



# IAAI Newsletter

June 2015, 1st Fortnight Issue

## IAAI News

### IAAI files criminal case against IATA

IAAI was compelled to take a legal recourse to solve the problems heaped upon the IATA Agents Fraternity and filed a Case against IATA at Gurgaon, Haryana, seeking directive for the reconstitution of APJC-India under Appendix 'F' – of PConf New Guidelines of January 2014, which further led to a Case under CrPC (Code of Criminal Procedure) against the IATA Representative, Mr. Vinod Malhotra.

Till end-2013, in countries governed under 810 and 818g, Agents' Representation in APJC was decided between the Travel Associations. In India, however, IAAI was kept out of APJC by the vested interests.

In January 2014, PConf issued globalized directives to countries under Res 818g to regularize APJC under Appendix-"F" of the New Guidelines - Establishment of an APJC – directing that the IATA local/regional offices must be responsible for the formation and regularizations of the APJCs in a country.

When our legitimate right was denied again, IAAI was constrained to approach the Court of Law for justice and fairness.

IAAI has requested the Court to restrain APJC-India from taking any action and direct the IATA Country Director to re-constitute APJC-India with 18 members (9 airlines and 9 agents equally represented by TAAI, TAFI & IAAI) with the Chairman to be elected from amongst these 18 Members as stipulated by Appendix "F".

Since IATA is a neutral body coordinating with both the airlines and the agents, IAAI expected either a statement on compliance to Appendix-F or a regret of inability under jurisdictional conflict.

On the contrary, IATA-India represented by Mr. Vinod Malhotra, purportedly, as a resident representative of IATA, stated that IATA only has a Branch office in Mumbai and that "IATA India Private Limited" in Delhi is a separate entity registered in India and challenged the jurisdiction of the Court. Further, he acted in a partisan manner and justified the deeds and activities of APJC-India, rationalized representation of TAAI & TAFI, eulogized the joint bank guarantee system, upheld and justified the "14 memberships" as a true representation of the industry.

In order to establish the restricted eligibility of TAAI and TAFI, the Defendant fraudulently produced as evidence before the Court, a copy of a letter dated 27<sup>th</sup> October, 2014, addressed to IAAI by IATA. This letter is purportedly signed by Mr. Sunil Chopra as Asst. Director – IDFS for India & Nepal. It is surprising how Mr. Sunil Chopra could sign such a letter when, in fact, he had been transferred to Singapore in August, 2013, as Regional Manager to certain Asian countries other than India!

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## IAAI News

On scrutiny, it came to light that this letter was a replication of the letter dated 19<sup>th</sup> July 2010 sent by IATA to IAAI when Mr. Sunil Chopra was the IATA Asst. Director – IDFS for India & Nepal then in 2010.

IAAI, therefore, has filed a Criminal case for forgery against the Defendant under Section 340 Criminal Procedure Code, read with Sections 191,192,193 & 194 of IPC, and the Case is posted for Hearing on 15.07.2015 due to Court vacation.

Appendix “F” globally recommends membership up to 18 and stipulates that all National Associations must have equal representation and the Chairman is to be elected from amongst them. And it even specifies that, if any fraction of a substantial number of agents is not represented through any Associations, IATA must ensure even their representation through nomination.

Even in a small country like Malaysia, with less than 800 Agents, the APJC has 18 Members. Gulf Countries have 18 members with a nominated Agent from Doha since the Government of Qatar forbids any Trade Associations in Qatar. Initially when APJC-India was formed in the year 2000, there were only 42 airlines and less than 2000 Agents. Initially, only TAAI was represented in APJC; thereafter, TAFI got inducted. In a democratic country with 2950 IATA Agents and 96 IATA carriers, can a 14-Member APJC be truly representative of the Indian Aviation Industry as stipulated in Para 1.1.1.3 of IATA Resolution 818g? IAAI and some major carriers like Emirates and Etihad are deliberately being kept out by restricting the APJC membership to only 14 Members.

IAAI is in negotiation with certain DIP (Default Insurance Program) Providers but have hardly got any support from IATA Singapore as the same has not been recommended through APJC-India. Hence, only a reconstituted APJC-India as per PAConf 2014 Appendix ‘F’ can save the Travel Industry in India. And, our proposal for DIP is endorsed and fully supported by Jet Airways, Singapore Airlines, Emirates, Etihad & Silk Air.

IAAI has challenged and fought against the unjust policies of APJC-India on many occasions, especially when IATA Resolutions were misinterpreted and misguided by the vested interests like the implementation of minimum Bank Guarantee in 2002, Zero commission & Transaction Fee in 2008 mooted by the Associations, the implementation & process of TAP on 08.03.2010 to circumvent our DGCA Order of 05.03.2010, the non-formation of ADM polices, brokerage on insurance premiums, and the process of implementing weekly payment system in India which can be reverted back to fortnightly payment even today by a re-constituted APJC-India.

The Industry is well aware of the game played by TAAI & TAFI by deliberately absenting themselves from the APJC-India Meeting held on 14.09.2010. This allowed the Airline Members to convene as an “Airlines Working Group” Meeting and recommend the retention of the 14-Member APJC-India with Air India as Chairman under 818g effective 01.06.2011. IATA, as APJC Secretary, mischievously recorded these proceedings as the Minutes of APJC Meet No-29, signed by Air India as Chairman and submitted to PAConf for circulation as Agenda Item-G5 on 17.09.2010

IAAI has taken up this matter of the reconstitution of APJC-India with Mr. Tony Tyler – Director-General & CEO, IATA, Mr. Aleks Popovich – Sr. Vice-President IDFS, IATA, and Mr. Chris Gilbey – Chairman of the Passenger Agency Conference.

IAAI’s stand is that every agent should have the liberty, the equality and the flexibility to do business according to his financial capacity and should also be compensated and remunerated by the airlines for the services rendered on their behalf.

## Aviation News

### AAI, Defence Ministry carry out test flight for flexible use of airspace



The Airports Authority of India (AAI) and the Ministry of Defence have for the first time carried out test flights for Flexible Use of Airspace (FUA), which would result in significant savings for airlines and cut down travel time sharply. Once FUA is implemented, commercial flights can fly over restricted zones with prior approval from defence authorities. About 40 per cent of Indian airspace comes under defence authorities, and is restricted for civil aircraft movement. As a result, most of the navigational routes are not straight, and commercial flights have to circumvent the restricted areas thereby losing fuel and time, while adding to carbon emission. On the Delhi-Goa sector, which sees around 15 flight movements a day, airlines take an average 23 minutes of additional travel time while flying from Mumbai coastline to Goa. AAI and defence authorities have devised an FUA manual. Once implemented, it would result in significant savings even on international flights.

### Air India seeks US pre-clearance facility at Delhi, Mumbai airports



Air India Ltd (AI) has asked the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) to facilitate having US Customs and Border Protection (CBP) facility at big Indian airports like Delhi and Mumbai. America-bound passengers can clear all immigration, customs and agriculture inspections required by the US at these facilities during departure itself. On landing in US, they can simply collect their baggage and walk off the arrival airports like domestic flyers.

While Dublin's Shannon airport has had the US pre-clearance travel facility for years, AI began to feel the need when Abu Dhabi also got this facility recently. The US pre-clearance is a big draw for flyers to America as it allows them to avoid serpentine queues at US airports. The Jet-Etihad combine is weaning away passengers from our nonstop flights to US, especially as Jet feeds Etihad's flights to US from large number of Indian cities. Dubai and Doha airports are also going to have the US pre-clearance. In such a situation, Delhi and Mumbai — from where AI has nonstop flights to US — need a similar facility for AI to remain competitive and take on the growing might of the Gulf carriers here.

AI's request comes at a time when the airline is planning to expand its wings in America. It is eyeing at least five new destinations in the US: San Francisco, Dallas, Houston, Washington and Boston. AI currently flies to New York and Chicago, the only Indian carrier to have nonstop services to North America.

## Aviation News

### You may pay lower fare for Zero check-in luggage



The DGCA has sought airlines' views on allowing zero check-in baggage passengers. Airlines like IndiGo & AirAsia India have been advocating this move for a long time & others like SpiceJet have already come out with similar schemes. IndiGo has told the regulator to allow two fares, one would be a regular fare where passengers will be allowed to check in 15 kg baggage without any extra charge & the second, a zero baggage fare that would be lower by up to 10% for those carrying only up to 7 kg hand baggage. IndiGo has told the regulator that a total fare of up to Rs. 4,000/- could be lower by Rs. 200-400 & Rs. 6,000 could fall by Rs. 600 under the zero baggage scheme.

### Oneworld open to partner Indian LCC

oneworld, the world's third-largest airline alliance after Star Alliance and SkyTeam, is not disinclined to inducting a low-cost carrier (LCC) into its alliance from India. A low-cost carrier will be required to make certain changes in its system like the frequent flier programme and a few technical upgrades to be eligible to join the alliance. The alliance had a former LCC as its member. Air Berlin turned into a hybrid carrier from being a low-cost and it is working well. oneworld was founded on February 1, 1999, and constitutes 15 members. The alliance had, in the past, tried to induct Kingfisher Airlines as its member from India, but the plan did not materialize. As of now, only Star Alliance has a presence in the country with Air India as its member. With Air India joining Star Alliance and Jet Airways becoming an Etihad partner, there's no other full-service in the country that flies international. While Vistara has started domestic operations in the country, it is 49 per cent owned by Singapore Airlines, which is a Star Alliance member and would prefer to induct Vistara into that alliance. Star Alliance, after adding Air India, carries the largest share of traffic despite a number of oneworld members like British Airways, Cathay Pacific, Japan Airlines, Malaysia Airlines, Qatar Airways and SriLankan Airlines operating flights to India.



### AirAsia India to start Guwahati—Imphal daily service



AirAsia India will commence daily flights from Guwahati to Imphal from June 25, 2015. Flight number I5 3781 will depart from Guwahati for Imphal at 1045 hrs and reach at 1140 hrs. The return flight I5 3782 will take off at 1205 hrs to land in Guwahati at 1300 hrs.

## Aviation News

### GoAir to double destinations by 2020



GoAir is to double the number of destinations in its network, & increase daily flights & annual passenger count by about four times by 2020, as the airline takes deliveries from its 72-aircraft order. These 72 aircrafts will be delivered between 2016 & 2020 ie 15 aircrafts a year as against the current average of 2.5 aircrafts a year. With this GoAir will aim to grow at more than 4 times the industry average, which means it is aiming for a higher market share. The airline is to expand from 22 destinations now to 36 by March 2018 & 52 by May 2020. From 41 routes now, it will grow to 71 in 2018 & 116 in 2020. It will increase daily flights from 140 now to 283 in 2018 & 514 two years later & aims to increase the number of passengers carried from 7 million to 16 million in 2018 & 30 million by 2020. Since November 2005 GoAir has scaled up its fleet size to 19 planes & 140 daily flights currently.

### Microlight flights now in Coorg

It's the closest you can get to flying like a bird. There you will be, 5000 feet up in the air in a hand glider that takes two people at speeds of up to 100 kmph, with scenic Coorg sprawled beneath. You have to report at Ponnampet with barely one hotel to its name. Staying 6 kms away, at Gonikoppal, is better, or Madikeri being a district, you can drive down from wherever you are holidaying to notch up an experience. It costs Rs. 2,500/- per adult; flight last 10-30 mins & are scheduled between 10 am & 5 pm.





## Hospitality News

### BSNL to offer Wi-Fi in tourism hotspots



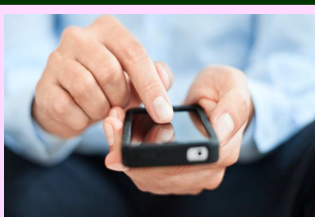
Bharat Sanchar Nigam Ltd. (BSNL) plans to implement ventures worth Rs 6,000 crore this fiscal year. These include Wi-Fi rollout in key tourism hotspots, extending mobile coverage in Maoist-affected areas and revamping communications infrastructure in the strategic Andaman & Nicobar Islands. The telecom operator will launch Wi-Fi hotspots in prominent locations such as Agra, Varanasi, Hyderabad, and Fatehpur Sikri, and shortly finalise the second wave of Wi-Fi rollout zones. As reported earlier, wi-fi facility at the Taj Mahal begins from 15th June.

### Keys Hotels launches second property in Kerala 'Keys Kochi'



Keys Hotels & Resorts, a leading chain of mid-market hotels, announced the launch of Keys Kochi, its second hotel in Kerala and 16th hotel across India. Hotel Keys Kochi, located close to Kerala's famous backwaters, offers breathtaking views and coupled with its proximity to M G Road, Fort Cochin and the Info Park is slated to be an ideal option for both business and leisure travellers. Keys Kochi is a fully equipped hotel with banquet facilities for conferences and receptions. The hotel has 151 rooms, many of which offer scenic views of the backwaters. The rooms are designed with a prime focus on guests' comfort and hence are furnished with a relaxing couch and comfortable beds with duvets. Mineral water and tea-coffee are complimentary in each room and guests can also enjoy the 24-hour room service and WIFI access.

### Top Hotel Groups developing Apps for Realtime Concierge Services



Hospitality majors that have been offering concierge services for years are also looking at launching the virtual form of concierge. Marriott recently rolled out an App specifically for corporate meetings that lets you make & adjust real-time requests for coffee refills, room temperature changes, meal time changes, more tables & almost anything else you might need without disruptions or leaving the meeting. Hilton Worldwide is also planning to bring concierge-on-mobile to India in its upcoming Conrad property.

## Railway News

### *Railway Tatkal Tickets Updates*



Indian Railways has changed the timing for the booking of Tatkal tickets, and customers can get a refund of upto 50% on cancellation for the same. From July 1<sup>st</sup>, the Tatkal booking for AC classes will commence at 10am and close at 11am, while for the non-AC classes, the Tatkal booking will commence at 11am and close at noon. Railways will soon launch its 'Tatkal Special' train service, traveling on which will be dearer than on normal trains. While 'Premium' trains — tickets for which are priced as per a dynamic fare structure — are already operational, the Tatkal Special trains will be an additional service to cater to the rush. The Railways has also relaxed the advance reservation period for Tatkal Special trains. The advance reservation period is of a minimum 10 days and a maximum of 60 days.

### *IRCTC ties up with radio taxis to offer cab bookings on its website*



Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC) Ltd., which recently forayed into road transportation for rail passengers by launching 'Concierge Services' at New Delhi and some other major stations, has rolled out the 'Cab for All' service to provide a safe and affordable taxi ride for people in Delhi/NCR. Shortly, Railways will extend the service to other cities.

With this service, passengers can book a GPS-tracked radio taxi on the IRCTC website, though they need not be a train passenger. For providing this service, IRCTC has entered into tie-ups with three radio taxi operators — Easy Cabs, Meru Cabs, and Mega Cabs. Passengers can book a radio cab along with their train or flight ticket in advance. Easy Cabs, Meru Cabs and Mega Cabs are the registered radio taxis and they comply with the rules laid down by the government. These cabs are centrally tracked through GPS and the drivers are trained and have police verifications. The radio cab service is available to commuters at the government-approved rate of Rs 23 per km, and Rs 28.50 per km between 11 pm and 6 am.

## Visa News

### Jordan waives visa fee for travellers staying 2 nights



Jordan has waived visa fees for tourists of all nationalities coming through Jordanian tour operators, whether travelling individually or in groups. However, the condition is that the traveller spends a minimum of two consecutive nights in the country. Further, the Jordanian government has reduced visa fees for tourists entering through land borders, from JOD 40 to JOD 10, on the condition that the tourist spends a minimum of three consecutive nights. Both these measures, taken to improve tourism in the nation, have taken effect. Among other decisions are waiving the Departure Tax and entry visa for all low-cost and charter flights taking off from King Hussein International Airport in Aqaba, and reduction in electricity tariffs for the hotel sector, which is aimed to make the hospitality sector more competitive in the region.

### Tourist arrivals on e-Visa to India rise 750% in May 2015

Last month, 15,659 tourists arrived in India on the e-Tourist Visa, as compared with 1,833 during May 2014, registering a growth of 754.3 per cent. This high growth may be attributed to the introduction of e-Tourist Visa for 76 countries as against coverage of earlier Tourist Visa on Arrival (TVoA) scheme for 12 countries.



The percentage shares of the top ten source countries availing of the scheme in during May 2015 were USA (37.82 per cent), Germany (9.35 per cent), Australia (8.95 per cent), Russian Federation (5.85 per cent), Republic of Korea (4.30 per cent), UAE (3.53 per cent), Mexico (3.16 per cent), Ukraine (3.01 per cent), Japan (2.89 per cent), and Singapore (2.43 per cent). The percentage shares of different ports of arrivals in India on e-Tourist Visa in the review period were New Delhi (43.65 per cent), Mumbai (22.14 per cent), Bengaluru (9.66 per cent), Chennai (7.25 per cent), Hyderabad (4.55 per cent), Kochi (3.97 per cent), Goa (3.81 per cent), Kolkata (3.24 per cent), and Thiruvananthapuram (1.73 per cent).

During January-May 2015, 110,657 tourists arrived on e-Tourist Visa, as compared with 9,841 during January-May 2014, registering a growth of 1024.4 per cent.



## Industry News

### Passport process made simple for Government employees



A new 'prior intimation' feature introduced by the Ministry of External Affairs for Government servants and public sector undertakings/ autonomous body employees seeking passports is expected to simplify the procedure for them. The prior intimation letter will benefit thousands of Government employees who find it difficult to obtain identity certificates/ no-objection certificates from their departments.

The letter will enable the applicant to inform his/ her controlling or administrative authority (employer) regarding the submission of the passport application. The passport-seeker can submit the letter in the format of Annexure 'N'.

After the applicant submits the passport application, the copy of this prior intimation will be sent to his/her employer. In case the employer has any objection regarding issuance of passport to that person, they can convey the details to the regional passport officer concerned. The final decision, however, will be taken by the passport issuing authority concerned. Getting a no-objection certificate from their headquarters is a challenge for many government employees, especially those posted in far-flung areas, away from the headquarters. This new system will eliminate the need to obtain the certificate. Merely submitting the prior information letter will allow them to take their passport application forward.

If the applicant submits the letter, the passport will be issued on the basis of pre-police verification. However, the provisions of police verification will remain applicable in reissue cases.

While the revised provisions deal only with passport issuance, the requirement for government employees to obtain prior information from their department/ ministry to travel abroad as per conduct rules will remain unchanged, as per the instructions issued by the department of personnel and training and respective authorities.



## Photo Feature

**Danxia Landform, South-west China**

The Danxia landform refers to various landscapes found in southeast, southwest and northwest China that "consist of a red bed characterized by steep cliffs". It is a unique type of petrographic geomorphology found in China. Danxia landform is formed from red-coloured sandstones and conglomerates of largely Cretaceous age. The landforms look very much like karst topography that forms in areas underlain by limestones, but since the rocks that form Danxia are sandstones and conglomerates, they have been called "pseudo-karst" landforms. Danxia landforms cover several provinces in southeast China. Taining County, Fujian Province, has very good examples of "young" danxia landforms wherein deep, narrow valleys have been formed. As the landform gets older, valleys widen and one gets isolated towers and ridges. The danxia landform is named after Mount Danxia, one of the most famous examples of the danxia landform. A very peculiar feature of Danxia landscape is the development of numerous caves of various sizes and shapes. In 2010, several Danxia landscapes in southern China, with a general name of "China Danxia", were inscribed as a World Heritage Site.

## Open Space

### Lighter Moments

During a bank heist the Chief told the Sergeant to cover all exits so the robbers could not get away.

Later the Sergeant reports to the chief, " Sorry sir, but they got away".

The Chief very disappointed says, " I told you to cover all Exits !"

"I did" replied the Sergeant. " But they got away through the Entrance".

### *Thought for the Fortnight*

Life is like making tea !! Boil your ego, evaporate your worries, dilute your sorrows, filter your mistakes & get the taste of happiness.



## ***IAAI Director Board***

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