

# CHIEF GUEST

## AMITABH KANT

The present G20 Sherpa, Govt. of India, and Ex-CEO, NITI Aayog, Amitabh Kant, has been working towards ease of doing business and digital payments in India, thereby revolutionising a segment in the hospitality industry

Amitabh Kant has held various magnanimous roles through the span of his career – he has worked as the CMD, ITDC; Joint Secretary, Ministry of Tourism, Government of India; Secretary, Tourism, Government of Kerala; MD, Kerala State Industrial Development Corporation; District Collector, Kozhikode; and MD, Matsyafed.

While working in Kerala, he was involved in structuring the Calicut Airport as a private sector project, based on User's Free; and developed the BSES Power project and Mattancherry Bridge under Private-Public Partnership (PPP). He also introduced fibreglass crafts and outboard motor technology in the fisheries sector and launched beach-level auctions that helped traditional fishermen enhance their income.

In his role as Secretary (Industries), Govt. of India, he spearheaded the 'Ease of Doing Business' initiative that ranked each of the states on the outcome of several parameters. He has also worked as Chairman of the Committee to implement digital payment in India.

Kant also conceptualised 'Atithi Devo Bhava', a campaign to train taxi drivers, guides, and immigration officials as part of his integrated stakeholder push for tourism development. As the National Project Director of the Rural Tourism Project of UNDP he has ensured that rural tourism got an impetus through their handicrafts, handloom, and culture.

All this work has earned him several well-deserved accolades, including the Economic Time Policy Change Agent of the Year Award, the Bloomberg TV Personality of the Year Award, the NDTV Administrator of the Year Award and the Distinguished Fellowship of the Institute of Directors. He has also been awarded the One Globe Award 2016 for leadership in Transforming Governance for the 21st Century and is the recipient of the Sir Edmund Hillary Fellowship award by the Prime Minister of New Zealand and the Golden Peacock Award for leadership in Economic Transformation - 2017.

