### **Update on IATO Activities**

### (Saturday, 16<sup>th</sup> October to Sunday, 31<sup>st</sup> October 2021)

#### Dear Members,

Greetings!

Please find appended relevant activities of our association for the period (Saturday, 16<sup>th</sup> October to Sunday, 31<sup>st</sup> October 2021)

#### Segments covered are

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

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

## 1. Communication / Letters that addressed key issues

Segment 1 update sequence by date:22/25,25,29 October

# Friday,22<sup>nd</sup> October

> IATO wrote to Smt. V. Vidyavathi, Director General, Archaeological Survey of India on the feedback of the tourism stakeholders - Covid Norms not being followed at ASI Monuments

A request was made to kindly give necessary directives to all the concerned senior officials at each monument that they should ensure that all the staff and the visitors should follow the Covid – norms and guidelines of FoHFW, Government of India and wear the mask. Similar directives may also be given to security staff at all the ASI Monuments.

A copy of the letter was marked to **A.** Secretary Tourism, **B**. DG Tourism and **C**. ADG Tourism, Ministry of Tourism, Govt. of India

> IATO requested Hon'ble Chief Minister of Delhi (NCT) to allow Transportation with 100 % seating in Cab, Maxi Cab and Tempo Traveller

IATO put forward that the seating capacity for cabs was restricted for 2 and maxi cabs for 5, the transport charges for the domestic and foreign tourists to travel by cabs and maxi cab was cost prohibitive and made package cost high, discouraging foreign

tourists to visit India and they would opt to visit neighbouring countries where package cost was comparatively very low.

It was requested to kindly allow transportation with 100 % seating capacity as was in the case of Delhi Metro and DTC buses so that travelling in cabs (5 seater and 7 seater cars) and maxi cabs with seating capacity of 8 seaters and above like tempo traveller, became financially viable and affordable for the tourists. Necessary amendments were requested to be made in the orders dated 14<sup>th</sup> October 2021.

A copy of the letter was marked to **A**. Lt. Governor of Delhi, **B**. Deputy Chief Minister and Minister of Tourism Government of NCT Delhi, **C**. Hon'ble Minister of Transport, GNCTD and **D**. Secretary (Tourism) Government of NCT Delhi

 Flowing on the above a request was made to Secretary Tourism, Government of India on the 25<sup>th</sup> to take up with the Delhi Government and all State Governments to allow Transportation with 100 % seating capacity in Cab, Maxi Cab and Tempo Traveller. A copy was marked to DG and ADG Tourism, Govt of India

### Monday, 25<sup>th</sup> October

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

IATO was informed by some of its members who were recognised by the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India that Delhi Government is insisting for inspection and saying that the rule for licensing was applicable only for those tour operators whose MoT recognition was given in the current year. MoT recognition is given for 5 years. If any of the MoT approved tour operator applied for Delhi Government licence and had valid MoT recognition they were exempt from the inspection.

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

> IATO requested Mr. Arvind Singh, Secretary Tourism, Ministry of Tourism and sought confirmation regarding

# simplification of MOHFW Guidelines for International Arrivals dated 20th October 2021

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

- 1. All travellers Planning for Travel should
  - i. Submit self-declaration form on the online Air Suvidha portal (www.newdelhiairport.in) before the scheduled travel
  - ii. Upload a negative COVID-19 RT-PCR report. This test should have been conducted within 72 hrs prior to undertaking the journey.
- iii. Each passenger shall also submit a declaration with respect to authenticity of the report and will be liable for criminal prosecution, if found otherwise
- iv. They should also give an undertaking on the portal or otherwise to Ministry of Civil Aviation, Government of India, through concerned airlines before they are allowed to undertake the journey that they would abide by the decision of the appropriate government authority to undergo home quarantine/ self-health monitoring, as warranted.

#### 2. On arrival in India

- i. In certain cases, RTCPR test will be done, otherwise those fully vaccinated will be allowed to leave the airport and shall self-monitor their health for 14 days' post arrival.
- ii. Travellers who are partially/not vaccinated will undergo RTPCR test, home quarantine for 7 days and retest on 8<sup>th</sup> day of arrival.
- iii. However nationals from the below mentioned countries even if they are fully vaccinated will be subject to RTCPR test on arrival, home quarantine for 7 days, and retest on 8<sup>th</sup> day of arrival. These countries are
  - Countries in Europe excluding UK, Germany and France
  - South Africa
  - Brazil
  - Bangladesh
  - Botswana
  - China
  - Mauritius
  - New Zealand
  - Zimbabwe

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

#### IATO urged that

- A) Guidelines need to be simplified and FAQ may be issued with more clarity so that correct information could be given to the foreign tour operators by Indian Embassies, High Commissions, India tourism offices overseas and by the Indian Tour Operators to their foreign counterparts.
- B) A list of countries in Europe at High Risk should be mentioned in FAQ.

A copy of the letter was marked to **A**. Secretary (H&FW), **B**. Director General (Tourism) and **C**. Additional Director General (Tourism)

### Friday, 29th October

> IATO offered its input on the DSIIDC meeting held on 5th Oct at Bombay Life Building, New Delhi

- 1. Delhi should be made and promoted as MICE Tourism Hub as it has lot of potential for MICE activities.
- 2. To increase number of night stay by the tourists, Delhi Government should initiate some evening entertainment activities in the city.
- 3. Reduction on GST percentage or refund to the tour operators enable offer competitive price to tourists to stay for longer duration in Delhi.
- 4. Rebate on Electricity rental cost at tour operator's premises.
- 5. To Counter any adverse media publicity for Delhi, PR Agency should be appointed.
- 6. Foreign tourists were more concerned about hygiene, safety and security. Therefore, to Make Clean Delhi, Safe Delhi and make Delhi City of Attraction having so much to show case in Delhi.
- 7. Financial support for organising road shows and promotion activities for Delhi.
- 8. During the Pandemic Situation Tourism sector was suffering the most and needed financial support to revive the existences. This could be cash or kind as deem fit by the Delhi Govt. For your information many state governments have extended financial help to the tourism sector and its workers, tourist guides etc.
- 9. Give tourism sector some rebate for renewal of licence fee, road taxes to tourist vehicles and reduction in fitness renewal charges.
- 10. There is acute problem of parking in Delhi for the tourist vehicles at tourist place, monuments, Railway stations etc. Government should earmark parking places for the tourist places and earmark designated dropping and pick up spots for tourist's vehicles/tourists including proper parking lot.
- 11. Any other help Delhi Government can extend

# 2. Webinars/ Panel Discussions/Circulars/Meetings

Segment 2 update sequence by date: 16,18,19,21,22, 26, October

## Saturday, 16th October

➤ Ministry of Tourism Webinar on 16<sup>th</sup> October 2021 was held at 11 am on "Durga Puja- Most important festival of the East India and its importance".

### Monday, 18th October

- ➤ Invitation for India Travel Mart (ITM) Dehradun, 9-11 November, 2021. All members were informed.
- ➤ All Members were updated on e-Tourist Visa for travel to India Members were informed that the Government official website for applying for visa including e-Tourist Visa was updated and foreign tourists who wished to apply for e-Tourist Visa could apply on the following link: -
  - Link for e-Tourist Visa

https://indianvisaonline.gov.in/evisa/tvoa.html

Home Page

#### https://indianvisaonline.gov.in/

A list of countries/nationalities who were eligible to avail e-Visa and instructions for the applicants were given on the above links.

#### Members were asked to note that

- **1.** Validity for e-Tourist Visa was for One Month (30 Days) with Single Entry, non-extendable and non-convertible.
- **2.** In the list of countries/nationalities who were eligible to avail e-Visa, names of the countries that were removed were
  - Canada
  - China
  - China Macau
  - China Sar Hongkong
  - Indonesia
  - Iran
  - Kazakhastan
  - Kyrgystan
  - Malaysia
  - United Kingdom
  - Uzbekistan

IATO has taken up with the Ministry of Tourism to request Ministry of Home Affairs that e-Tourist Visa should be of Double Entry with 60 days' validity as tourist were wanting to travel to Nepal, Sri Lanka, Bhutan along with India.

IATO further requested the ministry that e-tourist visa should be permitted for tourist entering through land from Nepal at least to facilitate the Buddhist Tourists Movements.

IATO would be taking it up with the Ministry to resume e-Tourist Visa from countries excluded especially from major source markets like Canada, United Kingdom, Indonesia, Malaysia, China Macau, & China, Hong Kong in e-Tourist Visa and China and other remaining countries to be considered once conditions were favourable.

# Tuesday, 19th October

➤ All members were informed on the Re-introduction of IATO News Letter - October 2021 edition which was attached.

# Thursday, 21st October

> IATO 39th AGM was held on Zoom at The Park New Delhi











# Friday, 22<sup>nd</sup> October

> All IATO Members (Tour Operators & Travel Agents) were informed on the details of pending Refunds of Advance paid to RTDC for Palace on Wheels Luxury Train.

IATO was writing to Rajasthan Tourism/RTDC for last one and half year for refund of advance payments which had been made by our members to RTDC for bookings on Palace on Wheels (PoW), which were cancelled due to cancellations of Tourist Visa and international flights due to Covid-19.

In spite of regular reminders and follow-ups, it is understood that refund of many of IATO members were still pending from RTDC.

As per discussion held during the AGM, IATO would be looking into the possibilities of taking legal assistance in the matter for which it needed some information from all those members whose refunds from RTDC with regard to PoW were pending

## Tuesday, 26th October

- ➤ Free Covid Vaccination Camp was organized for Hospitality & Travel Trade Stakeholders on 26th and 27th October at The Park Hotel, New Delhi. All members were informed.
- ➤ Foood for Thought" of the day as shared by Chairman, FAITH was sent to all members

# 3. Media Coverage

Segment 3 update sequence by date: 16,18,21,22,25,26 October

## Saturday, 16th October

> IATO on Twitter

### Monday, 18th October



# Thursday, 21st October

➤ President IATO spoke about road connection to Lumbini in Nepal to promote Buddhist circuit



### Friday, 22<sup>nd</sup> October



President advocated E Visa for key source markets like UK Germany and others



### Monday, 25<sup>th</sup> October



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REVOLT IN CHH'GARH CONGRESS?

YEARS TO REVIVE

POPULAR DRIVER



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SC issues notice to ex-Twitter India chief on UP govt plea

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# Tuesday, 26th October

➤ President spoke on Restoration of Airport Passes



# 4. Chapter News

Segment 4 update sequence by date: 28,29,31 October

# Thursday 28th October

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



#### > Regional Chairman North in Media



#### Friday, 29th October



Regional Chairman South represented IATO for the Southern regional tourism ministers conference. He had the opportunity to present the issues which tourism Industry was facing more focused on Southern region.

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

- 5) To have common COVID protocol policy which entering different states of India. To remove RTPCR negative test required by Karnataka.
- 6) With new system of QR code scanning to buy tickets at ASI monuments requesting put free wifi so tourist are not deprived of getting tickets
- 7) All ports to have common policy so cruise ships can have better experience while visiting India
- 8) Government of India to give Tourism, Industry status
- 9) Announcing the dates of festivals in advance so better promotion can be done

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

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

#### Sunday, 31st October

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

