

IATO

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

SPEAKS

**IATO APPRISED GOVERNMENT ON THE
ISSUES BEING FACED BY THE
INBOUND TOUR OPERATORS**



**37TH IATO ANNUAL CONVENTION IN
LAPS OF AWADH – THE KINGDOM OF NAWABS**

37th IATO Annual Convention

at
Lucknow, India



16-19 December 2022

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IATO Speaks is owned by IATO and printed & published on their behalf by DDP Publications Pvt. Ltd. & is printed at Modest Print Pack Pvt. Ltd., Delhi



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President's Message



Dear Members

Your 37th Annual Convention is just round the corner, lets get ready and start packing our bags.

Your Convention Committee has worked relentlessly to put together something which is different, unique and outstanding. You will feel and see the difference when you are in Lucknow.

Shri Yogi Adityanath, the Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh will be inaugurating the convention.

You are aware that Uttar Pradesh has many international tourist sites; from Taj Mahal, one of the seven wonders of the world, to one of the oldest living cities in the world - Varanasi. Apart from many highlights in the state, Lucknow city itself is an unmatched destination of unique cultural and historical values.

Those of you who have still not registered for the Convention, should do so immediately.

You are aware that the 'Minister of Tourism' last month had called for the state tourism minister's conference where they discussed the future plans and requested the states to become proactive. Your Association was represented and made some important points which were greatly valued and are now being adhered to.

Lastly, your Association has further requested the Ministry of Tourism to provide free of cost participation for all tour operators who are approved by them and are members of IATO. We are hopeful to see some favourable results at forthcoming FITUR and ITB.

I look forward to welcoming each one of you soon in Lucknow - the city of nawabs!.

Stay Well & Stay Safe!

Your President


SEPTEMBER

❖ IATO apprised Smt. V. Vidyavathi, Director General, Archaeological Survey of India on the Monkey menace at Taj Mahal

❖ IATO requested Shri Vinay Kwatra, Foreign Secretary to reinstate e-Tourist Visa for UK, Canada and other important source market countries

❖ IATO appealed to Shri Pinarayi Vijayan, Hon'ble Chief Minister, Govt. of Kerala to stop Mass Killing of Dogs in Kerala

❖ IATO gave its inputs to Mr. Prashant Ranjan, Director (NT) Ministry of Tourism on the Registration form for Best Rural Tourism Village Competition for Promotion and Development of Rural Tourism and Rural Homestays.

❖ All Members were informed on the 37th IATO Annual Convention to take place in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh in December 2022

❖ All Members were informed on the Invitation for the National Conference on Parāyatan se Pravartan: Tourism and Cultural Pride in Uttam Pradesh on 27th & 28th September 2022

❖ All members were informed on the participation in SEPC's India pavilion in WTM London to be held on 7-9 November, 2022

❖ President IATO speaking at the Tourism Ministers Conference, Dharamshala



❖ President with the Hon'ble Minister for Tourism Shri G. Kishan Reddy



❖ All Active Members were informed on the Joining Link for Incredible India Reconnect 2022 (Virtual RoadShow): France edition on Friday, the 23rd September 2022 at 01:30 PM (IST)

❖ All Members were informed on the 37th IATO Annual Convention to take place in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh from 16 - 19 December 2022 in December 2022

❖ All Members (Tour Operators & Travel Agents) were informed Regarding D-14 days Clause on special promo code rates by ITC Hotels for the IATO Members.

❖ All Members were informed of an email received from Indiatourism Dubai/ Embassy of India Bucharest regarding participation in TTR Romania.

❖ All members were informed on the participation in SEPC's India pavilion in WTM London to be held on 7-9 November, 2022

OCTOBER

❖ IATO appealed to Hon'ble Shri Narendra Modi ji, Prime Minister of India with a request to reinstate e-Tourist Visa for UK, Canada and other important source market countries

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❖ IATO apprised Shri P.K. Singh, Chief Executive Officer, Government e marketplace (GeM), Ministry of Commerce that from a circular issued by Team GeM many more services were included in the GeM Portfolio but IATO could not find any changes with regard to the services to be provided by the Ministry of Tourism, Govt. of India service providers as was requested in the earlier mail of IATO dated 15th September 2022

❖ IATO requested Mr. Rakesh Kumar Verma, Additional Secretary Ministry of Tourism for his help in getting UK visa on priority for the participants of WTM -2022

❖ IATO requested H.E. Mr. Vikram K. Doraiswami, High Commissioner of India, London to re-instate e-Tourist Visa for UK - one of the most important source market for Inbound Tourism to India

❖ All IATO Members were informed on the IATO Annual General Meeting to be held on Friday, the 28th October 2022 at 1030 hours

❖ All Members were informed on the IATO Letter to the Hon'ble Prime Minister requesting his intervention to restore e-Tourist Visa for UK, Canada and other important countries.

❖ President at the Rajdhani Tourist Driver Union Conference



❖ All members were informed of the Invitation from IHCL for Webinar on newly opened SAWAI MAN MAHAL, JAIPUR on Friday, 14th October 2022 at 12:00 Hrs.

❖ All Members, (Recognized by the Ministry of Tourism, Govt. of India) were informed on the Participation in World Travel Mart (WTM) 2022 in India Pavilion of Ministry of Tourism, Govt. of India

❖ All Members, were informed on the IATO Survey 2022 for Ministry of Commerce

❖ Mr. Arvind Singh, Secretary of Tourism, was contacted by the IATO regarding the participation of the Ministry of Tourism by establishing an India Pavilion at FITUR 2023 and ITB 2023.

❖ IATO offered suggestions to Mr. V. Vumlunmang, Additional Chief Secretary, Manipur Secretariat for Promotion of Tourism to Manipur

❖ IATO requested Mr. Rakesh Kumar Verma, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Tourism for Complimentary Space at WTM-2022 for the stakeholders and participation of Ministry in FITUR and ITB 2023

❖ IATO wrote to Shri Rajeev Ranjan Verma, Commissioner, Bureau of Immigration, Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India, informing him of the difficulties foreign tourists





from Spain and Germany are having in obtaining E-Visas, which is having an impact on the inbound tourism industry and leading to cancellations. Additionally, it was stated that there is a sizable wait in the issuance of e-visas, particularly for visitors from European nations. Additionally, more details are being requested, which causes a further delay in the visa. Before, e-Visas were issued within 24 to 72 hours, however this is no longer the case. All visa procedures and requirements had to be finished within seven days of the application's submission date.

❖ IATO sent a letter to Vinay Kwatra, the Indian government's secretary of state for foreign affairs. Russian tourists are having trouble paying their online visa fees in USD since their international credit cards are being stopped as a result of western sanctions, hence it is being asked that rubles be accepted as a form of payment instead. From Russia to India, this has an impact on the inbound tourism industry.

❖ The Tashkent International Tourism Fair, took place from November 30 to December 2, 2022, was made known to all members.

❖ The invitation from CGI Ho Chi Minh City to attend a webinar on Indian tourism trends on October 27, 2022, was shared with all members.

❖ The participation in ITM at Aizwal from November 16-18, 2022, was made known to all Active Members.

❖ The 37th IATO Annual Convention will be held in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh, from December 16 to December 19, 2022. All Members have been informed of this.

❖ The IATO Regional/State Chapter Chairmen Meeting will be held on December 15, 2022, in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh. All IATO Regional Chapter Chairmen and State Chapter Chairmen, Co-Chairmen, and State-in-Charge were informed. ❖

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the Rashtriya
Ekta Diwas
Quiz under
Ek Bharat
Shrestha
Bharat
”

NOVEMBER

❖ IATO wrote to Shri Ajay Kumar Bhalla, Secretary (Home Affairs) regarding E-Visa problems for the applicants from Europe especially from Germany and Spain

❖ IATO requested His Excellency Shri Vinai Kumar Saxena, Lieutenant Governor of NCT Delhi to allow plying of BS IV All India Tourist Permit Diesel Vehicles in Delhi

❖ IATO requested Mrs. Gayatri Rathore, Principal Secretary (Tourism), Govt. of Rajasthan, to withdraw revised policy for the bookings of Palace on Wheels

❖ IATO requested Shri Arvind Kejriwal, Chief Minister Government of NCT Delhi to consider services of tour operators of providing travel by All India Tourist Permit Diesel Vehicles in essential services and to allow plying of BS IV All India Tourist Permit Diesel Vehicles in Delhi during stage IV

❖ IATO apprised Shri Piyush Goyal, Minister for Commerce & Industry on the Issues being faced by the inbound tour operators for revival of Inbound tour operators to India and revive service export through tourism

❖ IATO wrote to Ms. Limatula Yaden, Joint Secretary (TRU-I), Central Board of Indirect Taxes & Customs, Ministry of Finance and offered Suggestions for Union Budget 2023-24 - Changes in Indirect Taxes

❖ IATO thanked Mr. Roshan M Thomas, Deputy Secretary (OM), Ministry of Tourism for his email and the information regarding FITUR and ITB - 2023 and apprised that

❖ All Members were informed on the Registration Details - 37th IATO Annual Convention, 16th - 19th December 2022, Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh

❖ All Members, were informed on the Rashtriya Ekta Diwas Quiz under Ek Bharat Shrestha Bharat

❖ All Members were informed on the IATO Interactive Luncheon Meeting on Monday, 21st November 2022 at 1200 hours at Le Meridien, New Delhi

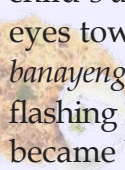
❖ All Active Members were informed on the India Albania Tourism Forum event on 22nd November 2022 at 1930 hours IST on Zoom

❖ All Members, (Recognized by the Ministry of Tourism, Govt. of India) were informed on the Participation in FITUR and ITB 2023 in India Pavilion of Ministry of Tourism, Govt. of India

The Postcard



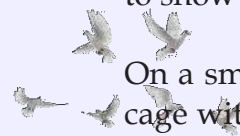
Shaam-e-Lucknow..



The day's light had darkened away, inviting the shades of a silvery blue twilight on the ageless silhouettes of Imambara, dimly lit stars began to appear and disappear in the sky. A child and his mother sat on the steps of a masjid looking at the stars, wondering about the charismas of Allah. The floating whiff of saffron buried in steaming rice caught the child's attention; *"Ammi aap bhi hamare liyea biryani banaiyea naa"*. The mother turned her eyes towards him and kissed him softly on his forehead; *"Hum aap kae liyea zaroor biryani banayenge, aap kae abbaa ko bhi biryani bahut pasand hai..."*. An airplane appeared in the sky flashing its tiny beacon lights, they both looked up. The twilight darkened further, stars became brighter, the boy smiled and hugged his mother.

Meanwhile, nine kilometers away in a 1895 haveli, an elite looking man sat at the head of a marble topped table. Sitting around the table were both his wives, his three young daughters, an old uncle, a film maker friend who was in town, a jovial neighbour with his attractive wife, and a visiting family friend who was a writer. They were being served dinner. It consisted of choicest Awadhi delicacies, specially prepared by his bawarchi; an undisputed master of culinary skills.

The boy and his mother began to walk back to their nearby home, her husband would soon be back from work, he had been out in the city all day long and must be tired. She remembered him mentioning to her in the morning that he was attending to a group of eleven foreign tourists from another country who had arrived in their city. It was his job to show them Lucknow and make them encounter the unique essence of its energy.



On a small terrace elsewhere, a flock of white pigeons rested inside a wooden box-like cage with their eyes shut in sleep, ready to take off into the blue skies the next morning at the command of their master. Downstairs, the master was occupied on his cell phone, negotiating the betting stakes for the next day, while his wife sat on the sofa, delicately embroidering the collar of a kurta with colourful silk threads, dimples appeared on her cheeks when she smiled. On the terrace, a shooting-star streaked through the dark sky.

The guests at the man's dinner table began to talk about the city and its connection with the pulse beat of artists, writers, and film makers; *"Shatranj ke khiladi, which was directed by Satyajit Ray was shot in Lucknow, the film was based on a short story by Munshi Premchand, it was later subtitled in different languages and released globally"*. *"Your Awadh region has also inspired other films for the Hindi cinema"*, *"Ganga Jamuna, Umrao Jaan were also shot here...."*, the film maker said. An attendant served him another helping of kakori kebabs. *"Yess,*

we have something in this air of Awadh that attracts men and women of thought and renown", the host remarked, one of the daughters passed around the dish of Nargisi Koftas. He started speaking about the bygone days of Awadh, their conversation went on for a long time. The retinue of his loyal attendants began to clear the table, one of them lit up the glass covered lamps along the wall. Dinner was over, it was time to celebrate the night.



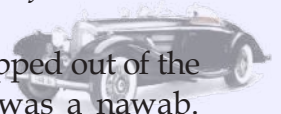
There was a loud knock on the door, the little boy rushed to it; his Abbaa was returning home after a day long nostalgia of the city, he had grown up in. Lucknow was his love; he adored its sounds, its aromas, colours and streets. Earlier in the day, he had told his tourist group; *"Our city is very different, you have to experience it once in your lifetime, it will stay in your heart for ever.....!"*. The boy took his hand and lead him out onto the balcony; *"Abbaa can you see those stars above the minarets, ammi told me they are a charismas of Allah"*. The man did not answer, but he did know, Allah had been overly benevolent to grant their city an abundance of visual and cultural wealth which gave them their livelihood. Lucknow was his home, he had so much to share about it; a lifetime may not be enough. *"Aap dono andar aiye, humne khana laga diya hae"*, his wife called out from inside.

In the wide open courtyard of his ancestral kothi, somewhere along the Gomti river, at the eastern edge of the city, a newly wed young man and his bride were rejoicing. They let off a pink coloured fanush from their hands, it stalled for a brief moment, then began to rise up slowly into the dark sky, radiating the bright glow of its camphor lamp. It soon became a simmering speck in Lucknow's night sky and faded away into infinity.

At the haveli, the wall lamps were still alight, the night was still young, the neighbour was trying to recreate some verses from Asrarul Haq Majaz, his favourite Awadhi poet;

"firdaus-e-husn-o-ishq hai daman-e-lucknow... aankhon mein bas rahee hai rooh-e-lucknow"
(heaven of beauty and ardour is the environ of lucknow... in my eyes lives the soul of lucknow)
"mutrib bhi hai yea, sharab bhi, abr-e-bahaar bhi... har lamhe mein basar hai jaan-e-lucknow"
(my music, my alcohol, my cloud of spring too... in every moment lives the spirit of lucknow).

A black vintage car rolled into the gates of the haveli. The person who stepped out of the restored 1936 Mercedes-Benz Roadster also had aristocratic bearings, he was a nawab. Dressed in a long kurta and churidar pajamas, he slowly walked up the stairs leaving a trail of ittar scent behind him. *"Adaab!"* he greeted, and joined them amidst the lamps.



It was 10 am; the pigeons were circling in the sky, the couple was still blissfully asleep, the elite man was being served tea in a silver tray in his garden, resting next to him was a brown doberman dog, the little boy was at his school flipping through the pages of an illustrated history book, his mother was at a shop buying few spices to prepare biryani for him, his father stood below the city's Rumi darwaza, narrating the history of Awadh to a curious audience of tourists surrounding him.



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

TOURISM SECRETARY TO SET UP INDIA PAVILION IN FITUR AND ITB 2023

IATO apprised two important international travel marts, FITUR and ITB to be held in January and March 2023 and the dates were FITUR, 18-23 January 2023, Madrid, Spain / ITB, 7-9 March, Berlin, Germany

The Ministry of Tourism, along with state tourism offices and other industry partners, has been attending both of the aforementioned markets on a regular basis. IATO asked to be made aware of whether the Ministry of Tourism is taking part in the aforementioned events or not, as SEPC had already reserved a

place at ITB and had sent out a circular inviting all stakeholders in the industry to attend. IATO asked for a prompt response on the aforementioned matter so that it may promptly inform its members and encourage them to take part in the India Pavilion of the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India. ❖

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V. VUMLUNMANG, MANIPUR SECRETARIAT TO PROMOTE TOURISM IN MANIPUR

Manipur Tourism will provide a four-night, five-day tour of all the major tourist cities and sites in Manipur for IATO members between November 2022 - January 15, 2023.

- Air ticket from city of origin in India to Imphal and back.
- Hotel Accommodation – 20 rooms on single occupancy at all places.
- Local transport during entire duration of the Manipur Fam tour.
- Local Guide.
- Interaction with senior government officials of Manipur Tourism and local stakeholders.

Road shows should be regularly held in significant cities all throughout the nation, and Manipur Tourism should engage with Indian tour operators at these events. Every time Manipur Tourism organises one of these road shows, IATO would inform the members.

Participation in International Travel Marts: Manipur Tourism should routinely take part in all significant international travel marts, such as WTM, FITUR, ITB, and TOPRESSA, by renting space in the India Pavilion established by the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, or independently. ITB 2022 will take place in Berlin from March 7-9, 2023, and Manipur Tourism must attend.

Participation in the Lucknow, India, 37th IATO Annual Convention: As previously mentioned, Lucknow, India, will host the 37th IATO Annual Convention from December 16-19, 2022. Senior officials from the Ministry of Tourism, the Government of India, and State Governments,



as well as the Tourism Ministers of the Center and the States, have been invited to participate. 16 State Tourism Departments participated in and sponsored IATO during its final conference, which took place in Gandhinagar in December 2021. It is anticipated that 20 states will participate in 2022. ❖



AJAY KUMAR BHALLA TO SORT OUT E-VISA PROBLEMS FOR THE APPLICANTS

IATO informed the public of the difficulties German and Spanish tourists, in particular, have in obtaining an electronic tourist visa for India.



important source markets, the industry would lose huge business and tourists from these countries were avoiding visiting India and opting for alternative destinations. If this situation continued it would be a big loss for the Inbound tourism business, thus loss of foreign exchange earnings and loss of employment. IATO was trying to recreate jobs for the trained tourism professionals who have lost their jobs due to Covid-19, but under the circumstances when there were lot of problems in getting Indian Visa, it was difficult to achieve this goal of recreating employment in tourism sector and to contribute for the economic development through inbound tourism.

”
IATO requested that within 72 hours If any additional information was required, it may be sought from the applicant and within 72 hours of receipt of the reply the status of granting of Visa to be intimated to the applicant
 ”

IATO received a large number of emails and phone calls from foreign tour operators stating that many foreign tourists who had made confirmed hotel reservations and other arrangements and had applied for an e-Tourist Visa had to cancel their trip to India due to the delay in receiving their visa. They were inconvenienced by the steep penalties associated with canceling their reservations for hotels, domestic flights, and other arrangements.

Similar feedback IATO received from many of its members and their foreign tour operators and they were threatening IATO members that if the situation did not improve, they would stop selling India tour packages. Due to such delays of E-Tourist Visa from

IATO requested to kindly look into this matter on priority and e-Tourist Visa from Spain, Germany and other countries be streamlined and brought to the level of Pre-covid when e-Tourist Visa was being issued within 24 hours rather than 72 hours from the time of submitting the application. IATO requested that within 72 hours If any additional information was required, it may be sought from the applicant and within 72 hours of receipt of the reply the status of granting of Visa to be intimated to the applicant. In case of any reason, if e-Visa was rejected, then the reason for rejection of Visa should be mentioned so that in case if any rectification needs to be done by the applicant, it could be done and application could be re-submitted. ❖

DELHI CM CONSIDERING TOUR OPERATORS DEMAND FOR USE OF DIESEL VEHICLES

IATO informed the authorities of the issues that Delhi's tour operators and travel agencies were having with the ban on the use of BS IV diesel vehicles in NCT Delhi. This restriction was put in place on November 3rd by CAQM order No. 120017/27/GRAP/2021/CAQM/ 378.



It has since been extended until November 13th 2022 despite the fact that CAQM revoked the order it had issued on November 3rd for actions under Stage IV of the GRAP with order No. 120017/27/GRAP/2021/CAQM dated November 6th, 2022. However, as stated in a document from the NCT of Delhi's government dated November 7, 2022, the prohibition on the use of BS IV Diesel vehicles in the NCT of Delhi has not been lifted.

Restrictions had been removed on plying of trucks in Delhi and also the primary schools are going to be opened from 9th November, therefore above restriction on BS-IV Diesel vehicles with All India Tourist Permit may also please be lifted.

95% of the tour operators, travel agents in Delhi were in possession of BS-IV vehicles as BS-VI stage was introduced during Covid in 2020 and tourism business from March 2020 to April 2022 was zero due to restriction on international flights and visa suspensions. Most of the tour operators had no business for over 30 months and they closed down their business. Therefore IATO members were not in position to purchase new vehicles. Now inbound tourism is slowly picking up our members have started their business for last 3-4 months but still they do not have funds to spend for purchasing new vehicles. However, BS -IV vehicles which they have in possession are well maintained and have

fitness certificate and following the emission norms.

Restriction of plying of BS IV having All India Tourist Permit vehicles has resulted that our members are not able to provide services to their foreign clients who travelled covering long distance of 5000 to 10000 kms difference countries globally from countries Europe, USA, Canada, etc. with the confirmed itineraries and hotels bookings and other travel arrangement within India from one city to another city. This has put our members in very difficult situation. This is also giving a very negative image of our country in front of foreign tourists who were being stopped to enter Delhi. Delhi is the Gateway city for 60-70 % foreign tourists arriving in India. After their stay in Delhi, visiting Delhi. This will result that foreign tourists after return to their country will sue their foreign tour operators in the court of law for lapse of services, who in turn will take Indian tour operators to the court. This will result that we will not be able to achieve target of 30 million foreign tourists by 2030 as desired by our Hon'ble Prime Minister.

IATO further mentioned that during Demonetization in 2016, on its request Ministry of Finance considered and gave various relief for the services provided by the tour operators to foreign tourists including purchase of monuments entry tickets in INR and exchange of old currency with the new currency notes etc. ❖

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PIYUSH GOYAL TO SERIOUSLY CONSIDER ISSUES BEING FACED BY INBOUND OPERATORS

Service Export from India Scheme: - This was withdrawn for the tour operators in the forthcoming Foreign Trade Policy 2022-27 to be announced soon. With the help of Government benefits (SEIS) tour operators were utilizing the funds to attract foreign tourists to India.

IATO recommended to Continue SEIS in the same format or in different format which you feel is beneficial for the tourism industry.

Consider scrips minimum 7% minimum with additional 2% incentive for incremental business growth.

Capping of Rs. 5 crore need to be relooked as it was disadvantage for Chain Hotels submitting one balance sheet for all hotels and also a few large tour operators.

To encourage MICE business need separate incentive as per International norms to lure big overseas Mice organizers to look towards India as this segment of business has big potential to grow.

Restoration of E-Visa from UK, Canada and other important sources markets and also to resolved E-Visa problems for the applicants from Europe especially from Germany and Spain

IATO requested that e-Tourist Visa from UK, Canada, Malaysia, Sri Lanka, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Kuwait etc. to be restored and also e-Visa for applicants from Spain, Germany and other countries to be streamlined and brought to the level of Pre-covid when e-Tourist Visa was being issued within 24 hours rather than 72 hours from the time of

submitting the application. IATO requested that within 72 hours If any additional information is required, it may be sought from the applicant and within 72 hours of receipt of the reply the status of granting of Visa to be intimated to the applicant. In case of any reason, if e-Visa was rejected, then the reason of rejection of Visa should be mentioned so that in case if any rectification needed to be done by the applicant, it could be done and application can be re-submitted.

Refund of IGST paid by the tourist leaving India on supply of goods taken out of India-Tax Refund for Tourists (TRT) Scheme to be implemented.

IATO requested that the Govt. should formulate the well-defined and simple procedure and user – friendly conditions / safeguards for allowing cash refund to the foreign tourists leaving India at the departure airport in respect of integrated tax paid by him on purchase of goods within India and being taken out of India as part of his baggage or otherwise. The procedure may be notified in the public domain at the earliest. IATO had already submitted a detailed recommendation letter dated 18th December 2019 to Ministry of Finance, Government of India and letter dated 24th February 2020 to the Ministry of Commerce, Government of India, New Delhi. ❖



”
**Consider scrips
minimum 7%
minimum with
additional 2%
incentive for
incremental
business growth**
”

16th October 2022

TWO

Azerbaijan Airlines

Delhi → Baku

TRAVEL WORLD ONLINE MEANS BUSINESS

Meghalaya scraps act promoting casinos, gaming parlours

FHRAI follows IATO, submits representation to govt requesting restoration of e-visa facility

5th Vande Bharat train on Chennai-Bengaluru-Mysuru route from Nov 10

RAIL EUROPE

Early snowfall in parts of Himachal boosts occupancy with influx of tourists

Zingbox upscares operations in Delhi, launches premium lounge at Anand Vihar

ADOTC announces new team

90% Dip In Foreign Tourists At Delhi's 3 Heritage Sites

COVID TAKES A TOLL: Footfall Drastically Down In 2021-22

Anuja Jaiswal@timesgroup.com

New Delhi: Though two of Delhi's World Heritage Sites, the Qutub Minar and the Red Fort, were among the top 10 most popular ticketed and Archaeological Survey of India-protected monuments visited by foreigners in 2021-22, the rush of tourists was far less than in pre-Covid days. However, in this financial year, the footfall of foreign tourists has gone up.

According to available data from the Union tourism ministry, there was a 90% decline in foreign tourist footfall at the World Heritage Sites in Delhi in 2021-22 when compared with 2019-20. ASI's Delhi Circle has around 174 monuments, including Qutub Minar, Red Fort and Humayun's Tomb.

According to ASI, 8,456 foreigners visited Qutub Minar in 2021-22 against 2.5 lakh earlier. Similarly, 6,579 foreigners visited Red Fort in 2021-22 against 91,364 in 2019-20. Humayun's tomb also witnessed a 97.5% decline in foreigners with just 4,892 tourists visiting the monument last year against two lakh tourists in the pre-Covid period.

However, in the six months April to September this year, ASI says 27,317 foreigners visited Qutub Minar, 14,679 went to Red Fort and 13,974 enjoyed the environs at Humayun's Tomb.

Indian Association of Tour Operators President Rajiv Mehra said, "In-bound tourism still hasn't picked up, but we are expecting a third of pre-Covid business by March 2023." He added that overseas promotion was required to make India visible across the globe.

Those in the tourism business say that delay and difficulty in procuring Indian visas from countries like the UK and Canada were deterring visitors. IATO urged the tourism ministry and prime minister to restore e-visas and focus on overseas promotion of India for revival of the industry. As Mehra said, "If this situation continues, foreign tour operators will stop selling Indian tour packages, which can lead to a big loss for the inbound tourism business."

Red Fort and Qutub Minar occupied the second and third spots among the 10 most popular centrally protected ticketed monuments for domestic visitors in the last financial year. While Purana Qila received more domestic visitors (4.7 lakh) than Humayun's Tomb (3.9 lakh), only 848 foreign tourists visited Purana Qila in 2021-22.

In the first wave, the Covid pandemic led to the closure of monuments in March 2020. They reopened in July after restrictions were eased, but were shut again during the second wave in 2021 before reopening in June. In January this year, the monuments were closed for public visit following a surge in Covid-19 cases triggered by the Omicron variant of the virus.

MONUMENTAL LOSS

No. of visitors at 10 most popular centrally protected ticketed ASI monuments during 2021-22

Domestic Visitors	Foreign Visitors
Taj Mahal: 32,94,611	Group of monuments, Mamallapuram, TN: 1,44,984
Red Fort: 13,23,501	Taj Mahal: 38,922
Qutub Minar: 11,57,664	Group of monuments, Saluvaganur, TN: 25,579
Group of monuments, Mamallapuram, TN: 11,42,150	Agra Fort: 13,598
Agra Fort: 10,27,462	Gingee Fort, TN: 10,483
Golconda Fort: 9,46,972	Vatukottai Fort: 9,174
Sun Temple, Konark: 6,72,891	Qutub Minar: 8,456
Upper fort, Aguada: 6,56,756	Fort Museum, Thiruvananthapuram, TN: 8,422
Chittorgarh Fort: 5,90,389	Red Fort: 5,579
Shaniwar Wada, Pune: 5,16,448	Rock-cut Jain temple, Sittanavasal, TN: 5,432

No. of visitors at centrally protected ASI monuments in Delhi over three years

Monument	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Qutub Minar	20,48,146	4,76,063	11,57,664
Red Fort	2,55,318	2,849	8,456
Humayun's Tomb	2,200,044	1,87,380	1,323,501
Red Fort	91,364	1,438	5,579
Humayun's Tomb	6,58,318	2,43,836	3,92,378
Red Fort	2,02,288	2,381	4,892

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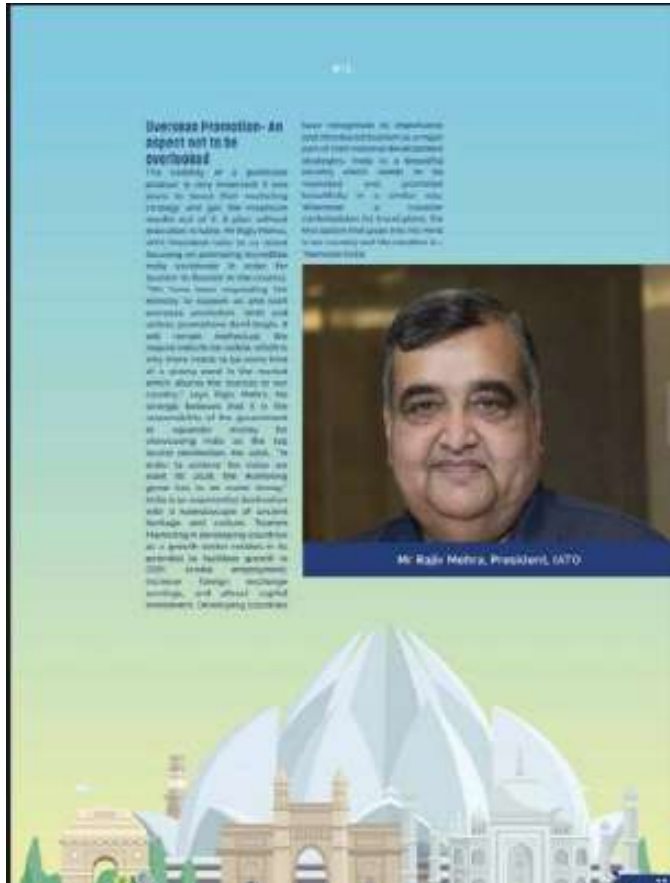
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COMMUNIQUE

IATO writes to PMO requesting intervention in restoring e-Tourist Visa for UK, Canada and other

Respected, Sir, The lack of the online Hospitality sector has been the biggest tourism industry with the arrival of foreign tourists going down to trickle. Now the pandemic seems to be over, with the Hospitality sector rebounding but similar situation seems to be existing in the tourism industry. There are multiple reasons for it like high airfares, restrictions on travel and above all difficulty in procuring the visas. In the regard IATO had made numerous representations and sent letters to the Tourism Home Affairs and External Affairs Ministry requesting them for restoration of e-Visa for UK, Canada and other major markets as maximum foreign tourists based in India from these countries. "Having failed to receive any response from these ministries, we have written to the PMO, hoping for a quick resolution" says IATO President Rajiv Mehra.

It is well known that tourists desire and in advance about the restrictions they will be travelling to and given the delay and difficulty in procuring Indian visas from various countries, the latter may not see the revival that was expected and quite probable that they may travel to neighbouring countries as it is easier to procure their visas.



The 37th IATO Annual Convention is going to be held from 16 to 19 December 2022 in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh

Mr. Ravi Gossai-Vice President will be the Chairman of the convention along with Mr. Sunil Mehra-Forg, Treasurer and Mr. Prateek Hira-Chairman, IATO Uttar Pradesh Chapter as the Co-Chairmen. This was announced by Mr. Rajiv Mehra, President of Indian Association of Tour Operators in the 40th Annual General Meeting held in New Delhi yesterday.

The inaugural function will be held at Indira Gandhi Pratishthan, Ganga Nagar, Lucknow and Hon'ble Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh, Shri Yogi Adityanath has given his kind consent to grace the occasion with his presence and inaugurate the convention. The Century Lucknow will be the venue hotel and all other activities including registration for the convention, business sessions and evening programmes will be held at The Century, Lucknow.



"We expect about 500-600 delegates from all over the country to participate which will include senior officials from the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India and States, industry leaders, tourism and hospitality professionals, travel trade media, added attraction for this year convention would be Post Convention Tours to Agra/Delhi and Varanasi. There are 1 post convention tours being organised on various sectors. This year we expect larger participation from the state Government in every state is keen to re-instate inbound tourism to their respective states, said Mr. Rajiv Mehra.

During the 3 days convention there will be deliberations on business issues during the business sessions being finalised and we will have experts in all fields, said Mr. Rajiv Mehra.

17 TRAVELBUZZNEWS.COM

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Persistent Visa Blues Leave UK Travellers Cold

Travel cos say no restoration of e-visas despite several requests resulting in booking cancellations, hurting biz

Anumeha.Chaturvedi
@timesgroup.com

New Delhi: Homa Mistry, the CEO of Trail Blazer Tours India, is a worried man, echoing the concerns of his counterparts in the inbound Indian tourism industry. The issue is the absence of e-visas for India for travellers from the UK, a key source market, and delays in getting appointment dates for tourists ahead of the peak season.

"We have been getting cancellations," he said. "Since these tours are planned months in advance, we have

booked domestic flights for these UK travellers. We have paid for excursions such as safaris to Ranthambore and Bandhavgarh. A lot of these cancella-

tions are non-refundable. We keep listening through the grapevine that something would happen this week or next week, but nothing happens. We

are hoping for some relief so that we are able to save the tourist season that lies ahead of us till March."

Sanjay Basu, cofounder and chairman of Far Horizon Tours India, concurred.

"There is a lot of angst in the market about e-visas not being restored. There is a backlash from clients. They have cancelled trips to India and they have done this in anger. A lot of operators in the UK have lost a lot of business, and for them India is becoming a liability," he said. "The short-term impact of this is pretty major."

Cancellations taking place ahead of peak tourist season in India

UK travellers facing delays in getting visa slots



This does not augur well for Covid-hit industry eyeing revival

Industry body IATO seeks immediate restoration of e-visas

On Oct 12, Indian High Commission in UK had said that it would open more centres, ramp up capacity to deliver visas

Setback for industry >> 7

news

INSPIRING VACATIONS
Inspiring Vacations webinar on destination Spain today at 3pm IST

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Big demand for customised and wellness experiences: Amitabh Kant

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IATO discusses special status for the inbound tour operators

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Travellers are looking for hyper-personalised buying experience: Sabre

BEAUTY HAS AN ADDRESS Experience Oman
Experience Oman

TOO

TRAVEL WORLD ONLINE MEANS BUSINESS

Airbnb and Indigo join hands to offer an 'InterFriendtion'

Al Geziry takes charge as DG for tourism at OCT Abu Dhabi

Ajman Tourism gets new Director General, Mahmood Khalaf Al Sayed Al Nuwairi

news

J&K registers tourist footfall of 1.62cr, first time in 75 years of independence

SAVE THE TRAVEL BOOKINGS

TOO

TRAVEL WORLD ONLINE MEANS BUSINESS

37th IATO Annual Convention in Dec to deliberate on 'Inbound Tourism - What Lies Ahead?'

Banyan Tree Alula in Saudi Arabia welcomes guests

Tourism will propel state's economy to new heights: Dy CM, Arunachal Pradesh

RAIL EUROPE

Viva Air launches Viva Mundo to provide better connectivity in America and Canada

Lemon Tree Hotels signs new property in Haridwar

Chhattisgarh Tourism to lease its 22 properties on PPP mode

21,941 weekly departures in winter schedule, 13.3% less flights than in summer

900-1000 delegates expected at IATO convention, Ravi Gosain named Chairman

Book for 3 nights Get 4th Complimentary

17 destinations to be developed for promoting tourism in Odisha: CM

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West Bengal to introduce Tourist Pick up and Drop points in Kolkata

Tour operators in Kolkata often face difficulties due to the traffic restrictions in and around the city while dropping off or picking up tourists in front of places of tourist interest or hotels. To address this problem, IATO West Bengal Chapter has played an active role to facilitate 'Tourist Pick-up and Drop points' for recognised tour operators.



Adventures you do not want to miss!



Sri Lanka's tourism earnings surpass \$1 billion-mark in first 10 months of 2022

According to the report, the monthly tourism earnings stood at \$75.6 million in Oct. Official reserves of Sri Lanka were \$1.7 billion by the end of Oct. More than 42,000 international tourists entered Sri Lanka in Oct, bringing the total tally of tourist arrivals so far this year to over 568,000.



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J&K Tourism organises Tourism Promotion Conference in Jammu

The objective of the Conference was to interact with the tour operators of Jammu and to integrate them with the recently launched Home Stay Policy, identification of new tourist circuits in each district, development and promotion of 75 offbeat destinations along with deliberating on the tourism promotion plan of all travel stakeholders.



MoT to participate in WTM London which starts today

"With the reopening of the country to foreign tourists, after a gap of almost 2 years, this year's participation of India is particularly significant. After the world's largest vaccination drive, the country is ready for international tourists," stated the Ministry of Tourism. A total of 16 stakeholders, including facilitators of medical value travel are participating as co-exhibitors in the India Pavilion.



To read more, visit www.traveltradejournal.com



Mr. Rajiv Mehra, President

IATO Meet in Mumbai announced its 37th Annual Convention in Lucknow from 16 -19 December 2022





Rani Bachani: A young woman entrepreneur at 70

Prior to establishing her company in 1995, ViceRegal Travels, she worked for Air India as a stewardess. Initially she began largely with inbound tours, but across time she also began to offer outbound travel. A straightforward person, she knew what she was after, and became one of the most successful tourism business entrepreneurs in South India. A serious commitment to profession, her dedication, and word-of-mouth publicity took her organisation to its present state of popularity.



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She advises the aspiring women entrepreneurs and newcomers to the tourism business to have a genuine interest in tourism and to preferably begin by working for a reputable organization

”

Initial stages of being a lady entrepreneur

Began her travel adventures with an airline, during which she was bugged by the spirit of seeing and experincing different places, she stepped

into the shoes of a tour-operator, and started an agency. It was a relatively new business for her but she worked hard, and fortune favoued her, when the Kashmir got disturbed due to terrorism, and tourism came to



a stand still in the valley, her company capitalised on their setback and began to promote God's own country actively, enticing tourists to Kerala. It was the beginning, she made sure her clients went back happy. Soon she was promoting other parts of India too.

Challenges as a lady entrepreneur

Bachani says, she did not come across too many obstacles as a woman entrepreneur in the business of tourism, although dealing with some agents in certain parts of India was difficult initially because they felt that being a woman they could get the better of her, but eventually they all accepted her because of her professional outlook, determination and honest approach.

Future of tourism business post-covid

According to her understanding, in post-covid period, tourism is more promising than ever before. She believes that India has a great potential, particularly now, when there

is a strong travel inclination. They are already beginning to receive inquiries from many nations, but the industry is currently facing the visa issue which is her only big concern. Once the Indian visa issue is resolved, India will have a flood of people from different countries arriving.

Promotion in overseas markets

Her marketing strategy for the international market entails using website, social media, word-of-mouth advertising, and finally the good words of their existing clientele.

Inspiring other women entrepreneurs

She advises the aspiring women entrepreneurs and newcomers to the tourism business to have a genuine interest in tourism and to preferably begin by working for a reputable organization first, where they can learn the key fundamentals before thinking of making an agency of their own. However it is a process in which learning never ends. "I am 70, and I am still learning" she says.

Next decade for women entrepreneurs

She has been an entrepreneur for nearly 27 years, she has seen at least six of the her office girls who had once worked with her, start their own tourism agency in different parts of India. "I am proud to see them all flourishing", she remarked. "I have always been supportive of the young people desiring to start out on their own". ❖

”

It was a relatively new business for her but she worked hard, and fortune favoured her, when the Kashmir got disturbed due to terrorism, and tourism came to a stand still in the valley

”

Jaisalmer: Where the romance of forts and camps is still alive

On India's westernmost border, in the middle of the Thar Desert, rises the enigmatic city of Jaisalmer. It is renowned across the world for its magnificent ornate palaces and forts, earning its name as the "Golden City of India" due to its golden sands and the use of yellow sandstone in the town's structures and architectures.



■ Bryan

5.1 sq kilometres in size, it is situated 225 metres above sea level in the picturesque Thar Desert. Once upon a time there used to be a wall surrounding Jaisalmer, but today only its gates and the dominating

fort which stands over the golden city remains. Once a sleepy desert city, it has developed into one of India's top tourist destinations and now holds significant importance and appeal among all the tourist locations across whole of Rajasthan.



The city of Jaisalmer was founded in the 12th century when Rao Jaisala, a Bhati Rajput King, decided to relocate his capital from Ludharva to a more secure location. The city was given status of a district in 1949 and admitted into the state of Rajasthan. Not very far from it, runs the 471 kilometer long international border.

Being essentially a desert city, it is subject to harsh climatic conditions, with extreme hot summers and bitterly cold winters. The summers last from April onto August, when it becomes very hot, typical day temperature can soar to 42° Celsius, while the night time temperature can drop to 25° Celsius. Its relative location within the Thar Desert makes monsoon conditions virtually

nonexistent. The majority of the year is dry in the city, but western disturbances bring about 15 centimetres of annual rainfall. Winters in Jaisalmer are significantly colder and last from mid-November to the end of February. At around 24° Celsius during day, the temperature is still pleasant. However, the nights are chilly, with lows of 7 to 8° Celsius.

The tourism and travel, stone carving and sculpting, khadi manufacturing, and mineral-oriented industries are currently the main revenue earning industries in the district. The camel leather industry in the city is also well-known. The city produces messenger bags and several other articles out of wild camel leather that are fondly well accepted all over the world.

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The highlights of city are quite endless; Jaisalmer Fort, Nathmalji-ki-Haveli, Patwon-ki-Haveli, Haveli Shreenath, Salam Singh-ki-Haveli, Gadsisar Lake, Government Museum

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Charms of India



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One of Jaisalmer's busiest and most lucrative industries is the city's tourism sector. A large number of domestic and international tourists are drawn to the desert city by its scenic beauty each year. Tourism accounts for the majority of the city's income, and the foreign visitors also contribute significantly mainly to its foreign exchange earnings.

Rajasthani government has built enough infrastructure to support the tourism sector in Jaisalmer. City's transportation is well connected to the major cities in India via roads, rails, and air routes. It has a very wide variety of lodging options to suit every budget.

The highlights of city are quite endless; Jaisalmer Fort, Nathmalji-ki-Haveli, Patwon-ki-Haveli, Haveli Shreenath,

Salam Singh-ki-Haveli, Gadsisar Lake, Government Museum, The Folklore Museum, Desert Culture Center and Museum, and a lot more. It is the only city in Rajasthan where time stands still and the romantic jingle of ancient times, keeps echoing around the ears. ❖

PUNJAB CHAPTER



❖ Chapter Chair Punjab and several Indian Ambassadors from USA, TO , RUSSIA at Luncheon meeting.

❖ Punjab Chapter Chair Punjab Felicitated the newly appointed Principal Secretary Tourism



NOV



IATO Meet in Mumbai announced its 37th Annual Convention in Lucknow from 16 -19 December 2022



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WEST BENGAL CHAPTER

❖ The Department of Tourism, Government of West Bengal is introducing exclusive Tourist Pick-up and Drop Points across the city of Kolkata based on the recommendation by IATO West Bengal Chapter to facilitate free movement of Tourist Traffic across the city of JOY.

Tourist-season-in-agra-restrictions-on-evisa-to-visit-india-not-introduce-evisa-facility-for-uk-and-canada



Future of Tourism in India: Eco Tourism

India is a very vast country with a dynamic culture known for its diversity, unique culinary experiences, ancient monuments, history, and breathtaking landscapes. Nearly 18 million visitors visited India in 2019, with New Delhi the capital, ranking as the eighth most popular place of arrival. The forces and trends of mass tourism has brought noticable impacts on many places.



■ Bryan

The only way to counter the negative effects of overtourism is the practice of sustainable tourism which has been steadily growing in India over the past few years. This is a result of efforts being made by both the public and commercial

sectors to safeguard India's environment and cultural heritage.

Impact of Tourism

In India, travel and tourism activity contribute about 5% of the country's GDP. India is expected to rank among the top 10 nations





in the world with the most tourism-related GDP by 2029, according to the WTTC.

Industry leakage is one of the important issues. In spite of spending money on a destination as a result of tourism, hardly much gets actually returned to the local economy. Instead, quite sizable amount of the income seems to go to tourism companies operating outside the country, who may or may not distribute a small portion of the earnings to locals. It's likely that nearly as much as 40% of India's tourism dollars are lost.

Sustainable Tourism in India

In India, sustainable tourism means traveling around in a manner that has little influence on the

environment and the local community. Additionally, it serves as a safeguard against overtourism in popular touristic places.

Domestic travelers place equal importance on sustainability as do foreign visitors. Sustainable Travel Report for 2020 said that 96% of Indian tourists view sustainability as a key factor in their travel decisions. This is significantly more, than the nearly 40% of travelers globally who pay attention to the matter of sustainability. ❖



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CHANGE IS THE LAW OF LIFE

What did you bring with you?



■ IATO Bureau (Resourced by Mukesh Mantra)

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What differs is what occurs between birth and death, or the journey between birth and death

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We are all the same, no real distinction. Everywhere in the world, childbirth is the same process. At birth, a child has no knowledge of their parents' social status, race, or religion. All throughout the world, mothers always embrace their children. The child requires the same care and nutrition. In what ways do parents around the world differ in their love for their children? The outcome is the same in terms of death. Is there a difference in the suffering we experience after losing a loved one. Do different regions of the world have distinct languages for expressing pain?

What differs is what occurs between birth and death, or the journey between birth and death.

I find that people and bath soaps share a lot in common. There are a variety of soap bars with different colors, scents, and shapes. There are a variety of shapes and sizes, including rectangular, square, round, pink, white, red, black, and orange. The list also includes some that are little and others that are large. We humans too vary in a variety of sizes, colors, forms, backgrounds, and other characteristics. One characteristic, however, remains constant: the foam created by a soap bar is always white, regardless of its size, shape, scent, or color. The lather always has a white hue, regardless of how colorful the bar is. Similarly, regardless of a person's origin, size, race, or color, all people have a core nature of peace, love, and harmony. White lather is a



symbol of purity. A soap's sole function in the world is to purify and clean other people. That is also the only purpose for which a human life exists. In order to be truly happy during this journey, I think we must reflect on ourselves and make changes within. One degree of internal change will result in a hundred degrees of external change.

At the time of birth, what did we bring with us? When we leave, what will we bring with us?

Below passage from The Bhagwat Gita sums up everything:

*Change is the law of life.
What have you lost, that you are weeping?
What have you brought that you have lost?
What have you made that has been destroyed?
You brought nothing.
What you have, you got from here.
What was given, was given here.
You have come empty handed and shall go empty handed.
What is yours today was somebody else's in the past and will be somebody else's in the future.
You think it is yours and are deeply engrossed in it.*

Take a quick look around. Humans are such egocentric creatures.

My struggles, sorrow, and setbacks; my life; my family – my wife, children, parents, and other loved ones; my home; and my job or a self-centered vanity. My accolades and prizes.

Where does the rest of the world stand? Do we see other people suffering as well? Do we recognise and value the accomplishments of others?

Above article is for self reflection.....

Life is a question without an answer. I just raise questions.

You go within to find the answers. Life is a mystery.

Where have I come from? Where I am headed to.

I am a seeker and a nomad by spirit. Wandering through the alleys of life searching my soul.

Seeking Liberation thru my lens.

There's an old saying 'Lifetime is not really long enough to figure out what it is all about'. So, seeking every moment to learn something new. Discovering myself & the truth behind everything. Just another guy with a passion to capture the moment. ❖

”
**My struggles, sorrow,
and setbacks; my life;
my family – my wife,
children, parents,
and other loved ones;
my home; and my
job or a self-centered
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and prizes**
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Bekal: A hidden jewel in God's own country

Bekal, a city in Kerala, is well-known for its stunning beaches, backwaters, and forts. It is situated on the Malabar coastline and has a view of the Arabian Sea and its sparkling seas. Nature enthusiasts will find it to be the ideal getaway location. Here are the must-do activities in Bekal if you want to get the most out of your trip.



■ Bryan

Bekal is well-known for its stunning beaches, backwaters, and forts. It is situated on the Malabar coastline and overlooks the infinite Arabian Sea. Nature enthusiasts consider it a perfect getaway in every sense of an escape into tranquility.

Kasaragod is a lovely town, sitting at the northern extreme of Kerala State. 16 km south of town on the National Highway is the largest and best preserved fort in the entirety of Kerala. Bordered by a magnificent beach, Bekal is a quaint town on the eastern shores of the state.





State highway runs from Kanhangad in the south to Kasaragod in the north. Bekal Fort Railway Station, Kotikulam Station, and Kanhangad Station on the Mangalore-Palakkad route are the closest railway stations. Calicut, Kannur, and Mangalore have airports. The Bekal town is situated on state highway 57. The largest of all forts in Kerala is located at Bekal close to the beach. The historic Fort, which is shaped like a huge keyhole, has tall observation towers offering panoramic view of the Arabian Sea.

The state government is examining a plan to launch seaplane services connecting Bekal with

Paravur backwaters, Kollam Ashtamudi, Kumarakom, and Punnamada.

Filmmakers have come to love this spot because of its magnificent natural beauty. The broader Kasargod region draws tourists from near and far due to its rich cultural and artistic legacy. When the Bekal Fort was classified as a special tourism area in 1992, the Bekal Tourism Development Corporation was founded. It is the location where a few Bollywood songs have been filmed.

Bekal Beach offers beautiful sunsets to look forward to, it is a neat and well-kept beach free of litter and plastic. ❖

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Malaysia: Renowned for its diversity

Malaysia is a nation renowned for its diversity of cultures. It is also the location that has captured the attention of the entire globe due to its beauty, which is why it draws so many people. There are native Malaysians, Chinese, and Indians living in Malaysia.



■ Bryan

Malay people, who are from Malaysia, also live in various regions of the world. Despite their global dispersion, they take care to uphold their cultural and religious traditions. The culture and religion of the Malaysian people are thus an important aspect to explore. Because of this, this essay informs the reader about the numerous cultural values that Malaysians hold dear.

The earliest known tribal history in Malaysia dates to about 40,000 years ago. In the third century BC, however, the kingdoms of the Hindu and Buddhist religions began to spread. In addition, with the arrival of Indian and Arab traders in the 13th century, the Muslims entered the peninsula. In addition, the Dutch and Portuguese established their colonial dominance in the nation over time. However, the British started to take over the nation at a rapid pace in the 18th century. As a result, the British empire expanded its grip over the areas of Malaysia.

Malaysia has seen an increase in its rate of development since gaining its independence. One of Southeast Asia's most powerful countries has developed from the nation.

Three different cultures have been identified as coexisting in Malaysia as a nation. The nation is fortunate to have three distinct civilizations, namely Malay, Chinese, and Indian. Asia in Miniature is another name for the artwork. Ion's cultural roots are also said to date back to antiquity. The Malays then relocated to



the land owned by traders from India and China who had come to the area. The nation also incorporates influences from Arab, Persia, and Britain.

Malaysia's population is split up into different demographic groups. In the Peninsular and East Malaysian parts of the nation, there is an unequal distribution of the people. Peninsular Malaysia has the majority of the nation's population. There are four distinct groups of people in this area. The Orang Asli and those who are not native to the area often differ from one another in terms of looks. In the area, there are Malays, Chinese, and other South Asians. Additionally, there are smaller ethnic communities in this area, including Europeans, Thais, Americans, Arabs, and Eurasians.

Malaysia has seen an increase in tourist popularity in recent years. This is partly because of good publicity (from the government and websites like this one), but it's also because international travel

is getting cheaper and more affordable. For all kinds of travelers, Malaysia is the ideal destination. Backpackers, groups, couples, and families with kids all love it as a destination. In Malaysia, there are occasionally new attractions found and frequent upgrades or renovations of already existing attractions. Even if rates have increased over the past few years, lodging in Malaysia is frequently relatively inexpensive when compared to neighboring nations.

Tropical rainforests cover Malaysia completely. Large rivers run from the country's highlands and empty into warm tropical seas, receiving about 10 feet of rain (about three meters) annually. Malaysia is one of the world's 17 megadiverse nations thanks to its combination of forest, river, and sea habitats. (A country that contains a large number of endemic species, or species that can only be found in one place on Earth, is considered to have a high level of biodiversity.) ❖

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