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POWER LISTERS

CELEBRATING THE ARCHITECTS OF THE HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY

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SAURABH RAI

Executive VP, South Asia, Middle East,
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Saurabh Rai's stint with the brand began in 2008 as director, global sales & development for India and Middle East. His rise to the present position stands testament to Rai's phenomenal knowledge of the field, strategic insight on market trends and decision taking prowess. Opining on the current industry scenario, he says, "The industry today is faced with the unfortunate global geo-political situation, which requires the hotel sector to be more agile than ever before. Shorter booking lead times, the easing of cancellation policies, and flexibility in bookings are some of the trends that have come to the forefront this year. In India, the domestic market will continue to be a key driver of business. One positive development is the state governments focusing on promoting tourism through heavy campaigns, which will help open up opportunities for secondary cities and destinations."

He admits that the scenario isn't encouraging for hotels to pump in large capital investments required by a global brand to support a worldwide sales, marketing, branding, loyalty, quality assurance and distribution infrastructure. And that's where a partnership with Preferred Hotels & Resorts helps. In fact, Rai's future strategy in India includes forging strong partnership and growing with them. "We continue to look at some great opportunities in the near future and are exploring possible avenues of expansion in the Indian subcontinent in countries like Sri Lanka and the Maldives," he ends on a positive note.