



# IAAI Newsletter

December 2014, 1st Fortnight Issue

## IAAI Column

### IAAI—An Association with a difference



That IAAI is an Association *'Of the Agents & for the Agents'* was amply reflected during the recent visit to Dubai by more than 400 travel agents from several Indian cities on the invitation from Dubai Tourism. While all the Travel Trade Associations were adequately represented, it was the IAAI team in which members were seen as a unified group, always interacting with one another. There were several informal team meetings during the 4 days in Dubai, all with the sole purpose of working for the betterment of the Travel Agent Fraternity & the future course of action of activities to be undertaken at different IAAI locations. An informal Steering Committee meeting of IAAI & ETAA was also held during this period.

## Air Canada to launch flights to Delhi from Nov 1, 2015



Air Canada is to launch non-stop flights between Toronto and Delhi beginning in November 2015. The new route, the first to be dedicated for Air Canada's Boeing 787-9 series aircraft, will open new opportunities in the Indian subcontinent, currently the largest international market not served by Air Canada. This service will appeal both to customers visiting and doing business in Delhi, the capital region of India and the fourth most populous urban area in the world, and to those customers making onward connections within India and throughout Southeast Asia on its Star Alliance partner, Air India, or other interline partners. Tickets will go on sale from December 9, 2014, and the service will operate four-times-weekly beginning November 1, 2015 using a Boeing 787 Dreamliner featuring a three-cabin service, including the next generation lie-flat seat in international business class, a premium economy cabin, and enhanced seatback inflight entertainment system available at every seat throughout the aircraft. Flights are timed for convenient connections both within Air Canada's North American network and in India on Air India or other interline partners to such cities as Mumbai, Chennai, Hyderabad, and to other destinations throughout Southeast Asia.

## India a key market for future of Etihad Airways



Etihad Airways recently announced that Mumbai and New Delhi will become its first destinations in India to be served with triple-daily flights. The third daily flight to Mumbai will start on February 15, 2015 and to New Delhi on May 1, 2015. The airline will also start daily services to Kolkata from February 15, 2015 bringing the total number of Indian cities served by Etihad Airways to 11. Etihad Airways increased the frequency of its services to India by tripling the number of seats on the Abu Dhabi-Mumbai and Abu Dhabi-New Delhi routes to 2,996 and 2,730 seats per week respectively, as well as doubling frequency to Kochi, Bengaluru, Chennai and Kozhikode.

## Aviation News

### DGCA cancels 186 slots of SpiceJet; asks to limit advance booking to 1 month



Concerned over the deteriorating condition of SpiceJet Ltd and large-scale flight cancellations, aviation regulator Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) on Friday, December 5<sup>th</sup>, withdrew 186 of its slots and asked it to clear salary dues of all its employees in the next 10 days. The DGCA also directed the airline not to take bookings of flights over one month and refund the booking amount to the customers of cancelled flights in 30 days. As many as 93 arrival and 93 departure slots were withdrawn by DGCA as the low-cost carrier was operating 232 flights in October, instead of 339 in September. The regulator would now on also carry out “heightened” surveillance of all SpiceJet flights on landing to ensure that safety is not compromised due to its financial troubles.

### flydubai to launch flights to Chennai in Q1 2015



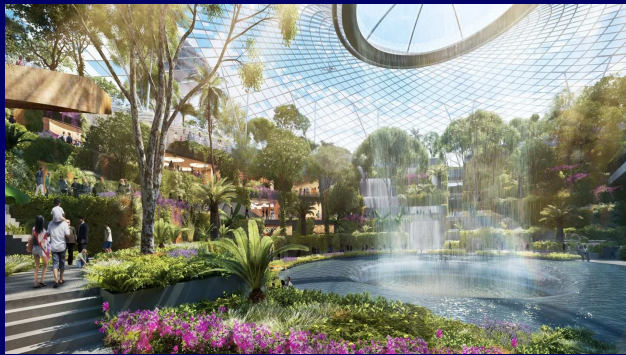
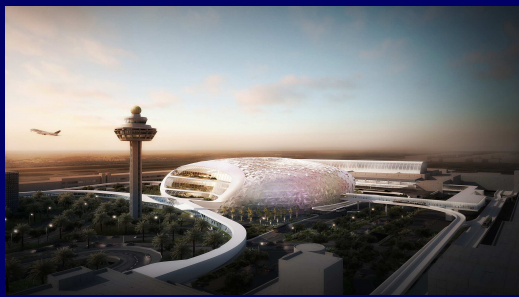
flydubai has announced flights to Chennai which will commence in the first quarter of 2015, further expanding the carrier’s footprint to 89 destinations in 46 countries. Chennai, flydubai’s eighth destination in India, will be served with three flights a week from March 31, bringing the total number of weekly flights to the market to 29. The new announced routes underline flydubai’s commitment to connecting the UAE to previously underserved markets. The carrier has linked Dubai to 56 underserved destinations since it started its operations in 2009.

#### Chennai Flight Details :-

Flight No.	Frequency	Sector	Departure	Arrival	Flight Time
FZ 447	Tuesday, Thurs-	Dubai—Chennai	9.25 pm	3.15 am (Next)	4 hrs 20 min
FZ 448	Wednesday, Fri-	Chennai—Dubai	5.15 am	8.05 am	4 hrs 20 min

## Aviation News

### Changi Airport 'Jewel' coming up at Singapore



Singapore Changi Airport is commencing the development of a new iconic facility, Changi Airport (Jewel) - a mixed-use complex featuring unique leisure attractions, a wide range of retail offerings and aviation and travel-related facilities. Strategically located in the heart of the airport, Jewel is expected to be completed by end 2018, is envisaged to be a world-class, signature lifestyle destination that will enable Changi Airport to boost Singapore's appeal as a stopover point, and a destination in itself, for all passengers including those from India. The complex will have five storeys above ground and five basement storeys, covering a total gross floor area of about 134,000 square metres (sqm). At the groundbreaking ceremony, guests were given a first glimpse of Jewel's architecture and design, and lifestyle offerings.

Jewel features a distinctive dome-shaped glass and steel façade that will be a visually stunning addition to the airport landscape. Passengers and airport visitors will be presented with an impressive view of the complex as they travel on the roadways leading to the airport.

The complex will house an integrated multi-modal transport lounge offering dedicated services for fly-cruise and fly-coach passengers. In addition, early check-in facilities in Jewel will enable passengers to check-in for their flights and deposit their luggage ahead of the regular check-in timings offered by airlines. To widen the range of accommodation options available at the airport, Jewel will offer its own hotel with 130 rooms, operated by international hotel brand YOTEL. One of Jewel's centerpiece attraction will be a huge five-storey indoor garden, Forest Valley filled with trees, plants, ferns and shrubs and a 40-metre high Rain Vortex - expected to be the world's tallest indoor waterfall. At night, the Rain Vortex will transform into a light and sound show with special lighting effects. Jewel will also feature walking trails and play facilities. In the surrounding area, there will be food and beverage outlets where passengers and visitors will be able to enjoy al fresco-like dining while enjoying views of the Forest Valley. Within Jewel, there will be a wide range of retail mix is envisaged to include exciting new concepts, top international brands, as well as Singapore-based names. The integration of world-class retail brands and dining concepts with indoor gardens and leisure attractions will provide visitors with a myriad of experiences.

(Source : [Travelbizmonitor.com](http://Travelbizmonitor.com))



## Hospitality News

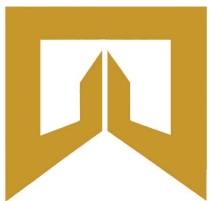
### Maharashtra International Travel Mart to be held from Feb 26-28, 2015 in Mumbai



MAHARASHTRA TOURISM

The Maharashtra Tourism Development Corporation (MTDC) is set to organise the 'Maharashtra International Travel Mart' (MITM) at the Bombay Exhibition Centre in Mumbai from February 26 to 28, 2015. Spread over three days, MITM will showcase the tourism attractions of the state that would lead to an enhanced brand image of the destination. The event will witness participation of stakeholders of the industry like hoteliers, travel agents and tour operators, adventure tour operators, tourism districts, handicrafts and handlooms, cuisine, etc. The event will showcase the best of what Maharashtra has to offer to the discerning travel trade from India and abroad.

### ITC planning to invest Rs 9,000 crore to expand its hotel portfolio



ITC Hotels is planning to invest about Rs 9,000 crore in the next three to four years to expand its hotel portfolio to 150 hotels. ITC Hotels, one of the largest hotel chains in the country, currently operates 102 hotels. ITC opened their 104-suite resort - ITC Grand Bharat - last week near Delhi where it spent Rs 2-2.5 crore per room. ITC will have a total of 150 hotels in the next three to four years, of which 33 hotels will be under the managed Fortune Hotels brand. The MyFortune brand will have six fully-owned hotels across Coimbatore, Guntur, Bhubaneswar, Srinagar, Kathmandu and another undecided location. ITC will launch five hotels in Mahabalipuram, Kolkata, Ahmedabad, Hyderabad and Colombo by 2018.

### The Fern opens its new hotel in Asansol West Bengal

Concept Hospitality has announced the opening of their new hotel in - The Fern Residency - in Asansol in West Bengal. Part of a mix-use development, Galaxy Mall, the 42-room hotel is positioned as mid-scale business hotel in the second largest city of West Bengal. The hotel has two restaurants and a 7,000 sqft banquet space. The hotel offers three types of rooms - Winter Green Rooms, the base category with 315 Sqft. of space; The Fern club room and the The Hazel Suites. Asansol is one of the busiest trading centres in India. It is a coal mining hub, and has a swiftly growing industrial arena. The city boasts of a huge workforce with its per capita income being much higher than many Indian cities.

## Hospitality News

### Trial run for Guwahati-Shillong-Dhaka bus service



The government is planning to introduce regular passenger bus services to Dhaka from Guwahati in Assam via Shillong in Meghalaya. To study and finalise the routes and start the service, a joint technical survey/trial run is being organised on December 10th and 11th. The trial run will be carried out jointly by delegations from India and Bangladesh to assess route conditions and other technical parameters. This service will be in addition to two passenger bus services to Dhaka already operating from Kolkata in West Bengal and Agartala in Tripura. The proposed bus service covering approximately 500 kms starting from Guwahati will be taking the Shillong-Dawki (Meghalaya)/Tamabil (Bangladesh)-Sylhet-Dhaka route.

### Hard Rock Hotels to foray into India with their first hotel in Goa



Hard Rock International, owner of one of the world's most iconic and recognised brands announced to launch the Hard Rock Hotel Goa, the first of its kind in India. Projected to open in March 2015, the brand will transform the existing North 16 Goa Resort owned by Convention Hotels India (CHI) into the Hard Rock Hotel. Catering to the evolving and distinctive needs of today's cosmopolitan traveller, the 135-room property will offer world-class entertainment, stylish design, unparalleled service and Hard Rock's differentiator - music. The property's location, in the heart of Calangute, is less than a mile from the area's famed beach that attracts an influx of international and domestic travellers year-round. Boasting a central location, just 22 miles from Goa International Airport, the property is easily accessible for travellers visiting the region.

## Hospitality News

### Ginger Hotels forays into Andhra Pradesh with first hotel at Visakhapatnam



Roots Corporation, a subsidiary of the Indian Hotels Company Limited (IHCL), launched their first Ginger Hotel in Andhra Pradesh at Visakhapatnam. Located at Dwaraka Nagar, the 72-room hotel is easily accessible from key business and leisure hubs in the city. All the rooms are smartly furnished designed to make guests' stay comfortable and convenient, therefore are equipped with mini-fridge, satellite television, self-controlled air-conditioner, etc.

## Railway News

### Wi-Fi broadband service launched at New Delhi railway station



New Delhi railway station has become the first railway station in the country to offer Wi-Fi broadband service. Minister for Railways, Government of India, inaugurated the Wi-Fi broadband service at New Delhi railway station. The Wi-Fi project for Indian Railways is being executed by RailTel, a public sector undertaking of the Ministry of Railways. The passengers will be offered free Wi-Fi broadband access for 30 minutes. Installing the Wi-Fi follows includes simple steps - i) First switch on Wi-Fi on your mobile phone ii) Choose Wi-Fi network- RailWire which is free iii) open browser iv) enter mobile number to register v) after registration, you will get one time password via SMS vi) you are now ready to log in for surfing. The RailWire-powered Wi-Fi will give maximum speed of 1 mbps. Wi-Fi facility shall be available to the users free of cost initially for a period of 30 minutes by registering on the Wi-Fi network through their mobile. For usage beyond 30 minutes, the user may purchase scratch cards, which will be made available at the 24X7 Wi-Fi help desks. These cards are priced at Rs 25 for 30 minutes and Rs 35 for 1 hour and are valid through 24 hours.



## Visa News

### Consulate of Hungary opened in Mumbai



The Consulate of Hungary opened in Mumbai on December 1, 2014 at Bandra Kurla Complex. Ambassador Designate of Hungary in India, launched the website, [www.namastehungary.com](http://www.namastehungary.com), which is targeted at the Indian market. The site has been designed in association with Namaste Tourism. The Namaste Hungary website is a virtual guide that showcases the holiday spots in Hungary, besides giving details like accommodation options, cuisine, and connectivity in the destination. The Consulate is in talks with VFS Global to open Visa Facilitation Centre in the city to outsource visa processing. Situated in Eastern Europe, Hungary is a hub of culture due to its status as one of the imperial countries of Europe. Its capital city Budapest is known as the 'Paris of the East'. The city is famous for its architecture, galleries, festivals, spas, as well as food and wine. Currently, visas are only issued through the Hungarian Consulate in Delhi, which requires applicants to travel to the capital for processing their visas. The Mumbai Consulate will relieve prospective travellers of this trouble. It will cater to the states in the Western and Southern parts of India (Gujarat, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Tamil Nadu, Goa, and Kerala). The Delhi Consulate will process applications from the Northern and Eastern regions of India.

### France eases visa regulations for Indian nationals



#### Launches eight France Visa Application Centres; will make available 'Chalo Paris' app from Dec 10

With the number of visas issued by French consulates in India up by 33 per cent in 2014, as compared with 2013, the French government will drastically ease visa procedures for Indian visitors. For the same purpose, with effect from January 1, 2015, both tourist and business visas for Indians will be delivered within 48 hours (two working days). In case of applicants residing in cities apart from those where the Visa Application Centres are available, the time period required would be 72 hours. A text message will be automatically sent to the applicant, should there be an extension of deadline due to insufficient documents or inaccuracies in visa application. Available on Apple store and Android/Google play store, the 'Chalo Paris' application (app) will be available to discerning Indian travellers from December 10, 2014 onwards. Offering 80 per cent offline content, it is a first-of-its-kind mobile app designed exclusively for the Indian visitor, before and after they reach Paris.



## Industry News

# Understanding Eco-tourism



Eco-tourism or Responsible Tourism is a new approach to tourism. It involves travel to natural areas to appreciate the cultural & natural history of the environment, taking care not to disturb the integrity of the eco system, while creating economic opportunities that make consideration & protection of natural resources, advantages to the local people.

Eco-tourism typically involves travel to destinations where flora, fauna & cultural heritage are the primary attractions. Eco-tourism is intended to offer tourists an insight into the impact of human beings on the environment & minimize the negative aspects of conventional tourism on the environment, also enhancing the cultural integrity of local people. An integral part of Eco-tourism is the promotion of recycling, energy efficiency, water conservation & creation of economic opportunities for local communities.



## Interesting Photographs

### Volcanic eruption at Mt. Etna Sicily, Italy

Etna is the largest active volcano in Europe. It is located in the north eastern Sicily, in Italy. It is the second most active volcano in the world, after Kilauea Volcano, in Hawaii. Etna is one of the most interesting volcanoes in the world for another reason as well: it has the longest period of documented eruptions in the world, as these records go back 3500 years. The volcano itself is believed to be the oldest volcano on the planet, dating back 350,000 years. Etna's latest eruption took place in May 2011, when the local airport needed to be closed because its runway was covered with ash.



## Open Space



### *Lighter Moments*



*The following is supposedly a true story relating to an actual guide and his response to questions.*

Swiss mountain guides who always do the same trails can get tired answering the same questions over and over. One time an English tourist was giving his guide an especially hard time with silly questions. They were walking through a mountain valley that was strewn with rocks, and the traveler asked, "How did these rocks get here?"

"Sir," said the guide, "they were brought down by a glacier."

The tourist peered up the mountain and said, "But I don't see any glacier."



"Oh, really?" said the guide. "I guess it has gone back for more rocks."

### *Thought for the Fortnight*

Always forgive your enemies; nothing annoys them so much.

—Oscar Wilde



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