

# IATO

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

## SPEAKS

**GOVERNMENT PLANS TO  
ALLOT SIGNIFICANT FUNDS  
FOR GLOBAL PROMOTION**

**INDIA POISED  
FOR RE-ENERGISED ERA  
IN INBOUND TOURISM**







**37<sup>th</sup> IATO ANNUAL CONVENTION**  
at  
Bengaluru, Karnataka

**September, 2022**  
Final dates yet to be announced



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# President's Message



*Dear Friends*

Greeting from a very hot city of Delhi where the mercury has already crossed 45°C.

Hope you all are taking special care to beat this heat - do keep cool and safe.

We have been in constant touch with the Government to launch its new and much-needed global consumer campaign to bring foreign tourists to the Indian shores. At the same time, to rekindle relationships with B2B partners, we need to conduct a lot of roadshows in various countries in a bid to reignite the passion to sell India with gusto. The holiday season in most parts of the world is about to start and, this will lay the foundation for future travel to distant lands such as India. The next few months will be important to participate in global travel shows and prepare agents to successfully promote our itineraries in their region.

With this, we need to imbibe the new normal standards of hygiene and safety. This is the time that we all need to secure and strictly follow the new developed hygiene standards, which will help increase the confidence levels of the tourists.

I would like to take this opportunity to ask you all to come up with new ideas and suggestions on what you would like your association to do for you. Apart from this, we are taking forward international sales and marketing and aim to help the industry grow— it is time that we all, collectively, increase the size of the cake, rather than slicing it thinner.

Lastly, our annual convention will take place in Bengaluru in September 2022. Prepare for some new leanings that will benefit us all to market India and lure a large number of tourists to India.

Please mark your calendars and be there.

*Your President*  




## MARCH

❖ IATO submitted a White Paper to **Arvind Singh, Secretary of Tourism**, on measures to rejuvenate tourism industry. The association requested Singh that the recommendations made in the White Paper may kindly be considered favourably and taken up in earnest with the concerned ministries.

❖ The IATO wrote to **Santosh Kumar Sarangi, Directorate General of Foreign Trade**, requesting that tour operators open a window to sell duty scrips. The association has asked for assistance in this matter so that required directions can be given to the relevant authorities to open the window for the sale of duty scrips, and the tour operators can then sell them at true market pricing as in the 2015-18 period.

❖ The restoration of the Tourist/e-Tourist Visa for foreign tourists was announced to all IATO members. The IATO pursued the government actively in order to restore Tourist/e-Tourist Visas for foreign tourists, including five and 10-year visas, directly from the Ministry of Home Affairs and through the Ministry of Tourism. The Ministry of Home Affairs has issued directives restoring all types of Tourist/e-Tourist Visas with immediate effect. A copy of the Ministry of Home Affairs order dated March 15 2022 was attached, and a link to the Bureau of Immigration, MHA website was also provided. IATO wrote to the government, requesting permission to enter Nepal and Bhutan via land borders. This apart, it also wrote that e-Tourist Visa for countries such as UK, Canada and other countries to be revived.

❖ IATO brought the issue of exorbitant increase in fee for wildlife safari permits for national parks and tiger reserves in Madhya Pradesh to the notice of **Shivraj Singh Chouhan**,

**Hon'ble Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh**. IATO requested the Hon'ble Chief Minister to issue directives to the concerned authorities to withdraw this proposed increase of fee for wildlife safari permits for national parks and tiger reserves when the tourism industry in India was suffering.

❖ IATO wrote to **Rupinder Brar, Additional Director General (Tourism)** seeking clarity on the MoHFW guidelines on International Arrivals. The order was issued on 10 February 2022.

❖ IATO expressed gratitude to **Arvind Singh, Secretary of Tourism**, for restoring the Tourist/e-Tourist Visas to foreign visitors. IATO proposed that it be added to the agenda in order to boost foreign tourist arrivals. It also said the validity of free Tourist Visa be extended till 31 March 2024 without capping of five lakh free Tourist Visa to boost inbound tourism in India. IATO said foreign tourists must be allowed into India through Nepal and Bhutan for revival of Buddhist Tourism.

❖ IATO wrote to **Arvind Singh, Secretary of Tourism**, to remove the cascading effect of GST on Tour Operators' services. IATO apprised the Secretary, Tourism that it had a pre-budget meeting with **G. D. Lohani, Joint Secretary (TRU), Ministry of Finance** on 3 December 2021 wherein IATO had raised the issue of cascading effect of GST on tour operators' services and other issues, including Tax Collection at Source (TCS).

❖ From 1 April 2022, all members were told that e-invoicing will be applicable for GST registered taxpayers with aggregate revenue of more than ₹20 crore.

❖ Following the IATO circular of 16 March 2022, all members were notified of the restoration of Tourist/e-Tourist

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Visa for foreign tourists as well as the start of scheduled commercial international flights. A copy of the letter received from the Ministry of Tourism dated March 22 2022 is also attached.

❖ From 26 March to 31 March 2022, the IATO had successfully organised the largest and completely hosted FAM tour in 47 single rooms with Gujarat Tourism for 47 its members. The IATO members investigated Gujarat's Buddhist sector.



**Bhupendrabhai Patel, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Gujarat** welcomed the members of the panel and was presented with the IATO manual by **Rajnish Kaistha, Hon. Secretary, IATO**.



❖ All members were advised of the following message from the Ministry of Tourism to be shared with foreign tour operators/clients on social media in order to build confidence and help India revitalise tourism:-

❖ **Santosh Kumar Sarangi, Director General**, and **Anil Agarwal, Additional DG, DGFT**, were commended by the

IATO for their patience throughout the hearing on the tour operators' request to provide a window for the sale of duty scrips.

## APRIL

❖ The Revision of Special Baggage Rates for international travellers booked by IATO members on IndiGo was communicated to all members.

❖ The withdrawal of the fee on the sale of abroad trip packages for foreign tourists was communicated to all members. For the past two years, IATO has been lobbying with the government to remove the TCS fee on abroad trip packages sold by its members/tour operators in India. At all fora, the association had been represented. When IATO met **Nirmala Sitharaman, Hon'ble Finance Minister** in her office on 16 July 2021 to discuss TCS and GST-related issues, which were taken up individually with her. The Hon'ble Finance Minister acknowledged the IATO's complaints and promised to investigate the matter thoroughly.

❖ **K.C. Varshney, Joint Secretary, Tax Policy and Legislation (TPL-I), Central Board of Direct Taxes**, was praised by IATO for agreeing to its request to remove TCS from the sale of abroad trip packages to foreign tourists had granted partial relief to the domestic tour operators by exempting collection of TCS only in the case of individual buyers who were not residents in India.

❖ **Pramod Kumar, Director (TRU-II), Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs**, was briefed on the Tourism Tax in Thailand, Malaysia, and Singapore by the IATO. From September 1 2017, foreign tourists staying in paid accommodation in Malaysia must pay a Tourism Tax of MYR10 per room per night. The IATO thinks that the information provided above will assist in removing the GST cascading effect on tour operator services.



❖ **Sunil H. Talati, Chairman, Service Export Promotion Council**, was requested by the IATO to waive off the SEPC Membership Renewal Fee for the financial year 2022-23. Offices of inbound tour operators were closed since 25 March 2020 and since then, there is zero business, zero billing and zero cash flow. Under the present circumstances, IATO members are in dilemma whether to renew SEPC membership or not.

❖ Fake websites for India e-Visa/normal Visa

IATO apprised **Sumant Singh, Joint Secretary (Foreigners), Ministry of Home** that it had come across a fake website for applying for India e-Visa/normal Visa, and as the site ended with "gov.in, it gave the feeling that this was a Government of India official website for applying for Visa.

Even the National Emblem of India was being used on the websites home page [www.indianvisasgov.in](http://www.indianvisasgov.in). These websites/links could easily cheat foreign nationals applying for Indian Visa.

❖ ITC Hotels Promo Code Special Rates for IATO members were communicated to all members (tour operators and travel agents).

❖ **G. Kamala Vardhana Rao, Director General of Tourism**, provided information on infrastructure to the hospitality industry, as per IATO. The association has been appealing to the government for a long time now that the tourism industry be awarded industrial status, some states have already done so, including Kerala, Maharashtra, and Rajasthan. The Ministry of Finance has accorded the convention and exhibition industry infrastructure status.

❖ IATO informed **Jyotiraditya Scindia Hon'ble Minister of Civil Aviation** about MIAL's exorbitant hike in commercial airport entry passes for the tour operators.

❖ Tripura Tourism officials greeted IATO Vice President at the Agartala Airport.



❖ For the past 27 years i. e. since 1995, IATO members who were recognized by the Ministry of Tourism were being issued Commercial Airport Entry Passes on payment, who were permitted to go inside the arrival hall to receive the foreign tourists at the airport and till the departure hall immigrations counters to facilitate foreign tourists to check in, especially senior citizens and those who cannot speak English language.

❖ During a session on tourism at the Bengal Global Business Summit in Kolkata, **Rajiv Mehra, President, IATO** discussed his vision. Department of Tourism, Government of West Bengal signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Federation of Associations' in Indian Tourism & Hospitality (FAITH) during the summit in Kolkata to initiate a strong industry partnership for the sustainable development of tourism in the state.

❖ The MoU signed with FAITH was exchanged by **Rajiv Mehra, President**,

## Inside IATO

IATO and Nandini Chakravorty, Principal Secretary, West Bengal Tourism in the presence of the Mamata Banerjee, Hon'ble Chief Minister of West Bengal.



❖ The Incredible India Reconnect 2022 (Virtual Road Show) was announced to all Active Members on 26 April 2022 at 12.00 hours.

❖ IATO gave its feedback and suggestions pertaining to issues being faced by the tourists at prominent tourist sites. In a response to the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, email IATO submitted a lengthy note to the Ministry concentrating on

the challenges tourists confront at popular tourist destinations, including the Ajanta and Ellora rock-cut cave temples, Fatehpur Sikri, Taj Mahal, and Hampi.

❖ IATO has written to **Narendra Modi, Hon'ble Prime Minister of India**, requesting assistance in reviving inbound tourism to India. IATO apprised the Hon'ble Prime Minister that inbound tourism industry of India was the worst affected due to Covid-19.

❖ The IATO annual subscription for the financial year 2022-23 was sent to all members for renewal of membership. Since the IATO members were still waiting for the inbound tourism to revive in the present scenario, the IATO Executive Committee decided in its meeting held on 25 April 2022 to extend relief to the members by charging a nominal amount towards the annual subscription for the financial year 2022-23. It may be noted IATO had waived off the annual subscription in 2021-22 to all those members who paid their annual subscription for the financial year 2020-21 and their membership was renewed automatically in the financial year 2021-22. The above relief for the annual subscription in 2022-23 would be applicable to all those who paid their annual subscription for the financial year 2020-21 and renewed their membership. However, annual subscription for the new members in the financial year 2022-23 and the annual subscription as mentioned above along with applicable joining fee will be payable.

❖ IATO urged **Ashok Gehlot, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Rajasthan** to remove the demand for an RTPCR negative report for foreign visitors entering Rajasthan. IATO apprised the confusion being created due to travel guidelines/advisories issued by the Rajasthan Government thereby making it mandatory for all foreign tourists to have RTPCR negative reports shown at the airport/railway stations.



❖ All members in Tamil Nadu were notified of **D. Gopinathan's** appointment as the **Co-Chairman, IATO Tamil Nadu Chapter**.

❖ The appointment of **SS Rana as the Chairman, IATO Uttarakhand Chapter**, was announced to all members in Uttarakhand.

## MAY

❖ All IATO members were notified of a special fee for participating in the India International Travel Mart 2022.

❖ At the IATO Booth, all Active Members were informed about IATO members' involvement in SATTE from 18 to 20 May 2022.

❖ IATO was overwhelmed with the address of the **Narendra Modi, Hon'ble Prime Minister of India**, delivered in Copenhagen, Denmark on 3 May 2022 for promotion of inbound tourism. The Indian Association of Tour Operators' and Visitors to India has written to the Hon'ble Prime Minister requesting that funds be released for promotion and marketing activities. This, as IATO understood, was because of paucity of funds with the Ministry of Tourism.

❖ On Thursday, 5 May 2022 at 6 p.m., all Active Members were notified of the joining link for Incredible India Reconnect 2022 (Virtual Road Show) - Germany (IST).

❖ The IATO Interactive Luncheon Meeting will be held on Monday, 23 May 2022 at 11.30 am at Hotel Le Meridien, Janpath, New Delhi.

❖ The office of the Hon'ble Prime Minister of India issued directives to **G Kishan Reddy, Hon'ble Minister for Tourism, Culture and Development of the North Eastern Region of India**, to meet **Rajiv Mehra, President, IATO**, and discuss the issues raised in order to assist India's inbound sector and take appropriate

measures, as stated in the IATO's request letter to the Hon'ble Prime Minister dated 4 May 2022.

❖ The office of the Honourable Prime Minister of India apprised G. Kishan Reddy, Honourable Minister of Tourism, Culture and Development of the North Eastern.

❖ IATO wrote to **Charles Sequeira, Head, Commercial Business, Jaipur International Airport** regarding Issuance of Commercial Airport Entry Passes to the tour operators' at the Jaipur International Airport. Tour operators were eligible to get minimum two and maximum eight airport passes based on their turnover. Since 1995 it has been a nationwide practice to meet and greet the foreign tourists in the arrival hall and departure hall at airports throughout the country on payment of a particular sum.

❖ IATO wrote to **Pragya Sahay Saksena, Member (Legislation & Systems), Central Board of Direct Taxes** requesting clarity on the withdrawal of the Tax Collection at Source duty on the sale of Overseas Tour Packages for international tourists. IATO also pointed out to the issues made during its meeting with her last month at her office, during which it sought clarifications on Tax Collection at Source and requested that she correct the errors in Notification Number 20/2022 dated 30 March 2022, as mentioned in IATO's letter of 5 April 2022.

IATO, hoping this had been resolved; if so, a copy of the notification/order may be sent to me. However, if this was still pending or had not been resolved and a meeting was required, IATO would be willing to explain the challenges its members were experiencing as a result of the notification anomalies in a one-on-one meeting.

❖ On Tuesday, 17 May 2022 at 1.30 pm, all the Active Members were notified of the REVISED Joining Link for Incredible India Reconnect 2022 (Virtual Road Show) with Singapore.

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**Hello Members!**

# IATO ORGANISES LUNCHEON MEETING AT LE MERIDIEN HOTEL, NEW DELHI

Agenda for the IATO Luncheon Meeting on 23 May 2022 at Le Meridien began with a welcome address by Rajiv Mehra, President, followed by in-house announcements by Rajnish Kaistha, Hony. Secretary, addresses by S.C. Kamra, Advocate and Taxation Consultant, and an Open-House/Question-and-Answer Session. Ravi Gosain, Vice President gave the vote of thanks.





**Hello Members!**





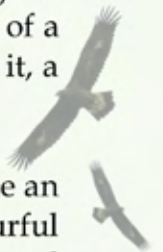
# The Postcard



*"Lohardi - don't change!"*



The gushing sounds of pristine Lumba Dug, drowned the enchanting silence of the lush green, Deodar and Pine covered Uhl river valley. Towards its far higher end, the snowy pinnacles of Dhauladhar mountains stood peeping out through the sky lit gap along the horizon. A pair of Himalayan eagles circled lazily in the cloudless sky. On one side of a dirt road, a thick furred black Bhutia dog lay snoozing in the welcoming sun. Near it, a flutter of Blackvein butterflies zigg-zagged around a wild Marijuana plant.

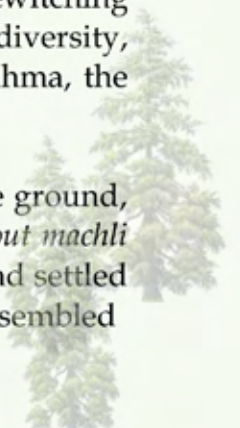


It was late afternoon, few men in their native sultan chola dress, sat huddled outside an old looking wooden house, playing chaupad. Not far from them, a woman in colourful pattoo dress, with a small child tied on her back, stood waiting for the local bus. Behind her, a postman in khakis and a white gandhi topi, stood collecting mail from a mailbox nailed to a moss covered wall. On his right, a pale white poster read; *'Saavdhan, yahan pe kahin koi kachra na phenke, aapne gaon ko sunder aur saaf rakhe - dhanyawad'* (Attention, do not throw any litter anywhere around, keep you village beautiful and clean - thank you).

Pleasing noise of the streaming water, lead us slowly down the path to the river's bank, shafts of balmy sunrays were sweeping across the river, giving it a lustrous hue. A fish leapt out of the water and went in again. Chet Ram quickly pointed towards an eddy formed under a rock and smiled at us; it was a hover of Brown trout moving about in the pool. Across the river, a cluster of wild white Daisies swayed mildly in the breeze, blooming tall over them, a scrub-like Red rhododendrons tree drew a striking contrast. It seemed we had arrived on some chaste piece of Earth which had remained untouched across the millenniums. Signal on our mobile went off, we got isolated from rest of the world.

The virginal waters of Uhl river valley begin from a lake fed by the Thamsar glacier, in higher Dhauladhar range, running all the way from there, down through a bewitching terrain of blissful glory. This less known valley is home to an enamoring bio-diversity, anchored in spellbinding landscapes that appear to have been crafted by Brahma, the creator himself.

82 years old Gujjar Lal, dropped his sack of freshly collected local herbs on the ground, and looked at the river; *"nikal lo aapni fishing rod ka saaman, yahan par aapko trout machli milegee"* (take out your fishing gear, here you will find trout fish). He lit up a Bidi and settled down on a rock. Reaching for our tackle box of assorted Mepps spinners, we assembled





our fishing rods, attached the lures, and began to cast our lines. Another fish leapt out, its silky wet body flashed for a moment in the sunlight and disappeared again.

The old man lit another Bidi. We stood there patiently, repeatedly casting our lines and reeling-in, but nothing happened; the Trout did not seem to be in any mood to oblige us. A Rhododendron dropped off the scrub and rolled down into the river, the Eagles continued floating in the sky. Light cool breeze kept caressing our weather beaten faces; fifteen more minutes passed, we did not stop casting. All of a sudden there was a sharp tug on one of the lines, it went taut, tip of the rod began to flex. An excited voice behind us shouted; *"fish-on sir, fish-on"*, it was Shamu, the charming local host of our homestay.

An hour and a half later, we had bagged enough Trout for a decent dinner, we packed up our gear and called it a day. Shamu began to whistle to himself as we walked back. A herd of sheep emerged ahead of us blocking our way, brushing past their stout wool covered shapes, we wound our way through them. Some minutes later we crossed an old watermill, it was grinding wheat, streaks of water escaping from it fell near our feet. In the distance we spotted Gujjar Lal ascending slowly up the mountainside trail, to his tiny slate roofed village. A bunch of women carrying big loads of wild grass, passed by. Shamu lead us straight to his house, we went up to our tidy rooms and took hot water shower.

It was getting dark, the sun had disappeared from the valley, somebody began to play a flute in some house nearby. Bits of simmering lights started to appear in the valley as its little hamlets got ready for the night. Looking out down the valley from our balcony, we started to wonder, if anyone who ever came here, would ever want to leave this place.

Shamu's young wife came running up the stairs; *"neeche aa jao ji, trout banaye gea"* (please come downstairs, let us cook trout). The aroma of fresh Trout sizzling in spring onions and spice, bursts of her youthful laughter around the fire, images of the fairytale landscapes, and the feeling of a rejuvenated existence took charge of our spirits. That night we slept like never before.

In the crispy chill of the morning we sat on the balcony sipping tea, listening to Shamu's father reflect the past. We learnt that for generations, the area had its very own judicial system, they did not refer to court of law, conflicts and disputes were amicably resolved by a jury of four people which was presided over by their local Devta (deity). Medical contingencies of any kind were met by their own practitioners, whose mastery of herbs and remedies was unquestionable. People used to carry up water, from the river, it kept them fit. In winters they made shoes of goat-skin and wore them in snow. They would encounter Black bears, Ghorals and Leopards, Tragopan and Monal pheasants would be seen often in the forests. Their favourite cooking included certain wild plants, they used only spring water for drinking. *"Sahab pehli baar jaab yahan bijli pahunchi, hum bulb jalta dekh karr darr gaye..."* (Sir first time when electricity reached here, we got frightened after seeing a light bulb...). It was fascinating to hear him.

Continued on next page...



# The Postcard

His pet Rooster 'Lafanga', suddenly appeared right next to him and started thrashing his wings, he needed attention. The man stood up bringing an end to the conversation. It was mid May, we were in a supremely blessed valley, breathing flawless air at 16 deg centigrade, and feasting our souls on the brilliance of nature.

Our bonding with its virgin splendor and the charisma of its inhabitants had just begun. We looked up towards the Dhauladhars, their crests were swathed in fresh sunlight, it seemed like we were living through some fantasy, which had no beginning and no end.

Someone nearby began to play the flute again. This time it was the striking melody of a familiar 1964 Hindi film song; 'aaa chal ke tujhe, mein le ke chaloon... ek aise gagan ke talea... jahan gham bhi naa hoon, aansu bhi naa hoon, baas pyar hee pyar palea' (come allow me to take you... to a place under that sky... where there are no sorrows or tears, where only love and only love thrives). The romance struck fellow seemed to be longing for his beloved.

It was only our second day in the valley. We could sense it, the best had yet to come. In the distance, we could see ceaseless contours of the mountains rolling away, their folds masking many more untold lores and mysteries. It was time to erase the toxic cache of urban chaos from our minds, we were destined to experience the exceptional.



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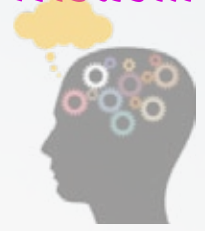
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## Author Note

*These untainted places which are still intact and have retained their character, are the tourism treasures of the future. They hold the profound promise of developing a different kind of branding and appeal in the times to come. We at IATO without losing time, must initiate a serious effort, prompting 'MOT' to provide motivating incentives and fitting guidance to such unspoiled places, before greedy commercial influences and interferences begin to dilute their character and original charms. Localised panchayats and rural stakeholders should be made aware of the larger picture and their defining role in it and how 'tourism' can benefit them across their generations.*







# DISCIPLINE NECESSARY FOR BUDDING ENTREPRENEURS

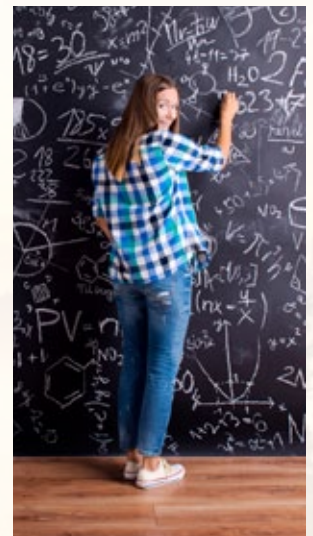
In a sensitive business such as tourism and hospitality, which is sharply based on elements of sound planning, attention to detail, anticipation of situational problems, quick decision-making and necessity of client satisfaction, one cannot afford to leave much to trial, risk or chance.

The role played by our escorts, local guides, or drivers, in whose care we finally put them, is one of the primary strengths of a client's travel after the file has been prepared to its final stages.

The following tour-control tool has been used to teach new staff members in order to ensure that tour operations in the field are error-free. It is especially beneficial to novice entrepreneurs and can aid in the smoother management of a tour. It can help you prevent mistakes, repeated instructions,

time-consuming reminders, and anxiety. Depending on the nature of a specific tour and the logistics associated with it, new checks and columns can be added and/or replaced as needed.

We must endeavour to get our staff teams used to working with self-check tools and disciplines as a matter of sound professional wisdom. Let us remember that it is nearly impossible for us as humans to recall everything; the innumerable details and micro attentions that go into successfully completing a client's trip experience.



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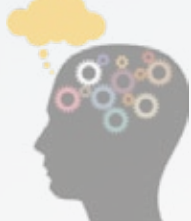
Depending on the nature of a tour and logistics associated with it, new checks and columns can be added and/or replaced as needed

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# Professional Wisdom



”

The tour-control tool has been used to teach new staff members in order to ensure that tour operations in the field are error-free. It is especially beneficial to novice entrepreneurs

”



Pax / Tour Name		Escort Name
Covid Protocall Checks		
Date: Day:	Itny Sectors:	

## 1. EARLY MORNING CHECKS →

YOURSELF	In Room	Tick Here		
Performance of the concerned function		No	Yes	Notes and remarks for you
Wakeup Yourself at Correct Time				Use your alarm or cellphone clock
Bathed Dressed and Ready				Shaving each day is necessary
Self Baggage Fully Packed				Keep needy things papers handy
Day's Funds Separated and Kept				In Denominations of 100s, 500s,
Day's Programme Read and Re-freshed				Read progrom with concentration
Prepared Packed Lunch for Pax (If Required?)				Use fresh local foods and fruits
Self Baggage brought to the Hotel Lobby				Have your name tag on baggage
Plan the Days routing movement				Refer to proper detailed Map

TRANSPORT	At Parking	Tick Here		
Performance of the concerned function		No	Yes	Notes and remarks for you
Driver Wakeup and Dressed Well				Driver shaved and clothes ironed
Vehicle Cleaned and Fully Washed				Interiors cleaned and dusted well
Airconditioning of Vehicle Working				Put on AC and check yourself
Every Window Clean and Transparent				Should be very clean for visibility
Every Window working well				No jammed windows or latches
Driver's Briefing on the Day's Prog Sector				He must check progrom routing
Vehicle fully refuelled during previous night				See yourself the fuel gauge
Breakfast of Driver Taken Care				He must feel he is taken care of
Driver Wearing Company Badge. First Aid Box				Badge wear straight and level
Fresh Flowers Sprinkled on Seats				At least 2 flowers on each seat
Mike system in Vehicle working well				Switch it on and check yourself
Availability of Mineral Water				Ensure there is sufficient





## 2. LATER MORNING CHECKS →

HOTEL	In Hotel	Tick Here		
Performance of the concerned function		No	Yes	Notes and remarks for you
Pax Wakeup Call Reminder to Hotel Desk				Remind tel-operator yourself
Breakfast Menu and Venue Arrangement for Pax				Use nice enjoyable location
Cashier Checkout Bill Prepare and Checking				Tally with your special Rates
Settle Checkout Bill by Voucher and/or Otherwise				Recheck Voucher and sign it
Check General Weather for the Day Tempratures				Look at the Weather App
Collect Hotel Packed Lunch for Pax (If Included?)				Fix up Menu beforehand
Time for General Call or Message to Office				Writeout your point and be brief
Check reporting of Local Guide if involved.				Ensure he is dressed like Indian.



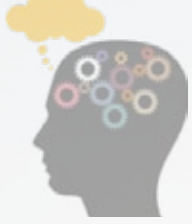
## 3. GENERAL MORNING CHECKS IN HOTEL →

HOTEL	In Hotel	Tick Here		
Performance of the concerned function		No	Yes	Notes and remarks for you
Pax Breakfast Menu and Service Instructions				Tip few waiters and organise it
Pax Baggage from Room brought to the Lobby				Place Baggage near Lobby Door
Local Guide Reporting Time at Hotel Lobby				Note his address and tel contacts
Local Guide Briefing on Day's Progm Content				Give him a brief written note
Driver and Guide planning Day's Routing				Plan minimum time for shopping
Local Experiences Reidentified and Planned				Read for them Details again
Pax Baggage Counted and Loaded in Vehicle				Ensure No damage to Baggage
Tips Given to Hotel Porters for Baggage				Give tips in Company Envelopes
Enquire if any special request from any Pax				Listen carefully, means lot to them

”  
Let us remember that it is difficult for us as humans to recall everything; the innumerable nuances and micro attentions that go into successfully completing a client's trip experience  
”



# Professional Wisdom



## 4. CHECKS BEFORE DEPARTURE FROM HOTEL →

HOTEL	In Hotel	Tick Here		
Performance of the concerned function		No	Yes	Notes and remarks for you
Hand Baggages of each Pax all taken by them				Ask every Pax individually
All Extras by Pax in Hotel Paid directly by Pax				Quickly first check with cashier
Pax Heads counted after sitting inside the Vehicle				Count from back to front rows
Pax General Briefing on Day's Programme				Only give the Pax an outline
Luggage tied and placed securely in Vehicle				Think of sheet cover in case rain
Special Attention to any special request from Pax				Make other Pax be aware of it



## 5. STANDARD CONTROL CHECKS DURING DRIVING →

GENERAL	On Road	Tick Here		
Performance of the concerned function		No	Yes	Notes and remarks for you
Vehicle Driver not using and blowing Horn				Preadjust the horn to low noise
Vehicle Driver driving smooth constant speed				Do not exceed 70-80 kms/hour
Driver not stopping near any visually Dirty Place				Look for neat clean surroundings
Driver never smoking inside the Vehicle				Can smoke outside at stopping
No music played in Vehicle (unless Pax request)				Check kind of cassettes (Indian)
Stop at Neat and Clean Toilet Places (check place)				Toilets must be dry and shining
Pax Baggage tied and kept Securely				Remember to arrange it carefully
Route silently rechecked along various points				Never use gesture of your hands
Pax conversation about cultures along the route				Speak less but give good infos
Think and Visualise about your Next Actions on Arv				Plan beforehand in anticipation
Call Hotel ensure Rooms are ready on Pax Arv				Carry Tel Numbers of the Hotels

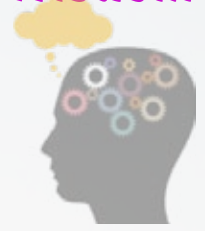
## 6. BEFORE CHECK-IN HOTEL ROOM CHECKS →

HOTEL	Each Room	Tick Here		
Performance of the concerned function		No	Yes	Notes and remarks for you
Good Views from the Room Windows				Views of pool or pleasant objects
All the Room on the same or convenient Floors				Check this before with Manager



Contd. on next page





Rooms clean and in fully correct order			Take the Housekeeping Person
Bed Sheets and Pillow Covers clean and fresh			Smell them for freshness
Bulbs and Lamps all working in the Rooms			Switch on/off each of them
Telephone and Intercom working in the Rooms			Check each of it by yourself
Electric Bells for Help working in the Rooms			Switch on/off each of it
Room Door Locks and Keys working			Use key and see by yourself
Mineral Water and Glasses in Room			Check the seals on bottle
Hotel Generator Working (no sound in rooms)			Go to generator-room and see
No disturbing noises in the Room surroundings			See through windows and check
Bathrooms clean and items well supplied Fresh			Flush should be absolutely clean
Towels and Soaps in Bathrooms			Smell them for freshness
Bathroom Water Flush, Taps, Showers working			Open/Close Taps and see water
No Pests or Rats or Lizards in the Rooms and Walls			Look behind Doors and Almirahs
Room Windows fully working and in correct order			It should shut tightly no airleaks
Introduction with the Lobby and General Manager			Exchange your Office Escort Card
Ensure Pax Check-in Details Passport Numbers			Keep the List handy beforehand.



## 7. NIGHT BEDTIME CHECKS BEFORE SLEEPING →

GENERAL	Tick Here		
Performance of the concerned function	No	Yes	Notes and remarks for you
Fix morning wakeup call for each Room			Tell Reception and also Operator
No disturbing noises near Pax Rooms			Check by walk near Pax Rooms
Vehicle mechanically Checked and Refilled			Ensure through the Driver
Next Day's Programme fully studied and decided			Read progmn with concentration
Day's Office Account Statement Filled and Written			Directly use Statement Format
Next Day Preparations and Activities Visualised			Make rough notes for next day
Fresh local flowers resourced from nearby garden			Only collect fresh flowers/leaves
Driver to find and check next day's road route			Ensure through the Driver





# IATO PRESENTED TOURISM SECRETARY WHITE PAPER TO REVITALIZE TOURISM

IATO submitted a White Paper to Arvind Singh, Secretary of Tourism, on measures to revitalize the tourism industry to give an impetus to sector, which has been affected most during COVID-19.



Arvind Singh  
Secretary of Tourism  
Government of India

IATO requested appropriate and reasonable support from the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India to implement the necessary policy changes that would help boost tourism to India and provide relief to those who have been affected by the pandemic over the past two years.

The association also appealed that its recommendations attached in the White

”  
IATO urged the recommendations in the White Paper be considered and pursued with the relevant ministries  
”

Paper be given serious consideration and pursued with the relevant Union ministries.❖

## DGFT URGED TO MARKET SCRIPS THROUGH EXCURSION OPERATORS

IATO wrote to Santosh Kumar Sarangi, Director General, Directorate General of Foreign Trade urging to open a window for promoting responsibility scrips for excursion operators during 2015-18.



Santosh Kumar Sarangi  
Director General  
Directorate General of Foreign Trade

IATO has requested the central government to open a window on the market of responsibility scrips, issued by the Directorate General of Foreign Trade, for excursion operators to promote them during the 2015-18 period.

It also asked the government to provide a window for the sale of duty scrips and issue directives in this regard.

This becomes important as the contributors have been going

through a liquidity crunch and the agents have been taking undue benefit of this situation and gambling into the nerves of our contributors and guiding them closer to hoarding scrips for profits, IATO stated.

If a window is open, it might assist the excursion operators to get their proper percentage, while promoting their scrips and keeping them away from undesirable hoarding of the scrips with the aid of using the agents. ❖



# 'REDUCE EXORBITANT FEE TO PERMITS FOR NATIONAL PARKS, TIGER RESERVES'

IATO urges **Shivraj Singh Chauhan, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh** to issue directives to officials concerned to rollback the increase in fee for Wildlife Safari Permits in MP

IATO requested Shivraj Singh Chauhan, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh to issue directives to withdraw the massive increase in fee for Wildlife Safari Permits for National Parks and Tiger Reserves in Madhya Pradesh,

”

**The association has appealed to the Hon'ble CM that inbound tourism in India must be revived**

”

even as the tourism sector in India is in the doldrums. Furthermore, the association has urged the state government to remove or reduce or bring it down to the previous fee chargeable on 1 October 2021.

The association has also appealed to the Hon'ble Chief Minister that inbound tourism in India must be revived to pre-pandemic levels. Urging the Hon'ble CM to rethink, the IATO stated that growth in tourism sector would be minimal until the hike in the fees is withdrawn. ❖



Shivraj Singh Chauhan  
Hon'ble Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh

# 'FOREIGN TOURISTS MUST FOLLOW SOPs FOR INTERNATIONAL ARRIVALS'

Clarifications needed by IATO members in order to advise foreign tourists/foreign tour operators about the SOPs issued for international arrivals.

MoHFW and Ministry of Tourism have issued a notification recently stating that SOPs/FAQs have not been issued for the international arrivals.

Those who did not follow the SOPs as laid down in the notification will be penalised. As per the SOPs, two per cent of the overall passengers within the aircraft shall go through random COVID-19 testing at the airport on arrival. But IATO members questioned whether the

passenger pays for the COVID-19 test, or will it be done free of cost.

Soon after arrival, can a DMC/FTO/client pick a particular resort or hotel to spend the quarantine period? Upon testing positive and if they are hospitalised, will the passengers be free to choose a hospital or be isolated in a hospital chosen for them by the authorities. The members also sought to know as to who will pay for the hospitalisation. ❖



G. Kishan Reddy  
Minister of Tourism  
Government of India

# TOURISM MINISTRY: RESTORE TOURIST, E-TOURIST VISA FOR FOREIGN VISITORS

IATO proposed that to increase inbound tourism to India, the validity of free tourist visas should be extended until 31 March 2024.

”  
**In order to increase inbound tourism to India, the validity of free Tourist Visa should be extended until 31 March 2024, without a cap of five lakh free Tourist Visa**  
”

IATO appealed to Arvind Singh, Secretary Tourism, to restore the e-Tourist Visa for international travellers from countries such as the United Kingdom, Canada, and others, as these countries send a large number of visitors to India.

To increase inbound tourism to India, the validity of free Tourist Visa should be extended



until 31 March 2024, without a cap of five lakh free Tourist Visa. Also, foreign tourists must be allowed to enter India through Nepal and Bhutan in order to revive Buddhist tourism. This

is necessary because flights to Bhutan were few. IATO requested that the foregoing issues be brought to the attention of the Ministry of Home Affairs for consideration.❖

## CBIC BRIEFED ON MANDATORY TOURISM TAX

In Malaysia, 10 per cent Service Charge is collected from foreign travellers. It is compulsory and controlled by Ministry of Finance and Royal Malaysian Customs Department.



Foreign travellers staying at paid lodging in Malaysia are difficult to pay a Tourism Tax of MYR10 in line with room in line with night time that has come into effect from 1 September 2017.

The tax is mandatory and controlled by way of means of the Ministry of Finance and the Royal Malaysian Customs Department. In Malaysia Tourism Service Tax. The 10 per cent Service Charge is likewise collected from foreign travellers. This is aside from food & beverage outlets, all different outlets need to display costs which include GST. The overall tax on tourism in Singapore works out to 7 per cent. It hoped that the information provided above was helpful in removing the GST cascading effect on tour operator services.❖



# REMOVE CASCADING EFFECT OF GST: IATO

IATO informed the Secretary of Tourism on 3 December 2021 that it met with **G.D. Lohani, Joint Secretary (TRU), Ministry of Finance**, to discuss the cascading effect of GST on tour operator services, and other issues. On TCS, Lohani told IATO to write to Chairman CBDT, which IATO did.



IATO has urged Arvind Singh, Secretary of Tourism, to remove the cascading effect of Goods & Services Tax (GST) on Tour Operators Services and other issues, including Tax Collection at Source (TCS).

It may be mentioned here that GST is levied at 18 per cent on 10 per cent mark up (deemed value) on the tour operators so that tax on the package deal price works out to 1.8 per cent of gross billing without an ITC.

Removal of GST on offerings supplied outdoor India to overseas tourists: IATO asked that GST/IGST can be completely exempted at the offerings supplied outdoor India i.e. in

neighbouring locations. As an end result of tax exemption, bookings might come to the Indian Tour operators in preference to such bookings getting into the favour of excursion operators primarily based totally in neighbouring international locations. This might upload forex for the country.

Small correction in such situations prescribe towards 5 per cent GST which is notified for excursion operators offerings. IATO apprised the Tourism Secretary that it had a pre-budget meeting with G. D. Lohani, Joint Secretary (TRU), Ministry of Finance on 3 December 2021 wherein IATO raised the issue of cascading effect of GST on tour operators. ❖

”  
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”

# IATO URGES CBIC TO REMOVE TCS FROM SALE OF ABROAD TRIP PACKAGES

Government seems to have given domestic tour operators a partial reprieve by exempting TCS collection only from individual consumers who are not Indian residents.



Since the Indian excursion operator increases bills to the FTO customer, IATO recommended that during such cases, Tax Collection at Source (TCS) need to now no longer be made relevant on billing to the FTO consumers positioned outdoor India.

However, the notification lately issued via way of means of the CBDT talked of person customer alone. IATO therefore, recommended that appropriate notification can be issued or present notification dated 30 March 2022 to be amended to inform that the provisions of phase 206C (1G) of Income Tax Act, 1961 shall now no longer be followed to the sale of distant places excursion programs to non-resident people in addition to overseas excursion operators/ company our bodies positioned outdoor India.

IATO similarly introduced that the TCS notification No. 20/2022 dated 30 March 2022 turned relevant in the case of a person purchaser who turned into now no longer resident in India and who turned into touring India.

The government notification was silent on the FTO / company entity who purchased distant places excursion package deal for journey in their client's / non-resident people. The customer is FTO and now no longer the

person. The person overseas vacationer buys the excursion package deal from the FTO who in flip processes the Indian excursion operator in turn raises bills to the FTO customers and books the outside excursion package deal in Nepal, Bhutan, Maldives etc. for the gain of his personal clients or tourists.

Frequently, an overseas vacationer plans his/her excursion from, say, the United Kingdom to Nepal immediately without touching India and after the crowning glory of his excursion, he returns back to London from Nepal.

Since this situation, the vacationer now no longer visits India neither earlier than nor after the Nepal visit. Strictly speaking, going via India means lack of communication, as per the notification. The advantage of TCS exemption will now no longer be available to the Indian excursion operator and accordingly, there could be no alleviation from amassing TCS as an extra levy on billing to the overseas vacationer.

With this intent, the circumstance of non-resident Indians touring India will become difficult. It has turned into, therefore, advised that the circumstance viz., "who's touring India" withinside the stated notification dated 30 March 2022 can be omitted. ❖

“Since the Indian excursion operator in turn raises bills to the FTO customer, IATO recommends that during such case TCS need to now no longer be made relevant on billing to the FTO consumers located outside India. However, the notification issued via way of means of CBDT talked of customer alone



# WAIVE OFF SEPC MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL FEE

IATO made this request because tourism industry, particularly inbound tourism, was hit the worst by COVID-19 outbreak, with all visas and scheduled international flights cancelled in March 2020.

Offices of inbound tour operators have been closed on account of that since 25 March 2020 that there is zero business, zero billing and nil coin flow. The excursion operators could no longer be



capable of taking any advantage of forex income for the fiscal years 2020-21, 2021-22 and 2022-23 additionally as there is no business. Keeping in view the monetary crisis, IATO waived off

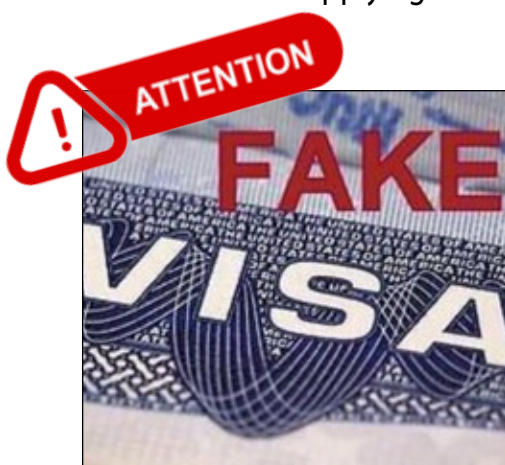
the Annual Subscription for his or her contributors for the financial year 2021-22 and for 2022-23 thinking about to fee of a nominal rate of 10 per cent of the real rate to make certain continuity in their club. Further, the SEIS discontinued with effect from 2021 and new suggestion was submitted with the aid of using SEPC, the DRESS became now no longer authorized for the brand new FTP coverage of Ministry of Commerce.

Additionally, there has been no incentive from the government for Tourism Export Services within the new overseas change coverage finalized for 2022-27. Under the prevailing instances, IATO contributors are in a quandary whether or not to resume SEPC. ❖

”  
The SEIS discontinued with effect from 2021 and new suggestion was submitted with the aid of using SEPC, the DRESS became now no longer authorized for the brand new FTP coverage of Ministry of Commerce  
”

# FAKE WEBSITES DISCOVERED ISSUING VISA

IATO informed **Sumant Singh**, Joint Secretary (Foreigners), Ministry of Home, that it had discovered a fake website for applying for an India e-visa/normal visa on which the word "gov.in" was used.



These websites/links have the potential to deceive foreign nationals seeking an Indian Visa. IATO urged that appropriate action be taken promptly to prevent foreign nationals from applying on these websites and filling out their personal information, which posed a security risk, in addition to defrauding foreign individuals seeking Visa/e-Visa.

Furthermore, the MHA should direct all Indian embassies, high commissions, and consulates to conduct an awareness campaign in their respective countries to promote the government's official websites, <https://indianvisaonline.gov.in/> and <https://indianvisaonline.gov.in/evisa/tvoa.html>, to ensure that no fraudulent activities harm our country's image. ❖

# APPEAL TO GRANT INFRASTRUCTURE STATUS FOR HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY

IATO has been writing to the government for a long time now, requesting hospitality industry be granted industry status. In this regard, the sector will require massive investment of ₹5 lakh billion.



G Kamala Vardhana Rao  
Director General (Tourism)

IATO has urged G Kamala Vardhana Rao, Director General (Tourism) to grant industry status to hospitality sector. The IATO has been appealing to the government for a long time now that the tourism industry be awarded industrial status. Some states have done so, including Kerala, Maharashtra, and Rajasthan.

The Ministry of Finance has accorded the convention and exhibition industry infrastructure status. For infrastructure status to the hospitality sector, it will require a massive investment of ₹5 lakh billion (based on a modest weighted estimate of ₹25 lakh per room). Assuming a debt-to-equity ratio of 1.5:1, this translates to ₹3 lakh crores in term loans and ₹2 lakh crores in shareholder equity. Such capital can only be generated through the private sector, and this necessitates a long-term low-interest rate regime, as hotels are long-term investments with a long breakeven period.

The Ministry of Finance has granted the convention and exhibition industry infrastructure status; the hospitality industry has to be notified. "We must enhance the intensity of high-quality hotel accommodations in India, which is currently low in comparison to global tourism leaders. India must, therefore, develop a high-quality inventory

of categorised rooms in order to increase its part of the global inbound market. India has to target two million classified quality hotel infrastructure to be able to serve to a considerable tourist traffic," the IATO stated.

The tourist sector will profit if the hospitality industry, fiscal, non-fiscal, and banking are given infrastructure status by the Centre and state governments.

Lower bank loans, tax savings, and enhanced foreign and private capital flow are all common benefits of infrastructure classification. The certification permits an industry to borrow money over a longer length of time and, on more favourable conditions, from insurance companies, pension funds, and international lenders. Businesses with infrastructure status can borrow foreign currency at a lower rate via external commercial borrowings. Because the sector is designated as infrastructure, it can acquire loans at lower interest rates and for longer periods of time, with higher limits.

Once an industry is designated as an infrastructure sector, it is eligible for a number of incentives, which, when coupled with the effects of the Goods and Services Tax, will lower total logistics costs and contribute to the "Make in India" goal. It is likely to attract a large amount of

“  
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”



private investment in the sector because the cost of finance will be low and the players will have a variety of funding choices. The new status will make it easier to start firms in different parts of the country, resulting in increased demand and growth, a potential that was previously unthinkable. Another important consequence of this measure would be the development of jobs. Because of the advantages listed above, the sector will attract a large number of investors, both domestic and foreign, resulting in increased employment possibilities in the country. Indeed, the building of the Sagarmala and Bharatmala projects has already resulted in the creation of nearly three crore jobs. The hospitality and tourism industries proposed granting hotels, restaurants, and resorts infrastructure and industry status.

The global context encourages the tourist sector for countries with a large share of incoming tourism. Tourism is Spain's most significant industry, and the government provides all available assistance to this sector, which generates a majority of the country's revenue. The French government has worked hard to provide a stable network infrastructure for all citizens across the country.

For many years, this infrastructure has also given services to summer visitors, vacationers, weekend homeowners, and, in general, all travellers. Aside from infrastructure, the French state and territorial governments have been heavily active in the construction of tourism superstructures.

The Federal Government of Germany organises

the appropriate coverage surroundings for tourism, with 16 Federal States (Länder) developing, shaping and selling tourism coverage. The Federal Länder-Committee on Tourism meets two times a year, fostering the alternate of statistics and coordination of measures regarding or greater of the Länder. The Federal Minister for Economic Affairs and Energy has an obligation for tourism coverage. The BMWi is supported through the Advisory Council on Tourism Issues, which brings collectively the pursuits of government, commerce, academia, change unions and others.

The Länder ministries are chargeable for tourism devise, put in force and fund regulations to sell tourism development. Local tourism workplaces coordinate the paintings of small, nearby enterprises, sell product layouts and adopt applicable advertising and marketing activities.

Thailand's government has a favourable policy. The Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) issued its Market Plan 2017 in July 2016. The Thailand 4.0 strategy intends to turn the country into a value-based economy through innovation, knowledge, technology, and creativity. It is also proposed that hotels be designated as an infrastructure sector, allowing long-term finance to be made available at the lowest interest rates in order to attract private investments, create jobs across India, and expand the availability of high-quality lodging. The loan rates in India are among the highest in the world. The overnight bank rate is around 7.5 per cent. ❖

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# SLASH PRICES OF COMMERCIAL AIRPORT ENTRY PASSES IN MUMBAI, URGES IATO

IATO members recognised by Ministry of Tourism have been issued Commercial Airport Entry Passes on payment for past 27 years, allowing them to go inside the airport's arrival hall to greet foreign tourists. But, from 1 April 2022, MIAL has increased the fee exorbitantly for one-year pass.



**T**he IATO apprised the Ministry of Tourism to reduce the cost of commercial airport entry passes.

It may be recalled the Mumbai International Airport Ltd. (MIAL) has increased the fee for Airport Entry Passes exorbitantly – ₹1,68,785 plus ₹30,382 GST – for a one-year pass, with effect from 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023.

This facility was provided to the Ministry of Tourism recognised tour operators, and members of IATO to ensure that foreign tourists arriving from various countries received personalised services and that they were not cheated/hijacked at the airport by touts or any other third party at the airport. With such a massive increase in fee of Airport Entry Passes for tour operators, India packages would rise, making our tourist packages uncompetitive in comparison to neighbouring countries such as Sri Lanka,

Malaysia, Indonesia, Singapore, and others, which wooed tourists with appealing packages. Airport Passes were a prerequisite for the Ministry of Tourism recognised tour operators to provide safe and personalised services to foreign tourists and receive them at the airport in order to safeguard their safety and to prevent them from being hijacked by Lapkas/cheaters at the airport. It will be exceedingly difficult for them to apply for airport passes if the airport entry fee is high.

In the light of the foregoing, the IATO has urged that the Hon'ble Minister issue a directive instructing tour operators to reduce the Airport Entry Pass fee till inbound tourism to India is revitalized.

For airports in tier - 1 cities, fee for Airport Entry Pass for tour operators shall not exceed ₹72,000 plus GST for a year (₹6,000/ per month) and should be proportionately decreased for airports in tier-2 and 3 cities. The AAI and other agencies such as MIAL, DIAL, GMR, and others should not view this as a revenue-generating activity, but rather as part of delivering services to international tourists visiting India and giving them a sense of belonging of Indian hospitality and confidence of safe travel to India. ♦

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**Airport passes are prerequisite for the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India recognised tour operators to provide safe and personalised services and receive foreign tourists at the airport in order to safeguard their safety from being cheated by lapkas**  
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# PM URGED TO REVIVE INBOUND TOURISM TO PRE-PANDEMIC LEVEL

IATO informed Prime Minister's Office that COVID-19 has impacted India's inbound tourism. Since March 2020, the sector has conducted zero business. As a result, inbound tour operators are experiencing severe financial difficulties.

With the restoration of the Tourist Visa/e-Tourist Visa after a two-year hiatus, inbound operators were doing their best to revive inbound tourism, but the situation was not ideal because the Ministry of Tourism was not conducting any promotional or marketing activities in overseas markets.

Because of this, tour operators had to start from scratch. It was critical to promote and advertise Indian tourism. Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, and Dubai aggressively promoted tourism so as to revitalize the sector in their countries and lure foreign tourists with attractive packages, the IATO said.

Recently, the Ministry of Tourism announced that it would participate in three major tourism events—WTM Africa (11-13 April 2022), Arabian Travel Mart in Dubai (9-12 May 2022), and IMEX in Frankfurt (31 May-2 June 2022)—by taking space and establishing an India Pavilion, where industry stakeholders were also invited to take booths.

Pleased with the ministry's decision, the IATO members had provided a list to the ministry, but we are yet to receive confirmation from the ministry.



In an appeal to Narendra Modi, Hon'ble Prime Minister of India, the IATO requested that prior to 2020, the Ministry of Tourism participated in all major international travel marts and fairs with industry stakeholders. FTOs and members of the IATO will be invited to a physical B2B meeting during the structured roadshows to be conducted by the ministry in coordination with India tourism offices and Indian Embassies/High Commissions/Consulates.

Incredible India events, including evening cultural programmes, cuisine festivals, and handicraft displays, will be held on a regular basis, with foreign tour operators. The ministry will sponsor Familiarisation trips for foreign tour operators, travel writers and bloggers that were previously halted owing to the pandemic. ❖

”  
**In an appeal to Narendra Modi, Hon'ble PM, the IATO requested prior to 2020, the Ministry of Tourism participated in all major international travel marts, fairs with industry stakeholders. FTOs and members of the IATO will be invited to a physical B2B meeting during the structured roadshows to be conducted by the Tourism Ministry**  
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# IATO APPEALS TO CM, GEHLOT TO REMOVE DEMAND FOR RTPCR NEGATIVE REPORT

IATO informed Rajasthan Government of misunderstanding generated by umpteen travel guidelines/advisories requiring that all international tourists need to have an RTPCR negative report and exhibit the same at the airport/railway stations.



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**The association said Rajasthan was asked to follow the guidelines of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India**

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The IATO has appealed to the Rajasthan government not to cause confusion among the international tourists planning to visit Rajasthan by giving travel guidelines. The association said Rajasthan was asked to follow the guidelines of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India, and allow foreign tourists to enter Rajasthan if they were fully vaccinated and



had already uploaded the vaccination certificate on Air Suvidha App or RTPCR Negative Test Report as per MoHFW. The association appealed

to Ashok Gehlot, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Rajasthan that the state government should not ask for the negative RTPCR report again from international travellers but follow the MoHFW guidelines. ❖



# 'ISSUE COMMERCIAL AIRPORT ENTRY PASSES TO TOUR OPERATORS IN JAIPUR'

Rajasthan members informed IATO office that the Head Commercial Business at Jaipur International Airport had refused to grant Commercial Airport Entry Pass to tour operators to enter the airport.

IATO persuaded the authorities that the provision of Commercial Airport Entry Pass was a must for tour operators in order to provide safe and personalised services and receive tourists at the airport, as well as to ensure that they do not become victims of being hijacked by Lapkas/cheaters at the airport. As a result, the Ministry of Civil Aviation has made the provision of issuing Commercial Airport Entry Pass for tour operators, which has been followed for more than two and a half years.

IATO refers to the most recent copy of the Ministry of Tourism letter No. TT/55/2019-TT in this regard. Dated 10 February 2022 with reference to Ministry of Civil Aviation, the letter No.

AY-1102417/2015-AS dated 8 January 2022 states that tour operators were eligible to get a minimum of two and a maximum of eight airport passes based on their turnover, and that this practise was followed since the past 27 years i.e. from 1995 at all airports in India on payment of a fee.

This was a worldwide practice of greeting foreign tourists at the airport's arrival and departure halls and providing them with the best available services so that they return home with joyful memories, resulting in word-of-mouth publicity and aiding in the promotion of tourism to any country. IATO has proposed the AEPs be issued to tour operators based on their eligibility as defined by the Ministry of Civil Aviation. ❖



**Tour operators received a minimum of two and a maximum of eight airport passes based on their turnover. This practice was followed from 1995**

## GIVE CLARIFICATION ON TCS: IATO

IATO wrote to Pragya Sahay Saksena, Member (Legislation & Systems), Central Board of Direct Taxes, requesting clarity on the withdrawal of the TCS duty on the sale of Overseas Tour Packages for international tourists.

IATO pointed out to the issues made during its meeting with Pragya Sahay Saksena, Member (Legislation & Systems), Central Board of Direct Taxes, last month at her office, during which it sought certain clarifications on TCS and requested that she correct

the errors in Notification No. 20/2022 dated 30 March 2022 as mentioned in IATO's letter of 5 April 2022.

If these issues persisted or were not resolved, IATO urged that it would hold a one-on-one meeting to explain the notification anomalies. ❖

**IATO urged CBDT last month during which it sought clarifications on TCS and appealed that the errors be rectified in Notification No. 20/2022**

## MARCH

- ❖ President IATO appeals to the Government of India to reinstate all suspended Visa/e-Visa, the 30 days free Visa to continue till 2024 and Visa charges before March 2020 to be applicable.



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**After two years, India restores tourist visas for all countries**

**HT Correspondent**

**NEW DELHI:** Two years after international travel was suspended due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the Union government has decided to restore all categories of tourist visas for foreign nationals and also issue fresh visas with immediate effect.

The government has already decided to allow regular international flight operations, which were suspended since March 23, 2020 due to the Covid-19 pandemic, from March 27.

An order issued by the ministry of home affairs (MHA) on Tuesday said it has considered the need for further relaxation of visa and travel restrictions keeping in view the improvement in the Covid-19 situation in India.

"Currently valid e-tourist visas issued for five years shall stand restored to nationals of 156 countries with immediate effect," the ministry said. Fresh five-year e-tourist visas to nationals of these 156 countries will also be issued.

The regular paper tourist visa, which has a validity of five years and is issued to nationals of all the countries, has also been restored. Similarly, the long duration (30-year) regular tourist visa to the citizens of the United States and Japan has also been restored and new ones will be issued with immediate effect.

All these visas were suspended in March 2020 when regular international travel was stopped after the outbreak of Covid-19.

In October 2020, India started the process of a graded relaxation in visa and travel restrictions for foreign and Indian nationals, who wanted to come to India for business, conferences, employment, studies and research — but tourist visas remained suspended.

They were opened for the first time in 18 months on November 15 last year, but only for travel in chartered flights.

The latest order will not apply to Afghanistan and will continue to be issued separately through an emergency X-Misc visa.

Rajiv Mehra, president, Indian Association of Tour Operators welcomed the decision. "This is a big relief for the entire travel and tourism fraternity and we hope that it will create confidence among foreign tourists that India is now safe to travel and they can visit India without any hassles."

A senior official from the civil aviation ministry said the move would "boost the travel and aviation sector at large."

**Tourist visas were suspended in March 2020.**

**Prashant...**

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## \* IATO Reaction Coverage on Restoration of Tourist/ E-Tourist Visa

**Tuesday, 17 May 2022**

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**India restores e-tourist visas for foreign travellers**

March 16, 2022, 8:05 pm

New Delhi, March 16 (UNI) Close on the heels of announcing to resume regular international flights, the government has restored 5-year e-tourist visa and regular tourist visa services to resume nationals. "Indian e-visa service has been restored for nationals of 156 eligible countries. All currently valid e-visas with respect to 156 countries stands restored," said the official visa portal. The move is set to give major boost to tourism sector which has been among the worst-hit by the pandemic. "Finally the wait is over for your much-awaited trip to India! Switch to your travel mode once again, as e-Tourist Visa Regular Tourist Visa services to India have been restored for international travellers," Ministry of Tourism announced on Twitter. The tourism sector hailed the government move and hoped it will create confidence among foreigners that India is safe to travel. "This decision is a big relief for the entire travel and tourism fraternity and we hope that it will create confidence amongst the foreign tourist that India is now safe to travel and they can visit India without any hassles. We also had restoration of all types of visas which includes 5 years visas for all eligible countries and 10 years long visas for USA and Japan," said Rajiv Mehra, President, Indian Association of Tour Operators (IATO). Mehra also urged the government to extend the validity of free Tourist Visa till 31st March 2024 without capping of 5 lakh free tourist visas and also allow entry of foreign tourists through land borders of Nepal and Bhutan for the revival of Buddhist Tourism. "This is also required as there are very limited flights to Bhutan," IATO President pointed out. The travel industry veteran said that while IATO wholly welcomes the announcement made by the government, it also urges the government to restore E-Tourist Visa from the countries such as the UK, and Canada as a high number of tourists visit India from these countries. Due to the raging Coronavirus infections across countries, the government had in 2020 suspended all visas granted to foreigners. After considering the evolving situation, foreigners were later on allowed to avail any kind of Indian visa other than Tourist Visa for entry and stay in India. Following consultations with stakeholders, Home Ministry decided to begin granting of fresh Tourist Visas for foreigners coming to India through chartered flights with effect from October 15, 2021. UNI NK GNK

09:33 AM 98% 90%

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**TWO**  
Travel World Online  
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**Gangotri National Park and Gargang Gali skywalk open for tourists**

The famous Gangotri National Park (GNP) and the historic Gargang Gali skywalk have opened to the public after a four-month winter break. GNP is famed for its scenic beauty, flora, fauna, trekking and mountaineering trails. The park was founded in 1989 and is reportedly the third largest national park in the country. Covering a total area of 2,799 sq. km, the park is situated near to the Indo-China border, with snow-capped Himalayan peaks in the backdrop. The major highlight of the park is the 1.5-km-long historic Gargang Gali skywalk, which used to be a trade route between India and Tibet. This 150-year-old wooden bridge was opened last year in August after restoration.

**IATO thanks govt for withdrawing TCS on overseas tour packages for foreigners**

IATO has expressed its gratitude to the Centre for withdrawing the Tax Collection at Source (TCS) on sale of overseas tour packages for foreign tourists who book tour through operators located in India. Rajiv Mehra, President, Indian Association of Tour Operators (IATO), said: "This decision is a big relief for the entire travel and tourism fraternity as it was not logical to deduct tax at source from Foreign Tour Operators (FTOs) as they are not residents of India. They neither possess any Indian PAN card nor they pay any income tax and hence are not liable under the Indian Income Tax law."

**Accor names Aniruddh Kr as Vice President**

Accor has announced the appointments of Aniruddh Kumar as Vice President - South Eastern, India & South Asia. Kumar brings over 23 years of diverse experience and will spearhead Accor's expansion strategy in the region in order to be competitive in current brand landscape, as well as focus on expanding current and new brands. Kumar, Chairman, Sanku VGP Operations, India and South Asia, said: "With extensive experience across major hospitality brands and a deep understanding of various markets, Aniruddh will contribute tremendously to bolstering Accor's position in the region. We are confident he will uphold the Accor legacy and commitment to its guests and members for the best of experience and lead the group to new heights."

**Himachal's Bir to host two-day music festival.**

Bir in Himachal will be hosting Musicians, a music festival that will run from April 15 to 16 in the region. The festival was started in 2019 to offer a perfect platform to new and emerging artists to showcase their talent. It is a non-profit festival focusing on promoting local and independent musicians. The past years of the festival names such as Birgit, a social media sensation, Rishabh Hensley A.K.A. Jash Sharma, hailing from the Bir Valley of Himachal Pradesh, and several other bands will be performing at the festival.

**Pride Group launches Pride Biznetel Alkapuri in Vadodra**

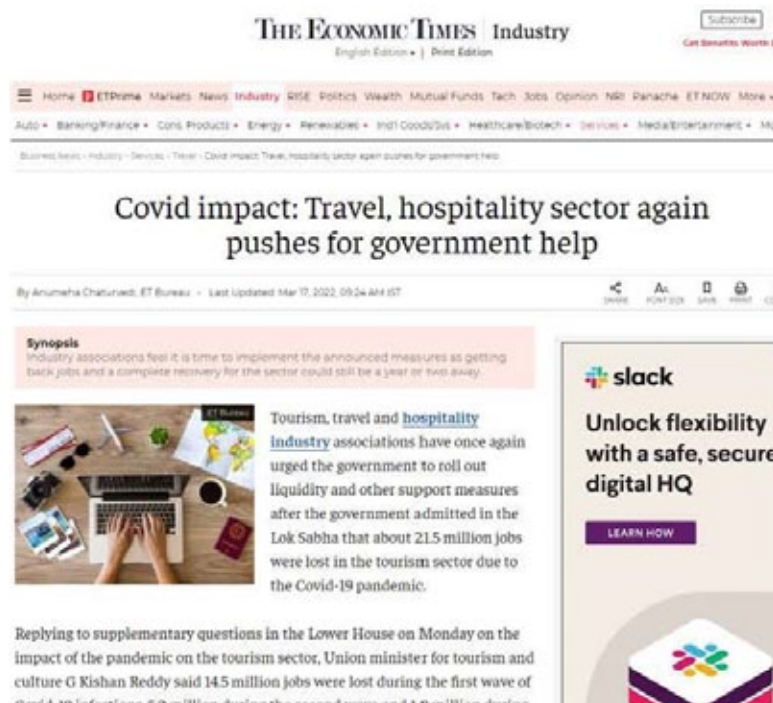
Pride Group of Hotels has launched Pride Biznetel Alkapuri in Vadodra, a 48-key boutique property offering scenic amenities. In close proximity to Vadodra Railway Station and 5 km from the Him Airport, Pride Biznetel Alkapuri is well-connected to places of interest like Laxmi Vihar Palace, Sayaji Bagh Garden, In-Vision Mall and Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel Museum.

**IATE organised Business meet at Hotel Classic Diplomat, Delhi**

Indian Association of Travel & Tourism Experts, comprising of 2500 travel experts working in different vehicles of travel & tourism sector, organised B2B physical meet. On the occasion, overseas companies marketed their product & services to approx 150 buyers, who participated in the event. Everyone was eager to meet and hear of the opinion that this kind of meet should take place more often.

E-post: asharna@indiaah.in Ph: 9818079063.

❖ Covid impact travel hospitality sector again pushes for government help



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Business News • Industry • Services • Travel • Covid Impact: Travel, hospitality sector again pushes for government help

## Covid impact: Travel, hospitality sector again pushes for government help

By Anumeha Chaturvedi, ET Bureau • Last Updated Mar 17, 2022, 09:24 AM IST

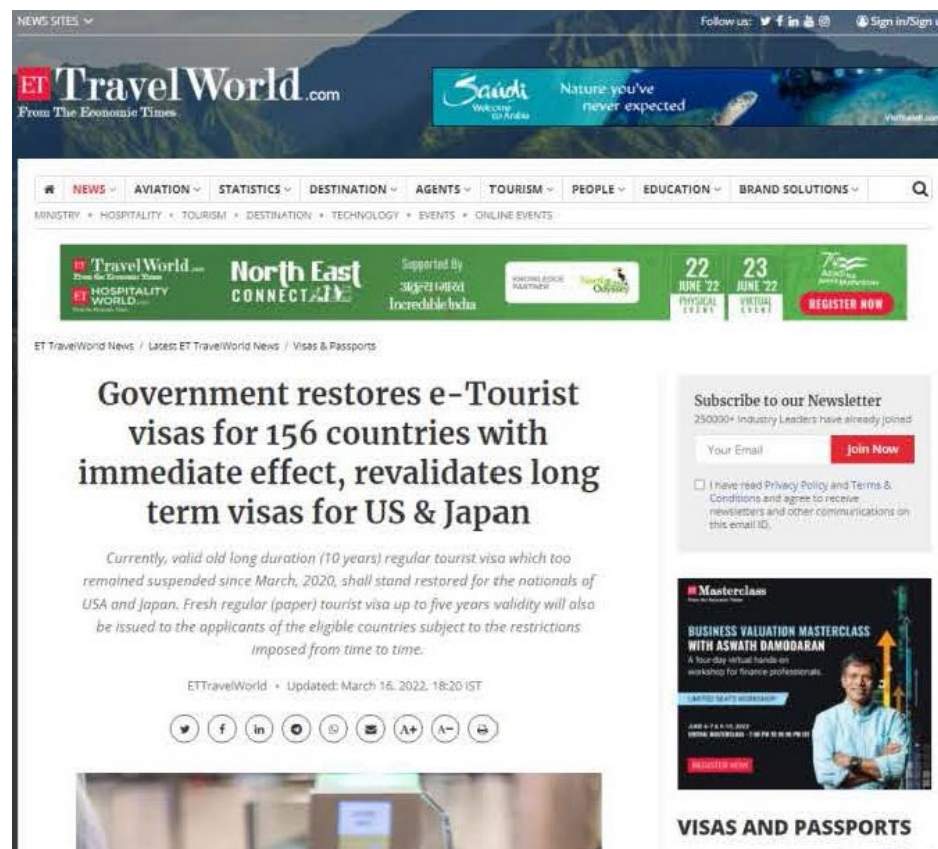
**Synopsis**  
Industry associations feel it is time to implement the announced measures as getting back jobs and a complete recovery for the sector could still be a year or two away.

Tourism, travel and **hospitality** industry associations have once again urged the government to roll out liquidity and other support measures after the government admitted in the Lok Sabha that about 21.5 million jobs were lost in the tourism sector due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Replying to supplementary questions in the Lower House on Monday on the impact of the pandemic on the tourism sector, Union minister for tourism and culture G Kishan Reddy said 14.5 million jobs were lost during the first wave of Covid-19 infections, 5.7 million during the second wave and 1.3 million during

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❖ Government restores e-Tourist Visa for 156 countries with immediate effect, revalidates long term Visa for US and Japan



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## Government restores e-Tourist visas for 156 countries with immediate effect, revalidates long term visas for US & Japan

Currently, valid old long duration (10 years) regular tourist visa which too remained suspended since March, 2020, shall stand restored for the nationals of USA and Japan. Fresh regular (paper) tourist visa up to five years validity will also be issued to the applicants of the eligible countries subject to the restrictions imposed from time to time.

ETTravelWorld • Updated: March 16, 2022, 18:20 IST

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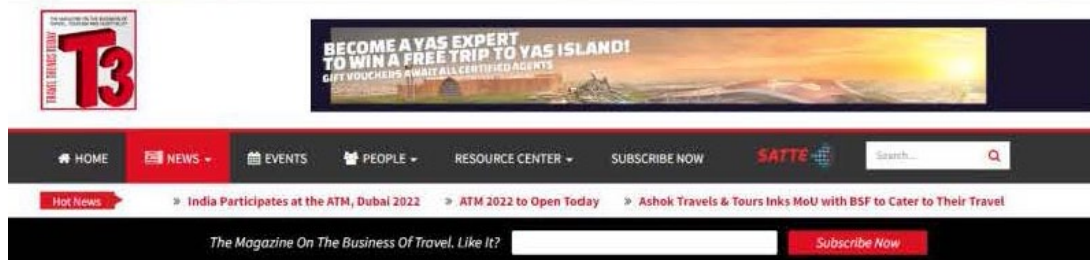
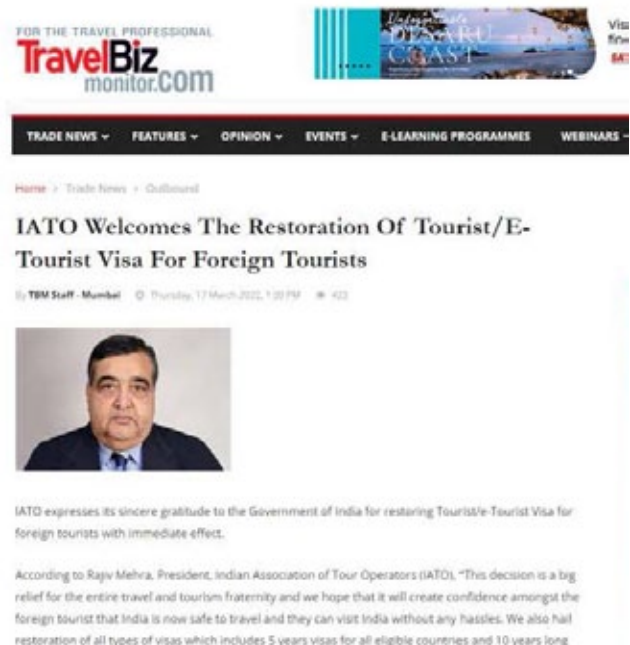
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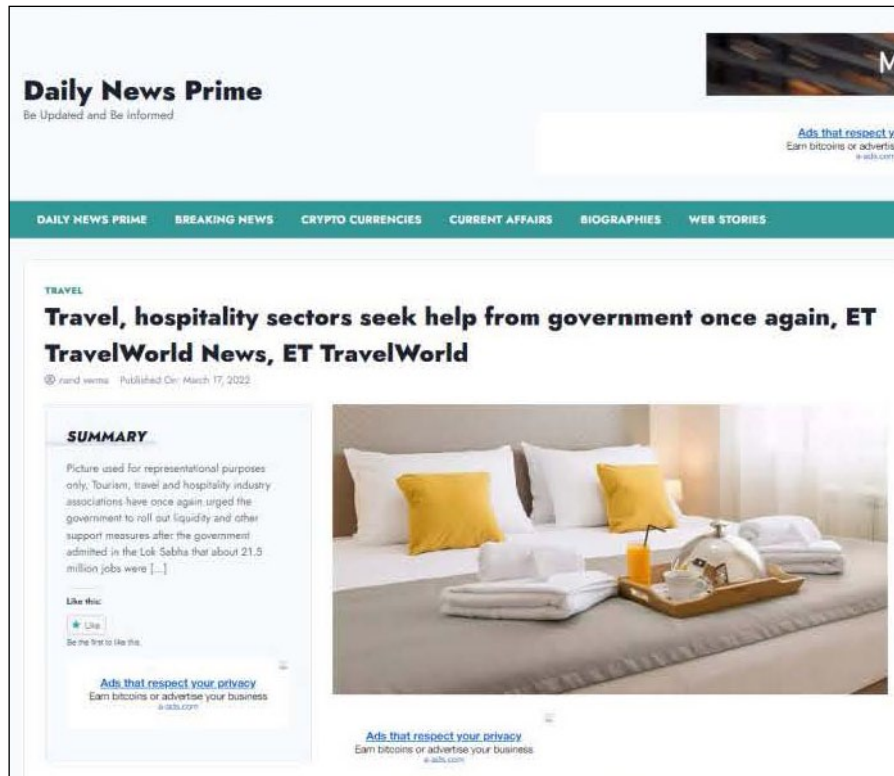
**VISAS AND PASSPORTS**



❖ IATO welcomes restoration of tourists and E tourist visa for foreign tourists.



- ❖ Travel hospitality sector seek help from government once again



- ❖ VP IATO speaks about being on a consultative mode with MOT GOI on Digital Mission, IIDMP and other facets.





# Industry hope gets wings

Ministry of Civil Aviation's announcement to resume international commercial flights from March 27 has left stakeholders in tourism and hospitality sector ecstatic, as they expect a rise in business.



Rajiv Mehra  
President, IATO

Even though the decision of restarting scheduled international flights from Ministry of Civil Aviation was on the cards, still it has come as a relief for the entire travel and tourism fraternity. We look forward to the revival of international tourism in the country. Furthermore, to enhance the foreign tourist flow to the country, we urge the government to restore all visas that were issued earlier, but were suspended due to COVID-19. This apart, we appeal to the government to resume multiple entry visa and e-Visa for the countries. We also request the government to extend the validity of free tourist visa till March 31, 2024, without capping of five lakh free tourist visas.



Ministry of Tourism

## Travel industry stakeholders welcome Government of India decision to reopen commercial international passengers services from today

Posted On: 27 MAR 2022 7:16PM by PIB Delhi

The decision of the Government of India to reopen scheduled commercial international passengers services to / from India from 27.3.2022, after a gap of two years, has been hailed and warmly by all the travel industry stakeholders of the country. The Directorate General of Civil Aviation had suspended operations of international commercial services with effect from 23rd March 2020, with a view to prevent the spread of the Covid 19 pandemic.

Earlier, the Government of India had started granting of fresh Tourist visas to foreigners arriving on charter flights with effect from 15th October 2021.

Hailing the resumption of normal international passenger services, Shri Rajeev Mehra, President of Indian Association of Tour Operators said that this would definitely increase tourist traffic to India and from September 2022 onwards, which is the start of the next inbound tourism season, a substantial amount of the affected business is expected to be back.

Tourism sector has been one of the most adversely affected sectors by the Covid 19 pandemic, impacting livelihoods of stakeholders related to the tourism industry. The Ministry of Tourism has extended financial support in the form of credit under the Credit Guarantee Scheme at concessional rates, to tour operators, travel agents and Regional level tourist guides, approved by the Ministry of Tourism.

\*\*\*\*\*

NB/OA

(Release ID: 1810276) Visitor Counter : 507

Read this release in: Urdu , Hindi , Tamil



◆ President on CNBC LIVE at 5pm



## Dedicated push must for Telangana

From a dismal budget to the need for proper tourism promotion drive in Telangana at the highest level, K Ranga Reddy, Chairman IATO Andhra Pradesh and Telangana Chapter, highlights what needs to be done in the youngest state of India to attract tourists.

Nisha Verma

**K**Ranga Reddy, Chairman IATO Andhra Pradesh and Telangana Chapter, claimed that despite having three tourism ministers, the importance of tourism was not highlighted much at the time of budget. "Looking at the budget presentation, I feel that co-ordination among the three tourism ministers was not done well enough or not given a room for much discussion," he said.



**K Ranga Reddy**  
Chairman, IATO Andhra Pradesh and Telangana Chapter

showcasing our products and not through emails," he added.

### Need to review

Claiming that in foreign countries, the guides, transport and tour operators follow the rules for safety and comfort of tourists. "There needs to be an agreement between overseas tour operators with those in India, so that the facilities are maintained at par with

However, he claimed that the provision of getting overseas tour operators to India was there before the budget, but it is being changed. "The government has amended the rules and regulations to avail the MDA scheme, wherein when the tour operator

needs to earn ₹2 crores of foreign exchange to avail the scheme. However, when we have zero foreign tourists visiting India, how do we get this foreign exchange?" questions Reddy.

He added, "They have also amended that the MDA scheme is only meant for the government approved tour operators. They are offering a loan of ₹10 lakh to those who have minimum ₹15 to ₹25 lakh yearly turnover. In the last two and a half years, there has not been any business. From where we can show this ₹25 lakh of business in our books? Hence, we are totally disappointed."

### The dichotomy

Reddy claimed that the government has permitted five lakh free tourist visas on a first come first

not make any difference to him. Hence, we have demanded to not only give free visa for five lakh

Looking at the budget presentation, I feel that coordination among three tourism ministers was not done well enough

people, but to also allow them to not pay entrance fee to visit any place of interest or a monument. However, it has not been considered yet," he stressed.

Another thing that the government shall look into is the training

showcase tourism products with the tour operators in Berlin, London, Geneva, Switzerland Tokyo and Madrid. This cannot be done by someone from the embassy overseas, because we are interacting with the tourism officials in India," suggested Reddy.

### What's in a scheme?

Commenting on the PRASHAD scheme, he said, "If the government is developing a destination under PRASHAD scheme, it has to be highlighted to international media. In a remote corner of the country, if they are spending some crores in development and even the neighbour does not know about the facilities there, it is not going to help," he added.

### Multiple factors

He said the MOT should think that

France and Switzerland, used to travel for culture tours. But their next generation have different concepts and preferences, and hence we should consider the requirement of youth. Hence, the government can give a gap of one year for the PRASHAD scheme, and turn it into a marketing scheme," he suggested.

### Telangana for tourism

Saying that a few years back, Hyderabad was used as a transit destination where people would come in the morning, look around and then go in the evening. However, commenting on Telangana State Tourism Policy, he said, "Unfortunately, this is the fifth or sixth year when there is no policy formulated by the Telangana government for the sector."



## APRIL

### 'Recovery in international travel has a long way to go'

IATO chief says incoming foreign tourists will touch half of pre-Covid levels in Oct

ABHISHEK LAW

New Delhi, April 1

International airfares are currently "three times" higher than pre-Covid levels but indications point out to a moderation over the next few months as flight operators — both international and Indian — increase frequencies, according to Rajiv Mehra, President of the Indian Association of Tour Operators (IATO), the national body of tour operators. Airlines like Virgin Atlantic, American and home-grown Vistara are already ramping up flights from India.

India opened up scheduled international commercial flight operations, to and from the country, from March 27.

"In the next two to three months, international air-

fares could come down to March 2020 levels. Flight frequencies will increase and so will the number of seats available," Mehra told *BusinessLine*, adding that visa processing for some key countries such as the US or Canada is taking time due to a shortage of staff.

**Pent-up demand**

Booking trends for April suggest that there is pent-up demand and "sufficient queries" have been generated. Indications are that by April-end, international tourist inflow could be at 1-2 per cent of pre-Covid levels.

Corporate bookings (international travellers) have also begun, with key cities of Mumbai, Bengaluru, Delhi and Hyderabad driving initial numbers.



Geo-political tensions, mostly the Russia-Ukraine war, could have some impact on specific holiday destinations.

**RAJIV MEHRA**  
President of the Indian Association of Tour Operators

Mehra added that bookings are now being made on a 45-day window (45 days before travel date) against the 60-90 day window that was the norm in pre-Covid times.

"If there are no unforeseen circumstances, by October this year, international tourists coming into India

should be at 50 per cent of pre-Covid levels. All indications point to good recovery in incoming tourists and international corporate travellers," he said.

Geo-political tensions, mostly the Russia - Ukraine war, could have some impact on specific holiday destinations like Goa, Mehra added.

Indians are also looking to travel abroad as enquiries for holiday destinations in Europe, the US, Bangkok, Maldives and the United Kingdom have started coming in.

**Robust domestic travel**

Domestic travel remains "robust". Bookings continue to be better than pre-Covid levels, with hotel room rates recovering "faster than expected" and at least 25 per cent higher than pre-Covid levels.

"Weekend leisure destinations are running nearly full

capacity and hotels now have the bandwidth to increase room rates. In fact, over a regular day, weekend room tariffs are up by at least 50 per cent. In some premium destinations or in demand spots, it is up even 100 per cent," Mehra said.

**High ATF tax**

The dampener, though, is high air fares. Domestic air fares are almost "twice than what they were earlier" and the increase is "quite visible". However, there could be a 20-25 per cent drop once the summer season cools off and Indian carriers start "full fledged operations with more airlines".

"High ATF tax has an impact on ticket prices too as airlines are passing on the cost to passengers," he said, adding that "the Centre must seriously consider bringing ATF under GST ambit".

### ❖ Big relief for travel and tourism fraternity

**Big relief for travel and tourism fraternity**

IATO expresses gratitude to Government for withdrawing Tax Collection of Source (TCS) on sale of overseas tour packages for foreign tourists

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**IATO Appeals to Prime Minister for help with India Tourism**

By Jurgens Thomas Stenmetz | Travelweek Online | Rebuilding Travel | Trending |

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IATO Appeals to Prime Minister for help with India Tourism

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❖ Incoming-foreign-tourists-could-be-at-50-per-cent-of-pre-covid-levels-by-october-rajiv-mehra-of-the-indian-association-of-tour-operators

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## Companies

### Incoming foreign tourists could be at 50 per cent of pre-Covid levels by October: Rajiv Mehra of the Indian Association of Tour Operators

Abhishek Law | Updated On: Apr 01, 2022

f t in o w e m

Domestic travel remains robust despite high air fares

International airfares are currently "three times" higher than pre-Covid levels but indications point out to a moderation over the next few months as flight operators — both international and Indian — increase frequencies, according to Rajiv Mehra, President of the Indian Association of Tour Operators (IATO), the national body of tour operators. Airlines like Virgin Atlantic, Amercian and home-grown Vistara are already ramping up flights from India.

THE TECH AGENTS

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thehindustantimes.com/india/2022/04/01/incoming-foreign-tourists-could-be-at-50-per-cent-of-pre-covid-levels-by-october-rajiv-mehra-of-the-indian-association-of-tour-operators/

## Incoming foreign tourists could be at 50 per cent of pre-Covid levels by October: Rajiv Mehra of the Indian Association of Tour Operators

April 2, 2022 by [thetechagents](#) [archive](#)

International airfares are currently "three times" higher than pre-Covid levels but indications point out to a moderation over the next few months as flight operators — both international and Indian — increase frequencies, according to Rajiv Mehra, President of the Indian Association of Tour Operators (IATO), the national body of tour operators. Airlines like Virgin Atlantic, Amercian and home-grown Vistara are already ramping up flights from India.

By October, incoming foreign tourists are expected to be at 40-50 per cent of pre-Covid levels. India opened up scheduled international commercial flight operations, to and from the country, from March 27.





❖ IATO thanks the government for removing TCS from the sale of abroad travel packages to foreign tourists





❖ President IATO on DD News



## Sri Lanka crisis hits Indian exporters, tourism sector

India has extended a Line of Credit of \$500 million to Sri Lanka

ANSHAD KHAN

THE timing of the Sri Lanka economic crisis could not have been worse for Indian businesses. The uncertainty due to the geopolitical crisis in eastern Europe is already taking a toll on exporters, travel and tourism industry and all other businesses in general, and now with the Sri Lankan economy floundering in the neighbourhood, things can't get bleaker. The island nation is smaller in size but is of significant interest for India, both strategically and economically. Several Indian companies have a presence in the country. According to Indian High Commission in Sri Lanka, major investments from India are in the areas of petroleum, retail, IT, financial services, real estate, telecommunications, hospitality & tourism, banking and food processing, metal industries, tyre manufacturing, cement, glass manufacturing, infrastructure development (railway, power, water supply) etc.

Companies like Tata, Bharti Airtel, Indian Oil, Mahindra & Mahindra and several Indian banks like SBI and Indian Overseas Bank operate in Sri Lanka. However, exporters and the travel and tourism industry are most affected by the recent crisis, it seems.

### Exports

India is the biggest trading partner of Sri Lanka with around \$6 billion annual trade. India had exported \$5 billion worth of goods and services in 2020-21 with textile, metals & steel, ships and boats, capital goods being the major exports to Sri Lanka. Sri Lanka accounted for 1.3% of India's total exports in 2020-21.

The crisis (in Sri Lanka) has hit most exports to the country barring the essential items like food and pharma goods, says Ajay Sahai, Director General and CEO of Federation of Indian Export Organisations (FIEO). He adds it is a humanitarian crisis and the government of India must support Sri Lanka with financial help to ensure exports of essential items are not disrupted.

The Indian government has extended a Line of Credit (LoC) of \$500 million to Sri Lanka for the purpose of financing purchase of petroleum products from India. Out of the total credit by Exim Bank under the agreement, goods, works and services of the value of at least 75% of the contract price will be supplied by the seller from



### India connection



India, and the remaining 25% of goods and services may be procured by the seller for the purpose of the eligible contract from outside India. Indian imports from Sri Lanka are small adding up to around \$1 billion most of it comprising tea, coffee, spices, animal fodder, edible nuts, among others.

### Travel and tourism

Tourism and hospitality industry is one of the major contributors to Sri Lanka's economy, approximately 12% to its GDP and is the fifth largest source of foreign revenue in the country. India plays a big role in this as the total number of tourist arrivals from India to Sri Lanka during pre-covid year (January-December 2019) was 355,002, or 18.2% of the total tourist arrivals into Sri Lanka. The current economic turmoil in Sri Lanka is unlikely to benefit India when it comes to attracting tourists who are seeking an alternative. According to travel industry experts, increased airfares are a big concern for leisure travel and that other South Asia nations are better placed to attract tourists, thanks to their friendly policies.

"In normal course (referring to the current crisis in Sri Lanka), it should have benefitted India but the countries like the

UK which have high number of people travelling to Lanka, don't have an E-visa arrangement with India, and with Easter Holidays around, I am afraid we won't benefit much," said Rajiv Mehra, President, Indian Association of Tour Operators (IATO). Mehra added that the current airfares are exorbitantly high and leisure travel has been hugely impacted by this.

A one-way economy class flight between Mumbai and London is costing a traveller anywhere between Rs 30,000-40,000 if one has plans to travel in the next one week. Non-stop flights may even cost Rs 10,000 extra. According to a travel agency executive, tourist inflow in the island nation has been on a downward trajectory since the Easter bombings that took place in April 2019.

He said, "After the attacks, Covid-19 pandemic wiped out tourism in Lanka and now when the global tourism industry is showing signs of recovery, Sri Lanka has gone into a deep economic crisis."

When asked if India's tourism sector stands to gain from this, the executive said that some pockets such as Kerala, the Andamans and Goas are seeing increased interest, but for foreign travellers, Sri Lanka has always offered a different experience, thanks to its excellent beaches. TNIEK contacted several Indian companies with business exposure in Sri Lanka, but they declined to comment on the issue.

India, which hasn't issued a warning as such, is also witnessing a lower flight movement between the two nations due to poor passenger load factor.

The crisis in Sri Lanka has hit most exports to the country barring the essential items like food and pharma goods. The Indian government must support Sri Lanka.

Ajay Sahai, CEO, FIEO

7:35 AM FRIDAY APRIL 23, 2022

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**MOT should depute officials to embassies under tourism officers for overseas promotions: IATO**

Rajiv Mehra, President, IATO, is visiting to Prime Minister's Office. He is discussing the issue of deputation of officials to embassies for overseas promotions. He is also discussing the issue of deputation of officials to embassies for overseas promotions.

**RUSSIAN FEDERATION SUSPENDED FROM UNWTO WITH IMMEDIATE EFFECT**

The Russian Federation has been suspended from the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) with immediate effect. This is due to the Russian Federation's invasion of Ukraine.

**MOT to select 5 top strategy papers by overseas tourism officers for future planning: Arvind Singh**

The Ministry of Tourism (MOT) is planning to select 5 top strategy papers by overseas tourism officers for future planning. This is part of the MOT's efforts to improve its tourism promotion strategy.

**SECOND PHASE OF DEKHO APNA PRADESH KICKSTARTS IN ARUNACHAL PRADESH**

The second phase of the 'Dekho Apna Pradesh' campaign has kicked off in Arunachal Pradesh. This campaign aims to promote tourism in the state and to create awareness about the state's tourism resources.

**IN CONVERSATION WITH MR. DEV KARVAT**

Mr. Dev Karvat is the President of the Karnataka Tourism Organisation. He is discussing the issue of tourism in Karnataka and the role of the Karnataka Tourism Organisation.

**As borders open, over 70 per cent Indians are excited to travel internationally: Airbnb**

Airbnb has released a survey showing that over 70 per cent of Indians are excited to travel internationally once borders open. This is a positive sign for the tourism industry in India.

**The Future of International Travel**

The future of international travel is bright. With the world's borders opening up, there is a huge potential for growth in the international travel industry.

**Maha tourism asks local authorities for maximum participation in UNWTO tourism village awards**

The Ministry of Tourism (MOT) is asking local authorities to participate in the UNWTO Tourism Village Awards. This is to recognize the efforts of local authorities in promoting tourism in their respective areas.



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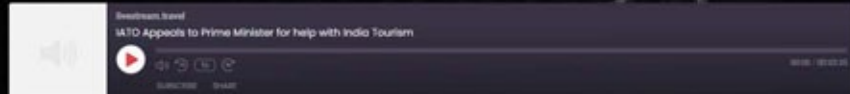
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POST NEWS



## IATO Appeals to Prime Minister for help with India Tourism

APRIL 26, 2022 | 00:02:30 | 0:04 | 0 COMMENTS



❖ President Covered in TOI

### Destination Bengal

#### Signs MoU With State At BGBS

Tanushree Banerjee @tanushreebanerjee

Kolkata: The apex chamber of tourism industry has set their eyes on unexplored travel destinations in Bengal.

The Federation of Associations in Indian Tourism & Hospitality (FAITH), policy federation of all national associations representing the tourism, travel and hospitality industry of India, joined hands with the state government on Thursday signing a memorandum of understanding (MoU) at Bengal Global Business Summit (BGBS). The aim is to identify and develop uncharted destinations and examine opportunities to promote tourism in exciting areas.

A hotel group committed to investing in at least two properties in Bengal, while an island waterways tourism operator lined up their cruises from Kolkata to Bangladesh and Assam. "We will set up two new properties in north Bengal. We want to expand our business to the Northeast and are looking forward to use Bengal as a gateway to the Northeast," said S.P. Jain, chairman of Pride Hotels and Resorts. Other major operators said they were in the process of searching for new destinations in Bengal for investment.

Elaborating their plan, enhancing river cruises, the FAITH secretary, Sandeep Chakraborty and FAITH secretary Rajiv Mehra in the presence of chief minister Mamata Banerjee during the BGBS, they would work in close coordination with state authorities to boost tourism and revenue. "We will form a task force with Bengal, we will have a brainstorming meeting soon. This will be a brain trust of a number of people who will participate in the project," said Jain.

**IN THE PIPELINE**

A hotel group commits to set up two new properties in north Bengal

An island waterways tourism operator plans two launch ships - Ganga Vilas and Nooka Vilas. Ganga Vilas will take tourists on a cruise on the Hooghly, from Kolkata to other places in Bengal, to Bangladesh, Assam and then to Patna in Bihar and Varanasi in UP. Nooka Vilas will offer two to three night bookings

Bengal has promised the operator jetties with shore power by 2025 to provide sustainable energy

The tourism body will form a task force with Bengal, they will discuss tourism opportunities with MoU in their respective areas

crisis the opportunities and challenges for tourism plans," said Mehra.

Attending a session on "Tourism for Inclusive Growth" at the BGBS, FAITH chairman Nand Lal Anand, also the executive director of ITC Ltd, said, "The tourism and hospitality sector is an important growth engine in the country's economy and I hope Bengal would be able to provide the same impetus as now."

A Bengali Council report suggested the total worth of creative industries sector in Bengal is Rs 36,000 crore annually, contributing 10% of Bengal's GDP. CMR said the state was also missing out on turning it into a global hub for tourism and hospitality. "We have already started working on it and are planning to set up a task force to look at it," he said.

"We have already started working on it and are planning to set up a task force to look at it," he said.

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Tuesday, April 26, 2022

#### IATO Appeals to Prime Minister for help with India Tourism

IATO Appeals to Prime Minister for help with India Tourism - Mr. Rajiv Mehra, President of the Indian Association of Tour Operators (IATO), has appealed to the Honorable Prime Minister of India, Mr. Narendra Modi, in a letter sent to him yesterday to help the tourism industry for revival of inbound tourism to India. In his letter written to the Hon. Prime Minister, Mr. Rajiv Mehra, President of IATO, mentioned that with the restoration of the Tourist Visa-Tourist Visa and resumption of scheduled international direct connections after a gap of more than 1.5

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Latest Breaking News Alerts

Breaking News (More) May 2022

Sanjay Chakraborty and Dr. Arun Kumar Sharma

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#### IATO Appeals to Prime Minister for help with India Tourism

Desperately seeking revival of inbound tourism to India

# IATO advocates roadshows

After Ministry of Tourism (MOT) started its virtual roadshows, Indian Association of Tour Operators (IATO) has urged the Prime Minister to revive industry by participating in travel fairs and physical roadshows.

Nisha Verma

Ministry of Tourism has started its month-long international roadshow, titled Reconnect 2022, covering 10 major source markets. At the same time, **Rajiv Mehra**, President, IATO has written a letter to the Prime Minister to help the tourism industry for revival of inbound tourism to India. He has mentioned that the current situa-



Rajiv Mehra  
President  
IATO

tion is not favourable in terms of overseas promotion and marketing activities by MOT. Mehra has suggested that there is a need for participation in all major international travel marts/fairs and conduct physical B2B meetings at structured roadshows. He said that there is a need to organise cultural & food events and Fam trips for foreign tour operators and media. Electronic and print media campaign should be restarted.

# TCS withdrawal to boost tourism

With a major thrust towards boosting travel in India, the Indian government has announced that domestic tour operators will no longer be required to collect tax on overseas vacation packages sold to non-resident visitors. The travel fraternity applauds this move of the government.

Janice Alyosius

With the aim of boosting tourism in India, the Indian government has decided that domestic tour operators are no longer required to collect taxes on overseas tour packages sold to non-residents.

According to Section 206C(1G) of the Income-tax Act, 1961, a seller of an overseas tour package may collect tax from a buyer at a rate of 5 per cent of the package price.

Representations were received from domestic tour operators facing difficulties in collection of tax from non-resident individuals visiting India booking overseas tour package from such domestic tour operators. Since such persons may not have a PAN, tax is required to be collected at higher rates. Further, such non-residents may find it

difficult to furnish their ITR and claim refunds.

In order to remove such difficulties, the Central Government, in exercise of powers conferred under section 206C(1G) of the Act, has specified that the provisions of the said section shall not apply to a buyer being an individual who is not a resident in India in terms of clause (1) and clause (1A) of section 6 of the Act and who is visiting India. Hence, a domestic tour operator is not required to collect tax on sale of overseas tour package to non-resident individuals visiting India.

**Rajiv Mehra**, President, IATO, said, "This decision is a big relief for the entire travel and tourism fraternity as it was not logical to collect tax at source from the Foreign Tour Operators/Foreign Tourists as they are not residents of India. They neither possess any Indian PAN



Rajiv Mehra  
President, IATO

This decision (taken by govt) is a big relief for the entire travel and tourism fraternity

card nor they pay any income tax and hence are not liable to the Indian Income Tax Law. Therefore, there is no scope for

them of availing any refund from the Levy of TCS. These persons are subject to taxation in their native country. It was, therefore, necessary that the provisions of TCS should not be made applicable to persons / companies who are Indian resident/located outside India."

IATO apprehended that in case TCS is collected from non-resident buyers such as FTOs, individual foreign citizens/ tourists, the Indian Tour Operators will lose their business, as the non-resident buyers will directly approach the tour operators based in Nepal, Bhutan, Sri Lanka and Maldives and buy the overseas tour package from those tour operators directly skipping Indian Tour Operators, resulting in loss of business for the Indian Tour Operators and a portion of foreign exchange. The Association strongly recommended that the provisions of TCS should be

amended not to be made applicable to sale of overseas tour package to non-resident class of buyers / FTOs for packages outside Indian territory.

He added, "We thank the Finance Minister, Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Tourism for understanding our view point and withdrawing Tax Collection at Source (TCS) on sale of overseas tour packages for foreign tourists booked through tour operators located in India."

**Riaz Munshi**, President, OTOAI said, "We are truly delighted and relieved that the Government has withdrawn Tax Collection of Source (TCS) on sale of overseas tour packages for foreign tourists who book tour through tour operators located in India. This is a positive move and will certainly reduce the burden on Outbound Tour Operators, who are struggling to stand back on their feet."



06:31 THURSDAY MAY 5, 2022 100%

Sanjeet Ddpl 6 minutes ago COP PUBLICATIONS

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**2 YOUR DAILY NEWS CAPSULE**

**KISHAN REDDY MEETS CMs OF NE STATES AT ASSAM CM'S RESIDENCE**

**IATO thanks PM Modi for promoting inbound tourism; seeks more marketing support**

**GMR GETS 30-YEAR EXTENSION TO OPERATE HYDRABAD AIRPORT**

**CM Pinarayi Vijayan to open KTM in Kochi today, conclave aims to boost Kerala's tourism sector**

**HAI URGES DGFT TO REVIEW EPCG POLICY, HELP HOSPITALITY**

**Corporate travel may recover quicker than expected, signs encouraging, says Sabre CEO**

**OBEROI GROUP'S EIH ASSOCIATED HOTELS' CMD PS OBEROI RESIGNS**

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**IATO expresses thanks to PM Modi for promoting inbound tourism in Denmark**

Indian Association of Tour Operators (IATO) has written to PM Shri Narendra Modi for extolling NRI's residing in Denmark to contribute to the economic development of the country. However, it also urges the Government to raise the level of promotion for attracting inbound tourists. According to Rajiv Mehra, President, IATO, marketing is not commensurate with our size and stature and we need to step up on Road shows, organising Incredible India seminars, increase participation in international travel fairs, organise Fam tour for foreign tour operators. This we understand because paucity of funds in the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India. We also understand that the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India are with new initiatives not known to us."

**#FirstOpinion**

**Ms. Nelliswa Nikani, Hub Head - Middle East, India and South East Asia, South African Tourism**

**Fairfield by Marriott announces opening of Fairfield by Marriott Vadodara in Gujarat**

Fairfield by Marriott recently announced the opening of Fairfield by Marriott Vadodara. Situated in the heart of the city with proximity to the Civil Airport Hami and the central business district, the 96-room hotel is designed with modern amenities for today's business traveler, creating an environment that focuses on the warmth and simplicity of delivering a seamless hospitality experience. "We are thrilled to introduce our first Fairfield by Marriott in Vadodara. This opening marks the 22nd Fairfield by Marriott to join our growing portfolio of 16 brands operating across the country," said Ranju Alex- Area Vice President - South Asia, Marriott International.

**Visit Portugal and Lufthansa host its first Trade FAM post Covid-19**

In the light of the global pandemic easing out and the tourism industry resuming, Visit Portugal in association with Lufthansa Airlines hosted its first Trade FAM trip for travel trade partners from India from March 14 - 20, 2022 in the Europe's favourite destination, Portugal! The delegation were representatives from travel companies including SOTC, Kesari Tours and Travels, Mango Holidays and Veena World. During the trip the agents arrived in Lisbon on March 14, 2022 where they kick started the trip with a Pre Tour of the beautiful city of Lisbon and Estoril coast. The delegation then participated at The International Hosted Buyers Meetings.

**We are excited to see tourism not just resuming, but thriving! With the restarting of international flights from India, we have been witnessing immense demand and interest from Indian travellers. This response encourages us to constantly push the envelope and provide the best hospitality experience possible to every traveller setting foot in the Rainbow Nation.**

❖ The President discussed his request to India's Prime Minister for assistance in promoting inbound tourism to the country.

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

**IndiGo names Venkataramani Sumantran as the Chairman of the Board**

**TRAVEL TV news**

06:34  
FRIDAY MAY 6, 2022

Sanjeet Ddpl  
16 minutes ago  
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**MADAME TUSSAUDS TO REOPEN AT DLF MALL OF INDIA, NOIDA**

**IRCTC'S BHARAT GAURAV TOURIST TRAIN TO BEGIN RUN ON JUNE 21**

**Need to build global tourism sustainable, resilient & responsible: UN General Assembly President**

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We should reach the 40% mark of pre-COVID inbound numbers by Oct-Nov 2022: Rajiv Mehra

Rajiv Mehra, President, Indian Association of Tour Operators, has said that if airlines add more capacity, inbound tourism should reach 40 per cent mark of pre-COVID numbers by October-November this year and about 50-60 per cent next year. "If all goes well, October 2023 onwards, we should be back to normal," he added.

KTM kicks off, Kerala received 35 domestic & 2 int'l tourists every minute in 2019

Kerala has shown spectacular growth in 2019. At a presentation showcased at the inauguration of Kerala Travel Mart, it was mentioned that the state, popularly known as God's Own Country, receives 35 domestic tourists and two international tourists every minute. KTM will be going on till 8th May and will have both domestic and international delegates.

The Economic Times  
English Edition • | Press Release

IATO seeks more marketing support from govt for attracting inbound tourists

By Anurupa Chaturvedi ET Bureau • Last updated: May 04, 2022, 05:40 PM IST

**Synopsis**  
The association said just as India has opened up to 30 countries in the neighbourhood, and that there is stiff competition coming from countries like Thailand, Laos, and even Nepal.

The **Indian Association of Tour Operators (IATO)** said on Wednesday it has written to prime minister **Narendra Modi**, thanking him for extending NRIs residing in Denmark during his speech there to contribute and help promote inbound tourism to India and thus contribute to the economic development of the country.

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**IATO seeks more marketing support from govt for attracting inbound tourists**

IATO said that one of the factors playing in their favour is the huge amount of marketing and promotional activities they are doing to attract foreign tourists. According to Rajiv Mehra, President, IATO, the country's marketing is not 'commensurate' with its size and stature.

Anurupa Chaturvedi • ET Bureau • May 05, 2022, 08:00 IST





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## Latest Breaking News Shows

### Breaking News Show 13 May 2022

Juergen Steinmetz and Dr. Peter Tarlow discuss the current situation in global travel and tourism. From the closing of the Republic of Kiribati, COVID cases in North Korea, the Russian-Ukrainian war, inflation, and the outlook on travel and tourism for the upcoming summer season. The post Breaking News Show 13 May 2022 appeared first on [...]

### Space Tourism Security

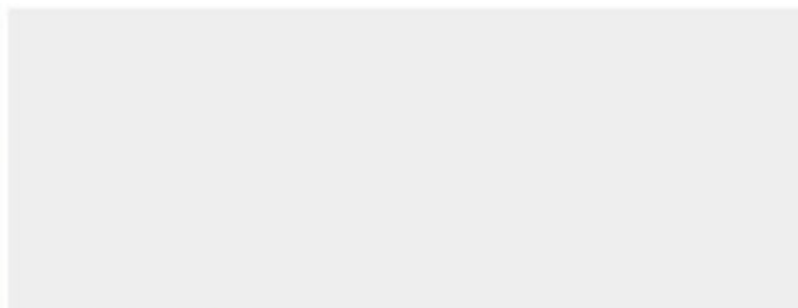
In today's Breaking News Show on May 8, 2022 Dr Peter Tarlow and Juergen Steinmetz discussed the need for space tourism security to prepare future generations. Also discussed are current challenges and the current situation in global travel and tourism. The post Space Tourism Security appeared first on [...]

Home > Breaking Travel News > India Tour Operators Say More Tourism Support Needed

Anil Mathur - eTN India May 4, 2022 0 1 min read

## India Tour Operators Say More Tourism Support Needed

Thanks PM for promoting inbound tourism



# Marketing Nachrichten

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INBOUND MARKETING

04/05/2022 BY R.LINDNER



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# KEEPING LIFE FORCE ALIVE BY SHUNNING NEGATIVE ENERGY, BE MORE POSITIVE

We all need reminders and inspirations in life to keep our spirits or life force alive. How can we break this negative cycle of thought process during these difficult times, how do we elevate our spirits and go forward, when the opposing force is powerful and wants us to suffer?



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

Here are some stories to encourage us to be more positive.

### **DON'T ASSUME YOU ARE GOING TO FAIL**

A marine biologist placed a shark in a big holding tank and then released several little bait fish into the tank during a study experiment. The shark immediately swam around the aquarium, attacking and eating the smaller fish, as one might expect. The marine biologist then created two different dividers in the tank by inserting a robust piece of clear fibreglass. She then positioned the shark on one side of the fibreglass and replaced the baitfish on the other. The shark swiftly attacked once more. The shark, on the other hand, crashed into the fibreglass divider and bounced off this time. The shark continued to repeat this activity every several minutes but to no avail. Meanwhile, the bait fish swam around unharmed in the second partition. Eventually, about an hour into the experiment, the shark gave up. This experiment was repeated several dozen times over the next few weeks. Each time, the shark got less aggressive and made fewer attempts to attack the bait fish, until eventually, the shark got tired of hitting the fibreglass divider and simply stopped attacking altogether. The marine biologist then removed the fibreglass divider, but the shark

did not attack. The shark was trained to believe a barrier existed between it and the baitfish, so the bait fish swam wherever they wished, free from harm.

### **NEVER GIVE UP ON YOUR DREAMS**

Once upon a time, there was a broke older man who lived in a little house and drove a beat-up car. He was surviving on \$99 in social security payments. He decided things needed to alter when he was 65 years old. So he considered what he could provide. His chicken recipe was a hit with his friends. He determined that this was his best chance to make a difference. He left Kentucky and travelled across the country in an attempt to sell his recipe. He told the restaurant proprietors he had a delicious chicken dish. He gave them the recipe for free in exchange for a modest share of the sales. Does not it sound like a decent deal? Unfortunately, most establishments do not accept credit cards. He must have heard NO 1,000 times. He didn't give up despite all of the rejections. He thought his chicken recipe was exceptional. Before hearing his first yes, he was refused 1,009 times. Colonel Hartland Sanders altered the way Americans eat chicken with just one achievement. Kentucky Fried Chicken, or KFC for short, was founded. Never give up and never

”

**The shark swiftly attacked once more. The shark, on the other hand, crashed into the fibreglass divider and bounced off this time. The shark continued to repeat this activity every several minutes but to no avail**

”







lose faith in yourself in the face of rejection.

## LOVE MATTERS MORE THAN MATERIAL ITEMS

"A dad chastised his young daughter for wasting a roll of gold wrapping paper some time ago. He became enraged when the child attempted to decorate a box to place under the Christmas tree because money was scarce. 'This is for you, daddy,' the kid remarked as she presented the gift to her father on Christmas Day. The man had been humiliated by his outburst a few days prior, but his fury was reignited when he saw the box was empty. 'You do not know when you give someone a gift, there supposed to be something inside?' he roared at her. The little girl looked up at her dad with tears and cried, 'Oh, daddy, it is not empty at all. I blew kisses into the box. They are all for you, daddy.' The father was devastated. He put his arms around his daughter, and begged for her forgiveness. A little while later, she died in an accident. For many years, the father kept the box next to his bed, and when he felt low, he would take out an imaginary kiss and remember the love of his daughter who had placed it there.

## YOUR PRIORITIES MATTER

Imagine having US\$ 86,400 deposited in your bank account every morning. The account does not carry over any balance from day to day, allows you to keep no cash balance, and cancels whatever portion of the balance you did not use during the day every evening. How would you respond? Draw out every dime each day. We all have one of these banks. Time is its name. It grants you 86,400 seconds every morning. Every night, it records any time you have not spent wisely as lost. It has no

balance from the previous day. You cannot borrow against yourself or consume more time than you have because there is no OD. The account is reset daily. It wastes unneeded time every night. It's your loss if you do not use the day's deposits; there is no way to get them back. There is never any time for borrowing. You cannot take out a loan on your own or against the time of another person. You have complete control over how you spend your time, just as you have complete control over how you spend your money. It is never a question of whether we have enough time to do things; it is always a question of whether we want to do them and where they fit into our priorities.

## FOCUS ON THE GOOD THINGS IN LIFE

"Two friends were walking through the desert. At one stage in their journey, they had an argument and one friend slapped the other one in the face. The one who got slapped was hurt, but without saying anything he wrote in the sand, 'Today my best friend slapped me in the face.' They kept on walking until they found an oasis, where they decided to have a wash. The one who was slapped got stuck in mire and started drowning, but his friend saved him. After he had recovered from his shock, he wrote on a stone, 'Today my best friend saved my life.' The friend who slapped and saved his best friend asked him, 'After I hurt you, you wrote in the sand and now, you write in stone, why?' The other friend replied, 'When someone hurts us we should write it down in sand where winds of forgiveness can erase it away. But, when someone does something good for us, we must engrave it in stone where no wind can ever erase it.' ❖



”

**The father was devastated. He put his arms around his daughter, and begged for her forgiveness. A little while later, the girl died in an accident. For many years, her father kept the gold box next to his bed, and whenever he felt low, he would take out an imaginary kiss**

”





# SIKKIM

## MULTI-ETHNIC AND MULTILINGUAL INDIAN STATE

Visitors travelling to Sikkim can quench their hunger for tranquility. It is the spot where you will sincerely believe in benevolence of nature and humanity. Relive your intriguing dreams in the midst of gorgeous mountains, breathtaking scenery, and cold temperatures.



■ Bryan Anthony Thomas

**S**ikkim, located in the northeastern part of India, is a bright and small state, surrounded by Tibet, Nepal, and Bhutan. The state has an exquisite beauty that will undoubtedly captivate you. Kanchenjunga, the third highest mountain in the world, is located in Sikkim (Eastern Himalayas).

Although Sikkim is a cosmopolitan,

multilingual, multi-ethnic, and multireligious state with four official languages and several regional languages, its true beauty may be found in its people and culture.

The state is home to people from neighbouring countries such as Nepal, Bhutan among others. Tibet's inhabitants have various beliefs, cultures, but they live



in peace and harmony. Even in a country as diverse as India, Sikkim is distinguished for cultural and religious harmony.

destination, offering a variety of fascinating Sikkim vacation packages. A journey to Sikkim will provide you with a wealth of

Sikkim's climate is a mix of hot and cold. The mountainous terrain and moderate temperature make Sikkim a colourful travel destination. Captivating Sikkim is one of the most sought-after tourist destinations in the world, with two airports, train links, and a national highway to promote tourism for developing the area. Because of its small-scale industries, organic farming, and booming tourism, Sikkim's economy, albeit not the largest in India, is the fastest-growing. The state is dedicated to environmental issues and it is the only Indian state to be named a 'Nirmal State' for its sincere efforts to abolish open defecation.



The destination is ideal for a relaxing vacation away from stress and humdrum of daily life. Sikkim's flora and fauna are incredibly wondrous. Sikkim is also a popular honeymoon

memories as well as an exceptional travel experience. There are a plethora of locations to visit in the state. You may get a glimpse of the Tibetan culture and get to sample Tibetan and Buddhist cuisine.

”  
**Post COVID, I see a significant boom in arrival to Sikkim, rooms and transportation are in high demand**

”  
— GP Upadhyaya  
Additional Chief Secretary, Tourism and Civil Aviation Department, Government of Sikkim







it hosts an annual International Flower Festival to felicitate the state's biological diversity. Sikkim boasts 552 distinct bird species and more than 600 different butterfly species. Snow leopards, red pandas, Tibetan wolves, and other wild species can also be found there.

The state has made tremendous progress in the fields of health, education, sanitation, public welfare, and environmental protection. Sikkim is attempting to better and enrich its people, despite limited resources and industrial progress.

The cuisine is a blend of Tibetan, Nepali and Lepcha dishes, which

”

**We take pride in maintaining ecological balance in our forest cover and trees. Sikkim is very disciplined and the people educate the tourist to not litter, that helps us keep the state clean**

”

– GP Upahdyaya  
Additional Chief Secretary, Tourism and Civil  
Aviation Department, Government of Sikkim



They hold several colourful events such as the Gangtok winter festival, Losar, Saga Dawa, and Pang.

The natural beauty and ecology of Sikkim are magnificent: the state is brimming with a variety of flowers –

come from various ethnic tribes and communities of Sikkim. Sikkimese food is largely based on rice, culinary vegetables from jungle such as *Ningro* (Fern), *Nakima* (Wild Lily), *Baas ko Tusa* (Bamboo-Shoot), *Cheuw* (Mushrooms) among others. ❖





# OMAN OLDEST INDEPENDENT NATION IN ARAB WORLD

Oman's tranquil atmosphere brings tourists in swarms to the country. Al Qurum in the capital city of Muscat is a must-see beach for a romantic couple. The incandescent beauty of coconut and banana plantations will wow you. Wahiba Sands might be described as ultimate desert safari. Between Sur and Muscat, lies a 10,000 square km. terrain.

■ Bryan Anthony Thomas

Oman is on the southwest side of the Asian continent, bordering Saudi Arabia to the west, the Arabian Gulf to the east, and Yemen to the south. As a result, it is a diverse tourism destination for both Arab and non-Arab countries. Between October and April, the Sultanate of Oman is overrun with tourists. The nation shares land borders with Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), and Yemen, while sharing maritime borders with Iran and Pakistan.

Its capital, Muscat, in particular, has several tourist attractions as well as historical sites. Salalah, which is one of the cities on the southern coast, is considered one of the most beautiful coastal cities of Oman. The Sultanate also has many stunning sceneries.

The tourism attractions of Oman are not restricted to these two cities alone. There are many other tourist attractions such as Anantara Al Jabal Al Akhdar Resort, the Wahiba Sands, and the Ras Al Jinz Turtle Reserve and many more delightful areas.



From the 17th century onwards, the Sultanate of Oman was an empire, vying with the Portuguese and British empires for influence in the Persian Gulf and Indian Ocean.

At its peak in the 19th century, Omani influence or control extended across the Strait of Hormuz to modern-day Iran, and Pakistan, and as far south as Zanzibar. When its power declined in the 20th century, the sultanate came under the influence of the United Kingdom (UK) and became a constitutional monarchy in 1963.





countryside as property despite working in cities.

Oman's interesting story uncovers instances of extraordinary moral strength, boldness, bravery, oceanic abilities, and provide work that together shaped the Sultanate by causing it to notice the endeavour of recognized Omanis and antiquarians who furnished the country with extraordinary abundance of human experience that is the groundwork of present-day Oman.

Oman has a rich geography that partitions the country into three unmistakable locales. These districts range from tough mountains, profound fjords in the north to the ridges of the Wahiba Sands and the enormous salt pads in the middle to the rich green slopes of the Dhofar locale in the south. A rough and tough shore extends from north to south. The northern beachfront strip along the Sea of Oman is known as the Batinah Coast, a thin ripe plain isolated from the remainder of the country by the Hajar Mountains. The most noteworthy top in the Hajar is Jabal Shams (Sun Mountain), which ascends to 3,009-metre. The southern incline of the reach are known for its desert garden towns where date forests prosper in semi-arid climate.

Oman is noted for its warm Arabian hospitality, vast natural beauty, and historical significance. It is a haven full of wonderful adventures and limitless exploration. Visitors will find anything they are seeking in Oman. This is a paradise of endless exploration, with natural beauty, abundant animals, and Omani friendliness. Oman has everything, whether travellers are

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**Oman is unlike any other country in the Middle East. Tourists are dazzled with friendliness of the people. Half of Oman's population is Arab. Large numbers of Baloch, those who migrated from Iran and Pakistan are settled in Al-Batinah**

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There are numerous diverse customs, cultures, and laws of Oman that are followed by other countries. The cultural heartland is located in the lower valleys of the mountain spines. There are 1.5 million Omanis, out of a total population of 5.9 million. Majority of the population speak Arabic, as well as other languages. Omanis are bound together by a feeling of resilience, which stretches out to the country's populace of almost 5.9 million. Omanis invest time in protecting the legacy and observing their age-old customs and traditions. Tourists are more often than not dazzled with the friendliness of the locals. More than half of Oman's population is Arab. Large numbers of ethnic Baloch, those who migrated from neighbouring countries Iran and Pakistan over the past several centuries, reside near Al-Batinah.

Oman is unlike any other country in the Middle East since it is noted for its lack of violence. As an Omani, daily life is blissful. People work hard to attain their goals in a safe environment. A large proportion of the population lives in rural areas. On the other hand, others possess land in the





searching for a calm vacation or a thrilling adventure. Travellers can go on a *souq* tour, look for traditional treasures, hike through awe-inspiring *wadis*, cycle through mountains, discover old forts, plunge into a lively underwater world, relax in a luxury resort, or simply take in the beauty.

Oman's weather is defined by a semi-arid desert climate with a consistent rise in temperature throughout the year. Rainfall is sparse and occurs mostly in the summer and winter. This provides an ideal climate for the growth of various plants and trees, as well as agriculture.

Oman has a rich tapestry of marine, pearl plunging, and exchange. Since it is situated at the tip of the Arabian Peninsula, their precursors assumed a significant part in the Silk Road and Spice Routes. Oman, the door for ships bridging the Strait of Hormuz, the Indian Ocean, and the Arabian Sea, is like no place else on the planet. Guests are much of the time overpowered by the view of the ocean set against the powerful Al Hajar mountains. Flanked by the Gulf of Oman, the Arabian Sea, and the huge desert of Saudi Arabia, Oman partakes in a disconnected area. The ocean associated Oman with the remainder of the world, making it a significant community for exchange. The land comprises deserts, valleys, mountains, and shore. Oman is a wonderland for guests keen on topography.

Oman is essentially Arab, with numerous and unique old-world beauties for visitors to see. The Islamic religion is deeply rooted in Omani culture. Oman established its own type of Islam known as



Ibadism, named after its founder, Abdullah ibn Ibad, who lived in the seventh century. There are Sunni and Shias in Oman, hence not all Omanis are Ibadis. Omanis are not only accepting of diverse Muslim sects beliefs, but also of other faiths: people are free to practise their respective beliefs and religions.

The heritage that has been passed from one age to another, the way of life, and the craftsmanship of the people must be seen to be believed. Yet, there is substantially more in the core of Oman to investigate: the feeling of regard for time, individuals, and nature. Oman's rich legacy has been kept alive and unaltered for ages.

Oman has an unusually high number of UNESCO World Heritage Sites for its size, including Bat, which has 3,000-year-old tombs, the Bahla Fort, and the Incense Trade Route, which begins in Dhofar and includes Al-Bilad, the ancient city of Zafar, Khawr Rawri, Shisr, and Wadi Dayqah. As one might imagine from a country with 2,000 km of coastline, the history of Oman is rich in seafaring traditions. Around the remote and historic

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**Islam is deeply rooted in Omani culture. Oman established its own type of Islam known as Ibadism, named after its founder, Abdullah ibn Ibad, who lived in the seventh century. There are Sunni and Shias also in Oman**  
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# Foreign Shores



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**Oman is an excellent choice for travellers seeking an Arabian experience. The travellers have retained the features of culture and heritage because of the remote isolation from the rest of the world and because of being the oldest Arabian state**

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harbours of its cities—Muscat, Muttrah, and Sur—there are numerous museums and galleries that highlight the importance of the water.

Oman's various vacation spots have something for everybody. From world legacy and antiquated archaeological destinations to many fortifications and palaces to mosques, souqs and dhows, all give an interesting understanding of the rich history and culture of Oman.

The Sugar Dunes (white desert) of Al Khaluf, seashores, islands, mountains, caves, channels and springs all give Oman an ethereal and magnificent look. One must also experience, surfing, jumping, rock climbing, camel and horse racing, cosmopolitan shopping, sumptuous food and eateries to make your heart beat faster with excitement.

Although Omani cuisine varies from one region to another, the dishes have a staple of curry, cooked meat, rice, and vegetables. Soups are common and are made from chicken, lamb, and vegetables. The cuisine is part of Khaleeji cuisine, and it is influenced by Arab, Pakistani, Iranian, Indian, Asian, Eastern Mediterranean, and African cuisine, reflecting Oman's position as a vast trading empire at the intersection of traditional spice trade routes.

Oman's economy is steady because of the stability of the political and security conditions in the country. It depends on the presence of oil, notwithstanding the presence of gas in it. It is portrayed by its economy as a big-league salary. It depends on industry, fish and farming, minerals, exchange and the travel industry.

The Sultanate of Oman contains the essential and adequate components to make it the country a vacationer's paradise. The government has maintained a policy of solely distributing private land portions to Omani residents for their homes and crops. Oman's traditional economic pursuits include fishing and agriculture. Oman's economic development is based on oil fuels. This is accomplished by promoting other industries. The economy will be more stable if the country can develop other industries. Oil and natural gas account for 90 per cent of the government revenue.

On the other hand, as oil obtained significance in the world, agricultural and fishery income declined proportionally. Because of this, transportation and communication systems have become vital to Oman.

The Ruler of Oman takes close consideration of Omanis since he has confidence in correspondence and great personal satisfaction. Inns across the Sultanate are renowned for firing up dishes that are gastronomic pleasures. Shangri-La Barr Al Jissah Resort and Spa is only 20 minutes from Muscat.

Oman is an excellent choice for travelers seeking an Arabian experience. They have retained the features of culture and heritage because of the remote isolation from the rest of the world and because of being the oldest Arabian state. Visitors are impressed by Omani hospitality.

The handicrafts are passed down through the generations and their architecture, which combines tradition with modernity. ❖



## MARCH

### TELANGANA CHAPTER



### ODISHA CHAPTER



### NORTH CHAPTER

❖ IATO Chairman NORTH on the topic.



### TS & AP CHAPTER

❖ The Vice-Principal of the British Residency, Hyderabad, was honoured by IATO (TS&Ap Chapter) and RLGS. The IATO Chapter provided several suggestions in order to expedite the public unveiling of an iconic structure.



❖ During the cricket awardees function, NITHM (IATO member) Director Dr Chinnam Reddy (13April 2022) helped the IATO Chapter (TS &AP).



## TRIPURA CHAPTER

❖ T. K. Chakma, IAS, Managing Director, Department of Tourism, Government of Tripura, recently met with a high-level team from Bangladesh.



**MAY**

❖ The Chairman of the IATO TS&AP Chapter was asked to come to Visakhapatnam by an English daily to provide suggestions on how to promote tourism in the state of Andhra Pradesh.



❖ The IATO Telangana and Andhra Pradesh Chapter congratulated Shankar Reddy, the incoming Assistant Director, MoT, to Hyderabad, India Tourism Office.





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

**SPEAKS**



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# INDIAN ASSOCIATION OF TOUR OPERATORS

## Offices and chapters across the country

