16th September 2021

To All Members

Subject: Update on IATO Activities (Wednesday, 1st September to Wednesday, 15th September 2021)

Dear Members,

Please find attached the Update on IATO Activities (Wednesday, 1st September to Wednesday, 15th September 2021)

With regards

Rajnish Kaistha		
Hony. Secretary		

Update on IATO Activities (Wednesday,1st September to Wednesday, 15th September 2021)

Dear Members,

Greetings!

Please find appended relevant activities of our association for the period (Wednesday, 1st September to Wednesday, 15th September 2021)

Segments covered are

- 1. Communication / Letters that addressed key issues
- 2. Webinars/ Panel Discussions/Circulars/Meetings/Chapter news
- 3. Media Coverage
- 4. Chapter News

Request your feedback to further the content of our weekly report.

1. Communication / Letters that addressed key issues

Thursday, 2nd September

➤ IATO requested Admiral D.K. Joshi, PVSM, AVSM, YSM, NM, VSM (Retd.) Hon'ble Lieutenant Governor Andaman & Nicobar Islands to revive tourism in Andaman & Nicobar Islands and remove restrictions of operation of flights to Andaman

IATO requested

- 1. To remove the restriction imposed on the number of incoming flights and allow at least 10 -15 flights a day so that it can meet the requirement of the locals and the tourism industry. It should be considered on priority so that the airlines can incorporate the same in their new schedule from September 2021 onwards.
- 2. To resume Tourism activities in Andaman & Nicobar and all those travellers/tourists who had taken both the doses of vaccination should be allowed to travel to Port Blair without any restriction and there should not be any requirement of RT-PCR test. Those who had not taken both the doses may be allowed to travel to Port Blair with negative report taken within 72 hours from the date/time of travel.
- 3. Due to the runway re-carpeting work which would resume again in October 2021, the NOTAM issued would restrict all the flight movement to before 2:00 pm only and this work is expected to continue till March 2022. This also meant that the Port Blair Airport shall not be able to operate in full capacity even during the peak tourist season.

A copy of the letter was marked to **A**. Secretary Tourism, **B**. Secretary Civil Aviation, **C**. DG DGCA, **D**. ADG Tourism, **E**. Chief Secretary A&N Islands, **F** Secretary Tourism, A&N Islands

Friday,3rd September

- ➤ IATO apprised Mrs. Rupinder Brar, Additional Director General regarding 1) Criteria for Issuance of Commercial Airport Entry Passes (AEP) for the Tour Operators and 2) Guidelines for Airport Entry Passes
- 1. Criteria for Issuance of Commercial Airport Entry Passes (AEP) for the Tour Operators:- As per the revised guidelines of Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, effective from 8th December 2020, (a copy was enclosed) there was no separate category of Inbound Tour Operators and as per the revised guidelines, MoT Recognition approval letter was given as "Tour Operator", (a sample copy was enclosed) whereas in the criteria for Airport Entry Passes it was specifically mentioned "Inbound Tour Operators". When IATO members were applying for airport entry pass they were refused, BCAs was asking for letter/certificate of MoT Recognition as "Inbound Tour Operator" as BCAs was not aware of this change in the New Guidelines for the tour operators dated 8th December 2020. It was thus requested that Ministry of Civil Aviation and Bureau of Civil Aviation Security be kindly informed accordingly so that the Bureau of Civil Aviation, Security issues revised guidelines to all their Regional Directors of revised guidelines of the Ministry of Tourism dated 8th December 2020 for issuing new airport passes.
- 2. Procedure and Guidelines for Airport Entry Passes Guidelines for Airport Entry Passes: IATO had not received the revised guidelines so far. With situation being improved, with vaccination going on full swing, it is hoped that the e-Tourist Visa and International flights would resume soon and inbound tourism business would also start.

3. Balance Sheet of 2019-20 to be considered for turnover requirement for Airport Pass: - As there was zero inbound tourism business since March 2020 and members who were applying for Airport Entry Pass would not be able to meet the turn over requirement for the financial years 2020-21 and 2021-22 as the inbound tourism had not yet started

A Copy of the letter was marked to **A**. Joint Secretary, Ministry of Civil Aviation, **B**. Director (TT) Ministry of Tourism and **C**.Asst. Director General Ministry of Tourism

Monday,6th September

> IATO wrote to Mr. Rakesh Kumar Verma, Joint Secretary (Tourism) and requested for the removal of minimum Rs. 2 crore FEE criteria in Revised MDA Guidelines for Overseas Promotion attaching the list of members whose turn over less was than two crores and claimed MDA in financial year 2018-19 and 2019-20

IATO re-iterated that

- 1. The clause of minimum requirement of turnover of Rs. 2 crore foreign exchange earnings was not there in the draft proposal, which IATO received from the Ministry for providing inputs. IATO got to know only from the final MDA revised scheme and it immediately requested to remove this clause vide letter dated 3rd February 2021 as all small MOT recognised tour operators would be disallowed to avail this scheme.
- 2. All MoT recognised inbound tour operators were allowed to avail MDA irrespective of their minimum turnover and there was a cap of upper ceiling of turnover and not the minimum turnover.

With the requested changes in the new guidelines, larger section of recognised tour operators would be able to avail the benefits and it would encourage tour operators from unorganised sector to get MoT recognition. This would definitely benefit the tourism industry at large.

A copy of the letter was marked to **A.** Secretary (Tourism), **B.** Additional Director General (Tourism) and **C.** Dy. Director General (OM) Ministry of Tourism Government of India

Tuesday, 7th September

- ➤ IATO in a letter of thanks to Mr. Kachoo Mehboob Ali (IRS) Secretary (Tourism), Govt. of Union Territory of Ladakh made suggestions to promote tourism to Ladakh.
- 1. All hotels in Ladakh should be encouraged to get classification and given star category accordingly to the Central Classification Committee of Ministry of Tourism, Government of India. However, due to climatic conditions and problems in Ladakh, there could be some relaxation in the guidelines and hurdles if any should be removed.
- **2.** All tour operators'/travel agents/adventure/trekking agents, tourist transport operators etc. should be recognised by the UT of Ladakh for which a policy could be formed in consultation with Ministry of Tourism, Government of India. The basic purpose of this was to ensure that high

- standard of services was maintained by the stakeholders, keeping in view the terrains of UT of Ladakh.
- **3.** A Tourism Advisory Committee of the UT of Ladakh should be formed where besides the Government officials, stakeholders like Chairman of IATO Ladakh, Padma Shree Mr. Chhewang Motup of Rimo Expeditions and others be invited to be the part of the Tourism Advisory Committee.

Wednesday, 8th September

➤ IATO request to Shri Shivraj Singh Chouhan, Hon'ble Chief Minister, Government of Madhya Pradesh, regarding Exorbitant increase for Wildlife Safari Permits for National Parks and Tiger Reserves in Madhya Pradesh commencing from 1st Oct 2021

IATO requested that

- The wildlife tourism season was about to commence on 1st Oct 2021, Increasing tariff this last minute would create unnecessary chaos and problems as rates were already communicated to Indian and foreign tourists who had booked for dussehra, Diwali, Xmas and New Year 2021- 2022.
- The current proposed hike is 1) a 60% hike for Indians on non-premium dates 2) a 100% hike for Indians on premium dates 3) a 220% hike for foreigners on premium dates 4) a 300% hike for foreigners on premium dates. The entry ticket for vehicle with foreigners gone up from INR 2000 to INR 6000.
- Foreign tourist arrivals to National Parks and Tiger Reserves in MP had been stagnant or dropping for several years now. In spite of this MP Forest Department proposed a hike of 220% (for non-premium dates) and hike of 300% (for premium dates) for foreign tourists which was not exorbitant but unrealistic!! Parks in MP, face tough competition from neighbouring states of Rajasthan and Karnataka for wildlife tourism. With these new policies, we would drive away whatever business Madhya Pradesh had gained in the last few years.
- MP Forest department in 2017 had decided that to encourage tourism, Foreign and Indian entry rates would be on par. Now they have decided to take a U-turn and to increase foreigner rates by 220% (non-premium dates) and 300% (premium dates) respectively. We were not against a hike which is justified and spread over many years. But overnight decisions like this, drastically effect not just the Inbound market whose costings were done a year in advance but also the domestic market, who were now booking in advance for holidays all the way up to early 2022.
 - Any major policy change like a steep price hike needed to include stakeholder consultation. From our partners in MP, we believe that the key process of stakeholder consultation was entirely ignored, and overlooked. Further, even the LAC (appointed by State Government, as per the guidelines of NTCA) was not consulted or informed. This displayed a gross negligence on the part of MP Forest Department in following the due process laid down by Hon SC.
- Ministry of Tourism, Government of India had recently announced 5 lac free visas for foreign tourists to encourage tourism growth post pandemic. The proposed increase will be counter- productive to the efforts of Ministry of Tourism, Govt. of India.

• The Tourism Industry has been one of the worst affected industries due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The Government and all its agencies (including the MP Forest Department) should support the industry through these times. With this proposed price hike this ailing industry would be severely affected for the next few years.

A copy of the letter was marked to **A**. Chief Secretary, **B**. Minister of Forests **C**. Principal Secretary, Tourism **D**. Principal Secretary (Forests) **E**. Principal Chief Conservator of Forest Government of Madhya Pradesh

Besides sending emails to all above, Mr. Gopal Rai, IATO Chapter Chairman, Madhya Pradesh was requested to hand deliver the letters and also follow up along with other stake holders in the state.

Wednesday, 15th September

> IATO highlighted the Issues being faced by its members regarding inspection of Bed & Breakfast Establishment etc.to Mr. Gaurav Saini Dy. Secretary (Tourism), Govt. of National Capital Territory of Delhi

IATO requested that

- 1. Inspections be scheduled properly area/location wise and should not scatter in different locations.
- 2. Sufficient advance notice be given for the inspections with at least 72 hours working hours for IATO to depute its members.
- 3. In case of any cancellation of inspection, it should be informed to the IATO Secretariat at least 24 hours in advance so that IATO can inform the concerned member.
- 4. In case of any force-majeure cancellation of inspection due to any unforeseen reasons, it should be informed on phone to the IATO office as well to the IATO member who had been deputed for the inspection at the earliest
- 5. Inspection report to be prepared immediately after the inspection with the consent of all the committee members of the inspection team. IATO Members should not be asked to sign on the blank form. IATO shall reemphasise and advise all its members going for the inspection that the policy followed by Regional Director North, Ministry of Tourism, Government of India should be followed for the inspections scheduled by Delhi Tourism also.

A copy of the letter was marked to Assistant Director, Tourism Department, Govt. of National Capital Territory of Delhi

2. Webinars/ Panel Discussions/Circulars/Meetings

Segment 2 update sequence by date:3,4,8,10,11,13,15 September

Friday,3rd September

- ➤ IATO Webinar/Training Session on GeM for the IATO Members was organised on Friday, the 3rd September 2021 at 3.30 pm to 5.30 pm.
 - ➤ All Members were informed on the Introduction of IndiGo Flight on Sector Delhi Gwalior and Gwalior Delhi with effect from 1st September 2021 as per schedule below: -

Flight No	Sector	Departure	Arrival	Effective Date	Frequency
6E 7356	Delhi - Gwalior	0710	0820	01 Sep	Daily
6E 7357	Gwalior – Delhi	1220	1330	01 Sep	Daily

Saturday, 4th September

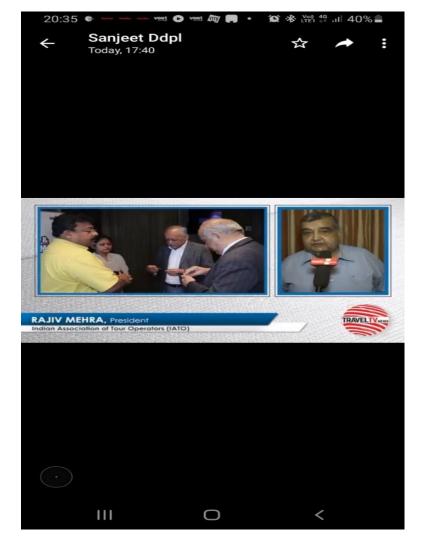
- ➤ Dekho Apna Desh Episode 98th Webinar on "Walk With Tribe" was organized on Saturday, 4th September 2021 (1100-1200 hrs.
- ➤ All Members were informed on the Operation of Special Train of Northeast Frontier Railway w.e.f. 28.08.2021 on the Guwahati to New Halflong route
- ➤ IATO Buddhist Tourism Promotion Committee held on Saturday 4th March at 11.30 AM on Zoom
- Civil Aviation Committee meeting held on Saturday 4th September at 4pm on Zoom.

Wednesday, 8th September

➤ Mr. Pronab Sarkar, Immediate Past President IATO was declared Elected as Member of SEPC Central Governing Council

Friday, 10th September

➤ Gujarat Tourism Travel & Tourism Meet was held on 10th September 2021 at 12 noon at Courtyard by Marriott, Gurgaon. President IATO interviewed.



Saturday, 11th September

> SEPC MASTER CLASS SERIES "Procedures related to Export of Services under GST, FTP & FEMA." was organised on 11 September 2021 at 11 AM

Monday, 13th September

All Members were informed on the "Foood for Thought" of the day as shared by Chairman, FAITH Foood_For_Thought_130921.pdf

Wednesday, 15th September

➤ All Active Members were informed and requested to confirm their interest to attend the FICCI National Tourism Investors Meet 2021 inaugural session on 23rd September 2021 at 4 pm at FICCI, New Delhi. 20 nominated IATO members were sought by FICCI.

3. Media Coverage

Segment 3 update sequence by date: 1,8,9,13 September

Wednesday 1st September

> Leave it to foreign tourists to decide whether they want to visit India: IATO President

https://travel.economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/associations/leave-it-to-foreign-tourists-to-decide-whether-they-want-to-visit-india-iato-president/85827601

> Travel bodies mull approaching MHA and civil aviation ministry over ban on commercial flights

https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/industry/services/travel/travel-bodies-mull-approaching-mha-and-civil-aviation-ministry-over-ban-on-commercial-flights/articleshow/85800705.cms?from=mdr

https://aajka-samachar.in/travel-bodies-mull-approaching-mha-and-civil-aviation-ministry-over-ban-on-commercial-flights/

 $\frac{https://www.pehalnews.in/travel-bodies-mull-approaching-mha-and-civil-aviation-ministry-over-ban-on-commercial-flights/1040970/$

> Disappointed with Government decision to extend the suspension of flights: IATO

https://www.travelturtle.world/news/disappointed-with-government-decision-to-extend-the-suspension-of-international-flights-iato/

> India international flights: extended suspension devastating

https://eturbonews.com/3002072/india-international-flights-extended-suspension-devastating/





01st Sep. 2021

IATO disappointed on Government decision to extend suspension of international flights

Mr. Rajiv Mehra, President, Indian Association of Tour Operators (IATO) expressed his disappointment on the decision taken by Ministry of Civil Aviation/DGCA to extend suspension of international flight operation till 30th September 2021 and



He mentioned that our members are very much depressed and disheartened by this decision taken by

the Government. It is time for the Government to help the tourism industry by reviving inbound tourism to India

IHG Hotels & Resorts expands footprint in Nepal with a new Holiday Inn Express

IHG Hotels & Resorts has signed a management agreement with DMR APA Joint Venture to develop a new Hotel - Holiday Inn Express and Suites Kathmandu Rabi Bhawan in Nepal. The brownfield hotel with 100 keys is expected to open by the first quarter of 2024. With this signing of Holiday Inn Express IHG will have 6 hotels in the pipeline.





Tourism Authority of Thailand (India) kickstarts 'Thailand Build Back Better Together' Campaign

Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) India Offices, New Delhi and Mumbai have announced the launch of 'Thailand Build Back Better Together' Campaign, which is a pan India Travel Agent Engagement. (from 30th August 2021 till 30th September 2021)



This month-long campaign will have weekly selfie

at Virtual Photo Booth, promotions, contest on different themes, polls, articles of destinations, tourism products and services as well as update travel situation in Thailand



Himachal Govt spent INR 136 crore in Lahaul-Spiti district under Tribal Area Dev. Programme

Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur inaugurated development projects worth INR 66.5 crore in the Lahaul-Spiti district. The government-sanctioned opening of 407 homestays in the valley. CM said that the new homestay units will help cater the inflow of tourists as well as create new employment opportunities.



goSTOPS launches goEXPERIENCES , a new 'experience wing' to curate exciting adventures for young travellers

goSTOPS, India's fastest growing backpacker hostel brand, introduces a new division goEXPERIENCES expanding its services to offer a wholesome, fun-filled, exciting, and experiential holiday.

For media coverage mail to: info@travelworldonline.in

> India's extension of international flight ban upsets trade https://www.ttgasia.com/2021/09/01/indias-extension-of-international-flight-ban-upsetstrade/

Thursday,9th September

> Mr Pronab Sarkar elected as member of SEPC Central Governing Council



Pronab Sarkar gets elected to SEPC's Central Governing Council

https://travel.economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/associations/pronab-sarkar-gets-elected-to-sepcs-central-governing-council/86056867

Pronab Sarkar, Past President IATO Elected as Member of SEPC Central Governing Council

http://www.travelworldonline.in/Tour-Operators-news-detail.aspx?news=Pronab-Sarkar,-Past-President-IATO-Elected-as-Member-of-SEPC-Central-Governing-Council-

https://tourismbreakingnews.com/pronab-sarkar-past-president-iato-elected-as-member-of-sepc-central-governing-council/

https://businessdunia.in/?p=15231

https://travelnewsy.com/2021/09/09/pronab-sarkar-elected-as-member-of-sepc-central-governing-council/

https://rjassociatesmedia.com/mr-pronab-sarkar-immediate-past-president-iato-elected-as-member-of-sepc-central-governing-council/

Pronab Sarkar elected as member of SEPC Central Governing Council ➤ Mr. Pronab Sarkar elected as member of SEPC Central Governing Council

https://www.bottindia.com/mr-pronab-sarkar-elected-as-member-of-sepc-central-governing-council/

➤ Karan Rathore, Pronab Sarkar elected to newly bifurcated SEPC

https://hospitality.economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/hotels/karan-rathore-pronab-sarkar-elected-to-newly-bifurcated-sepc/86088992

Monday, 13th September





Week 3 of #ThailandBetterTogether to highlight Family Fun in Thailand



Third week of 'Thailand Build Back Better Together' campaign by TAT India offices, will focus on Family Fun in Thailand. This week, the highlight will be Banglock as a destination, as it has bits of offer for the families. Along with Bangsok, two beach destinations will be presented — Pattaya and Hua Hin, which are famous seascle resorts that are normally combined with Banglock. To participate register on https://forms.gle/ObzmCFECm3C7FHE16

Gujarat Tourism holds meeting to showcase new developments and new places in Gujarat



Recently, an interaction session with Gujarat Tourism was held in Delhi, where the new developments and new places to visit in Gujarat weer showcased in video presentations. A presentation on tourist's facilities, monuments, national parks and other attractions were presented. Pajiv Mehra, President, IATO, said, they are seeking an approval from the Gujarat government and proposing to have the IATO convention in Gujarat in December.

TAFI Holds its NJC Meet in Gandhinagar



The new Team TAFI India had its first National Joint Council (NJC) meeting on 0.4 September at the Gift CiV Club Gandhinagar - Guijarat. The National Managing Committee and the Chapter Chairmen & Secretaries from all 11 Chapters were present. TAFI President Ajay Pakash rendered a traditional welcome to Shri Jenu Devan, MD & Commissioner of Guijarat Tourism. He shared his vision of a reviving travel and tourism industry as vaccinations picked up pace and the epidemic receded.

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Mohanlal unveils Kerala Tourism's mobile app to locate spots and record live experiences



Kerala Tourism Department launched its mobile app which ensures a hassle-free travel for tourists coming to Kerala and giving them an opportunity to discover unexplored attractions themselves and record their impressions during the visit. It provides all information about destinations at finger tips. It identifies unexplored destinations in all panchayats in Kerala and will help attract local tourist spots to grab global attention.

Chief minister Pramod Sawant announced 50 percent reduction in shack fees in Goa



For the second consecutive year, the Goa government has reduced beach shack fees by 50 per cent due to the continuing Covid-19 pandemic. This was announced by Chief Minister Pramod Sawant at a cabinet briefing on Thusday. Depending on the size and location, a shack operator has to pay licence fee of upto one lakt nupses Hopefully, the reduction in the fee would help shack operators make ends meet.

For more information contact harshal@ddppl.com +91 96194 99167 arumita.gupta@ddppl.com +91 96503 99908 www.tourismbreakingnews.com



For more news & updates please log on to

south of India.

4. Chapter News

Segment 4 update sequence by date: 1,6,7,15 September

Wednesday 1st September

➤ Chapter Chairman, Andhra Pradesh and Telangana was invited at a workshop under "Dekho Apna Desh" which will focus on Destination Development on 01st and 02nd of September 2021, to educate about bed and breakfast for livelihood. The subject of Bed and breakfast possibilities and how to make a commercially viable model while keeping the ideas eco-friendly. was taken up by IATO chapter chairman.

➤ Olympic medalists Lalit Upadhyay from Varanasi. Felicitated by UP Chapter IATO



Monday,6th September

➤ Message from Chapter Chair Telangana and Andhra Pradesh

Tourism Minister, Sri Kishan Reddy ji, inaugurated the Golf

games, today at Hyderabad.





Tuesday, 7th September

Chapter Chairman, Indian Association of Tour Operators (IATO), North East Chapter represented IATO North East States Chapter on a Doordarshan Assam program in August.

DD Assam talk show on "Impact of COVID-19 on Tourism Sector" aired on DD Assam Channel on 13 August 2021 at 9:00 pm.



The link to the

video https://youtu.be/RotHtlCP1xI

➤ Chapter Chairman, Indian Association of Tour Operators (IATO), North East Chapter attended a few webinars where he represented IATO as North East States Chapter Chairman

The Chapter Chair participated as a speaker in 02 webinars

- 1. Arunachal Pradesh focusing on Anjaw district (Please find the recording link for your reference: $https://youtu.be/Ki-qR_vle8M$)
- 2. Nagaland focusing on Kiphire district (Recording link for your reference: https://youtu.be/R4KYZEFOMfw)

✓ MEDIA NEWS

https://travel.economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/destination/states/lack-of-infrastructure-plagues-nagalands-kiphire-from-harnessing-tourism-potential/85823750

Wednesday, 15th September

➤ Chapter Chair Maharashtra attended J&K tourism event today.



