Lemon Tree Hotels looking at buying resorts

Punit Malik, Chairman and Managing Director, Lemon Tree Hotels, told Businessline, "We are currently looking at acquiring resorts to expand our portfolio and cash in on the growing demand for domestic travel."

According to Malik, the hospitality group plans to go for acquisitions as well as organic expansion. "We are currently building nine more hotels, which would have 1,200 rooms. By 2018, our target is to have ownership of 4,000 hotel rooms and manage 2,000 rooms through our subsidiary, Carnation Hotels. In the events category, we plan to add 1,000 rooms in the next three years," he added.

Earlier this month, the hospitality group was awarded the 2015 Asian Human Capital Award for building better strategies to mainstream persons with disabilities. The award is jointly sponsored by the Singapore Ministry of Manpower and the Human Capital Leadership Institute.

Malik said, "We are currently working on an equal opportunities' employee, Lemon Tree said it started recruiting persons with speech and hearing impairments in 2005. "Over time, we also started hiring people with visual and orthopaedic impairments, and later people with Down's syndrome. In 2010, we identified a new category of people - operationally-challenged people; i.e., those from socially economically and educationally disadvantaged backgrounds," he said.

At present, 3,000 people, out of its total staff strength of 5,300, are either from underprivileged backgrounds or are employees with disabilities (BPLs). By 2018, we plan to raise this number from 3,000 to 5,300. This means, in five years, the total Lemon Tree staff strength will be 13,000, of which 50 per cent will be from such backgrounds."

The group, founded in 2003, operates three brands - Lemon Tree Premier, Lemon Tree and Red Fox.