



IATO

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

SPEAKS

**Impact of
Coronavirus
Outbreak**

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BUDGET
FOR
TOURISM**



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Indian Association of Tour Operators (IATO)
310, Padma Tower II, 22,
Rajendra Place, New Delhi - 110 008
Tel : 91-11-25750028, 25754478, 25738803
E-mail: iato@ddppl.com; admin@iato.in;
iato@airtelmail.in

EC LIAISON
Mr. Harish Mathur

NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE

Mr. Rajnish Kaistha
Ms. Elina Satapathy
Mr. Tapas Banerjee
Mr. Abraham George
Mr. Mukesh Manra
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Dear Colleagues,

We have gone through the worst times of our lives, let us leave it behind. The sun seems to be rising again. Now that the government has announced the return of tourist visas, we can only hope that our business will resume shortly. The past 20 months have been an experience from which we all need to come out wiser, and be ready for the future. As your chosen and trusted team here at IATO, it has also been a significant period of learning for us.

Tourism is going to reshape itself. I would like to quote the words of **Shri Suman Billa**, Director, technical cooperation and silk road at UNWTO, *"We cannot start business again with the very same products, post pandemic"*. This is an alert for us all to put our heads together and brainstorm for new ideas and innovations that would keep us ahead of our competition. Further to this, **Shri Amitabh Kant**, CEO of Niti Aayog, has rightly said, *"Tourism sector has to go digital, and now going green is to remain most relevant."* It could be the new normal of doing business, and we need to prepare for the touch-less tourism practices and confidence building so that our customers feel safe, secure and protected.

A recent survey by IATA shows that 67% of travellers are frustrated with the covid-restrictions and want the borders to open, but are we properly ready to receive them? Let us not wait till the last moments, and instead use

this time productively, to create fresh products and to layout new systems for our Covid-safe ground operations.

IATO has been trying hard to be ahead of things and has been meeting various authorities to gather help in support of tourism. It has also been a learning period for the government bodies. Several positive things have happened, your voice is finally being heard, hopefully the things should slowly begin to change. I know everyone at EC is dedicated and doing their best.

I hope you enjoy going through the first issue. 'IATO Speaks' is a two way communication, we also want you to contribute with your innovative ideas and suggestions to improve it further. Your newsletter will gradually evolve itself, as we move forward.

Meanwhile, the collective efforts of our fraternity are already starting to show few encouraging results. MHA has decided to begin granting Tourist visas starting this month. By the 15th of November, we will have more visas available.

I wish you all a very happy festive season, please take good care and follow all precautions that will keep you safe and healthy.

Let us practice what we preach to our tourists.

Your President



Rajiv Mehra, President, IATO

RESUMPTION OF TOURIST VISAS FOR FOREIGNERS FROM 15th OCT

Ministry of Home Affairs, will start granting tourist visas to foreigners coming to India by charter flights from 15th Oct 2021 and to others from 15th Nov 2021, giving huge relief to the tourism industry stakeholders.



After being suspended for more than a year, finally India will start issuing visas to foreigners wanting to visit India. This was announced by the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) on the auspicious first day of Navratra. The visas will be issued with effect from 15th October to the foreigners coming to India by charter flights while, those travelling by flights other than charter flights will be issued visa from November 15.

However, all foreigners, airlines and others involved in the carriage of tourists to India, have to observe and ensure that all Covid-19 rules and procedures, put in place by Ministry of Health and Family welfare, are strictly adhered to. Owing to the pandemic, the visas to foreigners were suspended

since last year. The Government of India had imposed many other restrictions on international travel, in order to contain the spread of the Covid-19 pandemic. Though, later on, foreigners were issued visas to enter and stay in India, other than the tourist visas, with the changing Covid situation.

This decision was taken by Ministry of Home Affairs after consultation with the various industry stakeholders like state governments, Ministry of Tourism, Ministry of Civil aviation, Ministry of Health & Family welfare, Ministry of External affairs, along with others involved in the arrival of foreigners to the country.

This step was taken as the ministry has been receiving lot of requests

"This is very encouraging for the tourism industry and we hope the inbound tourism would start to some extent and will give a sigh of relief to the tourism industry stakeholders."



Rajiv Mehra
President
Indian Association of Tour Operators (IATO)

and representations from various organizations, associations directly or indirectly involved with the tourism industry.

Hence, this decision to begin issuing visas to foreigners wanting to visit India, was taken after consultation with all the industry stakeholders.

Therefore, considering the present Covid situation in India, the constraints placed on visa and international travel are further simplified or eased.

Rajiv Mehra, President, Indian Association of Tour Operators (IATO),

operations of the international flights as per bilateral agreement that were there before March 2020 and let foreigners wanting to visit India, to be able to book their tickets.

Rajnish Kaistha, Hony. Secretary, IATO, claimed that this is the best news on tourism front for the inbound tourism industry, which was otherwise on-ventilator since Mar'20. "IATO and all other tourism bodies worked very hard towards common goal of India opening. A word of thanks to MOT in conveying our message loud and clear that a lead time must be given, and November 15 gives us good 5 weeks to get ready with



Rajnish Kaistha
Hony. Secretary
IATO

thanked the Prime Minister, Home Minister and Tourism Minister for considering their request in resuming tourist visas, as Ministry of Home Affairs announced, resumption of Tourist Visa for Foreigners coming to India through chartered flights with effect from 15th October 2021 and for others from 15th November 2021.

He said, "This is a very encouraging for the tourism industry and we hope the inbound tourism would start to some extent giving a sigh of relief to the tourism industry stakeholders."

Mehra has made a petition to the Government of India, to restart

COVID SOPs in place. Our partners abroad are equally excited to start selling India tours once again."

He shared, that along with MOT, they must immediately start positive marketing in at-least top 20 tourism generating countries. "Spreading positive and safe message out is the need of the hour. First 5 lakh free eTVs shall be a positive catalyst but our request to Govt is to make this number 1 million. A mechanism should be in place that real tourists should get benefit of this scheme. Also, we need to get scheduled flights back for foreign tourists to start travelling," he added.

RELIEF MEASURES FOR THE INDUSTRY

IATO met **Nirmala Sitharaman**, Union Finance Minister, requesting her for some relief for our extremely stressed tourism, hospitality and aviation sectors.

IATO placed its recommendations on ECLGS and the necessary actions to support the hardest hit sector of tourism, hospitality and aviation and requested for the following:

1. ECLGS 5.0 Scheme: As the govt. had increased the layout for the ECLGS scheme from ₹3 lakh crores to ₹4.5 lakh crores of which as per last information, it was understood that a substantial amount had not yet been consumed, it would be a great support by the government to release a new ECLGS 5.0 for the sector disbursing another 20% on outstanding loans to further support the needs of the long term impacted stressed sectors to meet their working capital funds.

2. ECLGS 1.0 & 3.0: For the stressed sectors that had availed the ECLGS 3.0, ECLGS 1.0 could have been clubbed together with the ECLGS 3.0 whereby, even ECLGS 1.0 could have been reorganised to be given with a two years' moratorium and 4 years of repayment period.

3. ECLGS Operational Issues with banks: Many banks were not allowing the deduction of bank loan EMIs from the ECLGS funds stating that this would be falling into what they called as

Evergreening, which was using one loan to repay another loan. However, as the ECLGS funds were for supporting companies when they had no other cash flows, the usage of these funds to pay EMIs was essential or despite the government's support, the companies will be made into NPAs by the banks.

4. Tourism & Hospitality Sector Specific Relief Package: Ideally, if the Government could increase the ₹10 lakhs per recognised tourism and hospitality company with an option of at least a maximum of ₹40 lakhs per company in which, those companies that want lesser working capital could accordingly take lesser amounts while, those that want a larger amount of loan could take the full amount. Keeping in mind the long term stress on the sector, this could also be with a moratorium of 2 years and repayment of 6 years to make it easier for all industry players.

5. SEIS 2019-20: The SEIS 2019-20 was still awaiting disbursement after sixteen months and IATO sought urgent support as this money had already been spent by the companies belonging to the sector in the form of added value, discounted prices to the overseas markets to make India more competitive.



Nirmala Sitharaman
Union Finance Minister

“
Many banks were not allowing the deduction of bank loan EMIs from the ECLGS funds stating that this would be falling into what they called as Evergreening.”

IATO WRITES TO SEPC ON THE PREBUDGET PROPOSAL

IATO wrote to **Shoumi Dasgupta**, Dy. Director, Services Export Promotion Council and highlighted the key issues along with its recommendations on the Pre-Budget proposals for the year 2022-23 regarding Direct & Indirect Taxes.



The letter highlighted some important industry requirements and a gist of these are mentioned below.

1. Tourism industry to be treated as deemed exporter at par with IT Industry under export of services.

IATO recommended that the parameters / definition of “export of services” in section 2(6) of IGST Act, 2017 may be relaxed in the case of tour operators and the services of tour operators earning foreign exchange for the country may be accorded with the status of “export of services.” The criteria for determining the place of supply (POS) of services should be uniform between IT Industry and Tour Operators Industry. A note explaining the above point in detail was enclosed

2. Removal of cascading effect of GST on Tourism Industry
IATO suggested that either GST may be levied @ 18% on the 10% mark-up (deemed value) so that effective rate of tax on package cost works out to 1.8% of gross billing with no ITC. Alternatively, the gross value may be taxed at 18% GST and input tax credit on all input services including hotels and restaurants may be allowed on actual basis.

3. Removal of GST on services provided outside India to foreign tourists.
It was recommended that GST/IGST may be fully exempted on the services provided outside India i.e. in neighbouring countries even if package includes India tour. As a result of tax exemption, bookings will come to Indian Tour operators instead of such bookings going in favour of tour operators based in neighbouring countries. This will add considerable foreign exchange for the country.

4. Withdrawal of tax collection at source (TCS) for the foreign tourists.
• The provisions of TCS should be made applicable for persons / companies resident in India and not to foreign citizens / foreign tour operators located outside India.

• The provisions of TCS should not apply in case the foreign tourist visits India and thereafter proceeds to foreign country including neighbouring country or vice versa. Such a composite package does not technically qualify as “overseas tour program package” as defined in section 206C (1G) of I.T. Act, 1961.

5. Extension of Service Exports from India Scheme (SEIS) for the tourism industry for the next 5 years in the upcoming Foreign Trade Policy, 2021-25.
• Since the current Foreign Trade Policy 2015-20 was likely to be replaced by new Foreign Trade Policy 2021-25, the benefit of SEIS scheme to be continued for the tour operators and travel agencies for the next 5 years under the new FTP;
• The admissible rate of SEIS may be hiked from 7% to 10% of net foreign exchange earned by the tourism industry.
• Release the order for distribution of SEIS scrips for the year 2019-20 as this had not been done till date.

6. Small correction in the conditions prescribed against 5% GST notified for tour operators services
• The word “and” appearing between the words accommodation and transportation in condition No. 2 against sr. No. 23 of CGST Notification No. 11/2017-CT(R) dated 28.6.2017 to be replaced by the word “or”.

• The Govt. may clarify by way of circular binding on the lower authorities that this was intent from the very beginning when GST rolled out so that the GST authorities should not raise objections from 01.07.2017.



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

8. Reduction of GST on private ferry tickets at Andaman
IATO recommended that in view of the essential use of transport ferries, the GST rate should be nil or maximum 5% as in the case of ferry transport.

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

“
As a result of tax exemption, bookings will come to Indian Tour operators instead of going in favour of tour operators based in neighbouring countries.
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ENHANCING AND INCREASING EXPORTS THROUGH TOURISM

IATO wrote to **Shobhit Gupta**, Deputy Director General of Foreign Trade, Directorate General of Foreign Trade, Department of Commerce, Government Of India and offered its inputs and suggestions regarding measures to enhance and increase exports through tourism.



Shobhit Gupta
Deputy Director General of Foreign Trade, Directorate General of Foreign Trade, Department of Commerce, Government of India

- A separate allocation of funds to pay SEIS to the tour operators

- SEIS should continue under the new scheme RoDTEP for 2021-26 for the tourism service providers

- To encourage tourism arrivals during off season i.e. from April to September when there are empty rooms available. We requested to increase the percentage of SEIS to 15% and during season i.e. from October to March it could be 10%.

2. Tourism industry to be treated as deemed exporter at par with IT Industry under Export of Services.

It was requested that the parameters/ definition of "export of services" in section 2(6) of IGST Act, 2017 may be relaxed in the case of tour operators and the services of tour operators earning foreign exchange for the country may be accorded with the status of "export of services" paving the way for non-payment of IGST on billing to the foreign tourists / FTO.

3. Refund of IGST paid by the tourist leaving India on supply of goods taken out of India -Tax Refund for Tourists (TRT) Scheme under section 15 of the IGST Act 2017 to be implemented.

In the letter sent, some of the important inputs included

1. Service Export from India Scheme:

- There should not be any reduction in percentage of SEIS and minimum 7% should be maintained for the Tour Operators if it cannot be increased to 10%.

- SEIS for the financial year 2019-20 should be released immediately and there should not be any capping for the tour operators

“
There should not be any reduction in percentage of SEIS and minimum 7% should be maintained for the Tour Operators, if it cannot be increased to 10%.
”

E-MARKET PLACE FOR TOURISM FACILITATORS

IATO wrote to **Prof. Alok Sharma**, Director, Indian Institute of Tourism and Travel Management, Gwalior, regarding E-marketplace for RLG and Tourism Facilitators.

IATO referred to the discussion held during the virtual meeting chaired ADG (Tourism) wherein it was discussed about an App being developed by the Ministry/ IITTM where data of guides would be available and booking of guides could be made on minimum price fixed by MOT/IITTM depending

upon the calibre of the guide, which would help the tourists who make the arrangements including guides directly and not through tour operators.

IATO and others discussed and requested that the existing practice of finalising the rates between IATO and TGFI should continue on the basis of which tour operators quote their rates to their foreign tour operators/clients 6-12 months in advance. Similar was the practice which tour operators followed for the special contracted rates for the hotel rooms which they got from the hotels and on the basis of the same they signed contract with foreign tour operators/clients. This practice was followed for more than 25 years and was working smoothly. Suggestions put forward by IATO was supported by TGFI also.

“
App being developed by the Ministry/IITTM where data of guides would be available and booking of guides could be made on minimum price fixed by MOT/IITTM.
”



Prof. Alok Sharma
Director, Indian Institute of Tourism and Travel Management, Gwalior

PROMOTION OF BUDDHIST CIRCUIT ON RAIL

IATO offered inputs and suggestions for the event "Promotion of Buddhist Circuit on Rail" in the month of September 2021 to Rupinder Brar, Additional Director General, Ministry of Tourism. With reference to the meeting held July regarding promotion

of Buddhist Circuit on Rail in the month of September 2021, IATO gave its inputs suggesting day wise itineraries, preliminary information and a list of suggested stakeholders, international media, frontline daily newspapers and travel trade media to be invited for the event.



Rupinder Brar
Additional Director General, MOT

MUD PACKING OF TAJ MAHAL

IATO wrote to V. Vidyavathi, Director General, Archaeological Survey of India on the mud packing of Taj Mahal's main dome for 6 months.



IATO requested to know the authenticity of the news and also the dates on which the mud packing would be done with scaffolding so that we may inform our members, who, may in turn inform their foreign tour operators/visiting foreign tourists in advance to avoid disappointments to the foreign tourists and also they should not feel deceived. This information was also necessary for IATO members to avoid any legal complications from their

foreign tour operators/clients for not providing the promised/contractual services.

IATO also urged that ASI should inform the Ministry of Tourism and IATO in advance of the same so that foreign tour operators could be informed through our members well in advance. IATO also requested ASI to consult with the Ministry of Tourism and IATO before taking such decisions for the benefit of the tourism industry.

EVENT IN VARANASI DURING DEV DIWALI

IATO wrote to **Rupinder Brar**, Additional Director General (Tourism) and offered its inputs and suggestions for an event to be organised in Varanasi.



IATO suggested that MOT and IATO could organise an event in Varanasi coinciding with Dev Diwali on 18th November 2021, where IATO could invite approximately 100 of its members, from all parts of the country. The event could be to promote Varanasi and nearby places of India's old civilisation where IATO could organise 2-3 sessions about promotion of tourism to Varanasi, problems in promoting area,

infrastructure, connectivity issues etc. Following the session next day, Fam Trips/sightseeing for the delegates could be organised.

State tourism could also be involved and have a session on investment in Varanasi and nearby tourist cities for development of infrastructure. Air tickets to be provided by the Ministry and State Government could be asked to provide hotel accommodation and Fam Trips.



The Stand Still...



An interesting question to ask ourselves today is; why is mankind on Earth ravaged by epidemics and pandemics? Timeline of history tells us that we have witnessed these events in the past too, leading to elimination of humans. Over 25 million people across the world, perished with the Bubonic plague. And now again the battle with yet another pandemic. The question is; why?

This one was triggered by elements still not fully clear to us. 'Coronaviridae' (family of virus) had already been in existence. It is not an unknown name. 'Covid-19' was a new strain of the same family. There are others, still not known to mankind.

We could indeed reach the Moon and Mars, and could make clones and robots, but we could not take charge of these obscure mysteries, that take humans through such ghostly chapters. Isn't it ironic that while the average human life expectancy has increased over time, despite of this, we are all becoming increasingly vulnerable to such disastrous bio-events. Perhaps the answer to this connundrum, may be lying buried in our ancient past.

“Nonetheless, our world does not stop here, nor will mankind, at least not yet. Things will get back to normal, and we will go on, leaving our nightmare behind.”

Jan 2020. Invisible to the human eyes, somewhere in an oriental land, an abstract devil began its stealthy journey, on a global trail. It's mission; to bring a catastrophe, delete mankind, choke the world, and bring it to its knees. A few weeks later the devil was well on its way and succeeding in its devastating journey. Indeed, the world came to a stand still; mankind started praying, hospitals began to fill up, panic stunned human minds, people locked themselves inside homes, economies began to shrink, businesses started collapsing, and airlines vanished from skies.

Alarmed by its pace, India declared a complete lockdown. “do not step out”, became the new norm. People imprisoned themselves inside homes. Newspapers, TV channels, and Social medias, started flashing dramatic data-tables and visuals, unmindful of the panic they were causing to the masses.

Migrants dashed towards the city borders, breaking all cautions in a desperate attempt to return to their rural bearings. It was the beginning of terrifying time challenging the ability, nerves, and intelligence of our country's leaders.

The world changed. India changed. Virtual connects through cyber highways replaced physical one-to-one working. Industries and businesses sank into anguish. People lost jobs, poor demanded food, streets stood empty, messiahs of medical care began to work round-the-clock, everything went shut, there was fear everywhere. It felt like a ghostly world screaming; 'there is no tomorrow'.

Amongst all the industries that were instantly hit, 'tourism and hospitality' was the first to go down. Almost immediately, it became completely inert and meaningless. Countries across the world, isolated themselves and sealed their borders. Travel related businesses came to a full stop. Large scale dread and uncertainty took over. Locked away in their homes with no hopes of relief, the members found themselves in despair.

Crisis discussions over webinars mingled with confusion and speculations. Hotels began to shut down. Trains and Metros rested motionless on their tracks. Airplanes stood still like static models. Our fraternity went knocking on Government doors, seeking financial rescue packages. Here was a growing 'tourism and hospitality' industry with everything at stake; it now stood stranded, all alone, to fend for itself. The Government refused to oblige, and understandably so, considering the line-up of its priorities relating to masses. Tourism was left with no choice, but to pray for God's mercy.

Meanwhile, science and virologists managed to decode the genome (genetic-map) of this virus. After a significant mysterious delay, the World Health Organisation was informed. Billions of dollars were poured out to find a Vaccine, to stop this adversity of mankind.

It is always the hopeful human spirit and strength that keeps mankind going. On 30th May while the world searched for the vaccine, SpaceX's Dragon Capsule with astronauts Bob and Doug took off from the Kennedy Space Centre, leaving the Covid infected Earth behind. 19 hours later, they were docked with International Space Centre, in outer space, looking down at the unruly 'world', living on our planet.

As the months moved forward, fierceness of the killer virus began to subside. Gradually, public scare began to abate. Meanwhile the vaccine made its appearance in India, it was Jan 2021. But the devil had never really stopped in its journey. A second catastrophe was in store, waiting silently, for the country's leadership to blunder, and for people to drop their guards. Mar 2021, panic gripped our people again, press began to show sad images of the country, further strangling, tourism's already dwindling fate.

As creatures of superior thinking ability, we try to seek explanations for our intrigues? But answers to certain riddles could keep eluding us, if we refuse to look backwards into time.

Nonetheless, our world does not stop here, nor will mankind, at least not yet. Things will get back to normal, and we will go on, leaving our nightmare behind. Come what may, our country's tourism potentials and its magics, remain unmatched. None can ignore the appeal of our subcontinent. It is just a matter of time, tourism cannot stop.

But our elementary question would still remain, why is mankind ravaged by epidemics and pandemics, repeatedly?. Perhaps the answer remains hidden elsewhere. It can take a flash for us to realise, or it could take decades more to dawn upon the reasons of such haunting misfortunes. Maybe these stealthy mysteries sweeping across the human race, could be a kind of warning signals, that are announcing the start-of-an-end, should we fail still, to reach for the answer.

We may pin our intrigues and agony on the beliefs in karma and godly phenomenon, or we may allot scientific logic to this catastrophe by argument of modern day bio-mishap. But either of these directions fail to open our minds towards a new thought, which may lead us to the deeper genesis of such crippling crisis triggered by an invisible organic enemy. India's Vedic literature (written as early as 1500-1000 BCE), loudly advocated the absolute need for 'environmental protection and nature's regeneration'.

Our Vedic society was the first Environmental Protection society in the entire history of mankind, which said, '*Mata Bhumi Putroham Prithivya*' (Earth is my mother, I am her son).

It could be that we did the blunder of departing away from this ageless doctrine. It had kept everything on Earth infused with robust health and in a state of great inter-balance. Nothing ever said or written could match the profound wisdom of this rule, crafted in a few words. No realisation could be more regretful, nor any event more bizarre, then the one we have witnessed; perhaps a consequence of our failure to abide by the Vedic rule.

"Wise men change their mind, fools never do", maybe we humans need to realise the gravity of our folly, of not taking care of mother Earth. We have been warned once again. It is upon us to decide, whether we wish to behave on Earth as civilised-fools? or as men of Vedic wisdom?

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

Author's Note

Perhaps the answer to all these recurring intrigues, may be lying hidden in India's ancient Vedic texts. It is for us to re-orient our minds. IATO could take initiative to bring eco friendly conducts and behaviours under an essential discipline, to be worthy of being its member.

Tourism Breaking news
Monday July 19, 2021

WTO delegation meets Finance Minister, thanks her for relief measures & seeks more support
The World Tourism Organization (WTO) delegation met with the Finance Minister, Shri. Nirmala Sitharaman, on Monday, July 19, 2021, to discuss the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the tourism sector and seek relief measures. The delegation, led by WTO Secretary-General, Mr. Talek Shabana, also met with the Minister of Tourism, Shri. K. J. Somaiya, and the Minister of Culture, Shri. G. Kishan Reddy.

Intercontinental travel to take a hit for a while: Tony Fernandes, Group CEO, Air Asia
Tony Fernandes, Group CEO of Air Asia, said that intercontinental travel will take a hit for a while due to the COVID-19 pandemic. He said that the airline industry is still struggling to recover from the impact of the pandemic and that it will take some time for the industry to get back on its feet.

U. Kishan Reddy meets Haryana CM & Manipur Tourism Minister, discusses issues
U. Kishan Reddy, Minister of Tourism, Government of India, met with the Chief Minister of Haryana, Mr. Manohar Lal Khattar, and the Minister of Tourism, Manipur, Mr. N. Biren Singh, on Monday, July 19, 2021. They discussed the issues related to the tourism sector and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

TTAG greets Shipyard Yessir Naki in Goa, requests to restart Russia tourist charters
The Tourism Trade Association of Goa (TTAG) greeted the Shipyard Yessir Naki in Goa on Monday, July 19, 2021. They requested the shipyard to restart Russia tourist charters as soon as possible.

Travel & Tourism World of News & Views
July 19, 2021

Maldives and Germany opened borders for Indians, Non essential travel allowed
The Maldives and Germany have opened their borders for Indian tourists. Non-essential travel is now allowed between the two countries. This is a significant step towards the recovery of the tourism sector.

TiE - BSE
The Travel Industry of India (TiE) and the Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE) have launched a joint initiative to promote the tourism sector. This initiative aims to attract more tourists to India and boost the economy.

Kenya eye growing intra-Africa tourism pie, hosts tour operators
Kenya is eyeing a growing intra-Africa tourism pie and has hosted a meeting with tour operators. The meeting was held in Nairobi and was attended by representatives from various tour operators and the Kenyan government.

ATA Launch Global Action Group to Improve Handling of Disability Mobility Aids
The Air Transport Association (ATA) has launched a Global Action Group to improve the handling of disability mobility aids. This group will work to ensure that passengers with disabilities are treated with dignity and respect.

Tour operators seek more sops from FM to revive the ailing sector

Tour operators are seeking more support from the Finance Minister to revive the ailing sector. They are requesting various incentives and subsidies to help them recover from the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Finance Minister has promised to consider their requests and provide the necessary support. She has also announced that the government will launch a new scheme to provide financial assistance to tour operators.

The tour operators are hopeful that this support will help them revive the sector and attract more tourists to India. They are also working to improve the tourism infrastructure and services to make India a more attractive destination for tourists.

Tourism Breaking news
Tuesday August 3, 2021

IATO suggests changes in MOT's incentive scheme for Foreign Tour Operators
The Indian Association of Tour Operators (IATO) has suggested changes in the Ministry of Tourism's (MOT) incentive scheme for Foreign Tour Operators. They are requesting that the scheme be made more flexible and that the incentives be increased.

MOT sanctions 3 Swadesh Darshan projects worth ₹179.68 cr in Gujarat & Kishan Reddy
The Ministry of Tourism (MOT) has sanctioned three Swadesh Darshan projects worth ₹179.68 crore in Gujarat. The projects are located in the districts of Gandhinagar, Kutch, and Bhavnagar. The Minister of Tourism, Kishan Reddy, announced the sanctioning of these projects.

X2 VIRE PATTAYA SEAPHIRE
X2 Vire Pattaya Seaphire is a new cruise ship that has been launched. It is a 100-meter long ship with a capacity of 1,200 passengers. It is the largest cruise ship in the region and is expected to attract a large number of tourists.

Lakshadweep to get Maldives like beach & water villas worth ₹813 crore in three islands
Lakshadweep is set to get Maldives-like beaches and water villas worth ₹813 crore in three islands. The project is being implemented by the Ministry of Tourism and is expected to boost the tourism sector in Lakshadweep.

Jaipur Int'l Airport ranks first nationally and 51st globally in airport quality survey
Jaipur International Airport has ranked first nationally and 51st globally in an airport quality survey. This is a significant achievement for the airport and is a testament to the efforts of the airport authorities.

Free tourist visas to first 5 lakh, 'a morale booster'

The government has announced that it will provide free tourist visas to the first 5 lakh tourists who arrive in India. This is a significant step towards the recovery of the tourism sector and is expected to boost the morale of the industry.

The Minister of Tourism, Kishan Reddy, said that this initiative is a morale booster for the tourism sector and is expected to attract more tourists to India. He also said that the government is committed to providing the necessary support to the tourism sector.

The tourists who are eligible for this scheme are those who arrive in India from abroad. They must be tourists and not business travelers. The scheme is expected to be implemented soon.

वीकेंड टूरिज्म की शुरुआत की जागी उम्मीद
पर्यटन संस्थाओं ने साप्ताहिक बंदी खत्म करने का किया स्वागत, ठप था वीकेंड टूरिज्म

पर्यटन संस्थाओं ने साप्ताहिक बंदी खत्म करने का किया स्वागत, ठप था वीकेंड टूरिज्म। The tourism industry has welcomed the decision to lift the weekend travel ban. This is a significant step towards the recovery of the tourism sector and is expected to boost the morale of the industry.

The Minister of Tourism, Kishan Reddy, said that this decision is a morale booster for the tourism sector and is expected to attract more tourists to India. He also said that the government is committed to providing the necessary support to the tourism sector.

The tourists who are eligible for this scheme are those who arrive in India from abroad. They must be tourists and not business travelers. The scheme is expected to be implemented soon.

TOUR OPERATORS' DELEGATION MEETS FM SITHARAMAN



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, July 16: A delegation of the Indian Association of Tour Operators (IATO) called on Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman at her office Friday, and urged her to increase SEIS duty credit scrips percentage to 10 per cent.

SEIS or Service Exports from India Scheme (SEIS) incentivises notified service providers with transferable duty credit scrips as a percentage of their net foreign exchange earnings. This credit can be used by the service providers to pay a number of central duties and taxes, including the basic Customs duty.

SEIS scrips are currently given to tour operators on their forex earnings at the rate of 7 per cent that the industry, which has been one of the worst affected by the Covid-19 pandemic, finds inadequate at the current juncture and has sought an increase.

NEWS SPECIAL STORY

Goa's industry bodies urge CM to announce opening of chartered tourism by October

By Team 17/08/2021 0 2



Goa's industry bodies have urged the Chief Minister to announce the opening of chartered tourism by October. The industry bodies, including the Goa Tourism Development Corporation (GTDC) and the Goa Tour Operators Association (GTOA), have been advocating for the reopening of the tourism sector since the start of the pandemic. They believe that the tourism sector is a vital part of Goa's economy and that the government should take steps to revive it as soon as possible. The industry bodies have also requested the government to provide financial support to the tourism sector during the pandemic.

कोरोना काल में घूमने का प्लान



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बिहार में पर्यटन पर परिचर्चा आयोजित

पटना। इंडिया टूरिज्म पटना, इंडियन एसोसिएशन ऑफ टूर अपरेटर (आईएटीओ) एवं टूरिज्म एसोसिएशन ऑफ बिहार के साथ संयुक्त रूप से बिहार में पर्यटन की संभावनाओं एवं समस्या विषय पर परिचर्चा किया गया। उक्त कार्यक्रम में पर्यटन क्षेत्र से जुड़े हुए कई एजेंसियों ने हिस्सा लिया। यथा-गैस्ट हाउस का निर्माण, होटल का निर्माण, जगह-जगह पर शौचालय एवं उसे साफ सफाई का व्यवस्था, सिक्योरिटी व्यवस्था सुदृढ़ कराना, पीपीपी मोड पर डेवलपमेंट कराना यदि किसी डेस्टिनेशन एवं प्रोजेक्ट को प्रमोट करने एवं प्रोजेक्ट को बेचने में घरेलू ट्रेवल एजेंसी को शामिल करना, दूसरे राज्यों के ट्रेवल एजेंसी एवं दूसरे राज्यों की एसोसिएशन को आमंत्रित कर समय-समय पर बिहार में गुप्त पर्यटन स्थल को दिखाना आदि।

Tourism sector welcomes free visa scheme, seeks further extension

ARJUN KHAN in New Delhi

THE government's decision to make free visas to 16 lakh tourists has been widely welcomed by India's Covid-hit tourism sector. However, the industry believes that the scheme should be extended by up to 2 years against the stipulated deadline of March 31, 2021.

"After almost 15 months of the pandemic, the formal recognition that Indian Tourism, travel & hospitality is under stress and requires structural support in a first step and can be supported. While the waiver of 16 lakh tourist visas is a positive, it should be extended till 2022 or till at least till pre-pandemic tourist business is restored," said Anish Gupta, Co-ordinating CEO, IATO (Federation of Hotel & Restaurant Associations of India).

But a senior executive at a leading travel booking platform, requesting anonymity, said that it is highly unlikely that foreign tourists would want to visit India anytime soon given the negative publicity we earned during the second wave.

"Fear of the third wave, new virus variants, and the fact that our vaccines have not yet been given clearance by international authorities is reason it is unlikely the waiver free visa is an excellent idea but it should remain free of a deadline," he said. The free visa scheme will be applicable till March 31, 2021 or till 16 lakh visas are issued, whichever is earlier, the government said.

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman also said that 20th and 21st wave foreign tourists would be allowed to visit India for up to 16 lakh tourists. "The average daily stay for a foreign tourist in India is 21 days and their average daily spending per tourist is about \$14 (Rs 2,400). Once tourists visit tourism resumes, the first 16 lakh tourists will be in need of a change," Sitharaman said.

Besides the free visa scheme, Sitharaman also announced a new loan guarantee scheme for 201 travel and tourism stakeholders (TTS, recognised by the Tourism Ministry) and 10,000 regional or state-level tourism service providers. Union Minister of Tourism, Bhupendra Patel, President of Indian Association of Tour Operators, also requested the government to consider giving a one-time financial grant to all recognised tour operators.

Tour operators meets FM, seek raising SEIS scrips' benefit to 10%

A delegation of the Indian Association of Tour Operators (IATO) called on Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman at her office on Friday, and urged her to increase SEIS duty credit scrips percentage to 10 per cent. SEIS or Service Exports from India Scheme (SEIS) incentivises notified service providers with transferable duty credit scrips as a percentage of their net foreign exchange earnings.

पस्त है कारोबार, लोन से नहीं होगा भला

अजय सिंह

देशन बैंक से फोर आर एन। अजय सिंह का कहना है कि लोन से कारोबार नहीं होगा भला। उन्होंने कहा कि लोन से कारोबार करने के बजाय बिजनेस को बढ़ावा देने के लिए सरकार को कर्जदार बनाना चाहिए। उन्होंने कहा कि लोन से कारोबार करने के बजाय बिजनेस को बढ़ावा देने के लिए सरकार को कर्जदार बनाना चाहिए।

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राहत पैकेज के नाम पर कर्जदार बनाना चाहती है सरकार

अजय सिंह

देशन बैंक से फोर आर एन। अजय सिंह का कहना है कि लोन से कारोबार नहीं होगा भला। उन्होंने कहा कि लोन से कारोबार करने के बजाय बिजनेस को बढ़ावा देने के लिए सरकार को कर्जदार बनाना चाहिए। उन्होंने कहा कि लोन से कारोबार करने के बजाय बिजनेस को बढ़ावा देने के लिए सरकार को कर्जदार बनाना चाहिए।

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13th Aug 2021

G Kamla Vardhan Rao is the new Director General Tourism, GOI

G Kamla Vardhan Rao, 55, former of India's largest travel agency, has been appointed as the new Director General of Tourism, Government of India. He will also replace the current Director General of India's tourism promotion agency, the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India.

G Kamla Vardhan Rao has been working in the tourism sector for over 25 years. He has held various positions in the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, including Director General of Tourism, Government of India, and Director General of Tourism, Government of India.

Tik - Bit

DRV

Bangkok and Khao Yai National Park named among "The World's Greatest Places of 21"

The Traveler's Choice Awards (TCA) is a global award for excellence in travel. It is the world's largest travel award, with over 100 million votes cast each year. The awards are given to the world's best travel destinations, hotels, airlines, and travel services.

Bangkok and Khao Yai National Park have been named among the "The World's Greatest Places of 21" for the 21st year. This is a testament to the city's and park's commitment to excellence in travel.

Kandima Maldives Wins Agoda's 2021 Gold Circle Award Yet Again

Kandima Maldives has won the Agoda's 2021 Gold Circle Award for the 10th year. This is a testament to the resort's commitment to excellence in travel.

The award is given to the world's best travel destinations, hotels, airlines, and travel services. Kandima Maldives has been recognized for its exceptional service, facilities, and location.

राज्य में पर्यटन की असीम संभावनाएं

जैसे पटना : इंडियन टूरिज्म पटना, इंडियन एसोसिएशन आफ टूर ऑपरेटर (आईएटीओ) एवं टूरिज्म एसोसिएशन आफ बिहार ने संयुक्त रूप से राज्य में पर्यटन की संभावनाओं एवं समस्या विश्व पर परिचर्चा की। पर्यटन मंत्रालय के पटना कार्यालय के निदेशक वॉई नौलकंठम ने कहा कि बिहार में पर्यटन की असीम संभावनाएं हैं। इंडियन एसोसिएशन आफ टूर ऑपरेटर, बिहार- झरखंड के चेयरमैन सुशील कुमार सिंह ने कहा कि बिहार में पर्यटन के विकास के लिए टूर ऑपरेटर को एक मंच पर आकर कार्य करना होगा। संभावनाओं को धिक्कित कर स्थानीय पर्यटन को बढ़ावा देने पर काम करना होगा।

Friday August 13, 2021

Tourism Breaking news

G Kamala Vardhan Rao appointed as the new Director General, Ministry of Tourism, GOI

G Kamla Vardhan Rao has been given additional charge of the post of Director General, Ministry of Tourism, GOI. He would remain as the Chairman & Managing Director, India Tourism Development Corporation (ITDC), till appointment of a regular incumbent or until further orders, whichever is earlier. The announcement was made by Appointments Committee of the Cabinet.

MOT has recognised adventure tourism as niche tourism product: G Kishan Reddy

G Kishan Reddy, Cabinet Minister, Tourism & Culture, has shared that MOT has recognised adventure tourism as a niche tourism product to promote India as a 365 days destination and attract tourists with specific interest. MOT has issued Guidelines for Approval of Adventure Tour Operators as well as provides Central Financial Assistance to State Governments/ UT Administration for tourism infra development.

IATO signs MoU with German association DRV

Rajiv Mehra, President, IATO has revealed that the Indian Association of Tour Operators (IATO) has signed an agreement with Deutscher Reiseverband e.V. (DRV) German Travel Association to promote bilateral tourism between the two countries by taking suitable measures to normalize tourism once the situation is normal. A reciprocal cooperation agreement was signed by Norbert Flabig, President - Deutscher Reiseverband e.V. (DRV) German Travel Association and Rajiv Mehra, President, IATO to take this forward.

Rebooting the Indian MICE landscape

WEDNESDAY, 25th August, at 11 am IST

Register Now

नई दिल्ली 18-07-2021

सख्ती प्रतिबंधों के चलते समस्या अगले साल तक हवाई यात्री 47% बढ़ेंगे, प्री-कोविड स्थिति 3 साल नहीं

प्रमोद कुमार | नई दिल्ली

कोरोना की दूसरी लहर के बाद रेलवे और हवाई यातायात बढ़ने लगा है। प्री-कोविड की तुलना में 40 फीसदी ट्रेनें और 65 फीसदी फ्लाइट्स चलने लगे हैं। अगले साल तक प्री-कोविड के मुकाबले 47.8 प्रतिशत तक टैफिक रिफ्लैक्स हो जाएगा। हालांकि मार्च 2020 के पहले की स्थिति तक पहुंचने में तीन साल लग सकते हैं। इससे विश्वजन कंफिडेंस का घाटा 59,679 करोड़ रुपये तक पहुंच जाएगा। कोविड से पहले हर स्मॉल देश में 14 करोड़ डॉलर के कार 6.5 करोड़ लोग हवाई यात्रा करते थे।

80% ट्रेनें शुरू, बाकी पाबंदी हटाने के बाद

रेलवे के एडिशनल डीजी डीने नोन ने बताया, करीब 80 फीसदी ट्रेनें चलने लगे हैं। ट्रेनें की संख्या बढ़ाने के लिए रोज रियु हो रहा है। वेबे हो राज्यों में पाबंदी हटोके, सभी ट्रेनें शुरू हो जाएंगी। पैकिंग ट्रेनें चलने में सक्षम बनेंगे जो रही है, करेक्ट इसके इलाक़ा जवाब होते हैं। कोविड से पहले 126.8 एम्प्लॉयमेंट में वॉल्यूम ट्रेनें चल रही थी, जिनमें 1372 शुरू हो गई हैं। 5.881 में से 3,625 उपनगरीय ट्रेनें भी शुरू हो चुकी हैं।

UP, still an unexplored destination, is promoting religious, eco tourism

UP, still an unexplored destination, is promoting religious, eco tourism. The state is rich in its cultural and historical heritage, and is a great destination for tourists. The state is also known for its beautiful landscapes and wildlife. The state is also known for its religious and spiritual sites. The state is also known for its eco-tourism opportunities. The state is also known for its cultural and historical heritage. The state is also known for its beautiful landscapes and wildlife. The state is also known for its religious and spiritual sites. The state is also known for its eco-tourism opportunities.

Now, tourists can visit Taj Mahal five days a week

The Taj Mahal, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, is now open to tourists five days a week. This is a significant step towards normalizing tourism in the region. The state is also known for its beautiful landscapes and wildlife. The state is also known for its religious and spiritual sites. The state is also known for its eco-tourism opportunities. The state is also known for its cultural and historical heritage. The state is also known for its beautiful landscapes and wildlife. The state is also known for its religious and spiritual sites. The state is also known for its eco-tourism opportunities.



HISTORY REPACKAGED

Travel has always been about experiencing different destinations, its people, culture, food and history. Interestingly, Indian itineraries usually stop at history and culture. Highlighted below are some ideas to help add to the charms of India.

■ IATO Bureau

For the inquisitive traveller, India offers an unfathomable array of options. However, a common fallacy adopted by tour operators is to focus primarily on incredible buildings and the guides deliver historical narrations revealing the most minute details and also share historical anecdotes related to the life and times of the families associated

with the opulent buildings. Needless to say, India's rich historical legacy is aptly manifested in the constructive expressions of our craftsmen who sculpted awe inspiring buildings. However, an aspect of buildings is that if you have seen a few, perhaps you have seen them all. For example if you have seen 2-3 forts or palaces, then, subsequent overdose of these



would start to veer towards boredom. What I am trying to say becomes more relevant when we visit castles and cathedrals in Europe. After a point of time, despite the buildings being spectacular, concentration span dips. This is more because for an average tourist it becomes hard to relate to the story and intrigues of an alien culture. We tend to lose interest. It is the same, when we continually narrate historical verbal diarrhoea about one building after another. The clients tend to lose interest in the number of wives, concubines or children a particular king had, or the battles that he fought with various kings. A foreign tourist would find it hard to relate to this overpour of historical information.

Bawali Rajbari

An interesting option would be a stay at Bawali Rajbari, located just outside of Kolkata in the green lands of West Bengal. An erstwhile old palace, earlier belonged to the Zamindars (landlords), has been converted into a heritage hotel surrounded by farmlands. Offering picturesque views of the countryside, this heritage hotel is now replete with decorative colonial architectural motifs, breezy balconies, and graceful colonnades. It was formerly the headquarters of a small kingdom ruled by the Mandal family of Bengal.

At Bawali, there is an opportunity to explore the serene beauty of the surroundings. One can walk through the village, engage with the locals, witness their simple lifestyles, and let your heart be overwhelmed by the disarming hospitality of the natives.

Salawas

On your itineraries in and around Jodhpur, you could include a visit to Salawas. For those willing to step away from the tourist track to explore India's true colours & hospitality as well as incredible home cooked food, you would find just the place at Chhotaram Prajapat's Homestay. This rustic, cosy guesthouse offers simple, but, comfortable living conditions. The no-frills, informal huts with thatch roofs come with ensuite bathrooms. A stay here brings serene and authentic vistas to visitors to relate to the ethnic essence of the land. The place is perfect for those willing to experience the traditional Indian lifestyle, explore local villages, eat delicious home cooked food and treat themselves to real India.

Salawas is a land of magic carpets, a land where fantasy and reality joins forces to keep alive one of its most famous tradition - the *durry* (rugs). Salawas is famous for *durries* (rugs) made by local craftsman. The *durry* (rugs)

“
India's rich
historical legacy is
aptly manifested
in the constructive
expressions of our
craftsmen who
sculpted awe-
inspiring
buildings.
”



weaved out of cotton or wool, imbibes colourful tradition & heritage from its primitive form of weaving prevalent in the remote villages of Rajasthan. The patterns depict the colourful folklore of the region. One could also visit popular Durry Udyogs where you can buy and see how these rugs are being made in home looms.

Salawas also bestows upon the guests the opportunity to experience jeep safaris to the heart of Rajasthan villages where traditions centuries old still permeate life styles. One can witness the 'opium ceremony' - a ritual by which guests are welcomed. Gaily attired men and women carry on their chores and one can catch a glimpse of their norms and customs. The smoothened mud floors of the village huts remind one of the simple and traditional living here.

Hacra Dhani

Another hidden gem is Hacra Dhani, a village in Osian, a 1.5 hour drive from Jodhpur. Explorations of this remote tribal settlement happens on camel back, and, on foot as we unravel the mysteries and intrigues of this vibrant tribal hamlet. A small village, Hacra Dhani provides the incredible experience of overnight

stays in village huts, interacting with the migratory demoiselle cranes and safaris into the deeper desert. Without exaggerating, we can say that this is one of the best preserved tribal settlements in India.

Once you enter in the village, you would find your walk through the maze of lanes, and bylanes to discover a strong sense of community spirit. The villagers enjoy interactive and will join discussions on their customs, living conditions, and their homes. One can savour homegrown food, like dal (pulses), chawal (rice), sabji (seasonable vegetables), and Roti (three types of bread- wheat, millet, and corn).

In the evening, bathe in the moonlight under the starry sky, listen to the hypnotic rhythms of the rural sounds that reconnect with your inner self. India has some amazing sights and monuments. People from far and wide arrive to appreciate these. However, the warmth, richness, and diversity of the people is a closely guarded secret. We attempted to unravel this and hopefully the experience would leave a delightful memory.

“
Bathe in the
moonlight under
the starry sky. Listen
to the hypnotic
rhythms of the
rural sounds that
reconnect with your
inner self.
”

PRESERVING IN JAMMU: MUBARAK MANDI HERITAGE COMPLEX

A request was made to preserve Mubarak Mandi Heritage Complex, Jammu, a unique and glorious Heritage site in Jammu and Kashmir, that has the potential of being a UNESCO World Heritage Site.



IATO requested H.E. Shri Manoj Sinha, Hon'ble Lieutenant Governor UT of Jammu and Kashmir and drew his attention to the Expression of Interest (EOI) issued by the Executive Director Heritage Society dated 15th July 2021 inviting proposals for Development of HERTIAGE HOTEL IN ZANANA MAHAL (Queen's Palaces) at Mubarak Mandi Complex, Jammu, under PPP Model. IATO requested that Mubarak Mandi be

preserved as Heritage property and to be developed and promoted as one of the iconic tourist destination, for both domestic and foreign nationals, which would not only generate revenue for the Jammu & Kashmir but will also create local employment in the long run.

On favourable consideration of the request Mubarak Mandi Heritage Society may be directed to withdraw their EOI issued on 15th July 2021

RELAXATIONS ON THE GOVERNMENT E-MARKET PLACE

IATO requested P.K. Singh, Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Government e-marketplace (GeM), Ministry of Commerce to waive off requirement of three years' experience for MOT Recognised Operators providing Tourist Coaches and Cars to service providers through the GeM Platform.

IATO requested that for the service (tour operators, travel agents, tourist transport operators) recognised by the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, who possessed tourist vehicles and were registered on GeM Portal, clause of Prior Experience of assisting Government department/PSUs be relaxed and removed and all MOT recognised operators be eligible to

provide vehicles, Bus, Tempo Traveller or Cab /Taxi Operators under 'Service Category' on GeM platform.

This would help the MOT recognised operators to utilize their tourist vehicles, especially during the time of Covid-19, when all tourists' coaches/cars were not being utilized and operators' had no business.



P.K. Singh
Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Government e Marketplace (GeM),
Ministry of Commerce

HIDDEN TREASURES OF SOUTH INDIA

India is a land of the unexplored, from lush green jungles to mountain valleys and life changing experiences, we have it all. Today, we highlight three treasures in Southern India that will help travellers reconnect with nature and love the country a little more.

■ IATO Bureau

As tour operators, we need to always remind ourselves that our job is to add value to our products. We are not travel agents booking hotels, flights and transport services. These aspects of our job can be done online. Why does the client need a tour

operator? One key reason for this would be the tour operator's ability to bring unusual, lesser known, but charming venues that would add value to the experience. Today, we highlight a few intriguing treasures that are sure to make your itineraries interesting.



Gavi, Kerala

In your Kerala itinerary, there is an excellent option that can be recommended to guests who evince a wilderness interest. You could propose an extra day in Periyar. On this day you could suggest a special jeep excursion that would fascinate those who desire to spend some relaxing moments in the lap of nature. A short drive from Periyar, takes you to the magical Island, the village of Gavi - an eco-tourist spot in Kerala which is widely popular and is amongst the leading ecotourism centre's in India. Enjoy the countryside with the lake appearing and disappearing into the side. Gavi has been preserved in its natural scenic beauty untainted by the mighty hands of modernity. Yes, with every turn, you encounter nature at its unadulterated best –

sprawling grasslands, cascading waterfalls, hills and valleys harbouring its dear inhabitants. Gavi is mainly known for its wildlife. Endangered species including the Nilgiri Tahr, Mouse deer, Lion-tailed macaque etc. are often sighted at the outskirts of Gavi. This Island is also home to over 260 avian species, making it a haven for bird watchers. Besides bird watching, visitors can go boating or canoeing in the reservoir lake. The trekking trail to Pullumedu Peak ends with a panoramic view including the famous shrine of Sabarimala. Gavi is definitely one of the many wonders that nature has gifted us. Its wilderness has to be preserved and as we tread through these forest patches, every step should bear a promise of being kind and responsible towards Mother Earth.

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Dindigul, Tamil Nadu

A major highlight in your itinerary for Tamil Nadu would be a stay in a comfortable village home at Atthoor in Dindigul. A traditional home called Cardamom House, is situated in stunningly beautiful surroundings on a hillside of the western ghats over-looking a monsoon dependent 400 acre lake. Cardamom House, which has only 10 rooms, is owned and managed by Dr. Chris Lucas, a retired English physician, ably assisted by Indian staff.

An off the beaten track venue in the lap of nature, I believe a stay here would be one of the high points of the trip. Another reason to suggest this place is to give an opportunity to explore village life forgotten by time. At this exclusive stay, you can explore

and photograph the village, enjoy the sights and soak in the hospitality at your own pace and against the stunning backdrop of nature.

Kolukkumalai, Tamil Nadu

While in Munnar, one could propose a drive to Kolukkumalai tea plantation, the highest tea plantation in the world. This is a journey where new vistas of natural beauty reveal at every turn. The views down below of the valley, hills and Munnar town are quite spectacular. Drive through the tea plantations and its scenic valleys, spice plantations and visit the eastern slopes of the Western Ghats. During the drive, clients enjoy a beautiful and panoramic view of emerald green tea estates and the curvy hills of Munnar that just touch the low lying clouds.

“While in Munnar, one could propose a drive to Kolukkumalai tea plantation, the highest tea plantation in the world, where new vistas of natural beauty reveal at every turn.”

CLIMBING THE LADDER OF SUCCESS

Before internet was born and opened up wealth of human knowledge, people relied on the older generation to give them tips needed to improve their work. Is this lost now? Let's find out.

■ Tapas Banerjee

Wisdom can be described as the cumulative addition of positive experiences as well as individual thought to the knowledge that is bequeathed to us by our elders. Humanity has progressed in every field because the student inherited knowledge from the experiences of the previous generation, and, then adds new findings as well as attitude to their inherited knowledge. At the turn of the last century, the Wright brothers taught us how to fly. Similarly, Einstein is credited for introducing to the world the equation $E=mc^2$. In essence, he was responsible for setting the stage for nuclear power. However, subsequent students of aeronautics added their research to create jet flights and voyages through space. Similarly the subsequent disciples of Einstein harnessed nuclear power for generating energy. Hence, the eternal reality is that to ensure progress in society, students must always upstage their gurus.





create an element of product differentiation in the eyes of your prospective customer. If you do not do so then you enter a 'me too' mould of business that just focuses on bringing to the table an ordinary product that has a cheap monetary value, and, as the product is basic your returns are limited too because it is very easy to imitate what you are doing .

As tour operators we own nothing . The sights and experiences are a part of our historical legacy for the visitor to appreciate. Your knowledge and inquisitiveness will help you add destinations and activities that would create a product with unique attributes. The tour would stand out as a tall tree and not be lost amongst millions of grass blades .

To pursue knowledge, you must always be keen to learn for yourself first . Dissolve yourself into the knowledge of the activity or the destination . Develop a liking for it. Create bullet points of the highlights, both in a document and in your heart. This way, in the future, and when needed, you can explain to your audience in your own words and through the medium of your unique passion .

You must also not be averse to discussions and debates. This is how you not only share knowledge, but, you get to debrief yourself and discover the gaps in your knowledge bank . This would prompt you to investigate further and plug the gaps .

Once you feel that you have secured enough knowledge on a particular activity or destination, then, practice brief loneliness in terms of a solo walk through a quiet neighbourhood. During the walk, arrange the flow of your narration in your mind . Once you believe in what you have acquired write it

The most heartening aspect of our fraternity is that there is a great preponderance of youth amongst us. This means that our travel trade will only move higher and achieve success as the youth take charge.

However, it is important for the youth to inherit knowledge from their seniors in the right spirit . Often the young are driven by the power of youth and their faith in contemporary tools. This sort of blindsight's them from accepting traditional knowledge that is a universal reality. Without the foundations, a building cannot stand.

As far as the travel trade is concerned, I would recommend that you seek as much knowledge as possible on various aspects of the business . Knowledge is very empowering . Always be inclined towards learning so that you could add value to your product . It is this value addition that would

“
Your knowledge and inquisitiveness will help you add destinations and activities that would create a product with unique attributes.
”



down in a document . This will put a permanent imprint on your mind .

The best way to accept knowledge is to do so with a pure heart and the inquisitiveness of a child. As we progress in life, we see material manifestation of our success in terms of our cars, homes, phones etc . At this stage of life we are not looking for excellence or new knowledge, but, to somehow make material acquisitions as a part of our business activities . This, in my opinion is a serious distraction in achieving excellence.

We must never forget the hunger for knowledge that prompted us to succeed. We wanted to succeed at any cost. If you love what you are doing, you will be encouraged to gain more knowledge and strive towards excellence . Keep pursuing this . The main highway of your business

conduct should be passion and self-satisfaction.

Taking an example from cricket, we see many talented batsmen score a quick fire 30 or 40 runs . Then they lose focus and get out. To score a century you have to remain focused, curb your careless instincts, be prepared to run under the scorching sun, fight cramps and above all enjoy doing all this !

My parting suggestion to the youth would be to understand and imbibe knowledge, you need to be prepared to change from within. Otherwise, knowledge would remain only wishful intents.

The words would seem nice for the moment, but, this won't last. It is only when you are filled with the sense of making a change from within yourself, shall you permit knowledge to seep in and make the desired changes in your conduct of life and business.

“
If you love what you are doing, you will be encouraged to gain more knowledge and strive towards excellence . Keep pursuing this.
”

YAS ISLAND

ABU DHABI

THE ULTIMATE HOLIDAY DESTINATION

Stay, play and mix-it-up on Yas Island with access to world-class hotels and beaches, award-winning theme parks and attractions as well as dining and shopping to suit all tastes.

■ IATO Bureau

Yas Island invites visitors to indulge in never-ending fun in the heart of Abu Dhabi. Travellers can enjoy everything from record-breaking theme parks and attractions to Formula 1 racing and indoor climbing and flying. The 25 sq km island is also home to world-class shopping, dining and golfing. Holidaymakers of all ages

and interests can tailor the perfect trip to suit their tastes.

① **Ferrari World Abu Dhabi**

Located at the heart of Yas Island, Ferrari World Abu Dhabi is an award-winning theme park, which celebrates the spirit of the legendary marque through unique Ferrari-inspired experiences designed to



Warner Bros. World Abu Dhabi

delight the entire family. The theme park is home to exciting rides and attractions, family-friendly experiences, delectable Italian dining, unique shopping in addition to popular seasonal celebrations.

Travellers in search of speed need not miss Formula Rossa, the world's fastest rollercoaster with a top speed of 240km/h. The Park is also home to Yas Island's first Roof Walk and Zip Line experiences inviting guests to explore Ferrari World Abu Dhabi's signature red roof and zip through the Flying Aces loop. Fun for little champions is in full supply at Ferrari World Abu Dhabi's Family Zone, which includes miniature versions of the Park's most iconic rides; Formula Rossa Junior, Speedway Race, Flying Wings and Turbo Tower.

② **Yas Waterworld**

Considered the pearl of Yas Island, Yas Waterworld is a one-of-a-kind waterpark that draws inspiration from the UAE's pearl diving heritage offering families fun-packed adventures, the warmest welcome, and the most engaging

themed experience. The iconic waterpark welcomes guests into a world of exhilarating water experiences with world-class slides, zero-gravity falls and even the chance to cool off with an afternoon surfing session. With 45 state-of-the-art rides, slides and attractions - six of which can be found nowhere else in the world - Yas Waterworld is home to heart-pumping thrills like 'Dawwama', a hydro-magnetic tornado waterslide and 'Bubbles Barrel', the largest-ever 'sheet wave surf ride', in addition to the Pearl Diving Experience, where guests can dive deep and collect oysters containing pearls they can cherish forever.

③ **Warner Bros. World™ Abu Dhabi**

Warner Bros. World™ Abu Dhabi is an incredibly immersive indoor theme park, which instantly transports guests to the lands of their favorite characters, delivering endless family fun and adventures. Complete with 29 state-of-the-art rides, attractions and live entertainment shows, the Park is also home to authentically

“
Waterpark that draws inspiration from the UAE's pearl diving heritage, offering families funpacked adventures, the warmest welcome, and the most engaging themed experience.
”





Yas Theme Parks

themed dining and shopping – bringing to life some of the world's most iconic DC and Animation stories under one roof.

The adventure begins at Warner Bros. Plaza – the epicenter of the park. From there, guests can team up with the Justice League in Metropolis, fight crime with Batman in Gotham City and pal around with Bugs Bunny and the Looney Tunes in Cartoon Junction. A visit to the park isn't complete without a stop in Dynamite Gulch to witness Wile E. Coyote's latest prank on the Road Runner, or a Bronto burger with The Flintstones in Bedrock.

4 CLYMB™ Abu Dhabi

Travelers looking for an active break are bound to enjoy a visit to CLYMB™ Abu Dhabi. The region's ultimate adventure hub is home to not one but two record-breaking attractions. Reach new heights when you scale THE SUMMYT, the region's tallest climbing wall and dare to soar in the world's biggest indoor skydiving flight chamber. With experiences, courses and climbing routes to suit guests of all ages, CLYMB Abu Dhabi is the perfect spot for a fun-filled family day.

5 Shop till you drop at Yas Mall

Yas Mall is Abu Dhabi's biggest, and the UAE's second-largest, shopping centre. The light-drenched three-level mall offers an impressive array of stores, including international retailers and eateries, and a 20-screen cinema operated by VOX Cinemas. There are plenty of high-end choices to shop from in Yas Mall with outlets of some of the world's finest brands at your disposal. With infinite choices available, the most prominent ones are Tryano, Debenhams, Mango, Khaadi, Coast, Steve

Madden, Charles and Keith, MontBlanc, Lush, Mac, Sephora, and Pottery Barn.

6 World-class concerts, sporting events, musicals and so much more

Located on the waterfront of Yas Bay, Etihad Arena is all set to host 'An Evening with Russell Peters' on September 17, 2021, and Disney On Ice: Find Your Hero takes to the stage at Etihad Arena from 2-11 September 2021.

7 Yas Beach

With its white sands, crystal clear waters and natural mangrove surroundings, Yas Beach is an idyllic getaway perfect for watersport enthusiasts and families. Set up on a sun lounger to soak up some rays or experience a fresh fusion of culinary flavors whether at the beach bar or at the restaurant and enjoy a wide selection of International and Arabic gastronomic delights.

In the wake of the pandemic, Yas Island has been reassuring tourists of their safety and well-being during their time at the destination. 95% of eligible team members across the destination have been vaccinated, including attractions, experiences, hotels, restaurants and retailers in support of Abu Dhabi's vaccination program.

In addition, Yas Island's theme parks and attractions were awarded the 'Go Safe' certification by the Department of Culture and Tourism – Abu Dhabi, including Ferrari World Abu Dhabi, Yas Waterworld, Warner Bros. World™ Abu Dhabi. The certification is one of 25 health and safety accreditations received by the destination, including the coveted WTTC 'Safe Travels' stamp by the World Travel & Tourism Council in August 2020 - the first destination in Abu Dhabi to receive the international honor.



THE VALUE OF KINDNESS

The Covid-19 pandemic has created unimaginable levels of havoc. From losing business and jobs, to losing loved ones, life has taught us all too many lessons in a very short time. The below heart-wrenching story reminds us of small gestures that can make a huge difference.

■ Mukesh Manra

Ever since the pandemic, tourism and many other industries have been devastated. Many have lost their jobs and businesses have collapsed. These are difficult times and priority is survival. We have heard

a few cases where our trade partners and friends chose to end their lives and it's been very disturbing. We often think of calling our trade friends and talking to them but it stops at just the thought. When it's too late, we ask ourselves if that call



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The 25
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shopping, dining
and golfing.
Holidaymakers
of all ages and
interests can tailor
the perfect trip
to suit their tastes.
”

“
During these
times, instead
of scrolling through
Facebook and
Instagram, we
should open our
contact list and
start calling our
friends and ask
them about their
well-being.
”



would have made a difference. I am sure you all have experienced this at some time or another. To better understand how invisible forces support us in our endeavours, here is a short story that goes a long way.

The Starfish Story

A young girl was walking along a beach where thousands of starfish had been washed up during a terrible storm. When she came to each starfish, she would pick it up, and throw it back into the ocean. People watched her with amusement.

She had been doing this for some time when a man approached her and asked, “Little girl, why are you doing this?”

“Look at this beach, you can’t save all these starfish. You can’t begin to make a difference!”

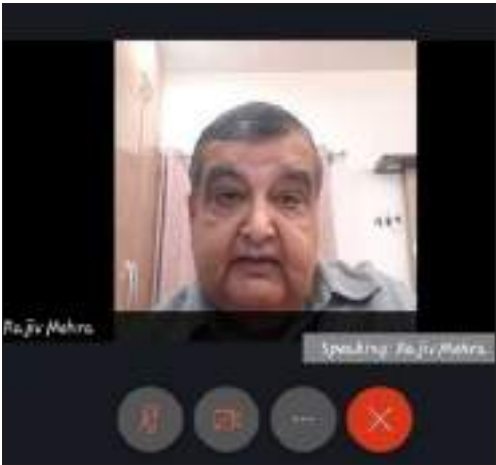
The girl seemed crushed, suddenly deflated. But after a few moments, she bent down, picked up another starfish, and hurled it as far as she could into the ocean. Then she looked up at the man and replied, “well, I made a difference to that one!”

The old man looked at the girl inquisitively and thought about what she had said. Inspired, he joined the little girl in throwing starfish back into the sea.

Soon others joined and all the starfish were saved. I personally feel that during these times, instead of scrolling through Facebook and Instagram, we should open our contact list and start calling our friends and ask them about their well-being. Sometimes we do not need to motivate or encourage them but just listen to them so that their burden is lightened by talking about it.



President IATO addressed a Virtual Digital Focus Summit on Entertainment & Film Tourism



IATO made a presentation on the Tourism Potential of the Republic of India at the SCO Meeting.



Sr. VP, IATO was an eminent speaker at the ASSOCHAM organised Virtual Conference on Health & Wellness Tourism “Transforming Wellness Tourism Sector & Roadmap to Reopening post-COVID 2nd Wave”.

IATO President addressed the panel on the Relevance of Tour Operators and Travel Agents more than ever



IATO’S OPINION MATTERS

The association participated in various meetings, webinars and panel discussions over the last 2 months. Here is a highlight of some important discussions. A virtual meeting with the Hon’ble Prime Minister on the export target of US\$ 400 billion for FY 2021-22 was held on Friday, August 6, 2021



Rajiv Mehra was in conversation with the Hon’ble Minister for Commerce & Industry. The minister spoke about tourism coming back with a bang. “I am glad that we were heard by the Honourable Minister of Commerce. He took note of issues such as SEIS, reopening of e-tourist visas and international flight. His expression was quite affirmative and we hope to get the desired results. Thank you to the support provided by our Vice President Ravi Gosain who was with me, our entire EC and few members who gave suggestions”, said Rajiv Mehra, President, IATO.



IATO President Rajiv Mehra and immediate past President, Pronab Sarkar, called on the Hon’ble Finance Minister in her office to thank her personally on the announcements that were made for revival of tourism and to seek support from the Government on other issues. The meeting with the Hon’ble Finance Minister was historic and fruitful.



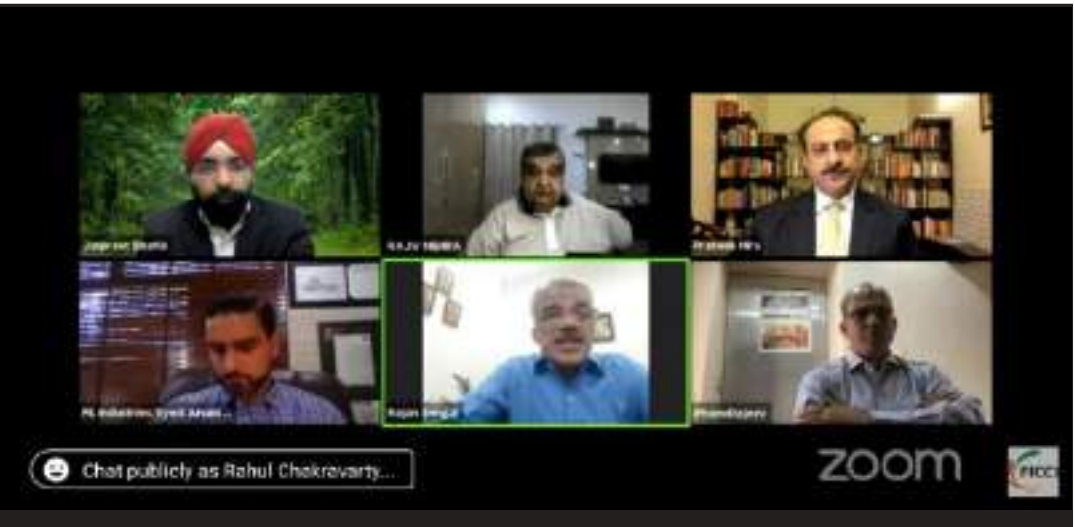
IATO President along with other trade members welcomed G Kishan Reddy, Hon’ble Cabinet Minister for Tourism and Culture



IATO President made a presentation on Tourism Revival – a global perspective at the BRICS Tourism Meeting. COO IATO also joined him. Joint Secretary Tourism chaired the meeting.



IATO President addressed the 2nd FICCI Travel Tourism & Hospitality E Conclave on the 6th of August 2021.



KARNATAKA CHAPTER

IATO's Chapter Chair in Karnataka met the Chief Minister and submitted the request for a consolidated single order from the Govt. of Karnataka for implementing covid protocol for tourism travel and hospitality sector. He was sympathetic to the request and assured full support.



BIHAR CHAPTER

Chapter Chair Bihar met Director tourism Bihar Prabhakwr Verma IAS. He was assured that they will promote Tourism of Bihar with IATO.



PUNJAB CHAPTER

IATO Punjab chapter met with Jenu Devan, IAS, Managing Director & Commissioner of Tourism Corporation of Gujarat and organised a workshop.



J&K CHAPTER

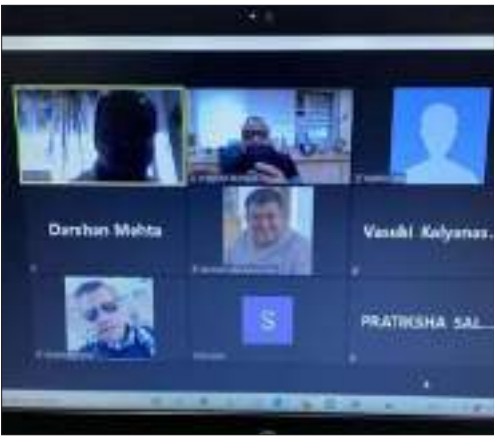
The Parliamentary delegation of 40 members headed by Shri Anand Sharma was in Srinagar to meet the various trade, commerce & Tourism Bodies. The State Govt has chosen IATO Chairman to speak about the problems and they had the opportunity to do so. The Chairman of the delegation was assured that has comments won't go unaddressed.



Kashmir Chapter: Chapter Chair Kashmir met Hony.Jt Secretary IATO in Srinagar and spent 90 minutes together discussing Tourism.

MAHARASHTRA CHAPTER

The chapter organised a meeting July 16, 2021.



UTTRAKHAND CHAPTER

IATO Uttarakhand chapter had their first zoom meeting with Mr. Sunil Gupta, Regional Chairman. It undoubtedly boosted the moral of the members.



OFFICIAL LAUNCH OF THE IATO LADAKH CHAPTER

IATO Ladakh Chapter organised an interactive meet with the Travel Trade organizations of Leh at Hotel Sera Courtyard. The dinner meeting was attended by current IATO Ladakh members, President Ladakh Travel Trade Alliance, President and executive members from All Ladakh Tour Operators Association ALTOA, All Ladakh Hotel & Guest House Association ALGHA, Taxi Union, Tempo Union and Bikers Association. Chairman IATO Ladakh presented traditional khatags to all the IATO Ladakh members and participants. Importance of IATO and privileges of becoming it's member were thoroughly discussed and explained. Members appreciated and congratulated IATO President and EC for opening Ladakh chapter and hoped that IATO will look into Ladakh Tourism issues. IATO executives from Delhi under the leadership of Rajiv Mehra visited.



NORTH EAST STATES CHAPTER

IATO North East States chapter received an invitation from Northeast Frontier Railway to attend an interaction. This was in relation to the Vistadome operations being planned by the NF Railway on the Guwahati - New Halflong and New Jalpaiguri - Alipurduar Jn routes.



REGIONAL CHAPTER - EAST



Jk Mohanty, Regional Chapter Chairman, IATO, attended a very successful meeting with union tourism minister. The Minister assured all his support.

WEST BENGAL CHAPTER

Tourism stakeholders urge West Bengal to allow entry of fully vaccinated travellers. Debjit Dutta, Chairman, IATO and ADTOL, West Bengal State Chapters, has urged the West Bengal tourism department to allow fully vaccinated travellers to fly into the state without the requirement of an RTPCR negative report.

GUJARAT CHAPTER

IATO'S Gujarat Chapter met the Honourable Tourism Minister to request of Survival & Revival while helping the travel industry.



Gujarat Tourism conducts FAM for IATO & ADTOI members

RAJASTHAN CHAPTER

Rajasthan chapter organised a virtual meeting for its membership.



MADHYA PRADESH CHAPTER

MP Chapter Chair organised a zoom meeting with IATO members and discussed various issues and concerns.



KARNATAKA CHAPTER

Fam Tours organised for Bloggers, Travel Writers and IATO Karnataka Chapter members by India Tourism, Bangalore, Ministry of Tourism, Govt. of India in association with Karnataka Tourism, Karnataka Tourism Society and IATO Karnataka Chapter.



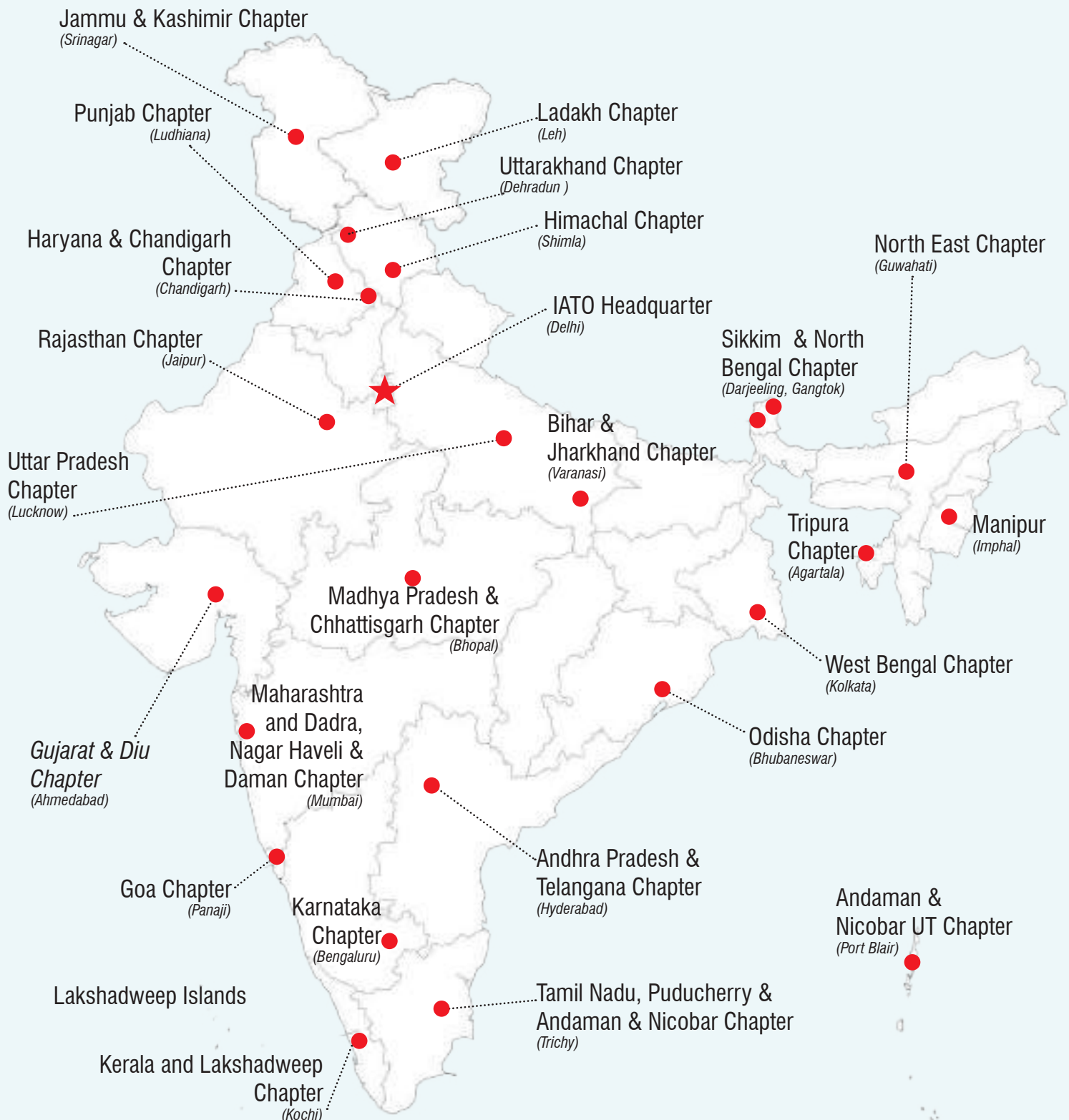
36th IATO ANNUAL CONVENTION at THE LEEA GANDHINAGAR, GUJARAT

BLOCK THESE DATES
16 to 19 December 2021



INDIAN ASSOCIATION OF TOUR OPERATORS

Offices and chapters across the country



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