

News Release

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Business Leaders Plan Revamp of Iran's Hospitality Industry

Human resources, air connectivity and investment are the keys to growth

In the run-up to the first Iran Hotel and Tourism Investment Conference (IHTIC) in Tehran, organiser, Bench Events, has praised Iran's commitment to boost economic growth and transform the country into a destination for business and leisure tourism.



Jonathan Worsley

Chairman, Bench Events

Jonathan Worsley, Chairman of Bench Events, said: "We're very pleased to be hosting IHTIC at such an important time, as the country embraces growth and

becomes a significant investment destination. The conference will tackle plenty of issues from management contracts, finance, airline connectivity and human resources”.

According to the latest Euromonitor report “*Travel in Iran*”, hotels are a key weakness, being both under-supplied and under-resourced from a staffing perspective. Jonathan continued “with the relaxing of sanctions in Iran, the industry urgently needs to tackle the employment challenges it faces. It will be extremely interesting to hear from speakers at IHTIC what plans are being drawn up to facilitate improvements in education and training”.

To address the human resource issue head on, **Georges R. Chakar**, Managing Partner at Link ME Global will host a session on the importance of human capital. He will be joined by **Mehrdad Agah**, Founder and CEO of AgahJobs and Managing Partner in Eiger International Executive Search; **Zaid Maleh**, Managing Director at MODUL University Dubai; **Olivier Vershelde**, Senior Consultant at Lausanne Hospitality Consulting and **Negar Teimourzadeh**, Partner at Sarcheshmeh. They will discuss the recent educational trends and how to recruit and retain the right talent in new emerging markets, such as Iran.

During the conference, MODUL University Dubai will announce the winner of a Full Scholarship on its globally-recognised Certified Hospitality Professional course.



Farhad Parvaresh

Chairman and Managing Director, IranAir

The Euromonitor report also highlighted the issue of connectivity, with flights, airlines and airport capacity being major problems for the industry. In an exclusive session hosted by **Akbar Ghamkhar**, Chairman of Rastin Tours; **Farhad Parvaresh**, Chairman and Managing Director of IranAir and **Heidar Vatankhah**, Deputy CEO, Iran & Board Member, Global Aviation Services Group will discuss the rapid growth of aviation and its impact on tourism infrastructure and investment. He will uncover plans for the development of the industry – including which markets will be connected and the new opportunities that will be created for investors.

Industry CEO's will come together on a panel to discuss what needs to be done to bring Iran's hospitality scene up to international standards and how the public and private sector can work together to attract the necessary investment. This panel will be hosted by **Ömer Isvan**, President of Servotel Corporation and joining him will be **Puneet Chhatwal**, CEO of Deutsche Hospitality; **Steven Daines**, CEO, New Businesses & Middle East & Africa at AccorHotels; **Omer Kaddouri**, President & CEO of Rotana Hotel Management Corporation and **Bassem Terkawi**, CEO of LINK ME Global.

The Iran Hotel & Tourism Investment Conference will take place on February 7-8

at the Parsian Evin Hotel in Tehran. For more information, visit www.iranian-conference.com.

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About IHTIC

Organiser: Bench Events **Founder Sponsor:** Incubeemea **Patron Sponsor:** Atiyaeh Saba Investment Company and Link Me Global **Platinum Sponsors:** AccorHotels, Azimzadeh Carpet Co., Deutsche Hospitality, Ilio Italian Restaurant, Melia Hotels International, Rastin Tours **Gold Sponsors:** DSA Architects International, Eye of Persia, Louvre Hotels Group, Parsian International Hotels Co., Rotana, Sarcheshmeh, Shaza Hotels, TRI Hospitality Consulting, ZAS Group of Companies **Exhibitors:** Servotel and Superfrost. **Education Partner:** Modul University Dubai. **Supporters:** Euromonitor International, Hospitality Asset Managers Association, Investors Group Iran, Pacific Asia Travel Association, Tehran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture and Tehran International Tourism Exhibition.

About Bench Events

Global event organiser Bench Events has a long track record of delivering multiple premium hotel investment conferences and forums across Europe, the Middle East, Africa, Asia and Latin America.

Market leading annual conferences include the Arabian Hotel Investment Conference (AHIC) in Dubai, now in its 13th year, the Africa Hotel Investment Forum (AHIF) the new Asia Hotel and Tourism Investment Conference (AHTIC), The Summit in London and the Latin American Hotel & Tourism Investment Conferences (SAHIC).

Bench Events' extensive portfolio also includes the Global Restaurant Investment Forum (GRIF) in Dubai and AviaDev, designed to promote the future air connectivity in Africa.

Bench Events' mission is enabling prosperity by facilitating growth, networking, and thought leadership in the hospitality industry worldwide. www.benchevents.com

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