



IAAI Newsletter

November 2015, IInd Fortnight Issue

IAAI News

An Open Letter to the Travel Trade Fraternity

Dear Colleagues,

As you are aware, we had initiated legal proceedings against IATA in the Gurgaon District Court. Our simple prayer was to direct the IATA Country Director to reconstitute APJC - India as per the new PAConf Guidelines of January 2014 and induct IAAI into APJC - India. (PAConf directs the IATA Country/Regional Head of a country to be responsible to co-ordinate and constitute APJC's and stipulates a membership up to 18 and mandates that all national travel agents associations must be represented equally and that the Chairman and Vice-Chairman be elected from the 18).

IATA, represented by Mr Vinod Malhotra (Branch Manager, Northern India - IDFS) as a resident of Delhi, deliberately hid the IATA Gurgaon office address where Mr. Malhotra sits with the IATA Country Director, Mr. Amitabh Khosla, and objected the case on the grounds of jurisdiction of the Court. Further, IATA submitted a forged document to the Court, which led us to file a criminal case of forgery (CrPC 340) against IATA in the same Court.

IATA's objections on jurisdictions and other matters were rejected by the District Court Judge in March 2015 and we were allowed to proceed with the APJC-India matter. Later, the Hon Court had passed the necessary order directing IAAI to proceed with the Criminal case against IATA through official channels. Accordingly, we have filed an FIR with the Gurgaon Police Authorities to enable us to proceed further through the Magistrate Court legally.

When the hearing started in the Gurgaon District Court, IATA, represented by Mr. Vinay Kakkar, an Aviation Industry Analyst, as a resident of Mumbai, filed a review petition in the Haryana High Court challenging the above order. Though Mr. Vinay Kakker is also working at the IATA Gurgaon office along with the Country Director, the Hon Court was deliberately misled with the false information that the Gurgaon office belongs to IATA India Pvt Ltd and not to IATA India. Whereas, the fact that IATA India Pvt Ltd still does not have any office in India had been proved by us in the Delhi District Court. The Hon High Court Judge failed to call for the Dist Court case files and did not take cognizance of the business cards of the IATA Country Director, Mr Amitabh Khosla, and others or the photographs or any other documentary evidences presented by us. The whole world knows that the IATA office is functioning from the Gurgaon address, but the High Court Judge obviously thought otherwise and was not convinced!!

As a result, our proceedings in the Gurgaon District Court have been put on hold.

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So, the only legal option available to us is to challenge the High Court order in the Supreme Court through a Special Leave Petition appealing for a stay of the High court Order which will enable the Gurgaon District Court to resume the proceedings. Our both cases in Gurgaon are absolutely fool-proof - this is why IATA is fighting so aggressively.

The United India Insurance Company, through an RTI query, has categorically revealed that a payment of commission amounting to Rs 5.86 crores was made to an Agent in Mumbai on account of default insurance during for the period 2010-2014. You all are aware that, from 2009, IATA is the insurer and beneficiary. Insurance premiums are calculated, invoiced, collected and processed by BSP, and are being regulated and controlled by IATA and APJC-India. Who are the actual beneficiaries then? With the ambiguity that exists, who should be arraigned?

- IATA claims to be a NEUTRAL body. But, in India, it seems to be otherwise. Whom are they trying to cover or protect?**
- Why is IATA obstinately defending the composition of the present APJC-India when it is not functioning as per IATA's own Resolution 818g guidelines given in Appendix F of January 2014??!!**
- The only conclusion can be that, emphatically, it demonstrates that certain vested interests in India are worried or scared of IAAI's representation in APJC-India.**

IAAI is not for any controversy. But, as an Association by the Agents and for the Agents, IAAI will stand and fight for the rights of our Fraternity and continue to legally fight for our legitimate "Commission/ remuneration". We have ONLY questioned or challenged the ILLEGALITIES in India. A new APJC-India under the "Appendix-F" guidelines with equal participation of all 3 associations and an elected Chairman is a must to REVERSE the TAP or Weekly payment to FORTNIGHTLY payment or get IATA to introduce the Default Insurance Program (DIP). All of these are very crucial for the ordinary travel agent's survival.

Please bear in mind that, from 1st January, 2016, your BSP payments will be automatically debited by your own bankers and you do not have to run for its clearance. Please also remember that you have already lost the monetary benefits from Passport and Visa processing. And, plagued by Zero Commission, TAP, WPS, competition from OTA's and shortly by the introduction of NDC, many of the Travel Agents have already pulled down their shutters.

Dear friends, this is the last and final call.... Kindly open your eyes and see how the consolidators, OTA's and IATA is making a mockery of your goodness.

**With regards
for IAAI National Board,**

**Biji Eapen
National President**

**D.L. Jekannathan
General Secretary**

**S. Saldanha
National Treasurer**

IAAI News

EXCLUSIVE WOMEN'S CHAPTER OF IAAI(MAHARASHTRA)

IAAI (Maharashtra) has taken the lead to open an exclusive Women's Chapter in the state with equal representation from Mumbai & Pune. This chapter will function under the leadership of Mrs Aruna Shetty, the IAAI Chairperson for Women Empowerment & the Chapter opening would be held in December at Pune where the IAAI top brass, office bearers & members of IAAI (Maharashtra) would be present.

IAAI is the first Association to start an exclusive Women's Chapter. Similar chapters would follow in Tamil Nadu & Kerala to be subsequently followed by individual chapters in cities like Pune, Mumbai, Chennai, Kochi, New Delhi etc.

Our women colleagues willing to join & contribute to these chapters may approach Mrs Aruna Shetty at womenpower@iaai.in

IAAI-Maharashtra Meeting at Hotel Kohinoor Mumbai



Aviation News

Air India's new San Francisco flights to originate from Bengaluru



Air India will start flights between Bengaluru and San Francisco from December 2 via Delhi. Starting journey from Bengaluru, the flight will travel non-stop from Delhi to San Francisco and passengers travelling to San Francisco will undergo all custom and immigration formalities at Bengaluru airport itself for their onward journey.

Flight AI-173 from Bengaluru to Delhi will depart on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays from Bengaluru at 2115 hrs with a A321 aircraft. The flight will arrive in Delhi at 2345 hrs. Flight AI-173 to San Francisco will leave Delhi on Wednesdays, Fridays and Sundays at 0235 hrs and will be operated with B777-200LR aircraft. This flight will arrive into San Francisco at 0700 hrs (local time) on the same day. The return flight will depart at 1030 hrs and arrive at Delhi next day (Thursdays, Saturdays and Mondays) at 1620 hrs & depart at 1745 hrs to Bengaluru which arrives at 2035 hrs by Airbus A321 aircraft.

Passengers from six other cities and IT hubs, in India i.e. Mumbai, Chennai, Hyderabad, Kochi, Ahmedabad and Pune will have seamless connections. Likewise, the return flight from San Francisco via Delhi will provide onward connections to nine cities i.e. Bengaluru, Mumbai, Chennai, Kolkata, Hyderabad, Kochi, Ahmedabad, Pune and Bhubaneswar. Passengers will have huge benefits travelling to San Francisco as they will undergo immigration and customs at their boarding points itself and can have comfortable journey further. Passengers can enjoy non-stop entertainment, specially chosen food and best of the comfort on this one of the world's longest flights.

Air India's new service between Mumbai & Diu



Air India has introduced a new service between Mumbai & Diu. Details as follows :-

Flights will operate on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday.

Mumbai—Diu : AI 9623 : 11.30 am—12.35 pm

Diu—Mumbai : AI 9624 : 1.05 pm—2.10 pm

Aviation News

Ethiopian Airlines operates an all-women functioned flight



Africa-based Ethiopian Airlines, starts operation of an all-women functioned flight on November 19, 2015 on the Addis Ababa - Bangkok route. This historic flight aimed at crystallising Ethiopian corporate conviction of 'Women Empowerment for a Sustainable Growth' and it is the first of its kind in Ethiopian 70 years of service. Operated by an all - female crew led by female flight deck crew members and senior female executives onboard, the on ground flight preparations were also conducted by females only. The fact that female employees comprise 30% of the total Ethiopian employee population signifies Ethiopian core value of equal opportunity employer.

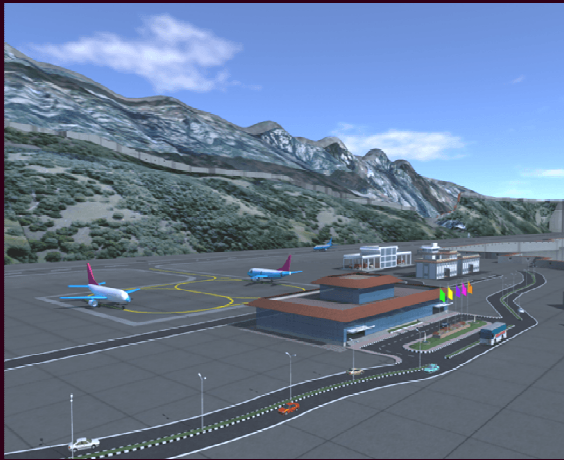
Air India Express Convenience Fee for Agents



Effective Nov'15 All Agents of India Region are entitled to a Convenience Fee (TFee) of Rs 150/- per passenger per segment on all Air India Express flights. Convenience Fee (Wfee) will be levied on passengers booking through the Air India Express Website and a Convenience Fee (CFee) will be levied for all booking done through any of AI's CTOs/ATOs. This is to keep parity in the final fare quote to the passengers desirous of purchasing and flying with Air India Express. It may be noted that this charge will be added onto the pricing summary on the last screen before going ahead to make a payment.

Aviation News

Sikkim's first airport in Pakyong to be operational from December 2016



Sikkim's first airport is expected to be operational from December 2016, with provision for direct connectivity to the land locked state thereby boosting tourism. The airport is coming up at Pakyong, 35 Km from Gangtok. Currently, the nearest airport is Bagdogra in West Bengal from where one has to drive down to Sikkim. The airport, spread over 400 ha (990 acres). It is the first Greenfield airport to be constructed in the Northeastern Region of India and the only airport in the state of Sikkim.

The airport is being built by the Airport Authority of India featuring a 1,700 m × 30 m (5,577 ft × 98 ft) runway and a 116 m (381 ft) long taxiway connecting it to an apron measuring 106 by 76 metres (348 ft × 249 ft) that can accommodate two ATR 72 aircraft at a time. Also under construction are a terminal building measuring 2,380 m² (25,600 sq ft) with a capacity of 100 passengers, a car park for 80 vehicles and a fire station cum Air Traffic Control Tower.

Turkish Airlines to add 6 new Gateways in India



TURKISH AIRLINES

Turkish Airlines is going to add minimum six new gateways in India which includes Chennai, Hyderabad, Bengaluru, Ahmedabad, Kolkata & Amritsar. Moreover, the airline which is presently operating a daily flight into Delhi & Mumbai, is planning to increase this to double daily. Presently, Turkish Airlines is deploying Boeing 777-300ER to Mumbai & Airbus A330-300 to Delhi. Airlines is looking at deploying Boeing 777-300ER to Delhi.

Hospitality News

Marriott International to acquire Starwood Hotels & Resorts Worldwide



Marriott International, Inc and Starwood Hotels & Resorts Worldwide, Inc today announced that the boards of directors of both companies have unanimously approved a definitive merger agreement under which the companies will create the world's largest hotel company.

The transaction combines Starwood's lifestyle brands and international footprint with Marriott's strong presence in the luxury and select-service tiers, as well as the convention and resort segment, creating a comprehensive portfolio. The merged company will offer broader choice for guests, greater opportunities for associates and should unlock additional value for Marriott and Starwood shareholders. Combined, the companies operate or franchise more than 5,500 hotels with 1.1 million rooms worldwide. The combined company's pro forma fee revenue for the 12 months ended September 30, 2015 totals over USD 2.7 billion. The transaction is subject to Marriott International and Starwood Hotels & Resorts Worldwide shareholder approvals, completion of Starwood's planned disposition of its timeshare business, regulatory approvals and the satisfaction of other customary closing conditions. Assuming receipt of the necessary approvals, the parties expect the transaction to close in mid-2016.

Visa News

- The Nigerian High Commission has outsourced its entire visa processing to a Nigerian Company. Earlier only STR, TWP & Dependent visas were outsourced; but from 30-November onwards, even Business & Tourist Visas will also be outsourced. As a result of this, there will be an OFFICIAL additional charge of Rs.6,900/- which will be applicable for all visa categories i.e. Business, Tourist, STR, TWP, Dependent, visas etc.
- Dubai Immigrations Offices will be closed due to the occasion of U.A.E. National Day and Martyrs' Day Holidays between Tuesday 1st Dec 2015 to Saturday 5th Dec 2015 (both days inclusive) and will resume operations on Sunday 6th Dec 2015.

PHOTO FEATURE

Lake Baikal, Russia



Lake Baikal is a rift lake in Russia, located in southern Siberia, between Irkutsk Oblast to the northwest and the Buryat Republic to the southeast. Lake Baikal is the largest (by volume) freshwater lake in the world, containing roughly 20% of the world's unfrozen surface fresh water. With a maximum depth of 1,642 m (5,387 ft), Baikal is the world's deepest lake. It is considered among the world's clearest lakes and is considered the world's oldest lake — at 25 million years. It is the seventh-largest lake in the world by surface area. It contains more water than all the North American Great Lakes combined. Baikal is home to more than 1,700 species of plants and animals, two-thirds of which can be found nowhere else in the world. The lake was declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1996.

Open Space

Lighter Moments

Tom and Timothy were in the same regiment in the army. They were inseparable friends and spent their evenings drinking together. After retirement, they went to different states and settled. However, they kept correspondence through e-mails.

To keep the memory of their boozing bouts alive, Tom always filled two glasses with rum and water and sipped from each alternately!

When somebody asked him why he did so, he explained: 'This glass is Timothy's; this one is mine. So I take a sip from each - one on behalf of Timothy, the other for myself.'

Suddenly one evening Tom was seen with only one glass on his table. He was asked what had happened. He replied, 'You see, I have given up drinking but Timothy has informed that he has not. So I have put away my glass and drink only on behalf of my friend.'

Thought for the Fortnight

Deep down, many of us feel insufficient, incomplete. What we often don't realize is that a lot of our happiness depends on our self-worth & self-esteem.

— P V Vaidyanathan

IAAI Director Board

1. Mr Biji Eapen, National President Pvt. : Speedwings Travel & Cargo Ltd., Kochi.
2. Mr V L Jekannathan, National Gen. Secretary (Madurai) Pvt. Ltd., Chennai. : All India Travel Agency
3. Mr Salvadore Saldanha, National Treasurer : S V Airlinks Pvt Ltd., Mumbai.
4. Ms Surinder Kumar, Director—NR Delhi. : Travelmate India Pvt Ltd., New Delhi.
5. Mr Rajendra Churiwala, Director—ER Kolkata. : Survottam Travels (P) Ltd.,
6. Mr Naresh Rajkotia, Director—WR : Madhuram Travels & Tours, Mumbai.

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We welcome your suggestions to improve this newsletter.

The same may be forwarded to iaai.pune@iaai.in

In case you do not receive any issue of the Newsletter, the same can be viewed on the IAAI website : www.iaai.in