



IAAI Newsletter

January 2015, IInd Fortnight Issue

Breaking News on Commission Issue

IAAI is happy to inform you about a positive development on our commission issue. A deep interactive & fruitful discussion took place on the Agent's Commission issue between the following Officials of Jet Airways and IAAI at Cochin on 29th of January.

Jet Airways -

Mr. Rajeev Nambiar - VP Sales
Mr. V Raja - Regional Head - Sales South
Mr. Muralidas Menon - GM Kerala

IATA Agents Association of India -

Mr. Biji Eapen, National President—IAAI
Mr. T U Shamsuddin, IPP, IAAI Maharashtra State Committee

State Committee -

Mr. Girish G., President - IAAI Kerala State Committee

It was in continuation of the discussions held at Mumbai on 15th January 2015 between the IAAI & Jet Airways team. The basis of the discussions were based on the two DGCA Orders of 5th March, 2010, and 16th September, 2013, that had favored IAAI's claims on the legality of travel agency commission as opposed to a Transaction Fee.



The Jet Airways Team has promised to revert on the modalities after discussions with their IT & Legal Affairs Departments on their return to Mumbai.

In preparation and readiness for the Jet Airways response, the IAAI & Jet Airways Team also had a very detailed consultations with IAAI Legal Consultant, Mr. P. Ravindran - Senior Advocate, on the matters related to the Aircraft Rules and legal deliberations. Mr Biji Eapen, President IAAI, has thanked all members of the Travel Agent fraternity who have shown patience, forbearance & faith in IAAI. He said,

"After a prolonged struggle spanning more than half a decade, we can definitely see a light at the end of the long tunnel".

Visit IAAI Stall at OTM Mumbai

Dates : 4, 5, 6 February 2015
Venue : Bombay Convention & Exhibition Centre (Hall 1),
NSE Complex, Goregaon (E), Mumbai.

Aviation News

Vistara to launch flights from Delhi to Goa & Hyderabad



Vistara is set to add Goa and Hyderabad to its route network from February 20 and March 1, 2015 respectively. The airline will operate daily direct flights from Delhi to Goa and double daily service to Hyderabad from the national capital. The airline has also increased frequencies from Delhi to Mumbai and Ahmedabad and from Ahmedabad to Mumbai.

Initially, the airline launched operations this month with 68 frequencies weekly, and will operate 164 services a week by March. Vistara started operations with three aircraft and Delhi as its operational hub, and by March, the full-service airline will have a fleet size of five.

British Airways offering free one-way upgrade to First



For a limited time lucky customers flying British Airways could enjoy the thrill of getting a free one-way upgrade to First. The special offer is being given to those buying eligible return flights in the airline's Club World cabin, from now until March 13, for travel up to April 11, 2015. That means they could be winging their way to scores of destinations around the world, reclining in luxurious fully-flat beds, sipping champagne and enjoying fine dining at 39,000 feet. British Airways offers flights in First to more than thirty destinations around world. Because of the frequency of flights, customers are more likely to get their free on-way upgrade on the following routes: New York, Washington, Miami, Los Angeles, Seattle, Boston, Johannesburg, Dubai, Singapore and Hong Kong.

Customers can make use of all the First facilities, from the fantastic lounge, to special concierge service. When travelling in First, customers can check in using a dedicated area at Heathrow's Terminal 5 and check in up to three 32kg bags, thanks to the generous baggage allowance. Once through Fast Track security they can access the airline's prestigious Concorde Room lounge at Heathrow's Terminal 5 and New York's JFK terminal seven, plus access to arrivals lounges. Each customer can relax into one of the 14 individual spacious suites in a herringbone layout, each with its own 6' 6" fully-flat bed, their own personal wardrobe and a 15 inch wide video screen for hundreds of hours of top in-flight entertainment.



SpiceJet is to stop its Aurangabad operations from February 1. The airline operated a daily flight to Delhi. The decision by SpiceJet to wind up its operations from Aurangabad will result in a 33 per cent dip in the air connectivity of the city with the national capital.

Aviation News

Air India starts direct daily flight on Delhi- Vijayawada route



Air India Ltd has introduced a daily direct daily service from Delhi to Vijayawada. This is the second flight on the route. The new service AI459 leaves Delhi at 0620 hrs and reaches Vijayawada at 0825 hrs.

In the return direction, AI460 leaves Vijayawada at 0900 hrs to reach Delhi at 1105 hrs. The introduction of this flight has reduced the travel time between the cities. Air India already operates a daily flight via Hyderabad to Vijayawada. With the introduction of this service, Air India now has two daily flights between Delhi and Vijayawada.

The new flight also provides connection to international flights departing from Delhi to Bangkok, Birmingham, Frankfurt, Kathmandu, London, Melbourne, Sydney, Paris, Rome and Milan. Air India operates flights to 12 destinations in South India which have convenient connections to the major metros.

Emirates launches weekly flight to Kolkata and introduces First Class on route



Emirates has announced two enhancements to its service to Kolkata. Starting from March 29, 2015, the airline will add a 13th weekly flight between the West Bengal capital and its home and hub in Dubai. Operating on Wednesdays, flight EK 572 will depart from Dubai International Airport at 1300 hours and arrive at Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose International Airport at 1915 hours. The return flight EK 573 will depart at 2030 hours and arrive in Dubai at 0005 hours. With this additional service, Emirates will operate 186 weekly flights across its network of ten Indian destinations.

Also, on March 29, Emirates will start to operate a larger Boeing 777-200ER on the route as flight numbers EK 570 and EK 571, which will offer the airline's First Class service. The Boeing is an up-gauge from the existing A330-200, with capacity for 274 passengers; 220 in Economy Class, 42 in Business Class, and 12 First Class. Emirates will be the only airline operating a First Class cabin to the city. The new service and up-gauge will represent a capacity increase of 250 seats in each direction per week.

Aviation News

Qatar Airways to increase capacity on all routes to Italy & introduce double-daily flights to Madrid



Qatar Airways has announced an increase in capacity on its flights to Italy, as well as double-daily flights to Madrid (Spain). The increase in both capacity and service will roll out over the next five months to help meet the expanding passenger needs for both these popular destinations.

With the introduction of wide-body aircraft commencing March 29 to Rome and Milan, and June 16 to Venice, the capacity to the airline's three Italian destinations will increase by 30 per cent. Furthermore, a change in the departure and arrival times to Rome and Milan will also help improve connections to a number of other destinations for the Italian market. The increase in capacity to Italy will be provided by introducing the Airbus A330 on the Milan and Venice routes, and the Boeing 787 Dreamliner on the Rome route.

Qatar Airways currently offers 35 flights a week to Italy, including double-daily services to Rome Fiumicino and Milan Malpensa, as well as daily flights to Venice Marco Polo.

In addition, commencing on July 16, Qatar Airways will begin operating a double-daily, direct scheduled service to Madrid-Barajas Airport from Doha's Hamad International Airport, adding four weekly flights. The flights will be operated by a Boeing 777, offering 293 seats in Economy Class and 42 in Business Class.

Zero penalty fees on jetairways.com for change or cancellation of tickets within 24 hours



Jet Airways will not charge any fee for cancellation and date change requests within 24 hours from passengers who book their tickets through the airline's website. The waiver can be availed of only within 24 hours of booking a ticket. The move comes in the face of increasing competition in the full-service segment, particularly after the national carrier Air India Ltd. joined the 27-member global airlines club Star Alliance and Tata-SIA joint venture Vistara launched its service recently. Until now, Jet was charging Rs 5,000 for cancelling an international journey ticket and Rs 3,000 for changing the journey date. In the domestic sector, the fee for cancelling or changing the date of journey stood at Rs 1,750. The new initiative allows passengers to amend or cancel their booking without any penalty fee by simply using the "manage booking" facility. In case of a change in the booking while the penalty fees will be waived off, any additional amount due to the increase in fare will be applicable.

Aviation News

New flights to Singapore & Abu Dhabi from Pune in Summer schedule



The city of Pune is all set to establish air connectivity with two more international destinations. The summer schedule for airlines, which begins in the second half of March, includes a connection to Abu Dhabi by Jet Air and to Singapore by Vistara Airlines.

Visa News

Taiwan offers visa-free entry to Indians cruising through Star Cruises



Taiwan Tourism has worked out a visa-free entry scheme for Indians sailing in through Star Cruises from January 2015 onwards. Three sailings are awaited in the first six months of 2015. Moreover, the scheme is being revised and new routes and cruise lines would be added in the near future.

Hospitality News

Kochi, Lucknow among 13 airports to be CAT III-compliant by July-end



Flight operations being affected due to inclement weather from Kochi, Lucknow, Patna, Jaipur, Lucknow, Amritsar, Kolkata and 6 other airports will become a thing of the past from July-end this year. Currently all these airports are CAT I compliant. The Indian Met office, along with Airports Authority of India, will install CAT III equipment at these 13 airports. This process will be completed by

July 31. For flight operations to go on smoothly even during poor visibility, airlines will have to train their pilots to fly in CAT III conditions.

Hospitality News

AP Tourism to launch amphibian bus service



Andhra Pradesh (AP) Tourism Department is to start an amphibian bus service at tourist spots along the coastline to give thrust to water sports and water transport. Amphibian buses can ply on land as well as on water. During the ride, tourists can see some picturesque locations in and around the beach. The bus will cost around Rs two crore.

It can carry 15 to 20 people in a single trip of half an hour. The bus will act as a link between private operators and manufacturers. The Tourism Department will give permission to private agencies to run this bus. To promote tourism along the coast, the Department is also mulling hovercrafts. The look of this jet will be very exotic with each one having a 50-seater capacity. AP Tourism Department also wants to introduce jet skiing and other water sports in Rushikonda, Kalingapatnam, Bheemunipatnam, Nelapadu, and Suryalanka.

Source: The Times of India

Ambuja Neotia Hospitality to add 8 luxury resorts in East & North East India in 5 years



AmbujaNeotia Hospitality, part of Kolkata-based real estate group Ambuja Neotia with interests in hospitality, healthcare and education, will foray aggressively into high-end luxury hospitality segment in the East and North East India in coming years. The company has plans to set up ten luxury resorts in nine locations over the next five years, of which two are already operational. The group will be developing their second hotel in Kolkata and another one in Digha in the Sunderbans. Other destinations where AmbujaNeotia will be developing luxury hotels are Sikkim, Ghum in Darjeeling, Makai-bari, and Lataguri in Dooars, West Bengal.

Hospitality News

Eurail brings range of new products to market for 2015



Eurail is setting the stage for travellers this year by introducing a variety of new products to its Eurail Pass portfolio. Travelling with a Eurail Pass is now even more exciting with new destinations to explore, the Children Travel Free initiative, the first-class Youth Pass, the Five in Ten Days Global Pass and the Attica Pass - a One Country Pass designed with Greek island hopping in mind.

Four new countries join Eurail's Global Pass offer this year. The additions of Bosnia-Herzegovina, Montenegro, Poland and Serbia bring the total to 28 countries that can be explored with the rail pass. The border connections created by this expansion add even more possibilities to the already vast itinerary options. For example, travellers can ride down the east Adriatic coast from Croatia to Montenegro, or stop in Poland on their way from Prague to Berlin.

With the launch of the new Children Travel Free initiative, Children aged four to 11 can ride for free with a family member or friend who is travelling on an Adult Eurail Pass. Up to two children per adult can travel free. Traveling with children or friends in the 12-to-25 age group has become easier with the introduction of the first-class Youth Pass. This pass was previously only available in second class. The first-class Youth Pass is now for sale at a 20 per cent discount from the adult cost, so everyone can enjoy the journey together in first-class comfort.

Besides the addition of new countries to the Global Pass product, Eurail has added a new pass category as well. Catering to the fact that not all travellers have an abundance of vacation days to explore 28 countries, the Five in Ten Days Global Pass option gives customers five travel days anywhere within a ten-day span to visit non-bordering countries of their choice.

Another way Eurail is giving customers more options is with the Attica Pass, a new One Country Pass to the Greek islands by ferry. With two international trips, customers can use Italy as a jumping-off point. It offers six ferry crossings within one month (the two international trips between Italy and Greece and four domestic trips for island hopping), and takes care of travellers with a rail/bus transfer from the international port of Patras to the domestic port of Piraeus.

Hospitality News

Royal Orchid Hotels to add around 10 hotels globally in next one year



ROYAL ORCHID
HOTELS

With a portfolio of 28 hotels, Royal Orchid Hotels is planning to add 8 to 10 hotels globally in the next one year. Among these, the hotel group is set to unveil a 126-key hotel in Chennai, 60-key property in Surat, and a 77-key hotel in Lokhandwala in Mumbai. A 250-key Royal Orchid Central is also under construction in Mumbai. Royal Orchid Suites are also being planned in Shimla (resort) and another 150-key in Tanzania. The other developments are still under negotiations.

India's longest road tunnel to reduce journey by 4 hours between Jammu & Srinagar



The arduous trek to Kashmir may soon be a thing of the past. A new passage to Srinagar now under construction will not only bring the regions of Jammu and Kashmir closer but will also end the frequent winter isolation of the valley from the rest of the country. The National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) has undertaken a project to upgrade the present national highway (NH 44) stretch from Jammu to Srinagar into four lanes. The project includes two major tunnels.

The 288-km distance between Jammu and Srinagar will be reduced to 238 km but more importantly the 10-hour journey will be covered in just about six hours, avoiding perilous points such as Khooni Nala (bloody path) where shooting stones slide at the speed of a bullet taking a heavy toll of life. The two tunnels will also end the snow-related traffic jams.

The Chenani-Nashri Tunnel which is being blasted through the Mury formation range of the Shivalik range at an elevation of 1.2 km is 9 km long and will be the longest tunnel in the country when completed in 2016.

The proposed two-lane tunnel with a separate escape route avoids Patnitop, a tourist spot during the winter for its snow, and the steep Nagroda bypass which the State government declared unfit for use after truck drivers found it difficult to negotiate not only the steep gradient but also the sharp and narrow bends on the range.

However, the twin tunnels with inbuilt escape routes in case of snow storm or blizzards, are being provided through Pir Panjal from Banihal to Quazigund at an elevation of 1.8 km. Though their entrances are not free from snow, clearing a four-lane road of snow would be much easier than a two-lane one.

Important Travel Tips for travelling abroad

- *“Paris is undoubtedly beautiful especially at night. However, it would be advised to the travelers to bear in mind that the city shuts down as early as 7 pm. It is difficult to get a hotel accommodation after seven. So please make hotel arrangements in advance & ensure to complete all outdoor tasks by the early deadline.”*
- *“When you travel by either Emirates or Etihad Airways in Business or First Class, they offer you complimentary airport transfers from & to your place of stay at both, the departure & the arrival destination.”*
- *“If you travel by Virgin Atlantic to London, irrespective of the category you fly in, upon arrival there is a separate counter for immigration making clearance very smooth & fast.”*
- *When on a trip to China, make sure that you have the address of the location & destination written in Mandarin. Not many people speak English, nor they familiar with the script, making it confusing & tedious to explain.”*

Photo Feature

'Rani ki Vav' near Patan, Gujarat



Rani ki vav is an intricately constructed stepwell situated in the town of Patan in Gujarat, India. It was added to the list of UNESCO's World Heritage Sites on 22 June 2014. It is generally assumed that it was built in the memory of Bhimdev I (AD 1022 to 1063), the son of Mularaja, the founder of the Solanki dynasty of *Anahilwada Patan* about 1050 AD by his widowed queen Udayamati and probably completed by Udayamati and Karandev I after his death. A reference to Udayamati building the monument is in *Prabandha Chintamani*, composed by the Jain monk Merunga Suri in 1304 AD. The stepwell was later flooded by the nearby Saraswati River and silted over until the late 1980s. When it was excavated by the Archeological Survey of India, the carvings were found in pristine condition. Most of the sculptures are in devotion to Vishnu, in the forms of Dus - Avatars Kalki, Rama, Mahisasurmardini, Narsinh, Vaman, Varahi and others representing their return to the world. *Nagkanya*, *Yogini* beautiful women - *Apsara* showcasing 16 different styles of make-up to look more attractive called *Solah-shringar*.

Open Space

Lighter Moments

A guy walks into a post office one day to see a middle-aged, balding man standing at the counter methodically placing "Love" stamps on bright pink envelopes with hearts all over them. He then takes out a perfume bottle and starts spraying scent all over them.

His curiosity getting the better of him, he goes up to the balding man and asks him what he is doing. The man says, "I'm sending out one thousand Valentine cards signed, 'Guess who?'"

"But why?" asks the man.

"I'm a divorce lawyer," the man replies.

Thought for the Fortnight

*What we have done for ourselves alone dies with us;
what we have done for others & the world, remains as immortal.*

— Albert Pike

The 'E' Of Life !

In this world of e-mails, e-tickets, e-paper, e-newsletter, e-recharge, e-transfer & the latest — e-Governance, never forget "E-shwar" or God who makes e-verything e-asy for e-veryone e-veryday. "E" is the most eminent letter of the English alphabet.

Men or women don't exist without "E". House or home can't be made without "E". Bread or butter can't be found without "E". "E" is the beginning of 'existence' & the end of 'trouble'. It's not at all in 'war' but twice in 'peace'. It's once in 'hell' but twice in 'heaven'.

"E" is represented in 'emotions'. Hence, all emotional relations like father, mother, brother, sister, wife & friends have "E" in them. "E" also represents 'e-ffort' & 'e-nergy'. Hence to be better from good, both "E"s are added. Without "E", we would have no love, life, or hope & senses like see, hear, smell, or taste as eye, ear, nose & tongue are incomplete without "E".

So go with "E" but let go your e-go.

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

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can be viewed on the IAAI website : www.iaai.in**