The TAAI Magazine

NamasTAAI

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MAY 2020

Digital Issue Launch



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Our reach includes Travel Agencies, Tour Operators (Domestic, Inbound and Outbound), National Tourism Boards, Airlines, Hotels, Excursion Agencies, Government Tourist Offices, GDS Companies, Travel and Tourism Educational Institutes, Industry leaders in Government and Media.

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The World Health Organization (WHO) officially declared COVID-19 a pandemic. However, none of us could assess the gravity of the situation till the lockdown was announced. No one of us in living memory has any inkling on dealing with this situation since history has been rewritten with this event. COVID-19 will be a lesson, hard learned, for generations to come.

While comparisons are being made to the World War II, we could only know in the coming months what kind of economic, monetary and human resource damage this catastrophic contagion has had on this generation that thrives on technology. What compounded the problem is the duration of the crisis as it still remains very much unclear.



This global health crisis presents the tourism industry with excruciating painful and constantly evolving challenges. Recovery will be long, arduous and will test patience beyond imagination. Taking due cognisance, we reached out to all you members through a webinar titled 'Road to Recovery', and informed you about what measures we have initiated (Some of the letters are published in this newsletter for your perusal) for the survival stakeholders of the industry. We are continuing our dialogue with various departments of the government on a regular basis. I am happy to inform you that government is looking at our suggestions seriously.

Friends, it is certain that travel & tourism industry would take longest time to recover after the lockdown is lifted. This is because the industry depends on people's behaviour. Going forward, the dynamics of the business will also change. The most popular destinations of the world may not be the same in terms of attracting footfalls. This means people will avoid crowded locations and instead will visit off beat and secluded destinations. It is also an indication that demographically travel patterns will change. The business activity of the industry will start with domestic travel, and the segment will remain in focus for some time. Technology will play a more important role from what it is now.

I am sharing my thoughts with you so that you can prepare yourself for the future. We all know that road to recovery is tough. But I am hopeful that collectively we can overcome all hurdles. I also very strongly believe that we will need to Reinvent & Restructure ourselves and build an environment to fight such challenges in the future. This digital issue of your very own NamasTAAI India is a window into the world of our efforts, and we are open to receiving your suggestions & feedback to collectively represent our cause.

Stay Home, Stay Safe.

Thanks & Best Regards

Jyoti Mayal
President, TAAI & Vice Chairperson, FAITH
president@taai.in



Dear Colleagues,



Greetings!

TAAI Team 2019-21 was elected by you with full confidence and support on November 28, 2019. Three months passed comfortably, and the entire committee was settling in with their respective portfolios to ensure growth and progress for our trade. We met the Minister of Civil Aviation (MoCA) as well as the Tourism Secretary, Government of India. They assured us full support and the first set of recommendations was submitted to MoCA, at the beginning of the year in January. Tourism Educational Workshops were successfully held with various domestic and international tourism boards across the country.

TCS was imposed on us by the Finance Minister and our battle began. The holiday season was coming up soon and we sent representations to all concerned in the government from CBDT, FinMin, NITI Aayog, Tourism Ministry, MoCA and up to the Hon'ble Prime Minister. Due to lockdown, TCS got differed up to September 30, 2020. They heard and acknowledged our representation. During our tough times of lockdown, we were asked to clarify our requests on TCS and as you read this, our fresh representation with clarifications has reached the Ministry officials for a Total Withdrawal of TCS.

As we approached 100 days in office, the catastrophe, COVID-2019 struck the world and a global pandemic was announced.

Everything has come to a standstill since then, but not for the Committee of your Association - TAAI.

Since the beginning of March, we started communicating with the Government of India, the airlines, tourism boards and members on a daily basis, informing them of the situation and what the committee has been doing. I shall not be exaggerating when I say that we, Office-Bearers, have been working 24x7.

With our positive attitude and confidence, we have been your strongest voice to IATA at APJC meetings, with MoCA, MoT, Ministry of Commerce and all others who could assist.

The support came in from UFTAA and FAITH, one being our Global representative Federation with the IATA/ Airlines, and FAITH our national Federation of Tourism & Hospitality.

CII and FICCI also supported us and voiced the concerns of TAAI to the government, instantly.

Friends, it's still not over. Our primary concern is of Survival and the Revival. Yes, it is going to take time for us to Revive and we all need to be united and positive, as always.

We have won many battles in the past but this is a WAR, against COVID-19 and we are trying to fight it with every resource we have.

The Airlines/IATA, Government has heard our voices and concerns loud and clear. Our video conference meetings have been fruitful, but friends, we rephrase the quote "the woods are dark and deep, but we have promises to keep, we have miles to go before we sleep, and miles to go before I sleep"

TAAI is there for you. We the Office-Bearers are one of you, and are sailing in the same boat. We shall together fight this war and shall soon be victorious.

We are humbled by your supportive messages to us, your Association colleagues. This shall be our Power to Fight.

NAMASTAAI, our friendly in-house magazine is being rolled out in a digital version this time due to the lockdown.

We seek your contributions for the upcoming issues be it with articles, your achievements, your experiences, your travel products and all that you might desire to be read by colleagues in our trade.

We Value Your Support and pray you Stay Safe! Stay Healthy!!

Warm Regards for prosperous days ahead.

Jay Bhatia
Vice President - TAAI
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TAAI has been active since day one and wishes to reassure members that we are working round the clock to protect your interests. We hear your concerns, we understand your issues and we are working tirelessly with all concerned Ministries in the Government/ with IATA/ with Airlines/ Hotels/Cruises/ Consulates and Embassies, on solutions to support us during this difficult time.

We are monitoring the COVID-19 situation on a daily basis and sending information updates to our all of you to understand where we stand. We are committed to work in ensuring that you - our members will survive this Global pandemic, revive and thrive post restrictions are lifted. We request everyone to stay safe and stay healthy!

Bettaiah Lokesh

Hon. Secretary General, TAAI

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Our approach to this crisis has to be broken up into a three stage process, namely Survival, Revival and Growth. From now until September/ October, which is the 'Survival' phase, we expect zero business, or zero arrivals and no holiday packages.

After that during the 'Revival' phase, there could be business but far lesser in numbers till December 2020. If everything goes well, starting January 2021, borders will open completely and embargos will be lifted, and we will enter the 'Growth' phase or back to business phase, when business should start picking up. We should see a steady growth from January 2021.

Shreeram Patel
Honorary Treasurer,TAAI
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NamasTAAI in a new Avatar

Going forward technology will play a very important role in the tourism industry than what it was earlier. During this lockdown, we adopted technology as there is no other option. We got used to it by overcoming all initial challenges. It is certain that sanitation, hygiene, and social distancing will remain in force for quite some time. Against this backdrop, work from home will be a norm. And offices will function with limited staff which means a shift on technology platforms. A closed look says that technology saves time and makes our life convenient. For a tourist, who wants to enquire about hygiene and sanitation of a hotel, can do so through technology. So, technology is going to be very crucial in future.

Our members are well aware of the role that technology is going to play in the future. So, we do not have to educate them much. The challenge is to educate the workers. Recently, we have done many meetings through technology in this lockdown. We have done virtual meetings with all our chapters with 100 per cent attendance. Frankly speaking, life has become more communicative with technology. I am sure more and more members are adapting to this quickly.

We would have provided technology platform to our members by April, had lockdown not thrown a spanner in our work. Besides technology, it is also time to work as a consortium and collaborate with each other. In this direction, we are hand-holding our members.

This is the best time to launch our digital version of NamasTAAI. It's a wonderful magazine and provides a plethora of information on important developments in the industry. With a digital copy, our reach will be far more than our print edition. Apart from other activities, this digital version will provide every detail of what we have done during the lockdown period.

My vision is to make it a complete knowledge platform which apart from enhancing knowledge also increases the business of our members.

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The road to recovery in a post-COVID world

By **Vinay Malhotra**, Regional Group COO – South Asia, Middle East & North Africa and Americas

The COVID-19 pandemic is expected to have a lasting impact on the global economy and particularly on the travel and tourism industry. With tourism accounting for 10% of global gross domestic product (GDP) and directly responsible for generating one in 10 of the world's jobs, any impact on travel and tourism will have a snowball effect on the global economy. The industry is also in a unique spot to help put the global economy back on its feet once the pandemic has passed.



SLOW BUT SURE RECOVERY

It may be premature to estimate the full impact of the Coronavirus pandemic (COVID-19) on international travel and tourism, with the course of the pandemic still evolving. But already, the World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC) has pegged the travel and tourism GDP loss to world economy at a substantial USD 2.1 trillion in 2020.

Hence, the road to recovery may take some time, but our past experiences prove that the travel and tourism industry is very resilient to geo-political and economic shocks. Whenever the pandemic is contained, business travel may well be the first to pick up. MICE (Meetings, incentives, conferences and exhibitions), however, may take much longer to recover owing to the large numbers the sector draws.

On the leisure front, VFR (Visiting friends and relatives) may still recover earlier as families would have been kept apart for the entirety of the pandemic, but holiday demand could be slower to grow. Experts predict a recovery of the travel and tourism industry perhaps by mid-2021 or even later. According to a March report by McKinsey, recovery pace will be faster for domestic travel, and slower for long-haul and international travel.

OPPORTUNITY IN ADVERSITY

If there is a silver lining to this crisis, it is that travel companies can think much more boldly and expansively about the future, and perhaps act on once-in-a-generation ideas.

As the world goes on a reset, centered and balanced lifestyle will become the new normal, thereby leading to surge in wellness travel.

Health and hygiene will become more important in the post-COVID world. From a visa application centre, an airplane, to sightseeing at a destination, people would look for an assurance that all touchpoints during a journey have adopted the health and hygiene aspect, in addition to security.

Online transactions will accelerate, but personal advice by travel agents and taking care of a customer will become more important as well.

Technology is set to become the biggest enabler for companies in the post-COVID world to ensure an enhanced customer experience. Companies should explore solutions that allow travellers to maintain social distancing norms as much as possible and at the same time, get a high level of service.

Whatever demand looks like when the crisis passes, in the short-term, it will definitely be lower than what it was as in pre-COVID times. However, the travel and tourism sector, with a proven track record for resilience during the 2008-2009 financial crisis and the 2003 SARS outbreak, is also well-placed to lead future recovery, and remains an above-average growth driver for many economies.

Thus, we are confident that when the situation improves, the travel and tourism industry will rally and show a positive trend. However, it's important to carefully monitor the evolution of the crisis, especially its impact on our industry, and align ourselves to cater to any new demands in terms of our services, which will make the paradigm shift in travel a comfortable experience for travellers. ■

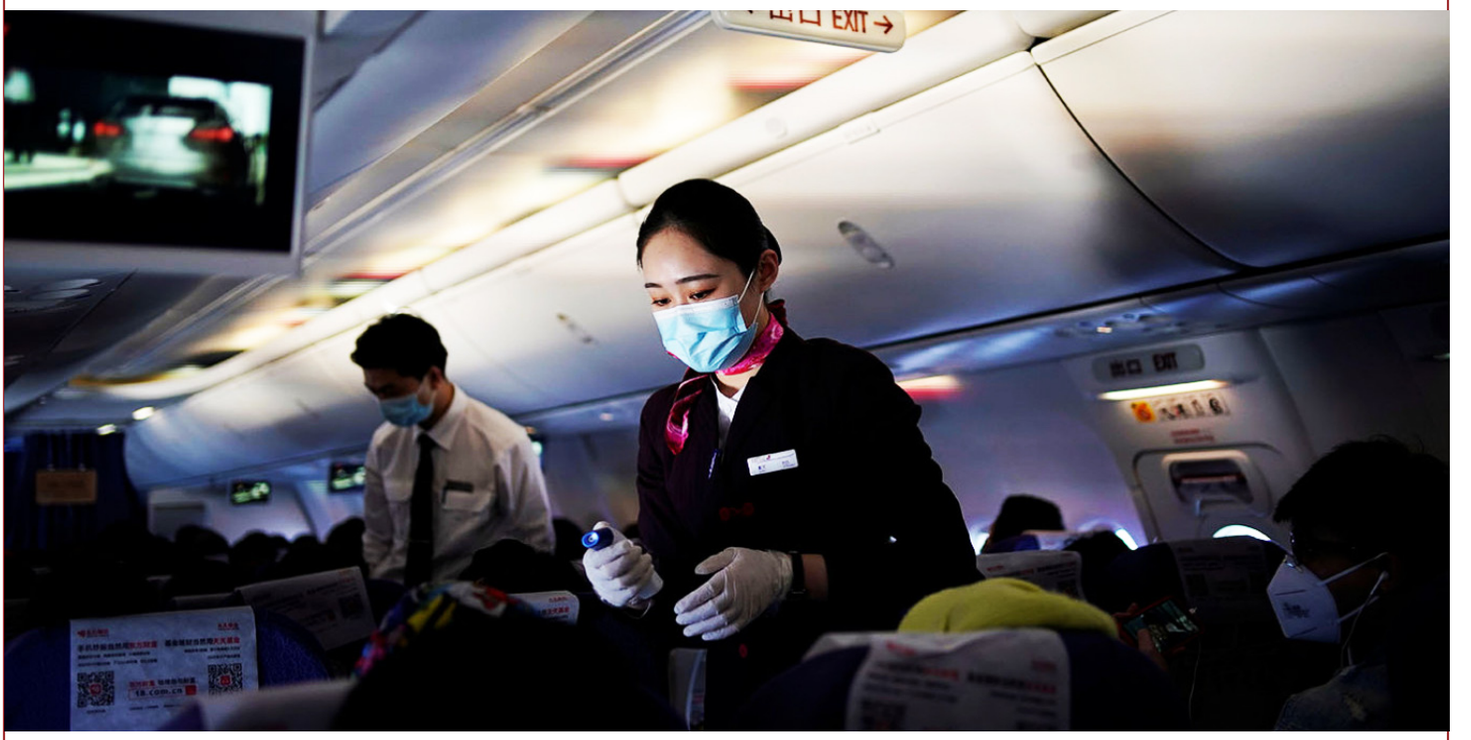


An Uphi

'Road to R

With the travel & tourism industry facing an existential crisis globally due to the travel curbs and border restrictions because of Covid-19 pandemic, the Travel Agents Association of India (TAAI) under the leadership of its dynamic president, Jyoti Mayal organised an online panel discussion to deliberate the 'Road to Recovery' for future. This discussion was organised in association with TravelBiz Monitor. TAAI's office bearers Jay Bhatia, Vice President; Bettaiah Lokesh, Hon. Secretary General; Shreeram Patel, Honorary Treasurer; were also a part of the discussion and shared their views and opinions.

Welcoming TAAI members and the agent fraternity, Mayal said that the industry is going through a crucial phase. "We got together here to let you know what



ill Task Recovery'

we are doing for our members and the industry at large," Mayal said.

Mayal informed that TAAI has already reached out to the Prime Minister, Finance Minister, Ministry of Civil Aviation, Ministry of Tourism and the Reserve Bank of India. "We have urged the various departments of the government to take relief measures against the backdrop of coronavirus pandemic, and help the industry to survive. The issues we raised right from GST exemption, loan waiver, refunds to agents from airlines and IATA, etc. The dialogue with the government is ongoing."

She reiterated that going forward businesses will face many challenges. "We are looking for a bailout package from the government to pay salaries and restart business from scratch."

Talking about IATA, she said that TAAI has made strong presentations in dealing with the aviation body. "We have already informed MoCA about

our issues on air ticket cancellation payments. We have requested IATA to not suspend any airline otherwise it will complicate the refund process for us, and we won't be able to survive after the twin defaults of Jet Airways and Kingfisher Airlines."

Moreover, Mayal stated that they are in regular touch with low-cost airlines. "We are looking for a favourable way out. Low-cost airlines are also looking into the issue and assisting us. This is rightfully our money and we must get it," she emphasised.

Commenting about the difficulties, Jay Bhatia, Vice President, TAAI, said, "As we approached 100 days in office, the catastrophe COVID-2019 struck the world and a global pandemic was announced. Everything has come to a standstill since then, but not for the Committee of your Association - TAAI."

While speaking about TAAI's efforts to lessen the negative impact of COVID-19 on travel agents, Bhatia said, "Since the beginning of March, we started communicating with the Government of India, the airlines, tourism boards and members on a daily basis, informing them of the situation and what the committee has been doing. I shall not exaggerate when I say that we, Office Bearers, have been working 24x7. With our positive attitude and confidence, we have been your strongest voice to IATA at APJC meetings, with MoCA, MOT, Ministry of Commerce and all others who could assist."

"Our primary concern is of survival and revival. It is going to take time for us to revive and we all need to be united and positive, as always. We have won many battles in the past but this is a WAR, against COVID-19 and we are trying to fight it with every weapon we have," he expressed.

Echoing the same thoughts, Bettaiah Lokesh, Hon. Secretary General, TAAI, said, "TAAI has been active since day one and wishes to reassure members that we are working round the clock to protect the interest of our members. We hear your concerns, we understand your issues and we are working tirelessly with all concerned Ministries in the Government/ with IATA/ with Airlines/ Hotels/ Cruises/ Consulates and Embassies, on solutions to support our members during this difficult time. We are monitoring the COVID-19 situation on a daily basis and sending information updates to our members to understand where we stand. We are





committed to work in ensuring that our members will survive this global pandemic, revive and thrive post pandemic."

While speaking about TAAI's efforts Shreeram Patel, Honorary Treasurer, TAAI, said, "Our approach to this crisis has to be broken up into a three stage process, namely Survival, Revival and Growth. From now until September/October, which is the 'Survival' phase, we expect zero business, or zero arrivals and no holiday packages. After that during the 'Revival' phase, there could be business, but far lesser in numbers till December 2020. If everything goes well, starting January 2021, borders will open and embargos will be lifted, and we will enter the 'Growth' phase or back to business phase, when business should start picking up and we should see a steady growth from January 2021." ■





TAAI takes the lead in seeking MoCA's intervention on processing refunds through Airlines & IATA

The Travel Agents Association of India (TAAI) took the lead to interact with the Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA) and initiated working together in close coordination for the benefit of the members.



At a video call with the Civil Aviation Secretary, Pradeep Singh Kharola, TAAI requested that ticket refunds should be processed through GDS online in 7 days instead of following the IATA RA (Refund Application) process which can take up to 60 days, and refunds to be done in cash and credit shell vouchers won't be accepted by agents.

Kharola, taking cognisance of the issues of TAAI members, has assured his support to the association in ensuring that the refunds process to be smooth.

IATA representative, who attended the call, said that the RA process being followed is a prerogative of the airline. The Ministry of Civil Aviation has directed IATA to provide the present RV values of refunds being processed to DGCA so far as some agents haven't been able to receive them due to the lockdown.

TAAI has requested MoCA to issue a note saying agents won't be responsible for refunding passengers until they received it from airlines. Moreover, they have asked IATA to not suspend any airline, and monitor credibility of all airlines, thereby protecting agents from airline defaults. ■



T&T industry may take 9 months to resume business activities after lockdown: TAAI President

According to the Travel Agents Association of India (TAAI) the travel & tourism industry might take at least 9 months to bounce back to normalcy after the lockdown is lifted and the world opens up completely.



Jyoti Mayal, President, Travel Agents Association of India (TAAI), "We project it will take 9 months before business activities normalise after the lockdown is over. Travel and tourism is the hardest hit, and always the last to revive due to any catastrophic event."

Mayal said that with regard to the current situation, they have made presentations to the Prime Minister and Ministries of Finance, Aviation, Commerce Minister and NITI Aayog. "TCS (Tax Collected at Source) has been deferred till October and we hope it eventually scrapped altogether. We are constantly in correspondence with airlines, domestic and international, IATA (International Air Transport Association) and UFTAA (Universal Federation of Travel Agent Association) for refunds and other re-booking issues."

TAAI has been working jointly with FAITH and CII to put a united front with the government and supplying them with industry data. "We are looking forward to relief and tax rebates, and especially support in paying salaries of our staff." ■

TAAI and FAITH urge PM to take steps for the survival of the tourism industry

Covid-19 pandemic has resulted in rapid decline of revenue for almost all sectors of tourism industry. Not only that the companies are fast running out of working capital. In view of that TAAI



and FAITH jointly wrote a letter to the Prime Minister for his immediate intervention. The letter urged him for a 12-month moratorium on their EMIs of principle and interest payments on loans and working capital from financial institutions (both banking and non-banking).

Additionally, both the organisations have requested the PM for doubling of their working capital limits and on interest free and collateral fee terms. "This will prevent all our tourism business from going bankrupt," said Jyoti Mayal, President, TAAI.

Mayal, also requested to set up a support fund for 12 months on the lines of MGNREGA to support basic salaries with 'direct transfer' to affected tourism employees."

On GST, Nakul Anand, Chairman, FAITH, said, "For Indian tourism to start preparing for revival, it is imperative for a complete GST tax holiday for the tourism, travel & hospitality industry for a period of 12 months. With almost nil revenues there is hardly going to be any GST collection. But a gesture of this nature will make a very strong statement and will promote both the domestic and inbound travel."

On TCS (Tax Collected at Source) front, Mahal requested the Prime Minister not to introduce it as TCS will displace business from India to overseas which will lead to shutting down of business of most tourism companies.. ■

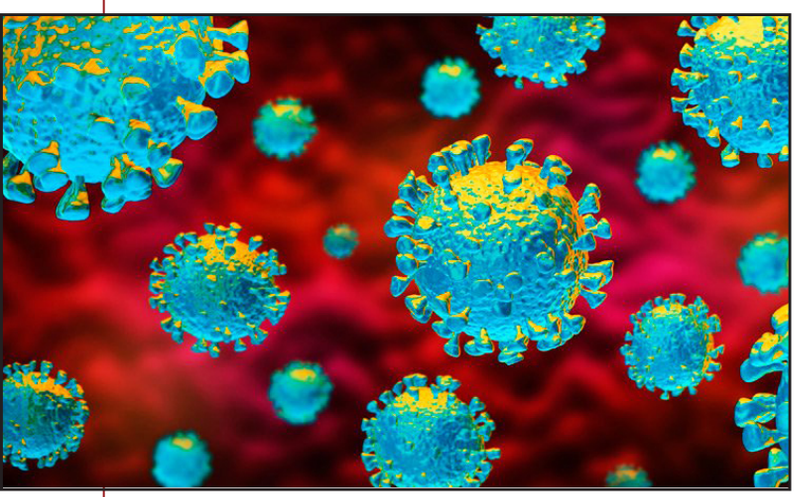


Covid-19 is the worst catastrophe having forced tourism business to come to a standstill: TAAI

Amid the escalating cases of coronavirus (Covid-19) globally, travel agents are facing en masse cancellation of hotels and flight bookings, and attractions are being temporarily shut while airports and sea ports are undertaking a massive task of scanning passengers.

For the travel & tourism industry in India this health outbreak could deal a death blow at a time when players were hoping 2020 would witness a revival of business sentiment since economic slowdown and crisis in the banking sector had curtailed consumer spending in 2019.

According to Jyoti Mayal, President, Travel Agents Association of India (TAAI), this is the worst catastrophe the tourism industry has ever faced when business has virtually come to a standstill. "TAAI has already appealed to the Ministry of Civil Aviation, DGCA, IATA, all airlines and other stakeholders to consider the situation on humanitarian grounds, and pass necessary instructions for date change waivers as well as cancellation policies on compassionate basis. This is a global concern, being not a political or an economic issue and should be considered in the interest of all."



Mayal said that airlines have taken cognizance of the situation and have updated their policies. "Other players have escalated the demand to their global head offices for consideration."

She said that while health and life are of utmost importance, the trade fraternity is adhering to the policies of airlines, hotels and related vendors. "Until such waivers are received, we are not in a position to action the same. TAAI and its member agents request that, travellers need to be patient. Acting as agents for the airlines and other vendors, it is beyond our limitations to offer waivers without the approval from the principals being airlines, hoteliers and other stakeholders. We are awaiting review from the government, airlines, hoteliers and all concerned to reconsider their policies of refunds and cancellation charges," Mayal added.. ■



TAAI appeals to Government of India to take measures for travel trade survival amid coronavirus

With the ongoing global crisis of COVID-19, travel is close to nil. The tourism boards of many countries have released travel advisories, resulting in events being cancelled or postponed and the number of flights being curtailed. The overall business environment has become gloomy for the travel industry with no foreseeable solution in the near future.

In view of this scenario, the Travel Agents Association of India (TAAI) has written a letter to Hardeep S. Puri, Minister of Civil Aviation, Government of India requesting several measures and assistance to minimise the risk and probable revenue losses of the travel industry. The letter was written by Jyoti Mayal, President, TAAI; Jay Bhatia, Vice President; Bettaiah Lokesh, Hon. Secretary General; and Shreeram Patel, Hon. Treasurer on behalf of TAAI.

The letter says, "Due to this many of our member travel agents/tour operators are concerned on their corporate, FIT and groups being cancelled and the travellers are urging the agents to organise the waivers."

It also mentions that only a few airlines operating from India as well as, other airlines globally are waiving off the charges, amid the Coronavirus crisis. Looking at the situation, which involves high risks in travelling, TAAI has requested the minister to release a circular, to all airlines operating, in and from India, as well as airlines operating into India, to grant waivers on rescheduling charges and cancellations on compassionate grounds.

The letter further adds that there have been a lot of cancellations/disruptions in flights worldwide and even IATA has requested aviation regulators for an immediate suspension in rules governing airport slots.

TAAI also brought in focus the misery of the tourism industry employees, due to their jobs being at stake, through the letter. The letter appealed for two measures from the Government of India, "a Relief in Tax Rebates for Travel Agents / Tour Operators on Income Taxes / Loan Repayments & Waivers, Reduction and Waivers in interest rates on overdrafts and loans," and "to allocate funds through the respective Ministry so as to create a corpus for the survival of the travel trade."

TAAI which represents over 3000 member organisations across India has shown interest to meet and mutually discuss upon the immediate measures to be taken to minimise the risks and revenue loss. ■

FAITH calls on Tourism Minister demanding a slew of relaxations for recovery from the current pandemic

With the unprecedented pandemic crisis engulfing the travel & tourism industry, the FAITH (Federation of Associations in Indian Tourism & Hospitality) along with all the member associations - (ADTOI, ATOAI, FHRAI, HAI IATO, IHHA, ITTA, ICPB, TAAI and TAFI) called on the Union Tourism Prahlad Singh Patel seeking his assistance and response to the current situation.

Moreover, stakeholders have requested the Tourism Minister's assistance in to secure a meeting with the Prime Minister to present their case.



Prahlad Singh Patel
Minister of Tourism

The delegation presented a crisis revival plan to the Minister demanding relaxation across key areas. This included a 200% weighted exemption of expenses to corporates on all domestic conferences, proposal for 6-9 months moratorium on all principle and interest payments on loans and overdrafts along with deferment of GST & Advance Tax payments and removal of fees for any upcoming licenses/permits renewal. They also pressed for excise exemption for liquor for the hospitality and travel industry across the states, and a GST holiday for the tourism, travel & hospitality industry for the next 12 months until the recovery.

The delegation requested for restoration of the SEIS (Service Exports from India Scheme) scrips for duty credit of 10% to tourism, travel & hospitality industry, and relaxation in MDA terms.

The industry put forth their suggestion of setting up a national tourism task with representatives from the Centre and states to develop a revival plan, and fast track approvals for investments.

Stakeholders at the meeting were unanimous in their opinion to direct airlines to not levy cancellation fees and issue full refunds or credit notes. ■

Some of the other recommendations include:

- Usage of the MNREGA funds to support salaries of employees in the Tourism, Travel & Hospitality industry till the time revival happens.
- Fast track all GST refunds for the industry wherever they are getting stuck.
- 300 basis point interest rate reduction and immediate transmission to the industry on term loans and working capital loans.
- The proposed TCS on travel in Finance Bill 2020 not to be introduced.
- Automatic increase in working capital limits by 50%.
- Removal of X-Visa requirement for peaks..

TAAI requests NITI Aayog to advocate on behalf of agents for receiving airline refunds due to COVID-19 cancellations



Amitabh Kant, CEO, NITI Aayog

With COVID-19 striking heavy economic blows to almost every industry, the future prospects are looking bleak. The travel and aviation industry has been one of the hardest hit by this pandemic, raising serious questions about the survival of both big and small travel agents who have been directly impacted by the international travel lockdown all across the globe. In light of these issues, Jyoti Mayal, President of the Travel Agents Association of India (TAAI) has written a letter to Amitabh Kant, CEO, NITI Aayog, requesting TAAI to be included in MoCA's approach regarding the aviation industry, as IATA agents are also part of the aviation industry.

Mayal raised concerns regarding the payment of March salaries to the lakhs of persons employed by the agencies, as the airlines industry is yet to refund huge amounts of money due to refunds and cancellations, owing to COVID-19. "Our main point of concern is refunds from airlines to be processed as soon as possible, and refunds of advances lying in float account of low cost airlines to be refunded to us as the same are unused by the member agents," wrote Mayal.

The letter requested Kant to advocate on behalf of the agent fraternity and suggest reliefs for the survival of the fraternity. Mayal also refreshed memories about the defaulting of Kingfisher and Jet Airways, by writing, "The refunds are exceeding the sales and agents are insecure as they have no surety of the airlines refunding them monies and chances of going bust like Jet is very high. We are still struggling from Kingfisher and then Jet Airways defaulting as the industry lost lot of money." ■



Team Progressive led by Jyoti Mayal sweeps TAAI elections

Team Progressive headed by Jyoti Mayal swept the Travel Agents Association of India (TAAI) elections held in Mumbai on November 28, 2019. While Jyoti Mayal registered thumping victory against Sanjay Narula in the straight contest, the entire Managing Committee headed by Mayal had a landslide victory in the elections.

While Jay Bhatia of Team Progressive was elected unopposed as Vice President earlier, Bettaiah Lokesh and Shreeram Patel have won the Hony. Secretary and Hony. Treasurer posts respectively in the elections.



Mrs. Jyoti Mayal
President, TAAI



Mr. Jay Bhatia
Vice President, TAAI



Mr. Bettaiah Lokesh
Hon. Secretary General
TAAI



Mr. Shreeram Patel
Hon. Treasurer , TAAI

The entire Managing Committee



Mr. Anoop Kanuga
(Mumbai)



Mr. Rajan Sehgal
(Delhi)



Mr. P Murugesan
(Chennai)



Mr. Devesh Agarwal
(Kolkata)



Mr. Paras Lakhia
(Ahmedabad)



Mr. Sunil Notani
(Bhopal)



Mr. R Venkatachalam
(Trichy)



Gurmeet Singh Vij
(Nagpur) Co-opted



Mehboob Shaikh
(Pune) Co-opted



After landslide win, Team TAAI to strive for Industry Status for Travel & Tourism Sector

Team Progressive, led by Jyoti Mayal, which swept the Travel Agents Association of India (TAAI) elections, has formulated a comprehensive vision document for the term 2019-2021. Mayal registered a thumping victory for the President's post against Sanjay Narula in the straight contest; and the entire Managing Committee headed by her had a landslide win in the elections for the two-year term held during their AGM held on 28th Nov 2019 at Sahara Star in Mumbai.



Spelling out her vision for TAAI, "We have to be strong enough so that the authorities and stakeholders hear us as a strong unified voice. We will dedicatedly raise the issue of according industry status to the tourism sector. That is top most priority," she said.

Echoing his views, Jay Bhatia, Vice President, TAAI said, "My major focus would be on resolving the pending issues of the trade. Easing out the GST issue of charging for the air tickets and the hotel credits across the country, strong connect with airlines since the scenario is changing with the inception of NDC, OpenPass and RHC, with the support of IATA. I believe this also requires a lot of hand holding from the trade and all stakeholders as well. As a team, concentrating on GST, better connect with principles and airlines, and strengthening relations with the govern

Enumerating on their plans, Bettaiah Lokesh, Honorary Secretary General, TAAI said that they are looking at revamping the Secretariat, making



it transparent and functional. "Moreover, we have plans of amending the Constitution and making it relevant to the current time. Apart from this, we will be connecting with the airlines to resolve pending issues of trade as we have a lot of challenges on hand. We will reach out to the government for more clarity on GST."ent to ensure better outbound and inbound would be our top priority," Bhatia added.

In order to implement the points listed in the vision document, the team believes their experience and business acumen will come handy. All the candidates of Team TAAI have held several positions at the national level for the association in the past.

Commenting on this, Mayal said, "Our Managing Committee has representatives from all the prominent chapters. Each of these candidates has brilliant track record having delivered to their role in the past and have an earnest desire to take up the cause of the industry at the highest level."

Echoing similar views, Shreeram Patel, Honorary Treasurer, TAAI, said that the Managing Committee members are dynamic and enjoy appeal among their members. "We wanted to form a strong team of candidates, and the criteria included past experience at the national level, and at the same time individually running a successful travel business. All our Managing Committee members are representative of the state and regional chapters of the association pan India. The entire office-bearer and Managing Committee of Team Progressive has a consolidated industry experience of more than 50 years."

With the travel & tourism industry witnessing a disruption with technology and M&As, the Team Progressive will drive the association members towards non-ticketing revenue models, create a strong board of advisors, including government, airlines and influencers. Moreover, the aim is also to increase woman empowerment to create a level-playing field. Besides, clarity on GST and the long-drawn issue of credit card payment for airlines and BSP also form a part of their vision document. ■





Jyoti Mayal
President, TAAI

Q After an emphatic win, what is your immediate plan of action at a time when the industry is going through crises?

The first and foremost area of priority is reaching out to the government since I believe it is always better to sort the problem at the apex level instead of trying to meddle with the lower rung. We will reach out the Ministry of the Civil Aviation to ensure a level-playing field for agents as well as seek clarity on the cost structure of an air ticket that is favourable to all parties involved. Secondly, we will restart the dialogue to press for industry status for travel & tourism. This has been a long-pending demand, and it is time we reach a logical end to the discussion which would require consistent follow up and pursuance from our end. Having a team of seasoned professionals would only work in our favour.

Q You are only the second female President of TAAI after Neeraj Ghei (1997-1999). What measures will you take to promote women in leadership roles in your association to bridge the gender gap?

In my discussions with the female members, what has come across that they want to avoid messy deliberations and political one-upmanship. However, they are more than willing to work towards the betterment of the association and the industry at large. Therefore, I have decided to create a Women's Cell that will actively work towards the society on the lines of a CSR model. Moreover, I am looking at regular discussions with them to empower them and strengthen their role.

Q As far as the TAAI Secretariat is concerned, how will you strengthen it?

The work is already underway to make the TAAI Secretariat self-sufficient. Moreover, we are working to set-up an office in Delhi. The idea is to bring about professionalism in running TAAI, which is a non-profit entity, and for this we require a Consulting CEO. Funds are a challenge here and we will strive towards speaking to corporate entities and airline partners for sponsorships. Also, we plan to encourage allied members to find value in the association and strengthen their participation. This will be a continuous process.

Q Enlist the kind of responsibility to be assumed by the office-bearers.

We will soon begin the process of allocating portfolios and delegating responsibility. I have a vision for each member of my team, and by mid-January, we will undertake an orientation programme for all chapters and regions.

Q On the education front, what is your plan of action?

We will continue to organise joint education sessions with tourism boards for members across India and host knowledge conclaves for skill development and alternate revenue streams. The industry is also facing an acute shortage of skilled labour. In this context, we have been approached by IIM, AMITY and universities in Bengaluru to make their modules more interactive. We will create a separate portfolio for that.

(Jyoti Mayal's views immediately after winning the elections in November 2019)

Chapter & Region Chairmen, Backbone of TAAI



I would like to welcome my Chapter and Region Chairmen to the Team 2020-21, after assuming office in November 2019.

Within months of taking over, we were engulfed with the COVID-19 crisis. During such testing times when the national leadership was seeking representations and dialogues with the government, it is the TAAI Chapter and Region Chairmen who stood behind us as pillars and kept the membership updated.

It is through their undying support, the office-bearers and Managing Committee were able to successfully execute webinars, e-conferences and reach out to the various departments in the government as well members nationwide with ground reports.

It is a matter of pride to have a rock solid support system of these leaders, who time and again have stood the test of time, and are driving and holding the members in these unprecedented times. I am happy to lead a team of such driven individuals.

Jyoti Mayal, President, TAAI



Neeraj Malhotra
Chairman
(Northern Region)



Shahul Hameed
Chairman
(Southern Region)



Manav Soni
Chairman
(Eastern Region)



Sameer Karnani
Chairman
(Western Region)



Amish Desai
Chairman
(Karnataka Chapter)



Bahram P Zadeh
Chairman
(Pune Chapter)



Devan Shah
Chairman
(Saurashtra-Kutch Chapter)



Gurjeet Singh Sekhon
Chairman
(Punjab Chapter)



Harraj Singh Sidhu
Chairman
(Chandigarh Chapter)



Hemendra Singh Jadon
Chairman
(MP&CG Chapter)



Jaffer Sadiq
Chairman
(South Tamilnadu Chapter)



K N Shastry
Chairman
(Kerala Chapter)



Malcom T. Pandol
Chairman
(South Gujarat Chapter)



Manoj Kumar Sogani
Chairman
(Rajasthan Chapter)



Nagesh Pampati
Chairman
(AP&TS Chapter)



Rajesh Agrawal
Chairman
(Nagpur Chapter)



Sainath Krishna Prabhu Dharwatkar
Chairman (Goa Chapter)



Syed Mohammad Farhan Warsi
Chairman (UP&UK Chapter)



Virendra Shah
Chairman
(Gujarat Chapter)



Zahoor Qari
Chairman
(J&K Chapter)



02nd Managing Committee Meeting

The 02nd Managing Committee Meeting of TAAI (2019 - 2021) was held on 8th January 2020 at Hotel Crowne Plaza, Greater Noida.

This meeting was conducted to extend TAAI's support to the 27th edition of SATTE which was inaugurated on the same day i.e. 08th January. The national office-bearers were among the dignitaries for the lighting of the traditional lamp for the opening and they also graced SATTE Travel Awards.

The meeting welcomed the newly elected Managing Committee members (including 2 co-opted members) and Chairpersons elected for the term 2019 - 2021

The TAAI President presented and announced distribution of portfolios amongst Managing Committee Members, for efficient administration of TAAI with National OB's playing supervisory roles.

The meeting duly transacted all business including statutory matters, reports of national office-bearers and membership matters.





03rd Managing Committee Meeting

The Managing Committee members & office bearers of all 20 Regions/Chapters of TAAI, who were invited to 03rd Managing Committee Meeting cum Orientation, boarded Cruise Karnika (Jalesh Cruises) in Mumbai on 3rd February 2020. The entire staff of Jalesh Cruises welcomed TAAI team with warm hospitality and grand reception.

On 04th February, the 03rd Managing Committee Meeting began in the morning. Vice President Jay Bhatia shared and narrated his thoughts/guidelines/responsibilities/work areas of the various portfolios allocated to Managing Committee members. There were fruitful discussions on issues, problems faced by membership and the way forward.

The National Office Bearers presented a detailed orientation, identifying the initial steps to be taken on priority and on the way forward for TAAI, as below:

Futuristic TAAI 2019 - 21 - Jyoti Mayal, President
Synergy: Jay Bhatia, Vice President
Organizational Path: Bettaiah Lokesh, Hon. Secretary General Revenue
Resources Development: Shreeram Patel, Hon. Treasurer

Aashish Gupta - Consulting CEO of FAITH, delivered a powerful presentation on the travel industry which was followed by Q & A session where members raised several queries, which were responded to, by Gupta.

The meeting concluded after transacting all business, including statutory and membership matters. Since the lockdown, TAAI has had MC meetings, via video conference calls.







Turkey, TAAI organise six-city roadshow across India



Mumbai

The Ministry of Culture & Tourism of the Republic of Turkey and Travel Agents Association of India (TAAI) conducted Destination Turkey workshops and B2B interactions in six Indian cities of Kolkata, Jaipur, Hyderabad, Bengaluru, Chennai and Mumbai from February 24-29. The event aimed for increasing culture and tourism ties with India.



At the inaugural of every session, there was a presentation by H Deniz Ersoz, Culture & Tourism Counsellor, of the Embassy of the Republic of Turkey, who presented Turkey as an attractive destination for the Indian market with its UNESCO World Heritage Sites, beautiful scenery and fabulous gastronomy.

He also presented the statistics of foreign arrivals in Turkey which was counted as almost 52 million in 2019, the Indian visitor's footfall was more than 230,000, 56% increase from that in 2018. In 2020, Turkey tourism expects 300,000 Indian arrivals.

Jyoti Mayal, President, TAAI, said, "TAAI is always working towards educating our members. We're organising this workshop with Turkey to keep our members updated and provide them with direct networking opportunities. We share a great relationship with Turkey and hosted roadshows in 6 cities. The six-city Turkey Tourism roadshow received a stupendous response from the travel trade and the quality of B2B meetings truly reflects the potential of India's outbound market to Turkey."

Each city witnessed from 150 to 350 attendees. The DMCs and hotels interacted with the agents and shared insights on how to promote Turkey as a destination. There were also short presentations by Turkish Airlines and IndiGo which provide direct connectivity from India to Turkey.





Mumbai





Chennai







Bangalore







Hyderabad





Jaipur







Kolkata

TAAI, Destination Canada consolidate their partnership further with third consecutive MoU

The Travel Agents Association of India and Destination Canada entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). This is the third consecutive MoU signed between the two parties, further strengthening their relationship. The MoU was signed between Jyoti Mayal, President, TAAI and Carl Vaz, Managing Director, Destination Canada India GSA.

Talking about this, Mayal said, "This MoU is an effort to ensure our members are well versed with a key destination like Canada. As part of the process, we will be conducting multi-city road shows for our members across India. Associating with Destination Canada is a step to strengthen a long-term mutually beneficial relationship to ensure outbound travel remains an attractive proposition for our membership."

Sharing his views, Vaz said, "Our association with TAAI has enabled Destination Canada to reach out to a wide cross section of travel trade members on on-ground destination training modules in metros and Tier-II cities. These on-ground activations complement our webianrs and in doing so we are able to go beyond generic destination modules to more in-depth development of seasonal itineraries. We look forward to our 2020 MoU with TAAI, and engaging with their members across seven cities.". ■




WELCOME
EXIT
CANADA
Opportunities
to learn best knowledge
in the framework
organized by
Destination Canada
in collaboration with
Travel Agents
Association of India
(TAAI)


EXIT
CANADA


WELCOME
EXIT

TAAI opens new avenue for members by inking MoU with Jalesh Cruises



The Travel Agents Association of India (TAAI) has inked a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Jalesh Cruises. The MoU was signed between Jyoti Mayal, President of TAAI and Preeti Sharma, Vice President – Sales, Jalesh Cruises, on board their premium cruise ship, Karnika in the presence of the entire national, regional and chapter-wise leadership of the association.

As part of this MoU, members of TAAI will benefit with special rates for selling Jalesh Cruises. Besides this, the association members will also enjoy discount for booking a holiday with their families. Moreover, regular product training and skill development for members will be undertaken across India.

Commenting on this development, Jyoti Mayal, President, TAAI said, "With Jalesh Cruises inviting us to experience the ship first-hand to the entire national, region and chapter leadership, we got a chance to experience a cruise holiday in our own country. This is a huge opportunity for our members as this will open a new vista for revenue generation. It's a win-win situation for both Jalesh Cruises and TAAI. With our extensive reach in the country, our members can offer the best of Indian hospitality at sea to their customers."

Preeti Sharma, Vice President – Business Development, Jalesh Cruises, said, "We are glad to have forged a MoU with the oldest travel association of India. This is an opportunity to bring cruise tourism on the national map of India, giving Indians a premium travel experience in their home



waters. Through this association with TAAI, our aim is to ensure that agents experience the ship first-hand and promote it among their customers across verticals. In order to lay this red carpet for Indians to seamlessly book a cruise holiday, TAAI was naturally the first choice with their history and pan India reach."

Rajiv Duggal, Strategic Advisor, Jalesh Cruises added, "TAAI and Jalesh Cruises entered into an MoU which was inked on the high seas in the presence of all India managing committee with all Chapter Chairmen, and the new President, Jyoti Mayal on our ship, MS Karnika. This MoU shall endeavour to create synergies between both entities with a clear focus to cross promote. TAAI being a reputed travel association with its reach across India will be able to help market Jalesh while TAAI members would enjoy a special relationship with the cruise company, and shall be able to sell and generate strong revenue streams for them." ■







TAAI office-bearers launching the onboard magazine of Jalesh Crusies, 'Making Waves'





'Life has become more communicative with technology'

Q Under your leadership, TAAI has become more pro-active now. During the lockdown, TAAI is conducting all its meetings, seminars etc. adopting the technology. Going forward, what will be the role of technology in the travel industry? Is technology going to be new norm post-COVID?

Going forward technology will play a very important role in the tourism industry than what it was earlier. In this lockdown, we have got used to technology, as there was no other option but to adopt it. We got used to it by overcoming all initial challenges. Artificial Intelligence, technology, virtual reality are here to stay and so is sanitisation, hygiene, and social distancing. Even if the cure is found we will adapt this way of living, as we have learnt it's a healthier way to live.

Work from home will be another norm for all industries who can adopt this and will use this opportunity to save resources. The offices will function with limited staff, which means a shift on a technology platform. Such initiatives of using technology save time, and makes our life convenient. For a tourist, who wants to enquire about hygiene and sanitation of a hotel or an area will be able to do so through virtual reality. Thus technology is certainly going to be an integral part of our lives.



Jyoti Mayal
President, TAAI

Q How are you educating your members to adopt technology in their business?

Our members are well aware of the important role of technology in our working future, we do not have to educate them much. Some challenges may come to our employees. Recently, we have done many meetings through various technology platforms in this lockdown. We have done virtual meetings with all our chapters with 100 per cent attendance. In my opinion, life has become more communicative with technology. I am sure, more and more members are adapting to this quickly.

Q Are you getting on board any technology company to impart knowledge to your members?

We would have provided a technology platform to our members by April, had lockdown not thrown a spanner in our works. Besides technology, it is also time to work as a consortium and collaborate with each other. Adaption of shared resource will also play a vital role. We at TAAI will surely guide our members and create opportunities.

Q First, ever digital issue of NamasTAAI is soon to be launched. What do you want to say about the new avatar of NamasTAAI?

This is the best time to launch our digital version of NamasTAAI. We will soon be launching it through an e-platform. It is a wonderful magazine and provides a plethora of information on important developments in the industry. Through the digital copy, our reach will be far more than our print edition. Apart from other activities, this digital version will provide every detail of what we have done in the lockdown period.

Q What is your vision for NamasTAAI?

My vision is to make it a complete knowledge platform, which apart from enhancing knowledge also increases the business of our members. ■



THSC in association with OptiMICE Events organised a Tourism Interface Skill Development Think Tank Session on 24th January 2020, at the Taj Mahal Hotel in New Delhi.

The pilot project was initiated by the Tourism Corporation of Gujarat and the Think Tank discussion was attended by senior representatives from the Ministry of Tourism - GOI, NSDC, THSC, Tourism Corporation of Gujarat Ltd. and select stakeholders from the Travel and Tourism Industry.

TAAI's GC Members such as, Jyoti Mayal, K.B. Kachru along with Jaideep Anand also contributed to the session and their suggestions were well appreciated.

TAAI OB's meeting with Hardeep Singh Puri, Minister of Civil Aviation and Usha Padhee, Jt. Secretary on 9th January in New Delhi.





During the Kyrgyz Republic Roadshow on 15th January at FICCI, New Delhi.

During the Penang Convention & Exhibition Bureau's roadshow on 15th January at Hotel Le Meridien in New Delhi.





Interaction with Argentine Consulate in Mumbai.

TAAI OB's meeting with Yogendra Tripathi, Tourism Secretary on 9th January in New Delhi.





The Director General of Israel Tourism had an interaction with captains of the Indian travel industry to position Israel as the most popular holiday and MICE destination.



L-R: Sameer Karnani, Chairman TAAI Western Region; Shreeram Patel, TAAI Hon. National Treasurer; Yakoov Finkelstein, Consul General of Israel; Jyoti Mayal, TAAI President; Amir Halevi, Director General - Israel Ministry of Tourism; Bettaiah Lokesh, TAAI Hon. Secretary General; Jay Bhatia, TAAI Vice President; Judah Samuel, Director of Marketing - India Israel Ministry of Tourism; Anoop Kanuga, TAAI Chairman - Tourism Services Council.





Interaction at SATTE with Tourism Malaysia





Northern Region Meeting





Western Region Meeting



TAAI's meeting with Pramod Sawant, Chief Minister, Goa

Staying Connected

At a time when border restrictions are in place, and lockdowns have been enforced, the proactive TAAI Team ensured that the work continues, unabated, since the magnitude of the crisis is beyond practical assessment.

Various teams held discussions and dialogues with the government, individually as well as jointly with industry associations to ensure consistent approach. Region and Chapter meetings continued as per plan, to gain perspective.

Here are some of the glimpses of the TAAI membership, being connected, despite restrictions and social distancing.







TAAI Members at Nepal Road Show in Indore.



Jyoti Mayal, President, TAAI, in an interaction with Portugal Board Members.



Interaction with BITB



TAAI MP & CG Chapter event was inaugurated at Indore by Shankar Lalwani, Member of Parliament; Hemendra Singh Jadon, Chairman TAAI MP & CG chapter, and Yuvraj Padole, Dept. Director Madhya Pradesh Tourism (event & Marketing). Through this event which was held on 14th and 15th February, 2020, TAAI's MP & CG Chapter had supported Indo Global Tourism Fair.





Niranjan S Bhargava, Hon. Secretary, TAAI Karnataka Chapter, and C.T.Ravi, Minister of Tourism, Government of Karnataka, along with other TAAI members at a panel discussion, held as part of a workshop conducted by the Department of Tourism, Government of Karnataka for the Karnataka Tourism Policy 2020-25. The workshop was held on 18th December 2019.



TAAI-STC's first meeting was held on 14th December 2019 at Hotel Blossoms, Trichy





TAAI Punjab Chapter's first meeting was held on 19 December 2019 at Hotel Radisson, Jalandhar in association with VFS Global. 25 to 30 TAAI members and officials from VFS Global were present at the meeting.

Elizabeth Samuel, Head of Operations; Gaurav Sharma, Manager-Sales; Mayur Jain, Sr. Manager-Operations; Amit Bedi , Sr. Manager-Operations; Talwinder Singh were the VFS officials, who were present at the occasion. Gurjeet Singh Sekhon, Chairman, Narinder Davesar, Hon. Secretary, Pankul Sharma, Hon. Treasurer from the new TAAI team (2019-21) welcomed the VFS officials. Elizabeth Samuel, gave a presentation on the working of VFS and their plans for the 2020 season. She also discussed how both (VFS and TAAI members) can work together to streamline and make the application submission process easier for their clients.

Senior members from the TAAI Punjab Chapter such as, Davinder Sharma, Kuljit Singh Hayer, Anil Kandhari, Jagmohan Sublok, Kirpal Singh, and K.K. Arora were present at the occasion.







First General Meeting with all active and allied members of Saurashtra, Kutch was held on 4th January 2020 at Hotel Regency Lagoon, Rajkot.









Blood donation camp organised by Rajasthan Chapter on 11th January, 2020. Many people from the travel trade enthusiastically participated in the initiative. A TAAI certificate and a medal were given to the donors.





Rajasthan Chapter's first meeting was held on 20th December, 2019 at Hotel Shahpura Residency, Jaipur.



India's Travel & Tourism grows 4.9% in 2019: WTTC Economic Impact Report

The travel & tourism industry grew at 3.5% globally in 2019, and for India, the growth was higher than the global average at 4.9%, according to the WTTC's Economic Impact Report (EIR) conducted in conjunction with Oxford Economics. This demonstrates the importance of the industry for supporting the economy as well as job creation, globally and specially in India.

The report shows that the Travel & Tourism sector experienced 3.5% growth in 2019, outpacing that of the global economy (2.5%) for the ninth consecutive year. Over the past five years, one in four new jobs was created by the sector, making Travel & Tourism the best partner for governments to generate employment.

KEY FINDINGS

- In 2019, Travel & Tourism's direct, indirect and induced impact accounted for:
- US$8.9 trillion contribution to the world's GDP
- 10.3% of global GDP
- 330 million jobs, 1 in 10 jobs around the world
- US$1.7 trillion visitor exports (6.8% of total exports, 28.3% of global services exports)
- US$948 billion capital investment (4.3% of total investment)
- 2019 was another year of strong growth for the global Travel & Tourism sector reinforcing its role as a driver of economic growth and job creation.

GLOBAL GDP GROWTH
2019 (%)

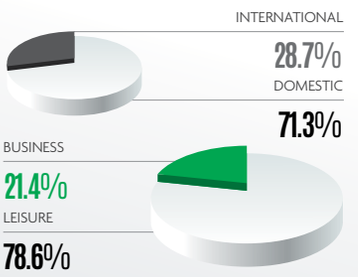


10.3%
CONTRIBUTION TO GLOBAL
GDP 2019 (US$8.9 TN)

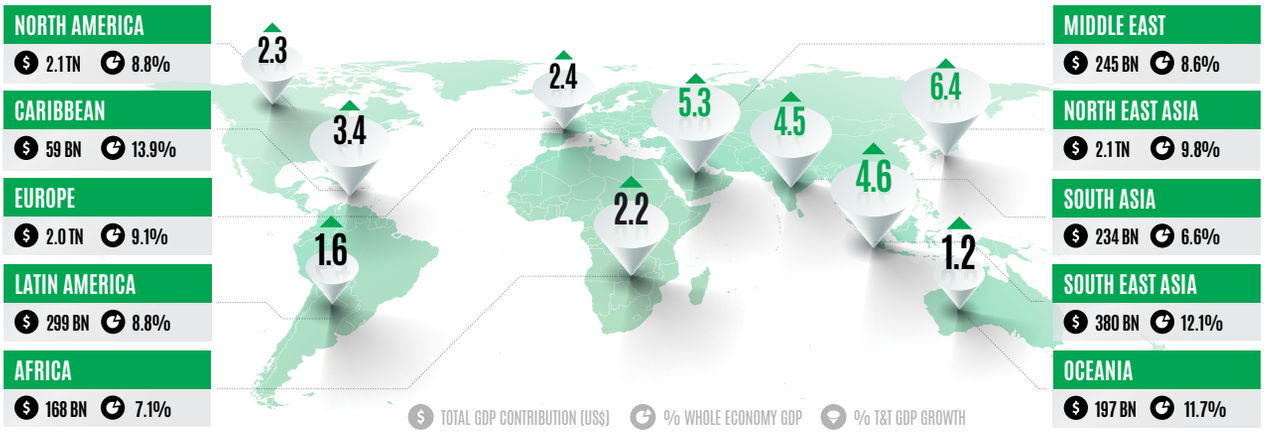
1 / 10
OF ALL JOBS IN 2019
(330 MILLION)

1 / 4
OF ALL NET NEW JOBS CREATED
OVER THE LAST FIVE YEARS

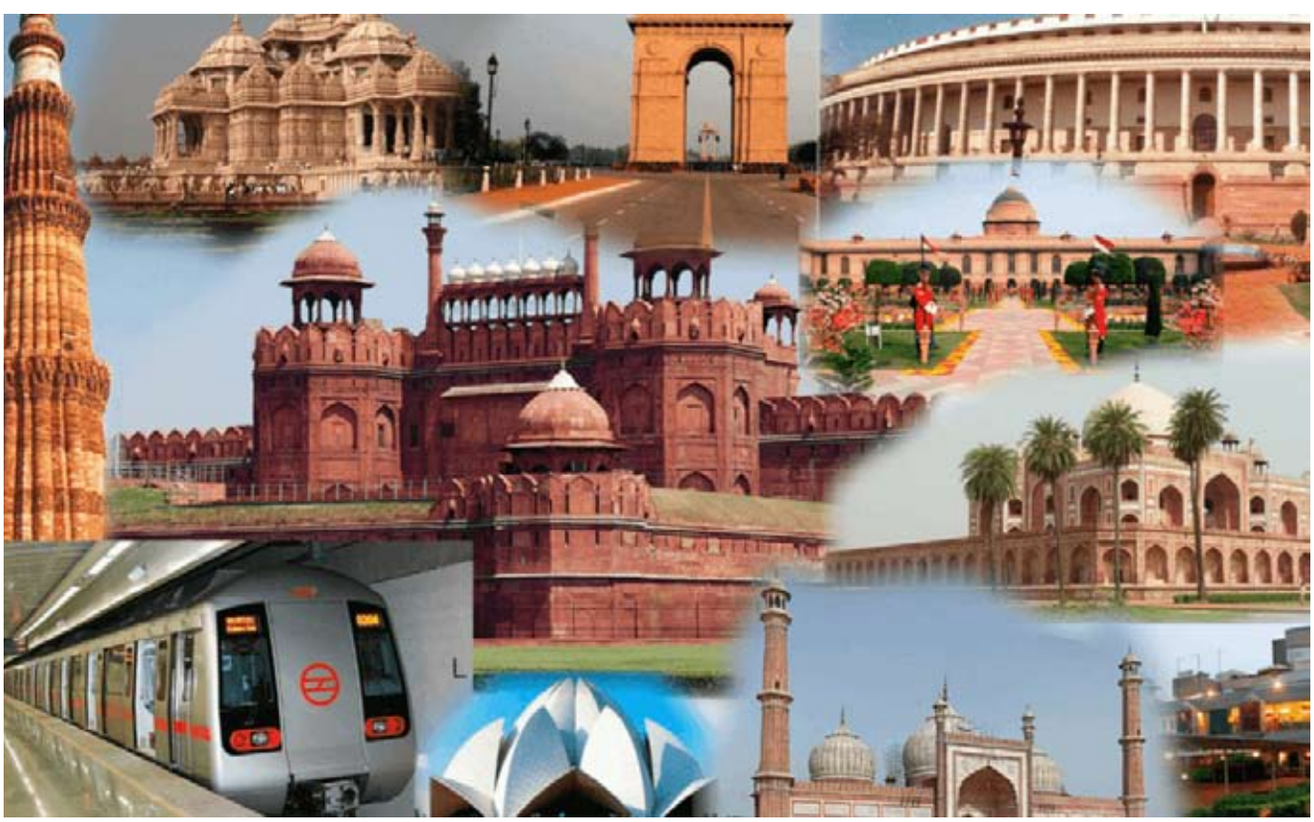
BREAKDOWN OF GLOBAL
TRAVEL & TOURISM SPENDING



TRAVEL & TOURISM REGIONAL PERFORMANCE, 2019*

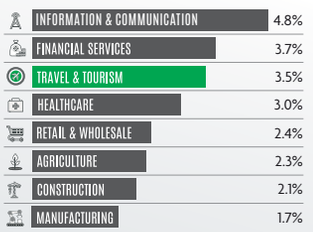


* Growth highlighted in green when it is above global T&T GDP growth of 3.5%



A CLOSER LOOK

01 SECTOR GDP GROWTH 2019 (%)

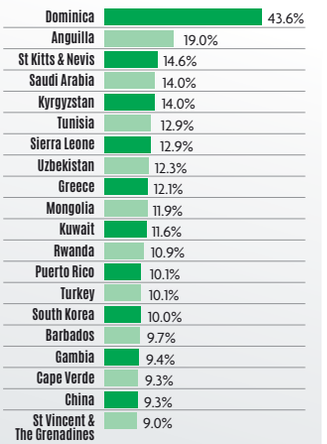


02 TRAVEL & TOURISM CONTRIBUTION TO GDP

		T&T CONTRIBUTION TO GDP, 2019 (US$ BN)	T&T GDP GROWTH 2019 (%)**	DOMESTIC SPEND % OF TOTAL, 2019	INTERNATIONAL SPEND % OF TOTAL, 2019	LEISURE SPEND % OF TOTAL, 2019	BUSINESS SPEND % OF TOTAL, 2019
1	UNITED STATES	1,839	2.3	84	16	70	30
2	CHINA	1,585	9.3	86	14	81	19
3	JAPAN	359	1.6	81	19	69	31
4	GERMANY	347	1.8	86	14	83	17
5	ITALY	260	2.2	76	24	81	19
6	UNITED KINGDOM	254	1.3	83	17	67	33
7	FRANCE	229	1.9	66	34	80	20
8	SPAIN	198	1.8	44	56	89	11
9	MEXICO	196	1.8	85	15	94	6
10	INDIA	194	4.9	83	17	94	6
11	AUSTRALIA	150	0.8	78	22	83	17
12	BRAZIL	140	3.0	94	6	89	11
13	CANADA	108	2.7	76	24	65	35
14	THAILAND	107	1.8	29	71	90	10
15	PHILIPPINES	91	8.6	85	15	66	34

**Growth highlighted in green when it is above global T&T GDP growth of 3.5%

03 FASTEST GROWING COUNTRIES IN TRAVEL & TOURISM GDP 2019



[1]This data includes the direct, indirect, and induced impact of Travel & Tourism
Source: WTTC and Oxford Economics. All values are in constant 2019 prices & exchange rates. As reported in March 2020



Evolving Digitally



Jyoti Mayal
President, TAAI

The on-going lockdown caused by the COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in offline conferences and gatherings being cancelled or postponed. To overcome the situation, a growing number of webinars and virtual events are being hosted, to provide industry participants with networking opportunities. Travel agents across the country are connecting through technology for virtual tours or industry webinars. The Travel Agents Association of India (TAAI) has been regularly organising webinars in association with TravelBiz Monitor, under the aegis of Jyoti Mayal, President of TAAI, to help agents tide over the current crisis and prepare for the new normal.

A recently released data by Redback Connect, a digital event and video communications provider, reveals a 71% spike in webinars, event live streams, and video conferencing throughout organisations looking to attract sales and retain customers in the COVID-19 climate in the country of Australia. Video-conferencing app Zoom has revealed that it has registered a sharp spike in the total number of users post the COVID-19 crisis. Over 300 million people used Zoom's video conferencing software on April 21st, a 50% rise from 200 million daily users at the beginning of the month, Eric Yuan said in a webinar.

Speaking about the importance of technology in the current situation, Mayal commented, "Technology has revolutionised





our entire industry. Understanding the environment of technology at a time, when social distancing is necessary, and having an understanding of it to know what the future is going to hold for us, is really important".

As a travel trade association, TAAI's office-bearers are used to travelling almost every day across the country for meetings and events. Due to the pandemic, when travel has come to a standstill, it was imperative for TAAI to take charge of the situation, and communicate the pain points of travel agents to the Government and stakeholders through video-conference.

While speaking on the digitalisation of communication, Mayal said, "We are social animals. No one has ever thought that we would have to do our important meetings through video-conferencing and voice our demands to the government as industry representatives through various webinars hosted on digital platforms. When the need of the hour is social distancing, we had no choice but to educate ourselves about the various modes of digital communications, and I think it is not only cost-effective but also feasible for everyone."

"Technology is not always expensive. Technology is always an enabler for us and we need to adapt to that, and if we can learn how to adapt to that with a little cost, then that can play a very important role in the future for us," she added. ■



Bringing the Spotlight on Financial Re-engineering & Technology

The ongoing pandemic has come as a major jolt to the travel & tourism industry, threatening to destroy its very existence. It initially resulted in additional security checks at entry points and curtailment of flights, however, the spread of the virus forced countries across the world to ban passenger flights and halting all forms of travel.

The travel & tourism industry in India was already battling with the collapse of Jet Airways, subdued economic environment and political unrest in India in 2019, and stakeholders were hoping for business to pick up pace in 2020. However, with travel restrictions in place, things have just taken a turn for the worse. No one in living memory has the experience to deal with the catastrophe of such massive scale, and cash management has become a huge crisis with agents already struggling for refunds from airlines. Moreover, lakhs of jobs losses and an uncertain future is a big worry.

In order to brainstorm on some ideas for re-starting business in the new normal, TAAI in association with TravelBiz Monitor brought together Avijit Banerjee, CEO & MD, Argon Capital Advisors, Ashish Kumar, Co-Chairman of FICCI Travel & Technology Committee and Kartik Sharma, Technology Therapist to offer some direction to their membership on financial re-engineering and deploying technology to ease processes.

During the discussion, TAAI President Jyoti Mayal, Hon. Secretary General Bettaiah Lokesh and Treasurer Shreeram Patel sought some direction for their membership, small as well as medium sized. They were joined by Sheldon Santwan, Editor & CEO, TravelBiz Monitor.



'MSMEs & SMEs need to understand ecosystem to gain benefit of financial schemes'

Avijit Banerjee
CEO & MD, Argon Capital Advisors

Most of the people associated with MSMEs or SMEs do not know how to approach or get finance-related assistance from banks or other financial institutions. "They do not understand the value chain and what fund needs to be chosen. They have to understand the entire ecosystem to get the benefit of financial schemes," said Avijit Banerjee, CEO & MD, Argon Capital Advisors, while speaking at an e-panel discussion jointly organised by TAAI and TravelBiz Monitor.

The impact of Covid-19 is huge and the recovery will be longer for every segment, and for the travel industry it will be longest, Banerjee opined. "The pandemic has compelled us to think that there is no tomorrow. The plan for 5-10 years is virtually non-existent. People associated with the travel industry have to come up with one or two-year plan and they can't look beyond that because we don't know how the immediate future turns





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As far as loan or financial assistance is concerned every businessman associated with travel has to come up with a concrete business plan. "This is the game of survival. It is imperative for every business man to think how they can be viable in the post Covid-19 situation. On the broader perspective everyone needs to think how he is different from others."

Raising capital loans, for companies with at least two years of audited finance, deciding on the economies of scale and investment in technology going forward are some of the considerations that Banerjee shed light on.

From TAAI, Preisent Jyoti Mayal, Hon. Secretary General Bettaiah Lokesh and Treasurer Shreeram Patel, on behalf of the members drew Banerjee's attention on critical concerns regarding finance and technology to get an expert view on the subject. ■



‘Strategy key to implementing successful story’

Ashish Kumar
Co-Chairman of FICCI Travel & Technology Committee

In order to begin recovery in the post lockdown world, Ashish Kumar, Co-Chairman of FICCI Travel & Technology Committee, believes the one critical factor is intellectual property. “Whatever story (intellectual property) one builds has to be woven across a strategy. The best business plans are made with passion. Relook at your ideas, refresh your plans and rework on your IP. The need of the hour is to get your story right. Whatever you learned over the years in the business will definitely help you, going forward. But what is important is the model you adopt in the business.” According to him, continuing with the same model in business would be a disaster. He was speaking at TAAI-TravelBiz Monitor e-panel discussion on Finance and Technology.

“The pandemic will bring in many unforeseen changes in the business. What was relevant yesterday may not be relevant today,” he opined. It is absolutely necessary to meticulously draw out plan for future business. “Number of passengers or tourists you used to get from particular destinations





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would not be same any more. Hence, it is imperative to prepare a plan that can tell you tentative revenue you can earn for a particular period," Ashish suggested.

Citing an example Kumar said that there is a huge market for India, especially in the corporate travel space as only 30% of the revenues reside in India, 70% is outside.

Moreover, suggesting some key measures, Kumar said the travel and tourism industry is fragmented and there is a huge case for collaboration. "There are areas for shared services and common costs for distinct areas. One needs to look at such avenues and work towards a common goal collectively. It's time to think afresh. Technology offers huge scope in business in today's context. Technology will also aid in bringing about seamless operations, especially on the employee side. Currently, in the post lockdown era, one should look at sustenance and keeping debt at bare minimum." He also appealed to the participants not to think that they can do everything on their own because the industry is highly fragmented. ■

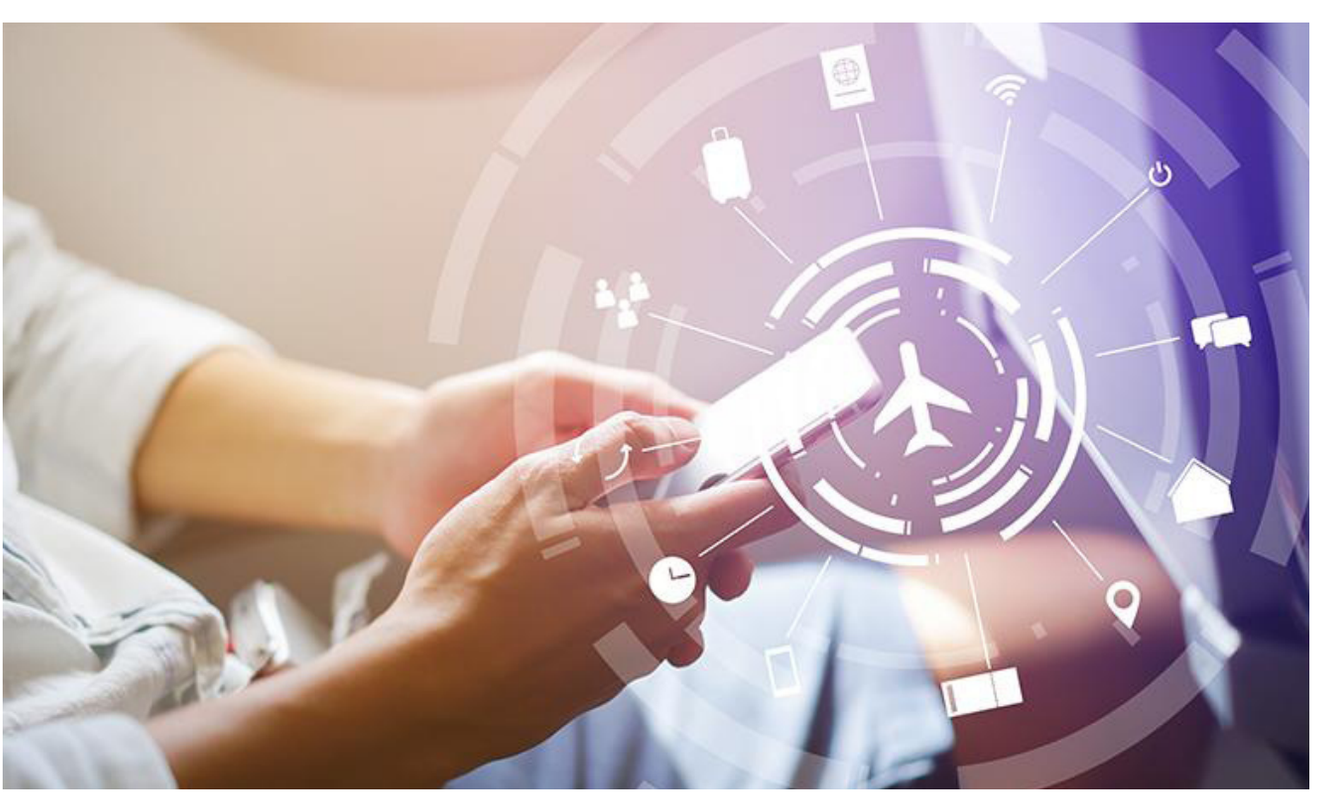


'Travel agents can use free technology offered by various technology vendors'

Kartik Sharma
Technology Specialist

In the wake of COVID-19 crisis, travel agents across the country are connecting through technology for virtual tours or industry webinars. Although technology has already been a vital part of the travel and tourism trade for the last many years, travel agents have been missing out on the benefits of technology due to slow adoption. As the face of travel changes and businesses look out for newer avenues to stay strong in the current environment, it has become imperative for travel agents to put emphasis on technology to stay competitive.

While speaking at a webinar organised by TAAI on Financial Re-engineering & Technology in association with TravelBiz Monitor, Kartik Sharma, Technology Specialist, presented his thoughts on the adoption of technology by travel agents, by saying "The travel agents have a very polarised view regarding technology, as most of them think technology is very expensive, and that it needs a big in-house team, which can cause a big disruption in the business. I must tell that these are all misconceptions. Nowadays, travel agents can





use free technology offered by various technology vendors. There are several companies which offer free CRM through which a travel agent's front office can be managed easily. This is a perfect time to think and adapt technology to business as social distancing norms can change the way of business post-COVID-19".

> "The travel agents have a very polarised view regarding technology, as most of them think technology is very expensive, and that it needs a big in-house team, which can cause a big disruption in the business. I must tell that these are all misconceptions. Nowadays, travel agents can use free technology offered by various technology vendors. There are several companies which offer free CRM through which a travel agent's front office can be managed easily. This is a perfect time to think and adapt technology to business as social distancing norms can change the way of business post-COVID-19"

Sharma also stated, "Through AI and machine learning and at a very cheap cost, which is not even the cost of one resource at the office, one can surely support their customers by implementing chatbots, which offer 24x7 multi-lingual assistance and transactional assistance, as well."

He further pointed out the benefits of technology for travel agents by stating, "The positive thing about using technology is one can make their employees work from home, which can save your real-estate cost, as it doesn't need you to pay rent or any other real estate cost. Also, it doesn't need to have a customer support desk, or customer centre, as AI can take care of that. One can target the right customers through various social media options available, and use it for personalising the data of the target customers. Through a powerful BI which can be easily available at a lesser cost, one can surely know their customer profile, preferences and can suggest customised itinerary and provide personalised experiences."

Jyoti Mayal, President of TAAI said, "Technology has revolutionised our entire industry. Understanding the environment of technology at a time, when social distancing is necessary, and having an understanding of it to know what the future is going to hold for us, is really important".

"Technology is not always expensive. Technology is always an enabler for us and we need to adapt that, and if we can learn how to adapt that with a little cost, then that can play a very important role in the future for us," she added. ■

TAAI's puts the Spotlight on 'Domestic Tourism: The Revival Instinct'

Till today, the contribution of domestic tourists and tourism to the Indian economy has largely remained unsung. However, there is a perceptible change in the last two decades as far as domestic tourism is concerned. The number of domestic tourist visits has scaled up significantly. In 2000, there were 220 million domestic tourist visits, the number has grown to 1.82 billion in 2018. This is almost a nine fold growth.

Taking due cognizance, TAAI in association with TravelBiz Monitor organised an e-panel discussion to inform its members and the industry about the importance of the domestic tourism segment, and its role as a saviour in beginning the recovery process once lockdown ends and travel restrictions are lifted. Another critical area is the religious tourism segment in India, which will help bring some breather to start with.

Moreover, through this platform, TAAI wanted to educate a large part of its membership to consider domestic tourism as a key area of focus beyond outbound and ticketing.

The panel discussion was Co-Moderated by Jai Bhatia, Vice President, TAAI and Sheldon Santwan, Editor & CEO of TravelBiz Monitor. The session saw TAAI President Jyoti Mayal sharing her views and exchanging areas of concerns with Meenakshi Sharma, Director General (Tourism), Government of India; Valsa Nair Singh, Secretary – Tourism, Government of Maharashtra; Kumar Pushkar, MD, Karnataka State Tourism Development Corporation and Anay Dwivedi, MD, MP State Tourism Development Corporation.



Meenakshi Sharma
Director General - Tourism,
Government of India

Tourism Ministry to create check list of common parameters for nationwide implementation

The Union Ministry of Tourism (MoT) will compile and create a check list of common parameters in collaboration with the Ministry of Health and in consultation with stakeholders of the industry, to be implemented across the country. "Post lifting of the lockdown in a staggered manner, we foresee travel to resume within the state and eventually move to interstate when adequate security measures are put in place. International rigidity is going to remain till protocols are implemented. Moreover, there is need for confidence-building measures for stakeholders," said Meenakshi Sharma, Director General - Tourism, Government of India.

Sharma said that MoT is open to suggestions and feedback from stakeholders on drafting this checklist





to make it all encompassing, without which it would be theoretical. She was speaking at an e-conference jointly organised by TAAI and TravelBiz Monitor on Domestic Tourism – The Revival Instinct.

Replying to a question on need for accreditation of businesses for offering adequate stimulus to the industry, Sharma said that the Ministry is well aware that the organised workforce is a significant number. "Assessing the impact and reaching out to everyone is difficult because of lack of data with MoT. The idea is not about regulation, but availability of data. This is the right time to provide accreditation without rigidity, and we require information from the state governments since they have large number of businesses registered with them across various vertical heads. We need data to create uniformity and not a parallel structure." ■





Valsa Nair Singh
Principal Secretary, Tourism &
Culture with Government of Maharashtra

"We have to promote contactless service in domestic tourism"

"Hygiene is going to play a major role in the post-COVID-19 world," said Valsa Nair Singh, IAS, Principal Secretary, Tourism & Culture with Government of Maharashtra. She mentioned that hygiene and sanitation will be one of the major aspects of domestic tourism promotion. Singh presented her views at a webinar organised by TAAI on Domestic Potential of India in association with TravelBiz Monitor. She also suggested that tourist





attractions should have sanitation certification, which should be issued directly by the Director of Tourism.

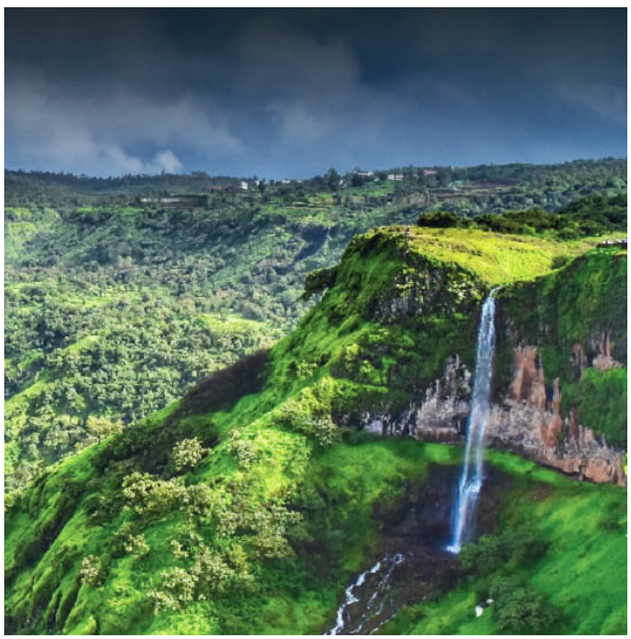
While replying to a question by one of the moderators, Singh said, "It is time to set guidelines so that we can run the business smoothly when the sector opens probably in the months of September or October. If we have a standard sanitation certification pan India basis it will be a great help. We have to put together proper guidelines to ensure hygiene."

She also encouraged contactless service by saying, "This is not about promotion but how the country as a whole takes the challenge of the pandemic. Step by step, after sanitation, we have to promote contactless service."

Valsa also said that it is time to encourage people to discover Maharashtra. "Just like travellers show interest for a foreign destination, we have to encourage them so that they show similar enthusiasm to visit different destinations in the state," said Singh.

She also appealed to the industry stakeholders to come forward with innovative marketing ideas and discuss those with the Government. "It is time to market the state in a right way which will encourage more people to visit the state," she said.

She was optimistic that if everything falls in place people will gradually start travelling and exploring domestic destinations. She also assured that the state government will extend all possible help in this regard. ■





Kumar Pushkar
Managing Director, Karnataka State Tourism Development Corporation

"We are planning to offer subsidy & support for Caravan tourism"

Karnataka Tourism is concentrating on Caravan Tourism, as post lockdown, roadways and caravan tourism will witness demand, said Kumar Pushkar, Managing Director (MD), Karnataka State Tourism Development Corporation (KSTDC). This insight was given by Pushkar at a webinar organised by TAAI on Domestic Potential of India in association with TravelBiz Monitor.

"Tourism through roadways definitely contributes





a major chunk towards Karnataka tourism's revenue. Caravan tourism was already a part of our agenda and we plan to support it. We are also finalising our next five-year tourism plan in which caravan tourism will take an important role. We are also planning for a subsidy, and will extend all the support in getting the registration done for caravans. We are also planning to extend our support not only to caravan tourism but other segments as well where our support is required. In the post-COVID situation after two or three months, we will probably see weekend tourism through roadways. By September-October we are expecting inter-state tourism through roadways," Pushkar stated.

Showing his concern about the pandemic and its aftereffect on the employment which the state tourism sector provides, he said, "The biggest concern of ours is employment, wherein approximately 3 million people are working in the tourism sector of Karnataka, whose contribution towards state GDP is 15%. But as we speak in this unprecedented scenario, tourism as an industry always takes a back seat in everyone's mind. In my opinion, tourism has to be supported not for money, but for the millions of jobs that it creates." ■





Mahmood Ahmad Shah
Director, Industries & Commerce,
Kashmir Division, Jammu & Kashmir

'Jammu & Kashmir tourism in a bigger distress than the rest of the country'

The COVID-19 pandemic has already heavily impacted the USD 234 billion worth (in 2018) of the Indian tourism industry. According to Mahmood Ahmad Shah, Director, Industries & Commerce, Kashmir Division, Jammu & Kashmir (J&K) is the worst hit than the rest of the country as has been battling with various political issues as well as revocation of Article 370. This insight was presented by Shah in a webinar organised by TAAI on Domestic Potential of India in





association with TravelBiz Monitor.

While expressing the fact that lockdowns are not a new phenomenon in the Kashmir Valley, Shah said, "Other states in the country are tackling the pandemic and the unprecedented situation from March this year, but Jammu & Kashmir has been fighting against all odds since last August. The stakeholders and the J&K tourism are doing their best to overcome the situation. But since March this year, we have been witnessing that whatever money and efforts we have put in, has been going down the drain. I agree that the whole country is going through a very tough time, but the valley is going through a much bigger distress, as per my knowledge, more than 400 properties in Jammu and Kashmir are in distress. They are finding it difficult to give salaries and make ends meet. The tourism sector in J&K is in a very unfortunate stage and it needs drastic help from the stakeholders and Government, to spring back."

"We need to think out of the box to get into a solution and business running," he suggested.

While answering a question from the moderator, Sheldon Santwan, Editor of TravelBiz Monitor, about whether there would be any changes in the houseboat policy, Shah replied, "Without houseboats, Jammu & Kashmir tourism is incomplete. We thought about the matter and reached the conclusion, that the houseboat policies need to be discussed with stakeholders. The houseboat community is not in a good state of health. It indeed needs special attention. I hope as soon as the crisis is over, this should be attended to, at the earliest for stopping losses and aid revival". ■



Anay Dwivedi
MD
MP State Tourism Development Corporation

"Exploring alternative sources for revenue & reinventing key to remaining relevant"

With Madhya Pradesh Tourism starting at huge loss due to the lockdown in force, Anay Dwivedi, MD, MP State Tourism Development Corporation (MPSTDC) believes they will have to look at alternate sources for revenue generation. "In the coming days people will travel for personal and necessary reasons. Currently, we have deployed and modified our vehicles to transport essential medical items, and our hotels have





been converted into quarantine centres." He was sharing his views at a panel discussion on Domestic Tourism organised by TAAI in association with TravelBiz Monitor.

Sharing travel patterns, Dwivedi said that they see a healthy number of visitors from within the state and 37% from Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra and Chhatisgarh. "In order to give adequate importance to the health of tourists, we will train our staff. Moreover, we are creating a website and bringing all the service providers of the state under one umbrella. This will allow seamless booking on our website with hotels and tour operators."

He went on to say, "Moreover, I believe we will bounce back faster since 82% tourists to the state are locals and from the neighbouring states. Wildlife tourism won't be affected since the next season begins in October. Currently, the time is to reinvent our offerings to stay relevant in the business."■



TAAI's 'Road to Recovery' for Outbound Tourism

The past 10 years have brought the global spotlight on India with players having recognised the potential of this market. With a view to gain a share of the Indian outbound pie, a slew of tourism destinations and travel products have forayed into the Indian market.

These players have been aggressive in their strategy to tap the robust sentiment of the Indian market due to its demographic dividend. Visa processes have been streamlined, additional offices have been opened to deal with the increase in demand, regular trade roadshows have been organised, familirisation trips are undertaken, and the online medium is being deployed to bring the best of the world to the Indian traveller's plate.

With such dependence on the Indian traveller, the impact of the COVID-19-inflicted lockdown will be massive on the travel sentiment once restrictions are eased.

Therefore TAAI in association with TravelBiz Monitor brought together experts like Suman Billa, Director – Technical Cooperation & Silk Road Development, UNWTO; Nakul Anand, Executive Director, ITC Ltd; Rodney D'cruz, Assistant Director, Passenger and Cargo Services – India, Nepal & Bhutan, IATA; Rakshit Desai, Managing Director - India, Flight Centre Travel Group; George Ettiyil, Senior Director – Sales – South Asia, Lufthansa and Sanjay Kumar, Chief Strategy & Revenue Officer, IndiGo for a discussion on 'Road to Recovery'. The panel saw TAAI President Jyoti Mayal moderating the discussion, with TAAI office-bearers Jay Bhatia, Bettiah Lokesh and Shreeram Patel seeking clarity and workable strategies to begin stabilising the recovery process.

India's robust domestic tourism segment will soften impact of COVID-19: Suman Billa



Although the travel & tourism industry in India currently staring at an uncertain future with the COVID-19 pandemic inflicting an unforeseen dent on business and travel prospects, Suman Billa, Director – Technical Cooperation & Silk Road Development, UNWTO (United Nations World Tourism Organization) is hopeful that sector will bounce back since India has a fairly strong domestic tourism market. "We are in a much better position than most other countries. One way to look at it is through data on the size of outbound, inbound and domestic segments. Because India has a robust domestic tourism segment, it will soften the impact of COVID-19 drastically."

Billa was speaking on an e-conference from Madrid which was jointly organised by the Travel Agents Association of India (TAAI) and TravelBiz Monitor. He was of the opinion that with the current outbreak that has engulfed the world, the awareness and recognition towards health will take center stage. "India has a huge opportunity because there will a growing interest for wellness, Ayurveda and yoga along with religion. This will be a huge opportunity to be tapped towards a long-term recovery."

Enumerating on the methods to be adopted, Billa said that countries will have to undertake measures to create value for travellers to revive the overall sentiment. "Markets are going to open in a staggered manner. From the inbound point of view with Europe and USA brought down to their knees, India needs to get market agnostic, and reorient strategies to tap markets that are ready to travel and pay for the services."



While sharing his optimism about revival, Billa expressed concerns about job losses. "I think the support will come for the industry, however, the question is how do we protect jobs? As and when the government announces relief measures, we all need to realise that there is only a limited corpus available with the government, and the primary area of focus for the industry should be the possibility of securing jobs." ■

According to NSDC and KPMG report (2017) the estimated market size of the global beauty and wellness industry is around USD 1.4 trillion with a CAGR of 15 %. India figures in the five top beauty and wellness markets of the world, and has the potential to even become the top 'Wellness' destination for the global travellers.

A 2016 report titled "Value Added Service – Wellness and Preventive Healthcare". by FICCI in association with EY estimated that the Indian wellness industry is expected to grow at a CAGR of ~12% for the next 5 years. From its current size, this industry can achieve ~INR 1, 50,000 crores by 2020. There is a huge potential for growth in this industry, and it may well become a major growth driver for the economy in future, the report states.

Experts recommend adopting common strategy roadmap for COVID-19 recovery

With the COVID-19 pandemic bringing world economies to their knees, the worst casualty is the travel & tourism industry. At this critical juncture, experts are of the view that there is need to adopt a common strategy roadmap taking a cue from the experience of the past global crises, and the magnitude of the current catastrophic event.

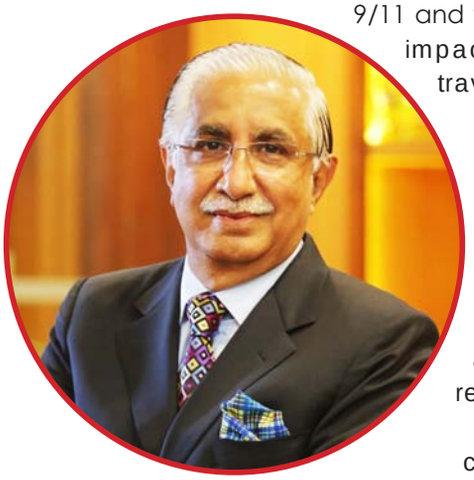


Rodney D'Cruz
Assistant Director, Passenger and Cargo Services-India, Nepal & Bhutan, IATA

Rodney D'Cruz, Assistant Director, Passenger and Cargo Services-India, Nepal & Bhutan, IATA (International Air Transport Association), while sharing his views at the TAAI e-conference 'Road to Recovery' was of the view that due to COVID-19 around 2.5 million people will lose their jobs. "Hence, the road to recovery is going to be very tough," opines D'Cruz. He appealed to the industry to have a common agenda to fight the pandemic and tread on the path to recovery. It is imperative that we adopt a common strategy to combat the extraordinary situation arising out due to coronavirus, D'Cruz said.

D'Cruz cited the example of how 9/11 terror attack changed the world forever. "This incident changed the world, especially on the security front," he pointed out. Looking at the gravity of the current situation there has to be much better coordination among the governments, associations, and agents emphatically across the world, said D'Cruz.

According to a KPMG report titled 'Potential Impact of Covid-19 on the Indian Economy' the sector faces questions around its very survival, and many believe that this crisis is a greater threat than 9/11 and the financial meltdown of 2008-2009. Considering this forecast on impact assessment, there is no doubt, the pandemic has ravaged the travel & tourism sector like never before.



Nakul Anand
Executive Director, ITC Ltd,

Echoing views similar to D'Cruz, Nakul Anand, Executive Director, ITC Ltd, said that looking at the colossal damage of the sector, time is of the essence to collectively come out with a common roadmap and go forward. Anand also said that India's outbound figure stands at 22 million where MICE and destination wedding contribute substantially. "If the government can incentivise MICE travel and contain the crowd to focus on the domestic market at least a year, it will be of great help post COVID-19 situation for recovery," states Anand.

Sharing his experience, Anand said that while the industry collectively has made representations for deferment of taxes and relaxation of interest, between survive and revive is the path to recovery. "The basic values will change, and there will be a seismic change. Social distancing is going to be a norm, and hygiene and sanitisation will be critical areas. This is going to be a long drawn process." ■

'Corporate travel will resume for reviving broken supply chains & tapping new markets'

With border and land restrictions in force due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the world and businesses will have to make changes to their functioning. However, despite this, corporate travel will eventually resume and business representatives will have to travel to aid demand generation.

Expressing his views at TAAI's Road to Recovery e-panel discussion, Rakshit Desai, Managing Director, FCM Travel Solutions, Indian subsidiary of FCTG, Australia, said, "Corporate travel will have to be divided into the scenario this year and a year from now. This segment has been constrained right now with suspension of travel activities. However, to access new markets and tap new businesses and segments, corporate travel will have to pick up once situation improves. Despite technology being an enabler, people to people exchange is still a critical factor in improving business and expanding geographies."



Rakshit Desai
MD- India
Flight Centre Travel Group

Desai was of the view that fresh logistical framework will have to be put into place. "Once the lockdown is lifted and the situation eventually resumes to normalcy, broken supply chains will have to be revived. The time taken for revival will eventually determine the costs involved."

With regards to the new normal scenario, Desai shared that customers and suppliers like hotels and airlines will have to make adjustments. "These factors will be critical in deciding the credit worthiness."

Separately, commenting on job losses due to the sudden halt in business, he stated, "Besides permanent pressures, there will be temporary salary cuts. Pragmatic solutions are required and everyone will have to make adjustments. Alongside hotels and airlines, even agents, including corporate travel management companies, require capital support. If all of us can reach a common working ground, we can sail through reasonably." ■



The travel trade should focus on promoting domestic tourism: IndiGo



Sanjay Kumar
Chief Strategy and Revenue Officer, IndiGo

As an airline company, our first responsibility is to bring back the confidence among the industry and travelling public, as there are a lot of negative sentiments amid COVID-19," said Sanjay Kumar, Chief Strategy and Revenue Officer, IndiGo, in a recently organised e-panel discussion named 'Road to Recovery' by TAAI in association with TravelBiz Monitor.

Kumar also emphasised on the uncertainty of the situation, "Nobody knows how long it is going to take to get back to the normal. The uncertainty of the situation is creating negative sentiments in the marketplace."

He suggested, "We have to bring back the confidence by bringing change in the daily operations with the help of government and other regulatory bodies."

"We will come out with a lot of measures, including revised boarding process. After every plane landing, we will require additional 20 minutes of time to disinfect the planes so that we are able to bring the traveller's confidence back. Post the lockdown, this is going to be the new normal," Kumar added.



IndiGo, which is India's largest low-cost passenger airline with a market share of 48% as of February 2020, expects the recovery in the domestic market to take 3-6 months whereas, the international segment could take much longer, in the range of 9-12 months. Explaining the same, Kumar said, "We are looking at a recovery time of 3-6 months for domestic flights, and 9 months for international flights. As an airline operator, we have to work very closely with the travel fraternity. "

He also put forward a strategy for airlines and travel trade to soften the impact of the absence of international travel, "In this scenario, we have to promote domestic tourism, as international travel processes such as visa applications, might take 9-12 months to get normal. In the meantime, the travel trade should focus on promoting the domestic tourism. We have to focus on building partnerships in the domestic market. It will play a very important recovery role, as this crisis has put us back by a couple of years from where we were."

While speaking about creating healthier partnerships with the travel fraternity in the country, Kumar mentioned, "At IndiGo, we are very interested to work with our trade partners. We are keen to work on specialised basis with them through dialogues, which will create win-win situations for both, partners and us." ■

'Lufthansa losing EUR 1bn per month due to COVID-19-inflicted suspension of flights'





George Ettiyil
Senior Director – Sales – South Asia, Lufthansa

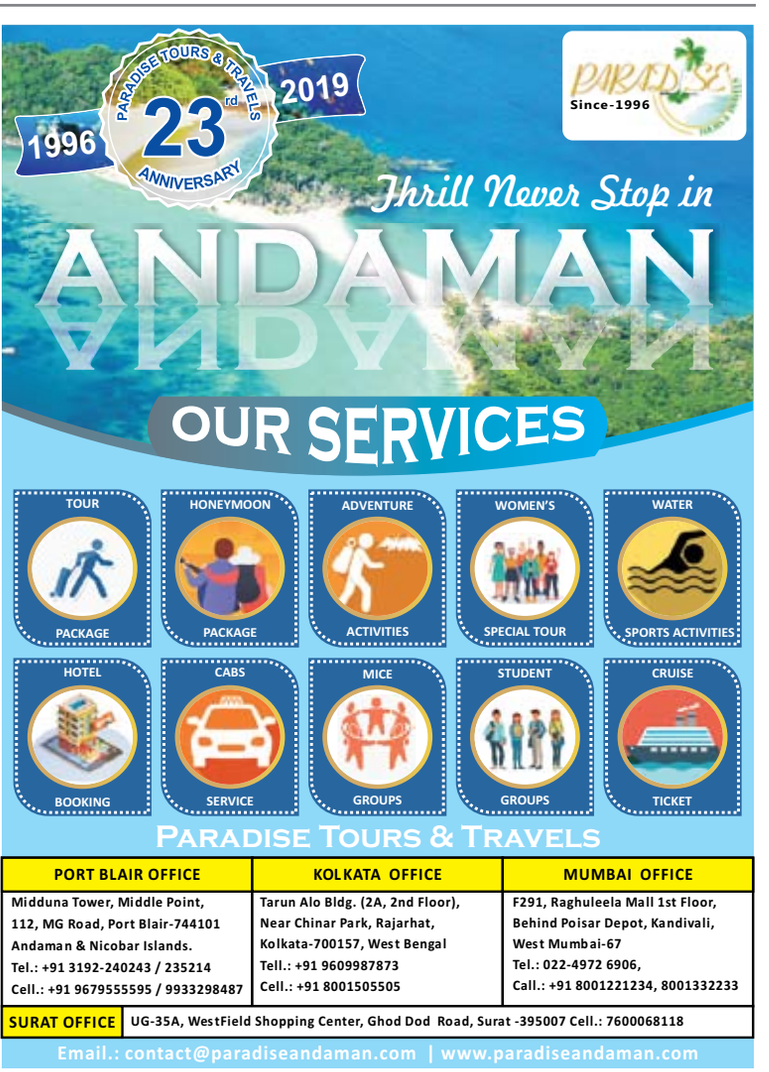
As one of Europe's largest airline, Lufthansa Group is witnessing a never-seen-before-crisis today with COVID-19 pandemic bringing global commercial aviation to a complete halt.

George Ettiyil, Senior Director – Sales – South Asia, Lufthansa said that the airline is facing an unprecedented situation comparable to the World War II scenario.

Elaborating on the losses, Ettiyil said, "We can't even compare the situation to 9/11. Lufthansa, despite its strong financial results, is losing EUR 1 billion per month. The rate at which the cash reserve is depleting, one could expect it to get over very soon. We are faced with life questions with regards to the industry and organisation. We have sought help from the countries we operate in for bailouts. There is only cash out flow and no in flow because of complete suspension of flights." He was answering a question from President Jyoti Mayal at an e-conference organised earlier this week by TAAI along with TravelBiz Monitor on Lufthansa's financials, and refund process.

With regards to the recovery, he said, "We don't have a time frame when we will we start flying. However, whenever we resume, we will not come back with the capacity that we operated before the lockdown. Moreover, my assessment is that till 2023 is what we should take to reach the pre-lockdown period flying position."

He spoke about giving attention to the thought the common standards that airlines and the aviation industry will have to adhere to in this new normal world, nd the requirement of health history of passengers. ■



Delegates deliberate on creating global fund & adopting PPP modal to support tourism recovery

Deliberating on means to be adopted and measures to be undertaken as part of the post-pandemic recovery process at the TAAI-TravelBiz Monitor e-conference, the association President Jyoti Mayal spoke about the possibility of creating a global fund to support tourism businesses and jobs. She spoke about public-private partnership to support the industry instead of depending on governments for bailout.



Suman Billa
Director – Technical Cooperation & Silk Road Development, UNWTO

Sharing his views on the subject, Suman Billa, Director – Technical Cooperation & Silk Road Development, UNWTO, said, "Governments and trade bodies have been discussing the idea to create a global fund with contribution of 1 dollar per traveller. However, there are logistical issues of administering the fund. Maybe the COVID-19 crisis could prompt governments to set up some sort of common funding towards this process."

Moreover, Billa said that the mantra for inbound should be PPP as government support would be restricted. "Only Kerala has been successful in following the PPP model on a sustained basis. As the world opens up in a staggered manner, stakeholders in India should consider setting up a robust PPP model and work aggressively to make it work. For inbound, the current situation will force us to take a hard look at the value we provide, and therefore create a mindset that will prompt us to not take unnecessary risk."

Billa said that UNWTO can take the advocacy process and make suggestions on behalf of the industry to the governments. He, however, cautioned that since the economy itself has taken a hit, government support will be restricted and every penny injected to support the industry will have to be justified. "Employees will have to take pay cuts and maintain flexibility." ■



Hyderabad International Airport Limited is a joint venture formed as a consortium between GMR Group (63%), Government of India (13%), Government of Telangana (13%) and Malaysia Airports Holding Bhd (11%). The model of PPP for Hyderabad Airport is based on a Build-Own-Operate-Transfer (BOOT) basis.

Welcome to our New Members

TAAI continues to grow. More industry leaders from all segments of the industry embrace TAAI - for TAAI offers the unique opportunity to support stakeholders get connected and progress beyond.

TAAI welcomes our new members. We have pleasure to invite these companies join us in our industry initiatives including training, learning from updates and getting connected through our networking opportunities with colleague agencies and industry leaders from all departments of our growing industry - travel, tourism, hospitality, travel technology, etc. **TAAI offers three categories of membership - Active, Branch Associates and Allied.**

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4	Radhe Krishna Tourism	AHMEDABAD	Mr. Dipakkumar Prafulkumar Nayak	Ms. Gitaben Ketan Sadarakar
5	Bhagwati Holidays	AHMEDABAD	Mr. Dipal Desai	
6	Sunworld Travels Solutions Pvt. Ltd.	AHMEDABAD	Mr. Dhaval Jani	
7	Goodwind Travels And Tours LLP	AHMEDABAD	Mr. Dharmesh Natubhai Shah	Mr. Natubhai Chunilal Shah
8	Travelsukha	AHMEDABAD	Mr. Dhrupen Shah	Mr. Nirav Nikhare
9	Frequent Flyers	AHMEDABAD	Mr. Maheshkumar Patel	Ms. Rupal Patel
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13	Sri Krishna Travels	BHEEMAVARAM	Mr. Pericharla Krishnam Raju	
14	Titiksha Holidays And Tours	BHOPAL	Mr. Purushottam Rajvansh	Mr. Devendra Kumar
15	Rai Travels	BHOPAL	Mr. Gopal Rai	Mrs. Pallovy Rai
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17	Voyagers Hub Pvt. Ltd.	CHANDIGARH	Mr. Amit Nagpal	Mrs. Karishma Nagpal
18	Safiya Travel Services	CHENNAI	Mr. S. Nizamuddin	Mrs. M. Zeenath Begum
19	Travelink Holidays	CHENNAI	Mr. Balu Nallappan	Mr. Moses Jeevanathan B.
20	Roundtrip.in LLP	CHENNAI	Mr. Manoj Jain	Mr. Tushar Jain
21	Sha Haj Service India Private Limited	CHENNAI	Mr. Abdul Hakim	Mrs. Hairun Faristha
22	Sri Sungai Wang India Pvt. Ltd.	CHENNAI	Mr. Raman M.	Mr. Sankar N. R.
23	Expedise Travel Private Limited	CHENNAI	Mr. Sajeesh CK	Mr. Shyam Sunder
24	Si Vetrivelan Traavels And Tours	CHENNAI	Mr. C. Raja	Mr. N. Velu
25	Fly Air Citi Tours & Travels	CHENNAI	Mr. P. Kannan	
26	Air Translink Travels	CHENNAI	Mr. M. Thasleem	Mr. M. Riyas Ahamed
27	Emperor Traveline	CHENNAI	Mr. C. Vishnu Vasanth Kumar	Mr. R. Udaya Kumar

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28	SBLT Tours And Travels Private Limited	CHENNAI	Mr. Lingam Dayalan	Ms. Pavithra R.
29	M.R.S. Air Travels Private Limited	CHENNAI	Mrs. Kavitha Senthil Kumar	Mr. Senthil Kumar Murugan
30	Westar Global Holidays	CHENNAI	Mr. Mohammed Esoof	Mr. Mohammed Thameem Ansari
31	E... Routes	COIMBATORE	Mr. Nagaraj Vishnuvarthan	
32	Tarmac Travelss	COIMBATORE	Mr. C. K. Gopinaathan	
33	Destinasia	DARJEELING	Mr. Animesh Swarnakar	Mr. Sishmi Guha
34	STS Travels And Tours	ERNAKULAM	Mr. Asok Kumar T.	Mr. Denny Varghees
35	Oberoi Integrated Travel Solutions	GURGAON	Ms. Sweety Shahi Oberoi	Mr. Indrajot Singh Oberoi
36	Digi Travel Solutions Private Limited	GURGAON	Mr. Marla Veera Bhadhra Shastry	Mr. Hari Singh Bhandari
37	Amigos Alliance LLP	GURGAON	Mrs. Manisha Bansal	Mr. Anuj Bansal
38	IMAD Travel Pvt. Ltd.	HYDERABAD	Mr. Hamed Ali	Mr. Hassan A. B. Mohammed
39	V. S. Tours India	HYDERABAD	Mr. P. Nipun Tulsyan	
40	Saieesh Tours And Travels	HYDERABAD	Mr. Bhanu S. V.	Mrs. Gowriswari V.
41	R. V. Tours And Travels Private Limited	HYDERABAD	Mr. Rajoli Venkata Ramana	Mr. M. Chandra Sekhar
42	Dreamcaster Tours And Travels Pvt. Ltd.	INDORE	Mr. Sunil Pandey	Mr. Gajendra Singh Bais
43	Aero Star International	INDORE	Mr. Girish Varshney	Mr. Ganesh Dudhade
44	Kabeer Enterprises	INDORE	Mr. Vishal Mudgal	Mrs. Vineeta Mudgal
45	Sky Travels	INDORE	Mrs. Varsha Wadhwani	Mr. Jaikumar Wadhwani
46	Tranzzair Travels	INDORE	Ms. Neetu Ganglani	
47	Bliss Holidays	INDORE	Mr. Vaibhav Khandelwal	Mrs. Sonal Khandelwal
48	Kalash Travels	INDORE	Mr. Mukesh Dewan	Manish Dewani
49	Travel Gallery	INDORE	Ms. Shweta Chopra	Ms. Saloni Pitliya
50	Moon Travels	INDORE	Mr. Rajiv Lashkare	Mrs. Leena Lashkare
51	Tour House	INDORE	Mr. Anil Kumar Bathvi	Mrs. Neeta Bathvi
52	Fairsky Travel House	INDORE	Mr. Shibu George	Mr. Ranjit S. Laungia
53	The Journey Tour And Travels	INDORE	Mr. Vivek Shrivastava	Mr. Rajesh Verma
54	Ok Trip .Com	INDORE	Mr. Shailendra Singh Parihar	Mrs. Laxmi Parihar
55	Tour 4 India	JAIPUR	Mr. Amit Modi	Mr. Pintu Sharma
56	Sapient Vacations	JAIPUR	Mr. Rajesh Mittal	Mr. Sandeep Beniwal
57	Japnoor Travels Private Limited	JALANDHAR	Mr. Satnam Singh	Mr. Ashok Kumar
58	Sunrise Holidays	JAMNAGAR	Mr. Nitin Varia	Mrs. Pooja Varia
59	Stay Mont Private Limited	KARNAL	Mr. Akshay Kambo	Ms. Aakanksha Sharma
60	Krishna Tour & Travels	KOTA	Mr. Virendra Vijay	Mr. Radha Krishan
61	Zen Tour & Travel	LADAKH	Mr. Jigmet Nurbo	Mr. Tsewang Dorje
62	Ladakh Mountain Tours	LADAKH	Mr. Mohd. Akbar	Mr. Mohd. Sharif
63	Southern Classic Tours	MADURAI	Mr. Baskar G	Mr. Gopinath M.
64	V S Travel Solutions	MEERUT	Mr. Mohit Jain	Mr. Shobhit Jain
65	Nanuan's	MOHALI	Mr. Sonit Soni	Mr. Harpreet Singh
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67	Krishna Leisure Holidays LLP	MUMBAI	Mr. Jay Duwa	Mr. Vishal Duwa
68	Travel Exotico	MUMBAI	Mr. Deepan Shah	Mrs. Surekha Shah
69	Viman Travels	MUMBAI	Ms. Kanchan Bagree	Mr. Vikas Bagree
70	Global Services	MUMBAI	Ms. Meenal Barapatre	Mr. Rajeev Purohit
71	SR Visas	MUMBAI	Mr. Mohammed Asif Qureshi	Ms. Pranali Ravindra Ghadshi
72	Tamarind Global Services Pvt. Ltd	MUMBAI	Mr. Louis D'Souza	Mr. Pradeep Patil
73	Fiji Airways	MUMBAI	Mr. Sajid Khan	

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74	ETI Global Holidays Pvt. Ltd	MUMBAI	Mr. Thomas Pappachan	Mrs. Ingrid Thomas
75	Dadabhai Travel & Tours Pvt. Ltd	MUMBAI	Mr. Riyasuddin Rauther	
76	Trip Jack Private Limited	MUMBAI	Mr. Hussain Afzal Patel	Mrs. Aisha Hussain Patel
77	Jai Tours And Travels	MUMBAI	Mr. Sunil Bachhuka	Mr. Harsh Vinod Mevada
78	Harvey India Tours And Travels Pvt. Ltd	MUMBAI	Mr. Joe Rajan	Ms. Rashmi Pisal
79	Vinayak Travels Private Limited	MUMBAI	Ms. Natasha R. Pimple	Mr. Booba T. Suratkal
80	J B Travel & Tours (India) Private Limited	MUMBAI	Mr. Arunraj Shyamraj Yadav	Mr. Indrajeet Shyamraj Yadav
81	Miracles Tours N Travels	MUMBAI	Mrs. Trupti Pradeep Prabhulkar	Mr. Pradeep Singh Balwant Singh Khagh
82	Jenson Worldwide Tours	MUMBAI	Mr. Jenson John	
83	Synchronising Destinations Pvt. Ltd	NEW DELHI	Mr. Nitin Dureja	Mr. Siddharth Jain
84	Travel Geeks Solutions LLP	NEW DELHI	Mr. Amit Goel	Mr. Ssatyajit Parrihaar
85	Udaan India Private Limited	NEW DELHI	Mr. Rajan Dua	Mrs. Seema Rajan Dua
86	Voyage Tours & Holidays	NEW DELHI	Mr. Ravi Kumar Kochar	Ms. Mamta
87	To Travel Is To Learn	NEW DELHI	Mr. Deepak Dewaker	Ms. Chandra Kanta
88	Global Legend Travels Pvt. Ltd.	NEW DELHI	Mr. Narender Kumar Baveja	Mr. Rajeev Syal
89	DSD Travels & Tours (A Unit Of The Delhi Safe Deposit Co. Ltd.)	NEW DELHI	Mr. Vijay Kumar Gupta	Ms. Kavita Kalwaney
90	Worldseye International	NEW DELHI	Mr. Dapinder Singh Khurana	
91	My Kinda Holidays	NEW DELHI	Mrs. Ira Narula	Mrs. Alka Jha
92	Alpha2Omega Travels LLP	NEW DELH	Ms. Geeta Sirpaul	Mr. Anil Lal
93	Afnan Travels	NEW DELHI	Mr. Sanaullah	Mr. Jatin Gulati
94	Megha Visa Services Private Limited	NEW DELHI	Mr. Bipin Kumar Mishra	Mrs. Savita Mishra
95	Adi Holidays Private Limited NEW DELHI		Mr. Masroor Ahmed Khan	Mr. Faizan Ahmed
96	Visawaale Travel Services LLP	NEW DELHI	Mr. Imran Khan	Mr. Mohammad Adnan
97	Cee Bee Cee Travels & Tours Pvt. Ltd.	NOIDA	Mr. Anil Chetwani	Mrs. Neelam Chetwani
98	Jambhala Tourism	PUNE	Ms. Shilbharti Avloketsingh	Mr. Ajit Avloketsingh
99	Upcurve Business Services Private Limited (T/A UdChalo)	PUNE	Col. D. B. Tingre Retd.	Mr. Yazdi Marker
100	7 Dreams Holidays	RAIPUR	Mr. Som Prakash Singh	Mr. Indraraj Chauhan
101	Hir International	RAJKOT	Mr. Kiran Maradia	Mr. Jaydeep Bhatt
102	OK2GO Travel Services Private Limited	SECUNDERABAD	Mrs. Kavitha Rumalla	Mr. Sunil Kumar Rumalla
103	Faith Tours And Travels	SECUNDERABAD	Mr. K. C. Vijay Vikram Kumar	
104	Madarwala Tours And Travels	SECUNDERABAD	Mr. Husain Madarwala	Mr. Hamza Madarwala
105	Shah Travels Private Limited	SRINAGAR	Mr. Shamim Ahmed Shah	Mr. Nassar Ullah Shah
106	Alfa Travels	SURAT	Mr. Ahmed M. Bhaimia	Mr. Salman A. Bhaimia
107	Iccon Holidays	SURAT	Mr. Devang Girishbhai Pandya	Mrs. Poonam Devang Pandya
108	Travel Mania	UJJAIN	Mr. Ankit Dadda	Mr. Dheerendra Singh Parihar

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