



IAAI Newsletter

April 2014, 1st Fortnight Issue

From the President's Desk...



Mr Biji Eapen

IAAI is the only travel agents representative body relentlessly fighting for agency commission since June 2008 and so far we won the case before the Hon. High Court of Kerala in which the Hon. Court directed DGCA to look into the matter and DGCA passed its landmark Order of 5th March 2010, and a fresh advisory dated 17th Dec 2012. Later, IAAI successfully impleaded in the FIA Case, and the Secretary, MoCA after hearing all parties concerned, passed his order on 16th September 2013 mandating commission as our statutory right under Aircraft Rules 1937.

Friends, our continuous fight for constitutional implementation of the Law is on, under our Writ Petition No: 25752/ 2013 filed in October before the Hon High Court of Kerala, whereby, we have prayed before the Hon Court to direct DGCA to implement, execute and enforce the Law and through IA with the prayer to direct Secretary MoCA to issue a letter similar to that issued in the matter of Cargo Agents dated 29th August 2007. The above case was last listed for hearing on 20th March 2014, but could not be taken up for hearing due to paucity of time and as the Hon. Judge directed for detailed hearing. And the DGCA filed the Counter Affidavit only on 11th April 2014.

Since the court is on vacation from 12th April to 20th May 2014, the case is now posted for hearing immediately after the vacation. IAAI legal counsel shall study the Counter Affidavit filed by the DGCA and shall take appropriate action accordingly.

Tata SIA aims to start operations in October this year



Tata SIA Airlines Ltd expects to start flights in India in October 2014, having secured a No-objection Certificate (NoC) from the Ministry of Civil Aviation, Government of India to begin operations. The airline was granted an NoC by the Ministry last week, which is the most critical step in the process of obtaining an airline permit from the DGCA. The airline secured approvals from the Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India and the Foreign Investment Promotion Board (FIPB) earlier. Tata SIA Airlines will time its entry with the start of what is traditionally the most profitable period for airlines in India.

Singapore Airlines to fly A380s to India from May 30



Singapore Airlines will deploy the Airbus A380 aircraft on its flights to Mumbai and New Delhi from May 30, 2014. The A380 superjumbo will operate daily to both Mumbai and New Delhi, taking over from two daily flights that currently serve each city using smaller Boeing 777s. Another daily flight will continue to be operated with B777s. In total, 14 flights will serve each city per week. The Singapore Airlines A380 not only has immense public appeal, but also showcases their commitment to offer the best in-flight experience to our Indian travellers. Customers from India will now be able to enjoy the complete A380 experience from Delhi and Mumbai to our onward A380 destinations including Frankfurt, Hong Kong, London, Los Angeles, Melbourne, New York, Paris, Shanghai, Tokyo Narita and Zurich. Singapore Airlines was the first airline in the world to operate the A380 when it was put into service in October 2007 between Singapore and Sydney.



Dubai Airport closure for 80 Days

An 80 day Runway Closure in Dubai between 01May & 20Jul 2014 has been announced & several airlines have had to make schedule changes to varying degrees. More than 300 flights per week are expected to be relocated to Al Maktoum International Airport at Dubai World Central (DWC) in Jebel Ali during the 80-day runway refurbishment of Dubai International Airport starting May 1, 2014. DWC will also serve as an alternate airport should any flight be diverted due to bad weather or any other delays at Dubai International (DXB). So far, 17 airlines including flydubai, have confirmed their intent to temporarily relocate their services to Dubai's second airport from May 1 to July 29. During this period, Dubai International Airport's two runways will be closed consecutively for refurbishment and upgrades that will ensure Dubai Airports is able to maintain its high safety standards as well as increase the capacity of the two runways.

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Jet Airways expands Code-share pact with Air France

Jet Airways (India) Ltd. has expanded its code-share pact with Air France signed last June, which will enable passengers of both airlines seamless travel across destinations. The expanded agreement provides for enhanced network connectivity to passengers to 12 major cities across Europe and the UK. With the expanded pact, Jet Airways' passengers will now have seamless connectivity to Nice, Lyon, Marseille and Toulouse in France; Barcelona and Madrid in Spain; Hamburg in Germany; Prague in the Czech Republic; Dublin in Ireland; and Birmingham, Manchester and Newcastle in the UK. Currently, Air France places its marketing code on Jet Airways' domestic routes between Mumbai, Delhi and Bengaluru to Chennai, Hyderabad and Kolkata. The new code-share flights are open for sale from today and will be available for travel from May 14.

USA to allow spouse of H1-B visa holder to work in America

Aimed at attracting the world's best and brightest, the US will soon come out with a series of policy initiatives and changes in the existing rules including allowing the spouses of H-1B visas to work in America. The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) will soon publish several proposed rules that will make the US more attractive to talented foreign entrepreneurs and other high-skill immigrants who will contribute substantially to the US economy, create jobs, and enhance American innovative competitiveness. These proposed regulations include rules authorizing employment for spouses of certain high-skill workers on H-1B visas, as well as enhancing opportunities for outstanding professors and researchers. These measures build on continuing DHS efforts to streamline, eliminate inefficiency, and increase the transparency of the existing immigration system, such as by the launch of Entrepreneur Pathways, an online resource center that gives immigrant entrepreneurs an intuitive way to navigate opportunities to start and grow a business.



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Carlson globally introduces New Brands— Quorvus Collection and Radisson Red

Carlson Rezidor Hotel Group has announced to introduce two new brands—Quorvus Collection and Radisson Red globally. The group has four brands in India - Radisson Blu, Park Plaza, Country Inns & Suites by Carlson and Park Inn by Radisson. The hotel group also revealed to have 42 projects in the pipeline in India. Radisson Red is an extension of the Radisson brand. It will cater to young and tech savvy generation. The first Radisson Red hotel will open in Asia-Pacific region by 2015. Quorvus Collection will be expert-curated luxury hotels that will be known for preserving distinct characteristics and traditional luxury. The group is planning to open Quorvus in top 50 cities of the world. Globally they are planning to have 20 Quorvus hotels by 2020.

Govt. overhauling Air travel policy for disabled



The existing policy on providing equitable and comfortable treatment to persons with disabilities for air travel is deficient and needs an overhaul. The Civil Aviation Ministry is coming up with a new set of guidelines for the airport managers and airlines to make certain that persons with disabilities do not face discrimination and have comfortable air travel.

A committee was set up by the ministry to examine the efficacy of the present system regarding air travel by differently-abled people. The committee emphasized the Civil Aviation Regulations (CAR) was “inefficient” in fastening the responsibilities among the stakeholders, which included the airlines, and also lacked in implementation of the guidelines to ward off discrimination against the disabled. The committee considered it necessary to amend the CAR to ensure that persons with disabilities can have access to and enjoy air travel on an equal basis with others and without discrimination, with dignity.

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New Cars to hit Indian Roads soon

According to automobile experts, around 40 new car models are going to be launched during the next year. Some of the big names are, Toyota Etios Cross, Honda Mobilio, Tata Zest, Tata Bolt, Maruti Suzuki Ciaz etc.



Arunachal now on Rail map

On Monday, a train chugged into Naharlagun for the first time in Arunachal Pradesh's history, making Itanagar, the second state capital among the eight north eastern states after Guwahati to be put on the railway map of India. The train, with 10 passengers and two goods compartments, towed by a diesel engine, left Dekargaon in Assam at 7am and arrived at Naharlagun at 12.30 pm, covering a distance of 181 km.

Often referred to as India's land of rising sun, and despite almost 27 years of attaining statehood, Arunachal remains mainly accessible by road only and to small extent, by air. However there are remote areas that are accessible only on foot. Coming of the rail line was greeted with enthusiasm by the travelling public, the traders, power developers and tourist agents. Before the just launched daily passenger train service on the Harmuti – Naharlagun (Itanagar) broad gauge section, the state had only 1.26 km railway line inside its border with a single station, Bhalukpong, in East Kameng district. A rail link to Arunachal Pradesh was in line with the Railway's goal of providing connectivity to all state capitals of the northeastern region. The line from Harmuti traverses 6 kms in Lakhimpur district of Assam before entering lower Subansiri and runs along the left bank of river Dikong for about 7 km up to Doimukh before crossing the river. There are 46 minor bridges and 11 major bridges on the line.

Railways are not just stopping at Naharlagun. They plan to connect Upper Assam areas with Arunachal. Last year's rail budget had proposed survey of a new line covering a distance of 119 km from Rupee in Assam to Pasuramkund, a Hindu pilgrimage site in Arunachal, which attracts lakh of visitors from different places of the country and abroad during Makar Sakranti (in month of January).



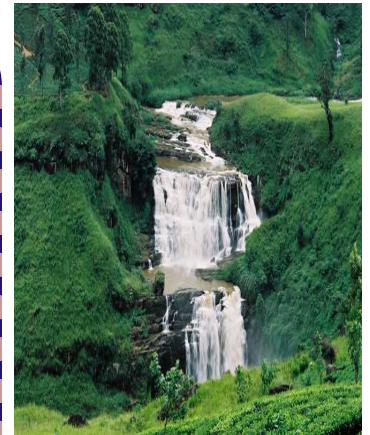
Hospitality sector boom in Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka has become an investment hotspot for Indian hotel chains as much as their overseas counterparts in the wake of a surge in tourism in the country since the end of the ethnic conflict five years ago and gradual easing of the global economic crisis.

Indian luxury hotel chain ITC is building a 300-room property in Colombo, in conjunction with the Sri Lankan government. Global chains including Starwood, Marriott and Best Western, too, have charted expansion plans in the country.

Tourist arrivals in Sri Lanka grew 26.7% last year compared to 2012, largely from India, China and Singapore. The safety and security factor improved after the LTTE (Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam) issue and Sri Lanka suddenly got on the global tourist map. Analysts say the hospitality sector in Sri Lanka is headed for an upswing over the next five years. Swiss hotel chain Moevenpick Hotels and Resorts plans to enter the country through managing hotels. Moevenpick plans to operate three five-star hotels. Similarly, Hyatt Hotels & Resorts has entered into a management agreement with the government affiliate Sinolanka Hotels and Spa Private Limited for the 475-room Grand Hyatt hotel in Colombo which is slated to open next year.

Sri Lanka is largely under-represented in terms of branded hotel rooms and this is the right time to enter the market. It is a green market and largely unsold in terms of International standard rooms.



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Scheduled Airlines will have to Deploy 6% Capacity in 'Remote Areas'

The Civil Aviation regulator Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) recently notified the new regional air connectivity guidelines under the Civil Aviation Requirements. As per the new regional air connectivity requirements, scheduled airlines will have to deploy at least 6% of their total operating capacity to "remote or strategic areas".

The areas identified are North East region, with the exception of Guwahati and Bagdogra, all airports in Jammu & Kashmir with the exception of Jammu, all airports in Andaman & Nicobar Islands and Lakshwadeep. Apart from this, airlines will also need to deploy 1% of their total capacity on routes operated within the four regions identified by the Civil Aviation ministry. However, for the purpose of calculation of capacity deployed within the remote or strategic regions, operations to Guwahati, Bagdogra and Jammu will also be included.

The operating capacity will be calculated on the basis of available seat kilometres deployed in regions apart from the remote and strategic areas. Previously, remote and regional area connectivity was mandated under the Route Disbursal Guidelines (RDG). The RDG mandated airlines to deploy a tenth of their capacity flying on trunk routes like Delhi-Mumbai to non-metro routes or Category II routes. The RDG was first notified in 1994.



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Interpol cracks down on fraudulent Online Air Ticket Sales

Interpol has carried out a crackdown on suspicious online air ticket transactions using fake or stolen credit cards. Over 180 people were arrested during an operation coordinated by Europol and supported by Interpol at airports across Europe and the US to tackle credit card fraud and illegal immigration. A two day operation was carried out on April 8 & 9 involving law enforcement agencies with support from the European Cybercrime Centre, the EU border control agency Frontex and Eurojust. The crackdown took place at more than 68 airports in 32 countries : 24 EU member countries plus Brazil, Colombia, Iceland, Norway, Peru, Switzerland, Ukraine and the US.



INTERPOL

Outlook Travellers “The Best of TRAVELS Awards” for 2013

Hill Stations	:	Munnar
Beaches	:	Candolim, Goa
Tourist Cities	:	Jaipur
Heritage Sites	:	Taj Mahal, Agra
Romantic Destinations	:	Goa
Pilgrimage Sites	:	Vaishno Devi
Adventure Tourism Destinations	:	Ladakh
National Parks	:	Corbett National Park
Medical Tourism Facilities	:	Kottakkal Arya Vaidya Sala, Malappuram
Brand Marketing Campaigns	:	Gujrat

International Destinations :

- Best in Asia : Thailand
- Best in Europe : Switzerland
- Best in rest of the World : New Zealand

Cruises : Royal Caribbean

Upcoming Destinations :

- In India : Andamans
- Overseas : Turkey

Airlines :

- Domestic : IndiGo
- International (Best Business Class) : Emirates
- International (Best Service) : Emirates

Airports :

- Domestic : Indira Gandhi International Airport, New Delhi
- International : Changi Airport, Singapore

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Hotels (Indian) :

- **Luxury :** The Oberoi Udaivilas, Udaipur
- **Business :** ITC Grand Central, Mumbai
- **Heritage :** Taj Falaknuma Palace, Hyderabad
- **Mid-range :** Kurumba Village Resorts, Nilgiris
- **Boutique :** Orange County, Coorg
- **Budget / Homestay :** Ginger
- **Spa Hotel / Hotel Spa :** Ananda in the Himalayas
- **Hotel Restaurant :** Wasabi by Morimoto, The Taj Palace Hotel, Mumbai
- **Hotel Chefs :** Ananda Solomon, Vivanta by Taj President, Mumbai

Hotels (International) :

- **Best in Asia :** Mandarin Oriental Bangkok, Thailand
- **Best in Europe :** Lausanne Palace & Spa, Lausanne, Switzerland
- **Best in Rest of the World:** Cape Grace, Cape Town, South Africa

Tour Operators :

- **Inbound :** Cox n Kings
- **Outbound :** Cox n Kings
- **Boutique :** Aquaterra Adventures
- **Adventure :** DiveIndia, Andamans
- **Responsible Tourism :** Help Tourism

Travel Portals : MakeMyTrip

Special Jury Category Awards :

- **Outstanding Achievement in Travel :** Gouthami of Travel Another India
- **Indian Hotel Debut of the Year :** The Khyber Himalayan Resort & Spa, Gulmarg

Lighter Moments

A large two engined train was crossing America. After they had gone some distance one of the engines broke down. "No problem," the engineer thought, and carried on at half power.

Farther on down the line, the second engine broke down, and the train slowed to a dead stop. The engineer decided he should inform the passengers about why the train had stopped, and made the following announcement:

"Ladies and gentlemen, I have some good news and some bad news. The bad news is that both engines have failed, and we will be stuck here for some time. The good news is that you decided to take the train and not fly."

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Thought for the Fortnight

Your mind is your great friend if you control it.
However your mind is your greatest enemy if it controls you.

— Bhagwat Geeta

IAAI Director Board

1. **Mr Biji Eapen, National President** : **Speedwings Travel & Cargo Pvt. Ltd., Kochi.**
2. **Mr V L Jekannathan, National Gen. Secretary** : **All India Travel Agency (Madurai) Pvt. Ltd., Chennai.**
3. **Mr Salvadore Saldanha, National Treasurer** : **S V Airlinks Pvt Ltd., Mumbai.**
4. **Ms Surinder Kumar, Director—NR** : **Travelmate India Pvt Ltd., New Delhi.**
5. **Mr Rajendra Churiwala, Director—ER** : **Survottam Travels (P) Ltd., Kolkata.**
6. **Mr T K Gopakumar, Director—SR** : **Magellan Travel Services (P) Ltd., Chennai.**
7. **Mr Naresh Rajkotia, Director—WR** : **Madhuram Travels & Tours, Mumbai.**

We welcome your suggestions to improve this newsletter.

The same may be forwarded to iaai.pune@iaai.in