

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



The future is now! How prepared are we?

By failing to prepare, we are preparing to fail – is an apt quote by Benjamin Franklin.

We hear remarks from several members that there isn't much meat left in this industry. With rigid approaches from our principals to go direct and "own" the customer, the role of agencies, it is said, is getting diluted. Do we buy this or take a deeper look?

There is plenty happening in market place. Are we only agencies of our principals? We are now challenged with complex questions - *What is that "extra" an end customer gets from an agency, more than what an airline website offers? What is that an agency offers on which the customer is dependent upon or finds it convenient, and can't get the same, directly?*

As we attempt to respond, we must bear in mind the speedy industry evolution. More technology and newer approaches are generated to offer more to a customer.

There are projections that must draw our attention. Here are some I could gather.

- There are about 21,600 Jet Aircrafts in Service. In 2034, this is estimated at 43,560.
- There are 58.1 Million jobs, worldwide, supported by Aviation and generates \$2.2 trillion in economic activity. During 2032, this is estimated at 103.1 Million jobs.
- The number of passengers carried by airlines is 3.1 Billion. During 2032, this is estimated at 6.5 Billion.

The projected growth is incredible. Airline industry is over 100 years old. It was on 17th May 1911, there was the first fee-paying passenger to a specific destination in a tiny biplane. And to have this 100+ year old industry double in the aircrafts; aviation jobs and passengers carried in the next 16 years is mind-boggling.

If these stats are to be taken seriously, the connected questions can be many. The challenge before all of us is – Are we geared up today, to be a part of this 100% growth and to sustain our success levels?

Perhaps, it is time to wake up. To suggest that the future is not away, ***but the future is here, now!*** There are more of such projections that will astonish us. Instead of disbelieving this scenario and procrastinating on change, it becomes important to evolve with times to remain a champion. Here are some more startling happenings. These will enlighten us on the change taking place.

- Look at what the Airlines are planning to "own" customers. ***Airlines are exploring plans to personalize charging for Air Travel***, according to CBS news travel editor Peter Greenberg. These (Customizing Air Fares) will be based on several factors.

Carriers will determine their own prices. They will use historical travel data; Flying Frequency; Place of Residence; where one files often, Age and Gender; Marital status; Shopping history and similar features to customize air fares.

• Richard Branson, President of Virgin Atlantic Airways said ***"I have no doubt that during my lifetime we will be able to fly from London to Sydney in under two hours, with minimal environmental impact. The awe-inspiring views of our beautiful planet below and zero-gravity passenger fun will bring a whole new meaning to in-flight entertainment."***

• There are Aviation leaders who say that small-jets or limited seater aircrafts will soon become a thing of the past. Gary Kelly, CEO of Southwest Airlines, predicts, ***"We'll have fewer airlines, but they will be bigger, stronger and healthier."***

On one hand, there is a boom in size enhancement. On the other, there is a gloom in industry revenues at most levels. What is the big balance to draw? – will be the question.

IATA represents about 240 airlines (or 84 percent of the world's total air traffic). The IATA initiatives - NDC & New Gen ISS, are standards and practices that one must take time to interpret and learn from.

The BIG question is not "how prepared are we?" – But ***"how prepared can we be?"***

There is a huge "willingness" factor. We must focus on these new approaches and newer challenges that will come up. It is not the tougher situations but the tougher inner that can make us resilient and robust to take on.

TAAI's focus is to get our members learn from these changes and projections. The recent MC & Region/Chapter Office bearers' orientation at New Delhi was presented with a glimpse of these changes. We are determined to stress on sharing these happenings. Several partners have offered to collaborate with TAAI and take this new education to the industry forward to have presentations all over.

TAAI's long-standing industry leadership remains vivid with a strong recall. We invite our resourceful members/partners to join hands with TAAI. We need to help support our members' k-levels with the evolving future and newer systems that will dominate the market place. The change must begin with each one of us.

Let's do it, together.

With warm regards & a Very HAPPY NEW YEAR - May this new year bring you more success & happiness than ever before.

Sunil Kumar
President,
sunilindia@gmail.com

TAAI'S ONE OF - A - KIND INTERACTION !

19th November 2015 saw the coming together of the TAAI committee from across the country. With National Office Bearers and their Managing Committee, Chairpersons of all 20 Regions and Chapters, along with the Hon. Secretaries & Hon. Treasurers. Hotel Kempenski Ambience, New Delhi was the destination for the 2 day workshop-cum-training program for the newly formed TAAI committee for the year 2015-17. It was wonderful to see one and all present meeting & greeting one another who had come for this specific purpose from pan India on 19th - 20th November. President, Sunil Kumar welcomed all and thereafter HSG Lokesh tookover and requested all to introduce themselves.

The President presented the goals and way forward for TAAI. Vice President Mr. Marzban Antia briefed the team on Credit card pass thru along with the continuous work that TAAI needs to liaise with the airlines during his presentation. Betaiah Lokesh, Hon. Secretary General took the floor explaining how day to day working of the association needs to be carried out on the basis of the Memorandum and Articles of Association. Briefing on the model by-laws and how membership queries and duties and roles of each committee member be it national or at region/chapter needs to be carried out.

Hon. Treasurer and Chairman-Tourism Council, Mr Jay Bhatia, updated on the financial position of TAAI. How the team needs to make the association financial strong, work on sponsorships and curtail unnecessary expenses in the interest of the members. He assured full support to the team and presented plans how training/workshops/roadshows with various tourism boards/dmc's/airlines would be held across all the country as a part of the destination special programs. TAAI would be working with NTO as well as State Tourism Boards on this. National Managing Committee members too presented their plans on the way forward for TAAI members. The Airline Council team Mrs. Jyoti Mayal and Mr. Shreeram Patel, presented on how they shall be interacting with the airlines on

various matters concerning the members, be it web parity, liaise with DGCA, work more proficiently on Airline-Agency relationships. Mr.Bhagwan Ramnani Chairman : Allied services, on how TAAI should interact with Embassies/Consulates/ visa facilitators like VFS and others along with training programs for members on visa processing and the new bio-metric Schengen regime.

Anil Kumar, Chairman: Membership Development presented his way forward so as to enhance membership multifold be it Active/Allied and other categories, and provide more value to the existing members. The sports and cultural council chaired by Mr.R. Venkatachalam, spoke to on how members need to interact and bond over sports and other activities. He has worked on proposals for networking and bonding of members by organising fam trips, cricket matches, football matches along with airlines, tourism boards, and other stakeholders in the tourism industry.

The President commended the excellent show and asserted that this Committee is focused on its commitment to taking TAAI to greater heights of glory. He also assured and stated that the 4 office bearers shall connect and work closely with DGCA/MoCA/MOT and other regulatory authorities so as to enhance the travel and tourism fraternity through brand "TAAI". Soliciting feedback from his team on this orientation programme All members present, praised National Office Bearers for the well organized orientation meeting, highlighting the way forward for TAAI & its smooth functioning while adhering to guidelines, procedures and practices laid in TAAI's Constitution. Members expressed desire to have such orientation programmes on regular basis. The evening was scheduled with an interaction between the members of Northern Region and National Carrier Air India, followed by a get-together with various Airlines, Principals, Industry Partners, Associates and Media over Cocktails & Dinner.

TAAI COMMITTEE TRAINING PROGRAM FOR REGION / CHAPTER OFFICE BEARERS





TAAI NORTHERN REGION INTERACTION



TAAI EXCLUSIVE DINNER



TAAI MC MEET ON 20TH NOVEMBER

The 2nd Managing Committee Meeting of TAAI (2015 - 2017) was held on 20th November 2015 in Delhi with good attendance. The President expressed overwhelming happiness with all Regions/Chapters being represented at this meeting as well as at the detailed briefing-cum-orientation of MC members and Region/Chapter officer bearers through presentations held on 19th November at the same venue prior followed by TAAI's Get together with Principals, Industry Partners, Associates and Media over Cocktails & Dinner. Various topics of concern were then taken up at the meeting.



OUR PRESIDENT ELECTED PRESIDENT OF UFTAA



The UFTAA's Annual General Assembly, which was held in Brussels on 8-9 November 2015 was great day for all of us associated with TAAI. Our President Sunil Kumar was unanimously elected as UFTAA President ! This was a proud moment for NOT just TAAI but all pan India travel industry colleagues, as It was a honour that an Indian had been thus elected. The decision was announced at UFTAA's Annual General Assembly, which was held in Brussels on 8-9 November 2015. The election was unanimous as various Associations of the world, present at UFTAA, sought leadership from Mr Kumar to support a new direction for UFTAA and to go global. In his address to the Annual General Assembly he sought the members to re-visit its goals to get UFTAA its pioneer status globally, for there are several prominent leaders of the world and associations that had contributed to the well-being of UFTAA during these 5 decades of successful existence.

Mr. Kumar shared his happiness that this highly reputed international organization which was a result of an initiative by a past president of TAAI, J.N Guzder at Mumbai and thus is an opportune time for India to steer UFTAA beyond its past glory. Besides handling several major roles in the travel industry Our President now takes another top another industry position.

Mr Sunil's landmark election will offer his leadership to UFTAA as it celebrates its Golden Jubilee, this year.. The federation was founded in Rome on 22 November 1966. UFTAA has already announced some key decisions in this year's Annual General Assembly, including inviting affiliate membership from individual travel agencies at an annual fee of only 100 Euro/150 Euro. Mr Kumar said "this is an excellent networking opportunity for agencies to enrol as a member of UFTAA and be connected to the world of professionals in Travel & Tourism Industry."

Also at the Brussels meeting, Yossi Fatael was elected as UFTAA's Vice President and SG Kaka was named Vice President of Finance. The board of UFTAA, which comprises of nine elected officers, will soon meet and assign portfolios and committees. In its Golden Jubilee the federation will expand its terrain to grow beyond its current status and have more associations/boards/individuals participate actively in the industry through UFTAA. We would like remind all Members that our President Mr Kumar has spent the last 18 years on TAAI's various committees and has held every elected office in the association, from Chapter Secretary to Chapter Chairman to current President.

WE ARE SO PROUD OF YOU MR PRESIDENT !!



TAAI FELICITATES AIR INDIA'S CMD

TAAI President Sunil Kumar and team consisting of Vice President - Mr. Marzban Antia, Chairperson - Airline Council- Mrs. Jyoti Mayal - Chairperson - Airline Council, Co-Chairman Airline Council, Mr. Shreeram Patel and Chairman - TAAI Northern Region, Mr. Rajan Sehgal felicitated AIR INDIA's CMD, Mr. Ashwani Lohani at Air India Headquarters in New Delhi on 20th November 2015. Mr Lohani was happy to meet and interact with TAAI and appreciated the courtesy call. He expressed the desire to meet with the Team at a later date.



(L to R) Mr. Marzban Antia - Vice President / Mrs. Jyoti Mayal - MC Member & Chairperson - Airline Council / Mr. Ashwani Lohani - CMD - Air India, Mr. Sunil Kumar R - President - TAAI / Mr. Rajan Sehgal - Chairman - TAAI Northern Region and Mr. Shreeram Patel - MC Member & Co Chariman - Airline Council

TAAI MEETS MINISTER OF TOURISM, REPUBLIC OF BULGARIA



TAAI Team comprising Mr. Marzban Antia - Vice President & Mr. Jay Bhatia - Chairman - Tourism Council & Hon. National Treasurer met Minister of Tourism, Republic of Bulgaria in Mumbai on 25th November 2015. The Ministry proposed to have workshops, tourism roadshows and training programs along with Fam trips for the trade.

In the pic (L to R): H.E. Mr. Petko Doykov - Ambassador of the Republic of Bulgaria to India
Mr. Marzban Antia - Vice President H.E. Ms. Nikolina Angelkova - Minister of Tourism, Republic of Bulgaria
Mr. Jay Bhatia - Chairman - Tourism Council & Hon. National Treasurer - TAAI

Members, TAAI Newsline is happy to commence a special page on Airlines matters and concerns that will be looked into by Consultant-Ashish Kumar of Agnitio World. Various topics of the aviation industry will be put up on this page by our Airline Council. This issue has questions answered by Mr Ashish on the way forward for travel agents through agent- customer relationships and how to be relevant and competitive. Read On !

HOW DO YOU SEE AGENTS MOVE BEYOND TICKETING PRODUCTS ONLY?

We believe agents need to think through deeply as to who owns the customer really and how the relationship is handled. Once the ownership is established in essence, agents can extend the pipeline of selling other product suite to customer as well. Agents need to invest in web services and digitalisation to be able to offer ease of use through single click selection of multiple product options managed via multiple integrations at the

backend. The end customer interface needs to be extremely easy to use and intuitive so that when tickets are being searched for - hotels and other product options are seamlessly integrated.

Agents need to recognise the opportunity of cross selling other products through their customer relationships and invest in technology to deliver value to the customers.

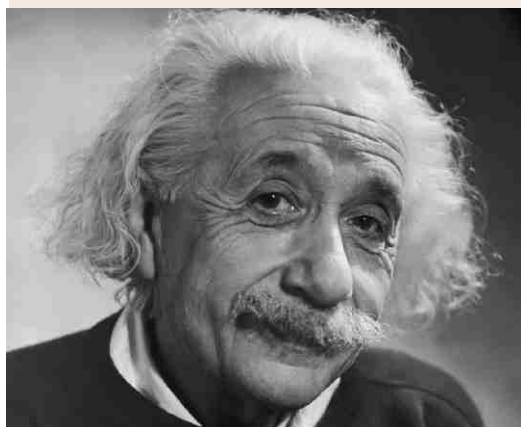
WHAT DO AGENTS NEED TO DO DIFFERENTLY?

Travel industry is going through a paradigm shift and Agents across the board need to relook at their strategy to be able to remain relevant and competitive. Large TMCs need to look at optimisation of their locations and process through initiatives such as centralisation / shared services to be able to offer inefficiencies to either customers and remain cost competitive.

Medium sized agents need to reinvent themselves through technology, resulting in transparency of price and efficiency and corporate self booking tools. Customers are looking for more options and price comparison for the best price to manage the unmanaged travel. More and more users are getting on mobile

and booking transactions with close to 40% of all transactions happening on mobile only. It is very important to ensure technology is mobile compatible and responsible as well.

Agents need to also invest in CRM and customer loyalty points program to be able to extend the relationship further and deliver superior value to them. Agents need to be careful while investing in technology and technology partner as it needs lot of working closely together with technology team and looking at various technology platforms and options. One can also optimise investment through open / shared / SaaS based technology platforms and well planned implementation.



QUOTE OF THE MONTH

“ Not everything that counts can be counted, and not everything that can be counted counts. ”

- Albert Einstein

TAAI AT RESPONSIBLE TOURISM SUMMIT 2015

The Responsible Tourism Summit 2015 was the brainchild of Outlook Traveller. Mr. Indranil Roy, President and Publisher, Outlook group welcomed the participants. Presented by Kerala Tourism, the aim was to make all travellers conscious of the all important need to respect the environment and culture of a destination and to conserve the natural heritage whilst understanding the social responsibilities of promoting tourism & its environmental issues and concerns. Over the years, Outlook Traveller has featured several articles advocating the high importance of Responsible Tourism and has endeavored to inculcate in its readers the spirit of this Responsible Tourism initiative. Mr. Roy later had the Lamp lighting ceremony. Mr. Vinod Zutshi, Secretary, Tourism Government of India welcomed the initiative of Responsible Tourism. He told the audience that the Government is keen to support Responsible Tourism in every possible way. The Summit, created a first-of-its-kind platform for all stakeholders of Responsible Tourism and led to intense interaction, networking, sharing thoughts and experiences. There were interesting panel discussions to discuss the way forward to develop a blueprint for Responsible Tourism pan India. TAAI President Mr Sunil Kumar was an eminent member of the Panel discussion that discussed various aspects of Responsible Tourism. MC Member and Chairperson

of TAAI Airline Council, Mrs Jyoti Mayal also attended the day-long Summit, held at the ITC Maurya. Other speakers at the SUMMIT were Harold Goodwin, Professor of Responsible Tourism, Manchester Metropolitan University and Director, Inter Mr. Nakul Anand, Executive Director, ITC national Centre for Responsible Tourism, Mr. Jose Dominic, MD and CEO of CGH Earth,. Ms. Tanvi Sundriyal, AMD MP Tourism, Jyoti Kapur, President, Association of Domestic Tour Operators of India, Mr. Pranob Sarkar-Honorary Secretary, IATO, Mr. Nakul Anand, Executive Director, ITC , Mr. Aman Nath, Chairman, Neemrana Hotels. Speakers also included Ashwini Lohani (CMD, Air India), Jeremy Smith (CEO & co-founder Travindy), Mandip Singh Soin (Founder and Managing Director, Ibox Expeditions, and Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society), Shama Pawar (Kishkinda Trust), Suman Billa(Joint Secretary, Ministry of Tourism, GOI), Mr. Santosh Mishra(Chhattisgarh Tourism), Mr. Anoop Shrivastav (Deputy Director, UP Tourism), Mark Watson and Dr.Venu. The RT Summit 2015 was ably supported by State Partners including Chattisgarh Tourism, UP Tourism, Incredible India, Gujarat Tourism, Kerala Tourism and Uttarakhand Tourism.



WONDERLUST TRAVEL MAGAZINE'S SEMINAR

Wonderlust travel magazine organized a Seminar on 'Transforming Tourism' on 16 December 2015 at Le Meridien, New Delhi. The premier event saw the coming-together of people from the travel and tourism industry who discussed various ways of Transforming Tourism for the better in the coming years. Around 150 people from all over the country attended seminar. The Hon'ble Secretary-Tourism, Government of India, Shri Vinod Zutshi supported the Seminar and was the keynote speaker. Five sessions on Tourism-CEO's Panel, Inbound, Outbound, MICE and Niche Tourism were up on the agenda. It had special addresses by top industry veterans and participants witnessed presentations of different State Tourism Boards & National Tourism Organizations. TAAI MC Member and

Chairperson, Airline Council, Jyoti Mayal, was the moderator for the panel and emphasized on transforming tourism and creating a two way traffic from distinguished panelists such as Commercial Director of Air India, Pankaj Srivastava, Faith Vice Chairman, Sarabjit Singh, Agnitio. Consultant Ashish Kumar & Anup Nair leading incoming tour operator. Northern Region Chairman, Mr. Rajan Segal was also present. We all are aware that Governments across the globe, especially those in developing nations, are looking to tourism as a way of transforming not just the economy, but the lives of its people, within and outside the sector. Let us hope that seminars such as these will enhance more initiatives from not only the Government but all stakeholders of the industry !



SOUTH AFRICAN TOURISM ROAD SHOW INVITATION FOR TAAI MEMBERS

THEY ARE BACK AGAIN !

After successfully-held roadshows pan India earlier this year with TAAI members' participation, South African Tourism Road Shows are back. TAAI members, get ready to get more of South Africa through their various presentations beginning with Kolkata Delhi, Hyderabad and Mumbai. For those of you who missed out last time, this is the ideal opportunity to get on board. There is never a full-top to learning and discovering ! Send your attendance RSVP to Indiaroadshow@southafrica.net as per invite below



We'd love you to join us at the 2016 South African Tourism Roadshow to get greater insight into the wide selection of experiences that our country has to offer. There's no denying that South Africa is a place that radiates potential and excitement; from thrilling adventures to world-class shopping, diverse landscapes to fascinating cultures; it's no wonder that tourism to the country continues to flourish. Join us to share in the magnificence of South Africa and be filled with ever more reason to invite your clients to a trip of a lifetime, in our unforgettable country. Shouldn't you be a part of it?

We look forward to seeing you there.

RSVP: Indiaroadshow@southafrica.net

City	Date	Time	Venue
Kolkata	18 January, Monday	10:00 - 14:00	The Oberoi
Delhi	19 January, Tuesday	10:00 - 16:00	Le Meridien
Hyderabad	21 January, Thursday	10:00 - 14:00	The Park Hyatt
Mumbai	22 January, Friday	10:00 - 16:00	The Palladium

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TAAI AND ITQ JOINT TRAINING PROGRAMS



TAAI and InterGlobe Technology Quotient, (ITQ) a strategic business unit of InterGlobe Enterprises which is a leader in aviation, hospitality and travel related services, contributing to the growth of the market through innovation and service leadership, has entered into an extended partnership for providing training to TAAI associated members and travel agents. The agreement enables TAAI associated agents across the country to nominate their staff to be trained on soft skills such as presentation skills, business etiquettes, personality grooming to name a few was sealed earlier in the year. Then

Training programs have begun with good participation from agent members of TAAI Regions and Chapters of Delhi, Mumbai, Pune, Raipur, Indore, Nagpur, Baroda, Vishakapatnam, Bhubaneswar, Hyderabad, Lucknow, Ahmedabad. Anil Parashar, President & CEO, InterGlobe Technology Quotient, said "It is an honor to be partnering with TAAI in this unique venture. It is our endeavour to reach out and extend support to build the skill sets for the operations and frontline staff of our travel partners so that they are well equipped to service the global customer of tomorrow. We believe that armed with these skill sets the staff of the agency will be poised to become the consultant of the future." TAAI President Sunil Kumar is of the opinion that "It is a very unique venture taken up by InterGlobe technology Quotient along with TAAI. We see this as a tremendous value proposition for the industry on the whole."





BARODA



LUCKNOW



MUMBAI



MUMBAI

ITQ SOFT SKILLS TRAINING IN AHMEDABAD

TAAI's initiative to offer Training programs to its agent members' front line staff have commenced in real earnest in Ahmedabad too. The TAAI & ITQ Soft Skill Joint Training was held here on 26 Nov 2015, pertaining to Customer orientation. The Training offered lesson on various vivid topics regarding customer handling. The participants were more than happy to

have open discussions on the topic. Mr. Manish Jurani from Training Partnerz was the faculty for this training program. There were a total of 37 enthusiastic. Said Mr Paras Lakhia Chairman of the Chapter said " This was a much awaited Training program and member agencies have appreciated TAAI's efforts in this direction "Certificates were distributed after completion.



AHMEDABAD



AHMEDABAD

TRAVELSHOP TURKEY WORKSHOPS IN INDIA



TRAVELSHOP TURKEY, Indian specialist tour operators located in Turkey organised workshops in cooperation with Turkish Tourism Board and Turkish Airlines for agent members of TAAI TAFI AND OTOAI in 6 different cities in India such as in New Delhi-7TH Dec, Kolkata- 8th Dec, Hyderabad - 9th Dec, Bangalore-11th Dec, Ahmedabad- 14th Dec and in Mumbai on 15th Dec. A scheduled workshop in Chennai was postponed to early next year due the unfortunate flood situation. Three Participating Hotels from Turkey also were a part of this event. Stakeholders like Turkish Airlines, Movenpick Hotel-Istanbul, Gamirasu Cave Hotel-Cappadocia; and Dosso Dossi Hotel, Istanbul also partnered in the show. TAAI members contributed to a large part of the audience. A Representative from the

Turkish High Commission attended the event in Delhi and the General Consul from Hyderabad attended the Hyderabad Road Show whilst Mr. Sabri Ergen The General Consul from Mumbai attended the Shows in Bangalore, Ahmedabad and Mumbai. This endeavor to constantly engage with Indian Partners will enhance tourism business in both countries. Mr. B.T Ramnani TAAI MC Member and Mr. Devesh Agarwal Eastern Region Chairman represented TAAI in the Kolkata roadshow. Mr. Ramnani stated "Indians are now looking at newer destinations to visit and Turkey is a good option, being just a few hours away with direct flights between India and Istanbul. Such Roadshows give agents more information on how to experience Turkey's contemporary traditional and legendary experiences of the destination thus enabling them to sell and market the destination better to the Indian traveller."

The Hyderabad, Bangalore and Ahmedabad roadshows too saw members in large numbers and the tourism potential from these cities is growing exponentially. Mr Imtiaz Qureshi MC Member who was present in Hyderabad for the program was of the opinion that "The importance of India as a source market for Turkey is increasing as India is an emerging travel market with massive growth potential. Such roadshows thus pave the way for getting to know more about the destination and queries can be answered across the counter. That helps a lot." Mr. Anil Kumar, MC member who attended along with office bearers of TAAI – Karnataka Chapter, stated that, "detailed presentations to members frontline staff followed up by b2b meetings with the hoteliers and airline personnel also helped to create more awareness of the products." Mr. Paras Lakhia, Chairman – Gujarat Chapter stated " the Travel Shop Turkey roadshow was very well organised and were attended by the TAAI Agent members of Ahmedabad. It was very informative and cleared out the ambiguities in the minds of all about the safety and security in Turkey. I am sure it will be helpful for tourism into Turkey." Mr Jay Bhatia Chairman, Tourism Council and Hon Treasurer, who initiated the tie-up along with TravelShop Turkey, attended the workshop in Mumbai and interacted with Murtaza Kalender, Managing Director, TravelShop TURKEY and his team. Said Mr Bhatia "TAAI members across the country, took advantage of the presentations and discovered more insights on selling itineraries to Turkey. We are looking forward to more roadshows and presentations with various other countries and DMCs so that the selling skills as well as more information is available for our members."

IN DELHI



IN KOLKATA



IN KOLKATA



IN BANGLORE



IN HYDERABAD



IN AHMEDABAD



IN MUMBAI



VFS GLOBAL TO CONDUCT JOINT VISA TRAINING PROGRAMS FOR TAAI MEMBERS

Bhagwan Ramnani, TAAI Managing Committee Member and Chairman – Allied Services Committee informs that the much awaited initiative from TAAI's new Managing Committee is soon to take off ! VFS Global is all set to conduct joint visa training programs for TAAI members pan India for the First Time !Member training is very much in the fore-front for the Committee's plans for 2015 -2017. Come January 2016 and VFS Global will conduct visa training, beginning in the second week on a quarterly basis in conjunction with the Regional/Chapter meetings of TAAI. "Said Mr Ramnani "There are regular changes in visa processes and most Embassies and Consulates are teamed up with VFS Global, hence TAAI had talks with them to conduct training sessions for our members across India on visa processing which will not only enhance their knowledge but enable them to share it with their clients thereby making visa processing easier for both parties." The 1st phase

will be to interact with personnel from VFS Global and Consulates & Embassies. The second will be to impart knowledge and conduct training for front line staff by VFS Global in association with TAAI. The Training will commence firstly in Gujarat in Western India and Kolkata in Eastern India, followed by Southern and Northern India. We all know how cumbersome visa processing can be. Specific training in this area will give TAAI members correct information and a clear understanding of various visa formalities and latest documents. as required by VFS Global. Thus frontline staff of TAAI members of all regions and chapters of TAAI will benefit from such training sessions. Besides VFS have also agreed to depute their regional managers to attend TAAI regional/chapter meetings as and when invited. Thus the initiative will bring better understanding with Owners/Directors of TAAI members. A face to face personal interaction will help TAAI members to resolve their issues & problems with regard to visa procuring.

NEWS FROM REGIONS & CHAPTERS

WESTERN REGION MEETING

The first meeting of TAAI Western Region was held on 15th December in Mumbai with good attendance under the aegis of the new Committee – Chairman Mr Sampat Damani, Secretary, Mr Sameer Karnani and Treasurer Ms Madhuri Kanga. Matters of immediate concern were discussed beginning with the Notice from Income Tax Authorities. All queries pertaining to this issue were answered by Mr Haridas Bhat, Partner of GMJ Associates to the utmost satisfaction of members. This was followed by an interesting presentation by TAAI Hon Treasurer and Chairman Tourism Council, Mr Jay Bhatia on the NewGen ISS – the proposed new and additional models of IATA Accreditation.



TAAI SOUTHERN REGION MEETING IN CHENNAI



President Mr. Sunil Kumar along with Vice President Mr. Marzban Antia, HSG Mr. Lokesh Bettaiah and Hon. Treasurer Mr. Jay Bhatia visited Southern region on 22nd Dec 2015 and joined the members for their second meeting of the Region. Ms Hema Chander, Chairperson, TAAI SR, welcomed the OBs and the meeting took off to an electrifying start. The President addressed the gathering with a speech of total commitment from the OBs towards taking TAAI to new heights, new concepts and new trends in the travel agents field with effective from 01st Jan 2016 and by leading UFTAA as the President this year. The bonding would only open new venues for a better environment for Travel Agents.

More and more of participation from the regional & chapters would be the next focus and Mr Sunil said his vision was to take 65 year old TAAI to new heights using the new tech savvy elements available. The HSG Mr. Lokesh started off with an update on the happenings in the industry and also briefed on the MC meeting held in Nov in Delhi. Lot of questions were put across to him.

The HSG with his expertise answered them much to the satisfaction of the members present. Treasurer, Jay Bhatia laid out the norms for mode of payment of IATA BSP cheques from 01st Jan 2016 and cleared all the doubts relating to the three payment options available to Travel agents.

Marzban Antia who has been working for the last 2 years liaising for the Gateway Pass through systems from major airlines stressed on creating better environment for the TAs by the introduction of HDFC corporate cards with substantial limits without collateral. These were in the pipeline for the agents pan India as this was the only way out for balancing the weekly payment and also the cash back offer from the banks will be an additional income. It was a fruitful gathering that exchanged lots of information and knowledge about the future of our Trade. Ms Hema Chander concluded the meeting, thanking the OBs for their visit and for sharing their thoughts with the members.



TAAI KARNATAKA CHAPTER MEMBERS MEET AIR INDIA OFFICIALS



The Members of TAAI, Karnataka chapter, had a fruitful meeting and interactive session with the team from Air India, headed by Station Manager, Mr. R Kannan and Assistant General Manager (Commercial), Mr. R Sachin, on 16th December, 2015. Mr. Kannan expressed his pleasure at being back to Bangalore after a long period when he was away at various stations, and was happy to meet old colleagues from TAAI at this interactive session. He introduced the members to Air India's new direct flight connecting the Silicon Valley of India to the Silicon Valley in the USA-Bangalore-SFO-Bangalore !! Mr. Kannan and Mr. Sachin went on to brief the members on the facility of through check in, customs and immigration at Bangalore for this and other connecting international flights which was well received by members.

Apart from this, they also briefed members that Air India had great plans for the coming year with the addition of 40 new aircraft to their fleet scheduled in 2016. They were hopeful of a few more international departures from Bangalore along with an increase in frequency on the domestic routes. They assured members that they at Air India, were ready to provide all possible support to the travel trade and looked forward to the support of the TAAI members. After their initial speeches the floor was thrown open to the members for a Q & A session, which was lively and interactive with Mr. Kannan and Mr. Sachin deftly responding to the many googlies and bouncers sent out to them by the members !

VFS PRESENTATION AND INTERACTIVE SESSION

TAAI, Karnataka Chapter organized a VFS Presentation and Interactive Session on the 23rd of December, 2015 which was well received and attended by members. The event included informative presentations on visa application processes and procedures for UK, Schengen, Canada, Australia, South Africa, Thailand, Malaysia and Vietnam followed by a Q & A session. The VFS, Bangalore team included Ms. Poornima Khera, (Senior Manager), Ms. Asha Rani, (Operations Manager-Schengen), Mr. Shantha Kumar, (Deputy Manager), Mr. Rao Karneedi (Deputy

Manager), Mr. Shaik Wajeed Basha (Deputy Manager) and Mr. Avinash (Deputy Manager). The members present sought various clarifications and suggestion from the VFS team, who went at great lengths to clarify all doubts and queries of the members as part of the Q & A session. The VFS team was happy with the event and also assured the Chapter office bearers that they would be willing to have such sessions on a quarterly basis. Members present also appreciated the initiative taken by the Chapter office bearers in organizing this session.



GUEST LECTURE BY TAAI AT TOURISM FIESTA ORGANIZED BY GARDEN CITY COLLEGE



The Karnataka Chapter recently signed an MOU with Garden City college of Management in Bangalore with a view to enhance and cultivate 'on the job' value to the students and create an industry and academia platform for nurturing new talent. As part of the MOU TAAI-Karnataka Chapter will be providing assistance in organizing speakers from the industry for guest lectures to the students. One such lecture was organized by the Faculty of Tourism of the College as part of their 'Tourism Fiesta' Mr. Niranjan S Bhargava, Chairman of the Educational Institutions and Programs Committee of the Karnataka Chapter



addressed the final year students of the Masters in Tourism Administration (MTA) program. He impressed on the students that the industry requires qualified and passionate youngsters to join the trade and that TAAI was working with their college to make it easier for them to get placements with established Travel Companies. Mr. Bhargava, in his own inimitable style, engaged the students in a lively interactive session, throwing 'trick questions' at them and ensuring that all the students present participated in the session. The students on their part were extremely enthusiastic and were happy to be a part of the session, where Mr. Bhargava gave them a glimpse of what lies ahead for them when they graduate and become a part of the Travel Industry ! Members of the Tourism faculty present at the Lecture were also very happy with the event. Ms. Ishrat N. Wahab, Head of the Department of Tourism of Garden City College said, "Thank you for having given us the opportunity to host such a wonderful event. I am sure, it will serve its purpose and will prove fruitful to the student community of the department of tourism. My students look forward to grabbing the wonderful opportunity that will come their way, both in the form of training, as well as internships. I am sure, together we will create a change."

NEWS FROM JAMMU & KASHMIR CHAPTER

Chairman of Jammu and Kashmir meets the CM Shamim Ahmed Shah, Chairman of Jammu and Kashmir Chapter informs us that he represented TAAI at the meet with Hon'ble Chief Minister of J&K - Jenab Mufti Mohammed Sayed along with heads of other associations. The CM was happy to interact with the Chairman who appraised him of the local situations in the area.



Hon'ble Chief Minister of J&K Jenab Mufti Mohammed Sayed Secretary Tourism J&K Govt.
Jenab Farooq Ahmed Shah (IAS) Chairman TAAI - J&K Chapter
Shamim Ahmed Shah with heads of other associations.



Hon'ble Minister of Education Jenab Nayeem Akhter Sahib (IAS)
Chairman TAAI - J&K Chapter Shamim Ahmed Shah

TAAI PUNJAB CHAPTER MEETING

The first meeting of Punjab Chapter was held on 10th Dec, 2015 in Jalandhar presided by none other than our President Mr. Sunil Kumar, accompanied by HSG Mr. Lokesh Bettaiah. Narinder Davesar Hon. Secretary of Punjab Chapter and Treasurer, Mr. Pankul Sharma took up the minutes of the Chapter's AGM held on 20 Jul 2015 which was duly approved. The agenda was to discuss the vacancy of its Chapter Chairman, the post being still vacant. Thus the MC had the onus of appointing the Chairman (as per AOA) to fill the vacancy. As per the directives of the President, they had already intimated the Chapter members to indicate if any member was interested in leading the Chapter. Member Mr. Ashwini Gupta of Dove Travel, Amritsar showed his interest but with no consensus. Mr. Ajit Singh of R.A Travel then proposed the name of Mr. Rajeshwar Dang, which was seconded by Mr. N.K. Seggar and the house confirmed Mr. Dang as the Chapter Chairman. The President addressed the house, thanking it for its co operation and welcomed the Chairman. Mr. Dang and Mr. S.K. Chopra also addressed the house and the meeting ended with vote of thanks followed by cocktails and dinner. Members were extremely happy to have the President and the HSG in their midst and made the most of this opportunity to interact with them.



2ND MEETING OF RAJASTHAN CHAPTER



Chairman Mr. Manoj Sogani of Rajasthan Chapter held his 2nd Chapter meeting with 15 members in attendance and had several discussions over topical matters including the new BSP payment system and members were shown a presentation on this topic.

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CHANDIGARH CHAPTER MEETING HELD ON 27TH NOV, 2015.



Mr. Baljit S Shergill Chairman of our Chandigarh Chapter along with his office bearers held the 1st meeting on 27th Nov, 2015. 13 Members attended the meet held at Hotel Park in the evening and were welcomed by the Chairman for making time to do so. There were discussions as to forming four committees-Allied services, Airline council, Membership and Tourism in the next meeting. The Chairman said "proper co-ordination needs to be

there amongst all the TAAI members for effective growth of the group. One of the topics was the mandatory check by the employer to check the NOC before employing any new staff. He informed them that more agencies wanted should join TAAI as members but the reputation and background of the Agency needs to be studied before bringing them on board. The meeting ended with a vote of thanks by Hon. Secretary Mr. Anil Anand.

KERALA CHAPTER CHAIRMAN AT IHMCT, KOVALAM

Kerala Chapter Chairman, Mr. Ross Massod, was a special Guest of Honor for the 6 days Skill Certification Workshop held by the Institute Of Hotel Management And Catering Technology in Kovalam on 5th December. The Program is focused on Food Production, F & B Service & Housekeeping for the benefit of the hotel employees as organised by the Institute. The Institute is run under the aegis of the Ministry of Tourism, Government of

India and is committed to the pursuit of Excellence in Hospitality Education. Chairman Mr. Masood also distributed Certificates along with other guests. He said "Today, skill is of utmost importance and such programs enhance the knowledge of participants who benefit from such interactions" Mr. Masood was also one of the eminent guest speakers and distributed certificates..



Left to Right - (1) Mr. Ajith Kumar, General Manager, Hotel South Park, Trivandrum, (2) Mr.P.K. Shaju, Additional Secretary (T), Government of Kerala, (3) Mr. V Sreekumara Menon, Member, IATA, (4) Mr.G.C. Bhuyan, Asst. Director, India Tourism, Kochi, (5) Mr.Ross Masood, President, TAAI, Kerala Chapter, (6) Mr.L.V. Kumar, Principal, IHMCT, Kovalam

MEETING CUM TRAINING PROGRAM BY GUJARAT CHAPTER



TAAI-Gujarat Chapter's well attended meeting was held on 16th December 2016 with an interesting a Soft Skill Training Program post the meet for owners and staff of members agents. The full day program was conducted by renowned faculty of English House a trustworthy service provider in Ahmedabad, involved in providing qualitative Soft Skills Training Service, that besides the training, spoke of the importance of having such programs. The Chapter had our President Mr. Sunil Kumar in its midst who was welcomed by the office bearers with a lovely bouquet and later addressed the members much to their delight. TAAI MC Member Mr. Shreeram Patel too graced the meeting.



SPECIAL DEALS FOR TAAI MEMBERS



Special Member Offer : Goa: Hotel Royal Orchid : Christmas & New Year Eve 2015. Members we are happy to inform you that we have obtained an exclusive offer for TAAI members travelling to GOA and staying at Hotel Royal Orchid. The below new year and Christmas package with 10% discount is for TAAI members travelling personally and not for sale to clients. 3 nights and 4 days (INR 42999 AI) | Validity:- 23rd December 2015 till 5th Jan 2016)

- Scheduled Transfers by Air- Conditioned Coach.
- Pre-set menu or Buffet Breakfast, Lunch or Dinner at "Cosmos" Restaurant.
- Use of gym, beach volleyball, water-polo and recreation activities.
- Use of the activities in the Kids Club.
- Access to swimming pool and the open-air Jacuzzi.
- Iron / ironing board upon request.
- Complimentary WI-FI.
- 30 mins couple massage once during stay.
- 10% discount at Boat Quat Grill (Award winning restaurant)
- Welcome drink on arrival (1 pint of beer or 01 mocktail).
- All applicable taxes included.
- Extension of stay on prorata basis.
- Please Note - Mandatory Gala Dinner at an additional price of -

Christmas Gala Dinner		New Year Eve Gala Dinner	
Adult	Child (6-12yrs)	Adult	Child (6-12yrs)
6000	3000	8000	4000

Note:- child upto 6 years complimentary ,6-12 years - 30% of package rates & above 12 years 40% of the package rates. Reservation of rooms is subject to availability.

For any further clarification and reservations, please contact Aijaz Ahmad, Sales Manager, Royal Orchid Hotels, m: + 91 9004478267 / 0226655292/93/91. email: sm.2.west@royalorchidhotels.com
Please note this offer is for TAAI Members travelling personally and not for sale to clients.



Sarovar Group of Hotels & Resorts is happy to offer TAAI members the following special preferential rates for Winter 2015 - 2016 inclusive of • All the special preferential room rates are Non-commissionable and exclusive of all taxes (unless specified) • Validity : with immediate effect till 31st March 2016 • Any changes in the taxation structure would be levied as

applicable. • All reservations will be confirmed subject to receipt of Advance payment prior to date of check in, or at the time of confirmation, whichever is later. • Our check-in / check-out time at most of our hotels is 12.00 noon (except for leisure destinations). • All arrivals prior to 07.00 am will be booked, held & charged for from the previous evening. • Reservations may be cancelled as per the House Cancellation Policy of the hotel (which could be 48 hours prior, 72 hrs prior or 30 days prior as for hotels in leisure destinations), without any charge. Any cancellations beyond that will incur a one-night charge. Please clarify the cancellation policy of the hotel before cancelling or amending the booking. • No advance will be refunded / adjusted and full retention will be charged in case of cancellation received within 48 hours of check in • A no-show or non-cancellation of a guaranteed reservation at least 24 hours prior to arrival will attract a one-night's retention charge. • All reservations on Direct payment basis will require credit card guarantee 48 hours prior to guest arrival enabling us to holding the booking on a confirmed basis. In absence of the CC details, the reservation will be released after stipulated time limit. • A confirmed / guaranteed reservation in any hotel cannot be substituted or transferred to any other reservation / hotel. • Any amendment / cancellation in the itinerary or hotels used will be treated as a fresh reservation request. In such cases, we reserve the right to review the accommodation status and applicable rates. The above shall incur Cancellation charges as applicable. • All guests, whether traveling as Individual or part of a group, are required to sign the guest registration cards upon check-in at the hotels. • These special rates will not be applicable during Pharma conferences, Exhibitions and black out dates.

For any further assistance, information, enquiries and instant reservations please feel to contact the undersigned
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TRADE NEWS

GUJARAT TOURISM GIVES 'INDUSTRY STATUS' TO STATE'S TOURISM

Good News is here ! Government of Gujarat has introduced a new tourism policy, which will be in effect till March 31, 2020. It is with this new policy that the tourism sector has been given the industry status. It will now aggressively promote investment opportunities in Gujarat for tourism. The new tourism policy will provide investment opportunities in eco-tourism projects, beach tourism and water sports projects, heritage tourism projects, international Buddhist circuits, wayside cafeteria with amenities, cleanliness projects and greenfield properties for development. Gujarat Tourism is looking at adopting PPP model in tourism projects. An event, 'Exploring Investment Opportunities- an interactive meet on Gujarat Tourism Policy' was organised in Mumbai on 8th December, where Saurabhbhai Patel, minister of tourism, Government of Gujarat said, "The new tourism policy

will provide many incentives and concessions such as capital subsidy, interest subsidy, registration/ stamp duty concession, exemption from luxury tax, exemption from entertainment tax, exemption from electricity duty, support for sustainable tourism, special package for mega tourism units, incentive for promotion of innovation, support for marketing and promotion, incentives for skill development / ICT enablement, assistance for research in tourism/ hospitality industry." The Government of Gujarat aims at positioning Gujarat as a vibrant tourist destination and attracting more and more visitors. This will in fact enhance livelihood opportunities besides environmental concerns. A real boon at promoting tourism which is already one of the most important economic driver.

E-TOURIST VISA SCHEME REGISTERS 2713 PER CENT GROWTH IN NOVEMBER UK CONTINUES TO OCCUPY TOP SPOT FOLLOWED BY USA, FRANCE AND GERMANY AMONGST THE COUNTRIES AVAILING E-TOURIST VISA FACILITY

A total of 83,501 foreign tourists arrived in the country on E-Tourist Visa in November 2015 as compared to 2,968 during the month of October, 2014 registering a growth of 2713.4%. UK continues to occupy top spot followed by USA, France and Germany amongst the countries availing E-tourist visa facility. The following are the other important highlights of E-Tourist Visa during November, 2015:

(i) During January-November, 2015 a total of 3,41,683 tourist arrived on e-Tourist Visa as compared to 24,963 during January-November, 2014 registering a growth of 1268.8% . This high growth may be attributed to introduction of e-Tourist Visa for 113 countries as against coverage of earlier TVoA scheme for 12 countries.

(ii) The percentage shares of top 10 source countries availing e-Tourist Visa facilities during November, 2015 were as follows: UK (23.93%), USA (16.33%), Russian Fed. (8.17%), France (7.64%), Germany (5.60%), Australia (4.82%), Canada (4.71%), China (3.26%), Ukraine (2.03%) and Netherlands (1.75%).

(iii) The percentage shares of top 10 ports in tourist arrivals on e-Tourist Visa during November, 2015 were as follows: New Delhi Airport (45.04%), Mumbai Airport (17.72%), Goa Airport (14.62%), Bengaluru Airport (5.57%), Chennai Airport (5.16%), Kochi Airport (3.56%), Kolkata Airport (2.27%), Hyderabad Airport (2.19%), Trivandrum Airport (1.44%) and Ahmadabad Airport (0.93%).

Tourist Visa on Arrival (TVoA) enabled by Electronic Travel Authorization (ETA), presently known as E-Tourist Visa scheme was launched on November 27, 2014. At present e-Tourist Visa facility is available for citizens of 113 countries arriving at 16 Airports in India. E-Tourist Visa fee structure has been revised w.e.f November 03, 2015 by clubbing the 113 countries into four groups for charging differential rates viz. US\$ 0, US\$ 25, US\$ 48 and US\$ 60. Bank charges have also been reduced from US\$ 2 to 2.5% of the e-Tourist Visa fees.

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