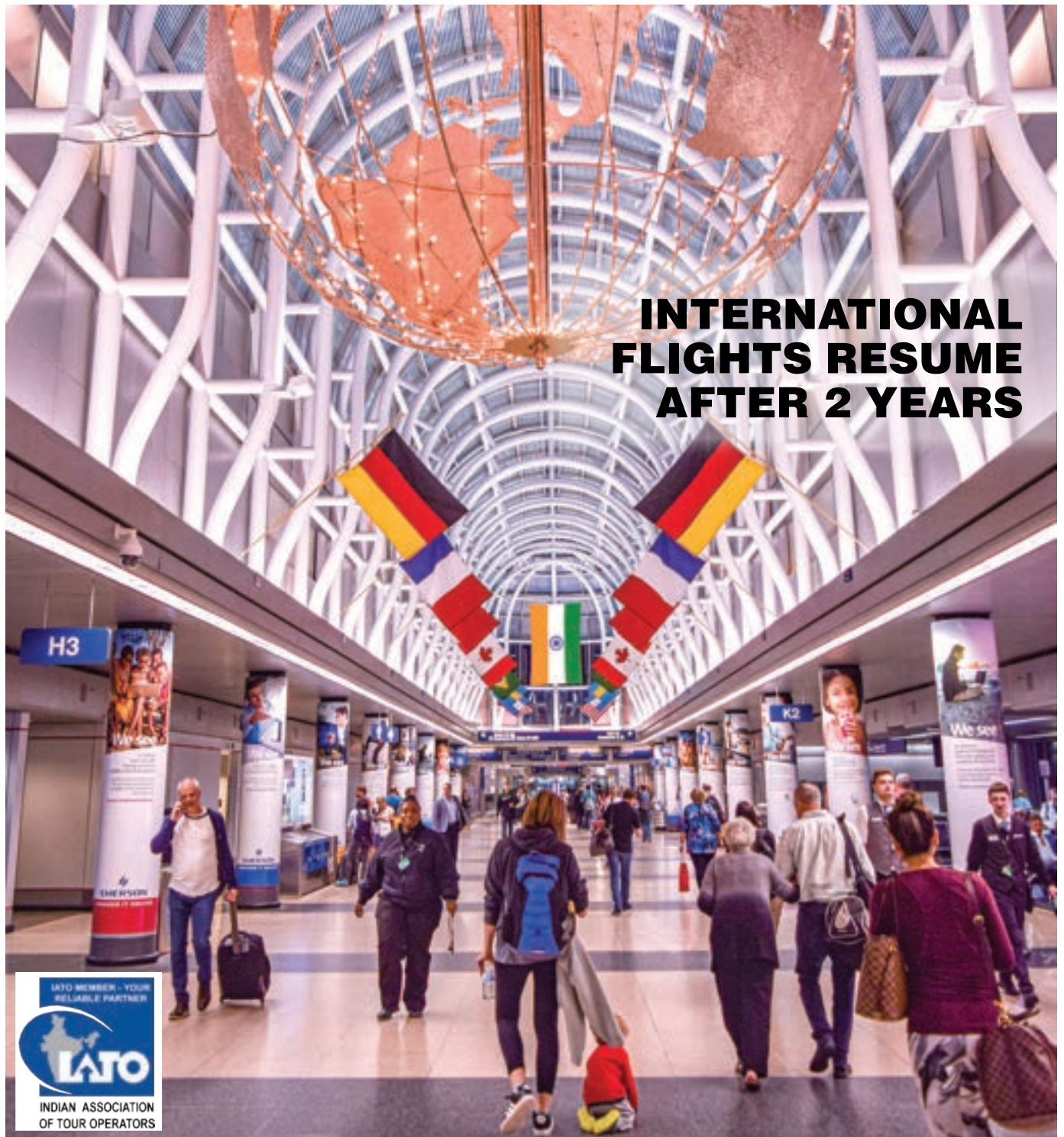




IATO

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

SPEAKS



**INTERNATIONAL
FLIGHTS RESUME
AFTER 2 YEARS**





37TH
IATO ANNUAL CONVENTION
AT
BENGALURU

TENTATIVELY IN
SEPTEMBER 2022



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President's Message



Dear Friends

Dear members,

India has finally opened its doors for foreign tourists. Now we can all get ready to market the country among all tourist destinations and patiently wait for the tourists to visit India. This summer is indeed going to be a tough one for all the agents, both old and young, to put India back on their itinerary.

The Union Ministry of Tourism has recently embarked on some virtual roadshows in 10 countries through their new marketing offices. The Indian embassies will get the new/existing travel agents promoting outbound in their respective countries.

The ministry has taken its own marketing initiatives, and all of us should contribute in this regard. I request you to go a step forward and request your clients to return to India. These old customers would send the correct messages to their peer groups and consumers at large to come and visit India.

IATO has been spearheading these activities with the ministry and we hope that most of our suggestions will bear fruit.

Decks have been cleared so that our customers can come to India without facing visa troubles, and get a seamless exit from the airport as the government has done away with the COVID-19 mandatory tests.

Your association has planned some activities in the next few months, and we would request all of you to participate so that together, we come out as winners.

Till next time be safe and we will meet soon again with a big smile.

With warm regards !

Your President


JANUARY

❖ All active members were detailed on the Taj Hotels Promo Code Special Rates for IATO members, with a booking link for the IATO promo code and a link for terms and conditions.

❖ IATO, represented by Rajnish Kaistha and Ravi Gosain, offered its viewpoint at the Incredible India Digital Marketing Platform VC meeting called by the Additional Secretary for Tourism.

❖ All active members were informed about the FAM trip to Divya Kashi Yatra by Deluxe Tourist Train from 22-25 January 2022.



❖ E.M. Najeeb addressed the webinar organised by the Embassy of Dakar and talked about medical tourism.

❖ Sunil Mishra addressed the webinar on National Tourism Day. It was organised by HCI, Nairobi. The theme of the webinar was tourist and cultural destinations in India.

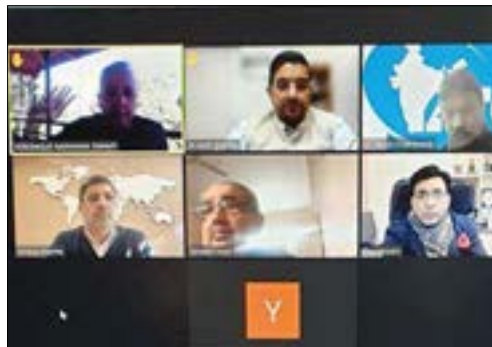
❖ Rajnish Kaistha addressed a webinar on the attractions of Indian tourism, which was organised by the High Commission of Bulgaria.

❖ Rajiv Mehra and Ravi Gosain offered their inputs to the Secretary, Ministry of Tourism, during the virtual meeting on 27 January 2022, with the stakeholders to seek inputs for preparing a Vision Plan for 2047 for the tourism sector.

❖ A Webinar-Vivanta Sikkim Pakyong was held on Friday, 28 January 2012.

FEBRUARY

❖ A meeting of the IATO Road Shows and Overseas Promotion Committee was held on 4 February 2022 on Zoom.



❖ The IHCL Webinar on amā Stays & Trails was held for the IATO Members on 7 February 2022 on Zoom.

❖ All allied members (tour operators and travel agents) were detailed on the Taj Hotels' Promo Code Special Rates for IATO members as well as Promo Code Special Rates for the IATO allied members (tour operators and travel agents) (for the Taj, SeleQtions, and Vivanta hotels) were also finalised.

❖ Rajiv Mehra and Ravi Gosain attended a virtual meeting under the chairmanship of the Additional Director General (Tourism) that took place on 9 February 2022 regarding the Loan Guarantee Scheme for COVID-affected Tourism Service Sector (LGSCATSS).

❖ All members were informed on the extension of the validity of the Union Ministry of Tourism's recognition and approval in relation to all categories of service providers (tour operators, travel agents, and tourist transport operators) till 30 June 2022 during the ongoing COVID-19.

❖ All members were informed of the MoHFW revised guidelines

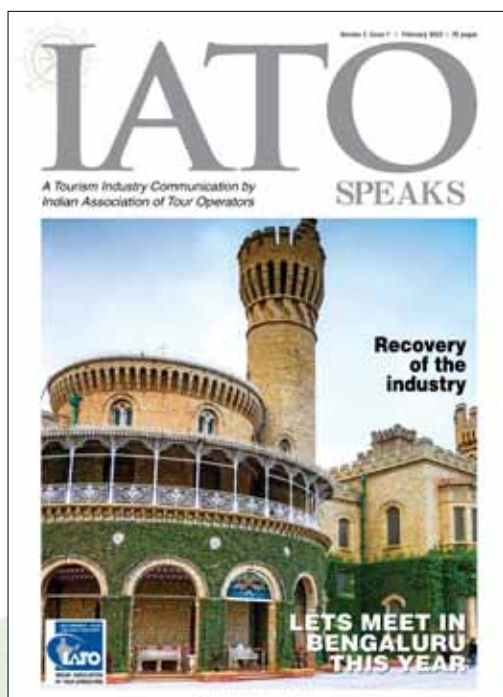
for international arrivals dated 10 February 2019. The 7-day quarantine clause was removed for all nationals.

❖ On regular follow-up by IATO with the government, MoHFW guidelines for international arrivals are revised. As per the revised guideline clause, seven days quarantine has been removed for all nationals and the list of high-risk countries has also been removed, which is good for us as there were some key source markets in the list of high-risk countries.

❖ All active members were detailed on the Invitation for India Travel Mart (ITM) Dehradun, 17-19 February 2022.

❖ All members recognised by the Union Ministry of Tourism were informed on the issuance of the Commercial Airport Entry Pass (AEP) to tour operators and hotels.

❖ IATOSpeaks – February 2022 Edition was circulated to all members.



❖ All members were requested to participate in the Study on the Revival of Tour Operators post-COVID-19.

❖ All members were informed about their registration as buyers for SATTE 2022 being held from 18–20 May 2022 at Greater Noida.

❖ All members were informed about the IMT M 2022-International Tourism Exhibition in Tel Aviv, Israel, 29–30 March 2022.

❖ All active members were asked to submit a piece of information needed by the Ministry of Finance to consider the removal of GST on services provided in neighbouring countries.

❖ IATO had an important meeting with Joint Secretary (TRU), Union Ministry of Finance discuss the removal of the cascading effect of GST on the tourism industry and the withdrawal of tax collection at source (TCS) for foreign tourists. On the removal of the cascading effect of GST on the tourism industry, IATO mentioned that GST is to be levied at 18 per cent on 10 per cent mark-up, i.e., only to charge at 1.8 per cent GST on tour operators services.

A small correction is to be made in the conditions prescribed against the 5 per cent GST notified for tour operator services as there is an anomaly in the notification for the removal of GST on services provided outside India to foreign tourists. On the issue of GST removal on services provided outside India, IATO requested that GST/IGST be fully exempted on the services provided outside India, i.e., in neighbouring countries, even if the package includes an India tour. As a result of the tax exemption, bookings would come to Indian tour operators instead of such bookings going to tour operators based in neighbouring countries. This will add considerable foreign exchange for the country.

All points were well taken. However, the Joint Secretary (TRU) has asked IATO the percentage of foreign exchange being paid to Nepal, Bhutan, Sri Lanka, Maldives, or other

neighbouring countries out of the total combined package tour cost, in addition to how much business IATO members lost as a result of GST on outbound services.

❖ All members were apprised of the pending refund from The Lalit Hotels and were requested to send the HOTEL WISE details to the IATO office by 24 February 2022.

❖ All active members were informed about the invitation from PHDCCI for the Border Tourism Conclave from 27 February to 1 March 2022, at Royal Desert Camp, Jaisalmer, Rajasthan.

❖ All members were requested to contribute towards the contents of IATO Speaks (the IATO Newsletter).

❖ A virtual training programme on Taj Hotels Promo Code Special Rates for IATO members was held on Friday, 25 February 2022 on Zoom. All members (tour operators and travel agents) were informed. All active members were informed about the FAM tour for promoting Maharashtra Tourism.

❖ Celebrating Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav, the Union Ministry of Tourism and the Association of Indian Universities organised the seventh episode 'Explore India, Discover Yourself' from the 12-episode webinar series, followed by a quiz.

MARCH

❖ On the request of IATO LG. Ajay Bhatt, Hon'ble Minister of State for Tourism, who is also MOS for Defence, Secretary MOT and Secretary Civil Aviation, a review on the resurfacing modalities of Andaman Airport would be undertaken pending which runway closure from 8 March 2022 was suspended. A new NOTAM for a runway closure from 1400 hours to 0080 hours the next day, from 8-11 March, was issued.

❖ Under the aegis of IATO (TS & AP chapter), the "Buddhist sites in Telangana state" seminar was conducted in collaboration with Telugu University to 15 RLGs, five state guides, and 10 tourism students in Hyderabad on 5 March 2022.



❖ IATO also requested Secretary, Union Ministry of Tourism to take up the matter with NGT to allow registration of diesel vehicles with an All India Tourist Permit (AITP) in Delhi.

❖ IATO wrote to Arvind Singh, Secretary of Tourism, and offered suggestions for the Draft National Tourism Policy.

❖ All members were informed regarding the pending refund of the advance paid for wildlife safaris to the Rajasthan government. IATO was following up on the subject, and it was asked to provide a list of its members whose refunds were pending. Members whose refunds were pending with the Rajasthan government were requested to send the details in a prescribed format to the IATO Office by 17 March 2022.

The Postcard



Bhalku Ram's wonder

The landscape was wet with a light drizzle, streaks of random sunlight came darting towards us through the tall trees. In the distance, slate-roofed huts kept appearing and disappearing from our sight.

There were five other people in the cabin. A newly-wed Punjabi couple making the best of their marital status through the dark tunnels, the bride's flustered face revealed their intimate escapades every time the train emerged from a tunnel. An elderly couple, who kept yawning and seemed quite bored with the unhurried speed of their journey. And a middle-aged lady holding onto a frisky toddler, who kept trying to reach for the ball of yarn in her hand. A pink throated Rosy-pipet flew into the cabin at one of the hillside stations diverting the toddler's attention.

Patches of tiny clouds hung in the valley. Our mini-locomotive slowly made its way up through the hills, crossing over gothic style bridges, winding along curves, and passing through countless tunnels. It chugged along on its narrow rail-track, whistling through deodars, pines, oaks and conifers, enveloping our senses in the exhilarating fragrance of surrounding woods. Petit rail-stations and quaint hamlets passed by, as we continued our mountain voyage towards the erstwhile traces of a British era hill station perched at 2,206 metres on a ridge. Briefly halting at tidy hillside platforms, it kept playing hide-and-seek with the sunrays.

The images that met our eyes, seemed right out of a fairy tale picture book. It felt like being inside a magnified Hornby's model-railway set, rolling through neatly arranged rail tracks, picturesque villages, misty landscapes, fancy rail stations, dramatic bridges and arch tunnels; everything seemed neatly rescaled and embedded into the hilly folds. The toddler's attention returned back to the yarn, he threw it out of the wide window. It suddenly became dark again, as we entered another tunnel.

In the darkness, we could sense the phantom ghost of 'Bhalku Ram', the shepherd from Jhajja village near Chail, who during 1890-1903, had single-handedly guided the British engineers, lay the Kalka Shimla narrow gauge railway track (recognised by UNESCO). Negotiating steep inclines, it went through 107 tunnels and 864 bridges, and connected the plains to the Himalayas. It was his extraordinary skill and unfailing understanding of the local terrain, that made the 'British Raj' pull off this 'unique feat of engineering'. Repeatedly failing to establish the correct alignments of the tunnels while starting to dig from both ends, the 'British' had to seek the help of 'Bhalku Ram'. Legend has it, that he had mastered the instinct of tapping on the side of hill slope with a solid wooden staff; by listening to its sounds, he would mark the points at both ends to begin digging. Not once did he falter in the alignments. A primitive and unschooled local non-engineer, the British Viceroy himself, awarded the man. After the completion of the rail-track, Bhalku Ram disappeared mysteriously. It remains a grossly awakening intrigue till date.

There was a long whistle, the locomotive pulled into Shimla station. A Kashmiri looking porter in grey kham dress topped with a short sadari hopped into the cabin. The Punjabi couple began to gather their luggage. The youngster started jumping with excitement, his mother lifted him in her arms. The elderly man waved at a small group of school students patiently awaiting him at the platform, his wife woke up suddenly from her slumber. We quickly disembarked and headed straight for Bhalku Rail Museum nearby.

The next afternoon we came across the same elderly man, he was walking on the mall, wearing a colourful local cap. Greeting us warmly, he remarked *"Shimla mein bahut kuch hae dekhne ko ji, angrez to chale gaye par kai nishaniyan choord gaye yahn"* (Shimla has a lot to discover sir, the Britishers finally went away, but they left behind many traces of their presence here).

The elderly man was the headmaster of some school and seemed to know the town like the back of his hand, we took off on a brief discovery walk to the places he mentioned. We had nil idea that we were about to see places, where our history had been made.

It was astonishing to learn that the Viceregal Lodge located on the observatory hill, had electricity as early as 1888, much before rest of Shimla received it, and it was here in one of its rooms that the decision of 1947 to carve out Pakistan from 'India', had been taken. And Peterhoff, the tudor style building of 1800s, built by the British, had housed several Viceroys and Governor Generals, and after our independence, this building had served as the Punjab High Court where the trial of Nathuram Godse, the assassin of Mahatama Gandhi had taken place, and he had been sentenced to death thereafter.

It became cloudy and began to drizzle, we rushed towards Annadale ground, which the British had named after their Annandale valley, in their County of Dumfries, back in Scotland. It had become their playground for social events, fête champêtre type garden parties and entertainment, where they hosted horse races, polo matches and cricket, in an extravagant display of their imperial lifestyle fueled on Indian wealth and slavery.

Daylight began to fade, the distant landscape turned into silhouette. A Himalayan pied-woodpecker rushed out of its nesting-hole, screeching its way towards another tree. The drizzle stopped, we thought of 'Balku Ram' and the 'train-track'; had he not guided the British colonisers, not much of what Shimla is, would be.



*The author, Neelam Thakur (Neel) has been a devoted Tourism and Travel professional for over 3½ decades.
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Author Note

This is a good time to rewrite the somewhat over glorified 'British Raj' tales in India, with far more deserving and more appealing, factual narratives of the lesser known native facts. Its also time to erase our British enslaved mindsets, and take daring new initiatives to think, create, and promote products, that highlight the informations which have remained lost under many of their glorified narratives. "Namaste World", India is ready to welcome you. We have so much more to tell you, than you know.



THE PATH OF MENTORING AND MEANDERING



■ IATO Bureau (Sourced by Tapas Banerjee)

Whenever we climb up the professional ladder, one of the most frequently asked questions is what the definition of 'professional wisdom' is and how one acquires it? To summarise, a professional is someone who works in an occupation that requires a high level of training and proficiency. While not axiomatic, 'wisdom' seemingly emerges from a professional foundation or reaches some maturity through a 'hard-earned', growing pains process or journey that enriches both the intellect and the heart. 'Integrity' and 'character' are two key elements of the processes shaping a wise personality that exudes wisdom.

course would only lead to a downward trajectory.

Character: It is the expression of one's temperament and vitality, such as the degree of pessimism and optimism, helplessness or hopefulness, as well as a capacity for authentic, empathetic connection, and so on; it is especially shaped through interaction with others. Hence, it is important to surround oneself with positive influences. These would invariably arise from within if you allowed extraneous



influences to affect you. It is entirely up to you to decide which influences to imbibe and which to reject. Character blossoms in solitude when you introspect deep within and examine the forces around you. The long distance runner derives his strength from his isolation.

Wisdom is a lifelong journey, not a set destination or a personality trait shown by a score or grade, and especially by material achievements. Of course, wisdom

”

Character blossoms in solitude when you introspect deep within and examine the forces around you. It is up to you to decide which influences to imbibe and which to reject

”



Integrity: It reflects a strong inner compass, clear values, and an ethical system, as well as an integrated sense of self capable of being or standing alone; it is especially forged in solitude. Hence, whatever steps we take in the course of doing business with our clients should be backed up by our integrity.

If we conduct business in which we fall in the eyes of others, we will fall in our eyes sooner or later. Such commercial or even personal transactions would struggle to withstand the pressure of time. You would undoubtedly fly above the heavens, but without integrity, you would float like a kite with its strings cut. Your unassailable



is often situational, that is, one may be a sage in practices of work and foolish in matters of love. Now that we have defined wisdom, let us identify the role of 'mentoring' and 'meandering' in wisdom generation. Most of us associate mentoring with a knowledgeable and understanding supervisor or senior colleague (or teacher, coach, and therapist, among others) who took us under their wing. This individual shared ideas and experience, assisted us in bandaging wounds, and helped us get back on our feet after a daunting learning curve challenge.

They also offered practical shortcuts based on more time spent on the battle lines. For many, this individual becomes a role model, affecting both our professional substance and style, especially during our formative years. Accepting mentorship, on the other hand, entails drawbacks as well. Embracing a mentor's approach completely, whether because the mentor is seen as Guru or it is easier to follow a known or safe-track, may thwart the development of one's own personality and confidence to explore.

In contrast to mentorship, meandering (or charting one's own course) can lead to the development of skills, experience, and, ultimately, wisdom, less through coaching and more through on-the-job training, especially while flying solo. A meandering learning curve, predictably, has a longer duration, unexpected detours and learning paths, and a higher frequency of errors.

In contrast to mentoring, through meandering (or charting one's own course) one may evolve skills, experience and, ultimately,

some wisdom, less by coaching and more by on the job training, especially when (mostly) flying solo. A meandering learning curve, not surprisingly, is often of longer duration, with unexpected detours and learning paths and has greater frequency of errors.

In conclusion, true and unique wisdom comes from a combination



of mentorship and meandering. While the mentor's personal behaviour may inspire you and offer thoughts and possibilities that you had not considered, do not allow your mentor to dissolve themselves into your existence. This will kill the opportunity for you to become a unique example or mentor oneself. Keep in mind that your mentor is from the past. You are the present, lunging towards an unknown future.

As a result, while the mentor builds your foundation, you must fly out of the nest, make mistakes, learn from them, befriend the vultures, and make a mark for yourself. The way you execute this over a succession of events and time grants you 'professional wisdom'. You are ready to transform yourself into a mentor to a new generation of professionals, some of whom may meander as you did. ❖

”
While the mentor's behaviour may inspire you and offer thoughts that you had not considered, do not allow your mentor to dissolve themselves into your existence
”





CALL FOR ENHANCED REGIONAL CONNECTIVITY UNDER UDAN

In response to a communication from Assistant Director General (TT), Ministry of Tourism, IATO offered its inputs on the Regional Connectivity Scheme under UDAN.

IATO recommends adding the following sectors under the Regional Connectivity Scheme of UDAN:

- Jhansi-Khajuraho-Khajuraho
- Lucknow-Khajuraho-Lucknow
- Varanasi-Khajuraho-Varanasi
- Agra-Khajuraho-Agra
- Gwalior-Khajuraho-Gwalior

Other recommendations were:

- A new airstrip should be developed and connected with the main city of India to the Statue of Unity. City: Kevadia,

district: Narmada, state: Gujarat.

- A new airstrip should be built and linked to Dwarka from India's main cities. City: Dwarka, district: Dev Bhumi Dwarka, state: Gujarat.

- There was only one flight from Mumbai to Bhuj. More flights should be added.

- Keshod airport in Gujarat required more connectivity as it is close to Sasan Gir, Somnath, Junagadh, Pinjore Airfield and Flying Club, and Pinjore. ❖

”

There was only one flight from Mumbai to Bhuj. More flights should be added

”

EXTENSION OF MOT RECOGNITION

IATO has requested that the validity of MOT recognition for tour operators be extended until 30 June 2022, and that the guidelines for MOT recognition for service providers be revised.

IATO called the ADG Tourism's attention to its prior communications dated 30 September-28 December 2021, urging that tour operators and other tourism service providers be granted extension until 31 March 2022, whose validity expired or was about to expire in the interim.

As international flight operations had not begun, the balance sheet, forex requirements, and other documents for FY2019-20 were not evaluated for granting an extension until 30 June 2022.

IATO also advised the ADG of a pending request to ease the conditions for service provider recognition. Qualifying criteria for MOT recognition for tourism service providers will be relaxed for qualified staff, and those who have completed a certificate course from the Tourism & Hospitality Skill Council (THSC) will be deemed qualified staff. In this regard, the Union Ministry of Skill Development also sent a letter to the Secretary of Tourism, but the matter was still pending with the TT Division. ❖

”

IATO advised ADG of pending request to ease conditions for service provider recognition

”

SUPPORT INBOUND TOURISM INDUSTRY, A PRESSING PRIORITY

IATO has written to Hon'ble Prime Minister Narendra Modi, requesting assistance for inbound tourism industry, which is suffering from severe financial crisis and is battling for existence, as well as preferential treatment for inbound tour operators.

The IATO requested for financial assistance to incoming tour operators and, as asked in its letter of 11 January 2022, IATO reaffirmed and demanded financial assistance for inbound tour operators so that they could

exist until the inbound tourism industry was resurrected.

According to the request, at least 75 per cent of wages earned in fiscal year 2019-20 should be awarded as a one-time gift.

In light of the departure of SEIS, a special status for inbound tour operators has been proposed, as well as an incentive of seven-10 per cent of net foreign exchange earnings during a financial year be offered, and that the new policy be reintroduced to evaluate this proposal. ❖



Hon'ble Prime Minister Narendra Modi

”
At least 75% of wages earned in FY2019-20 should be awarded as a one-time gift
”

REOPENING OF ANDAMAN AND NICOBAR

IATO has asked Jitendra Narain, Chief Secretary, Andaman and Nicobar Administration, to schedule the opening of tourist attractions in Emerald Islands in phases, in accordance with COVID-19 hygiene and safety guidelines.

IATO said that the tourism business has been in a grave crisis since March 2020 as a result of the pandemic, and that the Andaman tourism industry has only had an eight-month window in the last two years.

Due to the Omicron variant, all tourist places were closed from the first week of January, putting stakeholders in a financial bind.

However, as the overall scenario started to improve,

IATO requested for a calibrated reopening of tourist spots in the South and Middle Andaman districts, as well as the North and Middle Andaman districts, beginning in February 2022, with strict adherence to the necessary COVID-19 safety protocols.

The number of tourists at each tourist point should be capped in a bid to avoid overcrowding. As the situation improves, the authorities may relax the restrictions as they see fit. ❖



Jitendra Narain
Chief Secretary
Andaman and Nicobar Administration



SEEKING FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR INBOUND TOUR OPERATORS

IATO has asked Arvind Singh, Secretary of State for Tourism, to assist inbound tourism industry, which is going through severe financial crisis and is battling to stay afloat.



Arvind Singh
Secretary, Union Ministry of Tourism

”
Some overseas travellers would visit India, and some business would be generated
”

IATO requested the Ministry's aid in pressing three issues with the Hon'ble Prime Minister or the respective ministries in order to support incoming tour operators, as it was becoming increasingly difficult to exist without government financial assistance. The three issues include:

1. The government should provide financial assistance to inbound tour operators in order for them to survive until the inbound tourism industry recovers. IATO requested that at least 75 per cent of the wages paid in the financial year 2019-20 be given as a one-time grant.
2. Special status for the inbound tour operators to be given under which an incentive of 7- 10 per cent of the net foreign

exchange earnings during a financial year might be given and to reintroduce the new policy to consider our request.

3. International travellers arriving from non-high-risk countries who have received both vaccination doses and uploaded a negative COVID-19 RT-PCR report of testing completed within 72 hours of departure should not be quarantined for seven days. If no symptoms are identified after thermal scanning at the airport in India, passengers should be permitted to depart the airport, and foreign travellers from high-risk nations should be quarantined at home for seven days. Some overseas travellers would visit India, and some business would be generated to help the country survive. ❖

CREATE WINDOWS TO SELL DUTY SCRIPS

IATO has asked Santosh Kumar Sarangi, Director General of Foreign Trade, to establish a window exclusively for tour operators to trade tariff scrips.

”
Brokers have capitalised on their fears by encouraging members to stockpile scrips for profit
”

IATO requested that the appropriate authorities give the necessary instructions to open the window for the sale of duty scrips, allowing tour operators to sell them at genuine market prices between 2015 and 2018. This was especially important because IATO

members were facing liquidity concerns, and brokers were capitalising on their fears by encouraging them to stockpile scrips for profit. IATO wrote to Amit Yadav on 27 December 2021, and 11 January 2022, advising him that the problem was being looked at. ❖



NEED TO REVISE MOHFW GUIDELINES

IATO has urged Arvind Singh, Secretary of State for Tourism, to update MOHFW guidelines for the international visitors arriving in India.

IATO drew Arvind Singh's attention to IATO's letter of January 24, 2022, as well as its letter to Hon'ble Prime Minister Narendra Modi, in which the organisation asked support for the inbound tourism business.

Passengers from non-high-risk nations be exempt from the seven-day quarantine provided they have received both vaccination doses and uploaded a negative COVID-19 RT-PCR report of testing done within 72 hours of boarding their cruise, advised IATO. They should be allowed to exit the airport after passing through thermal screening upon arrival in India once no symptoms are detected.

Foreign visitors from high-risk nations may be subject



to a seven-day quarantine. However, this restriction is expected to be lifted by the middle of February 2022.

This may entice some overseas visitors to come to India. IATO members received inquiries from overseas clients and tourists, but due to the ongoing limitations, they postponed travel to India, causing bookings to be rescheduled. ❖

”
Foreign visitors from high-risk countries may be subject to a seven-day quarantine. This restriction may be lifted by the middle of February 2022. This may entice some overseas visitors to come to India
 ”

HAULAGE RATES FOR LUXURY TRAINS

IATO has asked Ashwini Vaishnav, Hon'ble Union Minister of Railways, to keep the cost of luxury train packages and haulage charges the same for the next five years.



Ashwini Vaishnav
 Hon'ble Union Minister of Railways

Because of COVID-19, nearly all tourist trains have been out of service for the past two years. In order to resurrect business for luxury trains, India should be able to compete with the neighbouring countries and deliver Indian tourism products, including luxury train packages, at competitive costs. As a result of this, IATO has humbly requested that:

- For the next five years, all luxury train haulage rates should be maintained and not increased.
- Indian luxury train tariff must be maintained for all luxury trains for the next five years.

This will assist us in retaining and attracting new business for our luxury trains. ❖

ELIMINATE CASCADING EFFECT OF GST

IATO approached G.D. Lohani, Joint Secretary (TRU-I), Central Board of Indirect Taxes & Customs, Union Ministry of Finance, regarding elimination of cascading effect of GST on tourism industry and discontinuation of tax collection at source (TCS) for international travellers.



Discussion would be to resolve key issues pertaining to the cascading effect of GST on the tourism industry.

It was suggested that GST be levied at 18 per cent on the 10 per cent mark-up (deemed value), with no ITC, so that the effective rate of tax on package costs is 1.8 per cent of total billing.

In their tours to India, for international tourists, several of our members include Nepal, Bhutan, Sri Lanka, the Maldives, and other neighbouring countries. On such holidays,

If the services are provided by a tour operator situated in Nepal, Bhutan, Sri Lanka, the Maldives, or elsewhere, the GST is not applicable.

This is causing Indian travel firms to lose business, and our country to lose money.

It was proposed that GST/IGST be completely exempted on services rendered outside of India, i.e., in neighbouring countries, even if the package included a trip to India.

As a result of the tax exemption, bookings will flow

”

Bookings will flow to the Indian travel operators as a result of the tax exemption, rather than bookings going to the tour operators in neighbouring countries.

This will bring a large sum of foreign exchange into India

”



IGST is imposed on the overall package cost, which includes services delivered in neighbouring countries.

However, if services are provided totally outside of India to foreign tourists, IGST is absolutely excluded.

to Indian travel operators rather than to tour operators in neighbouring countries. This will bring a large sum of foreign dollars into the country.

CGST Notification No. 11/2017-CT(R) dated 28 June 2017 (as amended) covers tour operator



services that are taxable at 2.5 per cent CGST and 2.5 per cent SGST.

One of the conditions given in column 5 of the table is as under:

- The bill issued for the supply of this service indicates that it is inclusive of charges for accommodation and transportation required for such a tour, and the amount charged on the bill is the gross amount charged for such a tour, including the charges for accommodation and transportation required for such a tour.
- It is acknowledged that in many circumstances, a tour operator organises hotel accommodations on their own or in combination with other services such as sightseeing, guides, and other such services, but not air or rail transportation.

We are concerned that the department may interpret this criterion to mean that a tour operator must supply both accommodation and transportation in order to qualify for the 5 per cent GST rate; otherwise, the tour operator will be subject to the 18 per cent general rate. The association believes that this is not the government's goal.

It was therefore requested that:

- In condition No. 2 against Sr. No. 23 of CGST Notification No. 11/2017-CT(R) dated 28 June 2017, the word "and" appearing between the words "accommodation" and "transportation" may be replaced by the word "or" instead of "and."

- The government may clarify by way of a circular binding on the lower authorities that this was the intent from the very beginning when GST was rolled out, so that the GST authorities should not raise objections from 1 July 2017.



It was urged that the TCS regulations apply only to Indian citizens and enterprises, not to foreign citizens and tour operators based outside India, because they do not have an Indian PAN Card with which to seek refund.

The TCS restrictions should not apply to foreign tourists who visit India and then travel to another nation, including a neighbouring country or vice versa.

As described in Section 206C (1G) of the I-T Act, 1961 such as composite package does not qualify as an "overseas tour programme package." ❖

”

TCS regulations apply only to Indian citizens and enterprises, not to foreign citizens and tour operators based outside India, because they do not have an Indian PAN Card with which to seek refund

”

EMPHASIS ON SIGNIFICANT ISSUES RELATED TO ECLG SCHEME

IATO praised Amit Agrawal for announcing the expansion of the ECLG Scheme's guarantee cover and emphasised some of the issues surrounding it.



Amit Agrawal
Additional Secretary
Department of Financial Services, Union Ministry of Finance

IATO thanked Amit Agrawal, Additional Secretary, Department of Financial Services, Union Ministry of Finance, for attending the meeting on 4 February to discuss the Budgetary announcements on expanding the guarantee cover of ECLGS by ₹50,000 crore for hospitality and related enterprises. During the meeting, some of the issues that IATO emphasised were:

- According to the existing standards, any tour operator that desires to apply for a loan must not be in default at the time of application. It was suggested that if any tour operators were not in default as of 29 February 2020, they should be eligible for an ECLGS loan.
- The government and banks provided relief in accordance with Supreme Court orders, which provided for a six-month moratorium on EMI payments. After the six-month moratorium period expires, the majority of IATO members' accounts became non-performing assets (NPAs) because they were unable to pay their EMIs.
- Instead of 29 February 2020, the average loan amount should be calculated on the basis of 1 April 2019 as IATO member loans/overdrafts throughout the summer. The

maximum loan amount will be based on the OD limit/loan amount as of 31 March 2021, or the greatest amount of OD/loan between 1 April 2019 and 29 February 2020, whichever is greater.

- If there was no loan or relationship with the bank, tour operators should apply for a loan based on their turn over for FY2019-20 as reported on their balance sheet, GST paid, or any other methodology determined by the ministry, but they must apply. Because there was no business in 2020-21 or 2021-22, FY2019-20 was proposed.
- Because there is currently no business, repayment of principal and interest on all ECLGS loans should be suspended until 31 March 2024.
- Thousands of tour operators were in a distress situation and were unable to pay their EMIs and were facing SARFAESI notices and action from their banks and financial institutions. Our humble request was to direct the banks to restructure the loans that have become NPA after 29 February 2020.
- All loans/ODs are to be restructured for one year under RBI resolution framework 2.0 and the moratorium on ECLGS 1.0

”

The government and the banks provided relief in accordance with Supreme Court orders, which provided for a six-month moratorium on EMI payments. After 6-month moratorium period expires, the majority of IATO members' accounts became non-performing assets

”



to be extended for a further two-year period.

- Though the government had announced loans to the tour operators under the Loan Guarantee Scheme for the COVID-affected Tourism Service Sector (LGSCATSS), loans were not being provided to the tour operators who had availed loans under ECLGS 1 and 3. Hence, the guidelines of the LGSCATSS need to be revised and relaxed to help the tour operators.
- On ECLGS, the RBI/Finance Ministry/NCGTC should direct all banks/NBFCs to follow the NCGTC standards and sanction

the loan without making it tough for no reason. Private banks, in particular, were causing unnecessary delays or refusing the ECLGS loan by alleging grounds that were contrary to the NCGTC standards or by refusing to grasp the guidelines. The ECLGS plan is fully guaranteed by the NCGTC, posing no risk to banks or NBFCs.

- Undue delay and refusal of individuals who were eligible was completely against the NCGTC standards, and thus defeated the objective of the scheme by adding additional suffering to this already pressured sector. ❖



WITHDRAWAL OF TCS FOR FOREIGN TOURISTS

IATO requested J. B. Mohapatra, Chairman, Central Board of Direct Taxes, Ministry of Finance to discuss the withdrawal of tax collection at source (TCS) for foreign tourists.

The provisions of TCS should not be made applicable to foreign citizens and tour operators, according to IATO, who met with Nirmala Sitharaman, Hon'ble Union Finance Minister, in her office and requested that the provisions of TCS not be

”

Such composite package does not technically qualify as "overseas tour programme package"

”

made applicable to them because they do not have an Indian Pan Card to claim refunds. The TCS

restrictions should not apply to foreign tourists who visit India and then travel to another nation, including a neighbouring country or vice versa. As described in section 206C (1G) of the Income Tax Act, 1961, such a composite package does not technically qualify as an "overseas tour programme package."

The Minister acknowledged the concern and stated that TCS would be abolished for foreign citizens and tour operators since it was irrational to impose TCS on foreign visitors because they were not eligible to pay income tax in India and did not hold an Indian PAN Card and thus could not claim a refund. ❖



J. B. Mohapatra
Chairman, Central Board of Direct Taxes
Ministry of Finance

SECURE 'APPLY FOR E-TRAVEL TRADE RECOGNITION' WEBLINK

IATO informed Neeraj Sharan, Assistant Director General (TT), Ministry of Tourism, about the problem tour operators and other service providers are facing in renewing or submitting new applications owing to an insecure URL for "Apply for e-Travel Trade Recognition".



Indian Association of Tour Operators requested that an SSL certificate may be obtained for URL for "Apply for e-Travel Trade Recognition", and the site should be secured.

Until the site was secured and an SSL certificate was obtained, all service providers whose renewal had expired or was about to expire during the period should be given the opportunity to upload their documents within a maximum of 15 days of the site resuming normal operations.

”
Service providers should be given opportunity to upload their documents within 15 days

Those service providers whose renewal has expired should not be treated as expired, and they should not be asked to apply for fresh approval. Their recognition should be under the renewal category. ❖

REVISE GUIDELINES FOR INT'L TOURISTS

V.D. Sharma, Member of Parliament (Lok Sabha) and State President, Bharatiya Janata Party, Madhya Pradesh, was recognised by the IATO for his support of the tourism industry by launching a flight between Delhi-Khajuraho-Delhi.



V.D. Sharma
Member of Parliament (Lok Sabha) and State President,
Bharatiya Janata Party, Madhya Pradesh

IATO sought his help in revising the MoHFW guidelines for international visitors arriving in India. Other key concerns were:

- Resumption of international flight operations in accordance with the bilateral agreement in effect prior to March 2020.
- Overseas tourism promotion with aggressive marketing and promotions by organising Incredible India

”
IATO sought V.D. Sharma's help in revising guidelines for international visitors

”
events, evening cultural programmes, food festivals, B2B interactions with foreign tour operators, etc., through Embassies of India and High Commissions along with MOT, GOI. ❖

OPERATIONAL BALANCE MUST BE STRUCK FOR RE-CARPETING OF THE RUNWAY

The IATO wrote to Rajiv Bansal, Secretary, Union Ministry of Civil Aviation about the flight disruptions caused by runway re-carpeting work.

IATO was informed by Andaman & Nicobar that the runway in Port Blair, Andaman & Nicobar Islands, will be closed for four days a week in March, April, and May 2022 for runway re-carpeting work, for which a notice has been issued by the authorities.

Unlike other states, the Veer Savarkar International Airport is Port Blair's lone connection to India's mainland. Tourists often visit these islands for four to five days, and a seven-day schedule would deter them from choosing Andaman as a destination.

The association has requested that the decision be reconsidered and that all options be explored to avoid the runway being closed. Flights could be operated

on all days from the morning to 2 p.m., and work could be done from 2 p.m. till the next morning.

Never before in the history of the islands have the islands been cut off in this way, so a balance must be struck to ensure that the airport stays functional at all times.

The IATO has also informed Ajay Bhatt, Union Minister of State for Tourism and Defence, about the situation and requested that, since the Hon'ble Minister was also Minister of State for Defence, he could kindly assist in the matter and consider the tour operators' association's request favourably to allow flights to operate on all days from the morning until 2 p.m. and work to be done from 2 p.m. until the next day morning. ❖



Rajiv Bansal
Secretary
Union Ministry of Civil Aviation

”
Tourists often visit these islands for four to five days, and a seven-day schedule would deter them from choosing Andaman as a destination
”

INTERNATIONAL FLIGHTS FINALLY TAKE OFF

Decision of Government of India to reopen scheduled commercial international passenger services to and from India on 27 March 2022, after two years, has been hailed and warmly welcomed by all travel industry stakeholders in the country.

The Directorate General of Civil Aviation has suspended operations of international commercial services with effect from 23 March 2020, with the view of preventing the spread of COVID-19. Earlier, the Government of India (GOI)

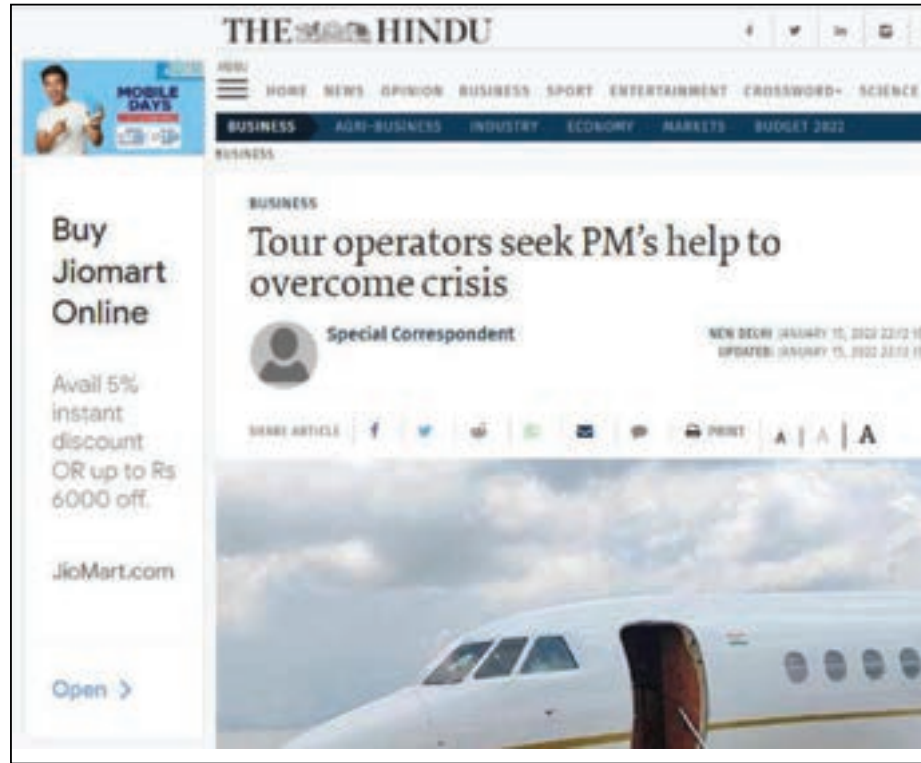
started granting fresh tourist visas to the foreign tourists arriving on charter flights with effect from 15 October 2021.

Hailing the resumption of normal international passenger services, Rajeev Mehra, President, IATO,

said that this will increase tourist traffic to India and that from September 2022 onwards, which is the start of the next inbound tourism season. Mehra also said that a substantial amount of the affected business is expected to be back. ❖

JANUARY

❖ Tour operators seek PM's help to overcome crisis



❖ Coverage in TravTalk





IATO Seeks Prime Minister's Intervention To Avert Financial Crisis Facing The Industry

T3 News Network • 14 January 2022 • 248



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IATO seeks PM intervention

Antagonised, Jan 14 (IUI) The Indian Association of Tour Operators (IATO) on Friday sought help from Prime Minister to avert an unprecedented financial crisis facing the industry since the outbreak of Covid-19 in March 2020. The situation has worsened following the postponement of international flights on account of the new raging Omicron wave, it said. IATO sought relaxation in travelling norms and financial aid to tour operators till the industry is revived. **Please log in to get detailed story.** Tag: #IATO seeks PM intervention

UNI Photo

8.5 (IUI) - Students who are 'Covid-19' victory signs at 'Hindustan Air Force Station' in 'Gurgaon' in 'Haryana' (IUI PHOTO-PR)

Other Links

UNITVARTA (News Agency)



Tour operators write to PM for quarantine

❖ Coverage In TTJ Magazine





www.iato.in

TWO Travel Travel Online

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International commercial passenger flights to remain suspended till Feb 28 in India

COVID booster a must to enter Abu Dhabi

Dani Shaluf takes over as Director General of Israel's Ministry of Tourism

IATO writes to PM seeking help to avert financial crisis facing travel industry

Robertas Metelis elected new President of European Parliament

VFS Global has temporarily suspended passport and visa services in Adelaide since 18th January until further notice.

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Sanjeet Doshi

BREAKING news

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WTTC DELAYS 21st GLOBAL SUMMIT TO 20-22nd APRIL 2022

IATO thanks IHCL on rolling out Promo Code Special Rates

AHMEDABAD IPO ISSUES 23% MORE PASSPORTS IN 2021

INTENSELY TROPICAL WINTER

Ahmedabad airport to partially remain shut from 9am-6pm till 31st May

Dharamala-McLeodgery ropeway to take 5mins instead of 25mins by car



700 Travel World Online
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23rd Jan 2022

OTOMI writes to finance minister, seeks concessions for outbound travel agents
The Suburban Tour Operators Association of India (OTOMI), comprising leading travel agencies across 15 states, has written to Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, ahead of Budget 2022, requesting certain relief and concessions for outbound travel agents.

The request includes: full 100% and immediate cash refund for international travel agents; full 100% refund for international travel agents; full 100% refund for international travel agents; full 100% refund for international travel agents.

Tourism should be in 'Union List' of India: IATO's K Ranga Reddy
India Association of Tour Operators (IATO) President and former Tourism Minister K Ranga Reddy has said 'Tourism should be transferred to the Union List of India for uniformity in the 28 states, which would be in line with the 'WTO' model.

Virtual names Fiona Dalton as General Manager, Australia & New Zealand
Virtuoso names Fiona Dalton as General Manager, Australia & New Zealand.

Austria announces mandatory COVID-19 vaccination for all citizens
Austria has announced mandatory COVID-19 vaccination for all citizens except pregnant women or those exempt for medical reasons from next month.

TUI to start three flights to Jamaica from Belgium and the Netherlands
TUI Belgium and TUI Netherlands will be launching three weekly flights between Belgium, the Netherlands, and Montego Bay in Jamaica.

Delta proposes to lift weekend curfew, awaits LG nod
In line with the demand of travelers, the Delhi government has proposed to lift the weekend curfew in the city, and allow airlines to operate on weekends.

CISF asks airlines and airport operators to restrict domestic passengers to one handbag each
The Central Industrial Security Force (CISF), in a circular issued on Wednesday, has asked airlines and airport operators to restrict passengers to one handbag each.

HAHN AIR APPOINTS KRISTEN REHPMANN AS NEW CEO
Hahn Air appoints Kristen Rehpman as new CEO.

Norwegian Cruise Line launches trade portal for India & Asia - Norwegian Central
Norwegian Cruise Line has launched Norwegian Central, an online trade portal for Indian and Asian travel agents.

THURSDAY JANUARY 27, 2022
TOURISM BREAKING news
DEEP PUBLICATIONS
MICEtalk Jan-Feb 2022
Convention Special

FITUR 2022 Doubles Trade Participation With Recovery in Mind
The year's International Tourism Fair (FITUR 2022) is scheduled to open on 12-13 February. The number of exhibitors is expected to exceed 1,000. The number of visitors is expected to reach 100,000.

J&K HOSTS CITY HERITAGE TOUR ON NATIONAL TOURISM DAY
Jammu & Kashmir Tourism Department has organized a city heritage tour on National Tourism Day.

Sustainable tourism development depends on rural communities: Singh
Sustainable tourism development depends on rural communities, says the Union Minister for Tourism, Culture and Civil Aviation.

THAILAND TO RESUME VISA SERVICES FOR VACCINATED VISITORS
Thailand will resume visa services for vaccinated visitors from 15 February.

G Kishan Reddy unveils digital calendar & book of 75 Indian monuments
G Kishan Reddy, Union Minister of Tourism, Culture and Civil Aviation, has unveiled a digital calendar and a book of 75 Indian monuments.

Norwegian Cruise Line launches trade portal for India & Asia - Norwegian Central
Norwegian Cruise Line has launched Norwegian Central, an online trade portal for Indian and Asian travel agents.

IATO HEAD FOR TS & AP VISIT BHONGIR FORT WITH 10 BIKERS
IATO members will visit Bhongir Fort in Telangana with 10 bikers.



Tourism sector seeks sops in budget to aid recovery

Varuni Khosla

varuni.k@ivemint.com

NEW DELHI: The badly hurt travel and tourism industry has set its sights on the upcoming budget to hasten recovery for the sector. Among their demands is extending the leave travel allowance (LTA) exemption limit for taxpayers, said travel firms like MakeMyTrip, ixigo and Thomas Cook.

"We request the government to consider extending the LTA exemption limit and bring it under the yearly allowances list for taxpayers. Currently one can apply for a leave travel exemption once in two years or twice in a four-year block. We are requesting it to be made yearly," said Rajesh Magow, co-founder, MakeMyTrip.

The tax-exempted LTA can currently only be claimed twice in four years. However, the company said it would be better if employees could claim this once every year tax free instead of every alternate year.

IN 2021, BUDGETARY ALLOCATION FOR THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM WAS SLASHED FROM ₹2,500 CR IN FY21 TO ₹2026.77 CR IN FY22

Online travel portal ixigo co-founder Alok Bajpai said they expect the government to strategise a sustainable long-term plan to help revive in-bound international travel which is currently disrupted by ongoing waves. He added that they also expect the upcoming budget to allot incentives for domestic tourism and promote it within the country. "IT deductions on domestic travel and tourism spends will help incentivise tourism and boost domestic travel further. Tax breaks and waivers for the airline sector will also help aid faster recovery of the industry. Bringing in Aviation Turbine Fuel under the ambit of GST (which

currently comprises 40-45% of the total operating cost of an airline) will bring much-needed relief to the aviation sector," said Bajpai.

Last year, the budgetary allocation for the Ministry of Tourism was slashed from ₹2,500 crore in 2020-21 to ₹2,026.77 crore in 2021-22 which came as a massive blow to the industry.

This year, Indian Association of Tour Operators hopes there will be an added withdrawal of tax collection at source (TCS) for foreign tourists that will encourage in-bound tourism. Starting October 2020, Indian tour operators were required to collect 5% TCS on billing to foreign tour operators or individual foreign travellers to India in spite of the fact they do not hold a pan card in India and are not liable to pay income taxes here. The FTOs or foreign nationals are not residents in India and are not liable to pay income tax.

In 2019, the sector's contribution to the GDP was 6.8% of the total economy.

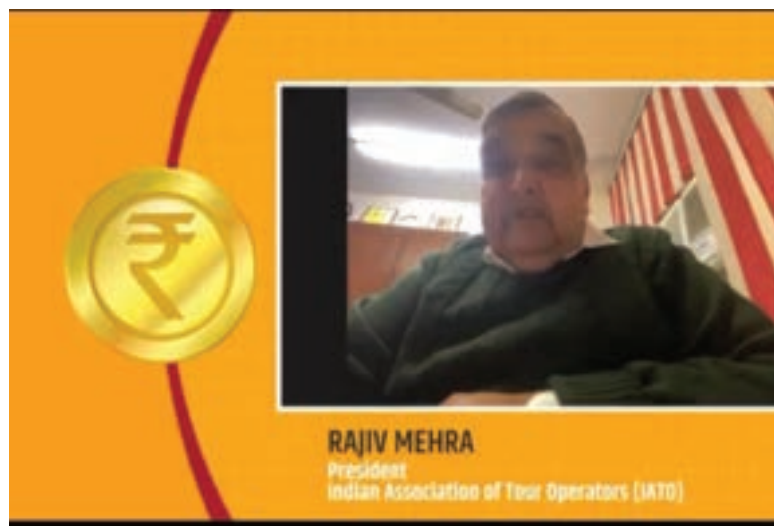


FEBRUARY

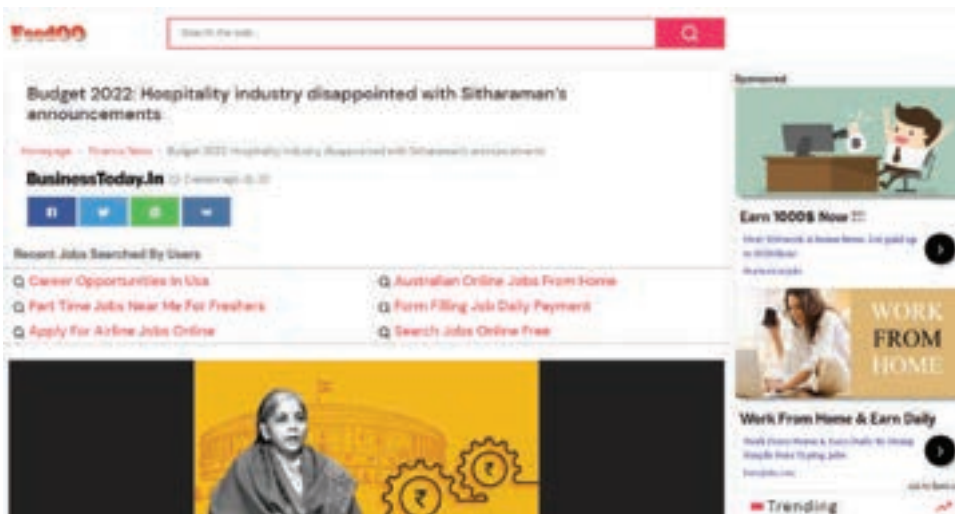




❖ President speaks on the budget



❖ Sr. VP on the India Ahead TV speaking on the Budget





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Murali Venkatesh joins as Talent & Culture Manager at Grand Mercure Bangalore at Copalini Mall
Suffol Mumbai BRC appoints Farhad Billewala as Director of Revenue

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IATO expresses its deep disappointment over being overlooked in Budget 2022

We sincerely believed the government would consider some substantial relief in the supplementary demand, says IATO President Rajiv Mehra

IATO MEMBER- YOUR RELIABLE PARTNER

TTJ
Travel Trade Journal

IATO expresses its deep disappointment over being overlooked in the budget

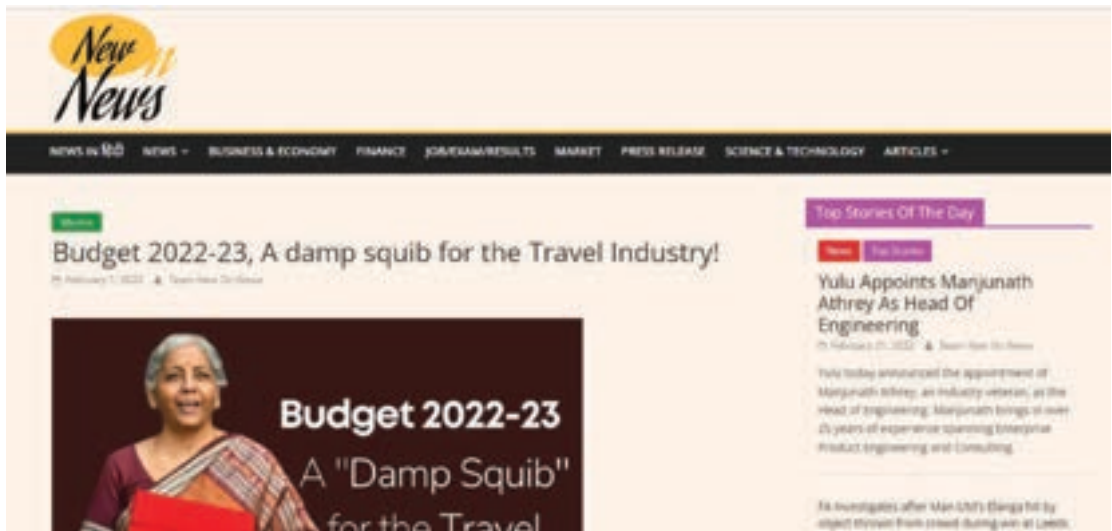
By Author February 1, 2022

Mixed Reaction From The Industry To Budget 2022-23

13 News Network | 21 February 2022 | 543 | 20 views

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TWO Travel World Online
 20th Feb 2022

BUDGET 2022

Travel and Tourism ignored once again: TAAI to FM
 The travel industry has been ignored once again by the Finance Minister. The industry has been lobbying for a long time for a budget that would benefit the industry. The industry has been lobbying for a long time for a budget that would benefit the industry.

IATO deeply disappointed over Budget 2022
 The industry has been lobbying for a long time for a budget that would benefit the industry. The industry has been lobbying for a long time for a budget that would benefit the industry.

Budget 2022: Hospitality industry sees ECLGS extension as ray of hope
 The industry has been lobbying for a long time for a budget that would benefit the industry. The industry has been lobbying for a long time for a budget that would benefit the industry.

Radisson Hotel Group's Zubin Saxena welcomes Budget 2022
 The industry has been lobbying for a long time for a budget that would benefit the industry. The industry has been lobbying for a long time for a budget that would benefit the industry.

Kerala Travel Mart deferred to May 5-6 due to COVID surge
 The industry has been lobbying for a long time for a budget that would benefit the industry. The industry has been lobbying for a long time for a budget that would benefit the industry.

❖ IATO Regional Chairman North spoke



TUESDAY FEBRUARY 8, 2022

TOURISM BREAKING news

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HOTEL FLIGHT BUS

JLL
INDIAN HOTELS REPORT OVER 100% RCPVPR GROWTH YOY IN Q4, 2021

SECY GEN SHWTD INAUGURATES 1st GLOBAL YOUTH TOURISM SUMMIT

INTENSELY AUTHENTIC

External Affairs Minister aims to launch e-passports after ensuring efficacy

Australia set to reopen its borders to vaccinated tourists from February 21

SWISS STUDENTS PUSH TOURISM BY SIMING FROM DELHI TO CHENNAI

THURSDAY FEBRUARY 10, 2022

TOURISM BREAKING news

Extension of validity of Ministry of Tourism recognition in all categories

IATO & ATOAI MET BJP MP SHARMA TO PLAN AIR LINKS IN MP

Kerala opens huge investment opportunities in Tourism sector: Riyas

ITC HOTEL GROUP LAUNCHES A NEW MOBILE APP

पर्यटन व्यवसाय के लिए सांसद ने दूर ऑपरेटर्स से की चर्चा

काशी (प्रतिनिधि) काशी - पर्यटन के विकास और इसे एक प्रमुख उद्योग बनाने के लिए पर्यटन व्यवसाय को बढ़ावा देने के लिए सांसद ने दूर ऑपरेटर्स से चर्चा की। सांसद ने कहा कि पर्यटन व्यवसाय को बढ़ावा देने के लिए सरकार को और अधिक प्रोत्साहन देना चाहिए।

कार त्राटक से टकराकर चलती तीन छात्राल | दंडीनिगमि

छतरपुर/ सागर **भोपाल, र**

खजुराहो के पर्यटन व्यवसाय को लेकर सांसद वी.डी.शर्मा की दूर ऑपरेटर्स से चर्चा

खजुराहो पलाइंट शुरू करने पर दूर ऑपरेटर्स ने जताया सहसद का आभार

राजकुमार सोनी छतरपुर।

खजुराहो। खोजीक बरिन में खोजीक की बुके खजुराहो के पर्यटन व्यवसाय को बढ़ावा देने और दूरऑपरेटर्स के साथ अच्छा रिश्ता बनाने की सोचकर खजुराहो पर्यटन सेवा प्रदाता प्रो.राजकुमार सोनी, सांसद ने अपने दिल्ली आवास पर इंडियन एरोस्पेस एंड टूरिज्म डेवलपमेंट को.डी.ए.ए. के साथ-साथ दूर ऑपरेटर्स की बैठक में सहभागिता के लिए पर्यटन व्यवसाय को बढ़ावा देने के लिए सांसद ने दूर ऑपरेटर्स से चर्चा की। सांसद ने कहा कि पर्यटन व्यवसाय को बढ़ावा देने के लिए सरकार को और अधिक प्रोत्साहन देना चाहिए।



खजुराहो पर्यटन सेवा प्रदाता प्रो.राजकुमार सोनी, सांसद ने अपने दिल्ली आवास पर इंडियन एरोस्पेस एंड टूरिज्म डेवलपमेंट को.डी.ए.ए. के साथ-साथ दूर ऑपरेटर्स की बैठक में सहभागिता के लिए पर्यटन व्यवसाय को बढ़ावा देने के लिए सांसद ने दूर ऑपरेटर्स से चर्चा की। सांसद ने कहा कि पर्यटन व्यवसाय को बढ़ावा देने के लिए सरकार को और अधिक प्रोत्साहन देना चाहिए।

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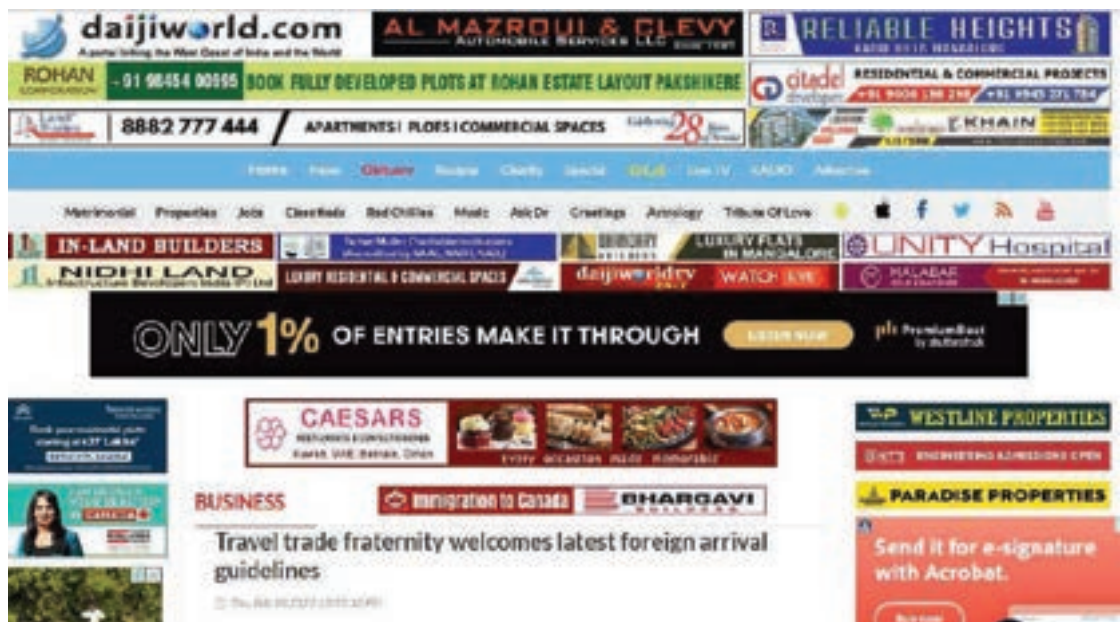
IATO thanks the Government for revising MoHFW guidelines for international arrivals

Admin February 11, 2022 47 Views



The screenshot shows the ET Travel World website. The main headline reads: "IATO welcomes government's announcement easing Covid related restrictions imposed on foreign travellers". Below the headline, there is a sub-headline: "Further, IATO has requested that in view of falling Covid cases the guidelines may". To the right of the article is a newsletter sign-up form with the text "Subscribe to our Newsletter" and "20000+ industry leaders have already joined". The website navigation includes "Home", "Aviation", "Statistics", "Destinations", "Agents", "Tourism", "People", "Education", and "Brand Solutions".

The screenshot shows the Hindustan Times website. The main headline reads: "Fully vaxxed won't need Covid test to enter India". Below the headline, there is a sub-headline: "The guidelines uploaded to the Union health ministry website showed that people will now need to either upload a negative report of an RT-PCR test taken not before 72 hours from departure or their vaccination certificate to the government's Aar Sakshya portal before they board their flight." To the right of the article is a photo of a man and a woman with shopping bags, with a caption: "Inside pics of Anmol Ambani, Khushi Shah's Creamy Mumbai wedding". The website navigation includes "Home", "Latest", "India", "World", "Cities", "Entertainment", "Cricket", "Lifestyle", "Astrology", "Editorials", and "For You".





Travel World Online
TWO app
10th Feb 2022

IATO thanks Centre for revising quarantine guidelines for international arrivals
IATA's Director General, Willie Walsh, has praised the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) for revising its quarantine guidelines for international arrivals. Walsh said the update is a "welcome step" towards making air travel safer and more efficient. He noted that the new guidelines will help airlines and airports manage the health and safety of passengers and staff.

Affairs bench protect interests of airlines & passengers
The Hon'ble Minister of Civil Aviation, Dr. Jyoti Basu, has announced the formation of a bench to protect the interests of airlines and passengers. The bench will be headed by a retired judge and will include representatives from the industry and consumer groups. Dr. Basu said the bench will help resolve disputes between airlines and passengers in a fair and timely manner.

Going away with mandatory quarantine rules couldn't be better-timed: Gaurav Khosla
Gaurav Khosla, Managing Director of Travel World Online, has commented on the mandatory quarantine rules for international arrivals. He said that the rules are a necessary step to ensure the safety of passengers and staff, and that they couldn't be better-timed. He also noted that the rules will help airlines and airports manage the health and safety of passengers and staff.

Trade welcomes the Government's move of opening doors for tourism revival by easing out restrictions
The Indian Trade Association (ITA) has welcomed the Government's move to ease restrictions on international arrivals. The ITA said that the move will help revive the tourism industry and boost the economy. It also noted that the move will help airlines and airports manage the health and safety of passengers and staff.

ACTOR to launch 12th Chapter on tourism
The Actor Group of Companies (AGC) is launching its 12th chapter on tourism. The chapter will focus on promoting tourism in the region and boosting the economy. It will also provide support and assistance to tourism businesses in the region.

Travelers react call for urgent action to protect the season: IATA
IATA has called for urgent action to protect the tourism season. IATA said that the current restrictions on international arrivals are a major barrier to the recovery of the tourism industry. It urged governments to ease restrictions and allow international arrivals to resume.

For more information, visit www.travelworldonline.com or call +91 9618079663.

TUESDAY FEBRUARY 15, 2022
TOURISM BREAKING news

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Ex-Turkish Airlines Chairman Bilal Ajci is the new CEO & MD of Air India
Air India has announced the appointment of Bilal Ajci as its new CEO and Managing Director. Ajci is a former Chairman of Turkish Airlines and has extensive experience in the aviation industry. He will be responsible for the overall operations of Air India.

HP HOSTS INDIA'S FIRST 40 KM FORESTH TRAIL RUN VIA TIGER RESERVE
Himachal Pradesh has hosted its first 40 km foresth trail run via a tiger reserve. The run was held in the Simlipal Tiger Reserve and was a great success. It was attended by many people and was a great opportunity for them to enjoy the beauty of the forest.

IATO thanks MOT and MoCA for reinstating airport passes for tour operators & hotels
IATA has thanked the Ministry of Tourism (MOT) and the Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA) for reinstating airport passes for tour operators and hotels. IATA said that the move will help the tourism industry and boost the economy. It also noted that the move will help airlines and airports manage the health and safety of passengers and staff.

Goa welcomes 500 pax from Moscow every 10 days and we expect this to increase: TTAG
The Tourism Trade Association of Goa (TTAG) has announced that Goa will welcome 500 passengers from Moscow every 10 days. TTAG said that this is a significant increase and will help boost the tourism industry in Goa. It also noted that the move will help airlines and airports manage the health and safety of passengers and staff.

BATAR AIRWAYS IS OFFICIAL PARTNER AT FIFA CLUB WORLD CUP
Batar Airways has become the official partner of the FIFA Club World Cup. Batar Airways said that it is proud to be the official partner of the tournament and will provide excellent service to all passengers. It also noted that the move will help boost the tourism industry in the region.

World's first parallel airline company 'WINAIR' from India to take off soon
Winair, the world's first parallel airline company, is set to launch its operations soon. Winair is a joint venture between the Government of India and private investors. It will provide excellent service to all passengers and will help boost the tourism industry in the region.

VIETNAM TO END TRAVEL CURBS ON INTL FLIGHTS FROM 15th FEB
Vietnam has announced that it will end its travel curbs on international flights from February 15th. Vietnam said that the move will help boost the tourism industry and boost the economy. It also noted that the move will help airlines and airports manage the health and safety of passengers and staff.

FAITH unveiled vision 2035 for a tourism driven India

WORLD TOURISM ORGANIZATION (WTO) has unveiled its bold vision for India with a vision document, 'FAITH' (Future Aspirations for India's Tourism) for the period 2023-2035. The document outlines a clear path for India to become a global tourism hub by 2035, with a focus on sustainable and inclusive growth. The vision is based on the 'FAITH' acronym: **F**uture Aspirations, **A**mbitions, **I**nnovations, **A**nd **H**igh Potential. The document is a comprehensive blueprint for India's tourism sector, covering various aspects such as infrastructure, human resources, and digital transformation. It aims to position India as a leading global tourism destination by 2035, with a focus on sustainable and inclusive growth. The vision is based on the 'FAITH' acronym: **F**uture Aspirations, **A**mbitions, **I**nnovations, **A**nd **H**igh Potential. The document is a comprehensive blueprint for India's tourism sector, covering various aspects such as infrastructure, human resources, and digital transformation. It aims to position India as a leading global tourism destination by 2035, with a focus on sustainable and inclusive growth.

THURSDAY FEBRUARY 17, 2022

TOURISM BREAKING news

Booked transport? Now save travellers on average 20% on hotels with Package Rates

Need to develop mechanisms with government to secure travel agents' money: TAFI

GOA: ANOTHER BLOW TO TOURISM, SHARP DROP IN KAZAKH CHARTERS

Govt. looking into extending the March deadline for free e-visas to India: Rajiv Mehra

SKYUP AIRLINES ANNOUNCE BIRD TRAVELS AS IT'S GSA IN INDIA

INTENSELY AUTHENTIC

ANTO webinar titled 'Tired-Your dream destination 2022' on 25th Feb at 3pm IST

KERALA LAUNCHES 'MONEYMOON HOLIDAYS' TO PROMOTE TOURISM

INVESTOR MEET-UPS CRUCIAL FOR DEVELOPMENT OF TOURISM: AP TOURISM MINISTER

VIRGIN GALACTIC REOPENS TICKET SALES

RAJIV MEHRA, President
Indian Association of Tour Operators (IATO)

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF TOURISM

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.302
ANSWERED ON 03.02.2022

REPRESENTATION FROM IATO

302. SHRI SANJAY RAUT:

Will the Minister of **TOURISM** be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government has received any representation from the Indian Association of Tour Operators (IATO) for one-time financial assistance and relaxation of seven-day quarantine rule for travelers from non-high risk countries, to help prevent closure of business and jobs losses;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and Government's response thereto; and
- (c) the details of steps taken or proposed to be taken by Government to revive current tourism industry by bringing more foreign tourists to the country?

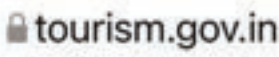

ANSWER

MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRI G. KISHAN REDDY)

(a) to (b): Yes, Sir. The representation of Indian Association of Tour Operators (IATO) regarding one-time financial assistance and relaxation of seven-day quarantine rule for travelers from non-high risk countries has been received in the Ministry of Tourism and this has been forwarded to the concerned Ministries such as Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Health & Family Welfare (MoH&FW) for consideration and taking appropriate action.

(c): Following are the steps taken by the Government to revive current tourism industry by bringing more foreign tourists in the Country:

- i. The Government allowed foreign nationals to enter into India for tourism purpose on e-Tourist Visa/ Tourist Visa through Chartered flight (for Group Tourism only) w.e.f 15th October,2021 and for Individual foreign nationals w.e.f 15th November,2021.
- ii. Free Tourist Visa to 5 Lakh Tourists: As per the announcement, once Visa issuance is restarted, the first 5 lakh Tourists Visas will be issued free of charge. The benefit of free of charge visa will be available only once per tourist during the issuance of the first 5 lakh tourist visas (free of charge visas). The scheme will be applicable till 31st March 2022 or till 5,00,000 visas are issued, whichever is earlier.
- iii. The Ministry of Tourism under its Overseas Promotion and Publicity Scheme promotes India as a holistic destination in the tourism generating markets overseas with a view to attract foreign tourists and increase India's share of the global tourism market. The above objectives are met through an integrated marketing and promotional strategy, and a synergized campaign in association with the Travel Trade, State Governments and Indian Missions.
- iv. The Marketing Development Assistance (MDA) programme of the Overseas Promotion and Publicity Scheme provides for extending financial assistance to approved Tourism Service Providers and States Government/ Union Territory Administrations for undertaking promotion of tourism to India in the overseas markets.





09th March 2022



IATO thanks the Government of India and welcomes resumption of international flights

It is a sign of relief for us to see that after a long period of suspension, international flights are resuming in India. IATO is pleased to see that the Government of India has taken the decision to resume international passenger flights. This is a welcome step towards normalizing the aviation sector and we look forward to working with the Government to ensure a smooth and safe resumption of international flights.

It's a huge relief: Ajay Prakash, President – TAIH

Ajay Prakash, President of TAIH, expressed his relief and joy at the resumption of international flights. He said, "It is a huge relief for us to see that after a long period of suspension, international flights are resuming in India. IATO is pleased to see that the Government of India has taken the decision to resume international passenger flights. This is a welcome step towards normalizing the aviation sector and we look forward to working with the Government to ensure a smooth and safe resumption of international flights."

Global travel will become easier as the regular commercial international flights resume later this month said Mr. Anilash Mishra, Joint Managing Director, IATA India. "Today's announcement to resume international passenger flights is a welcome move for domestic and international travellers who have been waiting for a long time to make travel plans. We are pleased that these measures will once again give a big boost to foreign tourism in the country."

International commercial flights will also regularise the demand-supply

This is a positive sign for all business and leisure travellers. The regularisation of international flights will help in regularising the demand-supply of international flights. This will help in ensuring that there is no shortage of flights and that the prices are reasonable. This will also help in ensuring that the quality of service is maintained and that the safety of passengers is always the top priority.

IATA Agents Association of India chief Bij Eapen warns of new problems amid Russia conflict

Bij Eapen, Chief of IATA Agents Association of India, expressed his concerns about the impact of the Russia-Ukraine conflict on international flights. He said, "The conflict between Russia and Ukraine has led to the suspension of flights between these two countries. This has led to a significant disruption in the international flight network. We are concerned about the impact of this conflict on the global aviation sector and we are working with the IATA to find a way to resolve the situation as quickly as possible."




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INDIA NEWS

After 2 yrs, international flights resume on Mar 27

India suspended scheduled international flights on March 23, 2020 and in July that year, opened a so-called air bubble arrangement with 37 countries to and from which flights were allowed in a limited manner.



Ticket booking service providers said resumption of international commercial flights will help reduce the airfare (IT file photo, Representative image)

Business Standard

REGULAR INTERNATIONAL PASSENGER FLIGHTS FROM MAR 27 AFTER TWO-YEAR GAP



Regular international passenger flights from Mar 27 after two-year gap



Scheduled international commercial flights in India to resume from March 27

Making the announcement, Union Civil Aviation Minister Jyotiraj Singh said that an 'air bubble' arrangement will also send travel revival. Regular international flights in the country are suspended since March 2020, when the Covid-19 pandemic first struck. The move is expected to bring cheer in the ailing tourism and travel industry, which was witnessing resumption of flight services from a long time.

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India to allow scheduled international flight ops from March 27

08-03-2022 Tue 21:42 IST | DAILY BUSINESS



New Delhi, March 8: India will allow resumption of scheduled commercial international passenger services from March 27.

"After having recognised the increased vaccination coverage across the globe and in consultation with the stakeholders, the Government of India has decided to resume scheduled commercial international passenger services

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India to allow scheduled international flight ops from March 27

2022-03-08 21:42:25

India will allow resumption of scheduled commercial international passenger services from March 27.

"After having recognised the increased vaccination coverage across the globe and in consultation with the stakeholders, the Government of India has decided to resume scheduled commercial international passenger services to all from India from March 27, 2022," an official statement said on Tuesday.

"The suspension of scheduled commercial international passenger services to or from India, that, stands extended only until 2322 hrs IST on March 26, 2022 and air traffic arrangements shall accordingly be extended to the extent only."

Last month, India's civil aviation regulator had extended the ban on scheduled international commercial flights till "further orders".

In late 2021, India had announced plans to allow resumption of scheduled commercial international passenger services from December 15, 2021 with certain conditions. However, the plan was postponed due to the emergence of the third Covid wave globally.

India had banned the operation of international flights on March 23, 2020 to contain and control the spread of Covid-19. Flight restrictions, however, were later eased under an bubble arrangement with certain countries.

India has welcomed the move.



पर्यटनप्रेमी 'फॅम ट्रिप' मोहिमेसाठी रवाना

पर्यटन संघटनप्रमुख व उद्योग
पर्यटनप्रमुखोंचे दर्शन

● **राजगुरू, 17 मार्च**
विद्यमान प्रमुख विदेशी पर्यटकांना आणि राज्यपाली प्रमुखिणास राज्य संघटन व पर्यटन विभागाच्या पर्यटन संघटन विकास यंत्रणेच्या वरिष्ठ अधिकारी आणि राज्य पर्यटन संघटनपदाची वरिष्ठ अधिकारी उपस्थित असून राज्य पर्यटन संघटन व पर्यटन विकास विभागाच्या वरिष्ठ अधिकारी आणि राज्य पर्यटन संघटन व पर्यटन विकास विभागाच्या वरिष्ठ अधिकारी उपस्थित असून राज्य पर्यटन संघटन व पर्यटन विकास विभागाच्या वरिष्ठ अधिकारी उपस्थित असून...



फॅमिलियर ट्रिप
मुम्बईचे वॉर्म

राज्य पर्यटन संघटन व पर्यटन विकास विभागाच्या वरिष्ठ अधिकारी आणि राज्य पर्यटन संघटन व पर्यटन विकास विभागाच्या वरिष्ठ अधिकारी उपस्थित असून राज्य पर्यटन संघटन व पर्यटन विकास विभागाच्या वरिष्ठ अधिकारी उपस्थित असून...



03/27/2022 7:16 AM Asia-Independent.com/india/news/india-allow-scheduled-flight-ops-from-march-27

INDIA INR INDIA

India to allow scheduled international flight ops from March 27

March 5, 2022



Airport.



New Delhi, (Asian Independent) India will allow resumption of scheduled commercial international passenger services from March 27.

"After having recognised the increased vaccination coverage across the globe and in consultation with the stakeholders, the Government of India has decided to resume scheduled commercial international passenger services to or from India from March 27, 2022," an official communique said on Tuesday.

"The suspension of scheduled commercial international passenger services to or from India, thus, stands extended only upto 2359 hrs IST on March 26, 2022 and air bubble arrangements shall accordingly be extended to this extent only."

Last month, India's civil aviation regulator had extended the ban on scheduled international commercial flights till "further orders".

Tourism fraternity delighted & hopeful with the resumption of scheduled International flights

The scheduled international flights were suspended in March 2020 as the world tourism came to a halt in the wake of the pandemic. Now, as things progress towards endemic, India finally opened its skies and declared resumption of scheduled international flights from March 27, 2022. The tourism fraternity is delighted with this announcement and also hopeful of the good times finally returning to the travel sector again. Here's look at how the industry stalwarts reacted to the news –

March 6, 2022

Priyanka Saxena Ray

"As President TAM and Vice Chairperson IATA, I would like to applaud the government, Ministry of Civil Aviation & Ministry of Health for finally agreeing to open commercial flights. We have been advocating to open flights continuously since long as we strongly believe that we need to start accepting the virus & start living a normal life or else the industry will die of starvation. MeCA & MoT have been working in a collaborative manner & soon the e-visa for travel into India will also be opened to facilitate inbound travellers once again. The industry needs to come back into action & start planning for outbound as the holiday seasons will soon start in India. Opening of commercial flights will bring about ease of travel, lower costs & more choice. Most of the countries are now removing strict protocols & opening borders & I am sure everyone around the world is wanting to experience life, connect back with the world, friends, family and business associates after a long period of 2 years

'DRIVE TO PURSUE ONE'S PASSION IS A PREREQUISITE FOR SUCCESS'

Sanghamitra Jena talks with **Elina Satapathy** about her journey, from working as a tour guide, being the first female guide with a licence to work in five Indian states in a male-dominated sector, to establishing her own venture.

”
We were a four-person team working on focussed tours of Odisha, Chhattisgarh, Nagaland, and Arunachal Pradesh. I envision myself as a mentor to the next generation of women entrepreneurs in the travel and tourism industry
 ”



Sanghamitra Jena

What drew you to the tourism business, and how did you start?

My passion for travel, meeting people, learning about their lives and cultures, and sharing the rich culture of my homeland with travellers led me to pursue a career in tourism.

Tell us about your entrepreneurial journey. What is the name of your business, and why did you choose it?

My company was named after one of my Western clients who accompanied me on 17 trips across India. So, the guest's suggestion for naming the firm so was to show the world the treasures of eastern part of India.

In 1992, I began my job as a tour guide. I was the first female guide with a licence to work in five Indian states, including Andaman and Nicobar, as well as the eastern part of India. I am from Odisha. Because the industry is male-dominated, they would not let me work as a freelance guide. I had to accept a position at a travel agency with the promise of getting assignments to go on tour jobs as a guide.

With time, it became more difficult to obtain the assignment by breaking the chain. After a year and a half of effort, when I

chose to quit the job, the office finally assigned me some files. During my 10 years with the company, I covered all of the Indian remote destinations. The less explored destinations were my favourite spots to present to the Western world. I was involved in the entire tour job of creating programmes, exploring the location to gain first-hand information, operating files, and so on.

When I left this travel agency in 2004, I decided to establish my own venture. In 2005, I registered the company. We were a four-person team working on focussed tours of Odisha, Chhattisgarh, Nagaland, and Arunachal Pradesh. During the visit, we encountered infrastructural issues in a few locations, including Bhitarkanika National Park in Odisha. I decided to launch a community project with a Swiss Camp accommodation unit in 2008 with the cooperation of the residents of this area.

The Nature Camp Bhitarkanika was developed with the support of the Dangamala villagers to accommodate tourists visiting the wildlife sanctuary here and enjoying village life. After four years, the camp became self-sufficient, and the villagers were able to operate it on their own. A second camp was established in



Konark, along the Kushabhadra River, in the serene atmosphere of a small jungle. We began planning the Swiss tent concept at the Farm House near Satpada on Chilika Lake with another village in 2020.

How has your business grown over time?

Growth was highly favourable when special attention was paid to the business. Personal attention to the tourists' interests, focussed and uniquely prepared trip circuits were a few of the grounds for growth.

Who was your first client, and when did you meet them?

My first client as a tour guide was a British couple. As a tour operator, my first client was a retired tour operator from the United Kingdom, who booked a trip to Chennai with me.

What role do you see yourself playing in 10 years?

I envision myself as a mentor to the next generation of women entrepreneurs in the travel industry.

Who do you regard as your most significant motivator?

My parents' and family's support was the biggest motivating factor for me. Another source of inspiration was a woman from the United States who was visiting India in the year 1995. She assisted me in my growth as a tourist guide and tour operator.

How has the pandemic impacted your business?

The impact of the dreaded virus on the business has been detrimental. There is nothing we can do about it, but remain patient until the crisis subsides.

How can you make a difference in the industry as a woman?

A woman can be the best curator. Through tour operations and the management of a sustainable tourism initiative, I hope to make a difference in the industry.

What steps would you take to promote gender equality?

Personally, I believe that discussing gender equality makes women inferior. I would love to train more women in our industry and encourage them to have the confidence to say, "I can do it." That, to me, is women empowerment.

What are your primary concerns as a woman entrepreneur?

Women in the travel and tourism industry, in my opinion, have a greater edge in garnering support from local villages as well as the authorities. Entrepreneurship is the same for men and women.

What is your message for budding women entrepreneurs of today?

What I would advise today's aspiring female entrepreneurs is to be focussed and honest about their goals and efforts, and to remember that the drive to pursue one's passion is a prerequisite for success as an entrepreneur.

What are your key suggestions for Indian Association of Tour Operators?

Regional members, whether allied or active, should be able to participate in decision-making. My sole recommendation to the association is that they should consider our marketing and promotion requests on a regional basis. ❖

“ Women in the industry should have an edge in garnering support from villages and the authorities. Entrepreneurship is the same for men and women. I envision myself as a mentor to the next generation of women entrepreneurs in the travel industry ”

DISCOVERING INDIA'S NORTH EAST

Inbound tourism has increased since outbreak of the pandemic and ensuing travel restrictions. North Eastern states are gifted with natural scenic beauty as well as distinct historical, cultural, and ethnic history. Bengia Mrinal based in Itanagar, Arunachal Pradesh talks about states enormous tourism potential.

■ **IATO Bureau** (Sourced by Elina Satapathy)

Our journey on the road less travelled began in the year 2000, not knowing then that the new century would bring with it the birth of a new idea, new challenges, and new learning. Tourism in India's North East was still in its infancy.

obstacles in order to send the guest home happy and with a sense of belonging to the region. Only then is our job done well and completed! To my mind, tourism is not about one person or one company, per se. It is the collective effort of the entire team



Stepping into this sector at this moment was quite symbolic as we were commencing services in the North East, which would also welcome the first rays of the sun at the turn of the century in the easternmost corner of India, Dong, in Arunachal Pradesh. We took the leap of faith and decided to tread on unknown territories—flagging most of the time, but always learning along the way. This facet of tourism, in my opinion, is what keeps most of us going. We overcome

that makes or breaks tours. It affects the first and last person in the line.

Hence our motto is:
We shall build good trips
At profit if we can
At loss if we must
But always good trips

Being based in the Camellia town of Assam, Dibrugarh, it was only natural that our USP would be tea tourism and with it our boutique properties—the



”

The experiential tea tour through a 160-year-old heritage tea garden in Ethelwold TE begins with you picking two leaves and a bud and provides insight into the various activities on an estate that vary seasonally. It will teach one all about tea, how it is grown etc

”

charming, restored heritage Chang Bungalows. Tea was not unknown to us, but tea tourism was. Also, Dibrugarh was not on the tourist map of India. So, we took a wider, different take on tea tourism so that it would encompass more.

The experiential tea tour through a 160-year-old heritage tea garden in Ethelwold TE begins with you picking two leaves and a bud and provides insight into the various activities on an estate that vary seasonally. It will teach you all about tea, its origin, how it is grown, tea tasting, and its quality. Tea estates come alive with teams of colourfully dressed tea pluckers, predominantly ladies, who pluck the delicate buds and leaves from March. The

harvest is taken every day to the factory where it undergoes the age-old process of being turned into the finished product. All stages of the process are carefully controlled to ensure that the product which leaves the factory is of the highest quality. This is the quality that has made Assam tea famous around the world.

CTC tea is a variety of tea and also a method of processing tea. In this process, the leaves are passed through a set of three rollers with hundreds of small sharp "teeth" that crush, tear, and curl. This style of manufacture has the advantage of the finished product brewing quickly, giving a dark infusion rapidly, is well suited for tea bags, and yields more cups per kg. Over 80 per cent of the tea produced is of the CTC type. It produces a rich red-brown colour when the tea leaves are boiled, and so is best suited for tea made in the Indian style, *masala chai*. This is done by boiling leaves in a mixture of milk, water, and sugar with some spices.

The next tour takes you to another tea estate, which specialises in organic green tea. The entire garden is organic and is located within pristine surroundings. The estate has within its



”

Guests are then driven to Inthong village, three hours away from Dibrugarh. This village is inhabited by the Singpho tribe. Their roots can be traced back to Tibet, from where they migrated to India. The Singphos knew and drank tea long before the British discovered it

”



Charms of India



”
After the fag end of the journey, the guests are driven to Inthong Village, about 3 hours away from Dibrugarh. This village is inhabited by the Singpho tribe. Their roots can be traced back to Tibet, from where they migrated to India
”

boundary a tea plantation, a rich bamboo stand, and a wetland which attracts numerous bird species. Visitors can enjoy a first-hand experience of plucking tea by hand and preparing roasted green tea themselves.

Thereafter, we visited yet another tea estate, which specialises in making orthodox tea, another variety of tea. Its manufacturing process is quite different from that of CTC. Instead of the tea leaf being crushed, the leaves are rolled in a machine that twists and breaks the leaves to release the natural chemicals that later react with oxygen in the air to give them their characteristic aroma and taste. It is the leafy variety of tea and is less strong in taste.

This is not the end of the journey of discovery. Guests are then driven to Inthong Village, about three hours away from Dibrugarh. This village is inhabited by the Singpho tribe. Their roots can be traced back to Tibet, from where they migrated to India. The Singphos knew and drank tea long before the British discovered it in Assam. Even today, tea plantations have immense significance in their

lives. Almost every Singpho family grows tea in their kitchen garden and brews Phalap tea. Phalap is an unfermented variety of traditional tea brewed by the SINGPHO TRIBE and is 100 per cent organic tea—a combination of green tea and oolong tea with medicinal properties.

There are two types of phalap tea: NDUM PHALAP, usually found in a cylindrical form as it is stored or stuffed in a hollow bamboo tube; and to use it, one has to cut it into small circular pieces. The second variety is PHALEE PHALAP, a loose form of dried tea leaves.

Making PHALAP is a unique process. The young and tender leaves are plucked and pan dried in large metal pans until their moisture content reduces and the colour of the leaves changes.

These leaves are then dried further on a bamboo shelf above the traditional wood fire in the kitchen. The hot smoke emanating from the fire dries the tea leaves and gives them a smoky flavour. Thereafter, they are crumbled, and PHALEE PHALAP is ready to drink.





NDUM PHALAP is processed in the same way, the only difference being that the pan-dried tea leaves are packed into a hollow bamboo tube. The leaves are cut into small pieces and stuffed into the tube, which is then heated until the leaves are steamed and can be stuffed more firmly into it. This process is repeated till the hollow bamboo is completely full. After that, the ends are tied and hung near the fireplace for better flavour and to ensure that the tea stays fresh for many years.

Horse riding was part and parcel of the tea plantations in yesteryear. *Kanjari* or the work on the tea estate, was overseen on horseback until the modern SUVs replaced them. One of the tours offered on a tea plantation is horse riding holidays. The *pahis*, or narrow paths between



the tea bushes, provide the perfect footing for the horses.

The lifeline of Assam is the Brahmaputra River which runs across the entire state. Can a tour be complete without a boat cruise in a country boat down the river? Stopping on pristine sand beaches for a breather with a picnic lunch makes for a



Charms of India



perfect day out. While there, one can hope to catch a glimpse of the endangered river dolphin and the migratory Ruddy Shelduck! Since the plantations provide so much forest cover by way of shade trees over the tea bushes, one should not be astounded by the variety of bird life they support: Black Hooded Oriole, Pied Hornbill, Lineated Barbet,



Hill Myna, Spotted Owlet, Crested Serpent Eagle, Yellow Footed Green-Pigeon, Common Hoopoe, Sultan Tit, and Racket-Tailed Drongo, among others. Other than birds, the plantations also sometimes see Hoolock Gibbons and leopards!

The icing on the cake is Dibru Saikhowa National Park, which skirts many plantations and abounds in rare and endangered species of over 350 endemic and migratory birds. The big four here are Jerdon's Bushchat, Black-breasted Parrotbill, Marsh

Babbler, and Swamp Prinia. One can also expect to see Baer's Pochard, Pale-capped Pigeon, Falcated Duck, Baikal Teal, and Eastern Spot-billed Duck.

Food is part and parcel of any holiday. Our bungalows offer an array of choices to tickle the palate of the visitor. Of course, local cuisine tops the list. With it, one has an opportunity to enjoy Bihu and Jhumur dance performances. The Communita Festival can be enjoyed in December. It showcases the culture of the tea community quite successfully. The other hidden jewels of the area are very humble and accomplished people like:

- Binanada Hatibaruah, a self-taught birding specialist, his knowledge and passion for birds can put most birders to shame and convert non-birders into die-hard ornithologists.
- Hemprabha Chutia, who lives in Moran, is known as "The" weaving woman because she has taken the art of weaving to new heights by weaving several epics in silk. She initially wove



Sankardev's 'Gunamala' and Madhavdev's 'Naam Ghosa'. Later, he progressed to weaving the entire Bhagavad Gita on muga silk in Sanskrit. Currently, she is weaving the Ramayana. Not surprisingly, she has been awarded various prestigious awards for her incredible work,



Charms of India



including the Bakul Bon Award, the Aai Kanaklata Award, and the State Government's Handloom and Textile Award. The tour of the region would remain incomplete without guests visiting:

- Namphake Village is the largest of the Tai-Phake villages in Assam, boasting 70 odd families who trace their ancestry to the great Tai race. The village folk speak the dialect and still follow the traditional customs of their Tai ancestry. The hamlet is famous for the Namphake Buddhist Monastery, one of the oldest and most respected Buddhist monasteries in Assam. It has in its archives

the well-preserved Ramayan written in Tai-script.

- Cheleng Chuk village situated about 67 km from Dibrugarh and about 8 km from Naharkatia Moran Tinali, with around 125 houses. This village is also known as 'The Lemon Village' as it produces Assam's famous 'Gol Nemu'

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and 'Kaji Nemu' in abundance. Jaanmoni Gogoi, a resident of this village, leads the initiative run by women who also engage in making different types of pickle, jam, and juice from the organic produce.

So, just as tea undergoes a metamorphosis from the leaf to CTC, Orthodox, or Phalap, so too do the guests return home with knowledge about tea, its surroundings, its culture, dance, food, and community. A heady mix which never fails to touch hearts! ❖

*The author, Vineeta Jalan is Director of Purvi Discovery Private Limited
www.purvidiscovery.com*





YOUR ENVIRONMENT IS REFLECTION OF YOUR INNER SELF

Short stories more often than not make one ponder about the hidden meanings of life in the morals they contain. Akin to the Father of the Nation's three monkeys, they spell out the path to leading life without a blemish.

■ **IATO Bureau** (Resourced by Mukesh Manra)

A selection of short stories to ponder and self-reflect on:

LAZINESS WILL NOT GET YOU ANYWHERE

A king once ordered his men to place a boulder across a roadway. He then crept into the woods and waited for someone to move the boulder out of the way.

Some of the king's wealthiest merchants and courtiers went around it, simply passing by. Many people criticised the King for failing to keep the roads clear, but none of them took action to have the stone removed.

A peasant carrying vegetables came along one day. When the peasant approached the boulder, he laid down his load and tried to push the stone out of the way. He finally succeeded after much pushing and straining.

When the peasant returned to collect his vegetables, he discovered a purse on the road where the boulder had been. Many gold coins were found in the purse, along with a note from the King explaining that the reward was for the person who removed the boulder from the path.



DO NOT SAY SOMETHING YOU REGRET OUT OF ANGER

Once upon a time, there was a young boy with a bad temper. His father decided to give him a bag of nails and told him he had to hammer a nail into the fence every time he lost his temper.

The boy hammered 37 nails into the fence on the first day.

Over the next few weeks, he gradually learned to manage his temper, and the number of nails he hammered into the fence dropped. He learned that controlling his temper was easier than hammering those nails into

”
The boy learned that controlling his temper was easier than hammering those nails into the fence. After hammering 37 nails, the boy steadily managed to control his temper
 ”





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You cannot laugh at the same joke over and over. So why always complain about the same thing? Complaining wipes out your good fortune
”



the fence. Finally, the day arrived when the boy did not lose his cool. When he told his father, he suggested that the youngster should now pull out a nail every day he kept his cool.

After a few days, the boy was finally able to tell his father that all of the nails had withdrawn. The father walked his son to the fence, taking his hand in his.

The father said, "You did well, my son, but take a look at the holes in the fence. The fence will never be the same again. When you say things out of rage, they leave scars like this one. A knife can be plunged into a man's chest and drawn out.

The wound will not heal no matter how many times you say, 'I'm sorry'."

STOP WASTING YOUR TIME COMPLAINING

People come to see a wise man over and over again, complaining about the same problems. He decided to tell them a joke one day, and they all burst out laughing. He told them the same joke after a few minutes, and only a few of them smiled. Then he told the same joke a third time, but this time no one laughed or smiled. The wise man said, with a smile, "You cannot laugh at the same joke over and over. So why are you always complaining about the same thing? Complaining wipes out your good fortune."

DAMAGED SOULS STILL HAVE WORTH

A shopkeeper posted a sign above his door that read, "Puppies For



Sale." Signs like this always seem to attract young children, and it is no surprise that a boy saw the sign and approached the owner, asking, "How much are you going to sell the puppies for?"

"Anywhere from US \$30 to US \$50," said the store owner.

The youngster took some money from his pocket. "I have US \$2.37," he explained. "May I please have a look at them?"

The shopkeeper whistled and smiled. The lady emerged from the kennel, trailed by five teeny, tiny balls of fur down the aisle of his shop. One puppy was noticeably behind the others.

"What is wrong with that little dog?" said the little boy, pointing to the stumbling, limping puppy.

The shopkeeper explained that the veterinarian had examined the puppy and discovered it did not have a hip socket. It would always limp. It would always be lame.

The boy got excited. "That's the puppy I am looking for."

"No, you do not want to buy that little dog. I'll just give him to you if you really want him." said the shopkeeper.

The boy became upset. He looked the store owner in the eyes, pointed his finger, and said, "I do not want you to give him to me. That little dog is worth just as much as the others, and I will pay full price for him. In fact, I will give you US \$2.37 now and 50 cents every month until I have paid for him."



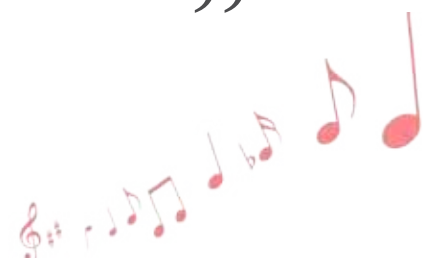
"You really do not want to buy this little dog. He will never be able to run, jump, or play with you like the other puppies," said the shopkeeper.

To his surprise, the boy reached down and rolled up his pants leg, revealing a severely twisted, crippled left leg supported by a large metal brace. He raised his head to the shopkeeper and softly replied, "Well, I do not run so well myself, and the little puppy will need someone who understands!"

NEVER LET ONE FAILURE FROM THE PAST HOLD YOU BACK IN THE FUTURE

As a man passed the elephants, he suddenly stopped, puzzled by the fact that these massive creatures were only held together by a small rope tied to their front

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He reached down and rolled up his pants leg, revealing a twisted, crippled left leg supported by a large metal brace. He told the shopkeeper, "I do not run so well myself, and the little puppy will need someone who understands!"
”





same size rope to tie them and, at that age, it's enough to hold them," the trainer explained. "As they grow older, they are conditioned to believe that they will never be able to break free. They are convinced that the rope can still hold them, so they never attempt to break free."

The man was taken aback. These animals had the ability to break free from their bonds at any time, but because they believed they couldn't, they remained trapped.

STRUGGLING WILL MAKE YOU STRONGER

Once upon a time, a man found a butterfly in the process of

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The elephants had the ability to break free from their bonds at any time, but because they believed they could not, they remained trapped

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hatching from its cocoon. He sat for hours, watching the butterfly struggle to force itself through a tiny hole. Then it suddenly stopped moving and appeared to be stuck.

Therefore, the man decided to help the butterfly. He took a pair of scissors and cut the last bit of the cocoon off. The butterfly then emerged with ease, despite its swollen body and small, shrivelled wings.

The man did not think anything of it, and sat there waiting for the butterfly's wings to

leg. There are no chains or cages. The elephants could easily break free from their bonds at any time, but for some reason, they did not.

He noticed a trainer nearby and inquired as to why these animals just stood there and made no attempt to flee.

'Well, when they are very young and much smaller, we use the





grow large enough to support it. That, however, never occurred. The butterfly crawled around with small wings and a swollen body for the rest of its life, unable to fly.

Despite the man's good intentions, he did not realise that the restricting cocoon and the struggle required by the butterfly to get through the small hole were God's way of forcing fluid from the butterfly's body into its wings to prepare it for flight once it was free.

YOUR REACTION MATTERS MORE THAN WHAT HAPPENS TO YOU

Once upon a time, a daughter complained to her father about how miserable her life was and how she did not know how she was going to get by. She was tired of constantly fighting and struggling. It seemed that as soon as one problem was solved, another one arose.

Her chef father escorted her to the kitchen. He filled three pots with water and set them on high heat. When the first of the three pots began to boil, he added potatoes to one, eggs to the second, and ground coffee beans to the third.

He then left them to boil without saying anything to his daughter. The daughter moaned and waited impatiently, wondering what he was doing.

He turned off the burners after twenty minutes. He drained the potatoes and placed them in a bowl. He took out the boiled eggs and placed them in a bowl. He then ladled out the coffee and

poured it into a cup. He asked, turning to face her. "What do you see, daughter?"

She quickly replied, "Potatoes, eggs, and coffee."

"Look closer, and touch the potatoes," he said.

She did, and she noticed how soft they were. He then instructed her to break an egg. She examined the hard-boiled egg after removing the shell. Finally, he asked her to take a sip of her coffee. Its intoxicating aroma made her smile.

"What does this mean, Father?" she inquired.

He then explained that the potatoes, eggs, and coffee beans had all been subjected to the same adversity: boiling water. Each one, however, reacted differently.

The potato went in strong, hard, and unrelenting, but in boiling water, it softened and became weak.

The egg was delicate, with a thin outer shell protecting its liquid interior until it was immersed in boiling water. The inside of the egg then hardened.

The ground coffee beans, on the other hand, were one-of-a-kind. They changed the water and created something new after being exposed to boiling water.

"Which are you?" he inquired of his daughter. How do you respond when adversity knocks on your door? Do you want to be a potato, an egg, or a coffee bean?" ❖



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A man found a butterfly in the process of hatching from its cocoon. He sat for hours, watching the butterfly struggle to force itself through a tiny hole. Then it suddenly stopped moving and appeared to be stuck

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‘LAND OF SHERPAS’ IMMERSED IN COLOUR ALL YEAR ROUND

Nepal is a tourist’s paradise. Great Himalayan Range makes up northern part of the country, containing highest elevations in the world. Not many are familiar with faunal surprises hidden within lush foliage of the country, as it boasts of vast assortment of verdant landscapes and thriving wildlife.

■ IATO Bureau



have several years of tradition and culture in them.

Not many people are familiar with the faunal surprises hidden within the lush foliage of the country. Nepal boasts vast assortment of verdant landscapes and thriving wildlife—some of which include rhinoceros, tigers and exotic bird species. Whether you are the one who prefers ski boarding down the slopes of mountains, or someone who likes to be attuned with nature, Nepal has everything for those who wish to catch up such an experience. So, it would be better to hop on a mountain bike or check into a luxurious lodge atop a peak and experience the old world charm of Nepal.

The great Himalayan Range makes up the northern part of Nepal, which is a Hindu majority country. It contains the highest elevations in the world. Seven snow-capped mountain ranges are near Nepal. They include Lhotse, Makalu, Cho Oyu, Kanchenjunga, Dhaulagiri, Annapurna and Manaslu.

Landlocked amidst the Indian plains and the Himalayas, Nepal is every mountaineer’s dream. Tourists from across the world gather here for a regular dose of thrill. The 'Land of the Sherpas' is often recognised by its landmark peak—Mount Everest—and its ancient tradition, vibrant culture. It is divided into three regions such as Himal, Pahad and Terai. Nepal has an amiable climate and a casual walk around Kathmandu, Bhaktapur or Patan will invariably make you stumble upon monasteries, each of which



Nepal occupies the central sector of the Himalayan arc with a small strip of southernmost region stretching into the Indo-Gangetic plain. Two northern districts of the country reach the Tibetan plateau near the Mount Everest.

The Lower Himalayan Range comprises subtropical valleys and hills. Population density is high in valleys, where snow occasionally falls in winter. The Terai region bordering India is on the northern edge of the Indo-Gangetic Plain. Three Himalayan rivers namely Koshi, Narayani, and the Karnali are the major rivers in the region. This region has a subtropical to tropical climate. Broad, low valleys called Inner Terai Valleys (Bhitri Tarai Upatyaka) lie north of these foothills in several places.

Tourism is one of the largest and fastest-growing industries in Nepal, employing more than a million people and contributing 7.9 per cent of the total GDP. The country is literally a tourist's paradise. The premier destinations in the country include Pokhara, the Annapurna trekking circuit and the UNESCO world heritage sites—Swayambhunath Stupa, Patan Durbar Square, Bhaktapur Durbar Square, Sagarmatha National Park, Chitwan National Park, six sites in Kathmandu, including the famous Pashupathinath temple.

A major source of revenue for Nepal comes from mountaineering: Mount Everest is accessible from the Nepal side. The home-stay tourism, in which cultural and eco-tourists stay as PGs in the homes of indigenous people, has seen some success.

After it opened to westerners, Nepal became a popular



Tiger in Chitwan National Park

destination during the 1960s and 1970s. However, the industry continues to face challenges due to lack of a plethora of facilities for high-end tourism.

Varied cultures are practised in Nepal. Kathmandu enjoys a rich tapestry of cultures blending to form a national identity. Adding colour to the otherwise placid life of the people are the festivals which are not only immersed in colour but are also celebrated all year round.

A must visit for travellers is the Indra Jatra festival where the people of Nepal come out in colour attires. The chariot of the living goddess is taken out in a procession during the eight day long Indra Jatra festival which falls in September and is one of the most revered festivals of Kathmandu Valley.

Food plays an important role in during the festivals in Nepal.

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The elephants had the ability to break free from their bonds at any time, but because they believed they could not, they remained trapped
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Foreign Shores



The Kathmandu Valley

popular snacks. Rotis (flatbread) and *dhedo* (boiled flour) are also the staple diet in some homes.

Another attraction in Nepal is Province Two where all the province's districts such as Parsa, Bara, Rautahat, Sarlahi, Mahotari, Dhanusha, Siraha and Saptari come under Terai region. Major attractions of the province include Janakpurdham, Janaki temple, Parsa Wildlife Reserve, Salhesh Botanical Garden (Phulbari), Gadhji Mai temple, Jaleswor Mahadev temple, Birgunj, Simraungadh and Baba Taal lake.

Food habits differ from region to region in Nepal. Indian and Tibetan styles of cooking influence the Nepali style of cooking. The staple Nepali meal is *daal* (lentil soup), *bhat* (boiled rice) and *tarkari* (curried vegetables), often accompanied by *achar* (pickles). Curried meat is a popular dish, but it is prepared on special occasions such as marriages, get-togethers among others. Momos (steamed or fried dumplings) deserve a mention as the most

The regional languages Maithili, Awadhi and Bhojpuri are spoken in the southern Terai region, while Urdu is spoken among Nepali Muslims. Varieties of Tibetan dialects are spoken in and upper reaches of Himalayas where Tibetan language is understood by those with religious education. Local dialects in the Terai and hills are mostly unwritten with efforts on to underway to develop the language either in Devanagari script or the Roman alphabet. ❖



UTTAR PRADESH CHAPTER

❖ Chapter Chair of Uttar Pradesh moderated the session on Perspective of Tourism in Uttar Pradesh at the Tourism Conference on National Tourism Day, 25 January, 2022.

NORTHERN REGION CHAPTER

❖ Northern Region Chairman speaks about budget expectations.



WEST BENGAL CHAPTER

❖ Chapter Chair, West Bengal on budget expectations..



AP & TS CHAPTER



JAMMU AND KASHMIR CHAPTER

❖ Chapter Chair J&K spoke of the need for more hotels in the state.



NORTHERN CHAPTER

अतुल्य! भारत
Incredible India



BORDER TOURISM WEBINAR SERIES

'Highlighting the Potential of Tourism in Border Districts of India'

Focus STATE: UTTAR PRADESH

Friday, 11 February 2022 | 3:00 PM - 5:00 PM

PROGRAMME

3:00 PM-3:05 PM	Opening Address by Dr. Yogesh Srivastav, Assistant Secretary General, PHDCCI
3:05 PM-3:10 PM	Presidential Address by Mr. Pradeep Multani, President, PHDCCI
3:10 PM-3:15 PM	Theme Address by Mr. Pawan S. Jain, Chair – Tourism & Hospitality Committee, PHDCCI
3:15 PM-3:20 PM	PHDCCI Presentation on Uttar Pradesh
3:20 PM-3:25 PM	Address by Mr. Pradeep Agrawal, Co-Chair-Uttar Pradesh Chapter, PHDCCI
3:25 PM-3:30 PM	Presentation on Incredible India
3:30 PM-3:40 P	Address by Mr. Mukesh Kumar Meshram (IAS), Principal Secretary – Tourism and Culture, Government of Uttar Pradesh
3:40 PM-3:50 PM	Address by Mr. Rama Kamaraju, Senior Consultant-Aspirational Districts Programme, NITI Aayog
3:50 PM -4:00 PM	Address by Mr. Sunil C. Gupta, Chairman – Northern Region, Indian Association of Tour Operators (IATO)
4:00 PM-4:10 PM	Address by Mr. Vivek Pandey, President, Travel Trade Association of Uttar Pradesh (TTAUP)
4:10 PM-4:15 PM	Vote of Thanks by Mr. Rajan Sehgal, Co-Chair-Tourism & Hospitality Committee, PHDCCI



TS & AP CHAPTER

❖ On 4 February 2022, the IATO chapter (TS & AP) organised the new series of 'Ashurkhana's' in Hyderabad. More than 20 'Ashurkhanas' were identified. No other tour operator offers these specialised tours.



GUJARAT CHAPTER

❖ Chapter Chair Gujarat met the New MD of Gujarat Tourism Alok Pandey along with two IATO members. They had good discussion with him on tourism prospects in Gujarat and also briefed him about IATO & handed him the IATO manual.

TS & AP CHAPTER

❖ GMR, Hyderabad is the first airport in India, to initiate the discussions and presentations to the Govt, "How to Increase Inbound Tourism". IATO (TS&AP) was part of that initiative.



❖ IATO chapter (TS&AP) trained MoT guides and took them on FAM tours to new destinations.

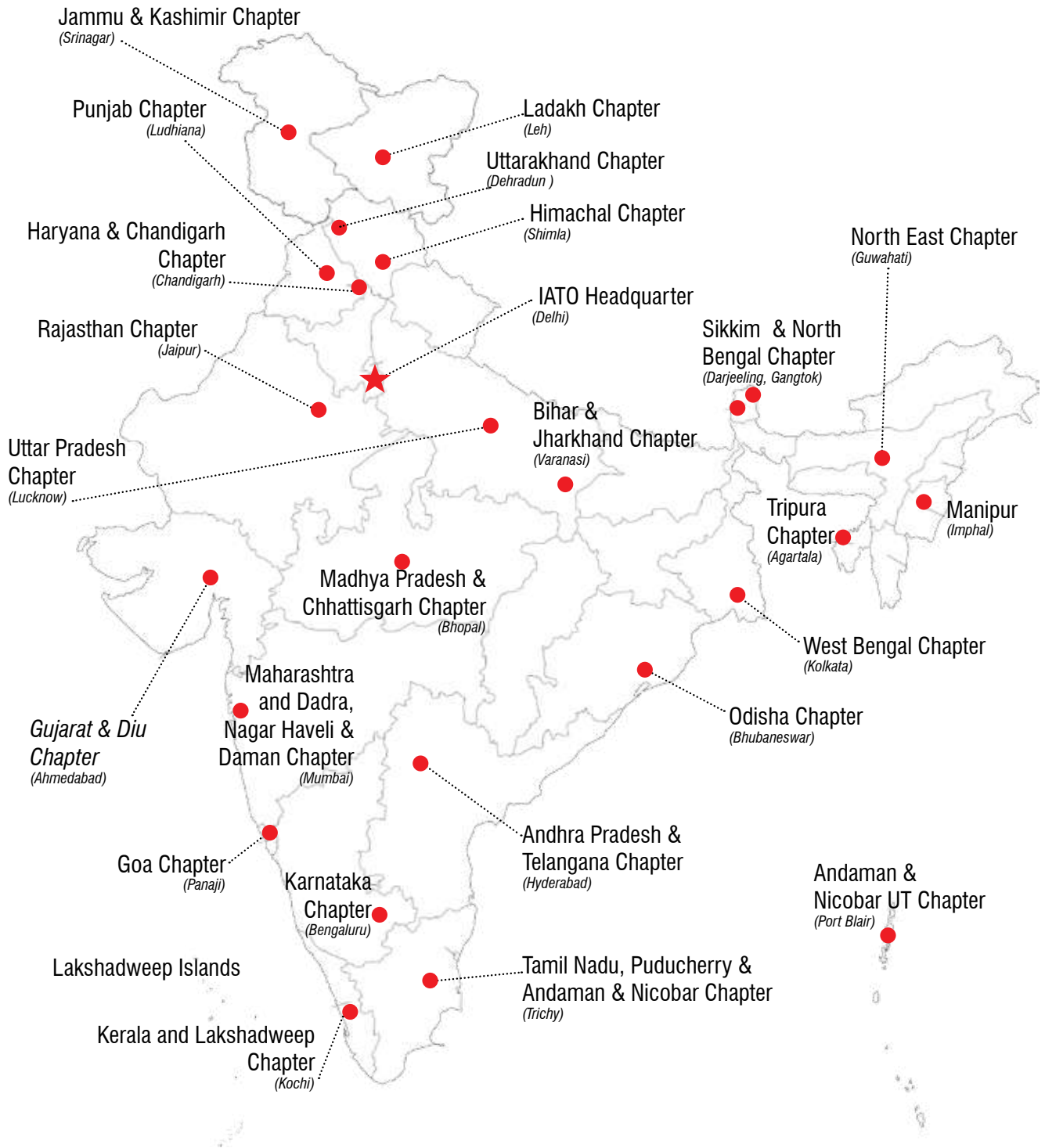






INDIAN ASSOCIATION OF TOUR OPERATORS

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>