

refreshingly different



## **Cornell University honors Lemon Tree Hotels with the prestigious Hospitality Exemplary Practice Award**

**New Delhi, 20<sup>th</sup> October 2014:** The Lemon Tree Hotel Company (LTH) has been honored with the Cornell Hospitality Exemplary Practice Award 2014 for their contribution and initiative in employing Persons with Disabilities in their 26 hotels in 15 cities across India. The award was announced at the Cornell Hospitality Research Summit (CHRS) held in Ithaca, New York last week.

LTH, India's fastest growing hotel group, is an equal opportunity employer. Currently, close to 10% of its total staff (2700 employees) are Employees With Disabilities (EWDs). The group plans to increase this number to 350 EWDs by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015. The target for 2022 is to hire 40% of its employee base as people who do not get opportunities for employment including EWDs, those who are economically underprivileged as well as those who are socially marginalized.

Speaking on the occasion, Patu Keswani, Chairman & Managing Director, Lemon Tree Hotels said, "We are delighted to be recognized for our efforts at such a prestigious international forum. We have always believed that the Lemon Tree brand should stand for more than 'just profit' and have therefore focused our efforts on creating a socially inclusive work environment in our hotels. We believe that persons with disabilities must be provided the same opportunities as others to realize their full potential and live with dignity. This award further motivates us to pursue this initiative with even more vigor and to be a catalyst of change however small, in social inclusiveness and opportunity creation for people with disabilities."

The Lemon Tree Hotel Company was jointly selected to receive this award with VOC Systems, from over 100 nominations by a vote of the CHRS advisory board. Held every other year at the Cornell School of Hotel Administration, The Exemplary

Practice Award is Cornell University's effort to recognize organizations that are playing a vital role in improving industry knowledge and practices.

Aradhana Lal, Vice President –Sustainability Initiatives, The Lemon Tree Hotel Company said, "We thank Cornell University for considering us worthy of this honour. We are happy to know our efforts in supporting Persons with Disabilities have been recognized. These values are today a part of Lemon Tree's culture and DNA and we hope to create more work opportunities to bring in people of different backgrounds, abilities and ethnicities to join our unified team".

Founded in 2002, Lemon Tree Hotels are a home grown chain. The group has been hiring EWDs since 2007 and have developed a structured process to induct people with disabilities into all its hotels pan India, including remote places like Muhamma in Kerala.

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### **About Lemon Tree Hotels:**

Fresh, fun & spirited Lemon Tree Hotels are India's fastest growing chain of upscale business and leisure hotels – the perfect choice for today's discerning traveler looking for high quality accommodation.

Founded in September 2002 by Patu Keswani, the New Delhi based company currently operates with 3 brands Lemon Tree Premier (upscale), Lemon Tree Hotels (midscale) & Red Fox Hotels (economy). The chain currently owns 26 hotels in 15 cities aggregating 3000 rooms with over 3000 employees. This speedy growth has currently made the group the 3rd largest by owned rooms with venture capital participation from US based global private equity firm Warburg Pincus, diversified Japanese financial institution Shinsei Bank, one of India's first private equity funds Kotak Realty Fund and Dutch pension fund asset manager APG.

By 2018, The Lemon Tree Hotel Company will own and operate over 8000 rooms in 60 hotels across 30 major cities of India including Ahmedabad, Aurangabad, Bengaluru, Chandigarh, Chennai, Coimbatore, Dehradun, Ghaziabad, Gurgaon, Goa, Hyderabad, Indore, Jaipur, Kolkata, Muhamma (Kerala), Mumbai, New Delhi, Pune, Shimla and Udaipur. To know more, visit [lemontreehotels.com](http://lemontreehotels.com).