



IAAI Newsletter

February 2017 — IInd Fortnight Issue

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IAAI denounces Emirates' decision to cut Commission

Retract this decision to cut agency commission



A torchbearer for the eroding agency commissions in India, Biji Eapen, National President, IATA Agents Association of India (IAAI) reacts sharply to the news. He says, "Needless to say, this has come as a rude shock to the accredited travel agents fraternity in India as it is solely their market support that has placed Emirates above the national carrier in the Indian skies. The matter is being discussed with our National Management Committee and a formal request will be sent to Emirates to retract its decision."

Source : Tourism Breaking News (Dated March 2, 2017)

IAAI participation at IITT Mumbai 2017

IAAI participated in India International Travel & Tourism Exhibition IITT from 09th Feb 2017 to 11th Feb 2017 held at MMRDA Grounds, Bandra Kurla Complex, Mumbai. Most of the Maharashtra State Committee Members represented IAAI at IITT. Several IATA, Non- IATA agents, hotel representatives and many professionals associated with the travel trade from Goa, Indore, Hubballi, Bengaluru, Surat, Delhi visited the stall. Most of the agents voiced their concern over the diminishing line of airline commissions & expressed their desire to join & support IAAI.



Welcome New IAAI Members

- **M/s. Insaf Tours & Travels LLP, Kozhikode, represented by its Managing Director Mr. Mohammed Luthfee P.M.**



- **M/s. Travel Park, Bhilai, represented by its Proprietor Mr. Anshul Ramariya**



- **M/s. Jain Tours & Travels, Durg, represented by its Proprietor Mr. Arpit Jain**



SpiceJet announces its seventh international destination



SpiceJet unveiled its first ever flight to Dhaka thus enhancing its global footprint. The airline now operates to 7 international destinations. SpiceJet will be operating a direct daily flight on the Kolkata - Dhaka - Kolkata route from March 23, 2017.

To celebrate the launch of the new route, the airline has also announced an introductory promotional fare of INR 3549 (all inclusive) for Kolkata-Dhaka and BDT 4325 (all inclusive) for Dhaka-Kolkata. Dhaka is the second international destination after Bangkok that the airline will be serving with a direct daily flight from Kolkata. As per the schedule starting March 23, the flight SG 71 will depart from Kolkata at 6.10 am to arrive at Dhaka at 7:30 am. The return flight SG 72 will depart from Dhaka at 8:15 am to reach Kolkata at 8:30 am. With the commencement of the summer schedule from the March 26, the flight SG 71 will depart from Kolkata at 7:10 am to arrive at Dhaka at 8:35 am. The return flight SG 72 will depart from Dhaka at 9:20 am to reach Kolkata at 9:40 am.

The new flight will provide convenient onward connections to cities such as Bangkok, Delhi, Chennai, Bangalore, Mumbai, Guwahati, Bagdogra, Aizawl and Silchar via Kolkata to Dhaka.

Air India inducts first A-320 Neo into its fleet



Aiming to bolster its capacity in the domestic market, Air India inducted the first Airbus A-320 Neo aircraft into its fleet. The Airbus A-320 Neo aircraft has a seat configuration of 162 seats including 12 seats in the business class. This aircraft is fuel efficient and is the first of 14 aircrafts leased from Kuwait headquartered ALAFCO Aviation Lease and Finance Company. Air India thus becomes the first CFM powered NEO operator in India.

Air India plans to induct 29 A-320 Neo aircraft into its fleet by 2019. The A-320 Neo will join Air India's existing fleet of 66 A-320 family aircraft thus making Air India's fleet size to 138 planes.

Air India, today, flies one of the youngest, state-of-the-art, fleet of aircraft comprising a mix of the wide-body Boeing B777s, B747s, its latest acquisition- the B787 Dreamliner and the narrow body Airbus A321s, A320s and A319 aircraft.

Vistara announces direct flights between Kolkata - Pune, and Delhi - Port Blair



Vistara announced the launch of two new routes to cater to growing customer demand. Starting March 26, 2017, Vistara will fly direct daily between Kolkata and Pune, and starting April 15, 2017, will also fly direct between Delhi and Port Blair (Andaman) on Saturdays and Sundays during the upcoming Summer season. These new flights are in addition to Vistara's recently announced service to Amritsar from both Delhi and Mumbai, and to Leh (Ladakh) from Delhi, both starting in March.

Vistara's Kolkata - Pune flight will serve business professionals as well as a large population in Pune that hails from Kolkata. The Delhi - Port Blair flight will cater not only the people residing in the Andaman & Nicobar Islands who visit the national capital, but also attract businesspeople and tourists from northern India to discover the history, beauty and trade potential of the Andaman Islands. The late-night departure from Kolkata to Pune will provide a convenient option for those wanting to catch a flight after dinner, while the early morning departure from Pune to Kolkata will provide a full day of work or leisure upon arrival in Kolkata.

The new direct flights between Delhi and Port Blair will let customers get away for weekend breaks or indeed spend an entire week in the spectacular beauty of the Andamans. For those planning shorter trips, Vistara will continue to offer a daily same-aircraft service from Port Blair to Delhi via Kolkata. The new flights are also suitably timed to allow foreign tourists to fly to the Andamans direct through a convenient same-terminal connection in Delhi's award-winning Terminal 3.

IndiGo to induct new A-320 Neo aircraft over a year



IndiGo has plans to induct 25-30 aircraft into its fleet in the next 400 days. Most of these will be Airbus A-320 New Engine Option, or Neo version. The latest additions will see the total fleet strength of the 11-year-old, Delhi head-quartered low cost airline touch 158 aircraft. After starting its first flight in 2006, it was only in 2009 that IndiGo took delivery of its 25th aircraft. Now, it plans to induct 25-30 aircraft in a span of just over a year. It expects to end the current fiscal with 20 Neo aircraft in its fleet. IndiGo had ordered 430 Neo aircraft, the first of which landed in Delhi in March 2016 after a non-stop flight from the Airbus headquarters in Toulouse, France. The Neo is distinguished by its large engine — 81 inches as compared to 61 inches of the Current Engine Option (Ceo).

Jet Airways and Hong Kong Airlines ink codeshare agreement

JET AIRWAYS 

Jet Airways and Hong Kong Airlines entered into a codeshare partnership with the soul purpose of enhancing the connectivity between India and the Asia-Pacific region. As part of the reciprocal agreement, Jet Airways will place its marketing code “9W” on Hong Kong Airlines’ flights operating between Hong Kong and Okinawa and Tokyo in Japan; Denpasar in Indonesia; Hanoi in Vietnam; Bangkok in Thailand; and Auckland in New Zealand. Hong Kong Airlines in turn, will place its marketing code “HX” on Jet Airways’ flights between Hong Kong and Mumbai as well as Delhi in India.

The agreement will allow Hong Kong Airlines to offer its guests a daily service connecting the key business cities of Hong Kong, Mumbai and Delhi. Additionally, Jet Airways’ Jet Privilege members will also be able to earn frequent flyer miles when they travel on Jet Airways marketed flights on these codeshare routes, which will not only be available for redemption but also count towards their tier status in the programme.


Emirates

Emirates has informed IATA Travel Agents of its move to cut Travel Agent Commission from 3% to 1% w.e.f. 1st April 2017.

India's first heliport becomes operational in Delhi



India's first dedicated heliport flying in and out of Delhi to nearby areas in choppers became operational at Rohini wef 28 February 2017. The heliport that is expected to reduce congestion at the IGI Airport here would also provide air connectivity to nearby pilgrimage centers besides medical emergency evacuation services.

Set up at an investment of about Rs 100 crore by the Pawan Hans Ltd, the heliport is spread over an area of 25 acres and consists of a terminal building having capacity for 150 passengers, four hangars with parking capacity for 16 helicopters and nine parking bays. Also, it has maintenance, repair and overhaul (MRO) facility for the upkeep of Pawan Hans fleet as well as for third-party maintenance work. Rohini heliport will become not only a hub for the helicopter industry in the country but push Government's ambitious regional connectivity scheme.

Ramee Group eyes expansion in India with 9 hotel openings this year



Ramee Group of Hotels, Resorts and Apartments is aiming to focus on the India market and increase its portfolio to 17 hotels in India by the year end. As of now, Ramee Group operates nine hotels across four sub-brands in India. Their upcoming properties in India are Ramee Strand Bengaluru; Ramee Rose Daman (in two months); Ramee Royal Manali (in next three months); Ramee Palace Badami, Karnataka (by year end); 110-keys Ramee Homotel in Bandra (4th in Mumbai) by September; Ramee Royal in Adajan, Ramee International in Varachha, Surat; Ramee Casa New Delhi; Ramee Suites Noida and Ramee in Lucknow. As of now, only four sub-brands are operational in India and the Group will be launching three more sub-brands (Ramee Grand, Ramee Casa and Ramee Royal) this year in India. Among the new markets, the Group is eyeing to tap Iran. The Iran Government too is keen on welcoming new hotel chains and increasing the number of keys. Moreover, the Iran economy is growing and they enjoy a healthy relationship with Middle East and India.

Hyatt launch new masterbrand - *“the World of Hyatt”*

HOTELS & RESORTS

Hyatt Hotels Corporation announced the launch of World of Hyatt, Hyatt’s new global platform grounded in the simple idea that a little understanding goes a long way. World of Hyatt is a new global masterbrand and platform for Hyatt and their guests, powered by Hyatt’s purpose – caring for people so they can be their best. It is being launched to inspire how Hyatt engages with guests, interacts with colleagues and owners, and operates the business. The new loyalty programme to go with the masterbrand will go live on March 1. It will introduce more tiers and more ways to earn status, which allows for more meaningful rewards and benefits for members. The tier names – Discoverist, Explorist, Globalist – reflect the aspirations of members as they travel and expand their world. And the rewards and benefits, such as providing more ways to earn free nights, reflect what matters to them most. The global campaign behind the launch, entitled “For A World Of Understanding”, calls for an era of understanding that reflects Hyatt’s purpose and reaffirms its commitment to building genuine and trusted experiences for its guests in a way that is meaningful to them.

Three new hotels to open in New York City in February



NYC & Company announced an opening of three new hotels in New York City this February: the contemporary and luxurious Whitby Hotel in Midtown Manhattan; the sustainable waterfront property1 Hotel Brooklyn Bridge in Downtown Brooklyn; and the 612-room DoubleTree by Hilton New York-Times Square West.

New York City has the most active hotel development pipeline in the country. With over 112,000 hotel rooms currently available across the five boroughs and an expected inventory of 135,000 expected by 2019, New York City continues to attract new developments.

From luxury and boutique hotels to independent and affiliated properties, ranging in size from just 14 rooms to over 900, New York City has rooms to suit all travelers' needs and preferences. Located in neighborhoods and boroughs across the City, these new hotels allow visitors to experience more new neighborhoods than ever before.

Avis India adds 15 new car models into self-drive fleet



Avis India, a mobility solutions provider, has introduced a series of product enhancements to its Self Drive fleet. One of the major USP's of Avis Self Drive in India is that all cars are delivered to and picked up from the customer with no additional cost.

The Self Drive service is now available in 5 major Indian cities, namely, Delhi, Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Gurgaon and Noida. The company has also ramped up its fleet size in all these cities and has introduced new and popular variants in four categories, i.e., Hatchback, Sedan, Multi Utility Vehicles (MUVs) and Sports Utility Vehicles (SUVs).

The new fleet includes car models from leading car manufacturers such as Hyundai, Honda, Toyota, Ford, Maruti, Mahindra and Renault. The fleet has now 15 car models, namely, i10 Grand, Figo, Swift, Dzire, Ertiga, Amaze, Etios, Ecosport, Ciaz, Duster, City, Creta, Scorpio, Innova & XUV 500.



The Thai Government has decided to extend the tourist visa fee exemption scheme, initially available from November 2016 to February 2017, by an additional six months until 31 August 2017. Visa applications from the Indian market grew by almost 200 per cent during the visa fee exemption scheme's initial duration. Hence, it was decided to extend the scheme for another six months.

Indian Railways to manufacture own trainsets running at 160 kmph



The railways has decided to go ahead with manufacturing on its own trainsets that can run at a maximum speed of 160 kmph, after its global bid in this regard failed to elicit positive response. Aptly named 'Train-2018', the first trainset -- a rake without a separate locomotive -- is expected to be ready by March 2018 and likely to be pressed into service in Delhi-Lucknow or Delhi-Chandigarh sector. A trainset, much like a Delhi Metro rake, comprises many coaches that are individually powered by a propulsion system, eliminating the need for locomotive. As per the Rs 200 crore project, two trainsets will be manufactured, in collaboration with foreign players on transfer of technology basis, for which the ICF has floated a fresh global tender. Aiming to offer both comfort and pace to passengers, the project will roll out semi-high speed, 16-coach trainsets with quicker acceleration and world-class passenger amenities.

For a first in Indian Railways, these trainsets will have automatic plug type doors that will open and close at stations, wide windows for panoramic view, and ergonomically designed seating. The railways had floated a global tender for procurement- cum-maintenance and manufacture of 15 trainsets with 315 coaches in June, 2015. Though five bidders had qualified for the initial round, they did not find the offer viable and asked for raising the tender size to 1,000 coaches. Equipped with bio-toilets, all coaches in the fully AC trainset will be inter-connected so that passengers can move from one coach to other with ease. To make the travel more a joyful ride, all coaches of a trainset will be provided with onboard Wi-Fi, infotainment and GPS-based passenger information system (PIS) which will keep the passengers informed about the travel status. The train will have plush interiors and diffused LED lighting. To reduce jerk and vibration, Train-2018 will be equipped with improved mechanical couplers and modern coaches with fully suspended traction motors, pneumatic secondary suspension and anti-roll bar.

New railway catering policy to separate food distribution and cooking



The Railways unveiled a new catering policy separating its cooking and onboard food distribution sections. The railways replaced the existing policy after seven years giving back onboard catering responsibility to Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corp. Ltd (IRCTC) for majority of trains, including all the new ones. The existing policy, which had relieved IRCTC from onboard catering responsibility, was effected in 2010. While the food will be prepared at state-of-the-art base kitchens, it would be distributed through service-providers from the hospitality industry, according to the policy which aims to attract reputed food-chain players from the market. IRCTC would begin to manage catering service in a phased manner. IRCTC would unbundle catering services. Railway catering policy-2017 also empowers the IRCTC to fix menu and tariff in consultation with Railway Board. In order to achieve social objective, the policy allows 33% sub-quota for women in allotment of stalls at all stations. Milk stalls would be allotted at all stations through open tender, according to the new policy. Besides, self-help groups will also be empanelled in catering services to promote employment opportunities in various regions. Stringent guidelines have been incorporated in the policy to set up base kitchens at major junctions and also to restrict IRCTC from outsourcing private licensees outright. Perpetual renewal of food stalls at stations has been done away with and the new policy envisages that tenure of stalls shall be of five years only. The new policy also encourages e-catering system.

Whitsunday Island, Australia



The Whitsunday Islands is a collection of continental islands of various sizes off the central coast of Queensland, Australia, approximately 1,400 kilometres (900 miles) north of Brisbane. The island group is centered on Whitsunday Island, while the group's commercial center is Hamilton Island. The most notable islands in the main Whitsunday group are named Dent, Hamilton, Hayman, Hook and Whitsunday which features the white sands of Whitehaven Beach.

Lighter Moments

“Work Out”

Who says we don't exercise ?

We 'jump' to conclusions, we 'throw' our weight around, we 'bend' rules, we 'push' our luck, we 'twist' the truth, we 'stretch' lies, we 'lift' our egos, we 'run' from tough situations.

We are absolutely fit but we are still fat because we eat our words, ever so often....

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Thought for the Fortnight

Concentrate all your thoughts on the work at hand.
The sun's rays do not burn until brought to a focus.

— Alexander Graham Bell

IAAI Director Board

1. Mr Biji Eapen, National President

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Full Page	Rs. 15,000/-	Rs. 40,000/-	Rs. 75,000/-	Rs. 1,35,000/-
Strips	Rs. 2,000/-	Rs. 5,000/-	Rs. 10,000/-	Rs. 18,000/-

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