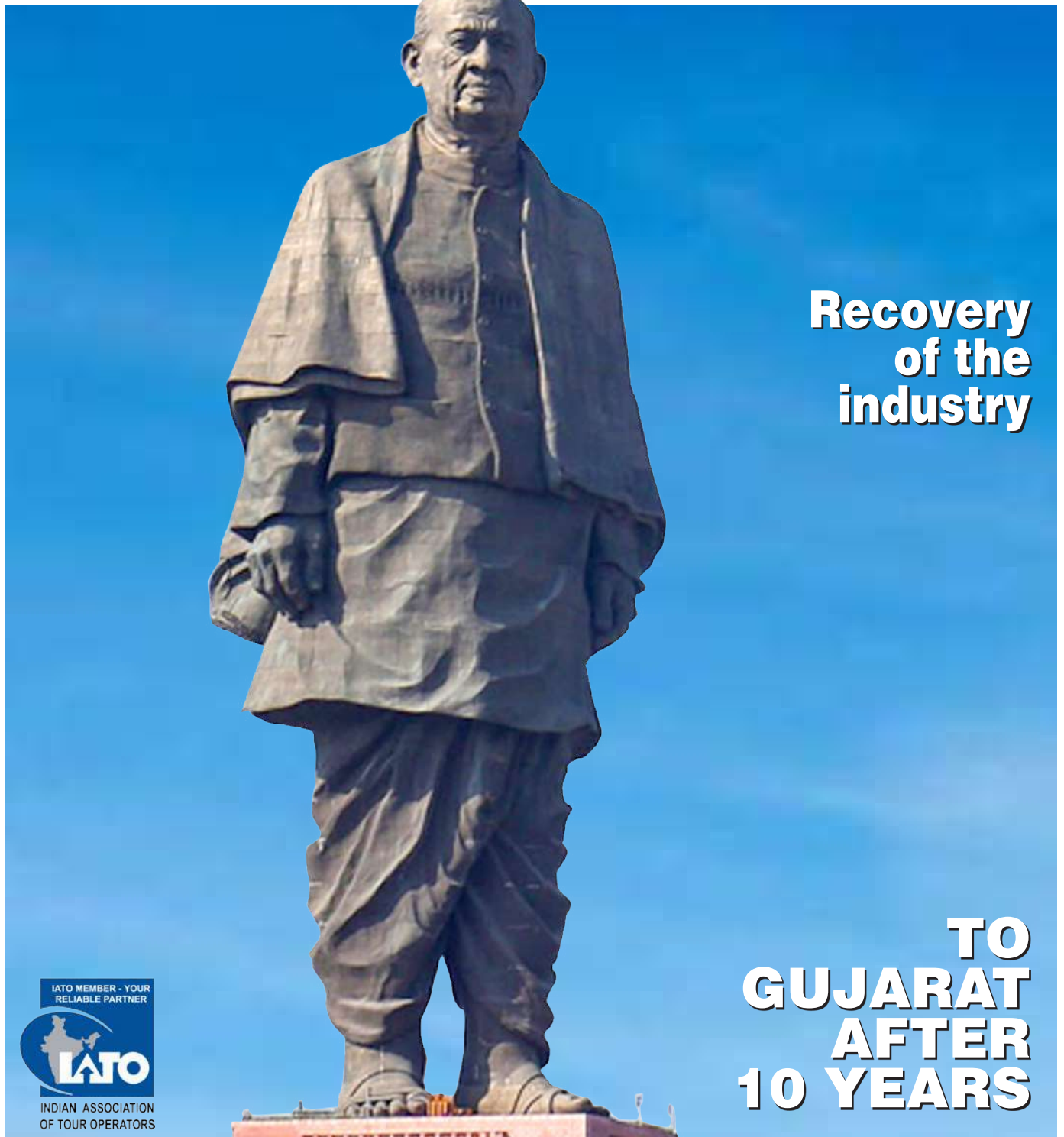




# IATO

*A Tourism Industry Communication by  
Indian Association of Tour Operators*

# SPEAKS



**Recovery  
of the  
industry**

**TO  
GUJARAT  
AFTER  
10 YEARS**





**36<sup>th</sup>**  
**IATO Annual Convention**  
**at**  
**The Leela Gandhinagar, Gujarat**

BLOCK THESE DATES  
**16 to 19 December 2021**



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Mr. Rahul Chakravarty

COMMITTEE CONVENOR  
Mr. Neelam Thakur

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# President's Message



*Dear Colleagues*

**T**he hard work of your association paid rich dividends when the first international tourist landed in India. This is a trickle, and I am sure that, in time, this will increase to a great way forward.

The 36th IATO Annual Convention is around the corner, and we have made special efforts to discuss business. The topics on the agenda and speakers are strong, and I would encourage each one of you to register and also get your senior members to join the deliberations.

We have specially negotiated the prices for you, which are quite reasonable and a better way to see Gandhinagar and Ahmedabad in the New Normal.

Lastly, we encourage you to show your commitment to your association and join us, and also discuss your issues/suggestions.

I look forward to welcoming you.

*Your President*  


# Message from the Convention Organising Committee

**W**e, the strong and vibrant IATO fraternity will make its presence felt and contribute to the apt theme of the IATO convention at Gandhinagar, "BRAND INDIA–THE ROAD TO RECOVERY".

We are grateful to the Government of Gujarat for granting this opportunity to IATO and shall endeavour to make Incredible India a stronger brand.

As the borders have opened up, it is an opportune time to deliberate on strategic issues that have impeded tourism in the past 18 months. We will discuss and hear from eminent experts of tourism about SEIS, flights, e-Visa, infrastructure, responsible tourism, seamless interstate movement, and the nascent elements of the marketing mix that will craftily position the participating states in the global tourism canvas in the New Normal.

The post-convention tours will embark upon the onsite marketing of the key destinations in our host state, Gujarat.

The IATO convention will thus witness the flow of thoughts from fertile minds that shall assist our members and address their sagacity to march on to the path to recovery armed with new skill sets, and tact, and in the process leading India to its position of glory in the world of tourism.

We look forward to welcoming you at the 36<sup>th</sup> IATO Annual Convention in December 2021 at Gandhinagar, Gujarat.



Rajiv Mehra  
President  
Convention



EM Najeeb  
Chairman  
Convention



Rajnish Kaistha  
Co-Chairman  
Convention



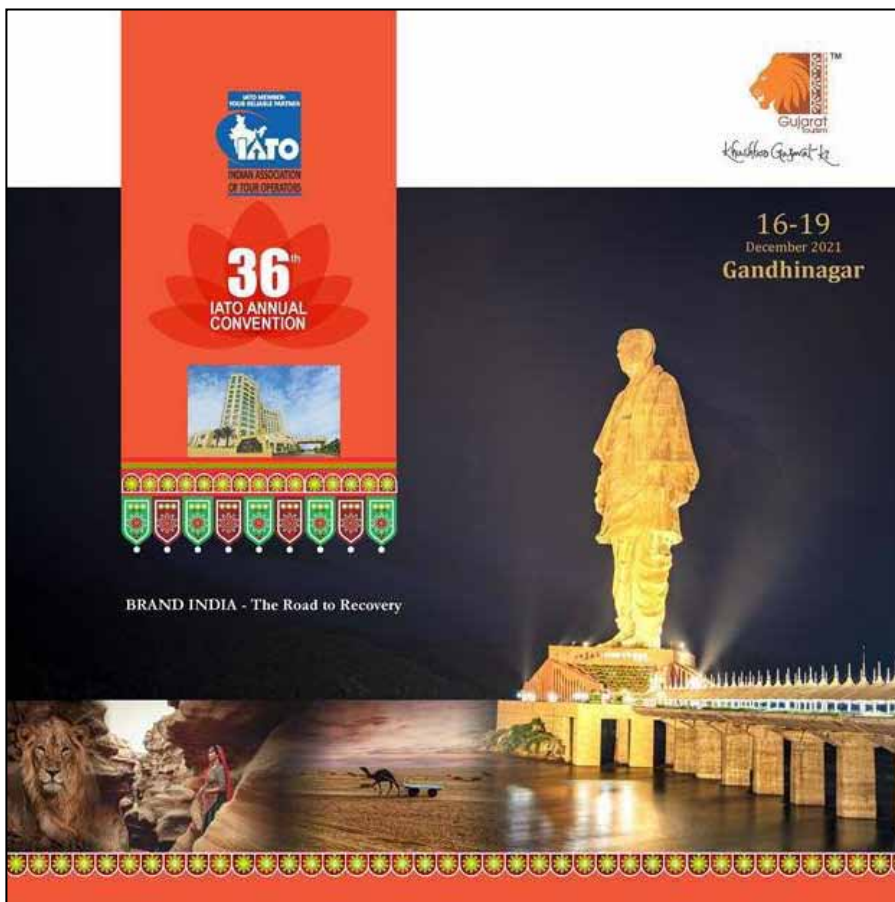
Randhir Singh Vaghela  
Co-Chairman  
Convention

*Let's meet in Gujarat!*



# TO GUJARAT AFTER 10 YEARS

The IATO invites its members to discuss ways and means to revive the tourism sector, which had seen worst days during the two COVID-19-induced lockdowns at the convention. The 36th Indian Association of Tour Operators' Annual Convention will be held in Gandhinagar from December 16 to 19, 2021 and the venue will be The Leela Gandhinagar.



welcome, since it is here that these words sound true, and the guest is referred to as 'God,' and the Gujaratis are abundantly cordial, hospitable, and will urge you to return again.

Gujarat, the home state of Mahatma Gandhi, the Father of the Nation, stretches out into the Arabian Sea with a hint of the desert, and a 1,660-km-long coastline. Ahmedpur Mandvi Beach, Chorwad Beach, Dwarka Beach and Somnath temple, Dwarkadhish temple, Swaminarayanan Akshardham temple, Wild Ass Sanctuary, Gir Wildlife Sanctuary are some of the places a visitor must visit.

The state also has Rani ki Vav, Champaner-Pavagarh Archaeological Park, Old Ahmedabad, Dholavira are some of the sites which attract hordes of tourists.

Gujarat also has the world's tallest statue — 182 metre-high statue of Sardar Vallabhai Patel. It was inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Sculpture, handicrafts, arts, and festivals contribute to the state's wealth. Gujarat is also one of the most technologically advanced states in the country, which has the country's largest petrochemical complex. The state has incredibly diverse scenery, ranging from deep green dense woods to stark white salt

**T**he 36<sup>th</sup> Indian Association of Tour Operators' Annual Convention will be held in Gandhinagar from December 16 to 19, 2021. The venue of the convention is The Leela Gandhinagar in Gujarat with the Theme:

**BRAND INDIA-The Road to Recovery.**

**GUJARAT  
Gandhi, PM's homeland**  
Aavo Padharo, Gujarati for

“  
**The members would deliberate during the convention as to how and when the tourism business could be brought back to the pre-pandemic days**  
”

# Let's meet in Gujarat!



plains. Due to aeons of migratory effects, its 1,660-km-long coastline is home to some of the state's most distinctive marine species, and its geographical placements make it an ideal matrix, a melting pot of a huge range of culture, people, places, and history.

## **Gandhinagar**

The second planned city of India after Chandigarh, Gandhinagar is divided into 30 organised sectors. With the tag of the cleanest city in Asia, Gandhinagar will host the 36th IATO Annual Convention between December 16 and 19, 2021. The city is named after Mahatma Gandhi.

The city houses many attractions to visit such as Swaminarayan Temple, Sarita Udhyan, Children's Park, Indroda Dinosaur and Fossil Park, Blackbuck National Park, deer park, GIET City Tower, Rani Roopmati's Mosque, Hanuman Temple, Brahmani Temple and Capital Complex among a host of others.

Tourists should not miss visiting Akshardham Temple. The temple is built out of pink stone with beautiful carvings around it.

History buffs also love Gandhinagar mainly due to its connection with Mahatma Gandhi. The Gandhi Ashram in the city was apparently the nerve centre where strategies and plans were prepared during the country's freedom movement.

The state is considered a gastronomic delight, Gujarat is famous for its mouth-watering *fafda-jalebi*, *thepla*, *khakra*, *khandvi*, *khaman dhokla*, and the delicious Gujarati *thali*. Although Ahmedabad has many upscale restaurants, people love the food available in Gandhinagar more.

## **The venue**

Blending modern splendour with vibrant old-world traditions, the 318-room hotel, built atop the concourse of the Gandhinagar railway station, is minutes away from the Mahatma Mandir Convention and Exhibition

“  
Located 40 minutes  
away from the  
Ahmedabad airport, it  
is in close proximity to  
many business hubs  
”

# Let's meet in Gujarat!



## TENTATIVE PROGRAMME

### 36<sup>TH</sup> IATO ANNUAL CONVENTION

### THEME: **BRAND INDIA - THE ROAD TO RECOVERY**

#### DAY 1

Thursday, December 16, 2021

1000 - 1700 hrs	Registration at The Leela Gandhinagar, Gujarat
1000 - 1700 hrs	Registration for IATO Run for Responsible Tourism at The Leela Gandhinagar, Gujarat
1315 - 1415 hrs	Lunch at your respective hotel, hosted by IATO
1600 - 1630 hrs	Hi Tea at The Leela Gandhinagar, hosted by IATO
1630 - 1900 hrs	Inaugural Function at The Leela Gandhinagar
1915 - 1945 hrs	Inauguration of India Tourism Fair/Mart – 2021 at The Leela Gandhinagar
2000 - 2230 hrs	Culture Programme and Dinner at The Leela Gandhinagar, hosted by Gujarat Tourism

#### DAY 2

Friday, December 17, 2021

0600 – 0800 hrs	IATO Run for Responsible Tourism
0950 hrs	Delegates to assemble in the convention hall and take seats
1000 – 1005 hrs	Starts of Business Sessions - Opening Remarks by Mr. Ravi Gosain, Vice President, IATO
1005 – 1100 hrs	Business Session 1 – Brand India - The Road to Recovery for Revival of Business
1100 - 1120 hrs	State Presentation 1 - Vibrant Gujarat
1120 – 1130 hrs	State Presentation 2
1130 – 1200 hrs	Tea/Coffee Break
1200 – 1210 hrs	State Presentation 3
1210 – 1305 hrs	Business Session 2 - Hotels in the New Normal

#### DAY 2

Friday, December 17, 2021- Continues

1305 – 1315 hrs	State Presentation 4/Announcement of Door Prizes
1315 – 1415 hrs	Lunch/B2B
1400 - 1450 hrs	Business Session 3 – Connectivity: New Frontiers

1450 - 1500 hrs	State Presentation 5
1500 - 1550 hrs	Business Session 4 - SEIS: New Policy under FTP 2021- 2026
1550 – 1600	State Presentation 6
1600 – 1630 hrs	Tea/Coffee Break
1630 – 1715 hrs	Business Session 5 – Responsible Tourism
1715 – 1725 hrs	State Presentation 7
1725 – 1735 hrs	State Presentation 8/Announcement of Door Prizes
1800 hrs	Depart for respective Hotels
2000 - 2230 hrs	Cultural Programme, Dinner at The Leela Gandhinagar, hosted by IATO

#### DAY 3

Saturday, December 18, 2021

0950 hrs	Delegates to assemble in the convention hall and take seats
1000 – 1100 hrs	Business Session 6 - Automation and Digital Marketing
1100 – 1110 hrs	State Presentation 9
1110 – 1120 hrs	State Presentation –10
1120 – 1150	Tea/Coffee Break/ B2B
1150 – 1240 hrs	Business Session 7 - Preparedness under New Normal (film by Dhruv before start of session)
1240 – 1250 hrs	State Presentation – 11/ Announcement of Door Prizes
1250 – 1350 hrs	Lunch/B2B
1350 – 1420 hrs	Business Session 8 – Dekho Apna Desh
1420 – 1430 hrs	State Presentation 12
1430 – 1530 hrs	Valedictory Session
1530 – 1600 hrs	Tea Break/B2B
1600 – 1700 hrs	Motivational Session
1700 – 1745 hrs	Award Presentation Ceremony/ Announcement of Door Prizes
1800 hrs	Depart for respective hotels
2000 - 2230 hrs	Entertainment and Dinner hosted by The Leela Gandhinagar and IATO

#### DAY 4

Sunday, December 19, 2021

Delegates Check out. Post-Convention Tours



# Let's meet in Gujarat!



Centre managed by The Leela. Located 40 minutes away from the Ahmedabad Airport, it is in close proximity to many business hubs and is the perfect destination for corporate meetings, and conferences.

The Leela Gandhinagar's cutting-edge, versatile, indoor and outdoor meeting spaces are well-equipped to host small as well as large-scale business and social events alike. Located 40 minutes away from the hustle and bustle of the city, it is the ideal destination for a getaway. The hotel offers a myriad of facilities such as a world class spa, a swimming pool, and a state-of-the-art fitness center, to exceptional dining venues spanning a host of cuisines in an idyllic setting.

## 36th IATO CONVENTION

As per the IATO, as the situation is slowly normalising, the members would deliberate as to how and when the tourism business could be brought back to the pre-pandemic days. It will be an opportunity for the members to get together and discuss strategies. With fears of contracting COVID-19 tapering off across the country, thanks to the full vaccination, the IATO has requested all its members to get both the doses of the COVID-19 vaccine for their and others' safety. The IATO members will be required to fill up the registration form to take part in the annual convention.

The members should scan through all the details in the registration

### To be taken note of

- Delegates need to make payment towards registration charges and post-convention tour charges only and not for the hotel accommodation.
- IATO will book accommodation for the delegates as per the registration details filled in the registration form. However, payment for Hotel Room
- Booking will be made by the delegate directly at the hotel.

# Let's meet in Gujarat!



form and fill them up, including furnishing the certificate of vaccination — both first and second doses of the COVID-19 vaccine.

*One can register online on IATO website:*  
[www.iato.in](http://www.iato.in) or <https://iato.in/convention2/registration>

The details of the tour during the convention are as follows:

## SPOUSE TOURS AND POST CONVENTION TOURS

### SPOUSE TOURS

**Spouse Tour # 1** – December 17, 2021  
- Day Trip- Ahmedabad City Tour with Old City Walk

**Spouse Tour # 2** – Half Day Tour - Gandhinagar

### POST CONVENTION TOURS

**POST TOUR # 1** - December 19, 2021 - Day Trip - Ahmedabad City Tour with Science City visit

**POST TOUR # 2** - December 19, 2021 - Day Trip - Gandhinagar-Modhera-Adalaj Ahmedabad 210 kms /05 Hr Round Trip

**POST TOUR # 3** - December 19 & 20, 2021 – One night/Two days Tour of Gandhinagar – Statue of Unity – Ahmedabad

**POST TOUR # 4** - December, 19 & 20, 2021 - One Night/Two Days Tour of Gandhinagar- Patan- Modhera- Little Rann of Kutch -Ahmedabad  
**POST TOUR # 5** - December 19 and 22, 2021 - Three Nights/Four Days Tour of Gandhinagar- Little Rann of Kutch- Bhuj- Ahmedabad

**POST TOUR # 6** - December 19 and 22, 2021 - Three Nights/Four Days Tour of Gandhinagar Jammagar- Dwarka- Porbandar- Somnath- Ahmedabad.

For any assistance or further details, please get in touch with the IATO Secretariat. Looking forward to welcoming you in Gandhinagar

E.M. Najeeb, chairperson, IATO convention, Rajnish Kaistha and Randhirsingh Vaghela, the Co-Chairmen of the convention. They will be available at the venue to welcome the members.

**The IATO seeks active participation of all its members to make the annual convention successful and request for the following: -**

- Participate in the annual convention by registering as delegates.
- Advertisement in the IATO Manual.
- Participation in Marketing Innovation Competition.
- Taking a booth in Indian Tourism Fair during the period.
- Sponsoring Door Prizes that will be announced daily during the business sessions.
- If you are sponsoring gift items to be put into delegates' kit bags, take note that no printed brochures or material would be accepted.
- Sample of gift proposed may be sent to IATO office for approval by December 6, 2021 and need to be delivered at the venue by December 13, 2021.

“  
**This will be an opportunity for the members to get together and discuss strategies**  
”

### SEPTEMBER

- ❖ IATO Webinar/Training Session on GeM for the IATO Members was organised on September 3, 2021. All Members were informed on the Introduction of IndiGo Flight on Sector Delhi-Gwalior and Gwalior-Delhi with effect from September 1, 2021.
- ❖ Dekho Apna Desh Episode 98th Webinar on 'Walk With Tribe' was organized on Saturday, September 4, 2021.
- ❖ All Members were informed on the Operation of Special Train of Northeast Frontier Railway w.e.f. August 28, 2021 on the Guwahati to New Halflong route
- ❖ IATO Buddhist Tourism Promotion Committee held on Saturday March 4, 2021.
- ❖ Pronab Sarkar, Immediate Past President IATO was declared Elected as Member of SEPC Central Governing Council
- ❖ SEPC MASTER CLASS SERIES 'Procedures related to Export of Services under GST, FTP & FEMA' was organised on September 11, 2021.
- ❖ All Active Members were informed and requested to confirm their interest to attend the FICCI National Tourism Investors Meet 2021 inaugural session on September 23, 2021 at FICCI, New Delhi. 20 nominated IATO members were sought by FICCI.
- ❖ India Cruise Summit was held on Thursday, the September 16, 2021.
- ❖ An appeal was made to all members to help the grieved family of one IATO members who lost his life due to COVID-19
- ❖ Discover the UNESCO World Heritage

Sites of Gujarat Webinar was organised at 11:00 AM, on September 21, 2021. All members were invited.

- ❖ A Virtual programme on 'Skill Development in Tourism Sector: The Way Forward', was organised on September 22, 2021. All members were invited.
- ❖ All Regional /State Chapter Chairmen were detailed on the facility of Applying online for IATO Membership
- ❖ All Members were informed on the Release of Service Exports from India Scheme (SEIS) Scrips for Services Rendered in the FY2019-20
- ❖ President and the COO at the FICCI 6th National Tourism Investors' Meet September 23 to 24, 2021.



- ❖ IATO Interactive Meeting to discuss Plan of Action for the Ministry about opening of tourism activities was held on September 24, 2021.
- ❖ 'Incredible Indian Adventurers: Experiencing Everest', Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav, Episode 2 was held on September 24, 2021
- ❖ IATO invited Bimal Bora, Minister for Tourism, Sports & Youth Welfare, Cultural Affairs & Power Government of Assam for its NE Chapter meet on September 26, 2021.
- ❖ Seminar - 'Assam as Ideal Tourism Destination Post-COVID-19' was held on September 27, 2021.
- ❖ Travel Turtle organised a Panel Discussion on September 27.

- ❖ Team IATO at the World Tourism Day at The Ashok New Delhi



Message from President on World Tourism Day was sent to all members

- ❖ Mehra addressed the WTD gathering of the stakeholders of tourism in Assam



- ❖ Chapter Chair Telangana received the Telangana State Tourism Excellence Award.



- ❖ IATO Bihar and Jharkhand celebrated World Tourism Day.



- ❖ IATO Annual General Meeting was held on October 21.
- ❖ PATA India's Webinar, Destination India - A European Perspective &

Opportunities was held on September 30.

- ❖ IATO One Way WhatsApp Group for Allied/Associate Members with Mobile no. 09643009939 has started.

## OCTOBER

- ❖ IATO delegation for Buddhist Tourism FAM October 4 to 8, 2021 to Bodhgaya, Varanasi organised by MOT GOI in association with IRCTC, Govt of Bihar and Govt of Uttar Pradesh.

President IATO welcomed the MOS Ajay Bhatt who flagged off the tour at the Safdarjung Railway Station.



- ❖ All Members were informed about the Tourist Visas being resumed with effect from October 15, 2021 for chartered flights and with effect from November 15, 2021 for others.

- ❖ IATO team visits Gujarat to discuss the Annual Convention. Meeting with Hareet Shukla, Secretary, Tourism Gujarat



- ❖ All Tour Operators' & Travel Agents' were detailed on the International Buddhist Conclave on November 17 to 21, 2021
- ❖ 36<sup>th</sup> IATO Convention will take place in Gandhinagar from December 16 to 19, 2021. All members were informed.

- ❖ All Active Members were informed on the FAM Tour to be organised by UP Tourism from November 1 to 4, 2021 for celebration of Deep Utsav.
- ❖ Inputs/suggestions for revival of tourism after the announcement of opening of tourist visa were sought from all members.
- ❖ All Active Members were informed on the Invitation for India Travel Mart (ITM) Dehradun, November 9 to 11, 2021.
- ❖ Ministry of Tourism Webinar on October 16, 2021 was held at 11 am on 'Durga Puja- Most important festival of the East India and its importance'.
- ❖ Invitation for India Travel Mart (ITM) Dehradun, November 9 to 11, 2021. All members were informed.
- ❖ All members were informed about the Re-introduction of IATO News Letter - October 2021 edition which has been attached.
- ❖ IATO 39<sup>th</sup> AGM was held on Zoom at The Park New Delhi



- ❖ All IATO Members (Tour Operators & Travel Agents) were informed on the details of pending Refunds of Advance paid to RTDC for Palace on Wheels Luxury Train.
- ❖ Free COVID-19 Vaccination Camp was organized for Hospitality & Travel Trade Stakeholders on October 26 and 27, 2021 at The Park Hotel, New Delhi.
- ❖ 'Food for Thought' of the day as shared by Chairman, FAITH was sent to all members

- ❖ Chapter Chairman met Dr. Mathivendhan Tamilnadu tourism minister at Bangalore, at the South India Tourism minister conference organized by MOT.



## NOVEMBER

- ❖ VP IATO at the Deepotsav at Ayodhya



- ❖ Global Services Enclave was organized by SEPC on November 9, 2021.
- ❖ All Members (Recognised by MoT, Govt. of India) were informed on the Loan Guarantee Scheme for COVID-19 affected Tourism Service Sector.
- ❖ All Active Members (Recognized by the Ministry of Tourism, Govt. of India) were informed on the Invitation for International Travel Mart from November 27 to 29, 2021 in Kohima, Nagaland organised by Ministry of Tourism, Govt. of India in collaboration with Department of Tourism, Govt. of Nagaland



# RESTORE TOURISM BY LIFTING FLIGHT CURBS ON EMERALD ISLANDS

IATO has requested **Admiral D.K. Joshi**, PVSM, AVSM, YSM, NM, VSM (Retd.), Lieutenant Governor Andaman & Nicobar Islands, in order to restore tourism in the Andaman & Nicobar Islands by lifting flight restrictions.



Admiral D.K. Joshi  
PVSM, AVSM, YSM, NM, VSM (Retd.) Lieutenant Governor  
Andaman & Nicobar Islands

**T**he IATO has urged that the restrictions on the number of incoming flights be lifted, allowing at least 10 to 15 flights per day to suit the needs of the locals and the tourism industry. It should be prioritised so that airlines can incorporate it into their new schedules from September 2021 onwards. To restart tourism operations in Andaman and Nicobar, all travellers/tourists who have received both doses of vaccination should be permitted to go to Port Blair without restrictions, and no

RT-PCR test must be required. Those who did not take both doses may be allowed to travel to Port Blair if they submit a negative report within 72 hours of their departure date/time.

The NOTAM issued will restrict all flight movement to before 2:00 pm only, due to runway re-carpeting work that would commence in October 2021 and is projected to last until March 2022. This meant that even during peak tourist season, the Port Blair Airport would be unable to function at full capacity.

## LIST OF ISSUES FACED BY SHORT-TERM LODGING INDUSTRY IN COUNTRY

IATO highlighted the issues being faced by its members regarding inspection of bed & breakfast establishments to **Gaurav Saini**, Deputy Secretary (Tourism), Govt. of the NCT.

**“ IATO members should not be asked to sign the blank form ”**

- IATO requested that:
1. Inspections should be scheduled area or location wise and not dispersed across multiple locations.
  2. Sufficient advance notice must be given for the inspections, for IATO to depute its members.
  3. In the event of any cancellation, it should be communicated to the IATO Secretariat at least 24 hours in advance.
  4. In case of any force-majeure cancellation due to unforeseen reasons, it should be informed by

phone to the IATO office and the member deputed for the inspection.

5. An inspection report is to be prepared immediately post-inspection with the consent of all the committee members. IATO members should not be asked to sign the blank form. IATO shall re-emphasise and advise all its members going for the inspection that the policy followed by Regional Director North, MoT, GoI should be followed for the inspections scheduled by Delhi Tourism also.



# NEW AIRPORT ENTRY PASSES: CRITERIA, PROCEDURES & GUIDELINES

IATO apprised **Rupinder Brar**, Additional Director General, regarding the criteria for issuance of Commercial Airport Entry Passes (AEP) for Tour Operators and Guidelines for Airport Entry Passes.

**C**riteria for Issuance of Commercial Airport Entry Passes (AEP) for the Tour Operators: - As per the revised guidelines of the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, effective from December 8, 2020, there was no separate category of inbound tour operators. As per the revised guidelines, the MOT Recognition approval letter was given as "Tour Operator", whereas in the criteria for airport entry passes, it was specifically mentioned as "Inbound Tour Operators." When IATO members were applying for airport entry passes, they were refused. BCAs were asking for a letter/certificate of MOT Recognition as "Inbound Tour Operator" as they were not aware of these revised guidelines for the tour operators.

It was thus requested that the 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 for issuing new airport passes.

**Procedures and Guidelines for Airport Entry Passes:** - IATO had not received the revised guidelines so far. With the situation improving and vaccination going in full swing, it is hoped that the e-Tourist Visa and international flights will resume soon and that inbound tourism business can also start.

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



Rupinder Brar  
Additional Director General, MOT

## EXTEND SEPC MEMBERSHIP

**I**IATO requested Dr. Abhay Sinha, Director General, Service Export Promotion Council to extend SEPC membership till December 31, 2021 for the financial year 2020-21. IATO thanked SEPC for all the support with regard to SEIS

for the year 2019-20 and that, no sooner SEIS for the year 2019-20 is received, its members would pay the membership fee for the year 2021-22. IATO made the aforesaid request keeping in view the financial hardship the tour operators were facing.



Dr. Abhay Sinha  
Director General, Service Export Promotion Council



# APPEAL TO REMOVE THE MINIMUM TURNOVER OF FOREIGN EARNINGS CAP

IATO wrote to Rakesh Kumar Verma, Joint Secretary (Tourism) and urged him to remove minimum ₹ 2 crore fee criteria in Revised MDA Guidelines for Overseas Promotion attaching the list of members whose turnover was less than ₹ 2 crore and claimed MDA in financial year 2018-19 and 2019-20 .



Rakesh Kumar Verma  
Joint Secretary (Tourism)

IATO re-iterated to Rakesh Kumar Verma that the clause requiring a minimum turnover of ₹ 2 crore in foreign exchange earnings was not in the draft proposal, which IATO received from the Ministry for providing inputs. IATO learned about this clause only from the final

MDA revised scheme and requested that it be removed via a letter dated February 3, 2021, as all small MOT-recognized tour operators would be barred from participating in this scheme.

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

“  
**The clause requiring a minimum turnover of ₹ 2 crore in foreign exchange earnings was not in the draft proposal**  
”

## NEED OF COVID-19 GUIDELINES AT ASI MONUMENTS



V. Vidyavathi  
Director General, Archaeological Survey of India

IATO wrote to V. Vidyavathi, Director General, Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) on the

feedback of the tourism stakeholders - COVID-19 norms are not being followed at ASI monuments. The request was made to kindly give necessary directives to all the concerned senior officials at each monument that they should ensure that all the staff and the visitors should follow the COVID norms and guidelines of FoHFW, Government of India and wear the mask. Similar directives may also be given to security staff at all the ASI monuments.

“  
**Senior officials should ensure that staff and visitors follow the COVID norms and guidelines of FoHFW**  
”



# PROMOTING TOURISM IN LADAKH

IATO in a letter of thanks to Kachoo Mehboob Ali (IRS) Secretary (Tourism), Govt. of the Union Territory of Ladakh made suggestions to promote tourism in Ladakh.

In the letter, IATO suggested that:

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 among others 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

“  
Due to climatic conditions in Ladakh, there could be some relaxation in the norms and hurdles should be removed  
”

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 such as Chairman of IATO Ladakh, Padma Shree Chhewang Motup of Rimo Expeditions and others be invited to be the part of the Tourism Advisory Committee.



Kachoo Mehboob Ali (IRS)  
Secretary (Tourism)  
Govt. of Union Territory of Ladakh

## DISCUSSION ON THE 36<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL CONVENTION OF THE IATO IN GUJARAT



Hareet Shukla  
IAS, Secretary (Tourism, Devasthanam  
Management, Civil Aviation & Pilgrimage) Gujarat

IATO requested Hareet Shukla, IAS, Secretary (Tourism, Devasthanam Management, Civil Aviation & Pilgrimage) Gujarat for an audience to discuss the 36<sup>th</sup> IATO Annual Convention in Gujarat.

The convention was scheduled to be held in Ahmedabad in 2020, but could not take place due to the pandemic. It was agreed by Gujarat Tourism on our request to postpone the convention to 2021,

subject to prevailing favourable conditions and SOPs in place.

With the current COVID-19 situation improving throughout the country and relaxations being made by the state government, IATO requested Gujarat Tourism to hold the IATO convention from December 16 to 19, 2021, as IATO hoped that by that time, most of tourism professionals would be vaccinated with both doses.



# ENTRY TARIFF OF NATIONAL PARKS AND TIGER RESERVES INCREASED IN MP

IATO has requested **Shivraj Singh Chouhan**, Chief Minister, MP regarding the exorbitant increase in wildlife safari permits for national parks and tiger reserves in that state, which had come into effect from October 1, 2021.



Shivraj Singh Chouhan  
Chief Minister, Government of Madhya Pradesh

IATO requested from the Government of Madhya Pradesh that:

- The wildlife tourism season was set to begin on October 1, 2021, and raising tariffs at this late date would cause unnecessary confusion and complications, as rates had already been conveyed to Indian and foreign tourists who had made reservations for Dussehra, Diwali, Christmas, and New Year 2021 to 2022.

- The current proposed hike is

- 1) A 60 per cent price rise for Indians on non-premium dates
- 2) A 100 per cent price rise for Indians on premium dates
- 3) Foreigners on premium dates face a 220 per cent increase.
- 4) A 300 per cent increase for foreigners on high-demand dates.

The entry ticket for vehicles with foreigners has gone up from Rs 2000 to Rs 6000.

- Foreign tourist arrivals to national parks and tiger reserves in MP have been stagnant or dropping for several years now. In spite of this, the MP Forest Department proposed 220 per cent hike (for non-premium dates) and 300 per cent hike (for premium dates) for foreign tourists, which is unrealistic!! Parks in MP face tough competition from the neighbouring states of Rajasthan and Karnataka for wildlife tourism. With these new policies, Madhya Pradesh will lose the business gained in the last few years.

- The MP Forest department in 2017 had decided that to encourage tourism, foreign and Indian entry rates would be on par. They have now decided to reverse their decision. We were not against justified hike that is spread over many years. But overnight decisions drastically affect, not just the inbound market, whose costings were done a year in advance, but also the domestic market, which is now booking in advance.

- Any major policy change needs 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 was not consulted or informed. This displayed gross negligence on the part of the MP Forest Department in following the due process laid down by Hon SC.

- To encourage tourism growth following the pandemic, the GoI's MoT recently announced five lakh free visas for foreign tourists. The proposed increase will be counter-productive to the efforts of the MoT, Government of India.

- The tourism industry has been one of the worst-affected industries due to the pandemic. The government and all its agencies should support the industry through these times. With this proposed price hike, this ailing industry would be severely affected for the next few years.

“  
**The proposed increase will be counter-productive to the efforts of the Ministry of Tourism, Govt. of India**  
”



# IATO'S APPEAL TO SEIS

IATO wrote to **Amit Yadav**, Director General of Foreign Trade, & Additional Secretary, Ministry of Commerce regarding the release of SEIS for the tour operators for the financial year 2019-20.

**I**ATO expressed its gratitude for announcing release of Service Export from India Scheme (SEIS) for the financial year 2019-20 for the service providers, including tour operators.

IATO appealed that SEIS @ 7 per cent was being given to the tour operators in previous years and this should not be changed now, after the funds have already been spent by the tour operators

on marketing, promotions and discounts to generate future business. IATO urged that to kindly retain SEIS to 7 percent and remove capping of ₹ 5 crores at least for the tourism industry as tour operators were in dire need of financial resources. Funds to be received through SEIS scrips were very important for the IATO members, which would help them to spend and restart/revive their businesses.



Amit Yadav  
Director General of Foreign Trade, &  
Additional Secretary, Ministry of Commerce

## NEED FOR CLARITY ON CHANGES IN SEIS

**I**ATO requested Amit Yadav, DGFT and Additional Secretary, Ministry of Commerce, Govt. of India for Clarification w.r.t. DGFT Notification No. 29/2015-20 dated 23.09.2021-Changes in the Service Exports from India Scheme (SEIS) for services rendered during the FY 2019-20 by the Tour Operators. It was notified that the facility to claim benefits under SEIS



**“ Benefits under SEIS on payments in Indian Rupees shall not be available for services rendered in the FY 2019-20. ”**

on payments in Indian Rupees shall not be available for services rendered in the FY 2019-20 . This created utter confusion amongst IATO members' / tour operators and needed clarification.



# EXTENSION OF TOURISM MINISTRY RECOGNITION FOR TOUR OPERATORS

IATO requested Rupinder Brar, Additional Director General, Ministry of Tourism for extension to the validity of MoT recognition for the tour operators till March 31, 2022 in the wake of COVID-19.



Rupinder Brar  
Additional Director General, MOT

IATO sought the extension based on the Ministry of Tourism, Govt. of India (HRACC Division) Office Memorandum dated 27th September 2021 wherein extension of the validity of hotel projects orders and classification/ reclassification orders of hotels and other accommodation units such as motels, apartment hotels, IIB&B/homestay units, Convention Centres, Guest houses, timeshare resorts, standalone air catering units, standalone restaurants among others was extended till March 31, 2022.

“  
**Documents of financial year 2019-20, may kindly be considered for granting extension**  
”

Since there was no business, balance sheet, foreign exchange requirement and other documents of financial year 2019-20, may kindly be considered for granting extension.

## NEED FOR CLARITY ON CHANGES IN THE SEIS



Maneek Davar  
Chairman  
Service Export Promotion Council for Clarification

IATO sent a request to Maneek Davar, Chairman, Service Export Promotion Council for Clarification w.r.t. DGFT Notification No. 29/2015-20 dated 23.09.2021-Changes in the Service Exports from India Scheme (SEIS) for services rendered during the FY 2019-20 by the Tour Operators

It was notified that the facility to claim benefits under SEIS on payments in Indian Rupees shall not be available for services rendered in the FY 2019-20.

This created utter confusion amongst IATO members / tour operators and needed clarification

“  
**Benefits under SEIS on payments in Indian Rupees shall not be available for services rendered in the FY 2019-20**  
”

# IATO EXCITED AS MHA GIVES GO AHEAD FOR REVIVAL OF INBOUND TOURISM

At present, only bubble flights are operating to/from our country, the cost of air tickets are very high and normally seats are not available.

As the situation in the country is improving, it is now announced by Ministry of Home Affairs to open e-Tourist visa from October 15, 2021 for Charter flights and from November 15, 2021 for regular tourists.

## Recommendations for revival of inbound tourism:

1. MoCA be requested to resume international flight operations and all airlines should be allowed to start operating their scheduled flights as per bilateral agreements. Announcement for opening of regular flights should be made soon so that lead time is given to the foreign tour operators/agents to prepare themselves to promote India packages.
2. As per the press release issued by MHA, the tourist visa will be single entry with 30 days validity. FTOs have requested that tourist visa should be of Double Entry with 60 days validity, in case people wish to visit neighbouring countries.
3. Free e-Visa should be extended to all foreign tourists applying for 30 days visa till March 31, 2023 and should not be limited to first five lakh tourists. Also this should be available exclusively for the foreign tourists who opt to visit our country for minimum five days.
4. A policy could be made by the Ministry for at least next two years, all visitors to apply for e-Tourist Visa/Normal Tourist Visa, should travel through a MoT recognised tour operator and/or IATO Member.
5. Fully Vaccinated people, should be granted e-Tourist Visa and should not be asked for RT-PCR test other than country of origin.
6. Other without complete vaccination, should be in possession of RT-PCR negative report. All states should be advised to have similar guidelines.
7. It was recommend that e-Tourist Visa should be made applicable immediately for those arriving by land, especially on the Indo-Nepal border, as PM Narendra Modi wants to promote the Buddhist Sector.
8. It is also requested that by November 15, 2021, the visas which were issued earlier, and still remain suspended should be restored.
9. Marketing should start through social media platforms and promotion of Incredible India website with the link of IATO website.
10. Strong media campaign both electronic and print should be started with clear message that India vaccination programme is successful.
11. All the important worldwide tour operators should be invited on FAM tours on different programmes by MOT.
12. Insurance factor has to be incorporated.
13. The government needs to appoint a PR agency on priority to counter negative media reports in foreign lands.
14. Roadshows should be planned involving stakeholders recognised



“  
**Strong media campaign both electronic and print should be started with loud and clear message that India Vaccination programme is very successful and exemplary**  
 ”

# Government and You



by MoT and should be organised in source markets abroad.

15. MoT approved Indian tour operators may be allowed to invite their principal agents on FAM trips.

16. Translate 'Dekho Aapna Desh' into foreign languages and they should be available on MoT website and link to be given on IATO website.

17. Emphasis should be laid on women's safety and security.

18. The brochure and website marketing support for Foreign tour operators is to be given.

19. In revised MDA scheme for overseas promotion, criteria of minimum ₹ 2 crores foreign exchange earning requirement should be removed. It is urged this clause should be set aside for the next three fiscal years.

### Issues needed to be taken up with Ministry of Finance and Commerce

To compete with our neighbouring countries, we need to offer competitive packages for which we need support from the government with the following:-

i) We request that SEIS should continue for the tourism industry in the new foreign trade policy being formed. If Commerce Ministry is doing away with the policy and is replaced by introducing RoDTEP Scheme in place of MEIS, but for Services Sector, no new policy is being introduced. The government should think of something new to offer similar to RoDTEP considering the services sector, especially Tour Operators who do not get ITC as being enjoyed by MEIS and there is no GST on export of goods. We need something a better mechanism and percentage refund on our total GST application to counter the competition from our

neighbouring countries.

ii) Cascading effect of GST on Tour Operators' services needs correction. After the implementation of GST with effect from July 1, 2017, the average tax on tourism industry works out between 18 and 23 per cent.

This has resulted in loss of business for the small and medium-sized tour operators. Many foreign operators have started avoiding selling India as a tourist destination and instead they are promoting Nepal, Bhutan, and Sri Lanka where taxes are between 6 and 8 per cent.

So, IATO suggests that either GST may be levied @ 18 per cent on the 10 per cent mark-up (deemed value) so that effective rate of tax on package cost works out to 1.8 percent of gross billing with no ITC. The gross value may be taxed at 18 per cent GST and input tax credit on all input services including hotels and restaurants may be allowed on actual basis.

iii) TCS on foreign tourists for booking of package tours by the Indian tour operators should be withdrawn immediately as foreign tour operators are avoiding booking tours of Nepal, Sri Lanka, Maldives and other countries to avoid 5 per cent additional tax as TCS, which is a loss for the tour operators and also for the country.

iv) The incentive scheme floated by the govt. for the Champion sector should be applicable to Ministry recognised, Indian Tour Operators. Also this needs to be simplified. We have requested the Ministry to call for a meeting where we can discuss the above so that our Ministry can take these forward at the earliest possible.

“  
**To compete with our neighbouring countries, we need to offer competitive packages for which we need support from the government**  
”

# RESUMPTION OF TOURIST VISA

IATO thanked Arvind Singh, Secretary, Ministry of Tourism, on the Government announcing resumption of Tourist Visa.

On behalf of the members of Indian Association of Tour Operators (IATO) and the tourism industry, the IATO President thanked Arvind Singh, Secretary of Tourism for supporting the IATO and the industry and recommending to the PMO and the MHA for resumption of tourist visa which MHA announced on the October 7, 2021. This could happen

flight operation and all airlines should be allowed to start operating their regular passenger flights as per bilateral agreement that was in place before March 2020, so that foreign tourists who want to visit India can book their tickets. Currently, only bubble flights were operating to/from our country, the cost of air ticket has gone up very high and normal



Mr. Arvind Singh  
Secretary (Tourism) on the Government



with the cohesive and tireless efforts and putting up the case by Secretary Tourism, DG (Tourism), ADG (Tourism), JS (Tourism) and the entire team in the Ministry, which resulted in this positive decision by the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA).

The IATO thanked the Prime Minister, Home Minister, Minister of Tourism and the Tourism Minister of all States for taking this decision and making the announcements.

IATO has put forward immediate steps for favourable consideration:  
1. Ministry of Civil Aviation be requested to resume international

seats were not available.

Therefore, it is essential that global flight operation to/from India be resumed and air fares became viable for the tourists to choose India for holiday purposes.

2. A request was made to make Visa Fee exemption more practical and beneficial, free e-Visa be extended to all foreign tourists applying for 30 days' visa till March 31, 2023 and it should not be limited to the first five lakh tourists. This would send a positive message globally that India is serious and will encourage foreign tourists to travel to India.

“  
**All airlines should be allowed to start operating their regular passenger flights as per bilateral agreement.**  
”

# GUIDELINES FOR AIRPORT ENTRY PASSES FOR TOURIST OPERATORS

IATO requested MoT to look into pending issues regarding criteria for issuance of Commercial Airport Entry Passes for tour operators, and guidelines for Airport Entry Passes.

**C**riteria for Issuance of Commercial Airport Entry Passes (AEPs) for the Tour Operators:- The criteria for issuance of Commercial Airport Entry Passes for the inbound tour operators and hotels was

Tour Operator" as BCAs are not aware of this change in the New Guidelines for the tour operators dated December 8, 2020.

We requested the Ministry to take up with Ministry of Civil Aviation and Bureau of Civil Aviation Security to issue revised guidelines to all their Regional Directors of revised guidelines of the Ministry of Tourism dated December 8, 2020 for issuing new airport passes.

**Procedure and Guidelines for Airport Entry Passes Guidelines for Airport Entry Passes:** - We have not received the revised guidelines so far and requested to send us the revised procedure and guidelines so that our members can apply for airport pass as per the revised procedure and guidelines.

**Balance Sheet of 2019 to 20** to be considered for turnover requirement for Airport Pass: - As there is zero inbound tourism business since March 2020 and members who are applying for Airport Entry Pass will not be able to meet the turn over requirement for the financial years 2020 to 21 and 2021 to 22 as the inbound tourism has not yet started. Therefore, it has been requested that for getting airport pass, turnover requirement may kindly be considered on the basis of turnover for the financial year 2019 to 20.



revised last year after detailed deliberations between Ministry of Tourism and Ministry of Civil Aviation.

As per the revised guidelines of Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, effective December 8, 2020, there is no separate category of Inbound Tour Operators and as per the revised guidelines, MOT Recognition approval letter is given as "Tour Operator", whereas in the criteria for Airport Entry Passes it is specifically mentioned "Inbound Tour Operators"

Now, when our members are applying for airport entry pass they are being refused, BCAs is asking for letter/certificate of MoT Recognition as "Inbound

“  
**When our members are applying for airport entry pass they are being refused**  
”





# NEED FOR TRANSPORTATION WITH FULL SEATING CAPACITY

IATO requested Chief Minister of Delhi (NCT) to allow transportation with 100 per cent seating in Cab, Maxi Cab and Tempo Traveller.

IATO put forward that the seating capacity for cabs was restricted for two and maxi cabs for five, the transport charges for the domestic and foreign tourists to travel by cabs and maxi cabs was cost prohibitive and made the package cost high, discouraging foreign tourists to visit India and they would opt to visit neighbouring countries where the package cost was comparatively low.

It was requested to kindly allow transportation with 100 per cent seating capacity as was in the case of Delhi Metro and DTC buses so that travelling in cabs (five-seater and seven-seater cars) and maxi cabs with seating capacity of eight and above such as tempo traveller, became financially viable and affordable for the tourists.

Amendments were requested to be made in the orders dated October 14, 2021. Flowing on the above a request was made to Secretary Tourism, Government of India on the October 25, 2021 to take up with the Delhi Government and all State Governments to allow Transportation with 100 per cent seating capacity in Cab, Maxi Cab and Tempo Traveller. A copy was marked to DG and ADG Tourism, Govt of India.



Arvind Kejriwal  
Chief Minister of Delhi (NCT)

“  
It was requested to kindly allow transportation with 100 per cent seating capacity  
”

## CLARITY NEEDED ON MOT RECOGNITION FOR TRAVEL OPERATORS

IATO wrote to [Adeshwar Kant](#), Deputy Secretary (Tourism), Department of Tourism, Government of NCT of Delhi on the Guidelines for Licensing of Tour Operators/Travel Agents/ Excursion Agents/Tourist Transport Operators.

It was requested to kindly give necessary directives that during the licensing, the Delhi Government concerned personnel should not insist on inspection of a Tour Operator/Travel Agent/ Excursion Agent/ Tourist Transport Operator who have valid recognition from the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India.

“  
The Delhi Government concerned personnel should not insist on inspection of a Tour Operator/ Travel Agent  
”

# SIMPLIFY NORMS FOR INTERNATIONAL ARRIVALS, TOURISM SECY URGED

IATO urged Arvind Singh, Secretary of Tourism and sought confirmation regarding simplification of MOHFW guidelines for International Arrivals dated October 20, 2021.



As per the guidelines, it was understood that upon arrival in India:-

1. All travellers Planning for Travel should

i. Submit self-declaration form on the online Air Suvidha portal ([www.newdelhiaairport.in](http://www.newdelhiaairport.in)) before the scheduled travel

ii. Upload a negative COVID-19 RT-PCR report. This test should have been conducted within 72 hrs prior to undertaking the journey.

iii. Each passenger shall also submit a declaration with respect to authenticity of the report and will be liable for criminal prosecution, if found otherwise

iv. They should also give an undertaking on the portal or otherwise to Ministry of Civil Aviation, Government of India, through concerned airlines before they are allowed to undertake the journey that they would abide by the decision of the appropriate government authority to undergo home quarantine/ self-health monitoring, as warranted.

2. On arrival in India

i. In certain cases, RTCPDR test will be done, otherwise those fully vaccinated will be allowed to leave the airport and shall self-monitor their health for 14 days post arrival.

ii. Travellers who are partially/not

vaccinated will undergo RTPCR test, home quarantine for seven days and retest on the eighth day of arrival.

iii. However nationals from the below mentioned countries even if they are fully vaccinated will be subject to RTCPDR test on arrival, home quarantine for seven days, and retest on eighth day of arrival.

These countries are:

- Countries in Europe excluding UK, Germany and France
- South Africa
- Brazil
- Bangladesh
- Botswana
- China
- Mauritius
- New Zealand
- Zimbabwe

The norms issued were confusing and not clear to the tourism stakeholders.

IATO urged that

a) Norms need to be simplified and FAQ may be issued with more clarity so that correct information could be given to the foreign tour operators by Indian Embassies, High Commissions, India tourism offices overseas and by the Indian Tour Operators to their foreign counterparts.

b) A list of High Risk countries in Europe should be mentioned in the FAQ.

“  
The guidelines issued were very confusing and not clear to the tourism stakeholders.  
”



# MAKE DELHI HUB FOR MICE, REDUCE GST FOR TOUR OPERATORS

IATO offered its input on the DSIIDC meeting held on October 5, at Bombay Life Building, New Delhi.

1. Delhi should be made and promoted as MICE Tourism Hub, as it has lot of potential for MICE activities.

2. To increase number of night stay by the tourists, the Delhi Government should initiate some evening entertainment activities in the city.

3. Reduction on GST percentage or refund to the tour operators enable offer competitive price to tourists to stay for longer duration in Delhi.

4. Rebate on Electricity rental cost at tour operator's premises.

5. To counter any adverse media publicity for Delhi, PR Agency should be appointed.

6. Foreign tourists were more concerned about hygiene, safety and security. Therefore, to Make Clean Delhi, Safe Delhi and make Delhi 'City of Attraction' having so much to show case in Delhi.

7. Financial support for organising road shows and promotion activities for Delhi.

8. During the pandemic, tourism sector was suffering the most and needed financial support to revive



the existences. This could be cash or kind as deem fit by the Delhi Govt. For your information many state governments have extended financial help to the tourism sector and its workers and tourist guides among others.

9. Give tourism sector some rebate for renewal of licence fee, road taxes to tourist vehicles and reduction in fitness renewal charges.

10. There is acute problem of parking in Delhi for the tourist vehicles at tourist place, monuments, Railway stations etc. Government should earmark parking places for the tourist places and earmark designated dropping and pick up spots for tourist's vehicles/tourists, including a proper parking lot.

“  
**During the pandemic, tourism sector was suffering the most and needed financial support to revive the existences**  
”

# APPEAL TO ADDRESS TAX ISSUES

IATO wrote to **Sanjay Singh**, Deputy Director General, Ministry of Tourism on the issues to be taken up by the Ministry with the concerned authorities.

IATO wrote to Sanjay Singh, Deputy Director General, Ministry of Tourism, on the following issues:

1. IATO recommended the removal of the cascading effect of GST on the tourism industry by charging GST on deemed value.

It was requested that, GST on tour operators be charged at a deemed value. As in the case of air travel agents, a deemed value of 10% of the gross billing of the tour operator may be considered as the taxable value on a deemed basis. This will allow the service to be taxed at 18 per cent on a 10 per cent mark-up, which means the effective rate of GST on the total package cost will work out to 1.8 per cent of the gross billing of the tour operator to his client with no ITC. It was submitted that the present rate of 5 per cent GST on the gross billing was tax on tax,

creating a cascading effect, and in any case, it did not represent taxation on value addition, which was the backbone of the GST system.

2. Request to remove the TCS levy on the sale of overseas tour programme packages to foreign tourists beginning on October 1, 2020.

IATO recommends that: The new provisions of the TCS exemption should not be made applicable to persons or companies who are non-resident foreign citizens, tourists, or foreign tour operators located outside India for purchasing tour packages through an Indian tour operator for outside India specified clearly. The limit of ₹ 7 lacs for non-applicability of TCS may be made applicable for Indian tour operators and authorised dealers in the case of purchase/remittance of money for overseas tour packages for Indian tourists travelling abroad.

“  
The guidelines issued were very confusing and not clear to the tourism stake holders.  
”

## PENDING REFUNDS OF IATO MEMBERS FOR CANCELLED BOOKINGS

IATO apprised Gayatri Rathore, IAS, Principal Secretary (Tourism), Govt. of Rajasthan, regarding Pending Refund of its members towards advance paid for booking of Palace on Wheels for their foreign clients and bookings cancelled due to Covid -19.

**I**A IATO submitted a brief of the advance payments made through Worldwide Rail Journeys to RTDC and pending for refund. There were five such companies with pending refunds.

Besides, there was one company that made advance payment directly to RTDC. IATO requested that necessary directives may be given to RTDC to make refund at the earliest and help the

tour operators, facing financial hardships due to Covid-19. They were in need of funds to make refund to their foreign clients to maintain business relationship and to secure future business.



# REDUCE AIRFARE OF AIR BUBBLE INTERNATIONAL FLIGHTS, MOT URGED

IATO requested Arvind Singh, Secretary of Tourism for resumption of international flights operation as per bilateral agreement in force before March 2020 due to high air fare presently available on air bubble flights.

IATO mentioned that the airfare had increased 2.5 to 3 times more than the normal fare that were before March 2020. Foreign tourists would not travel to India for holidays on such high airfares.

It is only the NRIs or Indians who are working abroad and had not met their families in last 20 months, would travel on these fares. Further, the IATO brought to the notice of the Secretary Tourism that foreigners were

not being allowed to travel to Sri Lanka on air bubble flights and this might also be the case with flights to Kathmandu and Paro. This restriction needs to be lifted immediately. The IATO requested the Secretary of Tourism to kindly impress upon the authorities in MHA, MEA and MOCA to resume normal international flight operation according to the bilateral agreements that India has with other countries that existed before March 2020 so that inbound tourism could start.



Arvind Singh  
Secretary, Ministry of Tourism

## APPOINT NODAL OFFICER TO ASSIST WITH HANDLING FOREIGN TOURISTS

IATO requested **Arvind Singh**, Secretary of Tourism to appoint a Nodal Officer from the ministry to help the foreign tourists in case of any emergency.

IATO apprised that with the opening of Tourist Visa including e-Tourist Visa, foreign tourists would start travelling to India and we would expect some kind of issues and problems coming up upon their arrival at various airports in India as every state has different SOPs for travellers.

Therefore, to avoid any inconvenience to foreign tourists

and avoid any negative publicity, it would be appropriate if MOT GOI could consider appointing a Nodal Officer who could assist the foreign tourists in case of any exigency upon their arrival at any airport in India and the Nodal Officer can help them and can deal with Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of Civil Aviation, Railways, state governments among others.

“  
To avoid any inconvenience to foreign tourists and any negative publicity, it would be appropriate if MOT GOI could consider appointing a Nodal Officer  
”

# NEED FOR AMENDMENT IN GST LAW FOR GROWTH OF TOURISM INDUSTRY

IATO offered **G.D. Lohani**, Joint Secretary (TRU-I), Central Board of Indirect Taxes & Customs, Ministry of Finance suggestions for Budget 2022-23 and changes in Direct and Indirect Taxes.



**S**uggestions for amendment in GST law for growth of Tourism industry:

1. Tourism industry to be treated as deemed exporter at par with IT Industry under export of services. IATO recommended that the parameters / definition of “export of services” in Section 2 (6) of IGST Act, 2017 may be relaxed in the case of tour operators and the services of tour operators earning foreign exchange for the country may be accorded with the status of “export of services”.

The criteria for determining the place of supply (POS) of services should be uniform between IT Industry and Tour Operators. Further the criteria of determining place of supply of services based on performance as mentioned in Section 13 (3) (b) of IGST Act should be made inapplicable for the tour operators.

2. Removal of cascading effect of GST on the Tourism industry

IATO says either GST may be levied @ 18 per cent on the 10 per cent mark-up, so that effective rate of tax on package cost works out to 1.8 per cent of gross billing with no ITC. Alternatively, the gross value may be taxed at 18 per cent GST and input tax credit on all input services, including hotels and

restaurants, may be allowed on actual basis.

3. Removal of GST on services provided outside India to foreign tourists

IATO says GST/IGST may be fully exempted on the services provided outside India. As a result of tax exemption, bookings would come to Indian Tour operators instead of such bookings going in favour of local tour operators in neighbouring countries. This would add considerable foreign exchange for the country.

4. Small correction in the conditions prescribed against 5 per cent GST notified for tour operators services.

IATO recommended that a. The word 'and' appearing between the words accommodation and transportation in condition No. 2 against Sl. No. 23 of CGST Notification No. 11/2017-CT(R) dated 28.6.2017 may be replaced by the word 'or'.

b. The Govt. should clarify by way of issuing a circular that this was its intent from the very beginning when the GST rolled out so that the GST authorities should not raise objections from July 1, 2017.

5. Refund of IGST paid by the tourists leaving India on supply of goods taken out of India -Tax

“  
**Tourism industry to be treated as deemed exporter at par with IT Industry under export of services**  
”



Refund for Tourists (TRT) Scheme to be implemented. IATO says the government should formulate the user-friendly conditions / safeguards for allowing cash refund to the foreign tourists leaving India at the departure airport in respect of integrated tax paid by him on purchase of goods and those goods are being taken out of India as part of his baggage or otherwise. The procedure may be notified in the public domain.

6. Reduction of GST on private ferry tickets at Andaman & Nicobar Islands.

IATO says in view of use of transport ferries, GST rate should be nil or maximum 5 per cent as in the case of ferry transport.

A separate letter was sent to K.C. Varshney, Joint Secretary, Tax Policy and Legislation (TPL-I),

CBDT, Ministry of Finance, Department of Revenue on Suggestions for Budget 2022 to 23- changes in Direct Taxes

- IATO says the provisions of TCS should be made applicable for persons' / companies resident in India and not to foreign citizens / foreign tour operators located outside India.

- The TCS provisions should not apply in case the foreign tourist visits India, and thereafter proceed to foreign country including neighbouring countries or vice versa such that it is combination of inbound and outbound tours package as composite package.

Such a package does not qualify as overseas tour programme package as defined in Section 206C (1G) of I.T. Act, 1961.

“  
When our members are applying for airport entry pass they are br airport entry pass they are being refused  
”

## CHANGES IN DIRECT TAXES

A separate letter was also sent to **K.C. Varshney**, Joint Secretary, Tax Policy and Legislation (TPL-I), Central Board of Direct Taxes, Ministry of Finance, Department of Revenue on Suggestions for Budget 2022-23 – changes in Direct Taxes.

**T**he provisions of TCS should be made applicable for persons' / companies resident in India and not to foreign citizens / foreign tour operators located outside India. The provisions of TCS should not apply in case the foreign tourist visits India and thereafter proceed to foreign country including neighbouring countries or vice versa such that it is combination of inbound and outbound tours package as composite package. Such a composite package does not

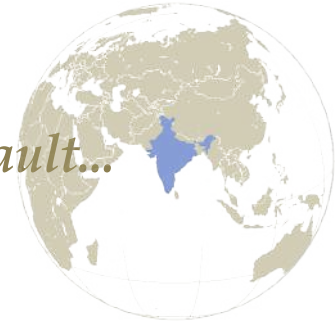


qualify as “overseas tour program package” as defined in Section 206C (1G) of I.T. Act, 1961.

# The Postcard



*Hosts by default...*



**G**ondwana was a super-continent, believed to be existing more than 550 million years ago. It started fragmenting gradually with time, finally around 180 million years ago, it split into seven different land masses. We identify them today as - South America, America, Africa, Australia, Antarctica, Arabian Peninsula, and the Indian subcontinent.

Imagine yourself sitting on a satellite, looking through the emptiness of space, towards the Earth. Now move your eyes towards its equator and bring them to rest on a 'gigantic piece of Earth' extending far into the sea, its upper most fringes towering gloriously over the mainland.

“  
**Abundance of resources cloaked in our topographies, our cultural galores, and spirit of natives, distinguished us as the land of allure, wealth and opportunities**  
”

Go ahead and zoom closer. Soon you will begin to see its 7,520-km-long coastline, encircling its southern land with a necklace of surfy sparkle, you will also see the glistening crowns of its more than 2,505-km-long greater Himalayas range fortifying its northern land. **This is India, 'the piece of celebrated Earth'**, that gives us our commercial nirvana and livelihoods.

Our geo-positioning is unique. This fortunate isolation from rest of the world, kept us at the prime of our experimental best, leading to phenomenal accomplishments, in ancient human sciences and practices. Abundance of resources cloaked in our topographies, our cultural galores, and spirit of natives, distinguished us as the land of allure, wealth and opportunities.

Across the centuries, our country has been the epitome of human warmth and welcome, psyche to pamper the guest was rooted deep in our societies. Archives of history display loud evidences of our hosting skills and extravagances. Starting from the early centuries, activities of hospitality have been an integral part of Indian life. The idea and concept of hotel is also not new to us, our records are abound with mentions of *musafir khanas* and *sarais*.

Man's desire for experiencing the non-native, is a force, that has lead to many milestones in the fascinating history of mankind. His innate quest, for discovering new knowledge and habitats, has resulted in grossly interesting outcomes.





Recorded travelogues of travellers during medieval periods (5th to 15th century) present an eye opening histography of striking information; an unquestionable testimony of our historic appeal to the world. It clearly exhibits the uniqueness of our desirability, charm and lure. The magic of our spell commanded voyagers to alter bearings of their compass and redraw the routes on their marine charts, in an attempt to reach this land of mystics, intrigues and riches.

Our soil has seen the arrival of over 34 explorers and their entourages, from Marco Polo to Giovanni Francesco Careri, men of every race have anchored gratefully at our shores, seeking dreams of their rejoicing. Our coastline has played host to mortals coming from nearly every continent; seafarers, colonisers, tradesmen, enterprising travellers, scholars and philosophers, India has been their bountiful bliss, which has met with their glowing expectations of that distant 'fantasy-land', they had heard about.

History tells us, travel, hospitality, and entertainment had started early in our timeline. It graduated to exceptional levels around early 16th century during the Mughal times, and continued with greater aplomb in mid 18th century, after British colonisers arrived here. Since long, our princely states, little kingdoms and aristocracies, had been inviting and hosting visitors from foreign lands, organising for them excursions to show highlights of their native provinces, territories and jagirs.

It is no surprise that *Athithi Devo Bhava* (Guest is God), comes naturally to us. Perhaps it is a genetic trait, we Indians have lived with it for centuries. The grip of this mania has seldom allowed us to distinguish between a friend or a foe, such is our history. We have been gracious hosts to all; be it the cadres of un-invited soldiers of the British East India Company frolicking in rural folds of our coastal Bengal, or the legendary Greek soldiers delighting in the fragrant mists of Malana village up in the Himalayas, or the footloose curious travellers of today basking in the generosity of our natives across the country, or the radiating warmth of a rickshaw-wala's smile, zig-zagging the visitor through ancient lanes and alleys.

Buzz of welcome is everywhere. Indeed India is Incredible, we are hosts by default. And that makes us conditioned perfectly, for the business of tourism and hospitality.



*The author, Neelam Thakur (Neel) has been a devoted Tourism and Travel professional for over 3½ decades.  
[thakurquest@gmail.com](mailto:thakurquest@gmail.com)*

### Author's Note

*Maybe we need to infuse some fresh thought into our re-marketing strategy. Perhaps IATO could take the first initiative to influence MOT to take up a new approach towards marketing, a kind of new buzz which plays on the stimuli of our history and hosting trend. An idea to 'spruce' up the post-covid revival efforts.*

SATURDAY  
23 OCTOBER  
2021

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THE STATESMAN

PEOPLE'S PARLIAMENT, ALWAYS IN SESSION

KISHIDA'S PRIORITIES P6

IS BAGHEL MULLING A REVOLT IN CHH GARCH CONGRESS? P3

TOURISM WILL TAKE YEARS TO REVIVE P7

VERSTAPPEN MOST POPULAR DRIVER P12

WEATHER

Partly cloudy with light rain in the evening. The maximum and minimum temperatures would be around 31 and 17 degrees Celsius respectively.

RELATIVE HUMIDITY: 60%

TEMPERATURE: 30°C/86°F

WIND SPEED: 10-15 KPH

MOON PHASE: WAXING CRESCENT

THUNDERBOLTS: 0

**Modi: 100 crore milestone reflects strength of India**

Prime Minister also emphasises the vaccines for VIP culture has been done away with

**State can't withdraw consent for CBI probe by omnibus direction'**

The Congress has not withdrawn its consent for the CBI probe into the 2G scam, which is a key part of the government's agenda, says a senior Congress leader. He said the government cannot withdraw its consent for the CBI probe into the 2G scam by a mere omnibus direction.

**FACT FILE**

100 crore milestone

3,41,43,236

1,75,745

15,786

18,641

4,53,042

**Congress censures Centre for celebrating 100 crore vaccination**

The Congress has criticised the government for celebrating the 100 crore vaccination milestone. It said the government should focus on the welfare of the people instead of celebrating such milestones.

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**THE TIMES OF INDIA**

CELEBRATING THE 175th BIRTHDAY

**'Hotels, better connectivity will propel Ayodhya tourism'**

**Lucknow:** The construction of the Ram Temple has generated immense interest in the vicinity of Ayodhya but it may take a few years before it joins the league of heritage and spiritual destinations like Varanasi, Prayagraj and Mathura. Tourism operators visiting the city at the behest of the state government are of the opinion that the development of hotels, better connectivity, regional roads and the construction of a city of shops in the vicinity may...

On Tuesday a team of 40 tour operators and travel bloggers visited Ayodhya and visited the Ram Temple site. They were accompanied by the state government officials. The state government has elaborate plans of developing the city as a major tourism attraction.

"We have already been promoting the sector among tourists for a while now. Till now it was only the...

...who also want to visit. However, it is important to make the city world class. The old structures should not be demolished to make the city. People don't want to just visit the temple but also experience the old world charm, the local culture, the people," said Ravi Goyal, the vice-president of the Indian Association of Tour Operators.

EE. Anand of Seta Travels in Delhi said that several more hotels were booked in the area, since people had had a chance to visit the temple. He said that the state government should focus on the development of the city as a whole.

...should be made into a thought destination. They said that a sector incorporating Lucknow, Ayodhya, Varanasi and Prayagraj should be developed, especially in Varanasi and Prayagraj, which are linked to Ayodhya.

...hotels, better connectivity, regional roads and the construction of a city of shops in the vicinity may...

...the state government should focus on the development of the city as a whole.





**Thursday September 9, 2021**

**Tourism Breaking news**

**Switzerland Tourism to conduct webinar on Swiss Travel System today at 3pm IST**

Switzerland Tourism will conduct a webinar today focusing on Swiss Travel System (STS) Switzerland's public transport network. The webinar will highlight STS's various products and services, as well as the unique free travel benefits of these offerings in Rail Europe's distributor network. To register, contact prajoon.k@rdt.com or 8007146332.

**Udaipur gets highest number of tourists in 10 years**

Principle Secretary of Rajasthan Tourism, Gayatri Mishra stated "In a time when tourism has been the most affected sector and COVID things have moved from fear to fact, better than in previous years, Udaipur has recorded maximum tourist footfall in 10 years. Occupancy rate in hotels has gone up, occupancy in restaurants is increasing, new hotels are coming up, the situation is becoming a tourism gateway and an emerging port in COVID times. Things have improved in Udaipur."

**Domestic airlines can stop providing COVID safety kits: Health Ministry**

As per order in guidelines given by Health and Family Ministry, airlines need not provide safety gear like masks, hand sanitizers, face shields or body covers to passengers. However, airlines need to ensure that passengers board aircrafts with their masks covering both mouth and nose. Passengers are required to follow COVID-appropriate behavior of wearing mask, hand hygiene and physical distancing.

**Reunite #InAbuDhabi!**

Learn about luxury experiences, local sights and responsible tourism!

Thursday, 14<sup>th</sup> September, 2021  
3:00 PM onwards (IST)

**Abu Dhabi**

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

Pronab Sarkar, former President of IATO has been elected as a member of the SEPC's Central Governing Council for 2021-23 to represent Travel & Tourism Sector. Sarkar has worked closely with the Ministry of Tourism and is looking forward to working closely with the Ministry of Tourism and other Ministries through SEPC.

**today's events**  
3:00 PM onwards  
Webinar on Swiss Travel System






**Travel & Tourism**  
**World of**  
**News & Views**

01st Sep. 2021

'Difficult Roads Often Leads to Beautiful Destinations'  
This time shall pass too  
Keep moving



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**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 e-Tourist Visa.



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.

**Tit - Bit**




**ASSOCIATES** Home About Us Services Publications Blog

**MR. PRONAB SARKAR, IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT IATO ELECTED AS MEMBER OF SEPC CENTRAL GOVERNING COUNCIL**

September 9, 2021 admin




## इटरनेशनल फ्लाइट पर रोक बढ़ने से मायूसी

**निरवा**

● मार्च, 2020 से इटरनेशनल टूरिज्म का रुतबा है गिरा

● 15-फरवरी से टूरिज्म होने का संकेत है जो जन से भी उभरते

● टूरिज्म का रुतबा बढ़े तो ही टूरिज्म का रुतबा बढ़ेगा

● टूरिज्म का रुतबा बढ़े तो ही टूरिज्म का रुतबा बढ़ेगा

● टूरिज्म का रुतबा बढ़े तो ही टूरिज्म का रुतबा बढ़ेगा

Wednesday November 3, 2021

# Tourism Breaking news

Abu Dhabi E-Learning

**Turaspain to conduct discussion on Schengen visa for India, Nepal & Sri Lanka on Nov 9 at 3pm**

The Tourism Office of Spain - Madrid will conduct a 1-hour virtual panel discussion on Spain's Schengen visa for travellers from India, Nepal & Sri Lanka on Tuesday, Nov 9 at 3pm. Sessions include: Ambassador of Spain to India, Consul General of Spain in Mumbai and Director of Turaspain in India. Contact: [spain.india@turisminspain.com](mailto:spain.india@turisminspain.com) +91 9850190002

**Ayodhya lights up to prepare for Deepotsav programme**

It has been proclaimed as a daily the city's Ayodhya administration in association with the Indian Institute of Aesthetics is going to promote art-houses in the village of Hanu in the United Kingdom.

**Ladakh's Hanu has been declared as Dark Sky Sanctuary**

It has been proclaimed as a daily the city's Ayodhya administration in association with the Indian Institute of Aesthetics is going to promote art-houses in the village of Hanu in the United Kingdom.

**In 2019-20, total contribution towards employment in tourism came up to 15%, says Rupinder Brar**

Rupinder Brar, ADG, Tourism, has said that the total contribution in 2019-20 towards employment in tourism came up to 15.34%, which broke into 6.60% of direct jobs and 8.74% indirect jobs. She shared these statistics during her presentation at the South India Tourism and Culture Ministry conference in Bangalore.

**Get attractive fares on EZZBOKINDIA.COM**

**COVID has accelerated rollout of technologies in travel sector: Madhavan Menon, Thomas Cook (India)**

Madhavan Menon, MD, Thomas Cook India, has said that COVID has accelerated the roll-out of technologies in the travel sector and this has opened out ways in which people access hospitality services. He shared that while adoption of technology and shift in priorities of domestic travellers were some changes that he particularly highlighted.

**36th IATO Convention: EM Najeeb is Chairman, Rajnish Kaistha & Ranchir Singh Vaghela Co-chairmen**

EM Najeeb, Sr Vice President, IATO, is the Chairman for the 36th IATO Convention scheduled from 15-18 December at The Lotus Grand Hyatt. Co-chairmen of the convention will be Rajnish Kaistha, Hony Secretary, IATO and Ranchir Singh Vaghela, who is also the Chairman, IATO Gujarat & District Chapter, Mumbai. Sr Vice President, IATO.

For more information contact [harish@iato.org](mailto:harish@iato.org) or +91 96704 88167 or [arash@iato.org](mailto:arash@iato.org) or +91 98503 09909

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### 'Hotels, better connectivity will propel Ayodhya tourism'

Hotels, better connectivity will propel Ayodhya tourism

ARTICLES

# TOI

Question: The construction of the Ram Temple has generated immense interest in the ancient city of Ayodhya but it may take a few years before it joins the league of heritage and top tourist destinations like Varanasi, Prayagraj and Mathura. Tour operators visiting the city as the centre of the world's gaze (in the absence of the Charayatra) have pointed out that the well-timed of hotels, better connectivity, regular bus services and availability of a station are the key to making the city a popular tourist destination.

On Tuesday, a team of four operators and travel program called (Harimangal, Dargam, Madam, Harik, Bhawan and Gargi) met to get a sense of how Ayodhya has to be developed. The state government has announced plans of developing the city as a major tourist destination.

"We have already been promoting the sector among tourists for a while now. To make it a city for pilgrims and tourists but how to do it is what we want to do."

TRAVEL turtle

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News Trade Report

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

Admin August 31, 2021 761 Views

# Agra, Varanasi attract tourists again

While the Taj city has become the favourite place for week-end getaways, foreigners are gradually arriving to keep tryst with Kashi ghats

Hemendra Chattervedi  
Sudhir Kumar

AGRA: In the post pandemic period, outdoor activities are once again witnessing surging interest levels and tourism sectors are rebuilding itself.

Agra and Varanasi, the two prime tourist destinations in Uttar Pradesh, are back under the spotlight. While Agra has become a favourite destination for week-end getaways, Kashi ghats are once again attracting foreign tourists.

Though there are no foreign tourists visiting Agra since the outbreak of the pandemic in March 2020, the city of Taj gets flooded with visitors from nearby areas seeking weekend getaways. Train and road paralytic status 70% of the highway from National Capital Region in and around Delhi. Unusually on Yamuna Expressway on week-ends are ample illustrations that Agra is definitely one of the most preferred weekend trip place after the second Covid wave subsided.

The extended Diwali weekend saw the city crowded with holiday-makers and on Sunday evening, the last day of holidays for Diwali, there was a kilometre-long queue at the toll plaza of Yamuna Expressway with a



Crowd of visitors at Taj Mahal on Diwali weekend.

large number of vehicles heading towards Delhi from Agra. Authorities at ISBT, Agra too confirmed that the bus services for Delhi got affected because of jam on the Expressway on Sunday.

Availability of best connectivity (the 60-km Yamuna Expressway connecting Agra with NOIDA) and affordable accommodation also attract visitors from Delhi, Gurgaon, NOIDA, Ghazipur and Faridabad etc.

Visitors from these cities in NCR look for a couple of days getaway in their own cars for a distance less than 200 kilometres and affordable rooms at quality hotels for family. Agra serves them all in this post-Covid wave scenario as hotels have shifted their focus from foreign tourists jutting away from home. The families from NCR region include their luggage in their cars and return the same day after visiting Taj and a few other monuments," said Smit Gupta, regional chairman (North), Indian Association of Tour Operators.

"The absence of foreign tourists has led to star category hotels looking for domestic visitors and they have slashed prices, making them affordable for average domestic visitor looking for a couple of days away from home. The families from NCR region include their luggage in their cars and return the same day after visiting Taj and a few other monuments," said Smit Gupta, regional chairman (North), Indian Association of Tour Operators.

Travel bureau owner Smit Gupta echoed similar sentiments, saying that 70% of visitors reaching Agra on week-ends and during holidays were those from the National Capital Region.

"One cannot take away the credit from Taj Mahal for its beauty and charm which makes the monuments worth visiting on repeat occasions. Visitors on week-end and holiday get-away have to face chaos because of crowd at the gates of Taj Mahal and something should be done about it," he said.

"Interestingly, Agra is also linked with state capital Lucknow by an expressway but it seems that the week-end visitor prefers to travel less than 200 km in a day by his own vehicle which is easy using the 165 km-long Yamuna Expressway than the 305 km-long Agra-Lucknow Expressway," he said.

During the pre-Covid phase till February 2020, the Taj Mahal used to get 20,000 tourists per day with the average inflow falling to 10,000 in a day during summers and rising to 25,000 to 30,000 visitors per day in winters, revealed an official of the Archaeological Survey of India at Taj Mahal, preferring not to be named. Taj Mahal used to have a foothold of about 60 lakh visitors a year in pre-pandemic days.

With the outbreak of Covid, Taj Mahal gates were closed on March 27, 2020 and opened on September 21, 2020 with capacity on the number of visitors. Only 5,000 tourists were allowed in a day with two slots of 2500 each in earlier and latter half of day. However, as the situation eased, 10,000 and

then 15,000 tourists were allowed by December 2021. With the onslaught of the second wave this year, Taj Mahal was again closed on April 16, 2021 and opened two months later on June 16, 2021 but with capping of not more than 650 tourists at a time.

The curbs were again relaxed in the situation improved and average number of visitors increased to 12,000 to 15,000 in a day in October this year but number of visitors rises to 25,000 to 30,000 on week-ends and holidays.

The ASI official revealed that there were more than 25,000 tourists at Taj on Gandhi Jayanti and the number crossed 39,000 figure on Diwali holidays.

**Foreigners back in Kashi**  
As life has returned to normal post the Covid-19 pandemic, it means the foreign tourists can once again keep their tryst with the ghats in Kashi.

Around 150 foreign tourists visited Varanasi in the last two months (September and October), according to a senior officer, department of tourism.

Most of the foreign tourists, who visited Varanasi during this period, were nationals of USA, England, Israel, Poland, Mozambique, Japan, Russia, France, Germany and Romania, the officer said.

"However, many of the tourists are travelling to Varanasi from cities like Bhubaneswar, Bangalore and Delhi where they were staying temporarily. They now prefer shorter journey as they got stuck in many cities when the Covid-19 had broken out over 17 months ago," said the officer.

According to the tourism department, many tourists also reached Varanasi via Nepal. Most of them spent around four to seven days and went back. At present, around 30 tourists are in Varanasi and they can be seen sitting on ghats.

On Monday, some foreigners were seen at Tulsi Ghat. They were enjoying traditional Naag Nathbhaya Laala' being performed in river Ganga. It is held every year a few days after Deepavali. Naag Nathbhaya depicts Lord Krishna's victory over serpent Kalas. A group of local artists of Kashi perform it in the middle of river Ganga.

Regional tourism officer Keertan Srivastava said, "Post Covid-19, around 100 tourists have visited Kashi. Gradually, the foreign tourists have started coming to Varanasi but their number is very small. I hope more tourists will visit the city in near future." He said that before March 2020 (when Covid-19 outbreak occurred), on an average, over 35,000 foreigners used to visit Varanasi every month during the peak season which begins in September and ends in the first week of March.

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क्यास

15 नवंबर से इंटरनेशनल फ्लाइट से आने वाले पर्यटकों को मिलना है वीजा, 30 दिन के लिए दिया जा रहा

## नए वीजा नियम बढ़ाएंगे पर्यटकों की मुश्किल

जगत्पन्न संवाददाता, आगरा: कोरोना वायरस के संक्रमण से देश धीरे-धीरे उबर रहा है। वायरस को रोकने के लिए सरकार ने जो प्रतिबंध लागू किए थे, उन्हें धीरे-धीरे हटाया जा रहा है। 15 अक्टूबर से चार्टर्ड फ्लाइट से आने वाले विदेशी पर्यटकों को टूरिस्ट वीजा देना शुरू किया जा चुका है। इंटरनेशनल फ्लाइट से आने वाले पर्यटकों को 15 नवंबर से टूरिस्ट वीजा दिया जाएगा। नए वीजा नियम व पाबंदियां पर्यटकों के लिए मुश्किलें बढ़ाएंगे। पर्यटन कारोबारियों को कोरोना के नाम पर थोपी गईं नई पाबंदियां रास नहीं आ रही हैं। उन्हें इसके चलते पर्यटकों के भारत नहीं आने की चिंता सता रही है।

भारत को पसंद करने वाले जिन पर्यटकों के पास 10 से 20 वर्ष की अवधि का वीजा था, उसे कैसिल नहीं किया जाए। जब पांच लाख पर्यटकों को सरकार निरशुल्क वीजा दे रही है तो ऐसे पर्यटकों से वीजा के लिए पुनः आवेदन कराने का कोई औचित्य नहीं है।

सुनील गुप्ता, चेयरमैन नॉर्दन रीजन, इंडियन एर्राटोरियन आफ टूर आपरेटर्स

सिमल एंटी वीजा की जगह मल्टीपल एंटी वीजा दिया जाए। वीजा की अवधि पूर्व की भांति 90 दिन की जाए। ई-वीजा सर्विस को बहाल किया जाए और वैक्सिनेशन करा चुके पर्यटकों के लिए सात दिन तक क्वारंटाइन रहने की अवधि नहीं रखी जाए।

राजेश शर्मा, सचिव टूरिज्म मिनिस्ट्री आफ आगरा

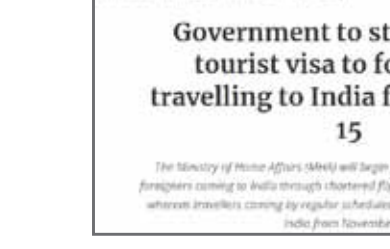
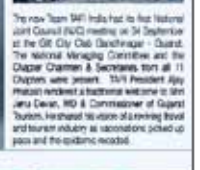
### ये हैं परेशानियां

- नंबर एक: टूरिस्ट वीजा में कई देशों को ई-वीजा की श्रेणी में नहीं रखा गया है। फ्रांस और जर्मनी के पर्यटक ई-वीजा प्राप्त कर सकेंगे, लेकिन यूनाइटेड किंगडम के पर्यटकों को दूतावास में संपर्क करना होगा। ई-वीजा की सुविधा होने से पर्यटकों को दूतावास जाने की जरूरत नहीं पड़ती थी, अनलाइन आवेदन कर लेते थे। उन्हें अब दूतावास जाना पड़ेगा।
- नंबर दो: जर्मनी, फ्रांस और यूनाइटेड किंगडम के पर्यटकों को क्वारंटाइन नहीं रहना होगा, लेकिन अन्य यूरोपीय देशों से आने वाले पर्यटकों को सात दिन तक क्वारंटाइन में रहना होगा।
- नंबर तीन: जिन देशों के पर्यटकों के पास पूर्व में 10 से 20 वर्ष तक के लिए वीजा था, उसे अवैध घोषित कर दिया गया है। उन्हें पुनः नए सिरे से वीजा के लिए आवेदन करने को कहा गया है।
- नंबर चार: पर्यटकों को 30 दिन की

अवधि का ही वीजा दिया जा रहा है, जबकि कोरोना काल से पूर्व 90 दिन के लिए वीजा दिया जाता था। 30 दिन के बाद ही पर्यटक दोबारा वीजा के लिए आवेदन कर सकेंगे।

● नंबर पांच: पर्यटकों को सिंगल एंटी वीजा दिया जा रहा है, जबकि कोरोना काल से पहले मल्टीपल एंटी वीजा दिया जाता था। मल्टीपल एंटी वीजा होने पर पर्यटक भारत आकर नेपाल, भूटान, श्रीलंका आदि देशों में घूमकर वापस भारत आ सकते थे। अब सिंगल एंटी वीजा होने से पर्यटकों को भारत के पड़ोसी देशों में जाने पर दोबारा वीजा के लिए आवेदन करना पड़ेगा।

● नंबर छह: यूनाइटेड किंगडम, फ्रांस व जर्मनी को छोड़कर यूरोपीय देशों से आने वाले पर्यटकों को यहां आने के बाद सात दिन तक होम क्वारंटाइन रहना होगा और आठ दिन आरटीपीसीआर टेस्ट कराना होगा। टेस्ट निगेटिव होने पर ही वो यात्रा कर सकेंगे।



## पर्यटन और फिल्म निर्माण में निवेशकों की भारी रुचि

जयपुर, समाचार चक्र न्यूज़। जयपुर में आयोजित तीन दिवसीय गुवांडा फेड सो के उद्घाटन दिन राज के पर्यटन, फिल्म निर्माण, टूर एंड ट्रेवल्स ऑफिसर, वेस्टा प्रवाससर्वीस एवं अन्य निवेशकों ने भागी सफल में भाग लेते हुए गुवांडा के साथ पर्यटन एवं फिल्म निर्माण के क्षेत्र में आपसी सहयोग के लिए सहज चर्चा की।

समाज के विभिन्न अतिथि डॉ. ललित के पैकर, पूर्व पर्यटन सचिव, भारत सरकार ने अपने सम्बोधन में इस अवसर को करने के लिए गुवांडा हाई कॉमिशन एवं फेडरली पैकर और कॉमर्स एंड इंडस्ट्री को बधाई देते हुए कहा की खीरवाड़ महानगर के बाद इस तरह की पहल प्रारंभिक है और ये पर्यटन विकास एवं इस क्षेत्र में नई जल धारण है।

कोल का पथरा खनिज होगी। पैकर ने पर्यटन क्षेत्र के विकास के लिए ईको टूरिज्म, सल्ट टूरिज्म, समर्थक रूप से समर्थित टूरिज्म को प्रोत्साहित करने के लिए बात किया।

नम अखंड, सार्वजनिक कूटनीति विकास, विदेश मंत्रालय, गुवांडा एवं एड्डी विरिय, निदेशक, गुवांडा टूरिज्म बोर्ड ने अपने सम्बोधन में गुवांडा में फिल्म निर्माण एवं पर्यटन विकास के लिए व्यापक अपार संभावनाओं के बारे में जानकारी देते हुए कहा की गुवांडा निवेशकों के लिए सुवर्ण वेरा है तक उन्होंने भारतीय निवेशकों से इन क्षेत्रों में निवेश एवं फ्लोवरी बढ़ाने का न्योत्र दिया। वेड सो में ज्योत सिंह रावठी, रणज सखरी टूर, जैसलमेर, दीपक मान, चरित, डॉ.सुदीप्टी रिजम मेकर, कुलदेव सिंह चरित, अजय, होल एंड रेस्टोरेंट एसेसिएशन राजस्थान, चरित सिंह, अजय, एसेसिएशन और कोर्पोरेट टूर ऑपरेटर्स और डीएच एवं ड्रीमल एसेसिएशन और टूर ऑपरेटर्स, खड्किल खान, राजस्थान एसेसिएशन और टूर ऑपरेटर्स, संदीप इय, संस्थापक, राजस्थान इंटरनेशनल विजय वैरिटीक एवं राजस्थान पर्यटन एवं फिल्म निर्माण के क्षेत्र में नुद्रे प्रतिक्रित प्रतिनिधियों ने अपने विचार व्यक्त करते हुए गुवांडा विषय को दोनों देशों के मध्य फिल्म निर्माण एवं पर्यटन से सम्बंधित अवसरों के प्रतिनिधि मंत्रियों के वीर आर्षोना किये जहाँ लॉक में क्षेत्र में आपसी सहयोग को गति मिल सके। बकाओं ने गुवांडा सरकार से फिल्म निर्माण एवं पर्यटन विकास के लिए पहलियों बनने का आग्रह किया एवं भारत से गुवांडा के लिए रीट्रीटर्नल सेवा शुरू करने की भी बात की।

भारत में गुवांडा के उन उष्णकटुभा मंडलम काजल एवं फेडरली पैकर और कॉमर्स एंड इंडस्ट्री के राजस्थान सचिव के अजय विरियन काशीरय ने कहा की तीन दिवसीय गुवांडा फेड सो सफल रहा एवं भागी संस्था में निवेशकों एवं पर्यटन क्षेत्र से जुड़े उद्योगियों ने भाग लेते हुए गुवांडा में निवेश करने की मंशा जताई। काशीरय ने कहा की फेडरली पैकर और कॉमर्स एंड इंडस्ट्री गुवांडा हाई कॉमिशन के साथ निवेशक एडवोकेट निवेशकों को क्या संभव मार्गदर्शन एवं सहायता देने का आग्रह किया।





**Travel & Tourism World of News & Views**  
 24th Sept 2021

**IATO urges the government to restore SEIS to 7 percent**  
 Indian Association of Tour Operators (IATO) has urged the government to restore the SEIS (Special Incentive for Export Services) from 2% to 7% as it is the only way to support the tourism industry and create jobs. IATO has also urged the government to restore the SEIS to 7% as it is the only way to support the tourism industry and create jobs.

**FICCI's National Tourism Investors Meet infused new energy in the environment**  
 To reinvigorate the ailing travel and tourism industry, FICCI organized its National Tourism Investors Meet, which was held on September 23rd, 2021. The meet was held in a virtual mode and was attended by over 1000 participants from across the country. The meet was a great success and it is expected that it will help to reinvigorate the ailing travel and tourism industry.

**Nepal resumes visa on arrival for fully vaccinated international tourists with no quarantine**  
 Nepal has resumed visa on arrival for fully vaccinated international tourists with no quarantine. This is a great relief for tourists and it is expected that it will help to reinvigorate the ailing travel and tourism industry.

**Switzerland Tourism Webinar Series**  
 Switzerland Tourism is conducting a webinar series on Jungfrau Railways today at 3pm IST. The webinar will focus on the latest developments in the Swiss tourism industry and will be a great opportunity for industry professionals to learn more about the latest trends and opportunities in the market.

**South African Tourism's first virtual roadshow aims at mutually-beneficial trade partnerships**  
 South African Tourism is launching its first virtual roadshow, which aims to establish mutually-beneficial trade partnerships between South African and international tourism professionals. The roadshow will focus on the latest developments in the South African tourism industry and will be a great opportunity for industry professionals to learn more about the latest trends and opportunities in the market.

**SEIS payments announced, stakeholders unhappy with percentage reduction & capping**  
 The government has announced SEIS payments for the tourism industry, but stakeholders are unhappy with the percentage reduction and capping. The government has reduced the SEIS rate from 7% to 5% and has also introduced a cap on the amount of SEIS that can be claimed. This is a significant reduction and it is expected that it will have a negative impact on the tourism industry.

**Bihar's 11 Circuits identified for tourist destinations**  
 Bihar has identified 11 circuits for tourist destinations. These circuits are: Patna, Gaya, Nalanda, Rajgir, Bodhi Tree, Vaishali, Mithila, Jharkhand, West Bengal, Odisha, and Kerala. These circuits are expected to attract a large number of tourists and will help to reinvigorate the ailing travel and tourism industry.

For media coverage mail to: [info@travelworldonline.in](mailto:info@travelworldonline.in)

Friday September 24, 2021

**Tourism Breaking news**

**Switzerland Tourism to conduct webinar on Jungfrau Railways today at 3pm IST**  
 Switzerland Tourism will conduct a webinar focusing on Jungfrau Railways, which will provide an overview of the railway's services and the latest developments in the Swiss tourism industry. The webinar will be held on September 24th at 3pm IST and will be a great opportunity for industry professionals to learn more about the latest trends and opportunities in the market.

**Nepal removes quarantine for vaccinated tourists**  
 Nepal has removed the quarantine requirement for fully vaccinated international tourists. This is a great relief for tourists and it is expected that it will help to reinvigorate the ailing travel and tourism industry.

**World Tourism Day: MOT to sign MoU with UNEP & RTSOI, launch Nidhi 2.0 and annual statistics**  
 The Ministry of Tourism (MOT) will sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the Regional Tourism Operators' Association (RTSOI) on World Tourism Day. The MOT will also launch Nidhi 2.0 and release its annual statistics. These initiatives are expected to help to reinvigorate the ailing travel and tourism industry.

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**Government notifies SEIS at the maximum rate of 5%, travel industry cries foul**

The travel and tourism industry, which was expecting an upward revision from the assured 7 per cent rate of incentive, was taken aback with the 2 per cent reduction in admissible rate.

P Krishna Kumar - ETTravelWorld - September 24, 2021, 09:15 IST

**HOSPITALITY WORLD.com**

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ET Hospitality World News / Latest ET Hospitality World News / Travel Agents / Inbound

**SEIS at maximum rate of 5 percent, says Government; travel industry not pleased**

The travel and tourism industry was expecting an upward revision from the assured 7 percent rate of incentive and was not expecting the 2 percent reduction.

A Modified Number - ET Hospitality World - September 24, 2021, 12:12:11

The travel, tourism and hospitality industry is badly hit by the SEIS reduction. For it's unlikely to say that the SEIS rate is expected to be increased to 7% in the next few months. Unfortunately, the government's announcement added to the existing gloom.



## Services exporters flag SEIS denial, rates

Cargo handling among sectors dropped; pandemic-hit tourism's benefit cut to 5%

Several services sectors are feeling about being excluded from the benefit of a given lower incentive rates under the Service Exports from India Scheme (SEIS), whose benefits for 2020-21 were notified on Thursday, even as exporters raised concerns about the 15-year cap on entitlements.

The tourism sector has been granted a 5% benefit on net foreign exchange earnings as opposed to 7% earlier, while some sectors like management consulting and engineering have been excluded altogether.

"Services such as management consulting, architecture, technical testing and analysis services, support services for maritime transport and cargo handling services, which were eligible during earlier periods, are excluded now," T. Vivekanand, principal partner, Lakshminarayana & Co., Chennai, said. "However, the rate of SEIS benefit has also been reduced by 2% from earlier specified rates."

The right December 31 deadline for firms to claim benefits would also cause inconvenience, he pointed out. "The right December 31 deadline set for firms to claim their benefits would also cause inconvenience, he pointed out. "The right December 31 deadline set for firms to claim their benefits would also cause inconvenience, he pointed out."



No smooth sailing: The right December 31 deadline for firms to claim benefits would also cause inconvenience.

**United News of India**  
India's Multi Lingual News Agency

Tuesday, Nov 30 2021 | Time 12:07 Hrs(IST)

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Business Economy

Posted at: Oct 5 2021 6:16PM

## Travel industry proposes free Covid insurance to foreign tourists, re-starting scheduled international flights

**Nirbhay Kumar**  
New Delhi, Oct 5 (UNI) Making strong pitch for starting scheduled international flights, Delhi-based travel and tour operators' body Indian Association of Tour Operators (IATO) has proposed to offer free Covid insurance to foreign tourists coming to India.

The suggestion made to the Tourism Ministry is aimed at promoting India as tourists-friendly destination globally.

Given that travel and tour operators earn significant portion of their annual revenue during holiday season starting October, they want the government to relax all travel restrictions.

Speaking to UNI, IATO President Rajiv Mehra said that there are limited foreign flights on limited international routes under 'Air Bubble' agreement and as a result airfare is very high. "The government should open e-Visa facility and fully-vaccinated tourists should be allowed. On the basis of bilateral air service agreements with various countries, flights should be allowed. If airlines find it viable they will operate," Mehra said.

The IATO President said that government can offer free Covid insurance to tourists for a year or two or till the situation stabilises.

"If a tourist spends US\$ 1000-1500 he can also spend another US\$ 25 for insurance against Covid. The government can offer insurance for free as this will send out very good message among tourists," Mehra said.

Travel and tourism industry has been among the worst-affected sectors by pandemic forcing thousands of firms out of business and causing massive job loss.

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## STAKEHOLDERS' RECIPES TO BOOST TOURISM IN STATE

### KEEP IT ECONOMICAL, PUBLICISE YOUR UNIQUENESS

**Hidden jewel**  
Mishra Pradeep continues to be a 'hidden jewel'. We have not been able to identify any other...  
- **Devjit Das**, Chairman, MP Committee Health and Restaurant Association, West Bengal

**Disposable income**  
The problem is that the people are still scared. I hope things will settle by January - by that time we will know whether the third wave is coming or not. Another problem is that the pandemic has hit the economy severely and people are short on disposable income. Anyone who spends money on tourism only when he is left with cash in hand after meeting his essential requirements. An Ex-vice chairman, there has been loss to its reputation...  
- **Prayal Tiwari**, Secretary, District Tour Operators of India

**Local culture**  
Our USP should be local culture and regional specialties, to enhance the cuisine of Mizoram. The road infrastructure has improved considerably. But we need better air connectivity. Also the likes of the various health like Khawzanda, Muzo and Jid Thawz should be fixed. Promote in state channels every week for public relations. Foreign tourists plan their trips several months in advance and they need to know dates of the season they want to attend. Flies are being slow in the state but the problem is that a certain shift in tourism is shown in the film and that in West Bengal. This should change. The development of private sector in tourism-related activities should be increased.  
- **Prayal Tiwari**, Secretary, District Tour Operators of India

**Women's safety**  
Women tourists must not only be safe but they should also be made to feel safe. They should be confident that nothing untoward will happen to them as Mishra Pradeep. So, more women like a recent woman's hike rally should be organised to build confidence among them. Also, we need to make special places accessible to different disabled people. After all, tourism is for everyone.  
- **Pray Tiwari**, business development manager, Silchar, Assam

**Exorbitant charges**  
Wildlife is the state's USP. The charges for wildlife safari are exorbitant. Why will a tourist pay through the nose in Mizoram when he can have a safari in a tiger at Sarawak or Corbett at a much lower price? Secondly, we need washrooms at every stop on the highways. Also, the guides should be well-versed in the history and the culture of the places concerned. There is another issue. We are talking of including tourists and rural tourism and charging Rs 1000 per day for homestays. Can a middle-class family afford it?  
- **Geopet Rai**, Director, Raizha, Mizoram

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The Government announced resumption of Tourist Visa for Foreigners from 15th Oct 2021

15th October 2021 11:20:23 | By TWD Bureau | 1648 Visitors

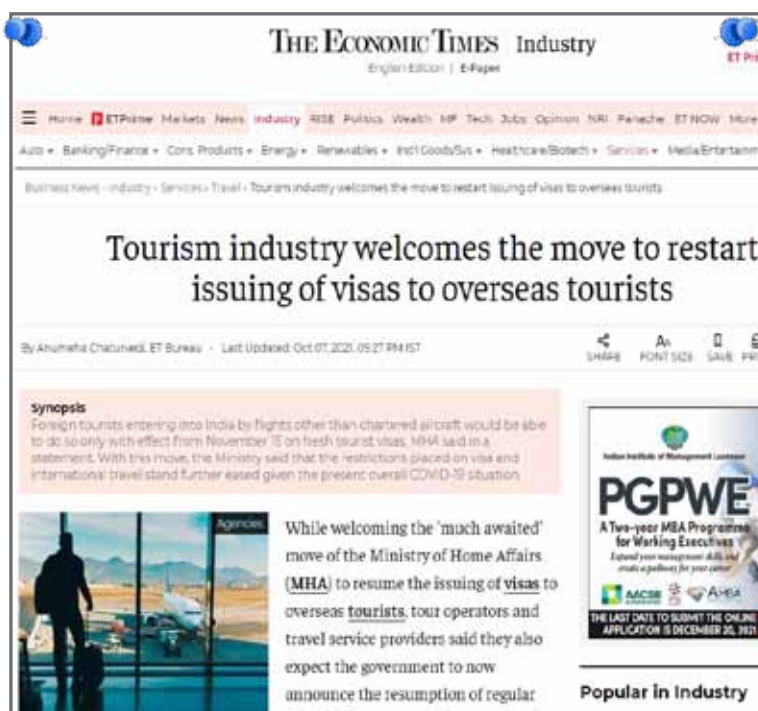
On the auspicious first day of Navratri, the Indian Government announced the resumption of Tourist Visa for Foreigners coming to India through chartered flights with effect from 15th October 2021 and others from 15th November 2021.

Mr. Rajiv Mehra, President of Indian Association of Tour Operators, thanked the Honorable Prime Minister, Home Minister and Tourism Minister for considering their request in resuming the tourist visa. Rajiv Mehra said "This is very encouraging for the tourism industry, and we hope the abroad tourists will start to some extent and will give a sign of relief to the tourism industry stakeholders."

**News Bulletin**

- India Government ends the complete suspension of tourist visa for foreign tourists from 15th October 2021
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percent of the Indian economy. Rajiv Mehra, president of the Indian Association of Tour Operators (IATO), welcomed Thursday's announcement. "This is a very encouraging for the tourism industry and we hope the inbound tourism would start to some extent and will give sigh of relief to the tourism industry stakeholders," Mehra said in a statement. – AFP





Wednesday October 13, 2021

## Tourism Breaking news

Win a trip to Switzerland!

### Eastern Cape Tourism seeks to see the region included in more packages to South Africa

Sharing its expectations from the upcoming annual show virtually in South Africa, on October 20, Vignay Dayaram, CEO of Eastern Cape Parks & Tourism Agency, says, "The Eastern Cape Province is the poorest in South Africa. After two years of promoting the destination to Indian travel partners, we seek to see it included in more packages to South Africa with more benefits and geographic spread."

### MOT ties up with Sarovar for special rates for members

Tourism Agency Federation of India (TAFI) has done a special tie-up with Sarovar Hotels across India by offering special packages to TAFI members. An initiative by the TAFI Hotels & Resorts Committee, the tie-up will allow members to get a variety of these hotels and resorts along these special rates for their clients. Jigar Dabhiyala, Committee Representative, TAFI, says, "To attract the Indian TAfi members, we have a TAfi logo, identification number on their email signature. The logo will be linked and checked to authenticity by Sarovar."

Times US

## Authorities notifies SEIS on the most charge of 5%, Journey trade cries foul – ET TravelWorld

TravelWorld

BULLETIN

## IATO convention in Gandhinagar

Indian Association of Tour Operators (IATO), has announced that its 36<sup>th</sup> IATO Annual Convention will be held in Gandhinagar in Gujarat from December 16-19, 2021. There will also be post-convention tours for attendees, keeping all safety protocols in mind.

**Media News**

The vision of the convention is the Luckhoo Foundation, Mumbai. Rajiv Mehta, President, IATO. The decision was made by the IATO Executive Committee, and Mehta announced the same to saying, "We planned to have our convention in Gujarat in September 2020 but had to postpone the same due to COVID-19".

Mehta added, "The resumption success of the previous editions has raised the expectations of the members and sponsors. More than 300 delegates are expected for the three-day event and the IATO convention is being hosted by all".

IATO is going back to Gujarat after a gap of 10 years and it will be an excellent opportunity for the members to visit the improved and developed infrastructure in Gujarat, stated the statement.

Mehta also mentioned that security is going through a very fast time and that focus would be on security for the delegates.

All delegates who will attend the convention, will have to submit copy of fully vaccination certificate

After thinking the venue and the dates, the IATO team is currently working on deciding the theme of the convention, as well as the panel discussions & activities that will happen during the course of the 3-day event.

The 36<sup>th</sup> IATO Convention was held in Kolkata in 2010, which saw delegates from across the country coming together in capital of West Bengal.

Mehta, along with other members of IATO including ED Nigam, Sr Vice President, IATO and Rajesh Khatia, Senior Secretary, IATO, visited Gandhinagar recently to finalize the venue and dates of the convention. Govt of Gujarat was being presented as a venue for the convention.

After thinking the venue and the dates, the IATO team is currently working on deciding the theme of the convention, as well as the panel discussions & activities that will happen during the course of the 3-day event.

E-news: 600,000 in daily WhatsApp

Exhibit A

Exhibit B

The business to travel magazine

## MICETalk

A highly credible magazine developed

Monday, October 11, 2021

## Tourism Breaking news

Win a trip to Switzerland!

### South African Tourism excited to showcase unique offerings at VirtuallyYoursSouthAfrica

Narvesh Mehta, Hub Head, SAC, says, "With world-class safety measures, catering techniques, unique accommodation arrangements, local experiences & the warmest tourism services, we cannot wait to give the Indian travel fraternity a taste of our finest hospitality. We look forward to mutually beneficial long term business relationships between South African exhibitors & Indian buyers at VirtuallyYoursSouthAfrica."

### IATO 36<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention to take place in Gandhinagar from 16-19 December 2021

The 36<sup>th</sup> IATO Annual Convention will be held at The Lotus Gandhinagar, Gujarat from 16<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> December 2021. Rajiv Mehta, President, IATO, in a statement issued by him, announced the decision of the Executive Committee, and said, "We planned to have our convention in Gujarat in September 2020 but had to postpone the same due to COVID-19. More than 300 delegates are expected for 3 days event."

### Delhi airport to resume flight operations at T1 from 31<sup>st</sup> Oct

After almost 18 months, the Delhi airport will resume flight operations from T1 terminal from October 31. The T1 terminal will handle all flights since March 25, 2020, when scheduled domestic flights were suspended for a two-month period due to the coronavirus-related measures. The first flight scheduled from T1 after reopening would be an Indigo flight that will depart for Mumbai at 05:30 hours. The T3 terminal and the T2 terminal of the Delhi airport resumed handling flight operations from July 25, 2020, and July 27, 2021, respectively. The DART group led DCAI, mentioned



11th Oct. 2021

**IATO 36th IATO Annual Convention to take place at Leela Gandhinagar from 16 -19 Dec.**

Mr Rujiv Mehra, President IATO said, "We believe December would be the appropriate time to have a convention. It will boost confidence in international travellers and send a clear message that India is safe and ready for business."



Mr Mehra mentioned, "The Stupendous Success of the previous convention has raised the expectations of the members and sponsors. More than 900 delegates are expected to attend the 3 days convention. The IATO convention is always eagerly awaited by all," he added. [Full story on - www.tourism.in](http://www.tourism.in)

**UNWTO and NEOM Launch 'Tourism Experiences of the Future' Challenge**

The 'Tourism Experiences of the Future' challenge will source innovative ideas and disruptive business models related to the tourism needs of the future. In line with growing demand for new experiences. All proposals must be aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals and should include the introduction or adaptation of digital and technological elements. \* Optimizing and maximizing the potential of experiential tourism, \* harnessing the positive impact of new technology \* Alternative business models and innovative experiences



**TIT - BIT**



**Kerala Govt sets up Revolving Fund to support tourism sector workers**

Kerala Government has set up a Revolving Fund to provide interest-free loans up to Rs 10,000 to those employed in a wide range of activities in tourism sector without any collateral security, as part of schemes to revive the pandemic-hit industry that provides jobs to thousands across the state.

As per the Government Order issued in this regard, the Revolving Fund has an initial corpus of Rs 10 crore. Tourism Minister Shri P A Mohamed Riyas said, "This fund comes when the tourism sector is poised for the post-pandemic surge. All those who are working in this vital sector can avail the benefit of this scheme to revive their activities", the Minister said.

Those who are employed in any tourism related activities with membership in any of the registered tourism sector organizations will be eligible for the loan under the scheme. Those engaged in units registered under the Responsible Tourism (RT) mission are also entitled to apply for the loan.



**Vadodara Travel Agents Association was launched under the presidency of Manish Shah.**

The official launch of the Vadodara Travel Agent Association was held yesterday at Laem Vilas Palace under the presidency of Manish Shah. Prominent dignitaries of the city, includes Member of Parliament, Mayor of Vadodra, King of Vadodra, Nriwas Manishi, Commercial Manager Gujarat Tourism, graced the occasion. Manish Shah said, "We wanted to create a platform where our agents can meet, network and discuss current challenges in the business. As a unified front, representation also becomes easier to various government and non-government bodies in times of need."



For media coverage mail to: [info@travelworldonline.in](mailto:info@travelworldonline.in)



**is LIVE now!**

**Tourism in all its forms, whether for faith or for leisure, needs modern infrastructure: PM Modi**

PM Narendra Modi, in his address at the inauguration of Kullu Nagar Int. Airport, said that modern infrastructure is very important for tourism in all its forms. "Modern infrastructure complete with rail, road, airports, waterways, hotels, hospitals, internet connectivity, hygiene, sewage treatment and renewable energy ensuring a clean environment are interconnected & it is important to work on all these simultaneously," he added.

**Economy Class Airfare starting from ₹19,199 returns, all-inclusive.**

**After visa resumption, IATO urges government to reinstate airport passes**

Raja Mehra, President, IATO, has said that with the reinstating of visas they have requested for reinstating airport passes. "Another issue we have taken up with the govt is the restoration of airport passes because when tourist traffic starts, people will start coming. Hence, our airport passes need to be restored immediately. We are in touch with the govt for the same" he stated.

Friday October 15, 2021

**Tourism Breaking news**

**No license to play recorded sound at hotels; FHRAI & EEMA to sensitise industry**

**Ministry of Tourism proposes to declare 2022-23 as Visit India Year: Ravi Gosain, IATO**

**IHG to launch 141-room Holiday Inn Express in Jaipur**

**The New York Times**

**India reopens to vaccinated travelers as more Asian countries loosen travel rules.**

The Indian government announced on Monday that it would allow vaccinated foreign visitors into the country for the first time in over two months. Following a ban in a bid to curb the spread of the coronavirus, cases rose and vaccinations picked up across Asia.

**THE ECONOMIC TIMES Industry**

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

The representatives of the industry associations such as the Indian Airline Operators' Association (IAOA) and the Indian Air Transport Association (IATA) are mulling approaching the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) and the Civil Aviation Ministry over the ban on commercial flights.

**ET TravelWorld.com**

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

Raja Mehra, President, IATO needs clarity to the government decision to extend the suspension of international travel and visa calls it depressing and disheartening.

**THE ECONOMIC TIMES Industry**

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

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Monday October 18, 2021

**Tourism Breaking news**

**We intend to establish joint marketing initiatives with Indian partners: Mpumalanga Tourism**

Sharing her expectations from the upcoming VirtuallyTourSouthAfrica roadshow of October 20, Sina Okonji, Acting Executive Manager – Tourism, Mpumalanga Tourism & Parks Agency, says, "We intend to invest the Indian trade to encourage Mpumalanga diverse offerings, while also establishing joint marketing initiatives which will be mutually beneficial for both – our potential trade partners in India and us."

**India opens e-Tourist visa website; UK & Canada residents still need to apply for paper visa: Mehra**

Rajiv Mehra, President, IATO, has shared that e-Tourist visa website has been opened for foreigners, for 30 day validity, which will be counted in the free 5 lakh visa granted by Govt. However, he said that e-visa for UK and Canada has not been opened, and they still need to apply for paper visa. In addition, he suggested that the Government should also start scheduled international flights.

**Bali opens to fully vaccinated travellers from 19 countries**

Bali has opened to fully vaccinated travellers from 19 countries including China, India. The UK is not on the list yet. How the island still need to serve a five period in a hotel. Around 50% are fully vaccinated, which is one vaccination more in Indonesia. It has revised the full list of countries they inspect hotel and flight book over time.

Aviation • Breaking International News • Business Travel • Government News • Hospitality Industry • India

Breaking News • News • Tourism • Travel Destination Update • Various News

## India international flights: extended suspension devastating

August 31, 2021 • by Anil Mathur • eTN India • Add Comment • 3 min read

English

**India International flights**

Written by Anil Mathur - eTN India

**The President of the Indian Association of Tour Operators (IATO), Mr. Rajiv Mehra, expressed his extreme disappointment on the decision taken by the India Ministry of Civil Aviation/DGCA to extend suspension of international flights until September 30, 2021, and of the e-Tourist Visa.**

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Click to listen to the article

1. The IATO President pleaded that it is time for the government to step in and help the travel and tourism industry.
2. Mr. Mehra has been pushing for

10% OFF

# STRATEGY TO PROJECT KERALA AS A TOURISM DESTINATION UNDERLINED

In discussion with EM Najeed, Sr. Vice President, IATO on the current scenario of the tourism industry in Kerala. He is one of the frontline leaders, sculpturing the innovative KTM Society, a pioneer in medical value, helicopter, education, and media tourism, projecting the southern state as an important tourist destination.



E M Najeed  
Sr. Vice President, IATO

## **W**hat were Kerala's efforts for post-covid tourism recovery?

Travel and hospitality businesses will promote transformational, conscious, and responsible tourism following COVID-19. The trade were coming up with packages keeping physical distancing in mind, such as a cycle tour, kayaking trip, birdwatching tour, and stay with discounted rates. The other aspect is to help properties reduce their back office costs by handling them themselves. With the inflow of regular segments of guests stopped, it makes good sense that the trade will promote our destinations to its own people.

## **What is the situation now in December 2021 (high season for Kerala)?**

Any discussion of a complete recovery must be based on the COVID-19 status for the next three to four months. However, in the present situation, there is potential for revival if there is no third wave and the vaccination effort continues at its current speed. That is, roughly 20 per cent of local tourism might be restored by December, putting domestic tourism on track to recover by next October. There is nothing else to say about international tourists at this point. We must also evaluate the worldwide scenario in this regard. Everyone is hoping for a little improvement by November or December of the next year. Even still, a complete return to normalcy is only expected in 2023.

## **What percentage of Kerala's tourism-workers have been vaccinated?**

The Kerala government has announced that hotel and restaurant employees in the state, falling into the 18 to 45 age group, will get priority vaccination. The government has also sent notifications to various priority groups that need to be considered for priority vaccination, based on the suggestions they have received





from several departments. Kerala's tourism industry has been asking for priority vaccination for its whole workforce so that they can begin tourism once again and revive the industry. The list includes people working in hotels and restaurants, airport staff, people working in the beverage industry and home delivery agents, among others.

Only a few days ago, the state's tourism industry proved to be a boon for virus control efforts. A number of tour operators converted their mini tourist buses, which have been going to dust for the past year, into special COVID-19 ambulances.

Given the pandemic in the state, several travel operators in Kozhikode, Thiruvananthapuram, and Malappuram had converted tourist buses into ambulances to help the patients.

### ***What are Kerala's plans for the following 12 months?***

The 13th Five-Year Plan will continue the legacy of the State in investing in its people and developing the productive forces of the economy. This is a plan for working people, the poor, the socially deprived, and the environment.

The 13th Five-Year Plan commits Kerala to a path of development that will develop, enhance, and modernise the productive sectors of the economy; expand jobs in various sectors with an emphasis on creating jobs for educated youth; strengthen and upgrade public education and health; and build upon a network of social welfare and reform measures that are part of the legacy of public action in the state; and ensure effective, timely, and monitorable delivery of the gains of development to the people.

“  
**Following the pandemic in the state, several travel operators in Kozhikode, Thiruvananthapuram, and Malappuram converted the tourist buses into ambulances in order to help the patients**  
”



# LADY ENTREPRENEUR

**Vasuki Sundaram, founder of a travel agency and former Chapter Chairperson** of the IATO Maharashtra Chapter. She spoke on developing destinations while sustaining small-scale industries and creating an environment to conserve art and culture, in her interview to Elina Satapathy.



**Vasuki Sundaram**  
Former Chapter Chairperson  
IATO Maharashtra Chapter

## Journey as an entrepreneur

Vasuki Sundaram started her career with an internship in one of the leading travel companies to understand the workings of an agency. Armed with this hands-on experience, she founded her own company. She started it with the goal of providing all travel-related services under one roof, including travel in all means of transportation and curated to meet the requirements of the clients. Her first client was her next-door neighbour, a successful businessman and exporter with a high-trip frequency and a strict adherence to proper documentation. It was quite beneficial in educating oneself on

how and when to package all of the trip requirements and know all the visa procedures, passports, and hotel reservations.

When asked about what she would do differently if she had the chance to start her career all over again, she replied, "Nothing special, but I am pleased with how it has turned out."

## Future vision

Given a chance, she would like to make Incredible India credible. There are many things in each Indian state that are comparable to those in Western countries. It is a unique blend of everything, whether it is beaches, forests, waterfalls, architecture, or cuisine. So, in whatever way she can, she would like to make these things more popular.

## Motivation

Though, not from the industry, but her uncle was the one who inspired and motivated her. His ideologies were instilled in her and greatly aided her in shaping her profession and business. "No one else will value you if you do not appreciate yourself," is her company's motto.

## Effect of the pandemic

The pandemic has been difficult. It has affected everyone's business to some extent and the entire world. But her company, interestingly, did not let the staff of more than 20 years, leave.



Initially, there was no business, but her company managed the business even when things had opened up for a short period during February and March 2021. This phase was utilised in enhancing the know-how of the company's staff.

They met the government and suggested to start caravans, as this mode of transportation/tourism is the safest at this point of time. The state government accepted the proposal readily and came up with a policy pertaining to Caravan Tourism.

Sundaram has also been a part of the executive panel for Tourism in the Indian Chamber of Commerce (ICC) and conducted a number of seminars and workshops on how to comeback and how to revive the tourism industry after the pandemic.

## Views on gender equality

She believes that there is a gender bias; it is present not only, but also exists in every field. She said, "A woman must value her own worth and keep doing the good work."

She was the IATO Maharashtra Chapter chairperson, and the first lady in IATO's history to hold this post. She feels the industry should be a combination of both sexes. As women have the knack of managing the broader aspects of the business, they should join the industry.

## Message to budding women entrepreneurs

She says, "Whatever you do, give your everything. You need to understand what you are doing and it should be your passion. If it is not your passion then it will not reflect in your work. And the most important thing is honesty."

“  
**Whatever you do, give your everything. You need to understand what you are doing and it should be your passion. If it is not your passion then it will not reflect in your work**  
”



# CITY TOURS

## FASCINATING AND CHARMING OPTIONS

The idea of adding value to our common city tours cannot be overemphasised. They are incredibly fascinating and charming options that are available in big cities. The author highlights some of the special tours and activities that can be done in metropolises.



■ IATO Bureau (Resourced by Tapas Banerjee)

The idea of adding value to common city tours cannot be overemphasised. It is important for us to be familiar with the nuts and bolts of every destination that we sell. It is only then can we create a perception of product differentiation in the eyes of our prospective customer. There are incredibly fascinating and charming options that are available even in our big cities. I will highlight as below some of the special tours and activities that can be done in a throbbing metropolis as Mumbai. Most tour operators confine their activities in Mumbai to a city tour where, we mostly drive past buildings .



The Elephanta excursion is also not a very charming proposal as there are herds of domestic tourists on the boat, as well as at the venue. Hence, it is important to consider some options for exploring the vibrant lifestyles of the city. Doing so will only acquaint the visitor with the minutiae of the destination. You may consider some of the possible options as below

1. Mumbai, offers the option for experiencing a unique food tasting tour, that is guaranteed to pamper your taste buds as well as blend with one's culinary interests. Besides being the Financial Capital, Fashion Capital, Film Capital (Bollywood) of India, Mumbai is also described as the Food Capital of India. This is a personalized private tour accompanied by a skilled guide who would educate you on the subtle nuances of the Indian cuisine in Mumbai. The tour would be a dream for the vegetarians, and will include some of the popular Mumbai street foods that are cooked right before your eyes. The frying that the preparation is subjected to ensures that neither the germ or the nutrition values survive — what remains is a guaranteed tingle and challenge to your



taste buds and revealing hitherto undiscovered tastes!

2. A walking tour of Mumbai's markets and bazaars is also a revealing experience. We believe that these fascinating regions of Mumbai are best explored on foot. This is how a fascinating insight to Mumbai's colour, diversity and vibrations are to be had. The walk brings to you places one would never have found in guidebooks or while on a regular tour. The experience sure would be a great learning exercise as your senses are assaulted continually, but, pleasantly. While on the walking tour, we would wander through the sprawling bazaars bustling with activity. The walk would enable us an opportunity to interact with locals, shoppers and traditional traders. The idea is not only to bring to the visitor the history and tradition of the place, but, to also bring to you face

to face with the people who have made it possible for this throbbing metropolis to generate and sustain over the years.

3. A tour of Mumbai's Dharavi slum. The latter has the dubious distinction of being the largest slum in Asia, and you can explore this seething mass of humanity for yourself on a tour of the slums. Rather than being a depressing experience, the tour aims to break the negative stereotype associated with the slum. Put aside your initial apprehensions and you will discover a place that is alive with small-scale industries and high community spirit.

The tour is led by local Dharavi residents, who refer to the slum as the 'Land of Opportunity'. Dharavi was the setting for the famous Hollywood movie 'Slumdog Millionaire' that was internationally acclaimed.

“  
The walk brings to you places one would never have found in guidebooks or while on a regular tour  
”





## FOR LONG-TERM SUCCESS, ONE HAS TO PROCEED STEP BY STEP

Someone once said of Hell, "On your last day on earth, the person you became will meet the person you may have become." — Anonymous. We don't always need to add more things to be successful; sometimes we just need to let go of some of them.



### 2. Physical Activity

One small step, but you will thank yourself one day.

#### Give up the short-term mindset

"You only live once, but if you do it right, once is enough."

— Mae West

Successful people set long-term goals, and they know that these aims are merely the result of short-term habits that they need to practise every day. These healthy habits should not be something you do; they should be something you are. There is a difference between "working out to have a summer body" and "working out because that is who you are."

#### Stop playing small

"You're playing small, which does not serve the world. There is nothing enlightened about shrinking so that other people will not feel insecure around you. We are all meant to shine, as children do. It is not just in some of us; it is in everyone, and as we let our light shine, we unconsciously give others permission to do the same. As we are liberated from our fear, our presence automatically liberates others."

— Marianne Williamson

If you never try and take great

“  
Impulsive web  
browsing and television  
watching are diseases  
of today's society.  
”

■ IATO Bureau (Resourced by Mukesh Manra)

Even though each of us has a different definition of success, there are certain things that are universal that, if you give up on them, you will be more successful. Some of them you can give up today, while it might take a bit longer for others.

#### Give up on the Unhealthy Lifestyle

Take care of your body. It is the only place you have to live.

— Jim Rohn's

If you want to achieve anything in life, everything starts here. First, you have to take care of your health, and there are only two things you need to keep in mind:  
1. A well-balanced diet







opportunities or allow your dreams to become reality, you will never realise your true potential. Moreover, the world will never benefit from what you could have achieved. So voice your ideas, don't be afraid to fail, and certainly don't be afraid to succeed.

### Give up your excuses.

"It is not about the cards you are dealt, but how you play the hand."  
— Randy Pausch,  
The Last Lecture

Successful people know that they are responsible for their lives, no matter their starting point, weaknesses, or past failures. Realizing that you are entirely responsible for what happens next in your life is both frightening and exciting. However, it is the only way that you can achieve success because excuses limit and prevent us from growing personally and professionally. Own your life; no one else will.

### Give Up the Fixed Mindset

"The future belongs to those who learn more skills and combine them in creative ways."  
— Robert Greene, "Mastery"

In a fixed mindset, people believe that their intelligence or talent are simply fixed traits and that talent alone creates success—without effort. They are wrong. Moreover, successful people know this. They invest an immense amount of time on a daily basis to develop a growth mindset, acquire new knowledge, learn new skills, and change their perceptions so that it can benefit their lives. Remember, who you are today and not who you have to be tomorrow.

### Give up believing in the "Magic Bullet"

"Every day, in every way, I'm getting better and better."  
— Émile Coué

Overnight success is a myth. Successful people know that

“  
**Successful people set long-term goals, and they know that these aims are merely the result of short-term habits that they need to practise every day.**  
”



# Spiritual Fountains



## Give up multi-tasking

"You will never reach your destination if you stop and throw stones at every dog that barks."

— Winston S. Churchill

Successful people know this. That is why they choose one thing and then beat it into submission. No matter what, a business idea, a conversation, or a workout. Being fully present and committed to one task is indispensable.

## Give up the need to control everything

"Some things are up to us, and some things are not up to us."

— Epictetus,  
Stoic philosopher

Differentiating these two is important. Detach from the things you cannot control, and focus on the ones you can, and know that sometimes, the only thing you will be able to monitor is your attitude towards something. Remember, nobody can be frustrated while saying "Bubbles" in an angry voice.

## Give up saying "YES" to things that don't support your goals

"He who wants to accomplish little must sacrifice little; he who wants to achieve much must sacrifice much; he who wants to attain highly must sacrifice greatly."

— James Allen

Successful people know that to accomplish their goals, they will have to say "no" to tasks, activities, and demands from their friends, family, and colleagues.

In the short-term, you might sacrifice a bit of instant gratification, but when your goals come to fruition, it will be worth it.

making small continuous improvements every day will compound over time and give them the desired results. That's why you should plan for the future, but focus on the day that's ahead of you, and improve by just one per cent.

## Give up your perfectionism.

"Shipping beats perfection."

— Kahn Academy's  
Development Mantra

Nothing will ever be perfect, no matter how much we try. Fear of failure (or even fear of success) often prevents us from taking action and putting our creations out there in the world. However, many opportunities will be lost if we wait for things to be right.

So, 'ship', and then improve (that 1%).

“  
**He who wants to accomplish little must sacrifice little; he who wants to achieve much must sacrifice much; he who wants to attain highly must sacrifice greatly**  
”





## Give up the toxic people

"You are the average of five people you spend the most time with."

— Jim Rohn

The people we spend the most time with add up to who we become.

There are less ambitious people, and there are more ambitious people than us. If you spend time with the ones that are less driven than you, your average will go down, and with it your success. However, if you spend time with people more advanced than you, no matter how challenging that might be, you will be more successful. Take a look around you and see if you need to make any changes.

## Give up your need to be liked

"The only way to avoid pissing people off is to do nothing important."

— Oliver Emberton

Think of yourself as a market niche. There will be many people

that like that niche, but there will be individuals who do not, and no matter what you do, you will not be able to make a market like you. This is entirely natural, and there's no need to do anything to justify yourself.

The only thing you can do is continue being authentic and know that the growing number of "haters" means that you are doing important things.

## Give up your dependency on social media and television

"The trouble is, you think you have time"

— Jack Kornfield

Web browsing and television watching are diseases of today's society. These two should never be an escape from your life or your goals. Unless your goals depend on either, you should minimise (or eliminate) your dependency on them. Direct that time towards things that will enrich your life.





# MYSTICAL PICTURESQUE HILL STATION OF HAFLONG

Haflong can be visited round the year, with the water bodies and forests coming alive during the monsoons, making it ideal for outdoor activities during the winters. The raw beauty of this relatively undiscovered place cannot be expressed in words.



Susmita Hazarika

■ **IATO Bureau** (by Susmita Hazarika, Assam)

**T**he Dima Hasao Autonomous Council's headquarters are located in Haflong, Assam. It is often regarded as Assam's lone hill station with British-era charm for experiential and conscious tourism. The Dimasa word *haflong* means 'white ant hillock'.

Mystical Haflong is a scenic hill station surrounded by lush green forests, gorgeous lakes, and waterfalls. For nature lovers and soft adventurers, Haflong is a dream destination. It is a great escape for a leisure excursion, with an elevation of more than 700 metres above sea level. The main attractions of this place are the stunning views of the Borail range, tribal culture, birding, hiking, and camping.

Haflong is year-round destination, with the monsoons bringing the water bodies and forests to life, making it perfect for outdoor activities in the winter. The raw

beauty of this relatively unknown destination cannot be described in words unless you visit it.

A four-lane express route through stunning scenery and the 1.7-km-long Maibong-Mahur tunnel on NH-54 connects Haflong to Guwahati (335-km/7 hours). Stop by the sugarcane fields along the way to witness how jaggery is made locally. From Haflong Circuit House, the view of the Borail Range and Diyung Bridge is breathtaking.

Visit the Haflong local market where mostly women sell their Jhum products— wild varieties of mushrooms, pineapples, garlic, turmeric, king chillies, — from the nearby villages, still using the traditional method of weighing. Drive to the town of Maibang, situated on the bank of the Mahur River, to see the unique stone house built out of a single stone by the Dimasa King.





The beautiful Haflong Namghar a neo Vaishnavite Assamese Monastery beside the lake situated at the heart of the town gives it a picturesque look with facilities for boat rides. Visit the Presbyterian Church of Haflong during Christmas to see how the decorations give a festive look to the whole valley. A breath-taking view of the magnificent Fiangpui church from the Muolpong View Point is an add-on.

The walls of Haflong town are painted colourfully with motifs of the tribal patterns that are usually woven into their dresses. There are 13 tribal groups such as Dimasa, Kuki, Hmar, Zemi, Karbi, along with a few other non-tribal communities.

Jatinga View Point and the Church are worth visiting. The oranges from Jatinga are famous. Visit the Jatinga Interpretation Centre for birds to learn about the famous phenomenon of birds committing suicide. A visit to the Model Ethnic Village is an option where cultural programmes and feasts of local food and drinks can be arranged with prior intimation to the authorities. Tourists can collect traditional souvenirs as well. Learning about the traditional rituals and weaving techniques would also be

interesting as a part of rural tourism.

Paragliding is a go-to sport for thrill seekers, while birding enthusiasts find a treasure trove in Gunjung. Bendao Baglai



Waterfall in Samparidisa Village is a place for numerous exotic butterflies. There are many hot water springs in and around these places whose water is considered to be of great medicinal benefits.

The Judima Festival, named after the locally vinified wine of this region, is held every year in the month of December. Here, traditional games, dresses, ethnic food, Judima, etc. are exhibited and sold.

Umrangso Golf Course and Lake are beautiful God-gifted natural heritage. Amur Falcons make their temporary home here on the banks of the Kopili River and migrate out during the month of November towards South Africa across the Arabian Sea.

Panimur, also known as the mini Niagra Falls of the North East, is the place where shooting for the Bollywood movie Rangoon was done. The Kopili river transforms into a thrilling waterfall here,



“  
**The walls of Haflong town are painted colourfully with motifs of the tribal patterns that are usually woven into their dresses**  
 ”



the only village in this district to get snow, that too for a short period, during the winter.

Haflong has a 3\* deluxe property, a few government lodges, and standard homestays. The town has a cafe with rustic views of the landscape. Enjoy a wonderful evening under the sky with Judima (a local rice brew) accompanied by folk

tales from the guides and cultural programmes followed by an ethnic dinner.

and it is a hotspot for watersports activities such as kayaking, but only for professionals.

Apart from the newly launched Vista Dome Service from Guwahati to Haflong twice a week both ways, there are many other trains to this scenic place after the renovation of metre gauge tracks to board gauge.

The DSA stadium, the walls of which are a series of mushroom-shaped pillars depicting the ruins of the Kachari Kingdom of Dimapur, the Orchid Garden, and Sontila tribal villages are a photographers' delight. Thuruk is





Even the new Haflong railway station is beautifully located in the lower valley of the town.

“  
**As IATO members, we vouch for responsible tourism in such sensitive places by restricting the movements of tourists to a limited group size**  
”

As IATO members, we vouch for responsible tourism in such sensitive places by restricting the movements of tourists to a limited group size as per the carrying capacity of the destination so that the tourists do not leave any negative impact on the culture of native people or disturb the pristine nature, thereby aiming for inclusive tourism.

Shooting for the Bollywood movie Rangoon was done in Panimur, also known as the mini Niagra Falls of the North East. The Kopili river transforms into a thrilling waterfall here, and it is a hotspot for watersports activities such as kayaking, but only for professionals.





# INDIA: THE LAND OF LURE AND CHARM

There is enigma to be explored, provided, we are willing to step off the tourist track. Here is a suggestion on a couple of venues that could be incorporated as part of tour packages when travelling through these respective regions.

## ■ IATO Bureau



Continuing our endeavour as initiated in our last newsletter, we would encourage our fraternity to express creativity in the products that they are offering to their clients. It is important not to get caught in selling the run of the mill tours, where there is hardly any difference between the products that one sells and those of another vendor. India is a land of lure and charm. There is enigma to be explored, provided, we are willing to step off the tourist track. Here is a suggestion on a couple of venues that could be incorporated as part of tour packages when travelling through these respective regions.

1. Dewalokam (<http://dewalokam.com/>). This is an eco-friendly home stay created on the principles of sustainability and responsibility. Dewalokam is one of the few places in Kerala where the local community is directly employed. Also, this is the only working organic farm in Kerala where the meat, vegetables, fruits, milk, and honey are produced and harvested for the guests. Here, you can go for activities like guided forest treks, gardening, bamboo rafting, spice walks, as well as cycling. The Ayurvedic herb garden has a lot of rare and precious plants that are used for

in-house ayurvedic treatments. The home stay is closed due to the pandemic, but, is expected to open up in 2022.

2. Also as a part of your schedule between Udaipur and Jodhpur a jewel enroute would be a sojourn at Sardargarh (<http://www.sardargarh.in>). Here we step off the tourist tracks to visit back of Rajasthan, where life is as it used to be 3-4 centuries back. Your stay would be in the former home of the erstwhile royals of Rajasthan. The palace is replete with character, and old world charm. You would walk out of the building and step into a town of the past. The feudal respect that the locals still have for the Royals as well as the disarming hospitality of the people would be akin to experiencing a 'Living Museum'. The people in Rajasthan are colourful and photogenic. In fact, if your guests are interested in taking pictures — this is heaven on Earth.

At Sardargarh, we recommend a short ride on a village train that passes through fascinating countryside as well as villages. The train clings on to the hills, and is popular with western travellers, especially when the monkeys from the neighbouring temples hitch hike a ride on the train.





## ANDHRA PRADESH CHAPTER

Chapter Chairman, Andhra Pradesh and Telangana was invited at a workshop under "Dekho Apna Desh" which will focus on Destination Development on September 1 and 2, 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.

## UTTAR PRADESH CHAPTER

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



## TELANGANA CHAPTER

Message from Chapter Chair Telangana and Andhra Pradesh Tourism Minister, Kishan Reddy, inaugurated the Golf games, today at Hyderabad.



## MAHARASHTRA CHAPTER

Chapter Chair Maharashtra attended J&K tourism event today



## RAJASTHAN CHAPTER

Co-Chair Rajasthan Chapter spoke at the meet



## KARNATAKA CHAPTER

Congratulations Chapter Chair Karnataka for runner-up award for best Gujarat inbound tour operator outside Gujarat



## MAHARASHTRA CHAPTER

Congratulations Chapter Chair Maharashtra



## NORTH EAST CHAPTER



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 August 13, 2021 at 9:00 pm

Arunachal Pradesh focusing on Anjaw district



Nagaland focusing on Kiphire district



## NORTH EAST STATES CHAPTER

IATO North East Chapter Meeting



## NORTH EAST STATES CHAPTER

Rajiv Mehra in conversation with Tourism Minister of Assam Bimal Bora at Guwahati



## UTTAR PRADESH CHAPTER

Mr Partik Hira Chapter Chair Uttar Pradesh being acknowledged by the Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh for his contribution to tourism



## JAMMU AND KASHMIR CHAPTER

IATO Chapter Chair J&K in Mumbai for a Road Show



## IATO AYODHYA TOUR



## BIHAR & JHARKHAND CHAPTER CHAIR

On the first Chapter Chair of J&K had a meeting with the Tourism Minister, Govt of India, and Addl DG and was the spokesperson on behalf of all the Tour Operator Bodies and deliberated on key issues

- MDA to be enhanced up to 50 per cent
- One time bailout: Package to be given besides interest waiver and interest free loans to stand up again.
- Tour Operators is the only tourism society which retained its staff paid salaries and even sold assets & jewellery to pay to staff only to ensure they don't turn up anti nationals or work against the society.
- Business loss insurance is important besides Govt should restart confidence building measures to bring back tourism immediately with removing travel restrictions at the earliest.
- Hon'ble Tourism Minister was also requested that he should take up with FINMIN to remove 5% GST on the packages tour operators lose business since clients book directly with hotels to save from this 5 per cent menace


घाटशिला 01-10-2021

### पर्यटन की संभावनाओं को लेकर लखाईडीह गांव पहुंचे टूर ऑपरेटर्स

ग्रामीणों के साथ किया मंथन, रूपरेखा तैयार की

भास्कर न्यूनज | मुलावनी

डुमरिया प्रखंड के लखाईडीह गांव में पर्यटन को बढ़ावा देने को लेकर इंडियन एसोसिएशन ऑफ टूर ऑपरेटर्स बिहार झारखंड के अध्यक्ष सुनील कुमार सिंह प्रतिनिधि के रूप में गांव वालों से मिलने पहुंचे। मनोरंजन मंत्रालय टूर ऑपरेटर्स के तरफ से लखाईडीह गांव पहुंच कर उनके साथ रॉक क्लाइंबिंग के ट्रेकिंग ट्रेनर दयानंद मिश्रा और उनके सहयोगी टीम के सदस्य भी शामिल

जोड़ने और इससे होने वाले रोजगार से ग्रामीणों को होने वाले अधिक लाभ पर चर्चा की गयी। साथी ही गांव के युवाओं को रॉक क्लाइंबिंग, ट्रेकिंग कराने की बातें कही गईं। ग्राम प्रधान कान्हु राम टुडू ने इस अवसर पर बताया कि लखाईडीह गांव में आने वाले पर्यटकों को हमारे गांव अतिथि देवो भव: की तर्ज पर स्वागत सस्कार करेगा। हम लोग अपने गांव के साथ आस पास के जनजातीय बहुल इलाकों के गांव को भी इससे जोड़ने का काम करेंगे।



## SOUTH CHAPTER



Regional Chairman South represented IATO for the Southern regional tourism ministers conference.

He had the opportunity to present the issues which tourism Industry was facing more focused on Southern region .

- 1) Uniform interstate tax when vehicles move from one state to other. Though national GO has come of one tax one country some states are still charging entry tax . Requested union minister to speak with those state to follow the one tax policy.
- 2) Remove quarantine for those tourist who are not fully vaccinated but having RTPCR negative report.
- 3) Reduce GST for hotels to 5 per cent for two years so that India be more competitive when compared to international market.
- 4) To reconsider SEIS rate to 7 per cent , which was reduced to 5 per cent.
- 5) To have common pandemic protocol policy, while entering different states of India . To

-PCR negative test required by Karnataka.

6) With new system of QR code scanning to buy tickets at ASI monuments requesting put free wifi so tourist are not deprived of getting tickets.

7) All ports to have common policy so that cruise ships can have better experience while visiting India.

8) Government of India to accord industry status to Tourism.

9) Announcing the dates of festivals in advance so better promotion can be done.

Most of the points got positive response and some action is hoped see in one weeks time (this what was promised).

However with regard to quarantine, the minister was clear at the moment that no change will be made. The authorities will relook only by December. Also he said India has not announced opening of International borders so date of schedule of flight opening will be announced soon.



# NEPAL

Sales have increased in colourful curio shops of Thamel, the tourist ghetto, while hotels have seen an improvement in occupancy rate with Christmas and New Year around the corner. As many as 66,000 foreign tourists visited Nepal in first eight months of 2021.

■ **IATO Bureau** (From Navaraj Shrestha, Kathmandu)

**C**OVID-19 has affected everyone's life one way or other. Many industries are struggling through the changing business scenario. Among them, the tourism industry is the one which was hit the most. Nepal is no exception. Many tourism employees have lost their jobs, several business have shut, and many hotels still remain uncertain of reopening. There are many more examples of the coronavirus effect.

However on the brighter side, Nepal is recovering in an unexpected way. It has become the choice of adventure lovers. About 66,000 foreign tourists visited Nepal in first eight months of 2021 for trekking and mountaineering expedition.

Many more inquiries were received for spring 2022, showing the coming of brighter days. "This way we might return to pre-pandemic level in a year," Dr. Dhananjay Regmi, CEO, Nepal Tourism Board, said.

Thamel, the tourist ghetto, has begun to come alive with varieties of international cuisine, coffee shops and melody of music, which goes on till late night. Colourful curio shops, including Thangka paintings, *Khukuri* (typical Nepali knife), Pashmina, and

Himalayan Herb Tea have begun to increase their sales.

Hotels have seen improvement in occupancy and ready to celebrate Christmas and New Year 2022 in a grand way. Among total arrivals, Indian tourists occupy a large number in Nepal.

We share a unique and free international border with India, many Indian tourists visit Nepal via flight and surface. A drive of between eight and nine hours from the border takes them to the lake city of Pokhara.

Pokhara is an adventure sports enthusiast's paradise. It is the gateway to world famous Annapurna Trekking region. This apart, the tourists can indulge in many other adventure activities, including Paragliding, Ultralight Flying, Bungee Jumping, Rafting, helicopter rides among others, which are becoming increasingly popular, especially with youth.

Phewa lake in Pokhara is famous for boating, and the lakeside street is full of hotels, restaurants, music, dance, and more.

Temple Tree Resort & Spa, which is a 5-Star Deluxe Property on the lakeside is a 'home away from home'.



Phewa lake, Pokhara



Mardi Himal High Camp





Sarangkot



A flight takes travellers on a mesmerising view of the Mount Everest

Pashupatinath temple, Dakshinkali temple, and Manokamana temple, popular among Indian tourists, are seeing crowds of devotees. Many Nepalese travellers are on the move to popular trekking destinations such as Mardi Himal in the Annapurna region, Namche Bazar in the Everest region. Jeeps in Muktinath temple region are rushing to transport the pilgrims.

We in Nepal, are hopeful, along with India, and the whole world, that our tourism industry will recover soon.

### **Pokhara**

Phewa lake in Pokhara region is famous for boating, and the lakeside street is full of hotels, restaurants, music, and dance, among others.

Temple Tree Resort & Spa, which is a 5-Star Deluxe Property on the lakeside is a 'home away from home'.

Mardi Himal High Camp situated at an altitude of 3,550 metre above sea level is the newly opened trekking route. The camp can be reached by a three-day trek or a 15-minute helicopter ride from Pokhara.

It is praised for short duration trek to view the magnificent Mount Annapurna and Machhapuchhere or Fishtail mountain. The more adventurous may opt to hike another 2.5 hours

to Mardi Himal Base Camp at 4,500 metres above sea level.

Manokamana Temple, which lies in between Kathmandu-Pokhara-Chitwan highway (approximately 140 km, four hours drive from Kathmandu, 100 km drive from Pokhara and 45 km two hours drive from Chitwan) is accessible by 15 minutes of cable car ride.

One having plenty of time can opt to climb for approximately 3.5 hours to reach there. It is believed that Manakamana Devi fulfills the wishes of the devotees who visit the temple for darshan.

Sarangkot a popular view point above Pokhara city is famous for the Sunrise view over the Himalayas, including Mount Dhaulagiri, Mount Annapurna and Mount Machapuchare (also known as Fishtail Mountain).

Below you can view Pokhara city under the clouds and on the other side is the Seti River Valley. Enjoying a lavish morning breakfast with the view is travellers dream.


### **Everest Mountain Flight**

One of the must-see landmarks is the Mount Everest — the highest peak in the world. An awe-stricken silence falls as the flight takes the tourists over Nepal's Eastern Himalayan Ranges where some of the highest mountains peaks in the world, including Mount Everest, are located.

“  
**Pokhara is an adventure sports enthusiast's paradise. The tourists can indulge in many adventure activities, including Paragliding, Ultralight Flying, Bungee Jumping, Rafting, helicopter rides among others**  
”







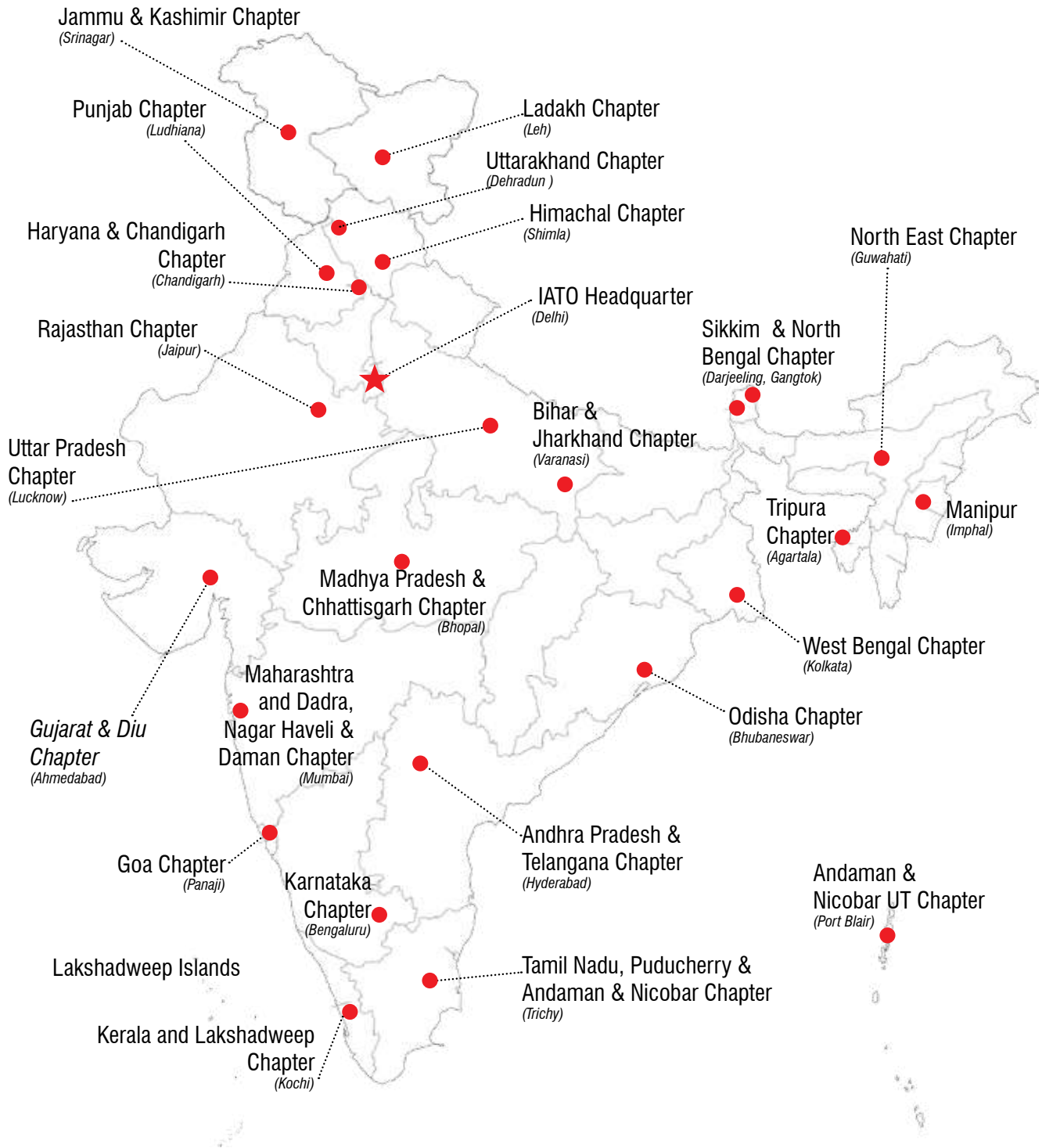
**36<sup>th</sup>**  
**IATO Annual  
Convention**  
**at**  
**The Leela Gandhinagar,  
Gujarat**

BLOCK THESE DATES  
**16 to 19 December 2021**



# INDIAN ASSOCIATION OF TOUR OPERATORS

## Offices and chapters across the country



For reference list of Regional Chapter Chairmen, State Chapter Chairmen, Co-Chairmen, state-in-charge is available on: <https://iato.in/pages/view/14>