

'Vivanta, Ginger to be first branded hotels in Ayodhya'

►Continued from P 1

Since the pilgrim city will attract lakhs of devotees, the work for providing the required infrastructure has begun by the government and tourism biggies.

The Vivanta and Ginger announced by IHCL on Friday will come up on a five-acre complex near the upcoming airport. IHCL EVP (real estate and development) Suma Venkatesh said: "These signings are in line with IHCL's vision to strengthen its presence across spiritual centres in India. Ayodhya is an important pilgrimage site and receives a very high footfall throughout the year. These hotels will also complete the travel circuit with Lucknow and Varanasi in Uttar Pradesh."

The IHCL is partnering with Bhardwaj Global Infra Ventures for these two hotels. R P Singh and S P

Singh of Bhardwaj Global said the "Vivanta and Ginger hotels will be the first branded hotels in Ayodhya."

It is learnt that work is on to have a Taj also in the city. IHCL's Chhatwal had told TOI last May that the group was keen to have multiple properties in the city. The company, which has 19 hotels, including nine under development in UP, had recently signed its first hotel in Vrindavan that will open in 2026.

Clearly tourism is betting big on the pilgrim circuit as these places are being developed and attracting lakhs of incremental visitors. The tourism ministry, for instance, recently said Varanasi was witnessing a big increase in the number of visitors over pre-Covid times. The tourism industry believes once the Shri Ram Temple opens in Ayodhya, and the city gets an international airport, it will become an even bigger magnet for pilgrims.