



IAAI Newsletter

January 2016, 1st Fortnight Issue

IAAI News

Andhra Pradesh Tourism—IAAI MoU

January 12th 2016 will be a historic day in the annals of the IATA Agents Association of India heralding the beginning of a new Travel & Tourism Trade related activity for this "Association by the Agents for the Agents".



On that day, IAAI signed an MoU with the Tourism Department of the Sunrise State - Andhra Pradesh to be a preferred partner in AP Tourism's developmental activities.

At the 1st Sunrise AP Investment Meet by Government of Andhra Pradesh and CII held from 10 - 12 January 2016 at Visakhapatnam, IAAI President Shri Biji Eapen, and the

IAAI AP State Ad-hoc Committee Chairman, Shri. K. Madhava Reddy, formally received the MOU from the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh, Shri N. Chandrababu Naidu.

The objective of the MOU is that both the parties work together for creating a networking platform for Tourism stakeholder's engagement and for promoting various places in Andhra Pradesh as important and preferred tourist destinations.

AP is fast emerging as a tourism destination in India that represents Indian culture and has beaches, hills, wildlife and the Eastern Ghats. The state also takes pride in its rich Buddhist History represented by the several ancient Buddhist monuments and in the temples led by the Sri Venkateswara Swamy Temple in Tirupati that make it the highest visited state in India by pilgrims.

IAAI News

Government notifies new Negotiable Instruments Act amendment bill to deal with cheque bounce cases

The government has notified the Negotiable Instruments (Amendment) Bill, 2015 which allows filing cheque bounce cases in a court at a place where the cheque was presented for clearance and not the place of issue. The Negotiable Instruments (Amendment) Bill, 2015 was passed by Parliament in the recently concluded Winter Session.

"The provisions of the Negotiable Instruments (Amendment) Act, 2015 shall be deemed to have come into force on the 15th Day of June, 2015, the day on which the Negotiable Instruments (Amendment) Ordinance, 2015 was promulgated to further amend the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881," the Finance Ministry said.

There are an estimated 18 lakh cheque bounce cases across the country, of which about 38,000 are pending in High Courts. Some litigants have to travel to different places from where the cheques were issued and not honoured.

Please visit following link for more details :-

<http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/policy/government-notifies-new-negotiable-instruments-act-amendment-bill-to-deal-with-cheque-bounce-cases/articleshow/50457231.cms>

Aviation News

24 new flights from Indigo

IndiGo

IndiGo, is enhancing its customer experience in the domestic market with the launch of 24 new flights connecting key cities within the country, at the start of this new year. Effective January 7, 2016, IndiGo has launched 12 flights connecting Delhi to Trivandrum, Bengaluru to Vishakhapatnam, Bengaluru to Bhubaneswar, Ahmedabad to Bengaluru, Bhubaneswar to Kolkata and Chennai to Trivandrum.

With effect from January 14, 2016, IndiGo has launched its 6th daily non-stop flight between Chennai and Hyderabad. Additionally, IndiGo has also launched 10 flights on January 15, 2016, connecting Bengaluru to Kolkata, Delhi to Ahmedabad, Delhi to Bengaluru, Delhi to Kolkata and Hyderabad to Mumbai.

With 671 daily flights connecting 39 destinations, these new flights will allow travellers to experience the matchless on-time performance IndiGo is synonymous with, thus further consolidating the airline's position as the fastest growing airline in India.

Air India to begin Delhi-Gorakhpur flights, 6 days a week



National carrier, Air India will commence flight operations from New Delhi to Gorakhpur, six days a week, from January 15, 2016. The airline will operate a 70 seater ATR 72-600 aircraft between Delhi and Gorakhpur. The flight will operate six days a week on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday. The flight AI 9809 will depart from Delhi at 1215 hrs and arrive Gorakhpur at 1415 hrs. On the return leg, flight AI 9810 will depart from Gorakhpur at 1445 hrs and reach Delhi at 1645 hrs.

The flight will offer connection to flyers travelling to various domestic and international destinations from Gorakhpur. Similarly, passengers arriving from the Gulf and other international destinations will get a convenient connection to Gorakhpur from Delhi by this flight.

This is the latest destinations to be added to its network under its 'Connecting India' programme. Air India also recently launched operations between Mumbai and Gwalior with ATR -72 aircraft and also connected Durgapur to Delhi and Kolkata with an A319 flight.

Aviation News

Air India advises passengers to report 3 hrs before flight departure



Air India has issued an advisory to its passengers to report 3 hours prior their flight departure. In view of the recent security alert in the country, passengers/baggage may have to undergo more stringent checks at airports. To avoid any delays to the flight departures owing to these procedures, Air India has requested passengers to report at the counter well in time for check-in.

The minimum reporting time for domestic flights is 75 minutes and for international flights it is 150 minutes before the scheduled departure of flights. Currently, check-in counters for domestic flights close 45 minutes before scheduled time of departure. For international flights, counters close 60 minutes prior to departure. Counters for flights (both Domestic and International) operating from International Terminals close 60 minutes before scheduled departure of flight. Boarding gates in both cases close 25 minutes prior to departure.

New USA flights from Qatar Airways in 2016



Qatar Airways rang in the New Year with a new daily, non-stop service between Los Angeles International Airport (LAX) and Hamad International Airport (DOH) in Doha, which started January 1. **These flights also connects Mumbai & Delhi, so now there is one more option option for Indians who travels to USA.**

The new route features the airline's landmark Boeing 777-200 and represents Qatar Airways' first passenger service to the West Coast of the United States. The expansion to LAX is the first of three new US destinations planned for 2016, along with Boston (BOS) on March 16 and Atlanta (ATL) on June 1 this year. The first arrival to Los Angeles was recognised with a special gate ceremony, celebrating the passengers on the historic flight. The LAX launch comes as Qatar Airways continues to expand operations in the United States and around the world. In addition to new launches in Boston and Atlanta, the airline is enhancing existing services along its successful US routes. On December 8th, Qatar Airways brought the state-of-the-art Airbus A350, the "airliner of the next decade," to American shores for the first time. The airline commenced a regularly-scheduled daily A350 service on January 1, 2016 to Philadelphia, and Qatar Airways will also begin A350 service along a second route between New York and Doha in April. The schedule is as follows :-

Mumbai-Doha : QR 557 : 0400—0515

Doha-Los Angeles : QR 739 : 0745—1310

Los Angeles-Doha : QR 740 : 1510—1810 (+1)

Doha-Mumbai : QR 556 : 2020—0200 (+2)

Delhi-Doha : QR 565 : 0435—0620

Doha-Los Angeles : QR 739 : 0745—1310

Los Angeles-Doha : QR 740 : 1510—1810 (+1)

Doha-Delhi : QR 56: 2105—0300 (+2)

Aviation News

MTDC-Pawan Hans launches 10 min Heli-tours in Mumbai



Giving tourists a unique opportunity to explore Mumbai – the commercial capital and heart of Maharashtra, Maharashtra Tourism Development Corporation (MTDC) alongwith Pawan Hans Ltd. have formally launched Heli-Tourism. These joy rides are aimed to attract tourists who have limited time at hand but wish to explore Mumbai and other parts of the state quickly. The helicopters will take off from Juhu Aerodrome every day for a 10 minute joyride. The cost will be INR 3200 per passenger and for an incredible experience. There should be minimum 4 passengers booking needed for takeoff. For infants till age of 2 years there are no charges. Also the tourist has to carry his identity card. Heli-Tours will be conducted on a regular basis offering tourists a completely different experience. Initially, only Mumbai scenic tours will be introduced followed later on by Heli-Tours to Elephanta Island, Ajanta Caves, Ellora caves and subsequently also to Shirdi. Starting January 7, 2016, bookings can be done at all MTDC offices and reservation centres for more information visit www.Maharashtratourism.gov.in.

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Aviation News

New GoAir flights to Port Blair, Leh, Patna, and Ranchi



GoAir has launched four new routes connecting Mumbai with Leh, and Bengaluru with three cities-Port Blair (Andaman & Nicobar Islands), Patna (Bihar), and Ranchi (Jharkhand).

The Mumbai-Leh and Bengaluru-Port Blair routes will commence on March 27.

The Leh flights will take off from Mumbai at 0400 and arrive in the Himalayan city at 0645. The return services will then depart from Leh at 0715 and arrive in Mumbai at 1115, with a brief stop in Srinagar. On the Port Blair route, flights will depart from Bengaluru at 1430 and arrive at 1715. The return flights will then leave Port Blair at 1125 and arrive back in Bengaluru at 1400.

Additional frequencies will also be introduced on the routes from Delhi to Ranchi, Lucknow and Patna, and there will also be an extra flight between Mumbai and Srinagar. All the new flights will be operated using GoAir's fleet of 180-seat, all-economy Airbus A320 aircraft.

Hospitality News

Genting Hong Kong launches premium cruise brand— “Dream Cruises”



Genting Hong Kong, one of the leading global leisure, entertainment & hospitality corporations, has launched its premium cruise brand—Dream Cruises—targeting specifically the Asia market thereby further cementing its position in the Asia-Pacific region. The tentative date of sailing for Dream Cruises is November 2016. Dream Cruises will be the third cruise brand of Genting Hong Kong, the other two being—Star Cruises & Crystal Cruises. The ship will be bigger than SuperStar Virgo & the price point will be higher as well. The prices will be out in Feb 2016.

The itineraries of Dream Cruises will include a two night cruise (Pearl River Delta); a five night cruise (Vietnam & Sanya); and a seven night cruise (starting in Guangzhou / Nansha Port).

The ship will boast of 1700 staterooms accommodating 3400 lower berth guests; sectional meeting space; 35 restaurants & bars; various entertainment areas like Zodiac Theatre, Bowling Alley, Zouk etc; outdoor adventures; relaxation & rejuvenation facilities like The Gentlemen’s Barber, Aeris Spa Café etc., among others. The ship will also have the Genting Club, a boutique hotel within a hotel. The Genting Club will have 142 suites wherein guests would receive exclusive privileges, including priority access, special events, European butler service, among others.

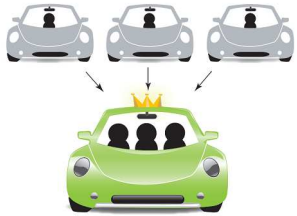
Rajasthan Tourism introduces night tourism in Jaipur



The Rajasthan Tourism Development Corporation (RTDC) has introduced the concept of night tourism. Jaipur is the first city where this tour has been launched. The tour includes major attractions like Amar Jawan Jyoti, Vidhan Sabha Bhavan, Birla Mandir, Albert Hall, Hawa Mahal, Jal Mahal, Amber Fort & concludes with dinner at Drug cafeteria Nahargarh Fort. Night tourism, where travelers can visit major attractions in the evenings from 6 pm till 10 pm. This new tour is slowly becoming popular amongst travelers.

Hospitality News

New concepts of travelling in large cities



A large shift in commuting preferences has begun with the 15 days trial of the Delhi Government's odd-even scheme. There are shuttle bus services, auto & motorcycle aggregators, ride sharing & all women bus services besides cab aggregators which are mobile App-based & increasingly becoming popular with commuters. These ventures have come up not because of the Government is promoting them, but because mindset of people is changing. In cities

like Gurgaon which has become the hub of Corporate activities, citizens are exposed to new concepts overseas & they want similar services here.

The newest concept is motorcycle taxis. In flashy yellow jackets & helmets, bikers wait outside metro stations in Gurgaon to ferry passengers. The idea is to provide last mile connectivity. Bike taxi services like MTaxi, Baxi & Bikxie are now available in Gurgaon.

In developed countries people are moving towards access rather than ownership. In 2014, more people got access to cars in Germany than ownership. Similar concepts have started in Delhi, Gurgaon, Mumbai, Chennai & Hyderabad by Orahi. Unlike car pooling, where a person is stuck with the group, ride sharing gives flexibility. All a person needs to do is to give his requirement & the system gives verified options of persons staying in the neighborhood & working close to his or her office.

ZipGo started its women-only bus service in Delhi region last month & has immediately become popular because of safety & security concerns in the region.

All-year road connectivity between Srinagar and Ladakh in few years



The Ministry of Road Transport India is to construct the Zojila tunnel on Srinagar-Kargil-Leh highway in Jammu and Kashmir. This will be the longest tunnel in South Asia, named Zojila pass tunnel, in Jammu and Kashmir. It is the biggest national highway project awarded in India in terms of project cost with a tunnel length spanning 14.08 km. This project has a strategic and socio-economic importance as it will provide the much-needed all-weather connectivity between Kashmir valley and Ladakh, which remains cut-off during winter due to heavy snowfall and hence assumes national importance. The project also involves construction of a tunnel spanning a length of 14.08 km and an approach road of 10.8 km with three vertical ventilation shafts, a snow gallery of 700 meters and avalanche protection measures. Work is already in progress on another tunnel near Z-Morh, 20 kms away from Zojila pass, on Srinagar-Kargil-Leh highway. the Z-Morh tunnel is expected to be completed by 2017. The 6.5 km long tunnel will connect Gagangeer directly with Sonamarg. Once the two tunnels are put in place, the journey time from Kashmir to Ladakh will be reduced drastically and the entire stretch will become motorable throughout the year.

Hospitality News

Cruise Tourism in India (Goa, Kochi & Mumbai identified as Ports of Call for Cruise Liners)



India could finally find a place on major international cruise routes, having thus far being skipped by the big global cruise companies because the terminals are not good enough & customs and emigrations takes too long. The Government has now got moving on the coastal circuit policy, identifying Goa, Mumbai & Kochi as shortlisted ports of call for global cruise liners. Despite a 7500 Kms coastline & an enviable location

in the Asia-Pacific region, which is a major market for cruise lines, India has largely missed out on this market.

Apart from ensuring good infrastructure at passenger terminals, the other major concern in India is the time taken for customs clearance & emigration at ports. Currently running into 3-4 hours, this process will need to significantly stream lined & shortened to ensure that cruise liners find it feasible to stop over in India. A cruise ship would normally stop only for a day or so at such destinations giving tourists just enough time to explore the city.

The west coast with "Port of Call" advantage on its side is particularly attractive to cruise liners. A port of call acts a transit & receiving centre for ships that touch several destinations as part of their cruise circuit. Travellers who disembark here, sometimes tour the areas in the vicinity or even fly to other destinations from there.

OTAs under scanner for Service Tax evasion

Leading online travel agencies like Makemytrip, Yatra, Cleartrip & Expedia are been investigated for alleged evasion of Service Tax on account of hotel bookings. The tax authorities are demanding that OTAs pay service tax as hotel service providers but OTAs are rigorously contesting the claim saying that they are only intermediaries. For example, a person books a hotel room for Rs. 10,000/- through an OTA & the OTA passes on Rs. 8000/- to the hotel with Rs. 2000/- as its margin. The tax department says that the OTA should pay service tax on Rs. 10,000/- & not on its margin of Rs. 2000/-. Makemytrip has recently made a payment of Rs. 15 Crores although under protest as penalty on this count.

PHOTO FEATURE

Sea of Stars Vaadhoo Island, Maldives



Vaadhoo is one of the inhabited islands of Raa Atoll, Maldives. Vaadhoo island is famous for the 'sea of stars.' This marine bioluminescence is generated by phytoplankton known as dinoflagellates. Woodland Hastings of Harvard University has for the first time identified a special channel in the dinoflagellate cell membrane that responds to electrical signals—offering a potential mechanism for how the algae create their unique illumination.

Open Space

Lighter Moments

A well respected surgeon was relaxing on his sofa one evening just after arriving home from work. As he was tuning into the evening news, the phone rang. The doctor calmly answered it and heard the familiar voice of a colleague on the other end of the line.

"We need a fourth for poker," said the friend. **"I'll be right over,"** whispered the doctor.

As he was putting on his coat, his wife asked, **"Is it serious?"**

"Oh yes, quite serious," said the doctor gravely. **"In fact, three doctors are there already!"**

Thought for the Fortnight

Our body is full of water but whenever it hurts, blood comes out. Our heart is full of blood but whenever it hurts, tears come out.

IAAI Director Board

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