

MBD to bring Steigenberger hotels to India

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BENGALURU: Diversified education and hospitality major MBD Group has announced plans to open the first property 'MBD Zephyr Bangalore', under its joint venture with Germany's luxury hotel chain Steigenberger Hotels, in 2019, with a vision to open 20 hotels in the country over the next 15 years, with projected annual revenues of hotels under management and/or franchise of nearly Rs 2,000 crore.

The group signed a 51:49 JV with Steigenberger on June 17, namely 'MBD Steigenberger'.

Talking about the JV, MBD Group Joint Managing Director Sonica Malhotra told *Deccan Herald*: "In terms of the whole operations in India, management of hotels, sales and marketing, and assistance provided to hotels in the pre-



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opening phase will be provided by MBD, while our partner will be supporting the JV through international sales and marketing, its international online reservation system, its loyalty programme, and training and development."

With the Bengaluru property, which will offer 184 rooms and 118 service apartments, the MBD Steigenberger brand, in line with the international po-

sitioning of the Steigenberger chain, is positioned to target the luxury segment in India.

"We are also planning hotels in all gateway locations such as Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai, Hyderabad, Goa, Kolkata, Pune, and Indore, among others. Normally, luxury hotels must have between 150-175 keys, so we are looking at 3,000-3,500 rooms under management, in the next 15 years, catering to

luxury business and leisure guests," Malhotra said.

While the brand will manage hotels, it's on the lookout for big realty players, people with historical land parcels, and business houses who would own the properties.

"We have a design and construction management team, which designs and builds all our properties. Typically, all hotel management companies are asset-light. We will be actually scouting projects owned by other people, and managing their hotels for them," she said.

Malhotra also hinted, "Steigenberger also operates two budget segment brands — InnerCityHotel and Jaz in the City, and we are eyeing if we could also strengthen our relationship in terms of these other two brands."

DH News Service