



IAAI Newsletter

May 2014 / IInd Fortnight Issue

IAAI News

IAAI has been quick to represent the IATA Agents grievances on the Airline Commission issue to the new Government & a Memorandum has been submitted to the Honorable Prime Minister of India on 28th May 2014 regarding reinstatement of Travel Agents Commission as per IATA resolution 818g at 5% under India Aircraft Rule, 1937 with copies to Minister of Civil Aviation, Secretary (Ministry of Civil Aviation) & the Director General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) :-

The Synopsis & Annexure is displayed on the IAAI website “www.iaai.in”. The Memorandum highlights the Government of India order dated 16 / 09 / 2013 ordering that there shall not be collection of any Transaction Fee & making it clear that Airlines are bound to pay Commission to accredited Travel Agents, *with a plea to implement the same on an urgent basis.*

Air India Privatization an Option, says new Aviation Minister



The new Minister for Civil Aviation Mr Pusapati Raju has said that, the new Government will examine all issues related to Air India & that privatization of the airline cannot be ruled out.

Air India total debts as on December 2013 have risen to Rs.47,200 Crores. Air India has already used

up almost half of the Rs.30,000-crore Equity infusion promised till 2020, without any real turnaround.

The India Commercial Pilots Association (ICPA) has written to the PM that it is not averse to part or complete pri-

vatization of the airline, if done fairly.

Airline sources say that as long as politicians & bureaucrats run the airline, there is no way Air India can perform.

Sri Lankan Airlines joins OneWorld Alliance



Sri Lankan Airlines has become a full member of OneWorld®, offering the alliance's complete range of services and benefits with effect from Thursday 1 May 2014 – as the first carrier from the Indian sub-continent to become part of any global airline groups. The national airline of Sri Lanka received clearance to board OneWorld, the world's leading quality airline alliance, after successfully completing a thorough review of its readiness conducted by Cathay Pacific Airways, which is sponsoring its entry into the alliance, with the OneWorld central team.

From the first flights on 1 May 2014, the 400,000 members of SriLankan's FlySmiLes loyalty programme in effect, have their frequent flyer privileges extended to whenever they fly with any OneWorld member airline. These include leading carriers from each global region – fellow Asia-Pacific carriers Cathay Pacific, Japan Airlines, Malaysia Airlines and Qantas; Europe's airberlin, British Airways, Finnair, Iberia and Russia's S7 Airlines; Qatar Airways and Royal Jordanian, from the Middle East; American Airlines and, from 31

March, its merger partner US Airways, from North America; LAN and, also from 31 March, TAM from South America; and more than 30 affiliated airlines. As part of OneWorld, Sri Lankan will be able to offer all of its customers seamless connections across a global network serving almost a thousand destinations in more than 150 countries, with first rate connections between the world's leading business centres. Its addition will bring two new destinations on to the OneWorld network – Sri Lanka's new Hambantota International and India's Tiruchirappalli. Sri Lankan already code-shares with OneWorld members Malaysia Airlines and S7 Airlines with code-share agreements with a number of other OneWorld partners at an advanced stage of discussion.

With Sri Lankan, OneWorld:

- Serves almost 1,000 airports in 150 countries, with 14,250 daily departures.
- Carries more than 500 million passengers a year on a combined fleet of some 3,300 aircraft.
- Generates US\$ 140 billion annual revenues.
- Offers more than 600 airport lounges, including many frequently rated the as the world's best.

No entry for Agents at Railway Reservation Centres



R a i l w a y ticket booking agents will not be allowed to book tickets at the computerized reservation centres of the railway administration. The ban came into effect in Pune division a few days ago. The Railways authorizes the Rail Travellers Service Agents (RTSA) to book tickets for train travel. Agents charge

passengers an additional sum for the service. The decision to ban entry of agents at reservation counters was taken long back, but a notification was issued on 20th May. Agents will not be allowed at the counters, but people can walk in at any reservation cen-

tre to book their ticket. The counters, if designated for agents, will now be open for all. The RTSA Association wants agents to be allowed in till the railway administration appoints RTSAs as e-ticketing agents.

Railways start Computerized booking of Retiring Rooms



Indian Railways provides lodging facility through retiring rooms to its passengers at stations spread across the country. In order to further enhance its service, Railways has developed the Retiring Room Application for computerised booking of retiring rooms. At present, booking of retiring rooms has been computerised at 67 stations. The rooms can be booked through

the Internet on www.railtourismindia.com. Currently, b o o k i n g / cancellation, up-gradation and extension are available through the application. Rooms can be booked in advance (up to 60 days) through Internet as well as on terminals

at stations. The facility of booking of retiring room is available only on confirmed and RAC tickets. The rooms can be booked two days in advance.

VFS Global inaugurates Joint Application Centre for Italy & France Visa in Kolkata

VFS Global has recently opened a Joint Visa Application Centre (VAC) in Kolkata for accepting visa application forms for Italy and France from residents of the city and the neighbouring states. The new VAC is conveniently lo-

cated and offers greater space, improved infrastructure and security facilities, as per a release. It offers an increased number of application counters and extended service hours, and includes a dedicated website for easy access to infor-

mation, and professional and responsive staff to handle the visa application process with local language capability. The new Centre in Kolkata will be open from 0900hrs to 1500hrs on week days.



VFS.GLOBAL
EST. 2001

Singapore Airlines will not charge premium fares for India-bound A380 flights

Singapore Airlines Ltd. (SIA) has said that it would not charge passengers premium fares for flying on the Airbus A380, which it will press into service on flights to Mumbai

and Delhi starting May 30. The A380 superjumbo will operate daily to both Mumbai and New Delhi with effect from May 30, replacing two daily flights that currently serve

each city using the smaller Boeing 777s. Another daily flight will continue to be operated with the 777. In total, 14 flights will serve each city per week.



- Travel to five countries in the SADC (Southern African Development Community) region may soon be a seamless journey. Angola, Namibia, Zambia, Botswana and Zimbabwe may soon have a common visa plan that will encourage tourism flow in the region and facilitate seamless travel within the region. South Africa will also be actively supporting the initiative.
- Nepal has named two Himalayan peaks near Mount Everest after Sir Edmund Hillary and Sherpa Tenzing Norgay and opened them to foreigners for climbing, a month after an avalanche killed 16 sherpa guides. Last month's tragedy forced hundreds of foreign climbers to abandon their attempts on the Everest, and the renaming exercise marked an attempt to revive Nepal's appeal to mountaineers.

Emirates to increase flights to double daily to Seychelles from Oct 28, 2014



Emirates is set to step up operations to the Seychelles by increasing services to double daily from October 28, 2014 .

The introduction of two more flights per week to the Seychelles will increase the

existing 12 scheduled flights to 14. 'Emirates' decision to commit two additional scheduled flights a week is a clear indication of customer demand. Emirates' expanded schedule provides better connectivity and a wider choice for our customers connecting through

Dubai. These additional seats every week are central to helping us meet the growing demand and support the Seychelles tourism industry.

Qatar Airways to deploy 2nd A380 from Doha-Paris

Qatar Airways' second A380 aircraft will, from July 3, 2014, commence operations from Hamad International Airport in Doha to Paris Charles de

Gaulle Airport. The airline recently announced that starting from next month, it would deploy the first of its 13 A380s on the QR003 and QR004 London-

Heathrow route. The second A380 will be used for service to Paris on QR39, and return on QR40.



- The Maharashtra Tourism Development Corporation (MTDC), in partnership with WB International Consultants and AB Hospitality, has launched the country's first floating hotel (floatel), named 'AB Celestial', in Mumbai. The floatel, which will house two multi-cuisine restaurants including a club lounge equipped with a 24-hour coffee shop, will be docked at the Maharashtra Maritime Board's jetty at Bandra under the Bandra-Worli Sea Link. AB Celestial will be open to public from August 15, 2014.

Qatar Airways to introduce two more US-bound flights from Kolkata

Starting next month, Qatar Airways will launch services from Kolkata to two more US destinations. The airline will start flights to Miami from June 10, and to and Dallas/Fort Worth from July 1. There will be a connecting time of 50-60 minutes at the new Hamad International Airport in Doha en route.

Qatar Airways currently flies to five US destinations, namely New York, Washington DC, Chicago, Houston and Philadelphia. The two new routes will be served by the airline's flagship wide-body Boeing 777 and Airbus 320 aircraft.



South Africa to grant visa to Indian businessmen in 4 days



South Africa will grant visa to Indian businessmen, who intend to explore prospects in the country for mutual business gains, within four days of submitting an application. Since South Africa enjoys a cordial relationship with India and its companies are ex-

panding their businesses in South Africa, the decision to grant visa facilities has been taken to further cement business ties between both countries.

India ranks amongst the top ten trading partners of South Africa and is now South Africa's fifth

largest export destination and sixth largest source of imports. India's investments in South Africa are estimated at around USD six billion to date and are expected to touch USD seven billion in the coming years.

- Qatar Airways recently launched direct flights to Istanbul Sabiha Gökçen International Airport, its third destination in Turkey and 140th from Doha. This flight is a four-times-a-week service. The route, which will be operated by an Airbus A320, with 12 seats in Business Class and 132 in Economy, will be Qatar Airways' third route to Turkey. On Mondays and Saturdays, flight QR243 will depart from Doha at 1355 hrs, to arrive in Sabiha Airport at 1810 hrs. On the return leg, flight QR244 will depart at 1905 hrs to arrive at 2300 hrs. On Tuesdays and Thursdays, flight QR243 will depart Doha at 1320 hrs, to arrive Sabiha Airport at 1735 hrs. On the return leg, flight QR244 will depart Sabiha Airport at 1835 hrs to arrive at 2230 hrs.

CISF to halve Airport Security check time for Passengers

In order to enhance passenger comfort, the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) has decided to cut security checks and frisking time at the airports to almost half of the present time taken.

The force has prepared a four-point new standard operating procedure for its security personnel who are deployed at the country's 59 civil airports to frisk and identify genuine travelling passengers and scan

suspect baggage. CISF have decided to cut the security check time for air fliers at airports by half. At present, CISF officials take 7-8 minutes to complete the frisking and identification of passengers but now they plan to cut it down by half to about 4 minutes. They have initiated a new profiling mechanism by which the security person

intelligently identifies between a genuine and a fake or suspect passenger. Once that is done, the security personnel are being trained to quickly go through three details in the air ticket which is checking the correct flight number, date, time and the valid I-card of the passenger.



MTDC undertakes English language training for Mumbai Cab Drivers

The Maharashtra Tourism Development Corporation (MTDC), along with GVK and Maharashtra Centre for Entrepreneurship Development (MCED), have begun training taxi drivers in Mumbai in spoken English

and behavioural skills. They will also be given more information on prominent tourism places across the city. The project kick-started at the Sahar International Airport yesterday with nearly 60 cab drivers being

trained on the first day. The project has been conceptualized looking into the growing number of tourists visiting Maharashtra, and also to ensure smooth flow of information between tourists and cab drivers.



- India-born, Abu Dhabi-based Entrepreneur Mr B R Shetty is buying Travelex, the world's leading foreign exchange specialist, from private equity group Apax Partners in a \$1.7 billion or Rs 9,800 crore deal, strengthening the play in the foreign currency exchange services market. Mr Shetty, also the owner of UAE Exchange, Middle East's biggest foreign currency provider, has partnered with Centurion, the investment vehicle owned by Abu Dhabi scion, for the deal.

DGCA issues New guidelines for better Passenger care at Airports

The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has issued comprehensive guidelines on the facilities/courtesies to be extended to passengers at airports in the form of Air Transport Circular 1 of 2014. The Circular lays emphasis on standardized passenger complaint redressal and courteous behavior of airline/airport staff dealing with passengers. The guidelines state that automated buggies should be provided free of charge for all senior citizens, expectant mothers and disabled and needy passengers in the terminal building to facilitate access

to boarding gates located beyond reasonable walking distance at all airports having annual aircraft movements of 50,000 or more. There should be small trolleys available after security check for carrying hand baggage up to the boarding gate. Airlines/airport operators should display details of their Nodal Officer and Appellate Authority in a conspicuous manner at key areas of the airport, indicating their names, contact number and e-mail addresses.

Ground handling staff of airlines/airport operators engaged in passenger handling must undergo periodic soft skill training for sensitization, courtesy, behavior and procedures for assisting passengers. Additionally, airlines/airport operators should every month report to DGCA on passenger complaints and any incident of misdemeanor, discourteous behavior and harassment, along with the action taken.

DIRECTORATE GENERAL
OF CIVIL AVIATION



AirAsia India to start flying from 12th June 14

AirAsia Bhd's (AIRA.KL) Indian joint venture will start flying from 12th June. AirAsia India will open ticket sales from Friday, 30th May at 9.30pm. AirAsia India, which will

operate a low-cost airline, will start its maiden daily flight on the Bangalore-Goa route with a price tag of Rs.990/- including taxes.

India's Tata Group and investment firm

Telestra Tradeplace are AirAsia's partners in the venture.



Driverless Car from Google

The New Google Drive

Google is building a fleet of 100 experimental cars that do not require a driver

What's Special About the Car?

IT HAS

- ▶ No brakes
- ▶ No steering wheel
- ▶ No gear shift
- ▶ No accelerator pedal

WHAT'S IN IT?

- ▶ It has two seats
- ▶ It has two buttons: a start button and a red button for panic stops

FOR CITY ROADS

- ▶ The car will have a top speed of 25 miles per hour

WHEN WILL IT ROLL OUT?

- ▶ It should be road-ready by early 2015

X FACTORS

- ▶ The front of the car will be made from a foamlike material so that it won't hurt if car hits a passenger
- ▶ Car could be summoned with a smartphone app
- ▶ It could drive to a destination selected on the app
- ▶ It will have electronic sensors that can see about 600 feet in all directions

Self-driving cars have the potential to drive much closer together and in the future at much higher speeds."

SERGEY BRIN, cofounder, Google



Lonely Planet Travel Awards 2014

Award Category	International	Indian
Best Destination Culture	Spain	Gujarat
Best Destination Adventure	Australia	Uttarakhand
Best Destination Wildlife	South Africa	Madhya Pradesh
Best Destination Relaxation	The Seychelles	Goa
Best Destination Value	Thailand	Kerala
Best Destination Food / Drink	Singapore	New Delhi
Best Destination Family	Malaysia	Rajasthan
Best Destination Romance	Paris	Gulmarg
Best Destination Shopping	Dubai	Mumbai
Best Destination Emerging	Belgium	Chhattisgarh
India's favorite Destination	Switzerland	---
Best Hotel Luxury	Burj Al Arab, Dubai	The Leela Kovalam, Kerala
Best Hotel Business	Four Seasons Hotel Washington, DC, USA	ITC Grand Chola, Chennai
Best Hotel Wildlife	Malamala Main Camp, South Africa	Orange County, Kabini
Best Hotel Heritage	---	Taj Lake Palace, Udaipur
Best Hotel Relaxation	---	Windflower Hall, Shimla
Best Hotel Homestay	---	Tathagata Farm, Darjeeling
Best Hotel romance	---	Coconut Lagoon, Kuttanad Kerala
Best Hotel value	---	Palais De Mahe, Puducherry



Reminder

The last date for the current quarter Advance Tax payment due date is 15th June 2014. Regular quarterly Advance Tax payment avoids tax burden at the end of the year & also penalty charges.

Thought for the Fortnight

When one door of happiness closes, another opens, but often we look so long at the closed door that we do not see the one that is opened for us.

— Helen Keller

Lighter Moments

A mechanic was working on an engine when he spotted a well-known heart surgeon in his shop. He asked a question to the surgeon ,

“So Doc, look at this engine. I open its heart, take valves out, fix them & put them back in, & when I finish it works just like new. So how come you get the really big bucks & I get peanuts, when you & I are basically doing the same work?”

The Surgeon paused, smiled & leaned over, & whispered to the mechanic... *“Try doing it with the engine running”*.

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.

Newsletter Editor

Mr Devendra Ghule

Asst Editor

Mr Saras Deshpande

Sudin Travels & Forex Pvt Ltd., Pune

We welcome your suggestions to improve this newsletter.

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