



# IAAI Newsletter

October 2014, 1st Fortnight Issue

## IAAI Column

### IAAI- ETAA joint convention likely next year



Mr Biji Eapen, National President IAAI announced that the Association will organise its next biennial convention in Delhi in mid February 2015. The forthcoming convention will have an agenda aiming to resolve agent's issues pertaining to the industry. Besides, IAAI is also eyeing to organise the convention jointly with Enterprising Travel Agents Association (ETAA). The proposal for joint convention was proposed at a



joint meeting held with IAAI and ETAA in Mumbai but it is yet to be finalised.

### Study Tour to Ras Al Khaimah

IAAI's Delhi arm has decided to undertake a study tour to Ras Al Khaimah, since the Emirate is a unique & emerging tourist destination for the Indian market. Ras Al Khaimah, which is two hours away from Dubai, offers wide options for leisure and MICE clients from India. The IAAI Delhi State Committee (DSC) meet has shown its dedication and strong intention to educate agents and keep its members update about the tourism industry through regular seminars and workshops. It has also welcomed and supported the idea of the National management to hold IAAI's next convention ICON 2015 at Delhi. It has also decided to continue organising domestic and overseas study tours to national and international destinations. In the domestic sector, Karnataka is a preferred destination. Talks are already on with the Karnataka Tourism Board and Karnataka Tourism Forum for a study tour, said IAAI Delhi President Mr Jagdeep Bhagat. The members appreciated the vision of the IAAI leadership towards educating agents in areas of importance to the trade. It was decided that the DSC will try and organise the study tour during the current year itself. At the meet, the members learnt about destination Ras Al Khaimah. Vani Singh on behalf of Ras Al Khaimah Tourism Board showcased the destination. Air Arabia being official carrier of Ras Al Khaimah also conducted a presentation on their services and route network.

Welcoming DSC's strategic decisions for agents' welfare, Mr Eapen said that education is the key mantra to organise any industry in the world & study tours, seminars and workshops will be complimenting the growth of agents.



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## Aviation News

### **Etihad Airways creates global partnership with five other airlines**



Six airlines have joined a new partnership created by Etihad Airways, which the airline is hoping to extend to other carriers. The initial participants alongside Etihad are Airberlin, Air Serbia, Air Seychelles, Jet Airways, and Darwin. Called Etihad Airways Partners, the partnership aims to offer customers improved networks and schedules and enhanced frequent flyer benefits.

It said membership is open to any airline, even those that are part of an existing alliance, such as airberlin, which is a member of oneworld. The key emphasis for Etihad Airways Partners is a strong commercial partnership and shared values. Etihad Airways Partners will also have access to economies of scale and operational synergies such as centres of excellence, shared sales teams in certain destinations, joint procurement of services and supplies, and shared pilot and cabin crew training at the Etihad's facilities in Abu Dhabi. Etihad Airways Partners was aiming to deliver a consistent experience for frequent flyers. It will also offer standardised mileage and tier benefits across all partners, with no blackout periods and priority services.

### **Lufthansa to start rolling out Premium Economy seats on Indian routes from December**



Lufthansa, the flag carrier of Germany, will start rolling out the Premium Economy class on Indian routes starting from December this year. The roll out will start with Boeing 747-8 fleet operating on Bengaluru- Frankfurt route from December 1. The B747-8 fleet is the first to be configured with four-class offerings. The Airbus 380s will start offering a four-class product from mid-2015. Lufthansa hopes to complete the roll out of four-class products on all the five sectors (Bengaluru, Chennai, Delhi, Pune and Mumbai) by the end of 2015. Lufthansa has already announced the commencement of the super jumbo Airbus 380 operations on Delhi-Frankfurt route starting from October 27.

## Aviation News

### IndiGo commences daily, non-stop service from Delhi to Vizag



This month, IndiGo will expand its domestic network with five new flights. On October 10, the airline introduced a daily, non-stop service from Delhi to Visakhapatnam (Vizag). It will also start a third daily, non-stop flight from Hyderabad to Vizag, and its sixth daily, non-stop service between Mumbai and Hyderabad, as per information on the airline's website. The 6E 605 flight will take off from Delhi for Vizag at 6:20 am, while the return flight 6E 604 will take off at 6:35 pm. The Hyderabad-Vizag flight number 6E 611 will take off at 4:55 pm, while the return flight 6E 608 will leave from Vizag at 9.00 am. Flight 6E 609 from Mumbai to Hyderabad will start flying at 12.30 pm, while the return flight 6E 608 will take off from Hyderabad at 10.35 am. Further, starting from October 26, IndiGo will commence its fourth daily, non-stop service from Delhi to Goa, and ninth daily, non-stop from Delhi to Bengaluru. The Goa-bound flight 6E 399 will take off from Delhi at 11:50 am, while the return flight 6E 398 will leave for Delhi at 2:45 pm. Flight 6E 507 from Delhi to Bengaluru will commence the journey at 6:40 pm, while the return flight 6E 508 will take off at 8:20 am.

### Air India's direct Delhi-Pantnagar flight started from Oct 14



In its latest initiative to expand air connectivity to smaller cities and towns, Air India Ltd. had started a direct flight from Delhi to Pantnagar in Uttarakhand from October 14, 2014. The four-times-a-week flight will operate on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Fridays and Sundays. Flight 9I 815 from Delhi will depart at 1430 hrs and reach Pantnagar at 1530 hrs. The return flight 9I 816 will take off at 1550 hrs to arrive in Delhi at 1650 hrs. Pantnagar is known for the G.B. Pant University of Agriculture and Technology. It is also close to the integrated industrial town Rudrapur, which has large industrial houses, and to the High Court of Uttarakhand. Pantnagar is a gateway point to the Jim Corbett Wildlife National Park and tourist destinations like Nainital, Ranikhet and Bheemtal.

In the recent past, Air India has launched flights to six regional stations, namely to Bhuj from Mumbai, and to Lilabari, Tezpur, Silchar, Guwahati, and Shillong from Kolkata. The airline also operates flights from Port Blair to Car Nicobar under charter agreement with the Andaman Nicobar Island Administration. Air India's regional fleet of eight ATR and CRJ aircraft cover 28 stations in India.

## Aviation News

- Amadeus, a technology partner for the global travel industry, and LCC (Low-Cost Carrier) AirAsia India have signed a content agreement. With this, AirAsia India's content will be available to Amadeus-connected travel agencies worldwide. AirAsia India is the most recent member of the AirAsia Group to make its content, schedules and fares available through Amadeus. AirAsia India will benefit from Amadeus' light ticketing technology allowing travel agencies to view and compare AirAsia India fares in the same screen as full-service carriers. With the light ticketing technology, travel agencies can book AirAsia India in Amadeus, faster than via any other booking channel.



- British Airways will end flights to Sri Lanka in spring next year due to falling demand. The airline will continue flying to the Sri Lankan capital Colombo and Male, Maldives till March 28, 2015. The seasonal services to Male in will then restart for winter 2015.



**Source : TravelMole**

- British Airways is set to deploy the super jumbo jet Boeing 787 Dreamliner aircraft on its route to Chennai from October 27, 2014. The airline will also increase its frequency to daily direct flights on the Chennai-London route from the current six weekly flights. To mark the deployment of the aircraft and increase in flight frequency on the route, British Airways is offering all-inclusive fares starting at Rs 49,230 for tickets booked by October 31, 2014, for outbound travel until March 31, 2015. The airline will offer a choice of three cabins, Club World (business class), World Traveller Plus (premium economy) and World Traveller (economy class) to its customers from Chennai.



## Visa News

### Indians eligible for Bahrain e-Visa from Oct 1



Indians will be eligible to apply for an Electronic Visa (e-Visa) to Bahrain from October 1 this year. From next year, residents of India will also be able to spend longer periods in Bahrain. Under the new system, visas will be valid for a month and can be renewed for up to three months. Additionally, multiple-entry visas will also be available for Indian citizens. Bahrain's new visa policy allows nationals from over 100 countries to obtain a visa online ahead of travel. The new policy is an important development that places Bahrain

among the countries with the most flexible visa policies in the region. The policy will be accompanied by improvements in the individual screening process, ensuring faster and more effective processing of applications. It benefits around half the world's population, including 1.25 billion Indians, and will further enable expatriates who do business in Bahrain, to easily travel in and out of the Kingdom more easily, as well as boost the tourism industry. Under the new policy, visitors from 66 countries will be able to receive visas on arrival in Bahrain. These visitors will also be eligible to apply for their visas electronically ahead of their arrival in the Kingdom, further easing their travel experience. Visitors from a further 36 countries will be able to exclusively obtain e-Visas, bringing the overall total of countries eligible to receive these visas to 102.

E-Visas can be obtained ahead of travel through an online application process, and eligibility can be checked on the Bahrain government's e-Visa website, [www.evisa.gov.bh](http://www.evisa.gov.bh).

## UK & Ireland sign agreement for joint Visa scheme

### Indian and Chinese tourists to be first beneficiaries of the scheme



Travelers from outside the European Union (EU) will now be able to move freely between the two jurisdictions on a single permit. The scheme will begin with visitors from China and India. This agreement will make it easier and more attractive for travellers to visit both Ireland and the UK, while at the same time strengthening Common Travel Area borders. The result of a high level of collaboration on work to strengthen the Common Travel Area and move to better, common standards for border

and visa issuance.

Source : BBC

## Hospitality News

### Mövenpick Hotels & Resorts signs seventh hotel property in Dubai



Mövenpick Hotels & Resorts has signed for a new Hotel Apartment property in Downtown Dubai with El Housein Limited. The modern skyscraper will become the seventh Dubai property of Mövenpick Hotels & Resorts in Dubai. The 246 hotel apartments will be developed with varying sizes, ranging between 36 sqm for studio apartments and 104 sqm for two-bedroom apartments. A speciality restaurant and lobby café will provide a variety of cuisine and guests will also be able to relax at a swimming pool, gymnasium, spa and beauty salon. With an enviable location walking distance from Dubai Mall and 1 km from Dubai International Financial Centre, Mövenpick Hotel Apartments Downtown Dubai will offer its guests access to key attractions and important business districts. Dubai International Airport is just 9 km away.

### Plaza Premium Lounge opens its first transit hotel in Bengaluru



Plaza Premium Lounge Management Limited, industry player in providing Premium Airport Services, introduced its first transit hotel in Bengaluru - the Day Hotel by Plaza Premium Lounge in Domestic Departures at Kempegowda International Airport. Unlike other hotels, the Day Hotel by Plaza Premium Lounge is a short stay hotel located within an airport terminal with a flexible hourly rate payment offering. It allows travellers to rest during long transits or extended waits between flights. The new hotel will join the two recently opened Plaza Premium Lounges in Bengaluru to further enhance the world class service at Kempegowda International Airport, providing comfort, convenience and value to all travellers. With easy access from the Domestic Departures check-in area, the Day Hotel is set to impress travellers with its cosy rooms, modern décor and excellent services. Equipped with 20 rooms with different configurations, including single rooms, studios, twin rooms and family suites, the Day Hotel has been designed to cater to the needs of all travellers, whether they are seeking a relaxing sleep, refreshing shower, soothing massage, or simply want to catch up on work in a private space away from the hustle and bustle of the airport. All the rooms have complimentary Wi-Fi connection, desks, a comfortable bed, storage space, international newspapers and magazines, TV channels and hot shower with amenities. In addition, premium organic massage services as well as a range of Indian and international dining options are available.

## Hospitality News

### Businesses Turn to Airbnb



Like a growing number of business travelers, Ms. Hauber, a San Francisco resident, and her co-workers have started staying in apartments and houses managed through Airbnb, which in July started a site aimed at attracting more business travelers. The service allows travelers —

business and leisure — to rent space for short periods. Ms. Hauber and two colleagues rented a three-bedroom condominium in downtown Austin, Tex., for this week's SXSW Eco conference. The apartment was less expensive and more convenient than hotels in the area. Companies large and small, increasingly focused on budgets, are starting to look beyond hotels to apartments and houses. The trend is part of a growing reliance on the so-called sharing economy, which also includes companies like the Uber car service and TaskRabbit, where clients can find people to help with everyday chores and other tasks. Although Airbnb declined to give the number of business travelers using the service, at least 55 companies are using the site to plan business trips. The site's new business portal mostly excludes shared apartments and quirkiest properties, like boats and tree houses, in favor of entire houses or apartments. The service has proved popular with property owners, especially since business travel helps fill vacant sites during the week. Among the hosts who have benefited is Steve Puryear, who said up to two-thirds of the guests in his Austin condominium — including Ms. Hauber and her colleagues — were business travelers. The headline on his Airbnb listing makes his preference clear: "Perfect 4 Executives/Professionals."

**Source : Economic Times**

**Tree of Life Resorts & Spa will open their third resort property in Varanasi in winter 2016. The 20-room resort is being set up in the outskirts of the city with typical Banarsi architectural design. The concept of Tree of Life will continue to be space and privacy and therefore prefer to be locations away from the city limits.**



## Railway News

### Mumbai-Ahmedabad high-speed railway corridor work to begin early next year



Western Railway (WR) will take up upgrading of tracks on the high-speed railway corridor between Mumbai and Ahmedabad on a priority basis. The work on the corridor will begin from the beginning of next year and is likely to be completed by 2016. Upgrading of tracks would allow superfast trains to travel at speeds of 160 kmph instead of 100 kmph. This will reduce travel time between the two cities by Duronto or Shatabdi by nearly 90 minutes. Only the existing tracks on the high-speed corridor need to be strengthened. The project has been successfully tested on the corridor between Agra and Delhi. During the trial run, a train had covered nearly 200 km in just 100 minutes and this included a ten-minute halt.

## Industry News

### Sri Lanka to get its first luxury cruise line; Royal Asian Cruises plans to home port 2 ships to the country



Sri Lanka is to get its first luxury cruise line after Royal Asian Cruises (RAC) announced plans to home port two ships in the country. RAC, which has offices in the US and in India, plans to initially invest around USD 200 million over the next few years. RAC will home port an 800-passenger ship in late 2015 from the Port of Colombo and hopes to take delivery of a second larger ship the following year. It plans year-round cruising from Colombo on short voyages around Sri Lanka and the Indian Ocean calling at ports such as Maldives and Kochi, along with longer 10- and 11-night round-trip sailings to Singapore. The company has a five-year plan laid out to expand to a fleet of five ships at a cost of USD 720 million.

Source: TravelMole



## Industry News

### Meru Cabs launches mobile app



Radio taxi service provider Meru Cabs has introduced a mobile application (App), Meru Cabs 3.0 with improved features like one-touch booking, tracking your cab and confirmed booking up to seven days in advance. In addition, Meru Cabs has also partnered with Citrus Payment Solutions Pvt Ltd, an online payment gateway solution, to introduce a cab wallet feature in the app. The cab wallet feature in the Meru Cabs 3.0 can be used for making payment of the trip and also be used at select outlets of third party retailers. Customers can register and load money in the wallet via debit card, credit card or through net banking. The amount can then be used to make payments through the app for journeys undertaken with Meru Cabs. There will be no transaction fee involved for usage of this feature. The new app also offers features including tracking the customers' locations and sending an alert in case of distress. The app allows the user to track the location of the nearest available Meru cab. The app offers an accurate automated travel service and also has a feature called 'Trip Tracker' service, which ensures safety of all customers, especially women. Additionally, the app integrates the booking of a Meru or Meru Genie, the company's low-cost module in the same app. There is an instant booking feature available which does not require the user to enter the pickup location as it is automatically tracked by GPS. Live positioning of the cabs in real time, cab tracking system and the estimated arrival time of the cab can be tracked using the app.

### Carzonrent, Tata Motors unveil economy self-drive concept in Delhi & NCR



Carzonrent (India) Pvt. Ltd. in association with Tata Motors Ltd has introduced an economy concept 'Myles City-Drive with Nano Twist' to promote self-drive in Delhi and NCR. This self-drive facility, under the Myles brand launched last year, with a fleet of 200 Nano cars is currently available in Delhi and NCR. Carzonrent will provide a seamless distribution network while Tata Motors will provide vehicles for the concept. Carzonrent is to start offering self-drive facility with a fleet size of 14 cars last year and now offers 600 cars. It is planning to offer 5,000 cars by 2016 under the brand Myles. It has market presence in 16 cities and 82 operating units.

## Industry News

### Apple Pay to revolutionise payments



Apple has launched its new payment system, Apple Pay, which allows people to pay for everyday goods with their smartphone & this app could regularly replace cash, checks and credit cards. Apple Pay uses the fingerprint reader on recent iPhones to confirm identities.

The promise of convenient and secure mobile payments has long been hailed — by start-ups and powerful companies like Google and Verizon. That promise has remained largely unfulfilled. But the swift reaction by companies in the three weeks since Apple Pay was unveiled makes clear that how we normally pay for goods and services is ripe for transformation. Square, a prominent payment start-up, plans to allow merchants the ability to accept Apple Pay transactions in the future. Stripe, a payment processing start-up based in San Francisco, has agreed to work with Apple to help more small businesses accept Apple Pay.

Each previous form of mobile payment has run into one problem or another. Google Wallet, for example, was hampered by limitations on the types of phones and cellular networks with which it was compatible, leaving Google to focus its mobile commerce efforts elsewhere. Softcard, the product backed by major wireless carriers, has seen little enthusiasm for its mobile wallet for similar reasons. As a result, cash and credit cards remain the norm in physical stores. So consumers have been unconvinced that paying with a phone at the register is any faster or safer than doing so with a credit card. And online, only 11 percent of e-commerce spending happened on mobile devices in the second quarter, according to data from comScore, an Internet market research firm. The rest is made on desktop computers, largely because it is easier to enter payment information on a desktop than a smartphone.

With Apple Pay people can pay online or in person with their phone, using an iPhone's fingerprint sensor to check out, an experience that Apple says will be faster and safer than offerings from its predecessors. Many major restaurant and retail chains, including McDonald's, Whole Foods and Macy's, have signed up to accept payments this way. Part of the scramble among companies comes from Apple's reputation for upending other industries. The iPod, for instance, revolutionized how consumers buy digital music. The iPhone has changed the way people use their cellphones in their daily life. Companies large and small think Apple's payments service could potentially have the same effect.

## Interesting Photographs

# *Puerto Vallarta, Marietas Islands, Hidden Beach*

## *Mexico*



## Open Space

### *Lighter Moments*

A dentist, after finishing with a patient came to him & asked him  
“Could you help me. Could you give out a few of your loudest, most  
painful screams ?”

The surprised patient said, “Why doctor, it wasn’t all that bad this  
time !”

The dentist said, “There are so many people in the waiting  
room right now & I don't want to miss the 4pm train for  
home.”

### *Thought for the Fortnight*

Raise your words, not voice.

It is rain that grows flowers, not thunder.

— Jalaluddin Rumi

## **IAAI Director Board**

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