PROFILE



CAPT. C. P. KRISHNAN NAIR Chairman Hotel Leelaventure Limited

Captain C. P. Krishnan Nair is chairman of The Leela Palaces, Hotels and Resorts, one of the finest hotel groups in India. From a young freedom fighter, then an officer serving in the Indian Army, to playing a prominent pioneering role in the Handloom Industry, and later becoming a major textile exporter, Nair has risen to fame and success through sheer grit and hard work.

Born on 9 February 1922 in Kannur, Kerala, India, Nair received his early education at a small elementary school in his native village. A born rebel, he joined the Freedom Movement at the age of 13 and later became an officer in the Indian Army. In 1951, he resigned his commission and helped to set up the All India Handloom Board. He was instrumental in developing and marketing the "Bleeding Madras" fabric in the United States, which met with legendary success in starting exports to the United States. By 2001, he was the recipient of the prestigious Golden Globe Award for the highest exports in clothing in India from The Ministry of Textiles, Government of India.

His frequent business trips to Europe and America exposed him to hotels with high service standards, inspiring him to make his first forays into the hospitality sector. At the age of 65, he started to build The Leela group of hotels which today has become one of the most celebrated Indian hospitality groups in the five-star luxury segment.

Inspired by the high luxury standards of European hotels, he set up the first Leela hotel in Mumbai in 1986 and signed a marketing alliance with Kempinski. Today, The Leela Palaces, Hotels and Resorts has seven luxury properties in New Delhi, Mumbai, Bangalore, Gurgaon-Delhi N.C.R., Udaipur, Goa and Kovalam; with more hotels opening in Chennai, Agra, Jaipur and Lake Ashtamudi in Kerala. His mission is to delight and exceed his guests'

expectations through gracious Indian hospitality, laid down in the ancient Indian scriptures as *Atithi Devo Bhava* or 'guest is god'.

Globally recognized as an environmentalist, hotelier and a visionary, Nair has been the recipient of many prestigious accolades. For his untiring efforts in environment conservation, he received the Global 500 Laureate Roll of Honour by the United Nations Environment Program in 1999 from Emperor Akihito of Japan. Lauding him as a doyen hotelier, the American Academy of Hospitality Sciences honoured him with the Lifetime Achievement Five Star Diamond Award in 2009; the Green Hotelier Award by the Geneva based International Hotel and Restaurant Association (IH&RA) and the Maharana Mewar Foundation's Uday Singh Award for "Outstanding Practical Achievements in the Protection and Improvement of the Environment" in 2002. In 2008, Business Week, US listed him among the 50 global octogenarians who still 'rock the world'. Recent awards in 2010 include the Hall of Fame Award at the Hotel Investment Forum India held in Mumbai and the 'Hotelier of the Century' Award given by the International Hotel and Restaurant Association. Nair also received the highest Indian civilian honour - the Padma Bhushan from Smt. Pratibha Singh Patil, the Hon'ble President of India.

Even today, his indomitable spirit and enthusiasm see him working on elaborate plans for the future. For both, The Leela Palaces, Hotels and Resorts, and for India.

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