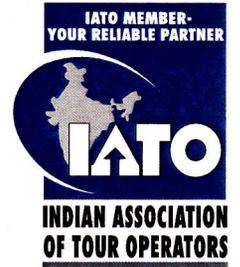


**INDIAN ASSOCIATION OF
TOUR OPERATORS**
(National Body of Tour Operators)



20th March 2020

IATO MEMBER - YOUR RELIABLE PARTNER

Shri Amitabh Kant
Chief Executive Officer
Niti Aayog
Government of India
Yojana Bhawan
New Delhi

310, Padma Tower-II
22, Rajendra Place
New Delhi-110 008
Ph.: 25754478, 25750034,
25738803, Fax: 25750028
Email: iato@airtelmail.in
admin@iato.in
Website: www.iato.in

Dear Sir,

Sub: Request for Refund of advance payments for the bookings of foreign tourists without any cancellations charges due to Suspension of Visa/E-Visa for all nationals till 15th April 2020.

On behalf of the members of IATO and on behalf of entire tourism industry, we appreciate the steps being taken by our Government to prevent and control the Coronavirus (COVID -19) spreading in our country. As per the information, so far the situation in India is under control and not very serious compared to the damage it has done in many other countries. This all could happen with the timely preventive measures taken by our Ministry of Health & Family Welfare and other concerned ministries.

With the latest Travel advisory issued by Ministry of Health & Family Welfare and Bureau of Immigration, Ministry of Home Affairs, all existing visas issued to nationals of all countries have been suspended till 15th April 2020.

This is to inform you that due to the above situation and reason of Coronavirus (COVID 19) tourists movements have cancelled without any fault of the foreign tourists. We are bringing to your kind information that our members are not getting due refunds from various state Government corporations, Luxury Trains, Safari Parks, hotel rooms and all airlines domestic and International. This we have brought to the knowledge of Ministry of Tourism, Government of India also.

Office Bearers

Pronab Sarkar
President

E.M. Najeeb
Senior Vice President

Rajiv Mehra
Vice President

Rajesh Mudgill
Hony. Secretary

Ravi Gosain
Hony. Treasurer

Rajnish Kaistha
Hony. Joint Secretary

Subhash Goyal
Imm. Past President

Executive Committee Members

Deepak Bhatnagar
P.S. Duggal
Raj Bajaj
Tony Marwah
Viney Tyagi
P. Vijayarathya
Sunil Gupta
Zia Siddiqui

Memorandum of Understanding with



In order to keep our country's image high and to revive tourism after global crisis are over, our members need to make the full refund to their foreign tour operators/clients under force majeure clause.

In view of the above, may I, request you for the following:-

- Hotels be advised to make full refund of the hotel rooms bookings with nil cancellation charges. They should not issue credit note and should refund the advance paid to the tour operators who have made the bookings so that the tour operators could refund to the foreign agent/clients..
- State Governments of Rajasthan, Maharashtra, Karnataka and IRCTC be advised to make full refund for the bookings made for the luxury trains run by RTDC, KSTDC, MTDC and IRCTC without any cancellation charges. They should not issue credit note and should refund the advance paid to the tour operators who have made the bookings/payments so that the tour operators could refund to the foreign agent/clients.
- State Government Wildlife/Forest departments be advised to make full refund of the advance paid for Jungle Safaris by the tour operators.
- Ministry of Home Affairs be advised to make refund of the e-Visa fee paid by tourists for all 30 days e-Visa.
- All the Airlines be advised to make full refund of the air tickets with Nil Cancellations for the bookings made for the foreign travelers on domestic sector and booking made for travel to neighbouring for foreign groups/individuals.

Besides writing to our Ministry of Tourism, we have also written to the concerned authorities in the Ministry of Civil Aviation, State Government, Airlines, FHRAI, HAI etc. requesting for refunds. Some of the hotels have agreed to make refund but many hotels are not agreeing to refund. Similarly there is no positive response from IRCTC, RTDC for refund of advance paid for the luxury trains. Airlines are also not giving positive response. All this has put tour operators in very difficult situation as they are not in a position to reply to their foreign counterparts in spite of the fact that there is suspension of Visa/E.Visa and no foreign travelers are being allowed to visit our country. This is the global situation adopted by many countries. Hence holding the advance payment is not justifiable.

INDIAN ASSOCIATION OF TOUR OPERATORS



Continuation Sheet.....

You had remained at the helm of affairs in the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India and know the problems and issues of the tour operators and their working conditions. If tour operators do not refund the advances received from the foreign tour operators/clients it will have long term negative impact on future business and it will be difficult to revive tourism after we recover from the setback of Coronavirus. Therefore, we need your help in the matter to keep our country's image high and to revive tourism to our country once we overcome this situation of global crisis.

We look forward to your favourable action in the matter.

Thanking you and with best regards,

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Pronab Sarkar", is written over a horizontal line.

Pronab Sarkar
President
(M) 9811102111