



IAAI Newsletter

April 2017 — IInd Fortnight Issue

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IAAI News

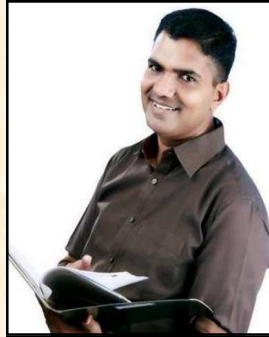
BSP Link Charges – The Realities



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The Indian Travel Agents should be aware that they are governed under IATA Resolution 818g and that any fees or additional charges over the normal IATA accreditation fees has to be tabled, discussed and approved by the concerned APJC-India for implementation. It is pointed out that the Agent Representatives in APJC-India had coordinated with IATA for the briefing

session workshops held on a pan-India basis from 14 - 29 September 2016 and charged Rs.700 per participant.

This evidently demonstrates that IATA had indeed discussed the new 'BSP Link Charges' in APJC-India in May 2016 and that the Agent Representatives had either naively or expressly approved the same.

Whereas, the Agent Representatives in APJC are taking the ordinary Travel Agents for a ride by issuing circulars claiming that they had strongly protested to IATA, requested for a dialogue and even delegated legal counselors to study the possibilities of legally cancelling the BSPlink charges. Appears to be a face-saving technique to impress upon everybody that they are ceaselessly involved in communications, discussions and interactions with IATA for that purpose!!

In the past years, the good old Agent Representatives in APJC-India have been allowing IATA and its Member airlines to impose 'Zero' commission, Ticketing Authority Process (TAP) permitting airlines to selectively appoint agents and the Weekly Payment System (WPS). Yet again, APJC-India has been silent spectators when the Travel Agents Fraternity were charged with US\$30 per month by IATA BSP as 'Enhanced User Account' charges in violation of Rule 5.2 of the IATA BSP Manual in 2011. This is being allowed when the IATA machinery itself has totally failed to honour its own commitment to pay commission as per the PSA Agreement under IATA Res 824.9.

On the contrary, the Agent Representatives have repeated the tactics to pacify Travel Agents over this illegal BSP Link charge as being an inevitable requirement of IATA while, interestingly, highlighted and motivated Travel Agents to become part of the money-minting mechanism of the 'Joint Bank Guarantee' system.

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IAAI News

BSP Link Charges – The Realities

The IAAI Kerala State Executive Committee Meeting held on 27th April 2017 strongly voiced protest against IATA and APJC-India for the irrational and illegal implementation of additional charges while depriving rightful remuneration to the Travel Agents thereby forcing them, for the sake of survival, to additionally charge customers in violation of the Supreme Court Order and the National Law that prohibits the collection of any charges other than the ticket fare.

The Executive Committee reaffirmed that the Indian National Law - the Aircraft Act 1934, Aircraft Rules 1937 - and the DGCA Order of 5th March 2010 and MoCA Order of 16th September 2013, all categorically define that commission is the rightful remuneration of the accredited Travel Agents. The Meeting also condemned the salient role played by the Agent Representatives in allowing IATA to implement the BSP charges very cleverly and requested the Travel Agents Fraternity to expose to the entire Travel Trade all those responsible for this betrayal.

The Executive Committee Meeting also criticized the Agents Representatives for their inaction in not insisting on the reconstitution of APJC-India as per IATA PAConf New guidelines of January 2014. Appendix 'F' very clearly mandates that the Agents Representatives in APJC-India should equally represent all the National Travel Trade Associations and that the Chairman is to be elected from the total of a maximum 18 Members that includes the 9 Airline Representatives too.

The reason for keeping IAAI out of APJC-India is quite evident as it is an open fact that, if IAAI becomes a part of APJC-India, IAAI will not allow or tolerate any such irregularities in APJC-India.

The simple question is - for how long can the truth be concealed? Either today or tomorrow, the Industry will certainly come to know the actual facts and the truth.

Qatar Airways seeks expansion to 7 Indian cities



Qatar Airways has sought a significant increase in capacity entitlements and access to seven new cities in India. Qatar is planning to start direct flights to several cities where it doesn't have a presence, while increasing frequency by four times on its current routes. Recently, Qatar Airways had announced starting a fully-owned airline in India, signaling an ambitious expansion plan in the country.

The new locations that Qatar Airways wants access to are Pune, Mangaluru, Lucknow, Jaipur, Tiruchirapalli, Chandigarh and Madurai, while the frequency of flights could be stepped up from metros such as New Delhi, Mumbai and Bengaluru. A liberal code-sharing policy with third-country airlines will allow Qatar Airways to boost traffic from Indian cities it does not have access to, through partner airlines via Doha.

Emirates trims US flights after curbs on electronic devices



Emirates, the Middle East's biggest airline, is cutting flights to the United States because of a drop in demand caused by heightened US security measures. The decision by the Dubai government-owned carrier is the strongest sign yet that tougher measures imposed on US-bound travellers from the Middle East are taking a financial toll on fast-growing Gulf carriers that have expanded rapidly in the United States in recent years. Dubai was one of 10 cities in Muslim-majority countries affected by a ban on laptops and other personal electronics in carry-on luggage aboard US-bound flights. Emirates' hub at Dubai International Airport, the world's third busiest, is a major transit point for travellers who were affected by US Government's executive orders temporarily halting entry to citizens of six countries. The reductions will affect five of its 12 US destinations, starting next month. The cuts will reduce the number of US-bound flights from the carrier's Dubai hub to 101, down from 126 currently. Twice daily Emirates flights to Boston, Los Angeles and Seattle will be reduced to once a day. Daily flights to Ft. Lauderdale and Orlando will be pared down to five per week.

Jet Airways codeshare agreement with Virgin Atlantic

JET AIRWAYS 

Jet Airways has expanded its codeshare agreement with Virgin Atlantic for the US-India routes. The aim is to bypass Abu Dhabi, with London's Heathrow airport as an alternative. The US government last month banned the use of all electronic items larger than a cell phone on flights from certain destinations. The ban covers laptops, tablets, e-readers, portable DVD players, gaming devices larger than a smartphone, and travel-size printers and scanners. The policy covers only nonstop flights to the US from 10 airports in West Asia and North Africa, including Dubai and Abu Dhabi, hitting Emirates and Etihad Airlines severely.

Jet Airways, partly owned by Abu Dhabi-based Etihad, currently flies to the US via Abu Dhabi. The ban therefore impacts its US-bound traffic. Passengers have already been switching to Air India so that they can continue working on their laptops on 14-17 hour-long flights to the US.

From April 19, Jet passengers travelling from India can go via Heathrow to nine US destinations — Atlanta, Boston, Newark, Washington DC, New York, Los Angeles, Miami, San Francisco and Seattle — operated by Virgin Atlantic. The move builds on the existing agreement between Jet and Virgin, in place since 2009, enabling Virgin customers to travel on Jet operated services between Mumbai and London Heathrow in addition to the airline's own direct Delhi to London service. In 2015, the codeshare was extended to Jet domestic services, allowing Virgin customers to travel between Heathrow and five destinations across India via Delhi or Mumbai.

In October last year, Delta and Jet announced a codeshare cooperation between India and the US over Heathrow, where Delta customers flying between North America and India can connect on flights operated by Jet to 20 destinations within India.

SpiceJet launches its Second daily direct flight on Kolkata–Dhaka sector

 **spicejet**
flying for everyone

Low-cost carrier SpiceJet has recently flagged off its second daily direct flight services to Dhaka from Kolkata. The new flight will be operational starting from May 16, 2017. With this new flight, the airline will be able to enhance its global footprint. SpiceJet, which now touches seven international destinations, is the first and only low cost carrier to operate daily direct flights on the Kolkata – Dhaka sector. Dhaka is the second international destination after Bangkok that the airline will be serving with a daily direct flight from Kolkata. The new flight schedule will open convenient travel options for business and leisure travelers and will allow corporate travelers with an option for a convenient return flight the same day.

SpiceJet connects Delhi & Bangkok with direct flights



SpiceJet has flagged off its first direct flight on the Delhi - Bangkok - Delhi route. The service on the Delhi - Bangkok route, will be operational six days a week (except Tuesday) and after May 9, the service would be a daily one. Similarly the service on the Bangkok - Delhi route will be operational on all days except Wednesday till May 10, after which it would be operational on all days.

Flight No.	Origin	Destination	Departure	Arrival	Frequency	Effective Dates
SG 87	Delhi	Bangkok	21:05	03:00	Mon/Wed/ Thu/Fri/Sat/ Sun	15 April - 8 May 2017
SG 88	Bangkok	Delhi	03:50	06:25	Mon/Tue/ Thu/Fri/Sat/ Sun	16 April - 9 May 2017
SG 87	Delhi	Bangkok	21:05	03:00	Daily	9 May 2017 Onwards
SG 88	Bangkok	Delhi	03:50	06:25	Daily	10 May 2017 Onwards

The new flight will connect the cities of Jaipur, Srinagar, Chandigarh, Dehradun, Jammu, Gorakhpur, Dharamshala, Surat and Jabalpur through convenient onward connections to Bangkok from Delhi. Besides Delhi, SpiceJet also serves Bangkok with a direct flight from Kolkata. Bangkok is one of SpiceJet's seven international destinations - Dubai, Dhaka, Colombo, Kabul, Male (Maldives), and Muscat.

India's longest ropeway in Mumbai



The Mumbai Port Trust (MPT) will construct India's longest ropeway between Sewri and Elephanta Island in the Arabian Sea, measuring around 8 km in order to boost tourism. The ropeway will give bird's eye view of flamingos and the proposed Mumbai Trans Harbour Link (MTHL), which is being executed by the Mumbai Metropolitan Region Development Authority (MMRDA). The proposed ropeway will either start from Haji Bunder in Sewri area in Mumbai and will go up to Elephanta Island, (a UNESCO World Heritage Site). It will give an enormous view of mud flat, mangroves and flamingos in the season. The proposal of Trans Harbour Link is north of both the locations. The people riding on the cable car can enjoy the scenic beauty outside. Presently, approximately 1,000 tourists visit Elephanta Island by boat, and they can switch over to the ropeway now for visiting the island. The travel will take approximately 14 minutes from Sewri to Elephanta Island by 20 seated cable car. Cable car would have a 3S system and ply on three ropes rather than the conventional system of a single rope. It has been incorporated in terms of safety, and it was ascertained that taking into consideration the distance. The single rope system is not long lasting and efficient. Hence, 3S System will be adopted for this project. The MPT also has plans to have terminals at both ends and has also prepared a feasibility report for the project according to which it would cost around INR 500 crore.

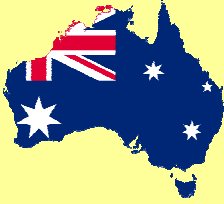
Hyatt plans to double brand presence in the Middle East



Hyatt Hotels Corporation announced plans to expand Hyatt's brand footprint in the Middle East and Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) with the signing of management agreements by a Hyatt affiliate for 14 Hyatt-branded hotels across the Park Hyatt, Grand Hyatt, Hyatt Regency, Hyatt Centric, Hyatt Place, and Hyatt House brands.

There are currently 14 Hyatt-branded hotels open in the Middle East and GCC, and the expected openings of these 14 Hyatt-branded hotels would double Hyatt's brand presence in the region within the next few years.

Australia abolishes visa programme used largely by Indians



Australia abolished a visa programme used by over 95,000 temporary foreign workers, majority of them Indians, to tackle the growing unemployment in the country. The programme, known as 457 visa, allows business to employ foreign workers for a period up to four years in skilled jobs where there is a shortage of Australian workers. The majority of the visa holders were from India followed by the UK and China. Australia will adopt a new 'Australians first' approach to skilled migration. The programme will be replaced by another visa programme, with new restrictions. The new programme will ensure that foreign workers are brought into Australia in order to fill critical skill gaps and not brought in because an employer finds it easier to recruit a foreign worker than go to the trouble of hiring an Australian.

Indian Railway Introduces a New Service



Indian Railway will now alert its passengers on their registered mobile phone when their destination arrives so that they can prepare themselves for getting off the train at the right station.

This service, named Destination Alert, will be of use especially to those whose destination is left behind because of traveling during the night or traveling alone. Such people will not have to face the trouble of missing their station and also paying the penalty.

One needs to follow a particular process to avail the facility of Destination Alert. Just type "ALERT" followed by your PNR number on your text message box and send to 139. One also needs to make a call to the number 139 after sending this message. Enter your PNR number during the call and this service gets activated.

Once the traveler registers his mobile number for Destination Alert, the alarm on his mobile phone will start ringing before the train reaches the scheduled destination.

Indian Railways to Start Double Decker Overnight AC Service Train In July



The Indian Railways are going to launch the Utkrisht Double-Decker AC Yatri (Uday) Express in July this year. Uday Express, special class service trains will run overnight, sticking to high-demand routes. Uday Express is equipped with comfortable reclining chairs. Its 120-seater AC coach will have large automatic food and beverage vending machines for passengers.

The high demand routes on which train's services will become operational include Delhi to Lucknow, Chennai to Thiruvananthapuram etc. The fare of the train will be lower than that of 3-tier AC class (3AC) in regular express trains. The 11-coach train will have facilities like large LCD screens in every coach along with Wi-Fi speaker system. The train having 40 per cent more carrying capacity than other trains aims to enhance public transporter capability clearing the rush in high-demand routes. Though it will not have sleeper berths despite being an overnight service, measures have been taken to make the journey comfortable with many added facilities. There will be comfortable seats with adequate leg space to relax at night. The interior of coaches will be aesthetically designed to give a modern look besides being equipped with bio-toilets.

Meteora, Greece



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The Metéora is a formation of immense monolithic pillars and hills-like huge rounded boulders which dominate the local area. It is also associated with one of the largest and most precipitously built complexes of Eastern Orthodox monasteries in Greece, second in importance only to Mount Athos. The six monasteries are built on natural conglomerate pillars, at the northwestern edge of the Plain of Thessaly near the Pineios river and Pindus Mountains, in central Greece. Metéora is included on the UNESCO World Heritage List.

Lighter Moments

A man visits his aunt in the nursing home. It turns out that she is taking a nap, so he just sits down in a chair in her room, flips through a few magazines, and munches on some peanuts sitting in a bowl on the table.

Eventually, the aunt wakes up, and her nephew realizes he's absentmindedly finished the entire bowl. "I'm so sorry, auntie, I've eaten all of your peanuts!"

"That's okay, dear" the aunt replied. "After I've sucked the chocolate off, I don't care for them anyway."

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Thought for the Fortnight

The best cure for the body is a quiet mind, and the best cure for the mind is "Never Mind".

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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