

FHRAI and CIRC Sign MoU to strengthen legal and compliance capacity

In a major step towards enhancing legal and regulatory compliance across India's hospitality sector, the Federation of Hotel and Restaurant Associations of India (FHRAI) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the CUTS Institute for Regulation & Competition (CIRC). The collaboration aims to bridge the widening gap between hospitality law and real-world practice.

“It is important to bridge the gaps between hospitality law and practice, as regulatory uncertainty and overlaps create hurdles for the industry,” said K. Shyama Raju, President of FHRAI, during the MoU signing.

India's tourism and hospitality sector is poised to exceed revenues of ₹5.12 lakh crore (\$59 billion) by 2028. However, startups and small enterprises often struggle with complex regulatory frameworks involving multiple licenses, labour laws, and compliance obligations—slowing down business growth and impacting customer experience, FHRAI noted in a release.

Environmental regulations have added further pressure, demanding stringent adherence to sustainability norms around energy, water, and waste management. While these align with global ESG and green building standards, implementation remains costly and difficult, particularly for smaller operators lacking institutional support, awareness, or incentives.

“In today's climate, legal literacy is not a luxury—it's a necessity for hospitality professionals,” said Raju. “With laws evolving rapidly, compliance demands increasing, and customer expectations rising, the FHRAI–CIRC course ‘Navigating the Legal Landscape of Hospitality’ is both timely and essential. It will equip professionals with the legal know-how to operate more responsibly and efficiently.”

The eight-week course is designed for a wide audience—including hoteliers, restaurateurs, HR managers, legal advisors, entrepreneurs, and hospitality students. It covers key areas such as licensing, contract law, labour regulations, taxation, intellectual property, and dispute resolution. With weekend live

sessions, expert instructors, and case-based learning, the programme ensures immediate real-world application.

Mr. Pradeep S. Mehta, Chairman of CIRC, highlighted the industry's knowledge gap: “Lack of legal awareness often results in inadvertent violations of consumer rights and regulatory slip-ups. Empowering professionals through structured legal education is critical for consumer protection, compliance, and trust-building in an increasingly regulated service sector.”

Mr. Mehta emphasized the need for a streamlined regulatory environment and more robust sustainability support mechanisms. “Creating widespread compliance awareness helps businesses avoid penalties, plan better, and build investor confidence—paving the way for long-term, sustainable growth.”

Mr. Raju concluded: “This course is more than a legal primer—it’s about building stronger, credible institutions. We urge professionals across the hospitality ecosystem to take advantage of this opportunity. Legal education is a foundational step towards a more resilient and future-ready industry.”