly recommend says **Pooja Amritkar** on her first visit to Macao.

Macao is a seamless blend where East meets West in a spectacular fusion of culture and architecture. I had the privilege of exploring the marvels of Macao with Sands Resorts Macao. This five-day Familiarization trip, aptly labelled ‘Rediscover Macao’, was organized for over 200 MICE professionals and media from all over the globe and multiple events were held in the Sands integrated resorts – The Londoner Macao, The Venetian Macao and The Parisian Macao to showcase their exceptional facilities and services.

My journey started with a seamless flight from Mumbai to Hong Kong aboard the Cathay Pacific. Upon touchdown at Hong Kong International Airport, I was guided to board the SkyPier Terminal Transfer Coach and embarked on a delightful one-hour journey that whisked me through the breathtaking 55km stretch of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge (HZMB) - the longest bridge-cum-tunnel sea crossing in the world. Upon arriving at The Londoner Macao, a wave of awe swept over me, and little did I know, the adventure had only just begun.

Birthday Surprise

No one knew it was my birthday, or so I thought, but the Sands team are Christmas elves at work and once I entered the luxurious



807 sq. ft Louis Suite, I was surprised to see a personalized photo frame, a soft toy with a heart balloon, and a delicious cake from their famed restaurant, Churchill’s Table, waiting for me – the unexpected gifts made my stay even more memorable! After settling into the British-designed suite, I indulged in the Victorian-style bathtub, watched a Korean Drama on their 20” Prima Smart TV built inside the bathroom mirror and then got ready for the first of many events – Welcome Cocktail.

Eiffel Tower's Magic in Macao

The Parisian Macao brings the life of Paris to Asia and provides an authentic French experience to all visitors. Its highlight is the 525-ft replica of the Paris Eiffel Tower, which delivers a breathtaking view of the Cotai Strip from its observation deck on level 37. At night, the Eiffel Tower lights up the streets and the grand illumination show dazzles the sky with captivating colours. As we enjoyed exquisite food and a wide array of desserts (macarons won my tastebuds), we interacted with representatives from multiple countries and Helena de Fernandes, Director of the Macao Government Tourism Office shared her views on Macao, “We want to track visitors for tourism plus MICE and we are looking at the possibility of multi-destination offerings combining Macao and Hong Kong as part of the Greater Bay Area.” Macao will be an all-encompassing destination, offering a myriad of experiences for everyone.

MICE: Where Ideas Converge

Kris Kaminsky, Senior VP of Hotel Operations, Sands China Ltd. said, “Sands Lifestyle #ReDiscover Macao 2023 is the

first post-pandemic mega MICE familiarisation trip that Sands Resorts Macao has organised. The carefully curated itinerary gave attendees an immersive experience of all that makes Macao a



world-class MICE destination and showcased our ongoing support of the Macao Government Tourism Office's 'tourism + MICE' initiative. We also showcased our comprehensive MICE capabilities,

which are needed for seamless and successful MICE events, to our business partners from all around the world."

The MICE conference was held at The Londoner Macao, the staggering 150,000 sqm of meeting and exhibition space, proved itself to be the perfect venue for conventions, business seminars, live entertainment, innovative functions and dynamic dining options. It can accommodate up to 15,000 pax in its largest space and has 334 breakout rooms and 12,500 rooms and suites.

The panel discussion occurred at The Londoner Macao's Smart Stage - Macao's first hybrid meetings space. The forum's two panel discussions, 'Innovation & Technology from the Lens of an Event Professional' and 'Talent Retention, Motivation & Optimisation' were moderated by David Blansfield, Executive Vice President, Northstar Travel Group. The Panellists talked about how they navigated through the pandemic to find an alternative but effective solution for business meetings and how AI can benefit the future of the MICE and hospitality industry. David Blansfield said, "AI is revolutionizing the way we refine our strategies, directing our focus towards elevating and enhancing the guest experience." Along with many international guests, this forum was also attended by Students from the Macao Institute for Tourism Studies.



The forum was followed by a teambuilding culinary activity - the Chef's Challenge. This event featured masterclasses led by top-notch chefs from Sands Resorts Macao, and Alex Gaspar, executive director - culinary, took centre stage.

Beyond the Suite Life

With the late afternoon free, I decided to explore the hotel and its many attractions. The vastness of the three hotels is impressive, each connected by picturesque walkways and luxurious shopping avenues. Sands Shoppes is the largest indoor shopping mall in Macao with 850 plus duty-free outlets that boast an impressive



array of international brands. The true to scale Elizabeth Tower, stands outside The Londoner, welcoming all guests and providing an enchanting backdrop for photos. The lobby of the hotel is inspired by the original Crystal Palace built in 1851 and the Victorian designed atrium is a piece of art. Other noteworthy attractions are Changing of the Guard, the original 1966 London Bus, replicas of 10 Downing Street and the Shaftesbury Memorial Fountain.

As I walked further, I could feel the royal ambience of London changing to match the romantic allure of Venice. The music shifts and so does the sky – changing into a masterful tapestry of vibrant blues with fluffy clouds. For a second, I almost thought it was real – it's that impressive. Gondolas gracefully navigate the winding canals within The Venetian Macao, which is also the second largest casino resort in the world.

A Dazzling Venetian Affair

The evening was followed by a Venetian-themed Showcase dinner, held at the hotel's colonnade. The long table, capable of seating around 100 guests was artfully decorated. As we were served delicious food with vegetarian and non-vegetarian options, Nuno Lopes, the first Macao designer to be featured in British



Vogue, unveiled his latest collection. The shimmering gold outfits took away our breath and the extraordinary fashion show with skilled violinists left us reeling for more. It was an exceptional night, no doubt, but it didn't end there – the after-party was held at St. Regis Bar where we enjoyed their signature cocktails and live jazz performance.

Gastronomic Grandeur

International buffet breakfast at The Residence, an exclusive club for The Londoner Hotel guests, includes their signature dim sum, light refreshments, all-day snacks, drinks and evening



cocktails. The Residence is divided into a series of rooms inspired by classic London houses and the homes of British celebrities and famous figures. I found myself utterly captivated by the enticing array of culinary delights and juices capable of satisfying every craving.

Exploring the Heart of Macao

I love exploring new cities and cultures, discovering each place as much as I can – and I must agree, Macao has a lot to offer. Our first local visit was led by our wonderful guide, Sofia, to witness the beauty of Macao. We started by visiting the Guia Fortress, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, Guia Chapel, one of the oldest churches in Macao and Guia Lighthouse, an iconic symbol of Macao's maritime heritage. Our next stop was at the Macao Museum, which showcases the history and multicultural heritage of Macao.

At The Ruins of St. Paul's, Sofia asked us to look closely and observe the Christian religious symbols, such as saints and angels, alongside oriental designs, proving a mix of Western and Chinese culture. We walked down the steps towards the famous Senado Square, where we indulged in a unique Portugal drink, Ginjinha at Ginja do Senado. It's a sweet cherry liquor and it's irresistible flavour tempted many to buy bottles as souvenirs to take back home.

After lunch, we went to the Coloane Village, a laid-back area in Macao where we sought blessings at Tam Kung temple and the



Chapel of St. Francis Xavier. We learned about the shipbuilding industry in Macao at Lai Chi Vun Shipyards and then had the best Egg tarts in all of Macao at Lord Stow's Bakery flagship store. I loved the buttery, crumbly, sweet and slightly caramelized texture. It's no surprise they are so popular.

The following day, I went to A-ma temple, which is not only the oldest temple in Macao but also the oldest building. Kandy, our guide, led us through the pavilions, prayer halls, and two additional temples connected by paths. She also showed us the Chinese tradition of burning paper money and houses so the deceased can have a comfortable afterlife.

Immerse and Inspire

In the afternoon, I went to teamlab SuperNature at The Venetian Macao to explore its variety of digital art installations, light displays, and interactive projections. The Floating Flower Garden, Valley of Flowers and Massless Clouds are among the best immersive exhibits I have ever witnessed. Their artworks urge people to become one with the art and redefine their perception of the world.

A Night to Remember

The final event, London Jubilee - The Gala Celebration, was nothing shy of an extravagant festivity. It demonstrated just how spectacular events at The Londoner Macao can be. Starting with cutting-edge sound and lighting systems for an immersive atmosphere to outstanding dining options prepared by world-class chefs. The arena provides a breathtaking backdrop for all events, incorporating pioneering technology and eco-friendly practices.

Kris Kaminsky assured us that the night would be an unforgettable event filled with thrilling surprises – he was not wrong. The Union Jack inspired evening commenced with musicians and dancers dressed like London guards and the 'Queen' graced the scene, adding royal charm. The London Arena buzzed with the energy of over 200 people, still leaving enough space for more.

The dinner consisted of dishes from the top five restaurants at The Londoner - The Huaiyang Garden, The Mews, Chiado, Gordon Ramsay Pub & Grill, and Churchill's Table, each contributing its distinctive signature dish. But the main surprise was seeing the dynamic sensation and winner of Australian Idol in 2004 – Casey Donovan, capture everyone's heart with her impressive vocals. The night ended with people taking their talents to the dance floor and leaving with a bag full of wonderful memories.



My time at Sands Resorts Macao was nothing short of a captivating journey, an unparalleled adventure that I wholeheartedly recommend. Rediscover the Marvels of Macao for yourself – a destination that promises an experience unlike any other.



EXPERIENCE REJUVENATING STAYS with Hospitality Like Never Before



239 Rooms

05 Banqueting Space

04 Elegant Restaurants

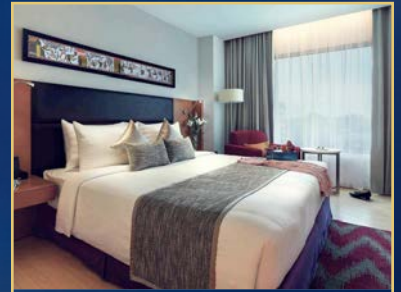


sayajihotels.com

MERCURE
HOTEL
HYDERABAD KCP

Discover a Haven

OF COMFORT AND ELEGANCE



The ultimate experience, ease into a relaxing stay at Mercure! Whether it is a business trip or a pleasant one, Mercure Hyderabad KCP offers an experience that is equal parts luxury and convenience. Comfortable rooms, exceptional service, and an extensive range of amenities.



A Customised Menu Based On Your Needs
Quality Support | Personalised Packages | Superior Care

Mercure Hyderabad KCP, 6-3-551, Banjara Hills Main Road, Somajiguda, Hyderabad - 500082,
Contact : 040 67888888/60