



Skål International Asia Congress 2025 Concludes in Colombo with Resounding Success

Over 200 delegates from across Asia gather to celebrate friendship, business, and leadership transitions

DINUSHKA CHANDRASENA

The 54th Skål International Asia Congress, held in the city of Colombo, concluded with resounding success, bringing together approximately 200 delegates from across the region under the theme of "Doing Business Among Friends." Hosted by Skål International Colombo, the congress served as a dynamic platform for networking, collaboration, and the celebration of shared values among tourism and hospitality leaders from across Asia.



traditional welcome evening, opening ceremony, business and networking sessions, traditional Sri Lankan theme night, Annual General Meeting and Gala dinner followed by the Skål Asia Area awards.

The event was supported by Sri Lanka Tourism Promotion Bureau, Sri Lanka Convention Bureau, SriLankan Airlines (official airline partner), and Aitken-Spence Travels (official ground handling and transportation partner). The Taj Samudra Colombo was as the official congress hotel, with Cinnamon Grand and Ramada Colombo partnering as hospitality partners.

The opening ceremony was graced by the Hon Minister of Tourism Vijitha Herath, Skål International President Denise Crafton, Chairman Sri Lanka Tourism Buddhika Hewawasam, Chairman Sri Lanka Convention Bureau Dheera Hettiarachchi, Skål International board members, officials from Sri Lankan Airlines and Skål International Asia delegates and Skalleagues from Sri Lanka.

The three day congress comprised of the

In a key highlight of the event, Skål Asia President Sk. Keethi Jayaweera formally handed over the presidency to incoming President Sk. Shekhar Divadkar, as the new SIAA board was announced during the Annual General Meeting. The leadership transition marked a new chapter of unity and growth for Skål Asia.

Skål International Colombo President, Ahintha Amarasinghe, expressed pride in hosting the prestigious gathering saying "It was an honour to welcome Skalleagues from across Asia to our beautiful island. The spirit of camaraderie and the professionalism displayed during the congress made it a truly memorable and impactful event. We are proud that Colombo has once again proven to be a world-class destination for global events."

Cont on Pg 2

City of Dreams Sri Lanka to Launch on 2nd August 2025: A Landmark in South Asian Tourism and Luxury

DINUSHKA CHANDRASENA

John Keells Holdings PLC (JKH) and Melco Resorts & Entertainment (MRE) proudly announces the grand opening of City of Dreams Sri Lanka on 2nd August 2025. This launch marks the completion of the final components of the project, including a world-class casino, the luxurious Nüwa hotel and a premium shopping mall.



The milestone partnership, marks the debut of South Asia's first fully-integrated resort and Sri Lanka's largest private sector investment in luxury lifestyle to date – an over USD 1.2 billion development that redefines Colombo's place on the global tourism map.

Strategically located in the heart of Colombo, the integrated resort brings together world-class hospitality, upscale retail, immersive entertainment, and cutting-edge MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Exhibitions) infrastructure in one dynamic destination.

Key highlights:

- 800 rooms and suites, comprising of a 687-room luxury hotel branded "Cinnamon Life" which was launched in October 2024, and a 113-room ultra-luxury hotel under Melco's flagship "Nüwa" brand.
- Expansive MICE facilities designed to host global business events and conventions.
- A state-of-the-art casino and

entertainment zone, operated by Melco, to international luxury gaming standards.

- A curated collection of signature dining experiences involving internationally acclaimed chefs.
- Immersive entertainment spaces for international performances and cultural showcase.

As City of Dreams expands its iconic brand into a vibrant new market, it capitalises on Sri Lanka's strategic location and the region's growing tourism demand. By introducing global expertise in luxury hospitality and gaming, the resort is poised to elevate the standard and appeal of Sri Lanka's tourism offerings. City of Dreams Sri Lanka is more than a resort - it is the epicenter of a new lifestyle movement, where modernity, elegance, and local culture converge. The landmark project sets new benchmarks for luxury, sustainability, and community engagement, redefining the region's tourism narrative.

- Tourism Catalyst: positioned to drive a surge in international arrivals – particularly from South Asia and the region, establishing Colombo as a premier MICE destination

Cont on Pg 2



ASIA PACIFIC PROPERTY AWARDS

in association with



WINNER 2025-2026



BEST HOTEL INTERIOR SRI LANKA

Amari Colombo
by FBEYE International
Pte Ltd

As Sri Lanka’s tourism industry pushes forward in 2025, the sector has recorded steady growth in international arrivals. While this progress is encouraging, numbers remain shy of initial projections set at the start of the year. Industry stakeholders had hoped to surpass the 2018 figures by mid-year, yet the shortfall is a reflection of wider challenges that extend beyond our borders.

The global geopolitical landscape has become increasingly complex, with economic uncertainty in key source markets, ongoing conflicts, and rising operational costs all influencing travel behaviour. Additionally, global tourism has seen shifting dynamics: Europe is grappling with inflationary pressures and airport disruptions, while parts of Asia are still navigating multiple challenges. Nevertheless, intra-Asia travel remains strong, with countries like Thailand, Japan, and Vietnam seeing notable demand spikes, particularly from short-haul and regional travellers.

Against this backdrop, Sri Lanka must continue to refine its offering, balancing affordability with value, and leveraging its unique position as a year-round destination. The island’s resilience lies in its diverse experiences—from heritage and wildlife to wellness and gastronomy—and capitalising on this will be key in converting interest into arrivals.

Meanwhile, major developments on the ground signal renewed confidence in Sri Lanka’s long-term potential. The highly anticipated City of Dreams integrated resort is set to open in Colombo in early August. The grand opening will feature none other than Indian film icon Shah Rukh Khan, expected to draw significant attention from the region and beyond, particularly India—a vital source market for Sri Lanka.

On a regional level, air connectivity continues to improve. India’s largest airline, IndiGo, as part of its rapid international expansion strategy, has commenced flights to the UK, with Manchester as its first point of entry. Routes to the Netherlands are also on the horizon, a move that reflects increasing outbound demand from South Asia and the growing appeal of secondary European cities.

While Sri Lanka’s 2025 tourism numbers may not yet reflect full recovery, the signs are clear: with strategic positioning, regional cooperation, and continued investment, the island is on a path toward long-term and sustainable tourism growth.



Dinushka
Dinushka Chandrasena
Editor

DoubleDee
PUBLICATIONS

Editor / Managing Director
Dinushka Chandrasena

Directors
Firoze Munzeer
Dinesh Chandrasena

Head of Marketing
Anoj Tillekeratne

Digital Marketing & Communication
Lakshini Wanigesinghe

Lead Designer
Eshan Perera

Digital/ Website Associate
Navodh Jayasundara

Website Design
Antyra Hospitality

Printing/ Publishing
Printage (Pvt) Ltd

Traveltalk Asia is a Monthly publication
of Doubledee Publications Private Limited

15A, Swarna Road, Colombo 6, Sri Lanka
Phone / Fax: +94-115345346
Mobile: +94-777756726,
+94-777756762,
E-mail: Dinushka@doubledee.lk
Anoj@doubledee.lk
Web: www.traveltalkasia.com

Travel Talk Asia is a publication of DoubleDee Publications. All information in Travel Talk Asia is derived from sources, which we consider reliable and a sincere effort is made to report accurate information. It is passed on to our readers without any responsibility on our part. Similarly, opinions/views expressed by third parties in abstract and/or in interviews are not necessarily shared by Travel Talk Asia. However, we wish to advise our readers that one or more recognized authorities may hold different views than those reported. Material used in this publication is intended for information purpose only. Content of this publication are protected by copyrights laws. Material appearing in Travel Talk Asia cannot be reproduced whole or in part without prior permission. The same rule applies when there is a copyright or the article is taken from another publication. Publications reproducing material either in part or in whole, without permission could face legal action. The publisher assumes no responsibility for returning unsolicited material nor is she responsible for material lost or damaged in transit. This publication is not meant to be an endorsement of any specific product or service offered. The publisher reserves the right to refuse, withdraw or amend or otherwise deal with all advertisements without explanation. All advertisements must comply with the Sri Lankan and International Advertisement Code. The publisher will not be liable for any damage or loss caused by delayed publication, error or failure of an advertisement to appear.

NEWS / FAMILY ALBUM

Cont on Pg 2

Skål Interntional Asia Congress 2025....

Reflecting on the congress, Skål Asia President Keethi Jayaweera said “Skål is more than an organisation – it is a global family of tourism professionals who believe in friendship, service, and sustainable tourism. This congress in Colombo exemplified the very best of what Skål represents – meaningful connections, progressive dialogue, and unity.”



Incoming President Skål Shekhar Divadkar shared his appreciation for the warm Sri Lankan hospitality saying “It has been a truly enriching experience to be here in Colombo for this congress. I am deeply honoured to take over as President of Skål Asia and look forward to building on the legacy of those before me, while working together with our clubs across the region to foster growth, inclusivity, and impact.”

The successful conclusion of the Skål Internationa Asia Congress 2025 reinforces Sri Lanka’s position as a leading MICE destination in South Asia and highlights the importance of global collaborations in shaping the future of tourism.

Cont on Pg 2

City of Dreams Sri Lanka....

- Sustainable Development: designed with environmentally friendly technologies and a strong commitment to local art, culture, and community initiatives, reflecting responsible tourism

City of Dreams Sri Lanka stands as a bold testament to our confidence in Sri Lanka’s future and our continued commitment to nation-building through transformative investments.”

Krishan Balendra Chairperson of the John Keells Group stated: ““The opening of the casino and Nuwa hotel operated by Melco marks the realisation of a key pillar of City of Dreams Sri Lanka, bringing to fruition the integrated development that was envisioned over a decade ago. This milestone sets a new benchmark in South Asia for world-class lifestyle, entertainment, and retail offerings. With Melco’s globally recognised expertise and exceptional standards, we believe this unique addition will significantly enhance Colombo’s tourism appeal, drive foreign exchange earnings, and create meaningful employment opportunities.

Lawrence Ho, Chairman and CEO of Melco Resorts & Entertainment, commented: “We are thrilled to be part of this landmark development in Sri Lanka and to be in partnership with John Keells. We believe Sri Lanka has immense potential, and this opportunity complements our existing portfolio of properties. City of Dreams Sri Lanka is expected to serve as a catalyst for stimulating tourism demand and promoting economic growth in Sri Lanka, drawing inspiration from the successful examples set by similar integrated resorts in other jurisdictions.”

Sri Lanka Opens the Doors to Tourism Investment with Strategic Land Bank Initiative

TTA BULLETIN

In a bold move to attract targeted tourism investment and transform the island’s tourism landscape, the Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority (SLTDA) together with the Ministry of Tourism has unveiled its dynamic Land Bank for Tourism Developments, a repository of cleared and pre-evaluated land ready for high-potential tourism ventures.



working in close collaboration with key government entities including the Sri Lanka Ports Authority, Urban Development Authority, Sri Lanka Railways, Mahaweli Authority, and several others. These partnerships are essential to sourcing cleared lands across the island, spanning beach fronts, cultural hubs, and eco-tourism zones.

Spearheaded by the Investor Relations Unit (IRU) of the SLTDA, the initiative marks a major step in providing streamlined access to land for both local and international investors. Through the Land Bank Management Information System (LB MIS) — a fully automated digital platform — investors can now explore a wide selection of state-owned and private-sector lands curated specifically for tourism-related projects.

In parallel, SLTDA is inviting private landowners to join the Land Bank and unlock investment opportunities through sales, leases, or joint ventures. With just a minimal payment to cover evaluation logistics, private sector owners can connect directly with interested investors. Once a transaction is initiated, the SLTDA facilitates connectivity and approvals, ensuring smooth negotiations between both parties.

Boosting Investor Confidence

This initiative underscores Sri Lanka’s commitment to building upscale, sustainable tourism infrastructure and attracting high-spending international travelers. With global tourism rebounding, the Land Bank aims to position Sri Lanka as a prime destination for tourism investment, offering both accessibility and investment security.

The Land Bank is being actively promoted by SLTDA across local and global platforms to maximize visibility and investor engagement.

State & Private Sector Collaboration

To ensure a robust supply of viable lands, SLTDA is



Jetwing

Luxury Reserves

SRI LANKA

UNRIVALLED INDULGENCE, REDEFINED.

Jetwing
JUNGLE LODGE
A Luxury Reserve

Jetwing
SAMAN VILLAS
A Luxury Reserve

Jetwing
LAGOON WELLNESS
A Luxury Reserve

Jetwing
WAHAWA WALAUWA
A Luxury Reserve

Jetwing
VIL UYANA
A Luxury Reserve

Jetwing
LIGHTHOUSE
A Luxury Reserve

Jetwing
WARWICK GARDENS
A Luxury Reserve

Jetwing
SURF & SAFARI
A Luxury Reserve

Jetwing
KANDY GALLERY
A Luxury Reserve

China’s Mango TV Brings “Serendipitous Journeys” to Sri Lanka—Major Reality Show to Spotlight the Country to the World

TTA BULLETIN



In a milestone collaboration for Sri Lanka’s tourism industry, the Sri Lanka Tourism Promotion Bureau (SLTPB) proudly announces the successful completion of filming for ‘Serendipitous Journeys’ , a Chinese reality series produced by Mango TV, one of China’s most influential digital platforms. This marks the first time a project of this scale and visibility has been filmed in Sri Lanka for a mainstream Chinese audience.

“Serendipitous Journeys” , a cross-cultural reality series led by acclaimed producer Li Chao, features Chinese celebrity couple Huang Zitao and Xu Yiyang as they immerse themselves in the everyday lives of locals in two countries—Tanzania and Sri Lanka. The Sri Lankan segment will consist of six 90-minute episodes, filmed entirely in and around Trincomalee, and is set to premiere in July 2025.

The series takes a deeply human approach as the celebrity couple "swaps lives" with a local family, running a homestay and adopting their routines and livelihoods. The Eastern coastal town of Trincomalee was chosen for its serene beaches during this season and for its untapped potential in tourism promotion, offering a contrast to the already popular southern belt.

Minister of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Employment and Tourism, Vijitha Herath shared his views on the initiative and stated, "This production is more than a television show. It is becoming a cultural bridge connecting the hearts of Sri Lanka and China. With professionalism and genuine respect, the crew embraced our people and captured the essence of our Nation of Smiles. Through the lens of youth and authentic storytelling, this project fosters deeper mutual understanding

and friendship, inspiring more Chinese travellers to experience the warmth and charm of Sri Lanka first-hand."

With a combined fan base of over 120 million followers, Huang Zitao and Xu Yiyang bring unprecedented exposure for Sri Lanka. Their presence and storytelling through this series create a major opportunity for strengthening tourism ties between Sri Lanka and China, especially as lifestyle and immersive travel gain popularity among Chinese outbound travellers.

As filming in Trincomalee wraps up, additional visual segments from around the country is currently being captured for inclusion in the episodes. This added footage will further enrich the storytelling and showcase the full spectrum of Sri Lanka’s natural beauty and cultural diversity.

SLTPB views this production as a strategic leap in positioning Sri Lanka on the global map through soft power and narrative-based promotion. The bureau also emphasized its intention to pursue more initiatives and partnerships of this kind to elevate Sri Lanka’s global image and attract quality tourism.

Mango TV is part of the state-owned Hunan Broadcasting System and is known for producing high-quality, youth-oriented content that reaches wide audiences across China and beyond. Its international collaborations are carefully selected, adding significant value to the destinations featured. The involvement of a government-affiliated media platform further strengthens bilateral engagement, signalling confidence in Sri Lanka’s safety, hospitality, and production infrastructure.

Sri Lanka Tourism Alliance and Australia’s Market Development Facility collaborates to launch a women in tourism storytelling campaign

TTA BULLETIN

Building on the momentum of a successful launch of findings from the women in tourism study, the Sri Lanka Tourism Alliance (SLTA) and Australia’s Market Development Facility (MDF), are collaborating to share inspiring stories of women as referral tools to attract and retain more women in the tourism industry.



In continuation of the ongoing partnership, this next stage will focus on raising awareness around opportunities for women to pursue careers in tourism, with the aim of challenging perceptions, amplifying personal stories, and inspiring more women across Sri Lanka to join the industry. The digital storytelling campaign will spotlight women from diverse roles in tourism — from hotel operations and female guides to security and tourism technology, to showcase the broad spectrum of opportunities that exist across the sector.

Building on the insights and findings gathered from the previous workforce study conducted jointly by MDF and the Tourism Alliance, which brought together industry leaders to explore strategies for increasing women's participation in the sector, this next stage deepens that momentum and moves towards providing new opportunities for women in the industry. As the study revealed, several barriers are faced by women in entering the tourism workforce — including a lack of awareness about available opportunities, negative societal perceptions, and limited skills and educational qualifica-

tions

Malik J. Fernando, Chair of the Sri Lanka Tourism Alliance, said “There is immense untapped potential for women in the tourism workforce. By spotlighting real stories and individual experiences, we hope to shift the narrative, break barriers and invite more women into the industry — not just as part of the workforce, but as changemakers.”

Maryam Piracha, Country Director of MDF Sri Lanka, mentioned that “Attracting more women into tourism isn’t just the right thing to do—it’s smart business. By spotlighting diverse career paths and real success stories, we’re encouraging the sector to rethink recruitment, invest in women, and unlock new potential for growth”

The next stage of this collaboration will also engage industry stakeholders to advance inclusive recruitment strategies, elevate the visibility of female-led success stories, and drive investment in targeted training and upskilling programs and initiatives for women in the tourism industry.

Classic Travels Clinches Prestigious Country Sales Award at Malaysia Airlines Global Trade Summit 2025

TTA BULLETIN

Classic Travels, one of Sri Lanka’s leading travel service providers, has been honoured with the Country Sales Award at the Malaysia Airlines Trade Elevation Summit 2025, held from 10–12 June in Langkawi, Malaysia. This recognition cements Classic Travels’ position as the top-performing sales partner for Malaysia Airlines in Sri Lanka, and the only Sri Lankan agency to be awarded at this year’s prestigious global gathering.



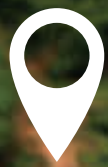
The Malaysia Airlines Trade Elevation Summit 2025 marked the airline’s largest international trade event to date, bringing together over 300 key global trade partners from more than 60 cities across 25 countries. The summit served as a strategic platform to foster global collaboration, align with Malaysia’s tourism goals, and set the tone for Visit Malaysia Year 2026.

“We are truly honoured to receive this award from Malaysia Airlines,” said Sabry, Director of Classic Travels, who was present in Langkawi to accept the accolade. “This recognition is a testament to the dedication of our team, the trust of our customers, and the strength of our long-standing partnership

with Malaysia Airlines. As travel continues to evolve, we remain committed to offering exceptional experiences and expanding opportunities for Sri Lankan travellers to explore Malaysia and beyond.”

The summit focused on future-forward strategies, featuring collaborative sessions with global industry leaders and decision-makers to drive tourism growth through innovation, partnership, and shared vision. The event also reaffirmed Malaysia Airlines’ commitment to supporting the national tourism agenda and strengthening its network of trade partners worldwide.

Classic Travels’ win not only highlights the agency’s exceptional sales performance, but also reflects Sri Lanka’s growing contribution to regional travel and tourism.



PEKOE TRAIL
Stage 21
Kandapola

Step Into a Storybook: The Pekoe Trail's Final Stages Unfold at Heritance Tea Factory

For those seeking to turn their Pekoe Trail journey into a timeless memory,
Heritance Tea Factory stands ready to welcome adventurers, tea lovers, and storytellers alike



Cinnamon Life Partners with John Keells CG Auto to Redefine Sustainable Luxury Travel in Sri Lanka

TTA BULLETIN

Cinnamon Life, South Asia’s first integrated resort, has taken a progressive step towards redefining luxury hospitality by introducing six DENZA D9s, a luxury New Energy Vehicle (NEV), into its



operations. The official handover was held at Cinnamon Life and marked the beginning of a strategic partnership between two forward-thinking brands under the John Keells Group umbrella.

This collaboration reflects a shared vision between Cinnamon Life and John Keells CG Auto, the authorized distributor for Denza D9s in Sri Lanka, and represents a significant milestone in the convergence of sustainable mobility and high-end tourism. As demand for responsible travel grows, Cinnamon Life continues to lead the sector with experiences that combine world-class service and environmental stewardship.

The DENZA D9, BYD Global’s’s flagship luxury NEV, sets a new standard for eco-conscious sophistication. Designed for comfort and performance, the DENZA D9s are tailored for discerning travelers who expect both elegance and environmental accountability.

“This strategic partnership with John Keells CG Auto is a reflection of our commitment to redefine the travel experience in Sri Lanka,” said Sanjiv Hulugalle, CEO & General Manager of Cinnamon Life at City of Dreams. “As Colombo emerges as a global destination for high-end tourism, we are proud to introduce sustainable luxury at scale,

providing our guests with unparalleled service through our new fleet of DENZA D9s.”

With this rollout, John Keells CG Auto has officially introduced the DENZA brand to Sri Lanka’s mobility landscape. This first fleet deployment signals an important step in expanding green mobility into sectors like tourism, where the potential for impact is significant.

“We are proud to bring the DENZA D9 to Sri Lanka as we expand into the luxury travel segment,” said Charith Panditharathne, General Manager of John Keells CG Auto. “This marks a significant step in our mission to drive a green mobility revolution that contributes to a cleaner, more empowered nation. The partnership with Cinnamon Life is a model for how luxury and sustainability can go hand in hand.”

As Cinnamon Life leads the charge in eco-conscious hospitality, the introduction of the DENZA D9 marks the beginning of a new era in sustainable travel. This collaboration demonstrates how the convergence of responsible tourism and cutting-edge green mobility can deliver an elevated guest experience, setting a new benchmark for luxury travel in Sri Lanka.

Sri Lanka successfully concludes Roadshows in Lucknow, Chandigarh and Jaipur

TTA BULLETIN

Sri Lanka Tourism is intensifying its promotional strategies towards Indian travellers by highlighting the country’s diverse tourism offerings to key markets in India by hosting a series of B2B roadshows and networking evenings in Lucknow, Chandigarh & Jaipur on the 23rd, 25th and 27th of June 2025. To attract more tourists from Uttar Pradesh, Punjab and Rajasthan, the Sri Lanka Tourism Promotion Bureau (SLTPB) and Sri Lanka Convention Bureau (SLCB) organised these roadshows (B2B) and Networking Evenings to promote Sri Lanka as a year-round destination for all segments of tourists.

These events will showcase Sri Lanka’s tourism industry, diverse attractions, resilience, and growth, to strengthen ties between Sri Lanka and India.

Under the leadership of Mr. Vijitha Herath, Honourable Minister for Foreign Affairs, Foreign Employment and Tourism and the Prof. Ruwan Ranasinghe, Honourable Deputy Minister of Tourism, the delegation is led by the officials of SLTPB & SLCB along with over 35 stakeholders from the Sri Lanka tourism sector. The delegation comprises Destination Management Companies, (Leisure and MICE) leading hotels & resorts, tour operators and other service providers from Sri Lanka. The industry stakeholders will engage in B2B interactions with their Indian industry peers in each city. The events will bring together over 200 participants in respective cities, comprised of Indian travel agents, key figures in the industry, and media delegates. The aim is to foster stronger ties between Sri Lanka and India, creating opportunities for beneficial collaborations in the tourism industry. This series of events is a vital part of Sri Lanka Tourism ongoing commitment to cultivating its strong ties with the



Indian market.

India has consistently maintained its position as the top source market for Sri Lanka, contributing to 20% of total tourist arrivals. From January to 31st May 2025, Sri Lanka welcomed 1,029,803 tourists, of which 204,060 were from India. This upward trend reflects the growing demand and connectivity between the two countries. Sri Lanka’s tourism earnings have already crossed USD 1.54 billion in the first six months of 2025.

Adding a vibrant touch of glamour and cultural immersion, a Sri Lankan cultural dance troupe performed throughout the events, showcasing the Island’s rich heritage and captivating traditions. This intensive effort emphasises Sri Lanka’s commitment to strengthening its position as a preferred destination for Indian travellers, offering a blend of breath-taking landscapes, vibrant culture, and world-class hospitality.

Through dialogues and presentations, the event will highlight Sri Lanka’s breath-taking landscapes, rich cultural heritage, and warm hospitality, enticing travellers to return again and again as the beautiful island nation is set to capture the hearts, enticing repeat customers with promises of unforgettable experiences. Participants were treated to a showcase of Sri Lanka’s diverse offerings, from pristine beaches to ancient temples, signalling a new era of tourism excellence for the Island Nation.

Stay22 unlocks more Asia stays for partners through its partnership with Agoda via Vio

TTA BULLETIN

As part of its business development strategy, Stay22 is expanding its global reach by including Agoda’s inventory via their new partnership with Vio to its solution. With 4.5 million accommodation options worldwide, Agoda has one of the world’s largest inventories and is particularly strong in Asia. With Agoda now available via Vio, Stay22 partners can earn more from Asia focused travel content with trusted inventory and no extra set up

Through Stay22 software solution publishers and content creators can now track and auto-monetize Agoda links, as the company’s inventory is now live for Stay22 partners through LinkSwap, via the Stay22 script, and the Allez Generator. That allows that existing Agoda links are automatically monetized, with no extra setup required.

"The integration of Agoda’s inventory is great news for our affiliate partners as it

unlocks new revenue opportunities through expanded access to Asia-based accommodations now available in our tools. We also expect this integration to drive deeper collaboration with Asian content creators." – says Misty Brewster, Head of Supply in Stay22.

Stay22 offers affiliate revenue generation opportunities for bloggers and media partners. Through artificial intelligence and machine learning technology, the travel tech company is positioning itself as the layer that connects content to commerce across any medium where travel intent exists, as it aims to be the bridge that turns that intent into revenue for content creators. It all starts with the Stay22 Script, a lightweight, drop-in integration that activates monetization across the partners’



sites in minutes. It powers tools like Nova our AI that spots high-intent readers and delivers the

right offer at the right time which increases bookings by up to 50 %.

Stay22 remains committed to continuous innovation to better serve its partners. In 2025, it launched two new tools: the Stay22 Map Button and the Script Builder — with more tools already in the works to help partners boost revenue and simplify monetization. The Canadian startup is purpose-built to support publishers at scale while ensuring reliable tracking, as well as payouts, and helping brands maintain performance without compromising efficiency.

Stay22 was founded in 2016 and is based in Montreal, Canada. The company uses artificial intelligence and innovative machine learning technology to connect online content creators such as bloggers and media publications seamlessly with the affiliate marketing programs of sellers. These mutually beneficial relations generate hard-to-reach, incremental and high-margin sales whilst also allowing bloggers and media publications providers to monetize their content with minimal effort. In 2024, Stay22 reached a Gross Merchandise Value of \$500 million and revenues of \$25 millions, while it helped monetize 182,000 pages across the web, which got 1.5 billion views. Travellers booked one million trips with Stay22 to 226 countries and regions last year. The Canadian company has currently 3,500 active partners. Further information on <https://www.stay22.com/>

UNVEIL YOUR ULTIMATE SUMMER ESCAPE

Embrace the splendour of Beruwala's sandy shores, where the gentle murmur of waves beckons you to pure relaxation. Escape to Occidental Eden Beruwala and immerse yourself in unparalleled comfort, intertwined with elegant, timeless luxury...where it's always endless summer.

☎ 0344 888 888 ✉ eden@brownshotels.com

Occidental
Eden Beruwala




Browns
HOTELS & RESORTS

MOVEMENTS

Sanjaya Bandara Appointed Director of Sales at Amari Colombo

TTA BULLETIN

Amari Colombo is delighted to announce the appointment of Sanjaya Bandara as Director of Sales, bringing with him over two decades of experience in Sri Lanka’s hospitality landscape and a strong track record in sales leadership across leading hospitality brands.



Sanjaya Bandara

Sanjaya began his career as a travel agent at one of Sri Lanka’s foremost Destination Management Companies (DMCs)—an invaluable foundation that offers him a nuanced understanding of inbound tourism, partner expectations, and the end-to-end travel experience. This perspective resonates strongly with the travel trade, making him a trusted partner who understands the business from both sides of the table.

His journey through the hospitality industry has seen him take on progressive leadership roles, most recently overseeing strategic corporate partnerships and key market development efforts in the luxury hotel sector. His expertise lies in driving revenue, building sustainable client relationships, and integrating digital and brand-forward strategies to optimise sales

performance.

In his new role at Amari Colombo, Sanjaya will spearhead the hotel’s sales division with a future-focused approach—strategically positioning the property as a preferred choice for both business and leisure travellers. He will work closely with the leadership team to amplify the hotel’s presence in the market while building meaningful partnerships locally and internationally.

“We are thrilled to welcome Sanjaya to the Amari family,” said Indika Jayawardena, Hotel Manager of Amari Colombo. “His well-rounded experience and strategic vision align perfectly with our aspirations for Amari Colombo to become a top-of-mind destination in one of the city’s most dynamic and vibrant districts.”

Amari Colombo, part of ONYX Hospitality Group, is poised to redefine upper-upscale hospitality in Sri Lanka—blending modern design, warm service, and an authentic connection to Colombo’s cultural heartbeat.

Resplendent Ceylon Appoints Dilshan Gnanapragasam as Chief Commercial Officer

TTA BULLETIN

Resplendent Ceylon, Sri Lanka’s leading luxury hospitality brand and the leisure arm of Dilmah, is pleased to announce the promotion of Dilshan Gnanapragasam to the position of Chief Commercial Officer (CCO). This well-earned advancement follows over nine years of dedicated service to the company, during which Dilshan most recently held the role of Senior Vice President – Commercial.



Dilshan Gnanapragasam

As Chief Commercial Officer, Dilshan will lead Resplendent Ceylon’s commercial strategy across its portfolio of luxury resorts, which includes the Relais & Chateaux collection of Ceylon Tea Trails, Wild Coast Tented Lodge, and Cape Weligama. The portfolio also includes Kayaam House and Ahu Bay under Reverie, as well as new properties currently under development. His responsibilities span revenue growth and profitability, strategic financial management, pricing, revenue optimisation, business development, market intelligence, and all commercial functions, including sales, marketing, distribution, and digital strategy.

“Dilshan has played a pivotal role in shaping Resplendent Ceylon’s commercial success over the past nine years,” said Malik J. Fernando, Founder and Chair of Resplendent Ceylon. “His leadership, market insight, and ability to connect

strategy with execution make him an invaluable part of our journey as we continue to evolve, expand, and inspire. His appointment heralds our new era of hospitality leadership with a focus on strategic growth, innovation, and guest experience excellence.”

With a career spanning more than 25 years in the travel and tourism industry, Dilshan brings a wealth of expertise and hands-on experience to his new role. Prior to joining Resplendent Ceylon in 2016, he held senior leadership positions at Amaya Resorts and Cinnamon Hotels. He also holds a Master of Business Administration in Finance from the University of Bedfordshire, UK—blending strategic insight with sound financial acumen.

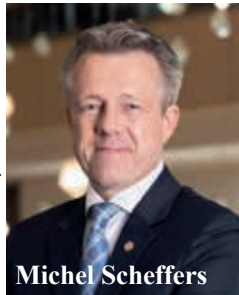
“I’m incredibly proud to lead Resplendent Ceylon through its next phase of growth,” said Dilshan Gnanapragasam. “With new properties on the horizon, a strong focus on innovation, and an unwavering commitment to excellence in guest experiences, I look forward to working alongside our dedicated team to elevate our brand to even greater heights.”

In addition to his corporate role, Dilshan serves as President of the Travel Trade Sports Club (TTSC), where he champions inclusivity and collaboration across the industry.

Amari Bangkok Welcomes Mr. Michel Scheffers as the hotel’s new General Manager

TTA BULLETIN

Amari Bangkok is proud to announce the appointment of Mr. Michel Scheffers as its new General Manager. A flagship of the ONYX Hospitality Group portfolio and one of Bangkok’s most established hotels, Amari Bangkok has long been a favourite among leisure, business, and MICE travellers. In 2024, the hotel proudly celebrates its 30th anniversary, marking three decades of excellence in Thai hospitality.



Michel Scheffers

With an illustrious career spanning over 20 years in the hospitality industry, Michel brings a wealth of experience and an unwavering commitment to excellence to his new role. Michel has been a key leader within ONYX Hospitality Group, a leading name in Southeast Asia’s hospitality scene, known for its portfolio of hotels, resorts, serviced apartments, and residences, for nearly four years, most recently serving as Area General Manager Southern Thailand, overseeing Amari Phuket and Amari Vogue Krabi. Amari Bangkok is confident that under Michel’s leadership, the hotel will continue to uphold the highest standards of service and guest satisfaction.

Blending timeless Thai traditions with contemporary luxury, Amari Bangkok offers an elegant escape in the heart of the

city. Its refined interiors are thoughtfully infused with local charm, creating a warm and welcoming ambiance for guests.

Centrally located in the dynamic Ratchaprasong district, the hotel places guests steps from some of Bangkok’s best shopping, dining, and cultural attractions. From the Platinum Fashion Mall to CentralWorld and Siam Square, world-class retail is just across the street. With the BTS Skytrain within walking distance, guests also enjoy quick access to Sukhumvit, Silom, Thonglor, and both international airports. Local highlights like the Erawan Shrine and Bangkok’s historic Old Town are also easily reached.

With its elevated culinary offering, exceptional location, and a legacy of heartfelt Thai hospitality, Amari Bangkok continues to set the standard as one of the capital’s leading destinations. Under Michel Scheffers’ leadership, the hotel looks ahead to its next chapter, with a continued commitment to the high standards of service, innovation, and guest experience that have long defined Amari Bangkok.

Rayhan Wannappa appointed as Acting Director General of Civil Aviation Authority, Sri Lanka

TTA BULLETIN



Rayhan Wannappa has been appointed as the Acting Director General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) of Sri Lanka with effect from 27th June 2025, following the retirement of the former DGCA.

Prior to this appointment, Wannappa served as the Deputy Director General (Air Transport and Security Regulation) at the Civil Aviation Authority of Sri Lanka (CAASL), while also attending to the duties of Additional Director General of Civil Aviation. Rayhan, an Attorney-at-Law, brings over 20 years of professional experience, encompassing both private legal practice and his service at CAASL.

Wannappa is widely respected for his

expertise in aviation legislation, bilateral air service agreements, air transport policy development and broader industry affairs. He holds an Advanced Master’s in Air Transport Management from the French National School of Civil Aviation (ENAC) and has played a vital role in strengthening regulatory frameworks and aviation security in Sri Lanka in alignment with global standards.

In addition to his regulatory contributions, he also serves as a visiting lecturer at General Sir John Kotelawala Defence University and actively participates in public speaking and leadership development through Toastmasters.

The Fishery
SEAFOOD RESTAURANT & BAR

DISCOVER
*A Sea of
Savory Delights*

Experience Colombo's beachfront dining at its finest. Indulge in fresh seafood and vibrant Sri Lankan spices. Enjoy stunning ocean views and a perfect setting for any occasion. Join us and savor delights that captivate your palate.

Visit: www.pegasusreefhotel.com

www.facebook.com/Pegasusreefwattala www.instagram.com/pegasusreef_wattala

Cinnamon Colombo Hotels Celebrate Food & Beverage Excellence at CAFE 2025

TTA BULLETIN

Cinnamon Lakeside Colombo hosted a press conference to celebrate the remarkable success of Cinnamon Colombo Hotels at the CAFE 2025 Culinary Art Food Expo, organised by the Chef's Guild of Sri Lanka. The event brought together members of the media and the winning teams to recognise Cinnamon's triumph in both culinary artistry and food & beverage service.

Cinnamon Colombo Hotels achieved significant accolades across categories, with Cinnamon Lakeside Colombo securing the prestigious Most Outstanding Overall 2025 Hotel Championship Trophy—the highest honour of the expo. This moment marked a proud milestone, reflecting the excellence, innovation, and dedication of the entire food and beverage division across Cinnamon Grand Colombo, Cinnamon Lakeside Colombo, and Cinnamon Red Colombo.

The press conference featured exciting live showcases, including the assembly of a stunning chocolate showpiece and a dynamic flairing act—demonstrating the skill, style, and creativity of the teams beyond the kitchen.

In attendance were key senior leaders who addressed the media, sharing their reflections on the team's efforts and achievements. Mr. Kamal Munasinghe, Area Vice President – Cinnamon Colombo Hotels and General Manager – Cinnamon Grand Colombo; Mr. Nazoomi Azhar, General Manager – Cinnamon Lakeside Colombo;



and Mr. Terrence Ferando, General Manager – Cinnamon Red Colombo, each commended the cross-functional collaboration that contributed to Cinnamon Colombo Hotel's outstanding performance.

Joining them on stage were members of the culinary and food & beverage leadership teams:

- Kapila Jayasinghe, Cluster Executive Chef – Cinnamon Grand and Cinnamon Lakeside Colombo
- Ashan Liyanage, Executive Chef – Cinnamon Lakeside Colombo
- Asela Nissanka, Executive Chef – Cinnamon Red Colombo
- Mr. Thushara Bandara, Director of Food & Beverage – Cinnamon Lakeside Colombo
- Mr. Namal Jayalath, Assistant Director of Food & Beverage – Cinnamon Grand Colombo
- Mr. Ishan Rodrigo, Operations Manager – Cinnamon Red Colombo

The event concluded with a vibrant media Q&A and a curated spread of food and beverage offerings, celebrating the winning spirit and service excellence that define the Cinnamon experience.

WTM London 2025 is now open for registration

TTA BULLETIN

Returning to London's iconic Excel from 4-6 November 2025, WTM London is now open for registration. Building on last year's hugely successful turnout, which saw an 11% rise in qualified buyers and 34,000+ meeting taking place, the 2025 edition of WTM London is on track to be the largest in its history.

In line with the continued expansion of Excel London, the show is poised to grow by 25,000 m², offering increased space, enhanced content, higher level engagement and the introduction of WTM Trend Fest, a brand-new cultural programme spotlighting immersive global experiences spanning live performances, themed activations and daily presentations.

Early indicators suggest record-breaking growth for exhibitor numbers, with destinations, experiences, transport, accommodation and tech solutions number continuing to rise. To elevate the exhibitor experience even further, WTM London will debut its very own TV channel this year, WTM TV, designed to educate, engage and connect audiences.

Levelling up its already unparalleled conference programme, WTM London



recently revealed a unified theme across all six conference tracks - 'reimagining travel in a changing world' – to maintain focus and clarity throughout the entire event.

With the show's expansion of stage and floor capacity, as well as a continued rise in conference session attendance (up by 29% last year), comes the opportunity to introduce new educational and entertainment experiences, including a series of bookable, fee-based masterclasses hosted by experts and exhibitors which will debut this year.

With the programme already taking shape, renowned sessions such as the Ministers Summit at WTM, Sustainability Summit, Geo-economics Summit, Marketing Summit, WTM Global Travel Report and ITT Future You Forum, have all been confirmed to return to the stages of WTM London this year.

Amaya Hills & Amaya Beach Excel at the 22nd Culinary Art Food Expo (CAFE) 2025

TTA BULLETIN



Amaya Resorts & Spas proudly celebrates the exceptional achievements of its culinary teams from Amaya Hills, Kandy and Amaya Beach, Pasikudah, at the prestigious 22nd Culinary Art Food Expo (CAFE) 2025, held at the BMICH, Colombo.

Organised by the Chefs Guild of Lanka and endorsed by the World Association of Chefs' Societies (WACS), CAFE is South Asia's leading platform for celebrating culinary innovation and excellence. This year's event welcomed over 3,000 chefs from Sri Lanka and abroad to compete across a wide spectrum of culinary disciplines under the theme "From the Point of Preparation to the Table."

Demonstrating remarkable skill and dedication, the teams from Amaya Hills and Amaya Beach secured an impressive 17 medals, including Gold with Excel-

lence, Gold, Silver, and Bronze across a wide range of culinary categories. From intricately plated appetisers and seafood dishes to Sri Lankan fusion cuisine, cocktail creations, fruit and vegetable carving, and artistic showpieces, their accomplishments reflect both breadth and brilliance.

These accolades reflect the dedication, precision and creativity of our chefs, whose pursuit of excellence continues to enhance the dining experiences at our resorts. We commend their hard work and take immense pride in their achievements on such a prestigious national and international platform.

As we celebrate this milestone, Amaya Resorts & Spas reaffirms its commitment to nurturing homegrown talent and advancing the standards of Sri Lankan hospitality and cuisine on the global stage.

Cinnamon Life Shatters Records at Chefs Guild Competition with Historic Culinary Triumph

TTA BULLETIN

Cinnamon Life has officially redefined the culinary landscape of Sri Lanka, clinching an extraordinary 56 medals at the prestigious Chefs Guild of Lanka Culinary Art Competition 2025, the highest medal tally in the country's history.

The resounding win includes a remarkable 23 Gold, 17 Silver, and 16 Bronze medals, firmly establishing Cinnamon Life as the new gold standard in hospitality. In an unprecedented feat, the Cinnamon Life team was also awarded the first-ever "Gold with Excellence" distinction in the Hot Cooking category, a perfect score that has never before been achieved in the competition's history.

Further cementing this landmark moment, Cinnamon Life received four "Top Gold" titles with Most Outstanding awards across several categories, a true testament to the pioneering spirit and relentless innovation that drives the talent within our kitchens.

"This is more than a victory- it's a statement," said Chamila Illukkumbura, Director, Human Resources at Cinnamon Life City of Dreams. "It reflects the bold, disruptive energy of Cinnamon Life, and it reaffirms our belief that Sri Lanka is home to world-class talent ready to take centre stage."

At Cinnamon Life, we don't just serve food, we craft experiences. These accolades are not simply medals; they are milestones on our journey to redefine hospitality, elevate culinary artistry, and ignite a new era of Sri Lankan excellence.

We are incredibly proud of our trailblazing chefs, whose skill, creativity, and commitment to excellence have set new benchmarks not just for Cinnamon Life, but for the entire nation.

This moment is history in the making. And we're just getting started.



Travel Trade Sports Club's 9th Pool Tournament Unites the Tourism Industry in Friendly Rivalry

The Travel Trade Sports Club (TTSC) successfully concluded its 9th Pool Tournament, bringing together professionals from across the travel and tourism industry in a spirit of camaraderie, competition, and community.

The awards were presented by Dilshan Gnanapragasam (President, TTSC), Vivek Kerkoven (Social Secretary, TTSC), Prabath Wickramathilake (Committee Member – Airlines), Amri Noordeem (Committee Member – Travels), and Malith Silva (Director – Operations, Wingway Holidays).



HOTELS

The Giants Return: "The Gathering of Giants" Returns for 2025 at Cinnamon Habarana Complex – A Celebration of Wild Majesty and Conservation

TTA BULLETIN

Cinnamon Hotels & Resorts, in collaboration with Cinnamon Nature Trails and in valued partnership with Seylan Bank, is honoured to announce the return of The Gathering of Giants—a pioneer conservation initiative set to take place from 25 to 27 July 2025 at Cinnamon Habarana Complex.



Rooted in a deep respect for Sri Lanka's natural heritage, this initiative reflects Cinnamon's enduring commitment to safeguarding ecosystems, empowering communities, and inspiring responsible travel. The official announcement of the 2025 edition was made today at the Atrium, Cinnamon Grand Colombo.

Now in its third year, this landmark event brings together conservationists, travellers, nature enthusiasts, and storytellers to celebrate the breathtaking annual migration of hundreds of wild elephants to Minneriya and Kaudulla National Parks—home to Asia's largest gathering of wild elephants and recognised as the 6th greatest wildlife spectacle globally by Lonely Planet.

"Bringing The Gathering of Giants to life for the third consecutive year reaffirms our deep and enduring commitment to safeguarding the country's unique wildlife and habitats," said Hishan Singhawansa, Chief Executive Officer Designate, Cinnamon Hotels & Resorts "This event goes beyond observation—it's about creating awareness, nurturing responsible tourism, and uniting communities and experts to drive a lasting impact. It's one of over 35 ongoing community empowerment and conservation initiatives that shape who we are and what we stand for."

This immersive three-day experience blends expert-led wildlife talks, hands-on workshops, and guided ethical excursions into Sri Lanka's iconic wilderness. While the elephants remain the heart of the event, this year's edition also embraces the broader diversity of Sri Lanka's wildlife, featuring dedicated workshops on leopards and migratory birds alongside our core mission of creating awareness and conserving the largest Asian elephant gathering—Asia's premier wildlife spectacle.

Commenting on the partnership with Cinnamon Hotels & Resorts for The Gathering of Giants 2025, Asiri Abhayaratne, Assistant General Manager – Marketing & Sales at Seylan Bank,

stated, "Our ongoing partnership with Cinnamon Hotels & Resorts and Cinnamon Nature Trails is rooted in a shared purpose—to champion Sri Lanka's natural heritage through immersive, conservation-focused experiences. The success of the 2025 Gathering of Giants highlights the power of this

collaboration, offering our cardholders privileged access to one of the world's greatest wildlife spectacles – The great elephant gathering of Asia. We are proud to build on this momentum with new initiatives and curated journeys in the months ahead with Cinnamon Hotels & Resorts and Cinnamon Nature Trails." Taking place in the heart of Sri Lanka's Cultural Triangle, the Cinnamon Habarana Complex—comprising Cinnamon Lodge Habarana and Habarana Village by Cinnamon, offers guests front-row access to nature's theatre, all supported by Cinnamon's signature brand of conservation-conscious hospitality.

This year's programme will be elevated by a powerful speaker lineup, carefully curated to ignite curiosity and spark conversation:

- Noah Falklind, award-winning BBC wildlife cameraman, will present Living with Leopards, a gripping exploration into the lives of Sri Lanka's most elusive predators, supported by exclusive behind-the-scenes footage and rare insights from the field.
- Dr. Prithiviraj Fernando, Sri Lanka's leading elephant expert and Chair of the Centre for Conservation and Research, brings over two decades of field experience to his talk, Elephants & Coexistence, which unpacks the complex relationship between humans and elephants, and the strategies for sharing space.
- Professor Sampath Seneviratne, renowned ornithologist from the University of Colombo, will lead The Avian Migration to Sri Lanka, a session delving into the mysterious journeys of migratory birds and the ecological importance of the island as a global avian corridor.

"The Cinnamon Habarana Complex—comprising Cinnamon Lodge Habarana and Habarana Village by Cinnamon, is more than a location; it's a gateway to one of Sri Lanka's richest ecological landscapes," said Johan Aschan, Area Vice President – Sri Lanka Resorts, Cinnamon Hotels & Resorts.



Dusit brings vibrant energy to the Maldives with a new all-inclusive resort near Malé designed for the young and the young at heart

TTA BULLETIN

Dusit Hotels and Resorts, the hotel arm of Dusit International, one of Thailand's leading hotel and property development companies, is set to mark a major milestone with the opening of dusitD2 Feydhoo Maldives — the group's first all-inclusive lifestyle resort and its second Dusit-branded property in the country, complementing the luxury Dusit Thani Maldives.



access to vibrant marine life and stunning dive sites — making it an ideal base for underwater exploration and ocean-inspired adventure.

Blending beachfront charm with overwater serenity, the upscale resort features 127 spacious villas across seven distinct categories, ranging

from 77 to 306 sq m. From tranquil beachfront retreats to expansive overwater sanctuaries, each villa is thoughtfully designed for modern comfort and style, with indoor-outdoor living spaces, private decks, and plunge pools in most categories.

dusitD2 Feydhoo Maldives also introduces a fresh and modern take on the all-inclusive concept, with à la carte dining across five distinctive venues, unlimited premium beverages, daily entertainment, and generous resort credits for personalised indulgence.

Fringed by a spacious lagoon and thriving coral reefs, the resort offers exceptional

Minor Hotels Shines at T+L Luxury Awards Asia Pacific with 26 Accolades

TTA BULLETIN

Minor Hotels has affirmed its leadership in luxury hospitality, earning 26 accolades, including three top honours, across its brands and managed properties at the Travel + Leisure Luxury Awards Asia Pacific 2025. Voted by discerning global readers, the annual awards recognise the best hotels, resorts, experiences, and hospitality leaders shaping luxury travel across Asia Pacific.



were also recognised, including for leadership, spa excellence, and iconic overwater villa design.

This year's results reflect Minor's exceptional breadth across the region, from heritage city retreats and beachfront escapes to jungle camps and wellness sanctuaries.

In Laos, Avani+ Luang Prabang emerged as a regional standout, claiming the title for Best Hotel Pool, recognised as one of the country's Best Hotels, and Best Hotel Spas. General Manager Max Chin was named the Best GM in Laos, highlighting the hotel's exceptional leadership.

In Vietnam, Anantara Hoi An Resort claimed the top spot for Best Upcountry Hotel, while Anantara Quy Nhon Villas earned recognition for both its beachfront appeal and top-tier spa offering.

Thailand saw four Minor Hotels properties featured across spa, city, and upcountry categories. Anantara Chiang Mai Resort and Anantara Golden Triangle Elephant Camp & Resort both ranked among the Top 10 Upcountry Hotels, with the latter also securing a place for Best Hotel Pools. Anantara Layan Phuket Resort placed among the Beach & Island Resorts, while Anantara Siam Bangkok Hotel was recognised among the Best City Hotels. Loy Pela Voyages, a luxury river cruise offering voyages along Thailand's majestic Chao Phraya River, placed among the Best River Cruise Lines.

In Cambodia, Anantara Angkor Resort and FCC Angkor by Avani, both in Siem Reap, ranked in the Top 10 for Best City Hotels.

In the Maldives, Anantara Kihavah Maldives Villas ranked across five categories, including Best Resort, Best House Reef, and Best Resort Pool and Spa. The resort also secured a spot among the Top 10 Most Outrageous Villas. Sister properties Anantara Dhigu Maldives Resort, Anantara Veli Maldives Resort, and Niyama Private Islands Maldives

Spa and wellness was a standout category for Minor Hotels, with four accolades across Laos, Thailand, Vietnam, and the Maldives. Highlights include the Anantara Spas at Anantara Quy Nhon Villas, Avani+ Luang Prabang, Anantara Kihavah Maldives Villas and Anantara Veli Maldives Resort.

A PRISTINE RETREAT AMIDST NATURE'S SPLENDOUR

Nestled within the enchanting jungles of Dambulla, Occidental Paradise awaits discerning travelers seeking a serene and captivating escape. With 67 meticulously designed rooms, guests are immersed in an ambiance of natural beauty, remarkable biodiversity and the tranquility that sets the stage for an enchanting sojourn. Embark on a remarkable journey at Occidental Paradise Dambulla, where every moment is infused with tranquility and serenity.

☎ 0662 286 300 ✉ fom.paradise@brownshotels.com

Occidental
Paradise Dambulla

[f](#) [@](#) [X](#) [d](#) [in](#) [v](#)
🌐 brownshotels.com


Brown's
HOTELS & RESORTS

HOTELS

Shangri-La Colombo Presents a Sensory Symphony: An Immersive “Rooted in Nature” Dining Experience in Collaboration with Spa Ceylon and Mastercard

TTA BULLETIN

Shangri-La Colombo, in collaboration with Spa Ceylon and Mastercard, unveiled an exclusive multi-sensory dining experience in celebration of Wellness Month. Designed as an intimate, invitation-only affair, the evening redefined fine dining by weaving together sight, scent, sound, and flavour in a seamless narrative. At its core was Shangri-La’s globally recognised ‘Rooted in Nature’ culinary philosophy: an ethos that honours sustainability, locality, and a deep connection to the natural world.

At the heart of this extraordinary event was a luminous LED dining table—its surface a living canvas of ocean tides and forest glades, synchronised with the newly launched Spa Ceylon SeaVeda and ForestVeda ranges. As the visual landscapes unfolded, diners were gently guided through complementary aromatic rituals by Spa Ceylon Co-Founder and Group Director, Shalin Balasuriya, who invited them to inhale the calming scent profiles of each range. The immersive interplay of smell and sight transported guests into the serenity of untouched nature, before a single bite was taken.

Each course of the menu was thoughtfully designed to echo these themes. Under the stewardship of Shangri-La Colombo Executive Chef Patrick Buttgerreit, the menu celebrated ethical sourcing, seasonal ingredients, and Sri Lankan provenance. From Indian Ocean Yellow Fin Tuna with hazelnut mousseline and scallion salad, to the exquisitely balanced Ceylon Crab Velouté featuring Indian Ocean smoked seer, every dish honoured the local land and sea.



The interlude—a strikingly plated Organic Pineapple Sorbet infused with native black pepper—served as a visual and flavourful transition between sea and forest. Presented in a blue cup with a white crumble reminiscent of sand, and topped with fresh pineapple to signify the land, the sorbet symbolised the journey inland from ocean to earth.

Main courses offered a choice between Roasted Chicken Breast and Braised Beef Ribs, each artfully composed to reflect the ForestVeda theme. Both were served with Granny Smith apple salad, truffle polenta, and an organic vegetable garden—visually echoing the forest terrain projected onto the table and continuing the narrative through texture and tone.

A thoughtfully crafted vegetarian menu ensured that plant-forward diners were equally celebrated, with dishes such as Mushroom and Organic Spinach Vol-au-Vent paired with Truffle Polenta and a verdant Organic Vegetable Garden—showcasing the bounty of Sri Lanka’s highlands.

The final course—The Rock—was presented under the immersive glow of the ForestVeda-inspired visuals. A delicate dessert rendition of Shangri-La Colombo’s signature cake, it was infused with Sri Lankan spices and Pettah Tea Mousse,

Step Into the Real Jurassic World with Avani: Krabi’s Starring Role in "Jurassic World: Rebirth"

TTA BULLETIN

Krabi has long captivated travellers with its natural beauty, towering limestone cliffs, emerald waters and ancient rainforests. Now, with the highly anticipated release of Jurassic World: Rebirth on 2nd July 2025, this breathtaking destination takes centre stage as a primary filming location for the latest instalment in the legendary franchise. To celebrate the release of the film, Avani invites families to make their own movie moments with the four-night Stay in Jurassic Paradise package at Avani Ao Nang Cliff Krabi Resort and Avani+ Koh Lanta Krabi Resort. With Jurassic World: Rebirth bringing prehistoric wonders to the big screen, Krabi is ready to welcome travellers eager to experience the thrill for themselves, offering the perfect balance of action, nature and relaxation.

For fans of the film series, Krabi offers more than just a tropical escape, it’s a real-life Jurassic world. The region’s diverse landscapes provide the perfect backdrop for adventure, allowing movie lovers to walk in the footsteps of their favourite characters and explore the cinematic scenery firsthand. Guests are invited to visit top filming locations, including Railay Beach and Phra Nang Cave, where limestone cliffs meet emerald waters. Families can take a boat trip to Hong Island with its towering limestone cliffs shaped over millennia, or hike through Than Bok Khorani National Park where jungle trails, waterfalls and ancient caves set the stage for epic adventure.

The Stay in Jurassic Paradise package brings Jurassic wonders to life for all ages. Families can indulge in a movie-inspired dining experience at Avani Ao Nang, kayak through lush mangroves to secret



natural pools and hike scenic trails together. Little ones will enjoy dinosaur-themed welcome treats and playful surprises, while parents unwind with rejuvenating spa rituals like the Lava Stone Renewal or Age of Rebirth treatments at AvaniSpa before toasting to adventure with themed cocktails and mocktails as the sun sets. With daily breakfast included, inter-resort transfers, a complimentary room upgrade and relaxed late checkout, the package promises an unforgettable journey through time, nature and pure cinematic escapism.

The Stay in Jurassic Paradise package starts from THB 38,000 (approx. USD 1,160) for a family of four sharing a Family Room on a bed and breakfast basis. The package includes:

- Two-nights at Avani Ao Nang and two-nights at Avani+ Koh Lanta
- Themed Jurassic-era dining at Avani Ao Nang
 - Adventure excursions: kayaking through mangroves and hiking
 - Choice of Lava Stone Renewal or Age of Rebirth spa treatment for two guests
 - Jurassic-inspired cocktails & mocktails at both resorts
 - Complimentary transfers between resorts and late check-out
 - Upgrade to next room category (subject to availability)

Browns Hotels & Resorts Launches Sea Turtle Conservation Hub at Dickwella Resort & Spa on World Turtle Day

TTA BULLETIN

On 23rd May, to celebrate World Turtle Day, Browns Hotels & Resorts (BHR) began a new chapter in marine conservation with the launch of a Sea Turtle Conservation Hub at Dickwella Resort & Spa—its scenic beachfront escape in southern Sri Lanka. Dickwella is a well-known habitat for sea turtles and a hotspot for diving and snorkelling, where visitors can observe marine life in its natural splendour. The establishment of the Conservation Hub in this ecologically significant location marks a key milestone in BHR’s broader sustainability mission to raise awareness on the importance of protecting marine ecosystems and promoting responsible tourism across the island.

The newly unveiled Sea Turtle Conservation Hub has been thoughtfully created to serve as a long-term educational and awareness platform. It features a beautifully designed space with informative and visually engaging signage that details the five sea turtle species found in Sri Lanka—namely the Green Turtle, Loggerhead Turtle, Hawksbill Turtle, Olive

Ridley Turtle, and the Leatherback Turtle. The panels share fascinating facts about each species, including their identifying features, nesting behaviours, migratory patterns, regional nesting locations across the country, and seasonal life cycles.

“At Browns Hotels & Resorts, sustainability is at the heart of what we do. The Sea Turtle Conservation Hub at Dickwella Resort is more than just an educational space; it’s a hands-on opportunity for tourists, schoolchildren, and local communities to get involved and truly understand the importance of protecting these remarkable creatures.” said Eksath Wijeratne, CEO, Browns Hotels & Resorts.

Dickwella Resort has also introduced community-based initiatives such as plastic and polythene collection points around the area, helping to address pollution—a major threat to turtles and marine biodiversity.

The launch event was a memorable and joyful occasion, hosted by the property’s

General Manager, Sisira Senaratne. Among the attendees were officials from the Department of Wildlife Conservation, students from Batheegama Maha Vidyalaya and the National Vocational Training Institute Thalalla, both foreign and local guests, and special invitees including former Sri Lankan cricketer Romesh Rathnayake.

One of the highlights of the day was an insightful awareness session conducted by D.C. Mahanama, Wildlife Ranger from the Department of Wildlife Conservation, who passionately spoke about the significance of turtle conservation in Sri Lanka. His address was followed by remarks from A.T.R. Ravindra, Officer-in-Charge of the Department’s Matara Division, whose expertise added further depth to the discussion. A creative touch was added with an art competition open to students and guests, where participants were encour-



aged to express their connection to sea turtles through art.

The day drew to a heartfelt close with the symbolic and moving release of around 100 baby turtles into the ocean under the careful guidance of officers from the Department of Wildlife Conservation. As the hatchlings made their way across the sand and into the waves, it served as a powerful reminder of the role we all play in ensuring the continuity of life beneath the surface. Through this initiative, Browns Hotels & Resorts continues to lead with purpose—blending hospitality with sustainability and inspiring meaningful action for generations to come.

Shah Rukh Khan to Grace the Grand Opening of City of Dreams Sri Lanka

TTA BULLETIN

Get ready, South Asia! The undisputed King of Bollywood, Shah Rukh Khan, is set to make a spectacular visit to Sri Lanka, gracing the highly anticipated grand opening of City of Dreams Sri Lanka on August 2, 2025, as special guest.



modern indulgence to offer an unmatched hospitality and entertainment experience.

Popularly regarded as “King Khan”, the presence of the multi-award-winning superstar at the by-invitation grand opening party underscores the establishment of the first luxury integrated resort in South Asia, developed through the notable partnership of John Keells Holdings and Melco Resorts & Entertainment.

The grand opening of City of Dreams Sri Lanka, touted to be the region’s most glamorous event of 2025, also marks the official launch of the resort’s “Let’s Go, Let Go” campaign, signaling a new era of luxury and entertainment, with an array of non-stop excitement in diverse culinary journeys, elegant hotel rooms, rejuvenating wellness retreats, luxury retail experiences, and the largest and most sophisticated meeting and event spaces in the country.

The integrated resort will also house a world-class casino, which will be operated by Melco Resorts & Entertainment. It also marks the entry of Nuwa, Melco’s luxury hotel brand, adding to Colombo’s dynamic hospitality landscape.

A premier destination in the heart of Colombo, perfectly positioned at No.01 Justice Akbar Mawatha, City of Dreams Sri Lanka is a 4.5-million-square-foot architectural marvel, designed by internationally acclaimed architect Cecil Balmond. The resort brings together timeless design, world-class service, and

Guests can immerse themselves in over 800 luxury hotel rooms, rejuvenating wellness retreats, premium retail experiences, and globally inspired culinary offerings — all with breathtaking views of the Indian Ocean and the vibrant city skyline.

Beyond leisure, City of Dreams Sri Lanka is set to transform Colombo’s standing as a business hub. It features the region’s largest and most sophisticated meeting and event spaces, including cantilevered ballrooms enhanced with curated Sri Lankan art and state-of-the-art amenities.

The opening will also unveil the resort’s signature campaign — “Let’s Go, Let Go” — an invitation to escape the ordinary and embrace the extraordinary. From luxury to leisure, and from relaxation to revelry, this spirit will be embodied throughout the event, made all the more memorable with Shah Rukh Khan’s attendance as special guest.

Now just a few weeks until the grand reveal, anticipation is skyrocketing across South Asia with the allure of unparalleled luxury, the thrill of entertainment, and the chance to witness history in the making. The grand opening of City of Dreams Sri Lanka with Shah Rukh Khan promises an unforgettable experience designed for discerning guests.

Stay tuned for exclusive updates and VIP opportunities as we count down to South Asia’s most glamorous event of 2025.

Mark your calendars: August 2, 2025 — Colombo will be transformed forever.

A League of Extraordinary Dads Celebrated at Pegasus Reef Hotel

TTA BULLETIN

Wattala, Sri Lanka — Pegasus Reef Hotel brought families together in grand style this Father's Day with a heartwarming celebration dedicated to all-star dads.

Themed “Father’s League”, the event turned into a day of laughter, bonding, and unforgettable memories by the beachside haven of Pegasus Reef.

Families gathered to honour the superheroes in their lives, enjoying a vibrant day packed with activities, delicious cuisine, and quality time.

At just Rs. 6,350 per person, guests were treated to a value-filled experience, showcasing why Pegasus Reef continues to be the go-to destination for family celebrations.

From games that brought out the competitive spirit in dads to relaxing moments

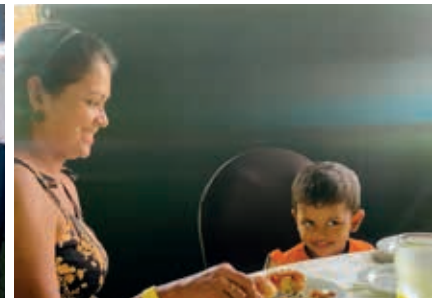
shared over a luxurious meal, the day was a perfect blend of fun, comfort, and connection.

The highlight of the event was a special segment recognizing “All-Star Dads” — those who go above and beyond for their families every day.

“Seeing dads laughing with their children, participating in games, and enjoying the simple joy of being together was truly heartwarming.”

With thoughtful service, scenic surroundings, and a festive spirit, Pegasus Reef once again proved itself as the perfect host for family-focused events.

Stay tuned for more themed experiences and signature celebrations coming soon from Pegasus Reef Hotel — where every special day becomes a lasting memory.



Sri Lanka’s Most Acclaimed Japanese Restaurant, Nihonbashi, Celebrates 30 Years

TTA BULLETIN

Marking three decades of popularizing “Washoku” in Sri Lanka, Chef Dharshan Munidasa’s flagship restaurant celebrates its 30th anniversary on the 28th of June 2025, a restaurant that began with a vision to bridge Japan and Sri Lanka through food and earned global recognition including being the first Sri Lankan restaurant on Asia’s 50 Best Restaurants list, ranking consecutively from 2013 – 2018.

Chef Dharshan’s journey was born from personal passion, an uncompromising commitment to authenticity, and a deep respect for ingredients. Since its inception in 1995 at Galle Face Terrace, “Nihonbashi”, literally meaning Japan-Bridge, represented a culinary promise; to serve real Japanese food, unapologetically pure and true to the traditions of Washoku. In his relentless pursuit of promotion and dissemination of Japanese cuisine and the principles of Washoku Dharshan was conferred “The Order of the Rising Sun, Gold and Silver Rays”, one of the highest honours granted by the Japanese Government.

From the very beginning, Chef Dharshan resisted trends, choosing not to serve “California Rolls” or fusion adaptations. Instead, Nihonbashi became a pioneer, introducing Sri Lankan diners to the nuanced flavours, textures, and philosophies of pure and unadulterated Japanese cuisine, from procuring Tsukiji-bound tuna

to championing the purity of seasonal ingredients. The restaurant takes great pride in sourcing most of its ingredients locally, given the access to the best fish markets, reserving imports for those exceptional ingredients not found in Sri Lanka.

Over the years, Nihonbashi has evolved into a culinary incubator, giving rise to



Chef Dharshan

renowned restaurants like Ministry of Crab, The Tuna & The Crab, Kaema Sutra and Carne Diem Grill, which all have strong influences of Japanese culinary philosophies. Nihonbashi also has branches in Kandy and the Maldives, extending its philosophy and experience beyond Colombo.

Nihonbashi’s new home at Port City features 8 private dining rooms with a mix of Japanese tatami style seating and western style seating: Chikurin (Bamboo Forest), Akamatsu (Red Pine), Bonsai, Ikebana, Samurai, Whiskey, Wine and Sake room, drawing inspiration from Dharshan’s Japanese heritage. The location exhibits an outdoor bar ‘Lost In Translation’, along with what is possibly the largest Yakitori Grill in the world.

The menu features a combination of traditional Japanese cuisine and modern Japanese cuisine, ranging from A5 Japanese Wagyu, Sushi, Sashimi, Tempura, Teriyaki and Nabe, to a wide selection of yakitori, as well as Dharshan’s original dishes such as Olive Oil Kake Tai Cha, Shirunashi Ramen, Karapinchu Tempura and Ten Sabi Temaki.

To mark this special occasion Nihonbashi introduces Sushi Sen, an existing new menu concept that reimagines the traditional hand roll experience. Guests become the architects of their own sushi roll, choosing from a selection of 10 mains, 10 vegetables, and 10 amazing sauces, creating a possible combination of 1,000 handrolls. Sushi Sen oers a fun, interactive, and flavour-packed experience that brings something truly original to Colombo’s dining scene.

Nihonbashi at 30 is more than a milestone — it is a legacy built on one guest, one dish, and one story at a time.

Emirates forges interline partnership with Bahamasair to facilitate connectivity to The Bahamas

TTA BULLETIN

Emirates and Bahamasair have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to establish an interline partnership benefitting customers travelling to The Bahamas.

The partnership enables Emirates to expand its reach in the Caribbean, allowing customers to utilise the services of The Bahamas’ national flag carrier from Florida to one of three destinations on the island country.

Under the unilateral agreement, customers traveling on Emirates to Miami or Orlando will be able to connect to Bahamasair flights to Nassau, Freeport or San Salvador, with the added convenience of booking itineraries with both airlines on a single ticket. Additionally, Emirates’ customers will enjoy generous baggage allowance when flying on Bahamasair to the three destinations.

Commenting on the new interline partnership, Adnan Kazim, Deputy President and Chief Commercial Officer said: “We are pleased to establish an interline partnership with Bahamasair to expand our reach to new and exciting destinations and offer travel options for our customers planning journeys to the Caribbean nation. The interline partnership offers customers the convenience of connecting in Florida for travel onwards to points across the islands of The Bahamas, while enjoying competitive fare pricing, the convenience of booking the entire journey on a single ticket and a generous baggage policy.”

“This partnership also supports our



agreement with The Bahamas’ Ministry of Foreign Affairs to promote the Caribbean destination across our network.”

As part of the MoU, both carriers will also explore opportunities to enhance their cargo interline cooperation and potential partnerships under their frequent flyer programmes. Bahamasair Managing Director, Tracy Cooper said: “This partnership significantly elevates Bahamasair’s global profile and opens access to invaluable expertise and new markets. By aligning with one of the world’s most respected airlines, we strengthen our capabilities and lay the groundwork for sustained international growth.”

Florida gateways, Miami and Orlando, are amongst the 12 U.S. destinations that the world’s largest international airline currently flies. Emirates serves Miami with daily flights with its Boeing 777, along with five-weekly services to Orlando, connecting travellers across its expansive network of over 140 destinations.

On the sidelines of Arabian Travel Market, Emirates and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of The Bahamas signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to jointly promote tourism to the Caribbean nation in a partnership aimed at further developing the country’s tourism and trade industries.

Flavours of Victory: Taj Bentota’s Culinary Maestros Shine with 14 Medals at Sri Lanka’s Premier Food Expo

TTA BULLETIN

Taj Bentota Resort & Spa is proud to announce a resounding success at the prestigious Culinary Art Food Expo 2025, with 11 chefs from the resort’s culinary brigade bringing home a remarkable 14 medals across diverse categories.



Organised by the Chefs Guild of Lanka, the Culinary Art Food Expo is Sri Lanka’s most revered gastronomic competition, judged by global culinary experts and showcasing the finest culinary artistry in the region.

From gold-medal-winning hot kitchen creations by Chef Parmesh Gowda, to exquisite chocolate artistry, patisserie finesse, and cold food presentation, the chefs of Taj Bentota stood out with their bold flavours, precision techniques, and refined creativity.

“This victory isn’t just about medals – it’s about our chefs’ dedication to reinventing tradition while pushing the boundaries of taste and presentation,” said the General

Manager of Taj Bentota. “Each plate they served was a canvas of art, passion, and purpose.”

Medal Highlights:
Chef Parmesh Gowda – Gold
Chef Ishila Bhanuka – Silver
Chef Vipula De Silva, Lakshita Ranaweera, Rashmi Erandika – Two Bronze Medals Each
Shamika Ekanayake, Kumudu Lakhman, Selvaraja Mohanthan, Buddhika Isuru, Thishal Abhisheka, Vihanga Gumhan – Bronze Medals

As one of Sri Lanka’s most iconic coastal resorts, Taj Bentota continues to set the benchmark for hospitality and gastronomy, led by a team that blends local inspiration with world-class execution.

IndiGo announces its long-haul debut with non-stop flights connecting Mumbai and Manchester starting 01 July 2025

TTA BULLETIN



IndiGo, India’s preferred airline, today, announced its first-ever long-haul route connecting Mumbai (India) with Manchester (United Kingdom), becoming the only airline to offer nonstop service between these two cities, starting 01 July 2025. Upgrading its in-flight dining experience, IndiGo also announced that complimentary hot meals and beverages will be served to all customers on this route. The airline will use its Boeing 787-9 Dreamliner aircraft to operate thrice weekly flights on the route. This will make IndiGo the only airline offering direct connectivity between India and the Northern UK. The flights are open for bookings across channels, including IndiGo’s official website www.goIndiGo.in, mobile app, and authorized travel partners.

Pieter Elbers, Chief Executive Officer, IndiGo, said, “IndiGo’s long-haul foray marks a pivotal moment in our global expansion journey. We are very proud as well as excited to open the sale of our first long-haul service connecting Mumbai with Manchester, a very special route in many ways. Celebrating India and its unique cuisine, we’re thrilled to announce that specially crafted complimentary hot meals and beverages, by iconic home-grown Indian brands, will be served to all our customers on this route. The new route will provide seamless connection to a vast majority of 90+ Indian destinations on IndiGo’s domestic network benefitting customers travelling from Manchester to Mumbai. This service by IndiGo will thereby further enhance connectivity between India and the UK, fostering stronger economic, educational, and cultural ties. Beyond supporting the growing Indian diaspora in the region, these direct flights are expected to boost two-way tourism, ease travel for students, professionals and leisure travellers, and unlock new avenues for bilateral trade and collaboration between the two countries. We look forward to a strong and synergistic partnership with Manchester airport, to be able to serve our customers well. This significant step underscores our commitment to becoming an airline of truly global scale and stature and contributing towards transforming India into a global aviation hub.”

Manchester Airport Managing Director Chris Woodroffe said, “Here at Manchester Airport we are proud to connect the North to the world – that is why we are delighted to be announcing this new direct service to Mumbai, and to welcome IndiGo to the UK. This route makes us the only Northern airport with a direct connection to India and cements our position as one of Europe’s best-connected airports. It will link the region to the world’s fastest growing economy, opening up even stronger trade and investment opportunities. It will connect half a million people with Indian heritage who live in Manchester Airport’s

catchment area to family and friends, and it will capitalise on the wide-ranging cultural and economic ties that exist. It also comes at a really exciting time for relations between India and the North of England – with a new consulate having opened in Manchester this year and a number of key cultural, sporting, social and economic partnerships being agreed in recent months. And on top of that we have this summer’s England

vs India Test series to look forward to. It’s great to see tickets for this exciting route going on sale and I’m really looking forward to welcoming the first passengers in the summer.”

The airline has made consecutive announcements of its debut long-haul routes from Mumbai, with Manchester and Amsterdam being added to its growing international network.

This is the start of a truly exciting new chapter in IndiGo’s growth journey with Amsterdam and Manchester being the initial long-haul destinations. With the introduction of more 787-9 from Norse, and the arrival of IndiGo’s A321XLRs starting this year and A350 from 2027 will usher a new era enabling the airline to offer long-haul flights with IndiGo’s unique value proposition.

Recently, IndiGo signed agreements with Norse Atlantic Airways to damp lease six Boeing 787-9 Dreamliner, one of which is already operating on its Delhi-Bangkok route. These aircraft will support IndiGo’s debut into the European market, starting with Manchester and Amsterdam, while the airline awaits the delivery of its A321XLR from this year and A350-900 aircraft from 2027 onwards.

The wide-body aircraft boasts a spacious double-aisle design, featuring 56 IndiGoStretch seats in a comfortable 2x3x2 configuration, with an impressive 43-inch seat pitch. The economy class offers 282 seats in a 3x3x3 configuration, offering a generous 31-inch seat pitch for a comfortable travel experience.

IndiGoStretch customers on this new route will enjoy an elevated in-flight dining experience with specially curated complimentary hot meals served with finest alcohol catered by award-winning iconic Indian brands, promising a journey that’s as enjoyable as the destination. IndiGoStretch’s customers will also enjoy extra legroom, comfortable seating, and increased recline, designed to elevate comfort during long-haul journeys. The premium experience includes more complimentary benefits like priority check-in, anytime boarding, advance seat selection, and zero convenience fee.

A Signature Experience by Browns Hotels & Resorts

Saakya - a coastal escape like no other



Step aboard Saakya, the newest addition to the Browns Hotels & Resorts portfolio and a remarkable introduction to luxury yachting in Sri Lanka. Departing from Port City Colombo, this private vessel offers an elegant and intimate retreat for up to 15 guests.

Saakya invites you to explore Sri Lanka's coastline in refined comfort. Expect stylish design, sweeping sea views and personalised service tailored for relaxation or celebration. Whether marking a special occasion or simply craving an indulgent escape, every journey with Saakya is crafted to be unforgettable.

☎ +94 77 4725 984 ✉ saakya@brownshotels.com 🌐 brownshotels.com



Occidental
Eden Beruwala



The Cathay Group celebrates the milestone of reaching 100 global destinations in June

TTA BULLETIN



The Cathay Group was delighted to mark a meaningful milestone on 12 June with a celebratory cocktail reception held at Island Shangri-La, Hong Kong. This month, Cathay Pacific and HK Express will reach 100 passenger destinations across the globe.

The event was hosted by Cathay Group Chair Patrick Healy and Chief Executive Officer Ronald Lam, and attended by guest of honour Secretary for Transport and Logistics of the Hong Kong SAR Government Mable Chan, JP together with other distinguished guests.

Speaking at the event, Secretary for Transport and Logistics Mable Chan said: “Today, we celebrate a very important milestone in Cathay’s long journey over the past years – 100 destinations, 100 routes covering the four corners of the world. This is no small accomplishment, and I would like to thank the collective efforts of the people in the Cathay Group as well as the people of Hong Kong, including in particular many of our colleagues in the Airport Authority Hong Kong and the government departments who have been actively and steadfastly helping and supporting the Cathay Group in growing its global network. I hope that our efforts will continue and we will work in continued partnership.

“As Cathay hits the magic 100, so too does Hong Kong International Airport and Hong Kong as an international aviation hub reach unprecedented heights. With the Three-Runway System already commissioned late last year, we have the enormous capacity to grow ourselves. This system has propelled the robust growth of Hong Kong International Airport in the areas of passenger traffic, cargo volume and flight movements.

“We have three players, three runways and one Hong Kong. So the path of Cathay, Hong Kong International Airport and Hong Kong are intertwined. I am very confident that we will be scaling new heights for Hong Kong and for the Cathay Group as well.”

Cathay’s Patrick Healy said: “I couldn’t be more excited to welcome you all to this celebration of the Cathay Group’s 100 passenger destinations across our two airlines, Cathay Pacific and HK Express. For almost 80 years, Cathay has been proudly connecting Hong Kong to the world by continuously expanding our global footprint. In the past two years alone, we have added 30 new passenger destinations, including 18 new destina-

tions this year alone and still counting. That rate of network expansion is at an unprecedented level for Cathay, and that has allowed us to reach this milestone of 100 destinations ahead of schedule.

“And that’s not the only record we are breaking. Our current investment programme of over HK\$100 billion across our entire offering of fleet, cabin products, lounges and digital services is also the most ambitious and largest in the company’s history. We have to continue to invest and it’s important that we take full advantage of the amazing new Three-Runway System we now have available to us at Hong Kong International Airport.

“All this reaffirms our determination to become one of the world’s greatest service brands, and demonstrate our wholehearted commitment to the Hong Kong international aviation hub, because that is what enables all of Hong Kong’s ‘eight centres’ to thrive.

“None of this would be possible without the outstanding support that we always receive from the Hong Kong SAR Government, and I’d like to take this opportunity to express our sincere appreciation to the Transport and Logistics Bureau, the Civil Aviation Department, and the Airport Authority Hong Kong.”

Cathay’s Ronald Lam said: “My team and I have been looking forward to this very important milestone. We have been working really hard to rebuild the Cathay Group over the past few years. I still remember our lowest point in our history was one day in March 2022. On that day, as a Group, we carried 58 passengers in total; nowadays, we are carrying consistently more than 100,000 passengers on a daily basis. On that same day, we only served three destinations in the whole world, and today we are standing here celebrating that we will be serving 100 global destinations within this month. What a fantastic achievement by our team, our partners, as well as Hong Kong.”

During the summer peak, Cathay Pacific and HK Express will operate passenger services to a total of 23 destinations in the Chinese Mainland, providing more than 300 return flights per week. Meanwhile, Cathay Pacific will operate more than 110 return flights per week to eight destinations in North America and close to 100 return flights per week to 12 European destinations during the peak period this summer.

Emirates layers on retrofitted aircraft with latest product, including Premium Economy to more cities

TTA BULLETIN



Get ready, South Asia! The undisputed King of Bollywood, Shah Rukh Khan, is set to make a spectacular visit to Sri Lanka, gracing the highly anticipated grand opening of City of Dreams Sri Lanka on August 2, 2025, as special guest.

Popularly regarded as “King Khan”, the presence of the multi-award-winning superstar at the by-invitation grand opening party underscores the establishment of the first luxury integrated resort in South Asia, developed through the notable partnership of John Keells Holdings and Melco Resorts & Entertainment.

The grand opening of City of Dreams Sri Lanka, touted to be the region’s most glamorous event of 2025, also marks the official launch of the resort’s "Let's Go, Let Go" campaign, signaling a new era of luxury and entertainment, with an array of non-stop excitement in diverse culinary journeys, elegant hotel rooms, rejuvenating wellness retreats, luxury retail experiences, and the largest and most sophisticated meeting and event spaces in the country.

The integrated resort will also house a world-class casino, which will be operated by Melco Resorts & Entertainment. It also marks the entry of Nuwa, Melco’s luxury hotel brand, adding to Colombo’s dynamic hospitality landscape.

A premier destination in the heart of Colombo, perfectly positioned at No.01 Justice Akbar Mawatha, City of Dreams Sri Lanka is a 4.5-million-square-foot architectural marvel, designed by internationally acclaimed architect Cecil Balmond. The resort brings together timeless design, world-class service, and modern indulgence to offer an unmatched hospitality and entertainment experience.

Guests can immerse themselves in over 800 luxury hotel rooms, rejuvenating wellness retreats, premium retail experiences, and globally inspired culinary offerings — all with breathtaking views of the Indian Ocean and the vibrant city skyline.

Beyond leisure, City of Dreams Sri Lanka is set to transform Colombo’s standing as a business hub. It features the region’s largest and most sophisticated meeting and event spaces, including cantilevered ballrooms enhanced with curated Sri Lankan art and state-of-the-art amenities.

The opening will also unveil the resort’s signature campaign — “Let’s Go, Let Go” — an invitation to escape the ordinary and embrace the extraordinary. From luxury to leisure, and from relaxation to revelry, this spirit will be embodied throughout the event, made all the more memorable with Shah Rukh Khan’s attendance as special guest.

Now just a few weeks until the grand reveal, anticipation is skyrocketing across South Asia with the allure of unparalleled luxury, the thrill of entertainment, and the chance to witness history in the making.

The grand opening of City of Dreams Sri Lanka with Shah Rukh Khan promises an unforgettable experience designed for discerning guests.

Stay tuned for exclusive updates and VIP opportunities as we count down to South Asia’s most glamorous event of 2025.

Qatar Airways Retains Skytrax 'Airline of the Year' Title for a Record Ninth Time

TTA BULLETIN

Qatar Airways has once again been named the 'World's Best Airline' by the prestigious international air transport rating organisation, Skytrax, retaining the top position for a record-breaking ninth time. This achievement reaffirms the airline’s steadfast commitment to delivering excellence across every touchpoint of the travel experience.

Qatar Airways Group Chief Executive Officer, Engr. Badr Mohammed Al-Meer, said: “Being named the World’s Best Airline by Skytrax for the ninth time is an extraordinary honour. This recognition is far more than an award, it is a celebration of the passion, precision and purpose that defines who we are as an airline. To retain this title in a highly competitive and ever-evolving global industry reflects the relentless efforts across every part of the business, from the frontline to behind-the-scenes, the passion and commitment of our people continue to set new

standards in aviation.

“We are equally proud to have been named the Best Airline in the Middle East, to once again hold the title of the World’s Best Business Class, and to be recognised for offering the Best Business Class Airline Lounge experience globally. These accolades reaffirm our ambition not only to lead, but to redefine what exceptional service means in aviation. Whether on the ground or in the air, we strive to deliver a seamless, elevated journey that anticipates the needs of our passengers and reflects the highest standards of quality, comfort, and innovation.

“Being continuously recognised as a Skytrax Five-Star Airline further underscores our mission: to set new benchmarks for the industry and to ensure that our passengers feel genuinely cared for, valued and inspired to return.

Oman Air becomes 15th alliance member

TTA BULLETIN

oneworld® today welcomes Oman Air as its 15th member airline. As the flag carrier of the Sultanate of Oman, Oman Air strengthens the alliance's presence across the Middle East and unlocks new opportunities for global travel.

"We are proud to welcome Oman Air to the oneworld family," said Nat Pieper, CEO of oneworld. "Oman Air brings valuable strategic reach and award-winning product and service to the alliance. This partnership opens up exciting new connections for our customers, particularly across the Gulf and South Asia, and reinforces oneworld's position as the premium alliance for international travellers."

Effective 1 July, oneworld customers can access an extended network of destinations across Oman Air's growing global schedule — including the launch of a new non-stop Muscat–Amsterdam service.

As a full oneworld member airline, Oman Air will provide oneworld Emerald, Sapphire, and Ruby customers with benefits including earning and redeeming miles, earning status points, priority check-in and boarding and lounge access. Likewise, Oman Air's top tier customers will gain access to oneworld priority benefits including a network of nearly 700 premium airport lounges globally, as well as newly opened oneworld branded lounges in Amsterdam's Schiphol and Seoul's Incheon Airports.

Emirates partners with Uber, with plans to make journeys more seamless, and reward travellers when they ride

TTA BULLETIN

Emirates and Uber have announced a strategic partnership through a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to explore ways to make journeys more seamless, effortless and rewarding for travellers. This includes enhancing the on-ground mobility experience for Emirates customers, while offering Skywards members loyalty benefits when using the Uber platform across select markets within the Emirates network.

The MoU was signed by Adnan Kazim, Emirates' Deputy President and Chief Commercial Officer and Anabel Diaz Calderon, Vice President and Head of EMEA Mobility at Uber.

Through this partnership, Emirates and Uber will work towards introducing several initiatives to offer travellers more seamless and effortless journeys. These include; Developing an integrated booking experience that combines Uber Rides Vouchers with flight bookings for easier airport transfers or in-city rides. Additionally, Emirates and Uber will explore offering Uber rides to and from the airport for select Emirates customers, supporting a complete door-to-destination experience.

The partnership will explore strategic



dam's Schiphol and Seoul's Incheon Airports.

"Oman Air is honoured to be joining the oneworld alliance, whose members and global footprint represent the best of what international travellers want to experience," said Con Korfiatis, CEO of Oman Air. "We are thrilled to be able to welcome oneworld customers to the Sultanate of Oman to experience our unique culture, stunning mountain excursions, beautiful beaches, and, above all, the warm hospitality of the Omani people."

Oman Air, with its hub at Muscat International Airport, serves 42 destinations across 22 countries and territories globally, including key oneworld hubs around the world. The airline offers three cabins, including its exclusive Business Studio with private suites on select longer-haul flights. Known for its exceptional in-flight hospitality, the airline has received several international awards including most recently Best Food & Beverage and Best Cabin Service in the Middle East at the Apex 2025 Awards. In late 2024 it also became one of only 10 airlines in the world to be awarded the prestigious APEX WORLD CLASS by YATES+ award, and the first to gain the APEX WORLD CLASS by YATES+ status for its Business Class Lounge at Muscat International Airport.



opportunities to closely collaborate on offering Skywards members in the UAE the opportunity to earn on rides or redeem their miles for Uber app credits or vouchers. Emirates Skywards will also explore ways for members in the UAE to benefit from earning Miles on Uber rides across select markets in the Emirates network.

Another area of collaboration will include exploring opportunities around Last Mile delivery initiatives for Emirates Courier Express, leveraging Uber's advanced technology platform and vast network of global Delivery partners to enhance customer reach, speed and efficiency.

Adnan Kazim said: "Emirates is excited to join forces with Uber as part of our commitment to delivering seamless travel experiences. In the months ahead, we'll closely work together to leverage our combined capabilities in travel and technology to expand planning options,

SriLankan Airlines Tops LMD's Most Loved in Aviation

TTA BULLETIN

SriLankan Airlines has come out on top in the Aviation Sector on LMD's Most Loved Brands, proving that the national carrier remains close to the hearts and minds of Sri Lankan travellers for its uniquely warm Sri Lankan service, extensive network, unparalleled direct services and seamless connections. The Most Loved Brands were determined entirely by LMD's discerning readership, made up of professionals and the who's who of the local corporate sector, in response to unaided, open-ended questions.

SriLankan Airlines prides itself on providing an authentically Sri Lankan service. From the warm smiles that greet every passenger at boarding, to the incomparable hospitality that makes every journey comfortable and memorable, and award-winning cuisine to suit every palate, both international and local, the airline has mastered the art of service delivery in true Sri Lankan style. Hiran Hewavisenti, the Chairman and Editor-in-Chief of LMD commented, "It could well be that our readership places a high intrinsic value on SriLankan being the country's national airline"

The airline's exceptional onboard service



extends to its flight operations. SriLankan operates close to 300 direct flights every week, covering Europe, the Indian Subcontinent, the Middle East, the Far East and Oceania. With direct and codeshare services, the airline connects Sri Lankans to 117 destinations in 59 countries across every continent, making SriLankan Airlines the natural first choice for travellers seeking convenient, direct flights and seamless connections out of Colombo.

Additionally, SriLankan Airlines continuously engages with its passengers and the wider Sri Lankan community through a combination of public relations, corporate social responsibility (CSR) and sustainability initiatives, rewarding loyal customers while giving back to the society. As Sri Lanka's most loved aviation brand, the airline has clearly shown that it is global in reach, yet Sri Lankan in spirit. LMD's readers further selected the airline as one of the top ten most loved corporate brands in Sri Lanka across all sectors.

Turkish Airlines World Golf Cup Returns to Colombo for Its 10th Edition

TTA BULLETIN

Turkish Airlines, the airline that flies to more countries than any other, successfully hosted the 10th edition of the prestigious Turkish Airlines World Golf Cup in Colombo on 28th June 2025. The event took place at the historic Royal Colombo Golf Club, drawing high-profile personalities and members of the local business community.

Now recognised as one of the most prominent corporate golf tournaments in the world, the Turkish Airlines World Golf Cup has grown significantly since its launch in 2013. Today, it brings together over 10,000 amateur players across more than 130 tournaments in 83 countries globally.

The Colombo tournament marked the 61st stop in this year's global series, with winners earning a coveted spot in the Grand Finals in Türkiye later this year. There, finalists will tee off at the renowned Gloria Golf Club and enjoy a luxury stay at the Gloria Serenity Resort on the Turkish Golf Coast.

Udula Wijesinghe emerged as the Colombo Champion with a stellar 44 points. Dhammika Ranasinghe and Min Kyu Lee followed closely, placing second and third, respectively. The Closest to the Pin awards

were claimed by Gehan Siribaddana (Men) and Heidy Rampinelly (Women), while the Gross Winner title went to K. Danushan with a score of 38.

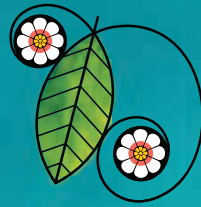
Speaking at the event, Fatih Bozkurt, General Manager for Turkish Airlines in Colombo, stated: "We thank all our guests who made the Turkish Airlines World Golf Cup here in Colombo a tremendous success. Once again, it was a thrilling tournament in the TAWGC series. Congratulations to our winner, Udula Wijesinghe – we wish him all the very best in Türkiye."

Finalists from each global tournament will fly to Türkiye in Turkish Airlines' award-winning Business Class, known for its luxury, comfort, and service.

Over the past decade, Turkish Airlines has played a significant role in positioning Antalya as a premier golfing destination through landmark events such as the Turkish Airlines Open and the World Golf Cup, strengthening Türkiye's reputation in global sports tourism.

The Turkish Airlines World Golf Cup 2025 is proudly supported by Gloria Hotels & Resorts.





Thema

COLLECTION



Aliya
SIGIRIYA



Amba Yaalu
KANDALAMA



Mountbatten
KANDY



Scottish Planter
NUWARA ELIYA



Tea & Experience
MANDARAM NUWARA



Waraka
UDAWALAWA



Wild Glamping
GAL OYA



Wild Glamping
KNUCKLES



Kithala
TISSA-YALA



Maalu Maalu
PASIKUDA



Parangi
WELIGAMA



Vista Vie
MIRISSA



Ayurvie
SIGIRIYA



Ayurvie
WELIGAMA



Thema Collection invites you to explore 14 unique properties across Sri Lanka, where each property tells its own story of heritage and nature. Experience authentic moments deeply rooted in local communities, offering sustainable adventures that connect you with the heart of the island's beauty and traditions. Discover the essence of Sri Lanka through unforgettable stays that blend culture, nature, and conscious living.

Different Themes, Authentic Experiences

