



IAAI Newsletter

May 2014, 1st Fortnight Issue

Medical tourism with Luxury Hospitals



Medical care in India is going extreme. Starting with room tariffs that can put the best luxury hotels to shame, private hospitals are adopting the best practices in hospitality to satisfy the whims of the truly demanding. For instance, some hospitals provide pickup and drop for patients in luxury cars. Others whip up gourmet fare for those who are fussy about their meals. Some even take a huge leap of faith and play the Gayatri mantra in the labour room while a baby is being born. There is a veritable technology arms race, with Wi-Fi enabled suites, extra large LED TV sets and ultramodern gadgets all vying for the attention of an unwell CEO, a minister, or just someone with a packed wallet who would want to run his office from the superlative comfort of his hospital room.

The Apollo Hospitals Group, for instance, has a few Rs 30,000-a-night suites that can house the patient and his entourage in luxury within interpreters, personal attendants, a well stocked pantry and the works. Similarly, a suite in Fortis La Femme in South Delhi will set one back by around Rs 37,000 for one night, at that price, one can stay at The Oberoi, New Delhi, for two nights. A presidential suite in Mumbai's Hiranandani Hospital costs Rs 30,000/-. Seven Hills Hospital, charges Rs 20,000 for a suite. And the tariffs don't include medical charges. A two-day all-inclusive childbirth package at Fortis La Femme can go up to Rs 4-5 lakh.

Contrary to the elite image of these hospitals, it is actually the low cost of treatments in India that is helping them rake in foreign patients. A liver transplant in the US costs Rs 2 crore, comparing with Indian Hospitals for Rs 30 lakh and that includes airfare. According to Apollo Hospitals, the no. of foreign patients opting for organ transplants is increasing by 20 % each year.

Qatar Airways launches website for Indian travel trade

Qatar Airways has launched an exclusive website for Indian travel trade partners. The website is aimed at providing up-to-date information on the company. The site is designed to serve as a unified communication channel for Indian trade to keep them informed and updated about various offers, products, circulars, advisories, policies and news on the latest developments from the airline.

The website is a platform for travel trade to raise queries and get instant support and feedback from the company. The website offers a selection of information on Qatar Airways in an easy-to-use format, enabling agents to access data by registering and logging on the website <https://tradepartners.qatarairways.com/AgentPortal/login.page>

This platform will help us market air fares and offers & share regular updates with Travel Agents on a real-time basis.

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Emirates to deploy super jumbo A380 on Dubai—Delhi / Mumbai route from July



After Singapore Airlines, Emirates will introduce its Airbus A380 super jumbo aircraft on its Delhi-Mumbai route from July, the airline announced yesterday, as per a Business Standard report. Singapore Airlines will start operating the A380 to Delhi and Mumbai from May 30.

Emirates plans to deploy an A380 on one of its existing daily services between Dubai to Mumbai, starting from July and is working closely with Mumbai Airport authorities to make this deployment possible. In addition we have plans to upgrade existing aircraft to larger capacity Boeing 777s to Delhi, Hyderabad and Mumbai starting from June 1. Emirates is the largest operator of Airbus A380 planes and has 50 of them in its fleet. It is also the largest foreign airline operating into India with 185 weekly flights.



Civil Aviation

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DGCA Orders Real-time Tracking of Flights

The Directorate General of Civil Aviation has ordered airlines to track planes on a real-time basis from takeoff to landing, following a report from the Malaysian government recommending such measures after the disappearance of Malaysia Airlines flight MH 370.

DGCA has asked air transport operators to use either the onboard Aircraft Communications Addressing and Reporting System (ACARS) or Automatic Dependent Surveillance — Broadcast (ADS-B) for real-time tracking. Airlines have to ensure that the two devices are in working condition before every departure. Operators have also been advised to devise a procedure for effective tracking of the aircraft while flying over areas where there is no coverage of ACARS/ ADS-B. ACARS is like an onboard computer which collects large chunks of information about aircraft health and performance and sends digital messages to a ground-level control centre, the airline and even the engine manufacturer. Just before takeoff, an automatic message is triggered from the ACARS on the aircraft to the operations control centre which records the departure time. A similar process happens when the flight lands. Apart from technical and location details of an aircraft, ACARS can give information on weather, medical emergencies and catering requirements. In India, IndiGo, GoAir and Air India have ACARS on all their planes. Jet Airways uses ACARS on its wide-bodied planes and a Boeing programme called Airplane Health Management for tracking other planes. Spice-Jet doesn't have ACARS yet but the airline has systems in place for flight tracking and will be able to comply with the DGCA safety circular.

- Taking a cue from its competitor IndiGo, budget carrier SpiceJet recently announced up to 25 per cent discount on tickets for four or more passengers travelling together on domestic flights. SpiceJet has consolidated its base fare by including fuel surcharge in it. Three days ago, another budget carrier IndiGo had announced special family fares offering similar discount of up to 25 per cent for a family of four to nine travelling together on a single passenger name record (PNR) across its domestic network.

Etihad launches luxury seats called “Residence”

Etihad Airways has unveiled super-luxurious products that are similar to luxury private jets. The airline, which is well known for its luxury, announced a new class of seats called “Residence”, described as a three-room suite. These will be introduced in the new wide-body aircraft—A380s.

The Residence would be priced on par with the private jets. Residence ticket from London to Abu Dhabi would cost in the range of \$20,000.



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Qatar Airways offers glimpse of A380 Business Class lounge

Qatar Airways recently offered a glimpse of its First and Business Class lounge and bathroom interiors of its customized A380-800 aircraft. The on-board lounge of Qatar Airways' A380 has been designed keeping in mind comfort for passengers. The lounge has been developed to make them feel like they are in their own executive club. It is spacious with the most advanced mood lighting system available. The First Class bathrooms have also been customized to create spa-like warmth. The lavatories include features such as modern taps which are sensor operated and large square modern sinks which help to maximize space. The airline is due to receive its first A380 very soon, the first of 13 such aircraft on order and it will be deployed on one of its busiest routes, Doha – London Heathrow from next month.



- Hyatt Hotels & Resorts has unveiled Hyatt Raipur in Chhattisgarh, making it the hotel group's sixth Hyatt-branded property in India and the city's first international business hotel. As part of Magneto – The Mall, a mixed-use complex, the 105-room Hyatt Raipur is located on National Highway 6, within close proximity of Swami Vivekananda Airport and the city's business and commercial centre. Hyatt Raipur guest rooms include four suites. Guest rooms feature dark walnut finishes and floor-to-ceiling windows that grant views of the city. Each room is equipped with a work station and high-speed Internet connectivity.

DGCA Wants Only 'Fit' Cabin Crew to Fly, Sets Norms.

For the first time, the country's aviation regulator has issued civil aviation requirements for medical examination of cabin crew to ensure that no overweight or obese person is a flight steward or an air hostess, thus making sure that the crew in the sky stays thin and agile. According to the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), this was necessary since Rule 38B of Aircraft Rule 1937 states that the cabin crew must remain medically fit to discharge duties in in-flight operations. Taking into consideration the ageing process and requirement of agility to perform cabin safety duty efficiently, frequency of medical examinations have been prescribed.

As per the new regulations, cabin crew till the age of 40 years will undergo medical examinations every four years, between 40 and 50 years, the crew will have to take medical examinations every two years, and every year beyond the age of 50.

DGCA's requirements say that the BMI, or body mass index, will be calculated as $\text{weight in kilograms} / (\text{height in meters})^2$. For male cabin crew, a BMI of 18-25 has been termed as normal while for female crew, 18-22 has been termed as normal. BMI of 25-29.9 for male crew is considered overweight and 30 and above is obese, while for females BMI of 22-27 will be considered overweight and 27 and above will be considered obese.

Based on the medical reports, the crew will be termed unfit, temporarily fit or permanently unfit. If the BMI is found to be overweight, they will be deemed 'Temporarily Unfit' and given three months time to reduce weight. If they still don't manage to do that the 'Temporarily Unfit' tag will continue for three more months. The process will continue for 18 months and if the person has not trimmed down by then, the crew member will be deemed 'Permanently Unfit'.

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RBI orders banks not to charge penalty for bank balance below minimum limit

Customers may soon be spared penalties for non-maintenance of minimum balances in savings accounts with the Reserve Bank India asking banks to cut down services on low-balance accounts and do away with fines. Banks however say the new regime will lead to higher charges on services for customers. According to RBI, Banks should not take undue advantage of customer difficulty or inattention. Instead of levying penal charges for non-maintenance of minimum balance in ordinary savings bank accounts, banks should limit services available on such accounts to those available to basic savings bank deposit accounts and restore the services when the balances improve to the minimum required level.

Many account holders who maintained dormant accounts, which were short of the Rs 10,000/- insisted on by most private banks, found that their balances had vanished as the bank had deducted a penalty every quarter for not maintaining adequate balance.

- **Jet Airways (India) Ltd. is trimming domestic operations as it piles up losses because of high operating costs and intense competition. The airline is in the process of shutting some domestic stations and pulling out from loss-making routes. Jet Airways is focusing on adding flights from Indian cities via Abu Dhabi, where Etihad is based, to boost profitability. They have already closed three domestic stations, including Tirupati, Visakhapatnam and Vijayawada (all in Andhra Pradesh), as part of rationalising domestic operations.**
- **Skytrax recently ranked San Francisco International Airport (SFO) third in the 'Best Airports Worldwide (40 million to 50 million passengers)' category after Seoul-Incheon and Kuala Lumpur International Airports. SFO was also rated fourth in the 'Best Airports in North America' category and fifth in the 'Best Staff (Customer Service) in North America'.**
- **Taj Group is set to open Taj Dubai in the fourth quarter of this year. Taj Hotels, Resorts & Palaces is focused on expanding its footprints in the Middle East with the launch of Taj Dubai in the region's economic, financial and tourism hub. The Group aims to establish the hotel as the leading luxury hotel for business and leisure in the region.**

World's first Electric Plane

The world's first airplane completely powered by electricity has successfully taken to the skies for its maiden flight. According to its developer Airbus, it could bring down air travel cost by more than a third. The small experimental aircraft called 'E-Fan' carried its first flight at an airport near Bordeaux in southwestern France, and could prove to be a key step towards greener, quieter and cheaper air travel. Manufactured by Toulouse-based Airbus, E-Fan measures little more than 19 feet from nose to tail and makes slightly more noise than a hairdryer. Powered by 120 lithium-ion polymer batteries, the plane's first official flight last month lasted less than 10 minutes, though the plane has the capability to fly for around an hour before recharging.

An hour long commercial flight with the E-Fan, according to Airbus, could cost only \$16, compared to \$55 for a flight in a petrol-powered plane of the same size. The electric E-Fan training aircraft is a highly innovative technology experimental demonstrator based on an all-composite construction. The E-Fan project and Airbus Group's commitment to the field of electric and hybrid research show their vision of future technological developments. It will not only lead to a further reduction in aircraft emissions and noise to support the environmental goals but will also lead to more economic and efficient aircraft technology in the long run.

Airbus plans to manufacture two versions of the E-Fan. The two-seater E-Fan 2.0 will be a fully electric training aircraft, while E-Fan 4.0 will be used for both training and general flight purposes and will be powered by a hybrid system.

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Qatar's New Hamad International Airport

Qatar Airways will officially move to its new home at Hamad International Airport (HIA), the world's newest state-of-the-art hub, on May 27th, 2014, when the world-class facility will become the new home for the national carrier of Qatar. Qatar Airways, which has been operating out of Doha International Airport for 17 years, has grown from operating only a handful of aircraft regionally to today where it has 134 aircraft flying to 138 international destinations. The move to HIA's state-of-the-art facilities is set to compliment Qatar Airways five-star service.



HIA will offer passengers a new standard in international travel and help in supporting Qatar Airways as it continues to grow its operations through its continuous fleet and route expansion. This airport will redefine the international traveller experience and set a new benchmark for airport excellence, and will enable Qatar Airways to offer its passengers an unrivalled experience. HIA, the world's newest international hub, is located four kilometres from the current Doha International Airport, and was built on land of which 60 per cent was reclaimed from the sea. The airport, which will operate Concourses A, B and C initially, will have the capacity to accommodate 30 million passengers annually upon opening and will redefine airport excellence. The state-of-the-art facility features 138 check-in counters across five islands, comprising of 108 counters for Qatar Airways' Economy passengers and all other airlines; 14 seated check-in areas for Qatar Airways' First Class passengers; and 16 counters dedicated to Qatar Airways' Business Class passengers.

Following the soft opening of the airport on April 30th, ten airlines are already flying in and out including Biman Bangladesh Airlines, flydubai, Air Arabia, Iran Air, Air India Express, Yemenia, Pakistan International Airlines, Syrian Airlines, Pegasus Airlines and Nepal Airlines.

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Mumbai—Goa Double Decker Train ready for trials

Railway passengers can look forward to an easier experience getting tickets on the Mumbai-Goa route if trials for double-decker trains succeed on this sector. As of now, double-decker trains operate between Mumbai and Ahmedabad in Western India. Introduction of double-decker trains on the Mumbai-Goa sector will throw open options for more berths per train and bring the demand pressure to manageable levels during the peak season.

The double-decker rake has already arrived in Mumbai and trials will be initiated shortly, hoping to be completed in a month. Trials will be carried out by the CR, Konkan Railway, and the Research, Design and Standards Organization (RDSO). Readings of the oscillation and route trials will then be submitted to the commissioner of railway safety, who will then decide on clearance. The route between Mumbai and Goa operates on a single track. In other words, the track is used for running trains in both up and down directions.

The Double-Decker train is likely to replace the existing Janshtabdi train that leaves from Dadar at 5.25am and arrives in Madgaon at 4pm. In the up direction, it leaves from Madgaon at 12.10pm and arrives at Dadar at 11.05pm. A double-decker compartment can accommodate 120 passengers, including 50 on the upper deck, 48 on the lower and 22 on the ends. There are likely to be 10 coaches attached to the double decker train.



Thought for the Fortnight

Be grateful for the happiness in your life which has led to growth & also for the sadness which gives depth to life.

Lighter Moment

A Police Officer sees an old lady driving & knitting at the same time & goes after driving next to her for a while he yells to her, "Pullover". She replies, "No. A pair of socks".

IAAI Director Board

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We welcome your suggestions to improve this newsletter.

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