



IAAI Newsletter

April 2015, IInd Fortnight Issue

IAAI News

Gujarat Tourism Travel meet at Mumbai

Gujarat Tourism held a B2B Travel Meet at JW Marriott Ball Room, at Juhu, Mumbai, on Friday, 24/04/2015. More than 50 suppliers from Gujarat participated in the Road Show. Many Travel Agents and Tour Operators from Mumbai including a large number of IAAI members visited this Travel Meet and had fruitful interaction with the suppliers.



From Left to Right—Ms. Aruna Shetty, Chairperson, IAAI Women-Empowerment Cell, Mr. Sanatan Pan-choli, Resident Manager, Mumbai – Gujarat Tourism, Mr. Naresh Rajkotia, Director IAAI and Mr. Chetan Momaya, President, IAAI – Maharashtra State Committee are seen in the Picture

IAAI News

Default Insurance Protection (DIP) program

Tremors are being felt in the Indian Travel Industry as July 2015 approaches when Travel Agents will be required to furnish Financial guarantees. With Insurance Guarantees routed through IATA BSP where the premiums are hovering at 1.75% + S.T and with APJC Representatives not making any attempts to have such premiums reduced, the ordinary Travel Agents will soon be facing turbulent times. They will be required to pay huge cash deposits and collateral securities for Bank Guarantees that will bleed their financial resources and eventually force many of the Travel Agents to close down their businesses.

Foreseeing this eventuality, IAAI had initiated steps to introduce the Default Insurance Protection (DIP) program, an internationally accepted method of airline financial protection, for the Indian Travel Fraternity which could relieve Travel Agents from the burden of cash/collateral deposit or advance insurance premiums and provide flexibility for resource-based optimization of business. Agents would have to make payments based only on sales revenue or the price per ticket sold. There is no advance payment, no advance premiums or fixed deposits required for this scheme. Ordinary Travel Agents will have the facility and flexibility to optimize business according to the market conditions. IAAI is working consciously to roll out this program by 1st July 2015, subject to IATA approval.

Tacit approval for the DIP program has been given to IAAI by Jet Airways, Emirates, Singapore Airlines and Etihad. However, there are many formalities to be undergone and the lack of support and approval from APJC-India may even veto the entire process. Hence, for the greater good of the Fraternity and for the survival of the ordinary Travel Agents, IAAI had approached the Delhi Court to stop all activities of the present APJC and direct the reconstitution of APJC-India under the guidelines given by the Passenger Agency Conference in January 2014 under Appendix F.

There have been apprehensions about the Case filed by IAAI following a communication from one of the Associations to its Members. Clearing the air, sources from IAAI have reaffirmed that the Case is against IATA only and that they have never went against any of the Travel Agents Associations or their activities.

Aviation News

Cheap air travel at midnight: Jet Airways to start 'Red-Eye' flights

JET AIRWAYS 

In a good news for frequent domestic flyers in India, the passengers can now book red-eye flights, that are comparatively cheaper than the daytime flights. Red eye flights, that are popular in the West, operate in mid night till wee hours of mornings. Jet Airways is all set to start three red-eye flights. The flights will operate from Mumbai-Delhi, Delhi-Kolkata and Delhi-Pune. Mumbai to Delhi flight will take off at 2.30 am and will land at 4.35 am. Delhi to Kolkata flight will take off at 2.10 am and will land at 4.25 am. Delhi to Pune flight will take off at 3.20 am and will land at 5.30 am. Jet Airways flight ticket will cost around Rs. 1,755/-. Earlier, Air India had red eye flights for international flights, mainly between Delhi and the tickets were priced between Rs 2,000/- and Rs 3,000/-, but this was several years back. AirAsia India is also likely to follow the suit, once Jet Airways start its operation.

Regional carriers to get permission to fly Metro route

The Government is to allow regional airlines to operate flight services to one additional trunk route outside their region to help them achieve profitability. At present, a regional airline connects smaller destinations to the major metro of that region. It does not operate outside the region and does not connect to more than one metro. The country has been divided into North, East, West, South and North East regions for this purpose. There is a request from the regional players to permit them to fly on a metro route which is outside their region. Currently, two airlines -- Air Costa and Air Pegasus -- operate as regional carriers. The permission to operate an additional (Metro) route would be granted on a case-to-case basis.



Aviation News

AirAsia India selects New Delhi as its northern hub



AirAsia India has chosen New Delhi as its northern hub, while Bengaluru will remain its home base. Chennai is another hub of the airline with engineering and operations staff. In the past, AirAsia India was not operating from destinations like Delhi and Mumbai, citing high airport charges.

The airline has started flights connecting Kochi, Goa, Chandigarh, Jaipur, and Pune from Bengaluru. AirAsia India will be having multiple flights from Delhi to at least two different cities.

Jet Airways introduces Chopard amenity kits on International flights

Jet Airways (India) Ltd. has introduced amenity kits from the Swiss brand, Chopard for First Class and Premiere guests on select international flights. The amenity kits contain cosmetic and comfort items, including a hand cream, lip balm (stick), hair brush, eye mask, and cabin socks, as per a release. The First Class amenity kit also doubles as an after-use tab case allowing guests to store their personal handheld electronic device, such as a tab.



Jet Airways signs code-share agreement with Bangkok Airways



Jet Airways (India) Ltd. and Bangkok Airways have entered into a code-share agreement. Flights under the code-share will open for sale on April 30, 2015 for travel effective May 4, 2015. The code-share will reinforce the international global network of both airlines and provide more choice for customers between India and Thailand. Jet Airways will place its marketing code on Bangkok Airways' flights between Mumbai (BOM) and Bangkok (BKK). Likewise, Bangkok Airways will place its marketing code on Jet Airways' operations between Bangkok (BKK) and Mumbai (BOM). These code-share flights will offer wider and convenient travel options to travellers flying between India and Bangkok for business and leisure. With the addition of Bangkok Airways, Jet Airways now has 21 code-share partners across the globe.

Aviation News

Air Seychelles increases flight frequency to Mumbai



Air Seychelles, the national airline of the Republic of Seychelles, has increased the frequency of its flights to Mumbai to cater for growing demand from business and leisure travelers. The current three-flights-per-week service between Mumbai and Seychelles has been enhanced with a fourth weekly flight that will continue to be operated on an Airbus A320 aircraft with 16 Business Class and 120 Economy Class seats. Air Seychelles has also upgraded its Mauritius service to four flights-per-week and will enhance Antananarivo to three flights-per-week from July 3, 2015, providing travellers with convenient and flexible travel options across the Indian Ocean.

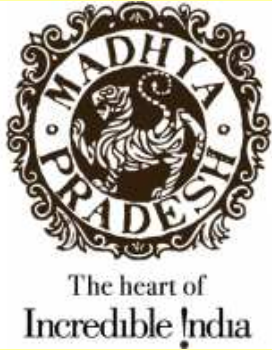
Air Seychelles also code-shares on 21 weekly Etihad Airways services between Mumbai and Abu Dhabi that connect onto return flights to Seychelles, offering guests from India the opportunity of combining a trip to the archipelago with a stopover in Abu Dhabi.

Air Seychelles schedule for Mumbai flights :-

| Flight No. | Origin | Destination | Departure | Arrival | Days |
|--|------------|-------------|-----------|---------|--------------------|
| HM 261 | Mumbai | Mahe (SEZ) | 8.45 pm | 2.55 am | Wed, Thu, Sat, Sun |
| HM 260 | Mahe (SEZ) | Mumbai | 4.00 am | 6.55 am | Tue, Wed, Fri, Sat |
| Note : All departures & arrivals are listed in local time. | | | | | |

Hospitality News

Madhya Pradesh Tourism year



Madhya Pradesh Tourism development corporation has announced tourism year starting April 2015. From last week of April, tourists will have a host of attractions round the year to get a flavour of Madhya Pradesh Tourism , Arts and Culture . The Tourism year was officially kicked off at Bhopal by Chief Minister Shivaraj Singh Chouhan.

The activities of tourism year which include food festivals, exhibitions, Folk Dances and cultural events in four major cities in the state will bring travelers more closer to MP . Madhya Pradesh will be an ideal destination for devotees during the holy month of Shravan with special tours to the two Jyotirlingas at Mahakaleshwar (Ujjain) and Omkareshwar.

New traveler centric packages such as tours to Bhojpur , Bhimbetka , Islam Nagar have been added . The Jheel Mohotsav at 9 different places in the state , Khajuraho dance festival, New hotel at Ujjain , new wellness resort at Pachmari , new hotel at Bhopal ,Anandotsav and Tansen festival at Bhopal, Pachmari Utsav , Deepandan utsav at Chitrakoot , Diwali handicraft festival are just some of the many activities which have been undertaken. The activities would be a perfect foundation to gear up for Simhastha 2016 to be held from 22 April 2016-21May 2016.

Apart from Wild life and pilgrimage tours people have a deep interest in heritage and architecture as also music. MP tourism will organize tours for such enthusiasts in conjunction of Khajuraho festival, Tansen festival among others.

To promote the tourism year MP tourism has also launched social media campaign to reach out to the people . The tourism website of the state has also been revamped and a news letter on MP tourism has been launched. MP has also embarked upon developing tourism infrastructure at smaller and unknown regions to increase tourist footfalls.

Hospitality News

Kerala Tourism to form new tourism circuit with Sri Lanka



Kerala Tourism has extended its frontiers to Sri Lanka and is forming a new tourism circuit with the island country. The island's sea plane operator based in Colombo has expressed interest to partner with corporate entities in Kerala to start sea plane services in the state, while in a discussion with the Pathfinder Foundation. Joint promotional activities will be conducted by Kerala and Sri Lanka to target travellers from big source markets like China, Germany and Russia. This will help in bringing more tourists to both these destinations.

Jumeirah to debut in India by 2019 with Mumbai property

Dubai-based international luxury hotel chain, Jumeirah Group has signed a management agreement with a company (name yet to be revealed as waiting for the final permit) for the launch of the Jumeirah Mumbai hotel, slated to open by 2019 and Jumeirah Goa hotel thereafter. Both the properties would be newly built. Apart from this, the luxury hotel chain is also searching for potential developers and investors in India who would be interested in having Jumeirah as their operator along with attractive conversion options simultaneously.



IHG's Hotel Indigo to make its debut in the UAE



InterContinental Hotels Group (IHG) recently announced the launch of its boutique hotel brand Hotel Indigo in the UAE with the signing of a management agreement with Sunflower FZE for a new 285-room property in Dubai. Hotel Indigo Dubai Business Bay to open in 2017. The new hotel will be located in the upcoming Business Bay District, a stone's throw from the world renowned Burj Khalifa, The Dubai Mall and the emerging Design District. The hotel's design, food & beverage, amenities and services will reflect the area's vibrant business, cultural and high-end residential community.

Visa News

E-tourist visa to be offered to 31 more countries



The Indian Government is going to extend the e-tourist visa scheme to 31 more countries. These are Argentina, Armenia, Aruba, Belgium, Colombia, Cuba, Guatemala, Hungary, Ireland, Jamaica, Malaysia, Malta, Mongolia, Mozambique, the Netherlands, Panama, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain, St Lucia, St Vincent & the Grenadines, Surinam, Sweden, Tanzania, East Timor, Turks & Caicos Islands, the UK, Uruguay and Venezuela. The scheme is also going to be made available at seven more airports by June 15, 2015, namely Jaipur, Amritsar, Gaya, Lucknow, Trichy, Varanasi, and Ahmedabad. The airports have been chosen due to the large number of foreign tourists they receive on account of their proximity to major tourist spots. The e-tourist visa is currently offered to nationals of 45 countries and can be availed of at nine international airports.

Industry News

Passport authorities to verify applicant identity with Aadhaar database



The inter-linking of Aadhaar numbers with the passport issuance process is set to become a reality. The connectivity is currently being tested by the ministry of external affairs at the Regional Passport Office in Delhi and is expected to be gradually extended to the entire country. Once in place, the new system will allow passport issuing authorities to cross check particulars furnished by an applicant with those registered in the Aadhaar database, including the biometric imprint. This added layer of cross-verification will add value to the process of authenticating the identity of citizens for issuance of passports. Citizens who are yet to get the Aadhaar card will not be denied a passport. The inter-linking is just a second layer of security check. The ministry hopes to close all gaps before rolling out this upgrade at all its 37 passport offices across the country.

However, despite the cross-verification of credentials, no change is currently expected in the process of police verification which is carried out prior to issuance of the passport. Applicants still have to furnish all documents as prescribed for their application. New system does not mandate every passport applicant to have an Aadhar number. Applicants may be asked to furnish acknowledgment slip of Aadhar application.

Photo Feature

Miracle Garden, Dubai



Miracle Garden is aimed on developing, creating tourist attraction with positive impact on environment, reduce carbon print globally by developing world's biggest and unique flower garden with features and attractions. More than 45 million blooming flowers in stunning designs, awesome shapes and structures, and eye catching color combinations achieved through 45 different flower varieties provide a grand attraction. Miracle Garden is one of a kind in the region and in the world for such a unique display and extravagant outdoor recreational destination. Miracle Garden in its First Phase is providing state of the art services and facilities including open parking, VIP parking, sitting areas, prayer room, toilet blocks, shower facility, security room, first aid room, carts for handicapped visitors, retails and commercial kiosk and all other related services available to facilitate visitors. Miracle Garden has the record in Guinness Book of Records for having the longest flower wall which will give new landmark for Miracle Garden and City of Dubai, believed to be leader in diverse and cultural tourist attraction.

Open Space

Lighter Moments

Texan Engineer

A very loud Texan Engineer was visiting Australia, and talking big about all of the large civil works in the USA that he was involved in. To be polite his Australian counterpart took him on a tour of some of Sydney's larger constructions.

First he took him to Gladesville Bridge. The Texan exclaimed, "What's that!" In reply the Australian said, "That's the Gladesville Bridge".

"Hmmpf" said the Texan, "How long and how many men did it take to build?" The Australian replied, "About 5 years with 1000 men."

The Texan replied, "Well in Texas we would've done it in 2 years with 500 men."

Next they went to the Sydney Opera House. "What's that" said the Texan. "That's the Sydney Opera House" was the reply.

"Hmmpf" said the Texan, "How long and how many men did it take to build?" The Australian replied, "About 10 years with 200 men."

By this stage the Australian was a little put out by the Texan's attitude so he decided to get some revenge, they walked around the Sydney Opera House and as they did the Sydney Harbor Bridge came into view.

Immediately the Texan exclaimed, "Wow! What's that?"

The Australian Engineer replied, "I don't know, it wasn't there yesterday."

IAAI Director Board

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|---|---|---|
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