

IATO initiates a 5-day campaign to make their voices heard

Indian Association of Tour Operators (IATO) has embarked on 'a Message a Day' campaign to highlight the challenges faced by the tourism industry to Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

IATO members were asked to send one email every day for the week of January 11-15 to the Prime Minister of India expressing what they feel about the industry, what problems they are facing and what actions need to be taken.

The 1st day of the campaign highlighted the problem of high taxation and how a reduction in taxes can reduce costs and encourage more visitors. The 2nd day of the campaign discussed upon the weak and poor implementation of the e-Tourist Visa (e-TV) system. IATO members suggested that more countries should be

added, validity of the visa should be made for 6 months (currently at 30 days), application period to be increased from 30 days to 6 months, multiple entry visa to allow for inter-regional travel.

The 3rd day of the campaign highlighted the employment in the industry. Due to the downturn, retrenchment of staff across the industry is seen, cost of running a company and paying salaries is becoming unmanageable and new employment generation will be nil. The 4th day of the campaign emphasized upon the poor infrastructure of our national monuments.

The 5th day of the campaign accentuated upon the lack of marketing approach of Indian Tourism. No marketing support to the industry, overseas tourist offices have been left headless for months, no support to foreign



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agents, the lack of any visibility or presence of the Indian tourism brand has affected the members.

INDIAN TOURISM INDUSTRY IS FACING NEGATIVE GROWTH, SAYS SARKAR

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has been promoting Indian tourism all over the world but ground reality is different due to various reasons. The past year has seen a very alarming slowdown in tourist arrivals into India and consequently business for a vast majority of tour operators. "Although official figures from the Govt. of India may show some increases, but the actual situation on the ground for the organized tourism sector as reported by our members and partner hotels is quite different," said Pronab Sarkar, Secretary, Indian Association of Tour Operators (IATO).

"The Indian tourism industry is facing negative growth," says Sarkar. "The decline can be attributed to a number of reasons; lack of overseas promotion by the government, outdated brand image, no heads for India Tourism offices overseas, poor PR efforts to counter negative publicity, high prices due to irrational taxation structures," he added.

Sarkar further said, "When PM Modi announced the e-Tourist Visa (e-TV) system for tourists, we were optimistic and IATO really played a pioneering role in getting this policy implemented. However, we were not able to

achieve the numbers we had aimed. IATO has been pleading to the Government to open window of e-TV application 180 days in advance instead of 30 days, to allow multiple entries instead of single entry, duration of stay under the e-TV scheme to be increased from 30 to 60 days, creation of more bio-metric facilities at our airports to ensure faster processing of e-TV travellers."

The organized tourism industry is under the biggest threat it has even been in the past 20 years. Companies are in critical condition and many small and medium players are on the verge of closing down in case situation does not improve soon.

"Fortunately, Ministry of Tourism had been supportive to our proposals and had taken up these matters with concerned ministries on top priority. But things have yet to get a final approval. We are quite hopeful on its merit, all

this will get priority consideration," echoed Sarkar.

Another major concern highlighted by Sarkar was poor surrounding infrastructure of national monuments.



The Ministry of Culture is proposing to increase monument entrance fees by 300 per cent from April 1 2016. Sarkar added, "Their claim that they did not increase the entry fee for last 10 years and so this increase is very justified. This fallacy is not acceptable by tourists as this not their fault. We have repeatedly told them as IATO, we

are not opposed to this increase, but this should be done in a phased manner and not at one go and to be done with a rationalized approach with advance notice. We had submitted our representation against this proposed notification and are quite confident that our request will get some priority consideration."



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FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

Dear Members,

Greetings and best wishes for the coming new Financial Year!

You will be glad to know that while reflecting back on the year gone by IATO has made some remarkable achievements. You have already got a detailed analysis of the major issues we had faced and how as a team we geared ourselves to meet these challenges. In order to update you on what all we achieved, I have put some of our achievements inside this Newsletter.

Thank you dear members each one of you for your support. I will be failing in my duty if I fail to thank my Executive Committee team for the confidence they bestowed on me and support extended to me.

I will be relinquishing my charge as President by April when new team will take over after the election programmed in the last week of April 2016.

We had looked forward to this year's Budget 2016/17 with lot of expectations for tourism sector but all of us are highly disappointed with the new budget. Nothing about exemption of service tax, extending benefit of exporters of goods to the tourism industry and GST was announced in the Union Budget 2016-17. Growth momentum which was visible in the first month of January 2016 in terms of international tourist arrivals will lose the momentum.

Even though they mentioned Action Plan for revival of 160 unserved and underserved airports and enacting necessary amendments in the Motor Vehicle Act. Yet, all these will be meaningless unless inbound tourism in the country increases. This can only be done by abolishing service tax based on Foreign Exchange Earnings (FEE) and reducing tax so that we can compete with neighboring destinations like Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore etc.

Your association fought for so many years for Electronic Tourist Visa (e-TV) and I assure you that we will continue our fight for this discrimination against the tour operators.

And last but not the least; IATO Annual Day held on 31st January 2016 at The Gateway Resort, Damdama Lake Gurgaon was a big success. This was an event to thank our members to have a family outing for a day. I would like to thank the organizing committee- Pronab Sarkar, Ravi Gosain, Sanjeev Joshi and especially Rajiv Mehra for making this event a great success. This will be our regular event in IATO Calendar.

Once again, thank you all for extending your support throughout my tenure.

Subhash Goyal



IATO holds interactive meeting with different Ministries and ASI at New Delhi



An interactive meeting was organized by Indian Association of Tour Operators (IATO) on 14th January 2016 at The Ashok Hotel, New Delhi, where Vinod Zutshi, Secretary (Tourism); Suman Billa, Joint Secretary (Tourism); Dr. R.K. Bhatnagar, Additional Director General (MR); Dr. Rakesh Tewari, Director General ASI; Shharat Sharma, Additional Director General (ASI) were present. IATO members were present in large numbers in this meeting.

The recent downward trend in tourism business and various pending issues with Government related to e-Tourist Visa, Service Tax, Increase in ASI monuments entry fee, Guide issues, Railway Issues, Marketing India abroad, vacant senior positions at nine India Tourism Offices overseas etc. were the bottleneck areas which needed IATO to seek help from Government authorities so that all these issues get priority attention of the Govt. and resolved, so that growth in international tourist arrivals can be put back on track.

Subhash Goyal, President, IATO, in his opening remarks mentioned about the downturn in international tourist arrivals affecting the organized sector business and pressure was building due to the fact that our members are unable to survive without business and future is looking very dark and even some of them may go out of business. The various issues raised by the industry and forwarded by IATO which are already with the Ministry for some time without showing any result of improvement. He briefly mentioned about the issues and requested the members to be brief and focused while raising the questions.

As a follow up to that the members raised issues which dwelled on the

following areas:-

- ASI issues
- Visa issues
- Marketing India Overseas
- Guides and guiding restriction at Fatehpur Sikri for Govt. of India Regional Guides
- Railway issues
- Revamping of Incredible India Campaign and filling up vacant post
- MDA (delayed payments)

Dr. Rakesh Tewari and Shharat Sharma apprised the members in clear terms that entry fee was not increased by ASI. This was the decision of CAG remark that ASI should increase the fee to meet its costs for conservation and maintenance as this is the mandate of ASI to keep the regular maintenance and conserve. They also mentioned that this increase has been made after 10 years and that too with the nodal Ministry's approval. ASI does not get any part of the revenue generated through tickets sales and it goes directly to Consolidated Funds of India.

Shharat Sharma, apprised the members that they have already adopted the initiatives of Green Vehicles/ CSR/ toilet up-gradation etc. ASI has already sign MoU for green vehicles in Goa. Also, ASI has started with electronic tickets for booking 90 days in advance for any ASI monuments.

President IATO clarified that members are not against the increase, but 300% increase at one go is the main issue and it is suggested to have increase





on a gradual basis with a notice period of minimum 6 months. Our members often sign contracts with overseas tour operators at least 6 months to one year in advance. It will be difficult for them to accommodate this sudden increase and bear the difference from their own mark up as they are working on very thin margin due to economic slowdown and competition with other neighboring countries. There are ASI monuments in Delhi, Agra, Jaipur and many places in the itinerary and in total; it is quite voluminous to bear the difference amount. Therefore the increase should be staggered between 3 to 5 years' time and not in one go. Similarly if some discounts can be given for purchase of bulk tickets as is the practice in overseas when bulk tickets are purchased by Tour Operators, they get discounts. This will also bring advance revenue to ASI.

In his opening remarks, Vinod Zutshi said that he was enlightened by this interactive forum with IATO members. He mentioned to have these kinds of meetings on monthly basis where serious points can be taken up. Further, he said that all the issues related to e-Tourist Visa holds lot of merits and deserve immediate consideration. He assured that all these issues will be taken up with the concerned ministries for implementing these suggestions. He also updated the members on the following:-

- e-Tourist Visa Application Form is now available in 9 foreign languages.
- Facility of applying for e-Tourist Visa from existing 30 days in advance to 180 days in advance is under consideration of the government.
- Extension of e-Tourist Visa at Sea Ports has been taken up with MHA and they are working on it

Secretary (Tourism) was very positive about the grievances which were expressed by the members. Regarding media sensitizing Zutshi suggested that we can have a joint meeting of MoT, IATO and Media and discuss in detailed with them. He would initiate this meeting with the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting Officials.

Zutshi also suggested to have one to one meeting with various ministries

viz. Transport/Railways/ Civil Aviation/MHA/ Culture to discuss issues raised as his Ministry's mandate is for effective coordination with them and he is committed to do that. He did not appreciate the idea of a whole day seminar with inter-ministry officials as this does not help.

For Branding of Incredible India Campaign and its rebranding, Zutshi and Suman Billa gave brief about the initiatives being taken by the Ministry and mentioned that ministry is seized on this work and by the new financial year, all these will be on schedule.

Secretary Tourism also mentioned that complaints of touts creating problems/ incidence requested members to report specific case and that will be taken up by the grievance cell. He also apprised on the following:-

- Proposed Pradhan Mantri Vikas Kosh
- India International Mart proposed to be hosted in a very big way
- Media plan will be ready somewhere in mid-March
 - Digital Consultant
 - Website will be of world class stature
 - Social Media (24X7 working with dedicated team)

For filling up the vacant posts, Ministry is considering using talent pool from private sectors for deputing at overseas offices and may be 25% will be picked up from other pool so that there is mix of right ability.

On the guides' issues, Suman Billa mentioned that Ministry is working on massive drive for licensing of guides. There is a plan to have guides all over which could be around 75000. He also mentioned that for purchasing the Satellite phone orders have been passed by the concerned authorities but yet to be purchased.

Vote of thanks was raised by Pronab Sarkar, Secretary, IATO. The assurance that Ministry is already seized with all these issues and is ready to hold meetings with concerned Ministries was very moral boosting for our members. Meeting ended with vote of thanks to the chair followed by lunch hosted by IATO.



IATO ACHIEVEMENTS FOR THE YEAR 2015

The previous year had been challenging in terms of inbound tourism to India. During last one year, IATO made all sincere efforts based on the inputs given by the members. While we could achieve some of the very long pending demands, there were some areas, where our efforts are still continued and will not stop till we get the success.

- The foremost is the e-Tourist Visa made a reality. The dream became reality on 27th November 2015 when IATO took the initiative on its shoulder to have this unique opportunity of launching by Union Home Minister Rajnath Singh in the presence of Tourism Minister, Secretary (Tourism), Secretary (Home) and host of other senior officials from all government Ministries MEA, MHA, FINANCE, CIVIL AVIATION, DIPLOMATIC CORP, airlines, media members. Over 1200 members were present & IATO hosted the event. Now 113 Nationals can take advantage of this facility.
- Monuments entry fee for ASI monuments which is going to be increased exorbitantly and going to be implemented got deferred.
- IATO emphasized on Air India to increase Free Baggage allowance from 15 kgs to 25 kgs on all its domestic sectors.
- Ministry of Tourism website www.incredibleindia.org linked with IATO website for lead generation and queries. This really benefited our members. Even though we are not satisfied, we are continuing our efforts to make it more effective.
- IATO was especially given the responsibility to handle all Ministry of Tourism sponsored Hospitality guests; Tour Operators, Media members, TV Teams, Decision Makers from overseas. IATO handled over 150 MOT sponsored Fam Tours in a very transparent manner. Each Fam Tour was handled by IATO members professionally.
- IATO successfully arranged 5 FAM TOURS for members for Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Jammu & Kashmir, Punjab and Madhya Pradesh.
- IATO restructured all sub-committees to ensure greater participation of members and better delivery.
- IATO website www.iato.in revamped with all relevant Government circulars, Notifications, Guidelines, put on the website for easy reference of members.
- Marketing Development Assistance Scheme of the

Ministry of Tourism, Govt. of India got revised as per IATO recommendations covering accommodation also. Though it took nearly three years, ultimately success came on 9th August, 2015. Details can be seen on IATO Website. This was also circulated to members.

- Code of Conduct for Best Practices was circulated earlier and now have been made Mandatory for members for renewal of Membership and to obtain Ministry of Tourism approval. Member's response has been overwhelming. It ensures ethical practices in tourism business operations.
- Enhanced Roadshows and organized six Road Shows covering 18 cities in collaboration with the Ministry of Tourism. We had ensured that these are professionally organized by having professional PR Agency (specially for language speaking markets).
- Inviting International Associations to hold their Board meetings in India. USTOA was hosted by IATO with Ministry of Tourism support. We had DRV from Germany in September 2015.
- Training Programme for IATO members continued regularly and over 6 such training programme conducted and member's feedback was very inspiring.
- IATO 31st Annual Convention was successfully completed in Indore with largest ever attendance and members liked the strong content of the Business Sessions, learned Speakers, Social evenings and Post Convention Tours.
- Holding first ever Global Travel Mart (GET India) on Service Sector under the aegis of Ministry of Commerce and Ministry of Tourism, Government of India was organized from 23-25 April, 2015 at Pragati Maidan and IATO handled the physical arrangements of the guests and played important role in overall coordination of the event specially inviting overseas tour operators through its members and handling the Fam Tours, B2B buyers/sellers meet professionally. IATO services were well appreciated by Ministry of Commerce and Ministry of Tourism and FAITH who gave the responsibility to IATO.
- IATO made useful contribution in Ministry of Tourism's New Tourism Policy, Civil Aviation Policy, Clean India Campaign, New initiatives of PRASAD AND SWADESH DARSHAN, Skill Development Programme "HUNAR SE ROZGAR" Cruise Policy Revision of Guidelines for classification of Hotel,

Bilateral Meets with Foreign delegations and all such areas where IATO was duly considered as THINK TANK for Tourism Development Plan.

- IATO contributed to the Ministry of Tourism on “Study of Taxes/GST levied on Tourism Sector Vis-à-vis Export Sector and compared to neighboring countries. Considering Inbound Tourism to be equated to export of goods by way of earning significant amount of foreign exchange, a detailed assessment of the Export Benefits and Schemes available were studied. This has sanctified our claim that tourism is the largest contributor of Foreign Exchange in our country.
- IATO gave its valuable inputs for finalizing the National Tourism Policy Guidelines to the Ministry of Tourism, Govt. of India which was recently announced on 27th September 2015 at the function held at The Samrat Hotel on the occasion of World Tourism Day.
- IATO made focused approach to Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Civil Aviation other concerned ministries which made impact on government decision process on the following:-
 - Availability of CENVAT Credit on Service Tax Charged on Services provided in a tour package as well as on the overall tour package.
 - Increase in Benefit under SFIS Scheme
 - Reduction in Value Added Tax (VAT) on Air Turbine Fuel.
 - Harmonization of State entry/Road Tax for Commercial vehicles so that travel is seamless across India.
 - Infrastructure (Air/Rail connectivity/stay facilities and issues of important places like Buddhist

Circuit etc.

- IATO made its presence felt in the successful running of the Buddhist Conclave organized by Ministry of Tourism in Bodhgaya, Sarnath and Varanasi.
- IATO's faculty assistance in IITTM courses for 24 hrs. Helpline has been recognized by Ministry of Tourism. This 24 hrs. Helpline has been done on the repeated requests of IATO to Ministry of Tourism. Now this will be available with 12 Foreign Languages. The 24 hour helpline number is 1800111363 or on a short code 1363.
- IATO's New look Newsletter became an instrument for maintaining link with our membership and developing PR with Trade Bodies, Government Ministries and Quality and Contents have received favorable response.
- IATO ensured with the help of our Ministry that movement of commercial vehicles is not affected due to Even – Odd Formula of Delhi Government.
- An Audio visual Presentation for Marketing India was made by IATO for using during seminars, workshops, road shows etc. and link was provided to the members to download and use it during promotional and marketing activities by the members.

There are many miles to go and fulfill the dreams of our members like exemption of service tax on the foreign exchange earnings, benefits given to exporters of goods, problems members are facing with regard to e-Tourist Visa and Biometric process at the International airports in India etc. and on behalf of the EC, I assure that our efforts will continue to achieve more and clear all the hurdles which are negatively affecting the growth of tourism.

DR. MAHESH SHARMA LAUNCHES 24X7 TOLL FREE TOURIST INFOLINE IN 12 INTERNATIONAL LANGUAGES

Dr. Mahesh Sharma, Minister of State (I/C) for Tourism & Culture and Minister of State for Civil Aviation launched the 24x7 Toll Free Tourist Infoline in 12 international languages including Hindi and English. This project is being implemented by the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India through M/s. TATA BSS who have been associated with the work after open bidding process.

This service is available on the Toll Free number 1800111363 or on a short code 1363 and operational 24X 7 (all days) in a year. The Tourist Infoline will have a 'multi-lingual helpdesk' in the designated languages to provide support service in terms of providing information relating to Travel &

Tourism in India to the domestic and International tourists/visitors and to assist the callers with advice on action to be taken during times of distress while travelling in India and if need be alert the concerned authorities.

The languages handled by the contact centers include ten International languages besides English and Hindi, namely, Arabic, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Chinese, Portuguese, Russian and Spanish. The calls made by tourists (both international and domestic) while in India will be free of charge. The international tourists in India and also international callers who speak the aforesaid languages will be directed to the call agents proficient in the respective language.



IATO celebrates its Annual Day on 31st January 2016

IATO Annual Day event was held on Sunday, the 31st January 2016 at The Taj- Gateway Resort, Damdama Lake Gurgaon. IATO members' presence in large numbers made the event colorful and remarkable. Luckily the weather was also very conducive for such outing and members enjoyed a lot in brilliant sunshine. Variety of sports and other activities were arranged on this occasion with special corner for laying hands on terracotta wheels, sugar candy point, sporty pistol shooting range, nail painting, caricature portrait painting, adventure sports arena and music and dance central stage.

IATO did its best to engage all family members with choice of activities and also choice of food and beverages. Everybody participated in the competitive events and got some prizes/gifts to take back as souvenir.

Many members, who attended the event, highly expressed their

happiness for the excellent arrangements. Rajat Gupta from Wind Horse Tours, said, "It was a great fun to be with IATO family this weekend. The event was quite a blowout. We had such fun seeing and getting to know fraternity members. We look forward for more such events to come out of our monotonous work life and enjoy to fullest."

Piyush Kapoor, General Manager, Hotel Ritz Plaza, said, "Thank you all for this wonderful day of fun and bonding with all our industry colleagues. We thoroughly enjoyed the event. Thanks to all IATO officials for organizing this annual day get together."

This gave IATO a lot of encouragement and motivation for the job done and will help the association to keep its members remain united for such collective efforts in future and achieve similar success in all fronts.





Promotion of Rail Tourism— Problems and IATO's Suggestions

S.No.	Subject	Problems	Solutions
1	Group Reservation	<p>Currently representative of any Indian school group or Indian wedding party is facilitated by supervisor of reservations in Indian Railways to issue the group ticket so that the party can undertake the journey as whole group with seat allocation done in continuity serial wise.</p> <p>However there is no provision for foreign groups of IATO members to book their foreign groups since there are no RTA's/RTSA's in existence as agents/representatives of Indian Railways.</p>	<p>Allocate a separate booking window as Nodal point for IATO members to be allowed to physically buy and obtain the tickets for their overseas foreign groups. Similarly IATO members who are recognized by Ministry of Tourism be allowed to act as representatives to serve the foreign groups for the cause of the nation.</p>
2	Reservation Timings on IRCTC website	<p>Most of our IATO members were earlier booking the train tickets for their foreign groups and individuals thru RTA's/RTSA's but after the licenses were not further renewed by the Indian Railways, many of our members started facing difficulties in serving their clients. Some of them also became sub agents of IRCTC/Birdres to buy online tickets thru these portals for Individual clients from 1 to 6 pax only in particular form.</p> <p>However, as per the new guidelines of Indian Railways had changed the timings from earlier 0800 Hrs to now 1200 Hrs. Also on the weekends the IRCTC site gets hanged many times.</p> <p>General public are allowed to reserve the ticket at 0800 hrs itself by opening their individual ID.</p>	<p>IATO members, who are earning almost 80% of the foreign exchange for incoming tourists which is great engine for the economic growth of our nation, should be allowed to open their email ID with login thru IRCTC portal by having similar facility of 0800 Hrs onwards.</p>
3	Platform Entry Passes for IATO members	<p>In order to service the foreign groups and individuals our IATO members buy platform tickets whose sale is suspended during/around special occasions like 15th August, 02 October, 26th January and during Puja holidays etc. etc</p>	<p>Members of IATO should be facilitated with issuance of special pass to serve foreign clients for arrival and departure at the platforms. Just like the airport authority issues special passes against payment on 6 monthly basis, same way Indian Railways can greatly benefit the foreign travelers by issuance of such passes to IATO members.</p>
4	Special Insurance Coverage- Safety and Security	<p>Safety and security is paramount for all travelers. Present insurance coverage for Indian and foreign passengers travelling on any of the train sector is INR 4 Lakh per pax</p>	<p>After the recent accident which happened on 12 Sep' 2015 Kalka to Shimla route, confidence of the foreign tour operators is shaken up and they are very concerned for future promotion of their groups for travel on Indian Railways. In order to repose the confidence back amongst the travel fraternity in overseas world, it is strongly recommended to increase the coverage up to INR 20 Lakh per pax.</p>
5	Advance Purchase of tickets	<p>Currently the reservation facility is available to the GSA's of Indian Railways who are based in Overseas countries for booking the train sectors 360 days prior to their date of journey. The overseas GSA communicates with foreign tourist office of Indian Railways located in Station Building of New Delhi Railways Station on first floor. Likewise some other gateway cities of India are providing such facility for GSA's as well as foreign tourists who arrive at the last minute.</p>	<p>Railways should allow similar facility to IATO members so that they can purchase train tickets for their foreign groups and individuals, either thru advance purchase or for their tourists who plan the itinerary after arrival in India.</p>
6	Tourist Bogies	<p>a) Even if the application is presented 6 months prior of the journey, to Baroda House office of Indian Railways for Hiring of Tourist Bogies on Toy Trains/Other Trains but the confirmation is only given at the very last moment. Our foreign groups keep chasing us for status but fail to obtain the reply from the Baroda House office.</p> <p>b) Security deposit Refund is quite difficult to get back and takes ages to recover.</p> <p>c) Hiring charges for extra coach are costlier almost two and half times of the ticket cost. Supposing the group wants to hire coach for sector Delhi to Sawaimadhopur, then Indian Railways levy point to point charge Delhi to Mumbai and Back plus 40% taxes. This is on a very high side.</p>	<p>a) Coach should be confirmed at least 30 days in advance along with full payment prior to the journey date.</p> <p>b) After the completion of the journey, security deposit amount should be refunded within 72 hours.</p> <p>c) In the earlier days it used to be only single journey plus taxes were charged for hiring of coaches, which should be reinstated</p>

S.No.	Subject	Problems	Solutions
7	Dual Tariff system for Luxury Trains	<p>a) Luxury trains are being operated by IRCTC, RTDC, KTDC and MTDC as per following</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Palace on Wheels (run by RTDC) • Royal Rajasthan (run by RTDC) • Maharaja Express (run by IRCTC) • Deccan Odyssey (run by MTDC) • Golden Chariot (Run by KSTDc) <p>b) All the above development corporations has set a tariff for the luxury train in foreign currency (US Dollars).</p> <p>c) As we quote to clients and tour operators months in advance, the lack of a stable price does not allow us to give a firm price and so our members are discouraging clients from buying the train.</p> <p>d) More importantly, our members are losing real money on payments to IRCTC/RTDC/ MTDC/KSTDc. We are charged an exchange rate HIGHER by them than what we receive our payments in and our members lose up to 1.5% simply on this.</p>	<p>a) We sincerely request that tariff should be in Indian Rupees only, both for Indian and Foreign Traveller and this step will send a very positive signal to the global tourism industry.</p> <p>b) May I request that necessary directives may please given to RTDC, MTDC, KSTDc and IRCTC to fix INR tariff only both for domestic and foreign clients so that our members do not face any problem in promoting the luxury trains.</p>

IATO MEMBERS SUPPORT FOR 'SPIRIT OF INDIA RUN'

The Ministry of Tourism has received a proposal from the High Commission of India in Canberra regarding the Spirit of India Run by Pat Farmer, a long distance runner, who has also served as a Member of Parliament from Sydney and as Assistant Minister for Education and Sports in the Government of Prime Minister John Howard. Pat Farmer will undertake 'Spirit of India Run' from Cape Comorin to Srinagar. The run will start on 26th January 2016 from Cape Comorin and will finish on 31st March in Srinagar.

He would be accompanied by a filming crew who would be moving ahead of him to film important places of interest identified by the respective State Govt./UT. About 15 evening functions would be planned out during his run with a finale in an iconic place in Delhi.

This run is aimed at cementing relations between India and Australia; encourage tourism and personal relationships with a view to create awareness of India as a tourism destination and showcase India as a positive country in Australia; and support causes and charity which in the current endeavor is to raise funds for education of the girl child.

IATO has been made responsible by the Ministry for the following:-

- Two experienced drivers with sound background knowledge of roads/routes and tourist spots of the respective States for the vehicles being provided by Mahindra



- Standardized T-shirts and caps to the Runners
 - Local Chapters to participate in all the events with local people who are connected with tourism
- State chapters are being provided with T-shirts and caps as also has been requested to coordinate with concerned Govt. of India Tourist Office about the arrivals/departure of Pat Farmer and his team so

that Chapter Chairman can organize befitting welcome/see off ceremony from IATO side. IATO Chapter Chairmen have been requested to coordinate with the India tourism offices/state tourism departments for flag off ceremony of the run and to welcome Pat Farmer and his team in their state respectively.

Revised Guide Fee w.e.f. 01 December 2015 to 30 September 2017

Indian Association of Tour Operators (IATO) and Tourists Guide Federation of India (TGFI) signed an agreement for the Guide Fee w.e.f. 01 December 2015 to 30 September 2017. The agreement was signed between Pronab Sarkar, Secretary, IATO and Narendra Singh Rathore, President, TGFI on 12th October 2015.

Particulars	Fee from 01 December 2015 to 30 September 2016	Fee from 01 October 2016 to 30 September 2017
1. GUIDE FEE		
1 - 5 Persons		
a) Half Day	1190	1370
b) Full Day	1510	1730
6 - 14 Persons		
a) Half Day	1510	1730
b) Full Day	1940	2240
15 - 40 Persons		
a) Half Day	2000	2300
b) Full Day	2620	3010
From 41 Pax onward in a group, services of two guides should be used or only half day extra guide fee to be paid		
2. LANGUAGE ALLOWANCE		
1 - 14 Persons		
a) Half Day	480	550
b) Full Day	640	730
15 Persons Onwards		
a) Half Day	520	590
b) Full Day	790	910
3. OUTSTATION EXCURSION ALLOWANCE		
(Applicable only when the minimum distance covered is beyond 100 kms. per day and involves no overnight stay)	1030	1190
4. OUTSTATION ALLOWANCE		
• For outstation guiding, escorting, accompanying irrespective of size per night, when a travel agent/tour operator/excursion agent does not provide hotel accommodation and meals	2860	3290
• For outstation guiding, escorting, accompanying of groups irrespective of size per night, when a travel agent/tour operator/excursion agent provide hotel accommodation and meals and bear such expenses	950	1100
• When on escorting assignment, if the duty exceeds 12 continuous hours additional allowance to be paid	790	910
5. CONVEYANCE ALLOWANCE		
• To report for assignment in metro cities (covering Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata, Chennai before 0730 hours or finishing after 2030 hours	480	550
• Other Cities	200	230
6. EXTRA ALLOWANCE		
For Delhi sightseeing whether Half Day of Full Day	240	270
7. CONVEYANCE ALLOWANCE		
To report or to return Fatehpur Sikri and Sikandra- Ex Agra, but to be paid only once either for going or for coming	160	180

Particulars	Fee from 01 December 2015 to 30 September 2016	Fee from 01 October 2016 to 30 September 2017
8. All other allowance like lunch, overtime, transport etc. will not be payable and will be covered in the above fees		
9. The following excursions would be paid as full day		
• Elephanta caves excursion		
• Excursion to Fatehpur Sikri		
• Excursion to Bharatpur		
• Excursion to Fatehpur Sikri and Bharatpur		
• Excursion to Mahabalipuram, Kanchipuram from Chennai		
• Excursion from Trivandrum to Kanyakumari		
• Excursion to Daultabad (or) Ellora		
10. For the following excursion tours (vice-a-versa), which exceed 8 hours, an extra allowance would be paid in addition to all the above fee and allowances.	640	730
• Hyderabad - Warrangal - Palampet and back		
• Chennai- Kanchipuram - Mahabalipuram and back		
• Chennai - Tirupati/Thirumala and back		
• Chennai - Pondicherry and back		
• Chennai - Gingy Fort and back		
• Madurai - Tanjore - Trichy drop and back		
• Trivandrum - Kanyakumari and back		
• Kochi - Alleppey - Kottayam and back		
• Bangalore - Mysore, Brindavan Garden and back		
• Bangalore - Belur- Halebid and back		
• Mumbai – Karla, Bhaja, Bedsa and back		
• Aurangabad - Ajanta Caves and Ellora		
• Kolkata to Shantiniketan and back		
• Kolkata to Bishnupur and back		
• Ranakpur and Kumbhalgarh - Ex Udaipur		
• Same Day Trip to Agra (Delhi-Agra-Delhi)		
• Chennai City Sightseeing + Kanchipuram		
• Chennai City Sightseeing + Mahabalipuram		
• Jaipur - Ajmer – Pushkar		
• Varanasi - Kushinagar – Varanasi		
• Varanasi - Bodh Gaya - Varanasi		
11. Wherever language or outstation or overnight allowance are applicable, the same will be over and above the guide fee that would be applicable		
12. Suitable imprest amount (covering the case outgoes on tour) May be given to the guides before the commencement of their assignment with the mutual understanding		
13. Usage of Guides shall be as per the laid policies of the Ministry of Tourism, Govt. of India		
14. Following Tours in Mumbai would be considered as full day		
• Heritage Walks in the Fort Enclave		
• Visit to Banganga, Khotachiwadi		
• City tours starting from hotels situated in the suburbs		
• A transport allowance of Rs. 120/- should also be considered to reach these hotels		
• Local sightseeing tours that exceed beyond 8 hours, the extra hours should be calculated as a half day tour		
• Bhuleshwar and Mumbadevi		
15. Special allowance for Aarti on Ghats in Banaras		
• Morning Aarti	240	270
• Evening Aarti	320	370
16. The fee and allowance agreed above between IATO and TGFI are to be paid in full and are not negotiable. There will be no extra charges in addition to the above for escorting groups.		

PERCENTAGE
SHARE OF FTAS
IN INDIA DURING
JANUARY 2016
AMONG TOP 10
SOURCE
COUNTRIES

15.29%
USA

11.99%
Bangladesh

11.23%
UK

4.87%
Canada

3.97%
Australia

3.71%
Russian Federation

3.27%
Germany

2.98%
France

2.97%
Sri Lanka

2.74%
China

252.3% growth in tourists' arrival on E-Tourist Visa in January 2016

A total of 88,162 tourists arrived in January 2016 on e-Tourist Visa as compared to 25,023 during the month of January, 2015 registering a growth of 252.3%. Commencing from 27th November 2014, e-Tourist Visa facility is presently available for citizens of 113 countries arriving at 16 Airports in India. The following are the important highlights of e-Tourist Visa during January, 2016.

The following are the important highlights of e-Tourist Visa during January, 2016:

- During the month of January, 2016 a total of 88,162 tourist arrived on e-Tourist Visa as compared to 25,023 during the month of January, 2015 registering a growth of 252.3%.
- This high growth may be attributed to introduction of e-Tourist Visa for 113 countries as against the earlier coverage

of 43 countries.

- The percentage shares of top 10 source countries availing e-Tourist Visa facilities during January, 2016 were as follows: UK (25.37%), USA (15.17%), Russian Fed. (9.58%), France (6.00%), Australia (5.25%), Germany (4.23%), Canada (4.10%), China (3.96%), Republic of Korea (3.72%) and Ukraine (2.86%).
- The percentage shares of top 10 ports in tourist arrivals on e-Tourist Visa during January, 2016 were as follows: New Delhi Airport (33.18%), Mumbai Airport (20.81%), Goa Airport (19.10%), Chennai Airport (6.95%), Bengaluru Airport (5.35%), Kochi Airport (4.17%), Kolkata Airport (2.99%), Trivandrum Airport (2.29%), Hyderabad Airport (2.13%) and Ahmadabad Airport (1.75%).

6.8% growth in FTAs in January 2016 over the same period in 2015

USA accounts for highest share of tourist arrivals in January 2016

Ministry of Tourism compiles monthly estimates of Foreign Tourist Arrivals (FTAs) on the basis of Nationality-wise, Port-wise data received from Bureau of Immigration (BOI) and Foreign Exchange Earnings (FEEs) from tourism on the basis of data available from Reserve Bank of India. The following are the important highlights regarding FTAs and FEEs from tourism during the month of January 2016.

Foreign Tourist Arrivals:

- FTAs during the month of January 2016 were 8.44 lakh as compared to FTAs of 7.91 lakh during the month of January 2015. There has been a growth of 6.8% in January 2016 over January 2015.
- The percentage share of FTAs in India during January 2016 among the top 15 source countries was highest from USA (15.29%) followed by Bangladesh (11.99%), UK (11.23%), Canada (4.87%), Australia (3.97%), Russian Federation (3.71%), Germany (3.27%), France (2.98%), Sri Lanka (2.97%), China (2.74%), Malaysia (2.59%), Japan (2.38%), Rep. of Korea (1.82%), Nepal (1.76%) and Afghanistan (1.62%).
- The percentage share of FTAs in India during January 2016 among the top 15 ports was highest at Delhi Airport

(28.38%) followed by Mumbai Airport (19.59%), Chennai Airport (7.92%), Haridaspur Land check post (6.58%), Bangalore Airport (5.72%), Goa Airport (5.68%), Kolkata Airport (3.92%), Cochin Airport (3.86%), Ahmadabad Airport (3.48%), Hyderabad Airport (2.83%), Trivandrum Airport (1.84%), Gede Rail (1.51%), Tiruchirapalli Airport (1.26%), Amritsar Airport (0.82%) and Sonauli Land check post (0.76%).

Foreign Exchange Earnings:

- FEEs during the month of January 2016 were Rs. 13,669 crore as compared to Rs. 12,100 crore in January 2015.
- The growth rate in FEEs in rupee terms during January 2016 over January 2015 was 13.0% as compared to a positive growth of 3.7% in January 2015.
- FEEs in US\$ terms during the month of January 2016 were US\$ 2.032 billion as compared to FEEs of US\$ 1.945 billion during the month of January 2015.
- The growth rate in FEEs in US\$ terms in January 2016 over January 2015 was 4.5% compared to a positive growth of 3.5% in January 2015.

Source: Ministry of Tourism, Government of India



IATO Manual ready for distribution

Indian Association of Tour Operators (IATO) brings out 2015-2016 edition of the IATO Manual for the Indore Convention (August 20-23, 2015). The Manual begins with good luck messages to the IATO team for the Convention followed by overview of IATO, its achievements, destination India, list of the Active and Allied members etc.

New Membership approved w.e.f 21st December, 2015

ACTIVE (Change of Status)

1. Mondial Trails Tours & Travels (P) Ltd.
Manish Chhibber, Head Sales
Tel: 011-47353636, 25362305
Email: info@mondialtrails.com
Web: www.mondialtrails.com

2. Indian Journey
Parvez Khan, CEO
Tel: 011- 25540786
Email: info@indianjourney.com
Web: www.indianjourney.com

3. Kalypso Adventures Pvt. Ltd.
Cmdr. Sam T. Samuel,
Managing Director
Tel: 0484-4012700
Email: info@kalypsoadventures.com
Web: www.kalypsoadventures.com

4. Buddha Holidays Pvt. Ltd.
Rashid Khan, Director
Peeyush Verma, Director
Tel: 0542-2504196, 2505948
Email: buddhaholidays@gmail.com
Web: www.buddhaholidays.com

5. Total Holiday Options Pvt. Ltd.
Arun Xavier Biswas, General Manager
Tel: 011-25308100
Email: arun@totalholidayoptions.in
Web: www.totalholidayoptions.in

ALLIED

1. Nalin's Travels
RabindraNath Panda, Proprietor
Tel: 0663-2400407
Email: nalins.travels@gmail.com

2. Inside India Holidays Pvt. Ltd.
Arvind Kumar Arya, Managing Director
Prince Dhamija, Managing Director
Tel: 011-65022446
Email: insideindiaholidays@gmail.com

3. Sunbeam Travels (Baroda) Pvt. Ltd.
Bina Kajaria, Director
Tel: 0265-2352021-22-91
Email: bharat@sunbeamstravels.com
Web: www.sunbeamstravels.com

4. Parth Travels
Hiten Katira, Proprietor
Tel: 0281-2462062
Email: parthtravelsrajkot@gmail.com

5. Hazel Treks N Tours
Pankaj Chheda, Proprietor
Tel: (M) 8454847518, 9969697518
Email: pankaj@hazeltravels.in
Web: www.hazeltravels.in

6. VMV Holidays Ltd.
Vikram Bajaj, Director

Tel: 033-40060699
Email: vmvholidays.memberships@gmail.com
Web: www.vmvholidays.com

7. Choice Holidays India.com
Ritesh Mundhra, Proprietor
Tel: 0771- 4032503
Email: ritesh@choiceholidaysindia.com
Web: www.choiceholidaysindia.com

8. Milesworth Travels and Tours Pvt. Ltd.
Ashish Gupta, Managing Director
Tel: 044-24338664-66
Email: ashish@milesworth.com
Web: www.milesworth.com

9. Arihant Tourist
Arihant Jain, Proprietor
Tel: 9719281920
Email: info@arihanttourist.in
Web: www.arihanttourist.in

10. Beat Travel Pvt. Ltd.
Digvijay Singh Rathore, Director
Naveen Yadav, Director
Tel: 0141-6519797
Email: headoffice@indiabeat.co.uk
Web: www.india.co.uk

11. Explore India Journeys
Manzoor Ahmad Karnai,
Proprietor (M) 9810198203
Email: rajeev@exploreindiajourneys.com
Web: www.exploreindia.co

12. Triplogin
Rajkumar C.Rath
Tel: 011-47824742
Email: raj@triplogin.com
Web: www.triplogin.in

13. Historical Hospitality Pvt. Ltd.
Jitendra Rathore, Founder Chairman
Tel: 011-26781240
Email: hhpsales@gmail.com
Web: www.indianhistoricalhospitality.com

14. Leisure Republic DMC
Deepshikha Singh, Proprietor
Tel: 0120-2891234
Email: services@leisurerepublicdmc.com
Web: www.leisurerepublicdmc.com

15. 99 Destinations
Fenil M. Bhayani, Partner
Tel: 0278-3005899, 2572799
Email: 99destinations@gmail.com
Web: www.99destinations.in

16. India Easy Trip Pvt. Ltd.

Sunil Kumar Saini, Director
Tel: 01334-326265
Email: indiaeasytrip@gmail.com
Web: www.indiaeasytrip.com

17. Exotic India Tourism
Jahangir Ahmad Wani, Proprietor
Tel: 011-23367786
Email: exoticindiaturism@gmail.com
Web: www.exoticindiaturism.com

18. SKG Tours Pvt. Ltd.
Sushil Kumar Gaur, Director
Tel: 0124-4082628
Email: info@skgtours.com
Web: www.skgtours.com

19. Open World Trips U/o Long Island
Travel Pvt. Ltd.
B. Rajagopalan, CEO
Ajay Jain, Director
Tel: 0124-2544500
Email: aj@openworldtrips.com
Web: www.openworldtrips.com

20. Pushpak Air Travels
Vishal Agarwal, Proprietor
Tel: 0361-2456789
Email: hr@pushpakgroup.com

21. Love India Travel
S. Radhakrishnan, Director
Tel: 022-27650150
Email: anil@loveindiatravel.com
Web: www.loveindiatravel.com

22. Terra World Travel (India) Pvt Ltd.
Nandini Lohia, Managing Director
Vijay Dhapola, Director
Tel: 011-26125550-552
Email: terraworld@vsnl.net
Web: www.terraworldtravel.com

23. Insight Vacations Pvt. Ltd.
Susanta Kumar Satapathy,
Managing Director
Tel: 0679-6571587
Email: sales@insightvacations.in
Web: www.insightvacations.in

24. Aviation Services Management
(India) Pvt. Ltd.
Vito Guilherme Gomes, Founder & MD
Tel: 0832-2465200-11
Email: goa@asm.services.aero
Web: www.asm.services.aero

25. Skyking
Prabhash Kumar Choudhary
Managing Partner
Tel: 0674-2390123-125
Email: skykingbbi@gmail.com
Web: www.skyking.co.in

26. The Explorers
Aloke Bajpai, Managing Partner
Tel: 022-22004774-5
Email: enquiries@theexplorersindia.com
Web: www.theexplorersindia.com

ASSOCIATE

1. Vinayak Holidays
Surendra Kumar, Proprietor
Tel: 079-26400835
Email: info@vinayakholidays.com
Web: www.vinayakholidays.com

NEW MEMBERSHIP APPROVED ON 9TH FEBRUARY, 2016

ACTIVE (Change of Status)

1. Shrishti Tours & Travels Pvt. Ltd.
Rajat Bagaria, Managing Director
Geeta Goyal, Director
Tel: 022-40948000
Email: info@sttpl.net
Web: www.shrishtiholidays.in

2. Hans Holidays Pvt. Ltd.
Kaulesh Kumar, Director
Uttam Kumar, Director
Tel: 06112-255524
Email: kaulesh@hansholidays.com
Web: www.hansholidays.com

3. IDMS Tours Pvt. Ltd.
Pramod Bhatnagar, Director
Usha Bhatnagar, Director
Tel: 011-29521080
Email: pramod@idmstours.co.in
Web: www.idms.co.in

ALLIED

1. Dnata International Pvt. Ltd.
Ashish Kishore, Country Head
Tel: 0124-6699999
Email: ashish.kishore@dnata.com
Web: www.dnata.com

2. Asian Voyages
Rajdeep Singh, Proprietor
Tel: 0141- 4011170/ 2220002
Email: asianvoyages@gmail.com
Web: www.asianvoyages.co.in

3. AVN Travels & Exhibitions Pvt. Ltd.
Alekh Kumar Pandey, Director
Vivek Bhardwaj, Director
Surender Meena, Director
Tel: 011-45515303
Email: info@avntravels.com
Web: www.avntravels.com
4. Shrine Voyages
Rajan Muthuswami Naidu, Proprietor
Tel: 022-40073333
Email: info@shrinevoyages.in
Web: www.shrinevoyages.in

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Write/Fax/E-mail your opinion and suggestions to us at
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310 Padma Tower II, 22 Rajendra Place, New Delhi – 110 008, Tel: 91-11- 25750034, 25754478, 25738803
Fax: 91-11- 25750028, E-Mail: iato@airtelmail.in, iato@eth.net Website: www.iato.in

Mirage like, almost mingled in the dry foliage, the gentle,
controlled, sauntering... Lion!

Not just one, many. The entire lot begins moving towards us,
getting closer and closer...

and is now a few feet away from my hand!!

And why do I still wish that they had come closer?
Maybe they will, in your tour.

Antony Sacchan



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Tourism

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