India's G20 Presidency and Impact on Indian Tourism, Travel and Hospitality Business

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Abstract
It has been called Bharat's G20 moment and how, the nation is using the opportunity to boost tourism and its vibrant culture. Milestones in any business are necessary, as they usher in a turning point. The push and pull factors of India, has ensured, not only inbound tourism, but galvanized domestic tourism on account of the facilities and opportunities and yes, the pride of every citizen to see his/her own country. If Covid-19 was a milestone with the learnings that it provided, G20 too has helped evoke the tourism, travel, and hospitality (TTH) business to reach the $1 trillion mark by 2047; when the nation celebrates its 100 years of existence as an independent nation. It was a moment of pride when Prime Minister Narendra Modi, leading the Indian delegation took over the G20 Presidency in 2022 from Indonesia and it was official that from 1st December 2022 to 30th November 2023. It was envisaged that a total of 215 G20 meetings would be conducted across 55 locations and tourism would have a total of four meetings. Three of the official meetings under the tourism track led by India's G20 Sherpa, Mr. Amitabh Kant would be held at: Gujarat (Rann of Kutch), West Bengal (Siliguri) and Jammu and Kashmir (Srinagar). The fourth Ministerial Level tourism meeting of G20 leaders was organized in Goa where a multitude of decisions were taken on various domains that will impact the TTH businesses and yes, most importantly environmental. The research paper focuses on what that TTH stakeholders feel about the G20 meetings in India and how it would impact the Travel and Tourism scenario, both inbound tourism (IBT), outbound tourism (OBT) and domestic.
Keywords: G20, Tourism, Travel, Hospitality, Impacts, Collaboration, SDGs.

1. Introduction

Prime Minister Narendra Modi wrote in a blog that appeared in New India Samachar [19] (Modi, 2022), "The previous 17 presidencies of the G20 delivered significant results, including ensuring macro-economic stability, rationalising international taxation, relieving debt burdens on countries, and many other outcomes. We will benefit from these achievements and build further upon them. However, as India assumes this important mantle, I ask myself, "Can the G20 go further still?" Can we catalyse a fundamental mind-set shift to benefit humanity as a whole? I believe we can." These surely were words of optimism that the Prime Minister expressed, and when one reads the final declaration following the finale of the G20, that was held in New Delhi, from 9th to 10th September 2023, the G20 meetings that were held across Bharat (India), were a huge success. Starting off with a tagline, more like a Mantra, with the theme of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam literal meaning 'Vasudha' (earth) + eva (one and only) + Kutumbakam (family) [20] (Narayanan, 2016), which Yogapedia (n.d.) mentions as a term from the Hindu text, Maha Upanishad, which typically translates to, 'the world is one family.' The Prime Minister of Bharat, in his article, aptly states, "our priorities will focus on healing our 'One Earth,' creating harmony within our, 'One Family,' and

giving hope for our, 'One Future' (Modi, 2022). Very aptly, the tagline, simply stated, with elan, "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam, One Earth, One Family, One Future," which in a way became a slogan, that reminded how all the citizens of the world; true G20 Nations, as mentioned in myGOV (2022) statement, the G20 or Group of Twenty, is an intergovernmental forum of world's major developed and developing economics comprising 19 countries (Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Republic of Korea, Mexico, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Turkey, United Kingdom and the United States of America) and the European Union (EU). Collectively the G20 represents and accounts for 85% of Global GDP, 75% of International Trade and 2/3rd of the world population and hence, it became even more pertinent.

2. India, G20 and the Tourism Narrative

Koul (2023) [8,9] aptly reported that India's G20 Presidency is a step for the nation to achieve the vision of being a trillion-dollar tourism economy by 2047. Along with Trade and Technology, Tourism, is being seen as a sector to accelerate the movement to the trillion-dollar development. India, with its multi-faceted tourism products and destinations has an opportunity to expand its narrative of inbound tourism with a special focus and emphasis on responsible and sustainable tourism along with adventure tourism. Thence, it can be said that adventure tourism is to become a catalyst for i) sustainable tourism practices, ii) employment generation and iii) economic growth. The idea of reaching fifteen million inbound visitors in 2024, and contributing to USD 30 billion in earnings; the idea of the tourism stakeholders to generate USD 56 billion in 2030 and have a total of 140 million jobs in the tourism, travel, and hospitality sector.[22] PBNS (2023) reported that by brining Adventure Tourism on page, the nation ensured promoting Adventure tourism, and presentations on Global and Indian scenario of Adventure tourism were given, as was the case in the second tourism working group sessions at Siliguri. Koul (2023A) reiterates the point that adventure tourism will also echo with the government's initiative of 'Make in India,' as adventure travel ensures that 60 to 90% of the money remains with the local communities, thereby strengthening their economy and economic status. Amaresh Tiwari, Vice Chairman at the India Convention Promotion Bureau (ICPB) (https://icpb.in) mentions, "hosting the G20 Summit and events related to it all year round has given India increased visibility on the global stage. This has led to a recognition of India as a major player in the global economy, which in turn has attracted more international events and conferences to the country. In preparation for major G20 events, there has been a push for infrastructure development in the country. This includes the development of world-class convention centres, hotels, and transportation facilities, which are essential for the MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Exhibitions) industry [1] (BOTT Desk, 2023)." Vikas [33] (Vikas, 2023), a delegate to a G20 program on Civil Society in Bangalore, "the infrastructure that has been evolved, some of it being new, will be used in the future for further development of the MICE segment, it is a clear indication that the Government has planned and ensured for the nation."

3. G20 Tracks for Discussions

The G20 has the following tracks that help in articulating various aspects that impact the Nations that are part of the G20 system (myGov, 2022) Table 1.

4. G20 Tourism, Travel and Hospitality

Writing in Hindustan Times, Arvind Singh [29] (Singh, 2023) Secretary, Tourism, Government of India, Ministry of Tourism (GoI, MoT), stated, the G20 presidency could not have come at a better time for India, especially its tourism sector. India is witnessing a revival of inbound arrivals and domestic travellers. We must capitalise on the G20 to achieve pre-Covid-19 numbers and, perhaps, even exceed them this year, and lay out the long-term agenda for promoting sustainable tourism globally.

Table 1 G20 The Tracks and Workstreams (Mygov, 2022)

	Track	Number of Workstreams	Workstreams
1	Finance Track	8	Global Macroeconomic Policies, Infrastructure Financing, International Financial Architecture, Sustainable Finance, Financial Inclusion, Health Finance, International Taxation, Financial Sector Reforms
2	Sherpa Track	12	Anti-corruption, Agriculture, Culture, Development, Digital Economy, Employment, Environment and Climate, Education, Energy Transition, Health, Trade and Investment, Tourism
3	Engagement Groups	10 Groups of Private Sector, Civil Society, Independent bodies	Business 20, Civil 20, Labour 20, Parliament 20, Science 20, Supreme Audit Institutions 20, Think 20, Urban 20, Women 20, Youth 20

Singh (2023) reiterated, that during India's year-long presidency of the G20, the nation will host over 200 meetings in 59-plus destinations. Over 100,000 delegates [21] (NDTV, 2023) from the G20, comprising 19 countries and the European Union (EU), partcipated to discuss significant issues related to the global economy, such as international financial stability, the climate crisis and sustainable development. All these areas impact the tourism sector. The GoT, MoT to ensure an orderly discussion on the Travel, Tourism and Hospitality dynamics, laid out five priorities [23-26] (PIB, 2023) areas of tourism for the G20 tourism sectoral meetings:

- Greening the tourism sector,
- Promoting digitisation/digitalization,
- Empowering the youth with skills,
- Nurturing tourism micro, small and medium enterprises (SMEs and MSMEs), and startups, and
- Strategic management of destinations (Destination Management).

The Nations G20 Sherpa, Amitabh Kant, brought about the importance and uniqueness of the country and the tourism sector, besides, job creation and employment in the tourism and related areas of handicrafts, handloom, and culture, should also focus on the Nations tourism that will concentrate on, 'experiential, sustainable and green destinations,' which visitors truly ask for (ET Travel World, 2023). This in fact became an important facet considering the sustainable development goals (SDGs) that are a key factor to the growth and evolution of tourism and related businesses. Falling under the Sherpa Track (Illustration 2), Tourism could work along with Culture, Environment and Climate, Employment to name a few. Anil Moghe (Moghe, 2023) [18] , a Tour Guide based on Bangalore, with the GoI, MoT for the past more than three decades, mentions, "I was in Hampi (Karnataka State), when the Sherpa Track, the Third (Note: the first and second meetings were held at Khajuraho and Bhubaneshwar (PIB, 2023B) Culture Working Group meetings took place, and I found that the juxta positioning of Tourism and Culture was very much true in its essence with the involvement of a large number of officials from the Department of Tourism, Museums, Archaeological Survey of India and the other players who manage the monuments too participated and contributed to a better sharing of ideas from across the Nations." Raghava [28] (Raghava, 2023) a local guide in

Hampi, the capital of the Vijayanagar dynasty too mentioned that, "a good number of my colleagues were taken to the program to guide the delegates who had come from across the world. This was a good exposure for one and all." Moghe (2023) further mentioned, that, "the delegates from foreign countries and even India will become our ambassador to usher in more visitors not only to Hampi but to other destinations as well, the G20 meetings that were held across India, are sure to ensure a multiplier effect in more visitors coming to India [10-14]."

5. G20 and the Tourism Track Meetings

Mathur (2022) reported that a total of four [3] (Divya, 2023) tourism track meetings led by G20 Sherpa Amitabh Kant have been planned. The four meetings were organized at the following destinations:

- Rann of Kutch, Gujarat (7th to 10th February 2023)
- Siliguri, West Bengal (1st to 3rd April 2023)
- Srinagar, Jammu and Kashmir (22nd to 24th May 2023)
- Panaji, Goa (19th to 22nd June 2023)

The Government of India no doubt had organized four meeting in relation to the Tourism Track, but other events such as the first Global Tourism Investors' Summit, MICE Global Conference and G20 Tourism CEO Forum meetings were also envisaged and planned (myGOV 2023). Rakesh Mathur [16,17] (Mathur, 2023), President of the Responsible Tourism Society of India (RTSOI) (https://rtsoi.org) who participated in the G20 tourism events mentions, "the idea of organizing the programs in the locations that were identified were to enable the foreign delegates to know the destinations and create a buzz, which would lead to growth in tourism, travel and hospitality (TTH)." Mr. Mathur further adds, "the G20 events in Srinagar, were a phenomenal foray into peeping into the destination and what the destination to offer for not only the delegates, but also the world to know the opportunities that one will have in the destinations. Srinagar was truly showcased as a destination for filming and the media, on account of its natural beauty and the opportunities that exist in a new environment." Participating in two of the G20 events, Rakesh Mathur further mentions, "the G20 meetings, wherever organized ensured a traction for the nation, and the delegates, would surely consider India as a destination for various reason, and become influencers in their respective countries. Besides, the interactions that occurred were fruitful to assess the opportunities for best-practice learnings, which would go a long way to build on qualitative tourism in India." An officer of the GoI, MoT who wanted to remain anonymous and who participated in the G20 Tourism events mentioned, "the events truly brought about a multitude of opportunities of learning between the countries, which will enable a thought process towards qualitative and sustainable tourism, which is the need of the hour." In fact, the officer mentioned to the authors, that, "it was under the Presidency Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA), that the Tourism Working Group in G20 was initiated, and it gave a platform for the member nations and stakeholders from across sectors to discuss, deliberate and guide the course of action for development of local and global tourism." The authors were able to ascertain the same as the G20 Working Group met in KSA under the shadow of the Covid-19 pandemic, which had brought the tourism business to its knees. In what is now famous as the Diriyah Communique (G20 Research Group, 2020), the G20 Tourism Ministers Meeting besides addressing the challenges that the pandemic had presented to the world two important postulates that focussed on:

- Inclusive Community Development through Tourism and
- Safe and Seamless Travel and Improved traveller experience

It is important to note that, the facet of Inclusive Community Development through tourism, focussed on the AIUla Framework [31,32] (UNWTO, 2020) that was developed by the G20 Saudi Presidency, the World Tourism Organization (WTO) (now known as UN Tourism), and the G20 Tourism Working Group; which will serve as a

guide for countries to work to ensure that tourism contributes to sustainable and inclusive development through

- identification and support of communities with high tourism potential,
- the definition of potential areas of action and respective stakeholders that promote local development,
- progress towards evidence-based policies founded on the measurement of the sustainability of tourism in line with international standards and
- showcasing good best-practices.

The 2020 G20 tourism working group clearly provided for a thought process for the future, which would enable subsequent G20 meeting to imbibe issues that would help the tourism system to bring in interventions which would help in building not only a thought process, but a path leading to action.

The following three postulates, clearly enabled the 2023 G20 tourism working group (Illustration 2) to further broad base the understanding and discuss issues that would help the tourism economy to position itself for options of people centricity, sustainability, and development.

- **Empowering People:** creating conditions in which all people, especially women and youth, can live, work, and thrive,
- **Protecting the Planet:** fostering collective efforts to protect our commons
- **Shaping New Frontiers:** adopt long-term and bold strategies to utilize and share the benefits of innovation.

A deep-dive into the various tourism working group events and more precisely the side events (see Illustration 2), will help one to assess the opportunities the G20 Tourism related meetings provided for in the G20 Edition of 2023 in Table 2.

Table 2 G20 Tourism Working Group Side events

Rann of Kutch, Gujarat 7th to 10th February 2023	1.Rural Tourism for Community Empowerment and Poverty Alleviation 2.Promotion of Archaeological Tourism: Discovering shared Cultural Heritage Besides, Discussions on the Five themes of tourism (myGOV, 2023)
Siliguri, West Bengal 1st to 3rd April 2023	1.Adventure Tourism and its transformative power in achieving SDGs. Case studies from UK, Mexico, Canada, Germany, Japan, Brazil as also from the Indian state of Uttarakhand were presented (myGOV, 2023A) 2.Tourism in Mission Mode: Advantage Adventure Tourism (PBNS, 2023)
Srinagar, Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir 22nd to 24th May 2023	1.Film Tourism for Economic Growth and Cultural Preservation 2.Ecotourism [6,7] (Hussain, 2023) as a vehicle to achieve Sustainable Development Goal (PIB, 2023A)
Panaji, Goa 19th to 22nd June 2023	1.Making Cruise Tourism a Model for Sustainable and Responsible Travel 2.Making India a Hub for Cruise Tourism 3.Towards a circular economy of plastics in tourism – the Global Tourism Plastics Initiative (in collaboration with United Nations Environment Program (UNEP), United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) 4.Public Private Dialogue: Importance of Travel & Tourism to the G20 Economies, in association with World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) and UNWTO (myGOV, 2023B)

First G20 Tourism Working Group, Rann of Kutch, Gujarat (7th To 10th February 2023)
Considered as the flagship Tourism event of G20,

the program was attended by, G. Kishan Reddy, the Federal Minister for Tourism Culture and DONER, besides, the Chief Minister of the State of Gujarat,

Bhupendra Bhai Patel, and his Minister Parshottam Rupala. A total of hundred delegates from various G20 countries and India participated,

Second G20 Tourism Working Group, Siliguri, West Bengal (1st To 3rd April 2023)

Besides, the inaugural, the working group discussion, the two side sessions that focussed on adventure tourism and its impact on the SDGs ensured the discussions took the debate to another level of articulation.

Third G20 Tourism Working Group, Srinagar, Jammu and Kashmir (22nd To 24th May 2023)

A side event on 'Film Tourism for Economic Growth and Cultural Preservation' was organized on 22nd May 2023, focusing on strategies to promote film tourism. The event was addressed by Shri. Amitabh Kant, G20 Sherpa, Government of India. He emphasised that potential of Jammu and Kashmir to grow as tourism destination that will encourage employment generation in the UT. He remembered how the destination has served as a perfect landscape to create some of the memorable movies of India such as Kashmir ki Kali, Lakshya, Haider, and many more (PIB, 2023C). Hussain (2023) reported that a total of 60 foreign delegates started the day with a session of Yoga against the backdrop of the Zabarwan mountain range before visiting the Nishat Garden. In many a way, the G20 tourism working group summit was one of the first after Jammu and Kashmir became a Union Territory.

G20 Tourism Working Group Meeting and Ministerial Meeting, Panaji, Goa (19th To 22nd June 2023)
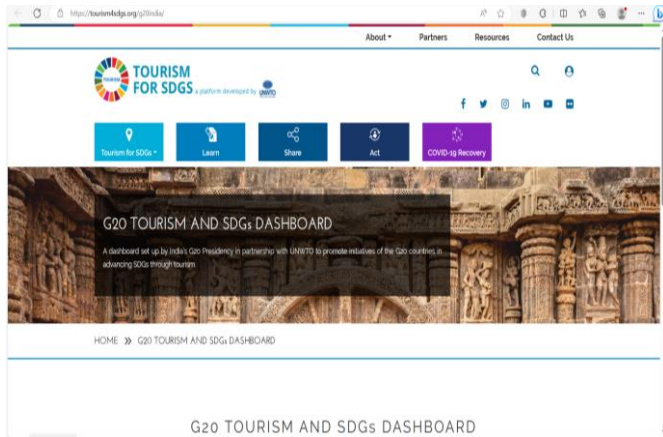
Considering that this was the last Tourism Working Group meeting, Prime Minister Modi himself addressed the delegates and the Ministers present through video conference and stated that, "tourism ministers rarely get a chance to be tourists themselves even though they are handling a sector worth over two trillion dollars globally." He also brought to date, "how India by then had engaged over 200 G20 meetings in more than 100 locations in the country." The Prime Minister stated that, "our efforts in tourism sector are centered on preserving our rich heritage and at the same time creating world class infrastructure for tourism" (myGOV, 2023B). The deliberations that the India as a nation set for the final meeting has been considered as the 'GOA Roadmap for Tourism,' promoting visitors' led actions for Travel for LiFE (https://www.mygov.in/life/) in line with the Lifestyle for Environment movement introduced and launched by the Prime Minister in India at COP26 in Glasgow on 1st November 2021, which called upon the global community of individuals and institutions to drive LiFE as an international mass movement towards, 'mindful and deliberate utilizations, instead of mindless and destructive consumption,' to protect and preserve the environment (myGOV, n.d.). The bottom-line of LiFE is to ensure, that it is individual and collective duty of everyone to live a life that is in tune with Earth and one that does not harm it. Those citizens of the world who practice this lifestyle are to be recognized as the 'Pro Planet People.' The Prime Minister in his address, quoted the case study of Varanasi/Banaras, and stated, if infrastructure is evolved the tourism capacity grows and increase leaps and bounds. The ten-fold increase in tourists to 70 million in Banaras is a testament to the way we evolve our infrastructure. The Prime Minister even threw open the idea of opening new destinations, and how the 'Statue of Unity' in Gujarat, had attracted 2.7 million visitors in the first year itself.

6. GOA Roadmap, Tourism and SDGs

One important aspect that the Prime Minister expressed was on terrorism, and he got to mention, "terrorism divides but tourism unites." The G20 Tourism and Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) dashboard [4,5] (Dwivedi, 2023) that is to be developed by GoI, MoT, in partnership with the UNWTO will be one of its kind, as it will bring together i) the GOA Roadmap, ii) best practices, iii) case studies and iv) survey results that will ensure, a) knowledge exchange, b) collaboration and c) growth. Sustainable, resilient, and inclusive tourism, will the catch words for the dashboard (illustration 3), which is a concrete outcome of the

G20 Tourism Working Group and a reference tool for all the stakeholders show in Figure 1.

Figure 1 Screenshot of The G20 Tourism and Sdgs Dashboard (Tourism 4 Sdgs, N.D.)

Speaking about the Dashboard, Secretary-General Zurab Pololikashvili says, "G20 countries represent over 70% of tourism worldwide.[30] Their leadership in the transformation of the sector is decisive. The G20 Tourism and SDGs Dashboard (https://tourism4sdgs.org/g20india/) is a concrete outcome of G20 Tourism Working Group and a reference tool for all. UNWTO is very happy to have joined hands with the Ministry of Tourism of India to make this possible (UNWTO, 2023)." Thence, the Goa Roadmap for tourism as a vehicle for achieving the SDGs, has become a global document that help the stakeholders of tourism, travel, and hospitality to (World Tourism Organization, 2023):

- Set up objectives,
- Recommend actions,
- Highlight the interconnection between the different priorities and
- The distinct contributions to the SDGs

Nakul Anand, Chairman, FAITH (Federation of Associations in Indian Tourism and Hospitality) (https://faithtourismindia.in), congratulating the GoI, MoT, stated about the G20 Tourism and SDG Dashboard, "as someone deeply invested in the travel industry, I am constantly seeking platforms that offer genuine insights and actionable knowledge. The G20 Tourism and SDG Dashboard,

does exactly that. It is a commendable initiative that will undoubtedly shape the future of travel, steering us towards more responsible and sustainable practices. The effort and enduring spirit of excellence have infused a sense of pride in the Indian Tourism Industry and enhanced confidence in FAITH and its association members that is USD 3 trillion tourism vision for India for 2047 is completely achievable" (Dwivedi, 2023). Rajiv Mehra, President of Indian Association of Tour Operators (IATO) (https://iato.in), speaking about G20 Tourism and the SDG dashboard states, "the dashboard offers valuable insights and actionable knowledge. There are a multitude of ways in which the Tourism sector in India will benefit from the hosting of the G20 Summit (BOTT Desk, 2023)."

The G20 Tourism Working Group discussions and the Side Events in Panaji, Goa, are a clear-cut statement of impact that will take the world of tourism, travel and hospitality of India and the world to greater heights and give ample scope to evolve further.

Conclusion
Kamakshi Maheshwari [15] (Maheshwari, 2023) of Indian Institute of Tourism and Travel Management (IITTM) (https://www.iittm.ac.in) states, "The G20 presidency offered India a crucial platform to promote its tourism potential, attract investments, and forge international partnerships. Through this global forum, India showcased its diverse cultural heritage, natural beauty, and rich history, captivating travellers from around the world. Focussing on tourism there were four tourism working group meetings of the G20 nations delving into different themes of tourism like rural tourism, archaeological tourism, cruise tourism, eco-tourism, adventure tourism, film tourism. This was something critical for the nation and the world, as it was a kind of re-boot, that the tourism economy was getting." The authors got to speak with a Senior Police officer in Mysuru (Mysore), Karnataka, who was overseeing the Security detail of the G20 event and the delegates who participated in the Think 20 Summit from July 31 to August 2, 2023. The officer who did not want his name to be mentioned in the

research, stated, that the arrangements made were elaborate for about seventy plus delegates, who were arriving from across the world and from Hampi, where they were attending the Culture Working Group meeting. The officer spoke of the multiplier effect that the event had on the tourism system, be it two hotels which played host to the event, the transport segment which benefitted more two-hundred operators, the handicraft shops, the dancers, who were invited to perform, the tour guides, who were instrumental in ensuring qualitative information was provided to the delegates, which sowed the seeds of furthering Mysuru as a destination to the others in their respective countries. The officer even spoke of how uniquely the Culture City of Mysuru was decked and decorated, which became a cynosure for the local people as well, who celebrated the event as if it was their own. Besides, the important tourist destination in Mysuru and its vicinity, the delegates, ventured out into the city as well and met with people, which created a people to people connect and brought about the true vibrance of 'One Earth, One Family, One Future.' Paras Prakash [27] (Prakash, 2023) of Pan Tellisense (https://www.pantellisense.com) articulating about the G20 Tourism events in India stated, "in the next 5 to 10 years, India's focus on green tourism, cashless economy, soft skills, sustainability, and film tourism would likely result in significant growth in eco-friendly tourism, widespread adoption of digital payments, a highly skilled workforce, and sustainable development practices. India will emerge as a global leader in green tourism and film tourism, attracting tourists through popular movie locations and film-related experiences. These efforts would drive economic growth and job opportunities, while improving citizens' quality of life. Besides, the best practices of tourism will also be shared with other nations, which will help in creating awareness. However, successful implementation would require coordinated efforts from the government, private sector, and society, with potential challenges and unforeseen events impacting the outcome." As we are aware, much of

infrastructure was developed for the G20 meetings across India, Rajat Sawhney, CEO, Rave Tours and Travels, states, "India no doubt is at the forefront of Medical Tourism, Wedding Tourism and MICE. G20 as an event will catapult India into a major tourism nation in the world. Post the summit, the travel and hospitality businesses will receive huge boost, and some of the infrastructure like the 'Bharat Mandapam,' in New Delhi, an architectural marvel will become an important structure for MICE in India (BOTT Desk, 2023)." G20 is being cherished even to this day, and ask anyone from the Tourism and Hospitality domain, the simple word that comes out is, the event is a 'milestone.'[2] Chaturvedi (2023) in an unequivocal way mentions, "G20 has created a buzz for India, and will fuel an uptick in foreign tourist arrivals in 2024." Clearly it can be said that, the G20 meetings across the various tracks in general and tourism in particular added a unique value to the tourism ecosystem in India, which enabled all segments of tourism, be it, domestic, inbound, outbound, hospitality, travel businesses, MICE operations, services providers like the Guides, restaurants to create better opportunities for themselves and strive for a better Tourism, Travel, and Hospitality (TTH) business scenario. True, the multiplier effect G20 provided to the Nation will be remembered for a long time to come [34,35].

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