



# IAAI Newsletter

**September 2016 — IIInd Fortnight Issue**

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## Technically advanced & innovative new I-Top System



i-Top8 (IATA Agents Own Portal 2008) was an initiative of IAAI in order to safeguard the interests of its Members from all the challenging Market conditions and present them with a new revenue model. The first Portal of its kind in the history of the Aviation World created solely for the Agents, by the Agents.

Subsequent to the IAAI NMC Meeting at Cochin in July 2016 and the IAAI Automation Core

Committee Meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> & 10<sup>th</sup> August at Mumbai, it was decided to revive and modify i-Top8 with advanced technologies to meet the BSP and NDC requirements and make it conducive to the Indian market conditions.

True to its commitment, IAAI is now proud to bring back I-Top8 in a new model and branding - i-Top (Indian Travel-Agents Own Portal) - with sophisticated technology and enhanced innovative processing modules. The new logo itself reflects these changes.

i-Top has been enriched with facilities for the User to work as an individual or a consolidator and operate through GDS platforms and also the internet to meet the present challenges and competitions in the Industry with B2B, B2C and B2D facilities including the new NDC process.

As you are well aware, our Industry is already crippled with the unhealthy competitions from consolidators and OTAs. Only i-Top can save us.

The IAAI Director Board had nominated Mr. Manish Synghal in Mumbai (98215 45786 / [itop@iaai.in](mailto:itop@iaai.in)) as Chairman of the Portal Working Group comprising the following IAAI Members to be in charge of the revival and implementation of i-Top, the 'Indian Travel-Agents Own Portal'.

- Mr. Harish Verma in New Delhi for Northern Region (98100 40254 / [harish@reisentours.com](mailto:harish@reisentours.com))
- Mr. G.H. Zaidi in Lucknow for UP (94151 09902 / [ghzaidi@nationwidetravels.in](mailto:ghzaidi@nationwidetravels.in))
- Mr. John Francis in Chennai for TN & Puthuserry (98417 47069 / [kwaytravel@yahoo.com](mailto:kwaytravel@yahoo.com))
- Mr. Mammen Varghese in Bengaluru for Karnataka (98450 36310 / [comfortholidays.travel@gmail.com](mailto:comfortholidays.travel@gmail.com))
- Mr. Padhi Srinivas in Vizag for Andhra Pradesh & Telangana (92466 79117 / [priyatravellinks@yahoo.com](mailto:priyatravellinks@yahoo.com))
- Mr. Ganesh Vaderi in Tirur for Kerala (93884 43308 / [ganesh@unitedholidaysolutions.com](mailto:ganesh@unitedholidaysolutions.com))

As decided by the Working Group, i-Top will be first re-linked to the Users of i-Top8 before integrating new connections.

Hence, those i-Top8 previously registered Members interested for a revolutionary change to the new Portal i-Top may kindly intimate their interest and willingness to the I-Top Chairman & HDQ before 15<sup>th</sup> October 2016.

Since we, the ordinary and medium Agents, have to struggle a lot to get i-Top integration and to avail its maximum usage and facilities, kindly suggest any additional requirements and possibilities which can be added to its menu for the betterment of the Industry.

**And, together, we can make a difference.**

**i-TOP PUTS YOU ON TOP !**

## **IAAI News**

### **KTM 2016 : yet another successful edition**



**K T M 2016**

The Kerala Travel Mart (KTM)-2016, which was held from 27 - 30 September 2016 at Kochi, is expected to bring in an additional business of Rs 5000 crore from the tourism sector, according to the KTM Society.

"The number of business-to-business meetings over the past three days exceeded expectations, with some sellers making more than 100 appointments. The conversion of these meetings into business will happen over the next two years," society's president Abraham George said.

According to 2015 statistics the state's year-on-year revenue from tourism (both direct and indirect) was pegged at Rs 2,6,689.63 crore, up 7.25%. Meanwhile, foreign exchange earnings for the year increased 8.61% to Rs 6,949.88 crore.

The latest edition of the biennial event saw an increase in participation of both domestic and foreign buyers, out of which almost 50% were new buyers.

IAAI, one of the three National Trade Associations, with its Central Secretariat at Cochin, was a part of the event. Therefore, a lot of the various travel & tourism industry stakeholders got to know more about IAAI's persistent efforts to right the wrongs in the Travel Trade to protect the interests of the ordinary Travel Agents in India.

As seen in the past, this event also witnessed several Travel Agents, Tour Operators, Hotels, and other key players joining IAAI after realizing that it is the only Association truly trying to defend the rights of the Travel Agent Fraternity.



## Jet Airways offers more connectivity to North America and Europe



Jet Airways will offer connectivity to North America and Europe over Paris, as part of its revised winter schedule, along with its partners Air France and Delta Air Lines. Jet Airways will offer connectivity to North America and Europe over Paris, as part of its revised winter schedule, along with its partners Air France and Delta Air Lines. As a result of the revised timings, guests will now be able to connect to 25 European and more than 10 North American cities over Paris. Some of the popular destinations in Europe include Amsterdam, Barcelona, Berlin, Birmingham, Copenhagen, Dublin, Frankfurt, Geneva, Madrid, Manchester, Munich, Nice, Oslo, Prague, Stockholm, Stuttgart, Vienna, and Zurich. Similarly, the new schedule will offer guests convenient connections over Paris to Boston, Chicago, Cincinnati, Houston, Los Angeles, Miami, New York, Newark, San Francisco, Washington, Vancouver, Montréal and Mexico City in North America. Jet Airways will operate an Airbus A330-200 aircraft on this route, with 18 Premiere seats that open up as flatbeds and 236 ergonomic Economy seats.

## Vistara unveils revamped Club Vistara frequent flyer program



On 26<sup>th</sup> Sept 2016, Vistara launched the official website along with the revamped Club Vistara (CV) frequent flyer program offering at least eight CV points per INR 100 spent. With the new tier evaluation criteria, tier upgrade is based on lower of tier points or number of flights flown. CV Silver is conferred on 15,000 points or 20 flights, Gold on 25,000 points or 30 flights and Platinum at 35,000 or 40 flights flown in 12 months. The all-new CV Platinum Tier offers 'Meet and Greet' service and no re-scheduling fees. The carrier is also promising immediate upgrade for elite members of other carriers.

The carrier is working on international expansion and is aiming to have 20 aircraft by June 2018. The 13th aircraft will be added in the next three weeks. The airline also expects to touch three million passengers by October. The 18th destination - Port Blair, will be added on September 30 this year.

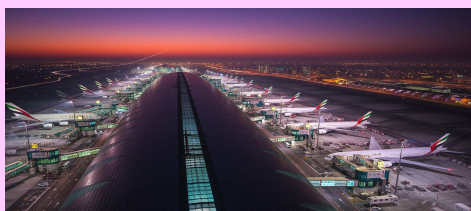
## Civil Aviation Ministry clears 4 Greenfield Airport projects



The Steering Committee on Greenfield airports headed by Secretary, Civil Aviation (MoCA), Government of India recently met and considered four new airport projects. The Committee recommended 'in principle' approval to three projects in Andhra Pradesh viz., Bhogapuram, Dagadarthi (Nellore) and Orvakallu (Kurnool).

The Committee also recommended for 'site clearance' to the project of Kothagudem in Telangana. The Steering Committee has also recommended 'site clearance' for the new Greenfield airport project at Kothagudem in Telangana. With this, Telangana is getting a second Greenfield airport besides Hyderabad International airport.

## Dubai Airports adds A380 facilities at Dubai International



Dubai Airports has announced it has commissioned work on a project that will expand the number of A380 contact stands at Dubai International's Concourse C to enable the facility to accommodate Emirates' growing fleet of superjumbos. The project will increase the number of Code F gates at Concourse C from three to 13, bringing the total number of A380 gates at DXB to 47, more than any other airport in the world. Concourse C became a part of the Terminal 3 complex used exclusively by Dubai's flagship carrier Emirates and its partner Qantas, following the opening of the US\$ 1.2 billion Concourse D in February earlier this year.

The upgrade project which commenced in the third quarter this year and is expected to be completed by the end of 2018, is part of Dubai's Airports' DXB Plus programme under which the operator aims to increase DXB's capacity to 118 million passengers per year by 2023 without building any additional major infrastructure. DXB Plus will boost throughput and enhance service through the design and implementation of customer-centric processes and the application of smart technology.

Concourse C will also undergo interior refurbishment as part of the upgrade project, including the re-design and enhancement of gate hold rooms, increase of dedicated airline lounge space, and ambiance enhancements to improve the overall customer experience.

## Air India & Air Austral sign a Code-Share agreement



National carrier Air India and Air Austral have signed a free flow code share agreement. This agreement will enable Air India to code share on Air Austral operated flights on the Chennai-Reunion-Chennai sector as well as beyond Reunion to/from Johannesburg, Seychelles, Mauritius and Madagascar. Reciprocally, Air Austral will put its marketing code on Air India operated flights beyond Chennai to/from Mumbai, Delhi and Kochi.

Air India, member of the Star Alliance, will offer its passengers flights departing from India to Saint-Denis de La Réunion via Chennai with the Chennai/Saint-Denis flight operated by Air Austral. The passengers of Air India will be able to connect in Saint-Denis on flights beyond to/from Johannesburg, Seychelles, Mauritius and Madagascar operated by Air Austral.

Air Austral will offer its customers flights from Reunion to Chennai and beyond to/from Mumbai, New Delhi and Kochi on flights operated by Air India. Air Austral has been operating on the route Reunion Island-Chennai-Bangkok since February 19, 2013. From the beginning of November 2016, Bangkok will be discontinued, leaving all the capacity available to the Reunion Island – Chennai service. The code share has initially been implemented on the Reunion-Chennai-Reunion sector from September 16, 2016. Code share on the other sectors is likely to be implemented subsequently.



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South: Chennai, Bangalore, Coimbatore

## SpiceJet to run Delhi – Jodhpur – Delhi daily flight



SpiceJet under its winter schedule will start its direct flight on New Delhi – Jodhpur – New Delhi sector from October 30, 2016. In Rajasthan, SpiceJet is already operating daily flights to Jaipur and Udaipur. Jodhpur is a popular tourist destination also known as Suncity sees a lot of tourist influx especially starting from the festive season. With introduction of this flight Jodhpur will be connected with Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Chennai, Mumbai and Kolkata.

Delhi – Jodhpur	:	SG 2695	:	12.50 pm – 2.05 pm:	Daily
Jodhpur – Delhi	:	SG 2966	:	2.25 pm – 3.55 pm :	Daily

## Mumbai Airport Runway to be closed for repair in October—November 2016

Flight operations at the Mumbai airport will come to a complete halt for five hours on Mondays and Thursdays between October 31 and November 28 due to repair work on the runways. According to Mumbai International Airport Pvt. Ltd., which owns and operates the Chhatrapati Shivaji International Airport, both the intersecting runways will remain closed from noon to 5 p.m. on both days to undertake carpeting work for strengthening the runway. They will undertake micro-surfacing of the runways, and airlines have been informed in advance to plan their winter schedule accordingly. The city's international airport is the second-largest airport in India in terms of passenger handling capacity.



## OYO introduces '*Sunrise check-in*' from 6 AM



OYO has launched an early check-in up to seven days prior to booking. This facility is being offered free of cost in many OYO's, and at a nominal charge in others. With this launch, OYO has become the first hotel brand in the world to offer guaranteed early check-in to guests. OYO's Sunrise check-in is now live both on its website and mobile app. Customers can identify, select and book hotels that offer confirmed early check-in. In addition, guests can also modify their existing booking and secure an early check-in.

The need to get a guaranteed early check-in is one of the key reasons that guests book hotels by walking in. Many of the guests shared that strict schedules for check-in times is one of their biggest pain-points related to hotel-booking. OYO's 'Sunrise check-in' feature gives them the freedom to plan their travel in a flexible manner. Sunrise check-in service is delivered via the OYO Partners system where hotels update days where they can offer early check-in and millions of users receive this update on a real-time basis.

## Marriott International acquires Starwood Hotels & Resorts worldwide



Marriott International, Inc. has completed its acquisition of Starwood Hotels & Resorts Worldwide, Inc., creating the world's largest hotel company. Marriott now offers the most comprehensive portfolio of brands including leading lifestyle brands, a significant global footprint, and leadership in the luxury and select-service tiers as well as the convention and resort segment.

Marriott will match member status across Marriott Rewards – which includes The Ritz-Carlton Rewards – and Starwood Preferred Guest (SPG), enabling members to transfer points between the programs for travel and exclusive experiences when they link their accounts later.

The new company will operate or franchise more than 5,700 properties and 1.1 million rooms, representing 30 leading brands from the moderate-tier to luxury in over 110 countries. With the completion of this acquisition, Marriott's distribution has more than doubled in Asia and the Middle East.

Marriott Rewards – which includes the Ritz-Carlton Rewards – and SPG are the most recognised and awarded loyalty programmes in hospitality. Together, these programmes will offer members more benefits when they link their accounts, as well as new destinations such as Aruba, Tuscany's Serchio Valley and Kruger National Park in South Africa for SPG members and the Maldives, Bora Bora and Santorini, Greece for Marriott Rewards and The Ritz-Carlton Rewards members.



## Nine islands chosen for Singapore-like tourism boost



The azure seas and white coral beaches of Lakshadweep and the tropical lushness of Andaman & Nicobar have been identified as tourism growth zones with nine islands. The islands are being seen as drivers of tourism and sustainable economic development on the lines of countries like Singapore that use water parks and natural resources to promote tourism, overcoming limited land areas while being mindful of conservation. Given ecological sensitivity of the islands, capacities will be limited, though current options for tourists will be improved.

Options in Lakshadweep, which is seen as a high-end tourism destination, are limited compared to Andaman & Nicobar. Among the islands identified are Smith Island, Ross Island, Avis Island and Long Island in Andaman & Nicobar. In the Lakshadweep, Bangaram, Thinnakara, Suheli, Cheriya and Minicoy are among those slotted for development. Tourist facilities in Lakshadweep are currently limited to Bangaram and a few other islands. The inclusion of Little Andaman, the biggest island in the chain with an area of 734.34 sqkm, almost equal in size to Singapore, came in for detailed discussion. In contrast 90% of the Andaman & Nicobar islands are notified as reserved or deemed forest with only 6% of land available for development.

**Source : The Times of India**

## 197% growth in tourists arrival on e-Tourist Visa in August 2016

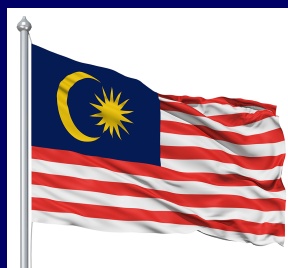


A total of 66,097 tourists arrived in August 2016 on e-Tourist Visa as compared to 22, 286 during August 2015 registering a growth of 196.6%. Commencing from November 27, 2014, e-Tourist Visa facility was available until February 25, 2016, for citizens of 113 countries arriving at 16 Airports in India. The Government of India has extended this scheme for citizens of 37 more countries wef February 26, 2016, taking the tally to 150 countries. Status of achievements in respect of e-Tourist Visa availed by International tourists visiting India last year in 2015 has been surpassed in the first six months of the current calendar year 2016.

During January - August 2016, a total of 6,06,493 tourist arrived on e-Tourist Visa as compared to 1,69,976 during January-August 2015, registering a growth of 256.8% . This high growth may be attributed to introduction of e-Tourist Visa for 150 countries as against the earlier coverage of 113 countries.

The percentage shares of top 10 source countries availing e-Tourist Visa facilities during August, 2016, were UK (19.4%), USA (13.2%), China (6.7%), France (6.4%), Spain (6.1%), UAE (5.5%), Germany (4.6%), Australia (3.7%), Canada (3.5%) and Republic of South Korea (2.4%).

## Malaysia High Commission revises visa fees



Malaysia High Commission has outsourced its visa processing to One Stop Centre Malaysia Visa (OSC) with effect from September 15, 2016. The new visa-processing partner has come with a slight revision in fees. Applicants will now have to bear a total cost of INR 5600 (Visa fees: INR 1000 and Processing fees: INR 4600). The processing time of the applications will be five working days for all categories. All other mandatory requirements including the three-month bank statement and a valid return ticket remain unchanged. This manual application for Malaysian visa is recommended for travellers seeking multiple entry to Malaysia.

The Malaysian Government also recently introduced the Electronic Travel Authorisation Visa (e-visa) for a short visit to Malaysia. At this point in time, the e-visa facility is available to Indians residing in India only and is valid for a single journey stay of maximum 30 days in Malaysia for tourism purposes. The E-visa fees would approx up to INR 2700 (INR 1050 for visa fees and USD 25 as processing fee) and has a turn round time of about 48 hours.

## Taiwan now offers free online visa to Indian Nationals



Taiwan has started offering free visa to Indian nationals, which can be applied online. The applicant's passport must have a validity of at least six months starting from the date of arrival in Taiwan. Besides, the applicant needs an onward/return air or ferry ticket and shouldn't have been ever employed as a blue-collar worker in Taiwan. In addition, the applicant must possess at least one of the following documents issued by the countries of Australia, Canada, Japan, Korea, New Zealand, any of the Schengen countries, the United Kingdom or the United States :

- Valid resident or permanent resident card.
- Valid entry visa (can be electronic visa).
- Resident card or visa that has expired less than 10 years prior to the date of arrival in Taiwan.

Online applications can only be made by persons holding valid regular passports. Once the application has been approved, the applicant has to print out the ROC Travel Authorization Certificate, which must be presented when entering Taiwan. An approved ROC Travel Authorization Certificate is valid for 90 days for multiple entries. The holder of an ROC Travel Authorization Certificate may stay in Taiwan for 30 days, starting from the day after arrival.

## After passenger cover, Railways plans baggage insurance



After successfully rolling out insurance for passengers who book tickets online, the Indian Railways is planning to introduce theft insurance. Under the proposed scheme, travellers can get a cover for all their baggage, electronic items and other valuables. The scheme would cover incidents like robbery and dacoity. Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC) has sought insurance companies' views on the issue.

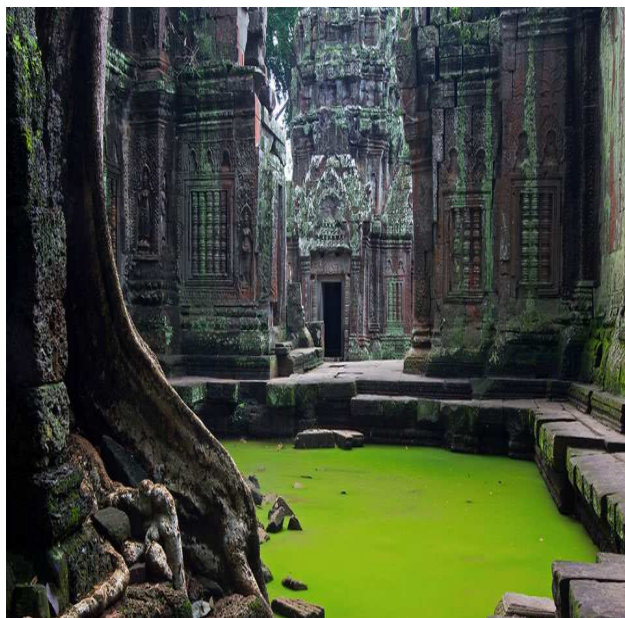
The existing system doesn't provide any provision for compensation in case of theft during a rail journey. According to the rules, a passenger can approach the train conductor, coach attendants, guards or escorts, in case of a robbery or dacoity. In such cases, railways officials normally help passengers file a first information report (FIR) with the police station concerned. However, the stolen goods are rarely recovered. And to claim normal theft insurance, passengers need a "non-traceable certificate" from police, which takes at least three months.

The initiative comes on the back of the passenger insurance scheme introduced by the railways on September 1, which became an instant hit among online ticket buyers. Till now, the scheme has attracted over 6 million buyers with about 330,000 passengers choosing it everyday.

**Source : Business Standard**



## Ta Prohm Temple, Cambodia



Ta Prohm is the modern name of the temple at Angkor, Siem Reap Province, Cambodia, built in the Bayon style largely in the late 12th and early 13th centuries and originally called Rajavihara. Located approximately one kilometre east of Angkor Thom and on the southern edge of the East Baray, it was founded by the Khmer King Jayavarman VII as a Mahayana Buddhist monastery and university. Unlike most Angkorian temples, Ta Prohm is in much the same condition in which it was found: the photogenic and atmospheric combination of trees growing out of the ruins and the jungle surroundings have made it one of Angkor's most popular temples with visitors. UNESCO inscribed Ta Prohm on the World Heritage List in 1992. Today, it is one of the most visited complexes in Cambodia's Angkor region. The conservation and restoration of Ta Prohm is a partnership project of the Archaeological Survey of India and the APSARA (Authority for the Protection and Management of Angkor and the Region of Siem Reap).



## Lighter Moments

A young boy enters a barber shop and the barber whispers to his customer.

“This is the dumbest kid in the world. Watch while I prove it you.”

The barber puts a dollar bill in one hand and two quarters in the other, then calls the boy over and asks, “Which do you want, son?”  
The boy takes the quarters and leaves.

“What did I tell you?” said the barber. “That kid never learns!”

Later, when the customer leaves, he sees the same young boy coming out of the ice cream store.

“Hey, son! May I ask you a question? Why did you take the quarters instead of the dollar bill?”

The boy licked his cone and replied, “Because the day I take the dollar, the game is over!”

## Thought for the Fortnight

Travel light on your journey in life. Your desires & expectations are heavy baggage which slow down & thwart your progress. Let them go.

— Swami Chidanand Saraswati

## IAAI Director Board

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**2. Mr H S Chawla, National Treasurer & Director—Northern Region**

: Speed Air Travel Agents, New Delhi

**3. Mr Naresh Rajkotia, National General Secretary & Director—Western Region**

: Madhuram Travels & Tours, Mumbai

**4. Mr Faisal Sharhabeel, Director—Southern Region**

: Magellan Travel Services (P) Ltd., Chennai

### Advertising rates for IAAI Newsletter

Size	2 insertions (1month)	6 insertions (3months)	12 insertions (6months)	24 insertions (One Year)
Quarter Page	Rs.5000/-	Rs.14000/-	Rs.25000/-	Rs.45000/-
Half Page	Rs.9000/-	Rs.25000/-	Rs.45000/-	Rs.80000/-
Full Page	Rs.15000/-	Rs.40000/-	Rs.75000/-	Rs.135000/-
Strips	Rs. 2000/-	Rs.5000/-	Rs.10000/-	Rs.18000/-

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can be viewed on the IAAI website : [www.iaai.in](http://www.iaai.in)**

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