



IAAI Newsletter

November 2016 — IInd Fortnight Issue

Index

Content	Page No.
IAAI News	2
Aviation News	3 to 5
Hospitality News	6 & 7
Visa News	8 & 9
Photo Feature (River Umngot, Dawki, Meghalaya)	10
Open Space	11
IAAI Director Board	12

IAAI News

BSP Link Charges - IAAI's Appeal to the DGCA

The IAAI National PST has apprised DGCA of the fact that the new BSP link charges effective 1st January 2017 are being implemented in India illegally without having been discussed, approved or recommended by the APJC-India as per the IATA's own Resolutions and procedures. While not ensuring that the airlines pay Agency commission as mandated by its own Resolution 824 (para 9), on the contrary, IATA is establishing further obligatory requirements on the Travel Agents by directing them now to pay additional charges for the services they are rendering to the 'Zero' airlines.

It was pointed out that, for the matter of their very survival and to meet this additional burden of payment, Travel Agents in India will now be compelled to violate the National Law and the DGCA and MoCA Regulatory directives that prohibit the collection of "transacting fees" from customers over and above the ticketed amount.

In its continued attempts to negate the implementation of IATA's New BSP Link annual charges of US\$360 per Agency office location, the IAAI National PST has sent an appeal to the Director General of Civil Indian on 23rd November requesting the Indian Regulatory Authority to enforce the National Law under the Aircraft Rules 1937 and other statutory provisions and take the following steps :

- Direct IATA to ensure that its activities are in conformity with the National law
- Direct IATA to reconstitute APJC-India as per Appendix "F" of PAConf 2014 Guidelines
- Disapprove all additional charges, including BSPlink, which may affect the National Law
- Enforce DGCA's Order dated 05.03.2010 regarding agency commission
- Direct Air India, the current Chairman of APJC-India, to send Minutes of the meetings to DGCA and seek approval for its decisions, particularly regarding revised fees, new levies, etc., proposed to be imposed on IATA agents.

IndiGo launches 28 new domestic flights connecting key cities

IndiGo

IndiGo, is further enhancing its customer experience with the launch of 28 new flights on its existing domestic network. The new schedule will see maiden flights on the Guwahati-Lucknow, Lucknow-Ahmedabad, Bengaluru-Indore and Raipur-Patna sectors. With the new flights and frequencies and induction of two new Airbus A320 aircraft, the airline's frequency will increase to 890 daily.

Effective November 2016, these flights will provide enhanced connectivity on the key sectors thus strengthening IndiGo's existing network within India. With 890 daily flights connecting 41 destinations, these new flights will enable both corporate and leisure travellers to experience IndiGo's on-time performance.

Alliance Air to induct 10 ATRs



Air India's regional arm Alliance Air has finalised the agreement for leasing 10 new turbo-prop planes as it gets ready to fly to unserved and under-served airports under the government's regional connectivity scheme.

The national carrier is anticipated to be a significant player in the ambitious UDAN (Ude Desh Ka Aam Naagrik) scheme -- that seeks to boost regional air connectivity as well as make flying more affordable for the masses.

Gearing up for more regional flights, Alliance Air has been working on expanding its fleet by leasing more number of 72-seater ATRs. Currently, Alliance Air has 10 ATRs and two of them are 42-seater ones.

It is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Air India and operates 39 point-to-point air services daily to 34 cities from six base stations -- Delhi, Kolkata, Mumbai, Hyderabad, Bengaluru and Bhopal. Majority of its destinations are tier-II and tier-III cities.

SpiceJet to start Hyderabad–Jabalpur–Hyderabad daily flight on Dec 23



SpiceJet will launch a daily direct flight on the Hyderabad–Jabalpur–Hyderabad route on December 23, 2016. Hyderabad is the third metro after Delhi and Mumbai that SpiceJet will be serving a daily direct flight connecting Jabalpur. The fares for the Hyderabad- Jabalpur route will start from INR 3,613 whereas for Jabalpur-Hyderabad route it will start from Rs 3,073. Bookings for the routes are currently open.

As per the schedule the daily direct flight of SG 1091 will take off from Hyderabad at 12:45 pm and arrive in Jabalpur at 2:20 pm; whereas the daily direct flight SG 1092 is scheduled to take off from Jabalpur at 2:40 and arrive at Hyderabad at 4:15 pm. With the introduction of this flight Jabalpur will be now be connected with Chennai, Bengaluru, Tirupati, Vijayawada and Coimbatore through onward connections.

Kolhapur Airport to be Maharashtra's first regional airport



Government of Maharashtra stated that they have taken all steps to clear hurdles for development of Kolhapur airport and it will be the first airport in Maharashtra to become operational under the Centre's Regional Connectivity Scheme (RCS).

The Centre plans to develop airports in 398 cities, including 29 in Maharashtra. The airports at Kolhapur, Ratnagiri, Sindhudurg, Solapur, Shirdi, Gondia, Nashik, Jalgaon, Nanded and Amravati will be developed in the first phase of the scheme. Priority has been given to start air service at Kolhapur. The central government will bear 80% of its total cost and the state the remaining cost.

Kenya Airways and Jet Airways expands codeshare deal

JET AIRWAYS



Kenya Airways

Jet Airways and Kenya Airways have expanded their existing cooperation by including codeshares on Jet Airways' domestic flights between Mumbai, New Delhi, Ahmedabad and Hyderabad, in order to enhance connectivity choices for guests while travelling from Kenya into India.

Through this agreement, Kenya Airways will place its flight code on Jet Airways' seven daily flights between Mumbai and New Delhi, five daily flights from Mumbai to Ahmedabad and five daily flights between Mumbai and Hyderabad. The arrangement continues to include Jet Airways' code on Kenya's double daily flights on the Mumbai – Nairobi route, allowing Jet Airways' guests to connect to other onward destinations in Africa.

Garuda Indonesia Announces launch of its flights from Mumbai to Jakarta



Garuda Indonesia to expand its service to India at the end of this year by opening a new route from Mumbai to Jakarta via Bangkok-wef 12th December 2016. The airline had received support from the Transportation Ministry and the new service would use Airbus 330 and Boeing 777 aircraft. The introduction of this flight has also resulted in an additional flight to Bangkok. The passengers traveling to Jakarta need not to change the flight as the same aircraft will travel onwards.

The timings are as follows :-

Sector	Flight No.	Departure	Arrival	Operational Days
Mumbai—Bangkok	GA 861	11.05 pm	4.55 am (+1)	Mon, Wed, Fri
Bangkok—Jakarta		6.35 am (+1)	10.05 am (+1)	
Jakarta—Bangkok	GA 862	12.55 pm	4.25 pm	Mon, Wed, Fri
Bangkok—Mumbai		5.20 pm	8.30 pm	

Merlin Entertainments announces the launch of Madame Tussauds Delhi

Madame Tussauds

Merlin Entertainments announced its first foray into the Indian market with the launch of its latest offering - Madame Tussauds Delhi. World renowned for over 250 years for the creation of detailed and lifelike wax figures, Madame Tussauds will pay homage to A-List celebrities from Bollywood through to Hollywood at the new attraction in Delhi, in addition to featuring icons from sport, music and notables that have not only shaped the popular and historical landscape of India, but the world as a whole.

Launching mid 2017 within the heart of the capital in the famed Regal Cinema at Connaught Place, Madame Tussauds Delhi will be the only attraction to encourage guests to have fun with the famous by offering a host of experiences spread over two interactive floors.

Allowing closer access than ever before, guests will be encouraged to interact with the incredibly life-like figures in highly themed and immersive environments. Visitors will be able to give a speech with Prime Minister Narendra Modi, take a selfie with Kim Kardashian and test their bowling skills and technique with cricketing legend Sachin Tendulkar.

No service tax on train tickets booked through IRCTC website till Dec 31



Train tickets booked through the IRCTC website till December 31, 2016 will become cheaper after government waiving off the service tax on tickets booked online to encourage cashless transactions in the wake of the demonetisation exercise.

Service tax will not be levied on tickets booked through the IRCTC website from November 23 to December 31. Service tax has been waived to incentivise cashless transactions through online booking. Before, INR 20 and INR 40 was levied as service tax on Sleeper and AC classes respectively for booking tickets through IRCTC website.

Dubai Parks and Resorts celebrates the opening of Bollywood Parks™ Dubai



Dubai Parks and Resorts, the Middle East's largest integrated theme park destination, celebrated the opening of Bollywood Parks™ Dubai on November 17, 2016, following the opening of LEGOLAND® Dubai and Riverland™ Dubai two weeks ago.

Bollywood Parks™ Dubai, is a first-of-its-kind theme park that showcases rides and attractions based on some of Bollywood's biggest blockbusters. The park opened with a ceremony that included various live entertainment shows performed by the talented Bollywood artists and dancers.

Bollywood Parks™ Dubai will recreate the Bollywood experience through themed attractions and rides spread across five zones: Bollywood Boulevard, Mumbai Chowk, Rustic Ravine, Royal Plaza and Bollywood Film Studios. Visitors will experience bold action, colourful story-telling and captivating dance sequences inspired by nine popular films: Rock On!!, Don, Lagaan, Sholay, Dabangg, Mughal-e-Azam, Zindagi Na Milegi Dobara, RA.One and Krrish.

Dubai Parks and Resorts comprises three theme parks: Bollywood Parks™ Dubai a first-of-its-kind theme park that will showcase rides and attraction based on some of Bollywood's biggest blockbusters. MOTIONGATE™ Dubai – a unique theme park showcasing some of Hollywood's most popular characters from DreamWorks Animation, Sony Pictures Studios and Lionsgate as well as the region's first LEGOLAND® Park and a LEGOLAND® Water Park. The entire destination is connected by Riverland™ Dubai – a retail and dining destination at the heart of Dubai Parks and Resorts that is free for all to enjoy, and guests can stay at the Lapita™ Hotel, a Polynesian themed family hotel part of the Marriott Autograph® Collection. Expected to open in late 2019, Six Flags Dubai will be the destination's fourth theme park and the region's first Six Flags theme park.

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Visa on phone facility for Emirates customers flying to UAE



Customers of Emirates Airline flying to the United Arab Emirates (UAE) can now apply for a visa using their mobile devices. In a first-of-its-kind initiative in visa application, applicants anywhere in the world can use the mobile app, launched by Dubai Visa Processing Centre (DVPC), to complete the entire visa application process for the UAE visa using mobile devices.

The user-friendly transactional app involves one-time profile creation, and allows data and document upload, payment and service delivery. Smartphone and tablet users can download the free DVPC mobile app from Google's Play Store or Apple's App Store. Through the app, passengers can apply for the 96-hours, 30-days or 90-days single entry visas, based on their Emirates itinerary. Customers may apply up to four international working days in advance of their Emirates flight departure date. For last-minute applications, customers may apply using the Express visa service as late as two international working days prior to flight departure.

Key features of the app include :

- Anytime, anywhere applications of UAE visa, globally
- Accessible via handheld devices to travellers of multiple nationalities
- No need to visit a Dubai Visa Application Centre or website
- User-friendly and easy-to-navigate transactional app
- Real-time visa application
- Modern, intuitive and convenient
- One-time profile creation
- Upload and save documents
- Convenience for subsequent applications
- Hassle-free credit or debit card payment options
- Optional Express visa service** available on the app
- Useful destination links and information
- App can be downloaded for free on Google's Play Store and Apple's App Store

Thailand halves visa-on-arrival fee for 19 countries including India



In order to promote tourism during the high season, the Thai Cabinet agreed to reduce its visa fees to THB 1,000 from THB 2,000 including those for visas on arrival, for tourists from 19 countries, as of December 1 until February 28. The 19 countries include Andorra, Bulgaria, Bhutan, China, Cyprus, Ethiopia, India, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Maldives, Malta, Mauritius, Romania, San Mario, Saudi Arabia, Taiwan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan. This change was announced less than two months after visa fees were increased to baht 2,000 on September 27.

In another development, Thai cabinet also agreed that the country's long-stay visa for tourists aged over 50 can be extended to a maximum of 10 years from the current one year, though the visa holder still have to report to immigration police every 90 days. The prolonged visa aimed to promote medical and wellness tourism while the target groups are visitors from many countries, such as China, Japan, India, United States and the United Kingdom. A foreigner seeking the long term visa must have a minimum monthly income of 100,000 baht (about 2,777 U.S. dollars) or a minimum deposit of three million baht (about 83,333 U.S. dollars) in a bank account and it has to be maintained for at least a year. Besides, they have to have a health insurance lasting a minimum of one year and worth a minimum of 1,000 U.S. dollars. The visa will be valid initially for five years and could be renewed for another five and the visa fee was set at 10,000 baht.

Cabinet approves merger of multiple visas into one head



The Union Cabinet has given its approval for liberalization, simplification and rationalization of the existing visa regime in India, and incremental changes in the visa policy decided by the Ministry of Home Affairs. The approval will facilitate entry of foreigners for tourism, business and medical purposes with one single visa. According to a government release, this initiative is expected to stimulate economic growth, increase earnings from export of services like tourism, medical value travel and travel on account of business and to make 'Skill India', 'Digital India', 'Make in India' and other such flagship initiatives of the Government successful.

This will also considerably ease the travel of foreigners to India for the above-mentioned legitimate purposes, a government release said. According to reports, the Cabinet also given the nod to extend the e-TV to 8 countries more, taking the total number of countries eligible for Electronic Tourist Visa to 158. The Cabinet has also accepted the recommendation of Ministry of Home to introduce long-term multiple-entry visa of 10 years and five years. However, according to reports, the long-term visa holders will not be allowed to stay permanently or work in India. With these changes, the nomenclature of Electronic Tourist Visa (ETV) will also be changed to Electronic Visa.

River Umngot, Dawki, Meghalaya

PHOTO FEATURE



Meghalaya, aptly named as "Abode of the Clouds," is a gateway to paradise! One such natural wonder of Meghalaya is Dawki, which is known for its crystal clear blue water of Umngot river, possibly India's cleanest river. The drive to Dawki from the state capital Shillong is a blessing with beautiful curvaceous roads that provide stunning views of valleys and waterfalls on the way. Umngot flows through Dawki, a small but busy town in the East Jaintia Hills district near the Indo-Bangladesh border. The town itself is a mere 95 km from Shillong.

Lighter Moments

The phone bill was exceptionally high. A family meeting was called to discuss on the issue.

Dad : This is unacceptable. I don't use home phone, I use my office phone.

Mum : Me too. I hardly use home phone. I also use my office phone.

Puzzled, they shifted their gaze to their son.

Son : Hey, don't look at me. I use my office mobile only.

The three of them now look at the maid who's patiently listening to them.

Maid : What?? So we all use our work phones. What's the big deal ??

Thought for the Fortnight

Before you speak, listen; before you write, think; before you spend, earn; before you invest, investigate; before you criticize, wait; before you pray, forgive; before you quit, try; before you retire, save; before you die, give.

— William A Ward

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