

The TAAI Magazine

# Namas TAAI

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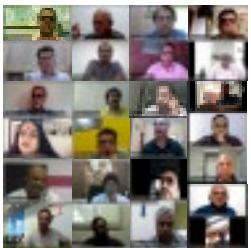
SEPTEMBER 2020



Towards a Better  
**Tomorrow**



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## NAMASTAAI

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Dear Members,

**C**ovid-19 a global pandemic, but its repercussions, and the responses to it have varied significantly around the world. Just as countries imposed lockdown at different times, they are reducing restrictions on different timetables and in different ways. Of course, this reflects the diversity of our world, which itself is a significant driver of demand for tourism. The diversity of impact and subsequent actions will make recovery for travel and tourism significantly more difficult than for any other sector.

The tourism industry, which depends heavily on hedonic and sensorial experiences, is facing the severest stress ever amid the ongoing pandemic. The interlinked socio-cultural, economic, psychological and political impacts of this magnitude can alter the predictive power of previously studied explanatory models and experience in the tourism recovery process.

Change is the only constant in this world, and so is the current pandemic situation. I strongly believe that we are at the end of the tunnel of despair, frustrations and low confidence. It is quite understandable that the Covid-19 pandemic will bring a mountain of changes in the Society, Economy and Tourism landscape. We also understand that the changes will lead to more Sustainable, more Vibrant and more Profitable tourism. The moment the virus spread is under control, there will be an urge to go back to business as usual, perhaps more so to compensate for the losses and we will see aggressive growth. History says that global tourism has encountered several crises right from terrorist attacks and wars to slumping economy and to outbreak of diseases. All these clearly suggest that tourism has been resilient to external shocks. All I want to say, like other crises, we will tide over Covid-19 as well. However, the impact of Covid-19 is far higher than previous catastrophes.

Anticipating the magnitude of the crisis, TAAI has been doing its best to address the issues being faced by our esteemed members and the industry at large. We have left no stone unturned to present our issues to the highest authority of the government, from the Honourable Prime Minister to the Ministries of Finance, Tourism, Civil Aviation, Health, External Affairs, and NITI Aayog, and the Reserve Bank of India. We have also represented our industry strongly with IATA, APJC, Airlines and other stakeholders. Our struggle and fight have been persistent, and constantly evolving. We are very confident that this current TAAI team will bring in a positive difference and change to and for this industry.

All our office-bearers are working diligently to assuage the pain of our members and stakeholders of the industry, which the pandemic has unleashed on us. To ensure that every member gets latest information on the developments of the industry and our initiatives and activities, we launched the digital version of our magazine, NamasTAAI in May.

Going forward, we must not forget the new norms, Sanitation, Hygiene and Social Distancing. The battle against Covid -19 needs to be won, and I am sure that together we will win the war against Covid-19. Joining our forces, we will rebrand the Travel, Tourism & Hospitality industry.

This issue of NamasTAAI is dedicated to the medical fraternity, coinciding with the 74th Year of Independence. We pray for all the people who have succumbed to the virus, and for the all the Doctors, Nurses & Medical Institutions who have fought selflessly for Our Safety & Good Health.

We at TAAI salute them!

Warm Regards,  
**Jyoti Mayal**  
 President, TAAI  
 president@taai.in



**The pessimist  
 sees difficulty in  
 every opportunity.  
 The optimist sees  
 opportunity in every  
 difficulty.**

**— Winston Churchill**



Dear Colleague Members,

**TAAI leads initiatives to restart travel and tourism.** Appeals and suggestions had been forwarded and are constantly being discussed with the Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA), Ministry of Tourism (MoT), State Governments and other stakeholders in the Government along with IATA and all the airlines.

Five months have passed. Travel, Tourism & Hospitality trade is waiting for the business to resume. A lot has changed or should we say everything has changed. The hectic schedules and lives of travel agents have stopped completely. Brakes have been applied to the ever-flourishing trade! COVID has indeed pushed us back by a couple of years! Frankly, the fact remains that business for all has stopped. Globally, all economies have come to a standstill.

**The Office Bearers have been suggesting positive solutions with facts & figures. Appeals are being submitted, while interactions/debates and justifications are being discussed daily on revival SOPs.** Uncertainty hangs on all of our heads, but with positivity, we feel that normalcy shall resume soon. Yes, but with the "New Normal".

Highlighting the sector's unique role in advancing the new normal, TAAI is working towards Sustainable Development and in protecting the most vulnerable members of our association.

As the world faces the devastating consequences of the pandemic, the tourism sector is among those being affected most severely. Travel is down, fear is up, and the future is uncertain. **But we at TAAI are positive and are taking this as an opportunity to rework, revise and remodel ways of doing business with our Principals, Customers and Travellers.**

While the exact timeline of recovery is not too far, assuming a maximum of 3 to 4 months more, the impact will eventually pass. Once this is all over, we feel that customers will travel again. However, we need to understand now that the travel & tourism sector will be facing a new post-

## Overall perspective on the current situation and the most important things required for the revival of travel & tourism with existing infrastructure

COVID reality, where travel trade members will all be vying for the hearts and minds of wary travellers—likely in some form of a sustained economic downturn driven by this crisis.

The new normal will likely include everything from the smallest of sanitation practices (travellers wanting to know more for their safety) to broader topics such as the health of nations/regions/ports-of-call, COVID features of travel insurance, and issues unique to specific modes of travel (like is social distancing possibilities in air travel, rail and even cruising)? Also, price-sensitive travellers will be looking to book on products and amenities and we agents shall see smaller booking windows, and possibly more breaks/holidays with lower spends and much briefer itineraries. But there is more.

**We need to utilise this time to begin and anticipate what that new normal might look like and prepare for it.**

We at TAAI shall be working closely with the trade to help understand and where possible, define the evolution of post-COVID travel & tourism. We are optimistic that soon enough we shall all be able to explore the world with a newfound appreciation, under the "new normal".

This is the right time for Governments to assure and ensure that travel trade is supported with re-drafted policies, so as to recognise that, tourism not only provides employment to over 10% of the country's population but also contributes to double-digit GDP growth. By this, the Government must also drive equality and inclusivity amongst all stakeholders.

Travel & Tourism is an essential pillar for Sustainable Development. While the government too is working its best to ensure the priority of saving lives to saving livelihoods! In India, the livelihoods of many depend on it, particularly in the hill stations and rural areas. Moreover, in many parts of the country, the protection of biodiversity relies heavily on the tourism sector, from conservation to the revenue generated by those efforts.

We feel that Tourism is a wonderful platform for overcoming the pandemic. It shall bring about confidence within the people and enhance the local economy too. Globally, by bringing people together, tourism can promote solidarity and trust, being crucial ingredients in

advancing bilateral cooperation which is the utmost need of the hour. This is what we see in the interim air-travel bubbles being created by MoCA.

**Friends, we must be patient and stand ready with all our tourism products be it domestic tourism, within the state calling it "Aaas Paaas Dekho", within India with "Dekho Apna Desh" and also international tourism through "Dekho Duniya Sari".**

By staying home today, let's plan and keep suggestions ready for travel tomorrow. Let us positively plan for travel tomorrow, which will support our jobs, reduced costs of administration, well-planned finances, no extended credits, prompt payments from customers, etc. This shall help us in celebrating our future!

It is suggested that the following be considered by one and all!

- Renegotiating our terms of doing business with principals and stakeholder partners
- Employment as per requirement
- Reduction in Administrative Cost and Bank Interest.
- Product information and knowledge.
- Customer Service for Retention of Customer Loyalty for continuous business.
- Choose the right messenger technology – Communicating tool with customers.
- Watch the price sensitivity and value for service
- Focus on your USP, maintain your existing customer base and inspire the customers to travel.

Our efforts are visible and we are confident that the results too shall be positive, as days go by....

**Brighter days are surely ahead once we complete this phase of the pandemic eclipse.**

While you read across this Digital e-issue of NamasTAAI, highlighting our efforts and endeavours, we warmly welcome your positive suggestions.

Considering happy days are not too far away, wishing you a safe, healthy and positive future.

Warm Regards,  
**Jay Bhatia**

Vice-President – TAAI  
vp@taai.in

## THE RESTART

Dear Members,

**C**ovid-19, a global pandemic, brought about untold suffering, deaths and destroyed economies across the globe. The impact of Covid-19 and responses to it has varied significantly around the world. Countries imposed lockdown at different times and in different ways. It only shows how much of diversity we have, which itself is a significant driver of demand for tourism. The Travel and Tourism sector will take a longer time to recover than any other sector.

We, in TAAI, have been working closely with National and State Governments on how to revive Domestic tourism post the Covid-19, as International travel will take a longer time to revive. We are confident that with the co-operation and support of the National and State Governments, we will find a way to Restart. We have to understand what each state can learn from the other. As states across India announce plan to end the lockdown, a new phase in the Covid-19 will emerge. We have to look at it with hope, but with caution. The old normal may not return soon and any resurgence of the virus will bring about more restrictions.

We have to now look at how TAAI members will navigate this difficult environment, specially the next few weeks, when the restrictions are eased. Eagerness to restart and rebuild is large, but so are many questions that returning to business raises. We have to motivate employees and reassure them about safety. We have to maintain hygienic environment at work places, have a holistic approach and focus on restarting our business. We have to tread with utmost caution, as we have been bruised badly already, and cannot afford to make any more mistakes while we are preparing to restart.

TAAI's Managing Committee is working with experts in the travel and tourism industries, FAITH, UFTAA, IATA etc., and will bring out guidelines on the way to Restart.

Stay Safe and Be Positive.

Warm Regards,  
**Bettaiah Lokesh**  
 Hon. Secretary General, TAAI  
 hsg@taai.in



## Breathing Life into Travel

It has been over a month now that the 'lockdown' has been 'unlocked'. It's time that travel too follows suit. After a grinding halt and having taken an economical beating, the industry needs to think through and put forth a fool proof plan to get back on feet.

It is said that nothing is more convincing than suggestions put forth based on self- experience. Hence, I recommend that we as travel agents should explore our own states, and use this opportunity to showcase our own state.

A good start would be think "local" given that few Indian states have travel restrictions and international travel is yet to open. I recommend 'baby steps'. Travel agents should explore/ travel their own state for "Unlocking Tourism". Say a travel agent from Gujarat should explore destinations pertaining to their state/periphery and put it on all social media with photos/ videos with details of all precautions/measures taken for Covid19.

Prepare a Dos & Don't dossier so that we have responsible travellers, and let all know that state is safe and ready for tourism. They could prepare viable itineraries and then this could be further exchanged amongst themselves and interstate travel experts. This would definitely give the required boost to the travel agents as travellers will find it more appealing since it comes from first-hand experience. Let us all travel experts remove the Covid-19 fear through positive campaign and revive local tourism in India.

Covid-19 is here to stay, However living with it and surviving is what matters. In fact, a large number of people want to break free and are ready to travel, and our responsibility is to make it happen sensibly with all the precaution and guidelines.

Warm Regards,  
**Shreeram Patel**  
 Honorary Treasurer, TAAI  
 treasurer@taai.in



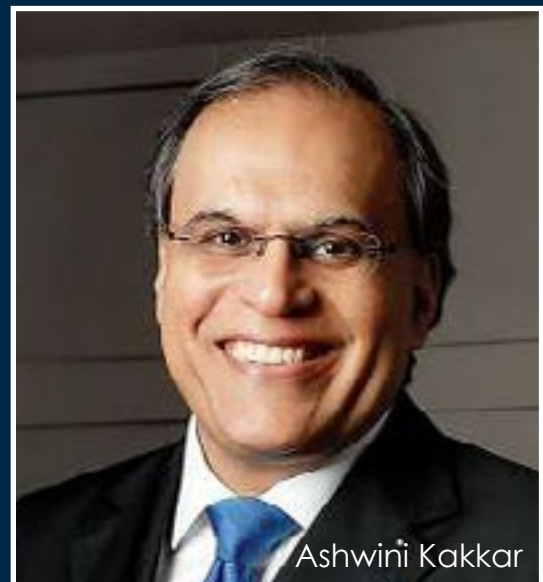
# Past Presidents join TAAI ‘Board of Advisor’ to offer guidance & support

**T**he travel & tourism sector is going through challenging times due to Covid-19, and the industry has been adversely impacted due to the unprecedented lockdown. The office-bearers and Managing Committee of TAAI have been in continuous struggle in enforcing representations with the government in all the relevant ministries, IATA, airlines and all support partners.

Since the Past Presidents have been guiding force to the trade for many years having led the members during various challenges, TAAI has invited Ashwini Kakkar, Rajinder Rai and Neeraj Ghei as Board Advisors.

“As Past Presidents of TAAI, we would like to invite you to be an Advisor to the Managing Committee during these crucial times and we shall invite you to guide us, moreover when we feel your experience and support would be required to channelise our thoughts for a better tomorrow,” the TAAI office-bearers said in an official communication.

“The confidence to revive back has empowered us. It shall take time for sure, but we shall overcome this. This situation of pandemic is something that is way beyond imaginations.”



प्रदीप सिंह खरोला

Pradeep Singh Kharola



सत्यमेव जयते

सचिव  
भारत सरकार  
नागर विमानन मंत्रालय  
नई दिल्ली-110 003  
SECRETARY  
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION  
NEW DELHI-110 003

August 19, 2020

Dear TAAI Members,

Travel trade has been close to my heart since many years now. I have been connected with TAAI and all of you since my days at Air India and am aware of the challenges faced by the trade.

2. Due to the pandemic, global airspace came to a near shutdown and we have faced a lot of challenges. Our aim was to control the spread of Covid19 and ensure appropriate repatriation of Indians from overseas. MoCA launched the Vande Bharat Mission and till date we have brought back nearly a million stranded passengers back to India.

3. Our first meeting on the pandemic crisis management with TAAI began in March'20. TAAI team lead by Jyoti ji, Jay, Lokesh and Shreeram have been in regular touch with me and officials at MoCA through their persuasive appeals, suggestions and regular discussions on concerns faced by its members across India. We have exchanged various communications, chats, web calls and joint meetings with IATA as well as the airlines. Priorities of the Government were many but MoCA ensured an appropriate hearing always to TAAI, being the nodal and premier Association in India. We must appreciate that although being aggressive your office bearers always maintained the dignity and respect for our team.

4. TAAI's, especially the President Jyoti Mayal's convincing power has ensured resolution of several issues like refunds, commencement of international flights. Being the governing authority, we must ensure that we jointly and amicably resolve the challenges faced by our partners. MoCA has reviewed all petitions and shall appropriately respond to each of the concerns raised. We look towards ensuring gradual opening of the skies soon and further enhance air bubbles between many more countries. Revival has begun and MoCA shall ensure that appropriate demand and supply is maintained which shall benefit the trade at large.

5. We seek your support to ensure growth on the Udaan and 'Sab Uden Sab Juden' initiatives. We feel that there is a need for innovative model to be created for air charters and the helicopter services in India. With your support we shall ensure that helicopter services shall come within the reach of the common man.

6. I, appreciate the efforts of TAAI for playing a pro-active role during these crucial times and raising concerns of member agents in the most positive and courtly manner. I once again assure you all that we shall work together with TAAI, in ensuring a fair and growth-oriented sector.

Wishing you all safe, healthy days ahead.

  
(Pradeep Singh Kharola)

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(MDA) norms for which your suggestions have been received and changes made as per the requirements of the trade.

- Our endeavour is to motivate stakeholders to promote tourism to India from overseas markets.
- Through your-goodselves enhance the visibility of brand Incredible India.
- To increase penetration of Indian Tourism across different cities and product segments in target countries.
- To use your skills and entrepreneurship to aggressively be more competitive than other countries in global market development.
- Provide financial support for study tours, participation in travel shows / exhibitions, undertaking online promotions in overseas markets etc.

Our new tourism policy shall ensure that responsible tourism shall be its foundation. Apart from health and hygiene it is also about practices of people and the behaviour of the traveller, as a responsible tourist. It cannot be the responsibility of service providers alone. We shall empower and encourage service providers who are our ambassadors of tourism.

Friends, post Covid, confidence in markets will have to be rebuilt by all of us jointly. We need to work from scratch and face competition from many tourism countries. Our TEAM at MoT shall be always ready to support all your initiatives. Hospitality and culture is our key USP and we welcome tourists with "Atithi Devo Bhava". So, let's remain positive and dedicate ourselves with full commitment to grow and enhance tourism to "Incredible India"

My sincere appreciation to Mrs Jyoti Mayal and the office-bearers of TAAI, who have been constantly supporting the Ministry with their recommendations, appeals, debates and providing insights with practical challenges being faced by the members of the trade.

We at the Ministry shall ensure that we support and care for the trade who has encouraged tourism to Incredible India.

Wishing you all a pleasant reading of this second e-digital issue of NamasTAAI!

Yours Sincerely,  
**Meenakshi Sharma**  
 Director General-Tourism,  
 Government of India  
 New Delhi

**U**nlock 3 is underway and we as a country are now embarking the new normal. Ministry of Tourism, Government of India is working with all stakeholders under the leadership of Hon. Minister of Tourism, Shri Prahlad Singh Patel, who has been constantly in touch with trade associations.

Travel Agents Association of India - TAAI has always led the initiatives during these pandemic times along with members of FAITH.

When I launched the Digital Issue of NamasTAAI, in May'20, we had not expected that with the support and co-operation of the trade we would be able to gradually open up. Suggestions came in from all verticals of the trade. Facts, figures, practical solutions and resolutions to challenges had to be considered. We have worked hand-in-hand on every step since day one!

We would like to thank each of you who attended the "Dekho Apna Desh" webinars and made it a grand success. Your encouragement has made us feel confident and we shall be happy to extend this program of continuous education of tourism products to the trade.

Apart from revival, MoT is working your office bearers on the new Marketing and Development Assistance



# COVID's Impact on Travel Industry

## UFTAA's active and supportive role

**C**OVERID-19 has been a ghastly happening for the Travel & Tourism Industry. It has caused never before the crisis to our Industry. Travel Agencies & Tour Operators; Airlines; Tourism Organisations and Countries depending on tourism are reeling under extreme pressure with a huge financial challenge that threatens existence or huge losses.

UFTAA's role with IATA and Airlines in bridging the gap between the "crisis and relief" has been continuous during the last 4 months. UFTAA actively engaged to support associations and agencies through continuous dialogues with IATA & Airlines. Some key areas where UFTAA has been consistently active are highlighted here.

- In the initial days of the lockdown, UFTAA successfully campaigned for the extension of payment dates to support associations encounter the lockdown.
- UFTAA's continuous debates at PAPGJC meetings, objected the arbitrary and incorrect practice by the Airlines to suddenly disconnect GDS from refunds. Thankfully, this is gradually getting restored.
- BSP Link's "Basic Version" subscribers did not have the facility to file for refund authorities through the Link, unlike those who subscribe for the "Enhanced Version". Through dialogues with IATA, the "Basic Version" subscribers were also given the authority to file refund applications.
- On refund applications, some airlines were only ready for "vouchers" or credit notes favouring passengers. UFTAA's stand from day one has been very clear. Such vouchers or credit notes, if acceptable to the agencies, must be transferable and cannot be only favouring the passenger. They should be favouring "travel agencies" who have made the payment to IATA.
- PAPGJC meetings turned into "weekly meetings" with a 90-minute interaction on every Thursday. UFTAA regularly participated; debated and sought updates on various challenges that agencies were dragged into. The APJC meetings are regularly held, mainly on Thursdays. The



UFTAA Team, led by Sunil Kumar, at 38th PAPGJC Meeting – 24 to 26th FEB 2020, at Geneva.

last PAPGJC meeting was held in Geneva from 24-26 February, 2020 which was a face to face meeting.

- The way-forward, beyond COVID-19, is a priority focus for the PAPGJC. The challenges our industry continues to face during this pandemic must be seriously reviewed and provisions to mitigate such crisis situations must be planned ahead. As a result, the discussions also aim at revisiting several aspects of the governing resolutions. This happens at the PAPGJC meetings as well as through Committees that are appointed. UFTAA's representatives are active in all committees formed.
- UFTAA has taken up several matters of Associations with IATA, from time to time. These are concerning challenges faced by associations in dealing with APJC's; IATA and Airlines. IATA response has been positive and all such matters are duly considered.
- Apart from the various E-meetings, UFTAA has held with Associations; with its Board and with IATA, there is a standing invite from UFTAA to all Associations to seek UFTAA's presence at a one-to-one interactive meeting as associations plan the way forward. Two such interactive sessions have been held between UFTAA & TAAI.

### POSITIVE VOTE FROM ASSOCIATIONS EXTENDS UFTAA BOARD'S TERM

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 causing challenges to travel and physically meet; UFTAA's AGM is extended to be held before 30th June, 2021. The resolution adopted by UFTAA's board on the 24th June, 2020, seeking extension of the current term to continue till the AGM to be held prior to 30th June 2021 has been unanimously approved by its member Associations through a Mail Ballot. Consequently, the term of the current Board of UFTAA, led by Sunil Kumar, as its President and Yossi Fatael; Trevor Rajaratnam and Cetin Gurcun as Vice Presidents, stands extended.

### 4TH UFTAA BOARD MEETING HELD ON 24TH JUNE, 2020

The 4th UFTAA Board meeting for the year 2019-20, was held on a virtual platform and was well attended. In view of the most challenging situation that is now created due to the Pandemic, UFTAA's Board deliberated extensively on the way-forward for UFTAA and its relationship with associations.

UFTAA Board Meeting reviewed in detail various subjects, including the relationship with Partners; IATA matters; Communications; Administrative matters; UFTAA of UFTAA; AGM and many more.

# Managing Committee Meetings of TAAI on Virtual Platform



**T**AAI Managing Committee meetings for the term 2019 – 2021 were held in the months of February, March, May, June and July 2020 via Conference/Video Call.

Here are some of the important decisions made at these meetings.

Three Past Presidents of TAAI were appointed as Board of Advisors to help guide TAAI to move forward post COVID with their vast experience, advice and support for betterment of the industry and membership.

- I. Ms. Neeraj Ghei
- II. Mr. Ashwini Kakkur
- III. Mr. Rajinder Rai

The house commended the Managing Committee for its' round the clock work which included continuous dialogues & communications with the Central Government Ministries;

taking up refund challenges with IATA & airlines individually including LCC's (credit shell and refund of balances in Agent logins; lesioning with FAITH, CII, Associations and Global body UFTAA; Regular interactions with members of Regions/Chapters; conducting webinars at Regions/ Chapters and National level and requesting government to allow travel agents to do ticketing for Vande Bharat mission flights.

The Managing Committee affirmed that it will continue its efforts to seek support and relief from the government & airlines and is trying to work out loyalty programs for members with as much as possible stake holders in the industry

The meetings duly transacted all business including statutory, legal & membership matters and reports of National Office Bearers, Managing Committee Members & Chairpersons.

# Round Up of Tourism Services Council

**D**uring the lockdown period, we have had the opportunity to host and conduct a lot of webinars for the benefit of our members, so that our members and their staff can have the opportunity to learn about various destinations to facilitate better selling.

I had the opportunity to participate as a panellist representing TAAI at a webinar held by Travel World Online on "Thailand an opportunity", was broadcast on 29th April. The other panellists were Vachirachai, Director TAT, Pradip Lulla, Subhash Goyal, Nitin Sachdeva, K.D Singh, and Himanshu Patil. The discussion was on the preference of short-haul destinations such as Thailand in the post COVID world, and the measures taken by Thailand to welcome back tourists.

Along with the President, Office Bearers also helped in setting up a webinar with TravelBiz Monitor on 'Domestic Tourism-The Revival Instinct', which was held on 25th April and received excellent viewership. The panellists along with Jyoti Mayal President, TAAI were Meenakshi Sharma, DG Tourism; Valsa Nair Singh, Principal Secretary Tourism for Govt. of Maharashtra; Kumar Pushkar, MD, Karnataka State Tourism; Anay Dwivedi, MD, Madhya Pradesh State Tourism; and Mahmood Shah, Director of Industries, Govt. of J & K. The webinar showcased TAAI's pro-activeness in engaging the industry stakeholders to create workable plans for restarting business post-COVID which will kick start the economy. A key message that emerged from the webinar was that domestic tourism will be the first to revive.

For the Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh Chapter; we had organised webinars with Vietnam DMC, Philippines Tourism and Jordan Tourism. Webinars were also lined up for Portugal Tourism, Maldives Tourism, Sharjah Commerce and Tourism, Disney Florida and Paris. We had a good number of attendees from the region thanks to the efforts of Hemendra Singh Jadon, Chapter Chairman. We also had another webinar named South Tamilnadu Chapter: Tourism Fiji. In association with Strawberry Holidays, also webinars on Philippines, Portugal Tourism, Jordan Tourism and Disneyland Paris were conducted.

In the Western Region, we had webinars on Portugal Tourism, Jordan Tourism, Sharjah tourism and Disneyland Florida done with the assistance of Strawberry Holidays, followed by Sri Lanka and the Maldives with LinkinReps. We saw a good number of attendees attending the webinar, thanks to the Regional OB's regular follow up with the members and realised that Jordan generated the most interest amongst the members. In the Nagpur Chapter and the Pune Chapter, we had Joint webinars co-ordinated for Sharjah Tourism, Maldives Tourism, Portugal Tourism and Jordan Tourism. In June we did another webinar covering Sri Lanka and the Maldives with the assistance of Linkin Reps. In the Telangana and AP Chapter, we organised webinars on 15th May and 22nd May covering Jordan, Portugal, Maldives, Sharjah and Walt Disney with unstinted support from the chapter chairman, Nagesh.

In association with Indian Hotels



The Grand Palace, Bangkok

Company Limited (The Taj Group), we organised a webinar showcasing Ama Stays and Trails, comprising off untouched experiential escapes ranging from charming residences to mesmerising trails in offbeat locations. They comprise of 15 bungalows in 5 destinations.

Furthermore, TAAI members participated in a Facebook live event on the Maldives, The Sun Will Shine Again, which was held on the 8th of June, and unveiled tourism opening plans through a virtual journey to rediscover the memories of the beautiful islands in the Maldives. The webinar was hosted by MMPRC with the association of the Maldives Ministry of Tourism.

We also circulated the Turkey guidelines for International and Indian Tourists post COVID, to the membership consisting of their SOPs, post resumption of tourist arrivals and details of the 'Safe Tourism Certification Program'. Further, we had also explained the details of what happens when an Indian tourist arrives, what happens if he tests positive and what is the cost of treatment and health insurance.

TAAI also supported a webinar series on Indonesia Tourism for the Western Region and Southern Region to educate members of Indonesia's post-COVID readiness plans. The health and the hygiene measures undertaken by hotels, tourist attractions, beaches and other stakeholders were spelt out to help the members convince their customers that Indonesia is a safe and secure destination to travel.

Along with Jay Bhatia, Vice-President, TAAI, I attended an evening event with the representatives of Saudi Arabia

Tourism to discuss how awareness about the destination is to be created in the Indian Market. We asked them to conduct joint training/education programs with TAAI for the agents with investments in fam trips to remove any apprehensions about the destination.

An updated list of all Tourism boards, DMC reps in India along with the names and contact persons have been shared with the Office Bearer's, Managing Committee and Region Chapter Chairpersons which could be circulated to our TAAI members. This will help them to get in touch with them on a one on one basis in case they would like any webinars to be conducted in their respective regions.



**Anoop Kanuga,**  
Chairman,  
Tourism Services  
Council, TAAI

# Activities done by Airlines Council



**T**AAI Airline Council organised virtual meetings with AirIndia, Air Vistara, IndiGo, SpiceJet and GoAir to discuss on the mutually beneficial path to move ahead as Domestic Aviation gradually started to open up from 25th May. Each of these meetings was held with the Top Management of the respective airlines and discussions were on key matters of concerns which needed to be addressed by the Airlines and presentation of constructive thoughts in benefit of the travel fraternity. The meetings with the top management of the said airlines were very positive and all Airlines have agreed and assured to work on the suggestions made by TAAI. Moving forward, we shall follow-up on these points and it was decided to have regular meetings like this with all Airlines.

Government part. We also presented our suggestions on the areas to focus on moving forward for a speedy and better revival of tourism as we fight out our way of this difficult situation. Jawaharbhair Chavda, Tourism Minister, was very positive and patient to hear us out and assured to look into these matters. It was decided to form a State Level Tourism Task Force which would regularly hold meetings to discuss the concerns and growth of Tourism. We shall have a regular follow-up on this meeting to take the positive steps forward.

Besides the above, TAAI Airline Council has been attending to various Member issues pan India with regards to their queries and concerns on refunds with various Airlines. Through these efforts, we have been able to resolve a lot of member issues.

TAAI Airline Council had a meeting with Usha Padhee, Joint Secretary - MoCA to discuss the various procedures involved in the refund of tickets by travel agents. We highlighted the issues that travel fraternity was facing during this meeting so that the ground reality is properly conveyed and appropriate guidelines can then be suggested by MoCA to the Airlines.

As a TAAI Airline Council, I along with TAAI Gujarat Chapter Office Bearers and a few other key Association heads met the Minister of Tourism Gujarat and presented our concerns and issues which needed some attention on the



**Paras Lakhia,**  
Chairman,  
Airlines Council, TAAI

# Impact during & possibilities post COVID19 Pandemic

The Travel, Tourism and Hospitality industries have been completely quelled by the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. While the world is still fighting against this destructive virus the industries are now devising strategies to rebuild and re-emerge from the crisis.

The recovery process for the Travel industry will be convoluted and long – winged. The combined efforts of TAAI in association with MOT, MOCA, Niti Aayog, Air Lines, State Tourism Boards has given some clarity regarding the road ahead.

The cancellation of flights during the period of Covid -19 pandemic outbreak had brought all the agents to a deadlock. Deliberations with IATA –BSP opened up a new optimism amongst the agents



**P. Murugesan,**  
Chairman,  
Legal Council, TAAI

when the Enhanced BSP Version was permitted to the agents using the BASIC Version to process their refunds.

Liaisons with MOCA and Airlines added yet another ray of hope when the refunds started to slowly roll in. RBI has already offered the waiver i.e.; Moratorium of interest against repayment on principles for a period of six months and has further requested to extend the facility until 31-03-2021. The MOT has also extended it's supported by cardinally renewing the agents MOT license.

Air India & other airlines opened up bookings to the agents under the Vande Bharat scheme which gave an opportunity to the agents to revive and serve their clients once again.



# TOWARDS A BETTER TOMORROW

**W**hile the travel & tourism industry is going through a catastrophe never witnessed before in living memory, leading to job losses, shutdown of airlines globally, collapse of businesses and eventually resulting in looming uncertainty over travel, what has emerged out of the crisis is the need for a complete overhaul.

The industry in the past two decades has seen a metamorphosis of sorts with the advent and dependence on technology. This time around, however, the need of the hour is to relook into business strategies, and bringing in complete automation to

negate any scope for manual error. While human touch continues to remain a key element of travel, technology as an enabler will have a larger role to play in the “new normal”.

It is, of course, disheartening to see that the industry hasn't received any sector-specific relief, however, what has come of the crisis is the various voices coming together to put up a brave fight towards rebuilding.

Team TAAI will continue to play a crucial role in bringing concerns of the members and the industry at large on the table to ensure together we redesign a better tomorrow.



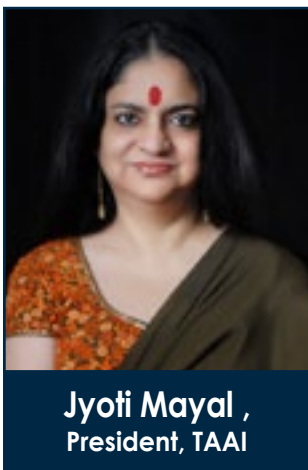
**Optimism is the faith that leads to achievement. Nothing can be done without hope and confidence**  
— Helen Keller



**It always seems impossible until it's done**  
— Nelson Mandela



## Unity & Innovation – the Only Way Forward



**Jyoti Mayal ,  
President, TAAI**

I strongly believe that crisis creates opportunities, and this is the time to introspect and look into our businesses, our contracts, our workings, our code of ethics and most importantly our commitment to each other - UNITY.

Let us all get together with one voice address our concerns, bring best practices into place, work towards building a robust industry where we as an integral part of Aviation, Tourism & Hospitality industry establish the norms and ways to conduct business with all our stakeholders , corporates and customer. This can only be achieved if we work TOGETHER in UNITY, and I say it loud and clear it is NOW or NEVER. Let's us not look at short term goals but pave a path of thriving in our journey and create a healthy, self-sufficient, self-reliant industry.

We have reached out to the Honourable Prime Minister and also our very supportive Minister of Tourism Shri Prahlad Singh Patel and Minister of Aviation Shri Hardeep Singh Puri and CEO Niti Aayog Shri Amitabh Kant that we should have a unified structured National Task Force at the Centre, inclusive of

aviation, tourism, railways, shipping (cruises both sea & river), transportation & commerce. The direction to every state for the growth should be filtered from the Centre. Most importantly we should get an Industry status to regulate the industry and there should be a control on sprouting of associations and diluting the voice.

Proposal to revive travel & tourism in & into India & also promote outbound as Tourism is always reciprocal & chain value needs to be promoted & protected.

Currently the sentiments & confidence of the traveller & also the travel service provider needs to be kindled – starting from a scratch we also need to establish the correct formats, rules & best practices what may have been missed out in earlier times but would hold good for future.

Struggling with cash/finance in these challenging times, MOT under the guidance of Hon. Minister needs to protect the consumer & the TRAVEL SERVICE PROVIDER besides supporting them by securing, moratoriums, rebates, reliefs, etc. (as been doing consistently since 4 months)

We need to formulate ideas as How



the confidence can be revived? Before we advise our customer to travel beyond essential travel we need to be confident & start moving out & opening our establishments.

- Anti body testing & RT-PCR for our offices too – without prescription – opening of more diagnostic centres.
- Full page notices in newspapers & dailies on regular updates to motivate the traveller business person – to drive the economy -all SOPs/protocols created a must for all travel stakeholders to display on websites & offices – the traveller is very confused. MOCA's statement that flights are ready you can travel only if countries allow – adding more confusion. TAAI would be willing to come forward and support MOCA & MOT to put all in place.
- No cancellation policies to be applicable with railways, airlines, hotels & cash refunds to be available to agent/consumer & no credit shells – this will make the sentiment of agent/consumer stronger to do for forward bookings & then mouth publicity & awareness will develop amongst travellers.
- Insurance to be included as a MUST in all bookings/packages so the client does not have to bear any added cost to secure cancellations & medical aid.
- Time to not licence but create rules for all travel agents & providers – Industry Status very important. Travel Industry needs to be organised & the process of making rules for organised players to be identified. Certification on health & safety.
- MOT to set up an IATA like body for travel Agents protection & to allow new members register & promote domestic tourism & avail support from the Ministry of Tourism.
- Protection of Agents money from Airlines default & not allow any Airline to Fly without Financial Guarantees/ Insurance to Government or on Tickets as we as IATA agents give the airlines. Refunds of tickets in cash a top priority.
- Please work with TAAI on a road map to support & develop tourism as all states have different local issues & TAAI has 20 region/ chapters spread all India & understands.
- Develop interesting new branded travel products

across the country which travel agents can sell, endorsed by MOT – 10 each state which reflects the uniqueness of the state.

- We had seen a presentation of an App created by MOT at the National Task Force meeting. Need to see it active & running & given to associations to disseminate & support our members to promote domestic tourism
- Abolish TCS as we cannot afford to be more expensive. GST & VAT needs to be deferred & also revised for future.
- Create Tourism Workforce Fund for our employees & also create a job portal with TAAI's help to support the travel Tourism Industry & work more closely with NSDC/ THSC.
- Our previous requests for moratoriums, reliefs & rebates to be considered.
- A uniform interstate quarantine policy be made because for all states travelling by any mode of transport.
- Incentive should be given on Domestic travel, conferences & events. The Incentives, which would be given on business conferences and events, should also be extended to e-conferences, social events and film production events.
- All tour operators recognised by the MOT, should be allowed to operate LTC tours. LTC benefits should also be given for religious, adventure and educational tours within India for domestic tourism to restart all hotels & bars, not only in Delhi but all over India immediately maintaining strict health safety protocols.
- For revival of tourism, while the KV Kamath Committee takes time to give its recommendations, it is very important that the moratorium on bank loans of hotels, travel agents & tour operators and tourist transporters should be extended by another 3-6 months immediately as the due date is 1st of September.
- All liquor licences, tourist permits and tourist visas should automatically be extended by one year without any charges.
- Air India should play a leading role in reviving domestic tourism by working in partnership with all the IATA travel agents and tour operators and should not undercut or undermine them in any.



# Tourism & Aviation Ministers all ears to TAAI



The relentless efforts of TAAI were evident when President Jyoti Mayal met with Hardeep Singh Puri, Union Minister of Civil Aviation and Union Tourism Minister, Prahlad Singh Patel on August 13. It was one of the rare occasions when two Ministers were present to hear out the concerns of the travel & tourism industry. Both Ministers were joined by Meenakshi Sharma, Director General Tourism and Rupinder Brar, Additional Director General Tourism, and Usha Padhee, Deputy Secretary Civil Aviation. The TAAI President made recommendations like opening of domestic tourism in India, restarting domestic and international flights and airline refunds.



# Recommendations from FAITH to Ministry of Tourism

**S**ocial distancing caused by COVID-19 pandemic has heavily impacted the tourism industry. For survival and revival of the tourism industry, Federation of Associations in Indian Tourism & Hospitality (FAITH) along with 10 founder member associations and cause partner - AIRDA, has written a letter to Prahlad Singh Patel, Union Minister of Tourism. Jyoti Mayal, President, TAAI and Vice-Chairperson of FAITH was an integral part of all the recommendations that were submitted by FAITH to various government bodies for tourism industry revival. In this letter, FAITH has made recommendations on strategy for the revival of the industry. FAITH and its 10 founder members had collectively proposed mainly on three aspects of tourism:

- Enabling Mechanism
- Revival of Tourism Demand
- Protection of Tourism Suppliers

Some of these suggestions are listed below:

- 1. Dual-Task Forces:** Tourism encompasses multiple ministries and takes place in and within states. It thus requires a coordinated approach across all the ministries at the central government level and between centre and state. FAITH Associations propose a dual-task force strategy.
- 2. Targeted Marketing Communication:** Marketing communication of Indian tourism should be kickstarted, which should focus on positivity and safety of Indian tourism while weaving these messages around different product segments (adventure, meetings heritage, wellness, spirituality) niche destinations and incredible concepts of Indian tourism.
- 3. Uniformity in Regulations:** To stimulate domestic tourism FAITH associations recommended dispelling consumer fear and confusion by ensuring uniform inter – quarantine air and land border policy across all states. This will provide confidence and give knowledge to both business and leisure tourists.
- 4. Progressive E- Visa Strategy:** As travel bubbles have started between India and international countries, FAITH associations propose an immediate multiyear e- visa holiday for all visa categories applicable till as and when inbound tourism demand to India stabilises.
- 5. Incentivise Domestic MICE & tourists:** FAITH associations propose incentivising two segments of domestic tourism, domestic conferences and domestic consumers to travel



within India by creating customised tax breaks for both these segments based upon their expenses through GST registered tourism service providers. The 28 million-plus people who travelled out of India for both these reasons need to be given enough incentives to holiday within India.

- 6. India Tourism Mart:** FAITH has also proposed that to establish confidence and showcase the incredible Indian tourism products through India Tourism Mart (ITM) should be organised in the first or the fourth week of November for international tour operators.
- 7. Re- notified meeting norms for MICE:** The meetings segment has to begin its revival process and FAITH associations recommend revising upwards the meeting norms by allowing 300 indoors and up to 500 in open areas. Two fine examples of safe gatherings are the proud unfurling of our national flag at Red Fort on the occasion of our 74th Independence Day and the inauguration of the holy temple site by the honourable PM. These can be showcased as templates for role model gatherings.
- 8. GST rationalisation:** FAITH associations suggest that GST be rationalised and for hotels above INR 7500 be brought down to 12% from 18% which will stimulate travel. On a weighted average basis, India still has the highest GST in tourism around the world which in majority of the countries is less than 10%.
- 9. LTC recognition:** Tour operators and travel agents recognised by Tourism Ministry should be notified as LTC operators. This will automatically allow travel within the country for adventure, religious, heritage, spirituality or for educational purposes and others across the country.
- 10. Last Mile Air Connectivity:** For the tourist hinterlands, remote last-mile air connectivity must be enabled through a hub and spoke system under the UDAAN policy with increased state support till private demand picks up and helicopter search and rescue needs to be enabled for adventure tours across the beautiful Indian adventure spots.
- 11. Satellite Phones connectivity:** To ensure seamless communication through world-class adventure tourism products in hinterlands which are only unique to India satellite phones should be made available to adventure tour operators recognised by MOT.
- 12. Enlargement of the definition of MICE:** Meetings segment must now formally include, recognise and officially support all forms of social gatherings, movie shoots and virtual meetings. States need to be requested to encourage and financially support these formats.



# THSC elects Jyoti Mayal as Chairperson

**T**ravel Agents Association of India (TAAI) President Jyoti Mayal has been elected as Chairperson of Tourism & Hospitality Skill Council (THSC).

She represents TAAI on the governing body of THSC which is a non-profit organisation registered under Societies Act with an independent Governing Council, represented by senior members from Tourism & Hospitality sector. Funded by the National Skills Development Corporation (NSDC) with the support funding from the industry members under the guidance of Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) and promoted by NSDC and CII (Confederation of Indian Industries).

THSC caters to all the sub sectors of the industry, namely, hotels, travel operators, food service restaurants, facilities management and cruise liners.

## WOMEN EMPOWERMENT, GAINING STRENGTH

### TAAI Launches Ladies Wing 'Women in TAAI'

In order to encourage more women to take up leadership roles and contribute to the fraternity at large, the Travel Agents Association of India (TAAI) launched its Ladies Wing, WIT – Women in TAAI.

“Women have always played an important part in the growth of travel, tourism and hospitality, in each of our organisations, be it a part of our frontline teams, sales, product teams, finance as well as management,” said Jyoti Mayal, the only second woman to lead TAAI as President.

FLO & TAAI will be the facilitators in the process and will connect women with the relevant stakeholders, undertake training in specific verticals for enhancing their livelihood opportunities, increasing their self-awareness as equal partners in the nation's growth and working towards their economic empowerment. This will happen under the guidance and support of Ministry of Tourism, Govt. of India.

### Jointly the two associations will work on these areas:

- Involve more women in the promotion of domestic tourism and encouraging travel to at least 15 destinations within our country under the 'Dekho Apna Desh' initiative and working towards gainful domestic consumption of our own products and services.
- Create community-based Tourism activities around
- one Iconic Monument or Tourist Landmark in each state, across the country. Women will be trained, encouraged to be the tour guides, run the food stalls, the souvenir stalls with their own arts & crafts, and handle the overall accounts and running of the activity.
- Raise awareness on Sustainable Tourism practitioners and focus on Tourism as a vital sustainable livelihood tool for women's empowerment, by way of advocacy and awareness, educational workshops, seminars to encourage the little known women eco warriors and



Jyoti Mayal



- eco-tourism practitioners across the country
- Will train women by conducting workshops on concepts of food safety, health and hygiene, sanitation, environment, culinary skills, entrepreneurship skills to promote food tourism and women's street food stalls, sidewalk cafes, etc. with NSDC under the endorsement of MoT.
- Reinforce Ministry of Tourism's ATITHI DEVO BHAVA initiative.
- Creating livelihood opportunities through rural home stays in far flung locations as well as urban home stays which will empower women to gain financial independence.
- Will work with tour agencies and entire travel trade to train more such community-driven and women-led initiatives in their regional chapters, across India.



# TAAI appeals MoCA for opening airspace & scheduled flights to sectors beyond air bubbles

Subsequent to the meeting of TAAI President Jyoti Mayal with Hardeep Singh Puri, Union Minister of Civil Aviation, and Prahlad Singh Patel, Union Tourism Minister, the association has appealed to the Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA) to permit airlines to commence scheduled flights and carry passengers to under serviced markets beyond the air bubbles.

The air bubbles permit point to point services between only a few countries which have signed the agreement with India.

Commenting on this, Mayal said, "We have appealed to permit and open the criteria for airlines to carry passengers to various other countries beyond their hubs to the under-served markets. This is because in a lot of markets where there are fewer requirements for VBM or Air Bubbles are not created, these carriers shall be able to carry passengers as per specified norms to and from India and the transiting country."

The TAAI office-bearers in a joint statement said, "Since air bubble flights too are not meeting adequate capacity, this shall open up the capacity and give opportunity to member travel agents, airlines and travellers to commence their activities. This shall not only enhance the economy, but also provide a ground to cater to non-connected sectors from India. This shall enable commencement of business and act as a revival catalyst for member travel agents in India but also restart economic activity between other countries with India."

Safety and health norms are being followed by airlines/travellers/travel agents as per protocols and advisories issued by governments.

TAAI is of the view that this is the right time to permit commencement of scheduled operations as global skies open up.





## TAAI reinforces importance of a Travel Agent for Airlines; seeks level-playing field

**T**he Travel Agents Association of India (TAAI) voiced its dejection on Air India's repeated social media posts and communications to travellers to book on their website to verify airfares with the airline before booking with the agents. The national carrier has also stated that agents block the inventory on the GDS. TAAI says, "It is well understood and a fact, that agents not only provide service of booking the air ticket but also update to the travellers/customers on the procedures, documentation, visa formalities and guide the passenger."

In a strongly worded letter addressed to the Minister of Civil Aviation, Hardeep Singh Puri and CMD of Air India, Rajiv Bansal, TAAI has asked the national carrier to withdraw the same. During these times of crisis rather than supporting the agent, whom Air India refers to as "Travel Partner", who ease the burden of the airline in managing its sales and distribution, the airline management is outright set to demean, malign and insult the accredited member travel agent, who have always supported the national carrier through thick and thin over decades. This is totally uncalled for. We are pained to say that "Air India Plays Dirty", TAAI said..

"All we would once again urge you is to ensure a fair playing field to member travel agents, who run establishments-thereby supporting employment, promote your airline-enabling your sales, place financial securities with IATA to obtain ticketing authorities with

your airline - protection against default, pay taxes on their earnings-supporting the economy and trade of the country. We once again request you to ensure that accredited member travel agents are giving the due respect and permitted to promote and sell airline seats using the GDS on all sectors that are being operated by Air India, under the Vande Bharat Mission, to and from India."

TAAI member agents provide services to the traveller/customer, who feel secure by dealing with. The oldest trade association has demanded clarity on the issue "to ensure that the agent and customer have direct relationship in their conditions of additional services and charges being levied thereon for providing the same."

"All we would once again urge you is to ensure a fair playing field to member travel agents, who run establishments-thereby supporting employment, promote your airline - enabling your sales, place financial securities with IATA to obtain ticketing authorities with your airline - protection against default, pay taxes on their earnings-supporting the economy and trade of the country. We once again request you to ensure that accredited member travel agents are giving the due respect and permitted to promote and sell airline seats using the GDS on all sectors that are being operated by Air India, under the Vande Bharat Mission, to and from India."



**Our members  
have volunteered  
to assist all  
government /  
airline officials  
and help  
the injured  
passengers.**

**— Jyoti Mayal,  
President, TAAI.**

The Travel Agents Association of India (TAAI) has expressed shock and concern over the Air India Express aircraft AXB1344 that crash landed at Kozikode Airport last evening. TAAI has reached out to the Kerala Chief Minister's Office to offer help. The association has come out with support to the state and families of the victims to offer any kind of assistance.

"Our members have volunteered to assist all government/airline officials and help the injured passengers and assist the families of the deceased," stated Jyoti Mayal, President, TAAI.

"We also urge DGCA and MoCA to appropriately probe the accident. Safety of human life is utmost important

and should not be compromised at any level. Our members in Kerala and across the country shall be available to assist and can be connected for assistance of any nature," a joint statement by the national office-bearers reads.

"We are particularly saddened that all the passengers were returning on the Vande Bharat flight back to their homeland, India from Dubai, due to the pandemic, to relocate and connect back with their families. We pray for the speedy recovery of the injured in this accident and convey our heartfelt condolences to the families of the passengers, crew/pilot who lost their lives."





**Neeraj Malhotra,**  
Chairman,  
Northern Region

**K**eeping in view the trying times which have been hard for the travel agents owing to the lockdown, TAAI Northern Region has been conducting a series of webinars to educate and motivate the travel agents.

In the month of April, a webinar titled 'Thriving in chaos' was organised with Manish Behl, a leading mindfulness expert, Tedex speaker, writer and internationally recognised motivational speaker on mindfulness. The talk session was organised for the travel agents to keep their hope up in these troubled times. In the unique talk session, Behl shared ways to bring about positive changes in life and how to battle with the COVID-19 pandemic. Neeraj Malhotra, Chairman, Northern Region, Ranjan Sehgal, MC Member, Gaurav Dogra, Hon. Secretary, Northern Region were the key attendees of the event.

The region had also conducted a webinar for the travel agents with Delhi International Airport and GMR on the various safety measures that are being taken at the airport to ensure safe and pleasant flights. The aim behind conducting this webinar was organised to disseminate the information and educate passengers about the safety measures being taken at

the Delhi International Airport.

In the webinar, travel agents learnt about how Delhi International Airport has mapped out the passenger journey through the airport and has planned various measures at each departure and arrival level touchpoints; which includes communication for passengers, social distance marking, proper sanitisation throughout the airport, alignment of queue managers, sanitisation of the baggage trolleys and baggage trays etc. Sanjiv Edward, Chief Commercial Officer and Douglas Webster, Chief Operating Officer of Delhi International Airport were present at the webinar to discuss about the measures taken at the airport.

While speaking about the webinars, Gaurav Dogra, Hony. Secretary, TAAI Northern Region said, "We did our first webinar on April 16 with motivational speaker Manish Behl, one with GMR on its readiness and preparedness before opening, and another with Expedia TAAP prior to this one. The next webinar was with OYO on July 16. All our webinars saw an attendance of around 100-125 members. Other than these, we have also conducted our members' meet and discussed many issues like airline refunds and even Vande



**Gaurav Dogra,**  
Hon. Secretary,  
Northern Region




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Initiated & Supported by Travel Agents Association of India (Northern Region)



Mr. Neeraj Malhotra  
Chairman



Mr. Gaurav Dogra  
Honorary Secretary



Mr. Manish Saxena  
Honorary Treasurer



Founder of Internet moguls & Host of this Webinar

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Mr. Neeraj Malhotra  
Chairman



Mr. Gaurav Dogra  
Honorary Secretary



Mr. Manish Saxena  
Honorary Treasurer



Mr. Sunny Sodhi  
Head of Sales, OYO

For any queries, please contact us at - [coreta@oyorooms.com](mailto:coreta@oyorooms.com)

Bharat mission flights. We will have another members' meet soon."

TAAI Northern Region has also conducted the Online Travel Webinar by Avi Arya. Sharing his thoughts, Neeraj Malhotra, Chairman, TAAI Northern Region, said, "The purpose behind the webinar was to learn how to use social media in business. Arya shared many points and it was amazing to see how one can grow their business just by using the right tools. The idea was to educate members on using social media in their business so that they can grow." Malhotra informed that they have been organising such informative and insightful webinars ever since the lockdown started, so that the members remain motivated in these tough times.

When asked about his views on IATA's relevance during a crisis such as COVID-19, Malhotra said, "Almost 90 per cent of our members have already renewed their IATA certification. However, it has not been of much help to the agents in COVID times. Our members are really disturbed about the way IATA has handled the entire situation. They

are only working for the airlines and not the agents because all their revenue comes from the airlines. They don't get anything from us. For us, they are just collecting payments and giving to IATA. Their main clients remain the airlines."

Malhotra further added, "Just like IATA has fixed dates to collect money from us, they should have fixed dates with the airlines as well to refund our money. We haven't received any money for refunds filed in March also."

— northern@taai.in



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Link: Join Zoom Meeting: <https://zoom.us/j/999401780292?pwd=OCUuOUIuUkVhbnZlYUJlZlYWTzA4MkR0aDZkdz09>  
Meeting ID: 999 401 780 292  
Passcode: 808003

Initiated & Supported by - Travel Agents Association of India (Northern Region)

**Mr. Neeraj Malhotra**  
Chairman

**Mr. Gaurav Dogra**  
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**Mr. Manish Saxena**  
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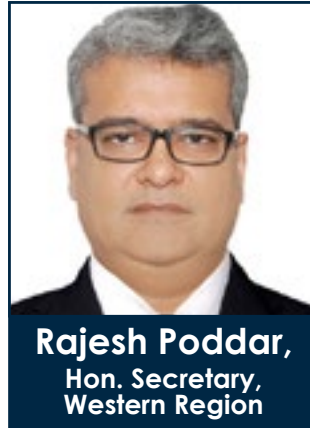
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**T**AAI Region members has met on May, 18. The meeting was attended by 50 members where the members of the chapter had given the information of activities and Interaction done by TAAI Office Bearers with Government officials and Airlines.

The members also had a virtual meeting with the Indonesian counsel general to discuss the way forward on promoting Indonesia as a destination post-COVID. The Counsel General updated the chapter members on various measures taken by the country for the safety of visitors coming to Indonesia. He also asked for support from TAAI members for reviving tourism and proposed a mega fam for travel trade to

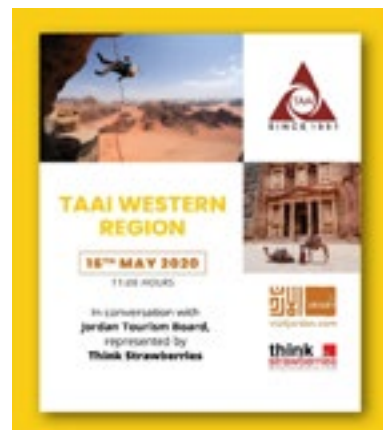
boost the confidence of safety of visitors.

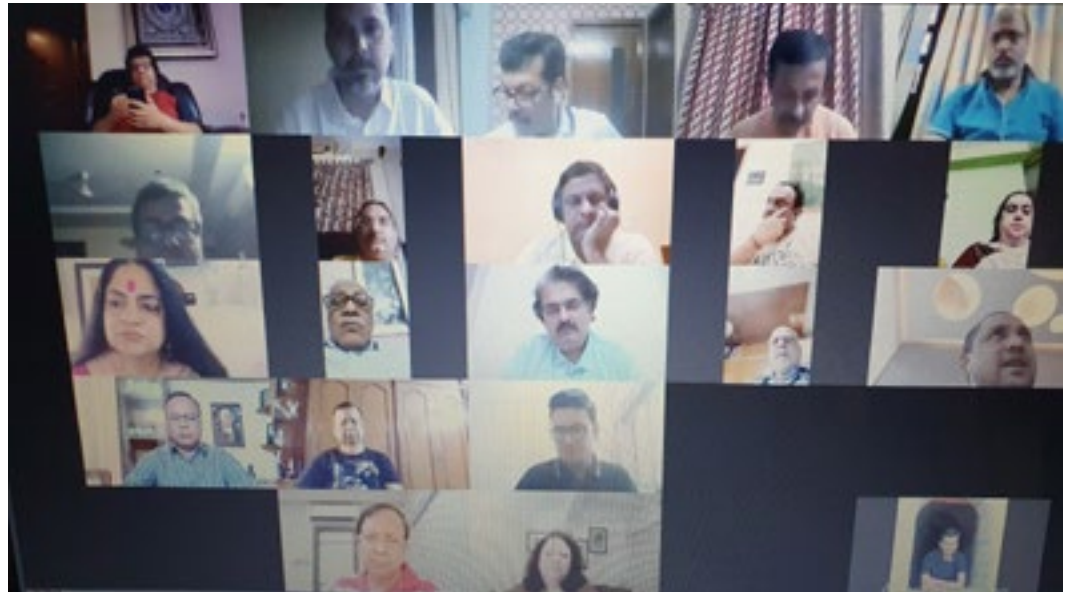
The Western Region members had organised a series of roadshows of various destinations like Sharjah, Portugal, Walt Disney etc., in collaboration with Think Strawberries.

The members has organised roadshow along with linkin reps for hotels in Sri Lanka and the Maldives.

The members attended a meeting on 10th July with Rupinder Brar, Additional Director General Tourism, Government of India, to discuss on various issues such as, the support required from the Government to promote domestic tourism in India.

— western@taai.in





**Manav Soni,**  
Chairman,  
Eastern Region



**Anjani Kumar  
Dhanuka,**  
Hon. Secretary,  
Eastern Region



**Sajjan Kumar Gupta,**  
Hon. Treasurer,  
Eastern Region

The Eastern Region has held a couple of meetings during the pandemic lockdown. The chapter conducted an interactive session through Zoom meeting with Singapore Airlines on 10th April, as SQ had introduced a new refund policy which needed to be clarified amongst the chapter members.

Another interactive session was organised between the national committee and the Eastern Region Members on 13th May. National office bearers also participated in the session.

A regional meeting was held on 19th June, which was well attended. It is worth mentioning and appreciating the dedication of a senior member of the chapter, Samar Ray who despite being hospitalised, participated/attended this meeting from the hospital bed. The members listed a few points for which support is required from the National Board:

- Enrolling most of the members under TAAI joint bank guarantee for 2021
- Plan the roadmap for Revival of the Industry.
- Interact with Tourism Boards for aggressive

promotions after lockdown.

- Seek Government support as mentioned in the letter by TAAI with FAITH (Federation of Associations in Indian Tourism & Hospitality) to the Government of India (MOT).
- Settle Refunds from airlines (without any penalties, or credit shells).
- Rebate by the accounting package/ solution providers, if not for the current financial year then definitely for 2021.

During the lockdown, Eastern Region's office bearers assisted members who required support with the renewal of BG process, airline refund and settling dues with the consolidators of/in the region.

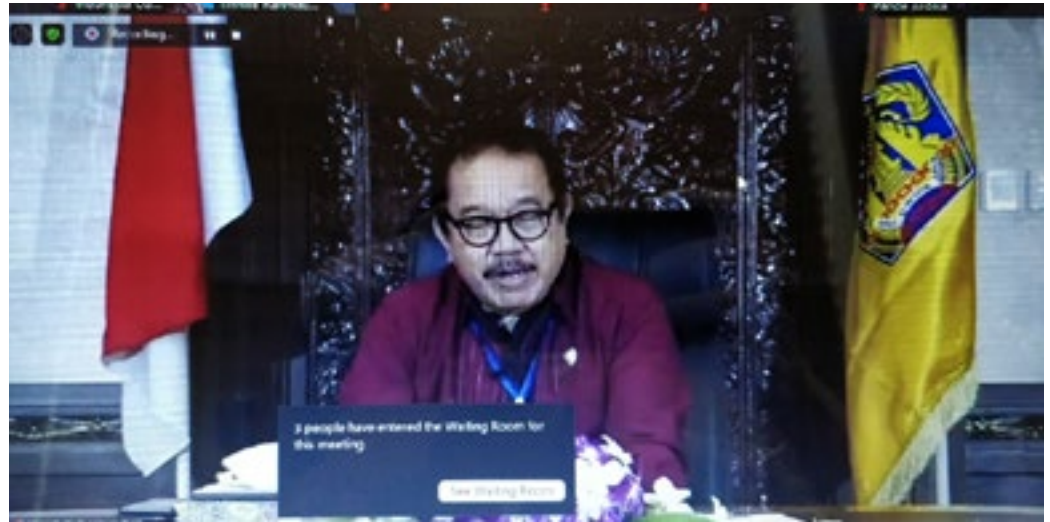
All the Tourism Board, Airline and other Tourism related presentations were organised by the National Committee and executed by the office bearers of our region.

TAAI National Committee members have tirelessly worked throughout this lockdown. No words can match the efforts made by them. On behalf of our region, we would like to thank them for their unconditional support.

— eastern@taai.in

Victoria Memorial, Kolkata





**Shahul Hameed,**  
Chairman,  
Southern Region



**S. Sakthivadivel,**  
Hon. Secretary,  
Southern Region



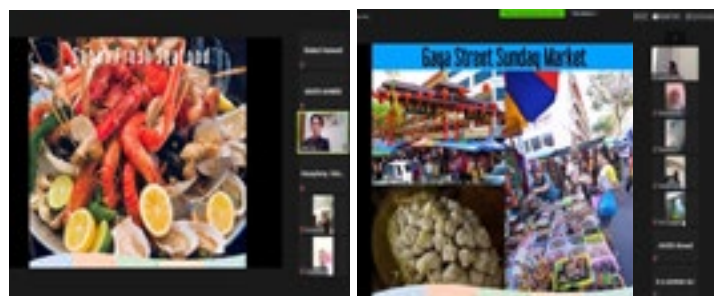
**N. Karunakaran,**  
Hon. Treasurer,  
Southern Region

The webinar was hosted by Agus Saptono, Consul General of the Republic of Indonesia, Mumbai. Prof. Dr. Ir. Tjokorda Oka Artha Ardhana Sukawati, Vice Governor of the Province of Bali, Indonesia.; Anak Agung Ngurah Wirawan, Director of Construction and Operational Indonesia Tourism Development Corporation (ITDC); Norma Aulia, Vice President & Alliance Management PT Garuda Indonesia (Persero) Tbk. and Freddy Rompas, General Manager Inbound Pacto, were also present at the webinar.

The Consul General said that the Government of the Republic of Indonesia is currently preparing procedures and steps for tourism destinations to enter the era of new normal in post-pandemic covid-19, through the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy. It was suggested that health protocol (Cleanliness, Healthy, and Safety) should be applied in all sectors of tourism. It was also pointed out that Bali, should be a pilot project in applying the procedures. The Consul General added that Bali is the most ready destination to welcome tourists after Covid-19, and it is the most favourite destination for Indian tourists.

Anak Agung Ngurah Wirawan, Director of Construction and Operational Indonesia Tourism Development Corporation (ITDC), enlightened the attendees about quality health facilities in Nusa Dua Bali area, as well as the protocol to enter the area to comfort all visitors.

To support the promotion of Indonesian tourism in India after covid-19, Norma Aulia, VP Network & Alliance Management of PT.



Tourism Malaysia, Sabah Tourism Board and Travel Agents with the support of TAAI had conducted a webinar for TAAI Southern Chapter. Presentation of the latest attractions, updates, DMC List, Digital Booklets were given by Sabah Tourism Board organized by Tourism Malaysia-Chennai. A total of 60, 45, 50 and 55 agents participated from Hyderabad, Chennai, Bengaluru and Kerala respectively on 22nd, 24th, 26th, and 30th June 2020. Positive inputs from the attendees were received with request for more details pertaining to convention centre availability, film shootings and any special incentives offered by groups.

Garuda Indonesia Tbk., informed that Garuda Indonesia is planning to open the direct flights from Bali to India (Mumbai - Denpasar PP & New Delhi - Denpasar PP) next year. Direct flights are now a necessity for tourists to shorten their travel time.



GRT Hotels and Resorts product presentation held for the members by Shubhangi, GM, sales & marketing and Sampath, Sr. Sales Manager, Head Travel Trade.

In Karnataka, a phase-wise lifting of the lockdown had commenced in May itself, barring a one week lock down which was imposed in July. Given the circumstances and the very slim chances of normal operations of flights resuming soon, our initiatives would be directed towards domestic tourism. We have not yet formulated any concrete plans and will be interacting with our members before moving ahead.

TAAI and the National Office Bearers have done a stupendous job in approaching all possible departments. However, this is a long drawn process as the Government does not seem at all inclined to even recognise us as an industry. However, this does not take away from the efforts that have been put in by TAAI and we are sure that our President will continue to push on all fronts - GST, TCS, industry status, etc.

Karnataka by itself has a great scope for domestic tourism with availability of adequate infrastructure, good road connectivity and accommodation at all tourist locations. We are also fortunate that we have a very proactive State Tourism Department in Karnataka who are doing all that needs to be done to revive Tourism in the state. However, of late there has been an increase in the number of COVID-19 cases due to which there could be negative effects. We are hopeful that by September 2020, things will improve and there will be an increase in tourism throughout the state of Karnataka.

Given the state of affairs arising out of the pandemic and various phases of lock downs, there has not been much activity in our Chapter. Physical meetings are, of course, out of the

question and we have had only one virtual meeting of the Chapter members since the time the countrywide lockdown has been imposed. This meeting was held on 22nd April 2020 and we had the pleasure of having our National Office Bearers present at the meeting. The Chapter members were very appreciative of the various steps taken by TAAI to safeguard the interest of the members and interacted with the National Office Bearers.

We have been constantly updated by the National Office Bearers on matters relating to the industry and have ensured that all such information is shared with our members through emails and on the Chapter WhatsApp group and we must mention here that our members have been very appreciative of the efforts of the National Bearers.

Apart from this, our Chairman, Amish Desai, has been active with the Karnataka Tourism Department having been a part of various meetings, virtual and in person, to work on strategies for the opening up of tourism activities in the state. He also assisted in inviting Mr Kumar Pushkar, MD KSTDC, to be a part of TAAI's webinar Domestic Tourism – The Revival Instinct.

Desai was also invited to submit to India Tourism suggested Standard Operating Protocols for re-starting agency offices which was duly submitted on behalf of TAAI to India Tourism, Bangalore office. He was invited by the Union Ministry of Tourism to be a panelist and presenter on a webinar on Golf Tourism – India a Golfer's paradise, organised by them under the Dekho Apna Desh series.

— karnataka@taai.in



**Amish Desai,**  
Chairman,  
Karnataka Chapter



**Niranjana Sachidananda Bhargava,**  
Hon. Secretary,  
Karnataka Chapter



**S.V. Chidambares,**  
Hon. Treasurer,  
Karnataka Chapter



Madikeri, Karnataka



The first virtual meeting of the TAAI Kerala Chapter was held on 15th April, which saw participation from the President, Honorary Secretary, Vice President and Treasurer of TAAI. Jyoti Mayal, President, TAAI explained the steps taken by TAAI and informed about the discussion which the national leadership had with MOCA, IATA, Ministry of Tourism and various Airlines. The issue of refunds from Airlines is being continuously brought up in meetings with airlines, as well as, in media interviews. She elaborated on the policy that going to the court should be the last resort. The issue of financial protection of the travel agents from IATA members and other non-IATA airlines through legislation has been taken up with MOCA. The office bearers answered various questions of the members of the chapter.

The Chapter held another meeting on 23rd June, which was addressed by K C Chandrahasan, Senior Past Chairman. He explained that the travel industry is going through a rapid transformation and unless the travel fraternity can see the writing on the wall it would be a challenge to survival. The kind of business and jobs that exist today may not survive over the next two decades. Old methods of doing business will be irrelevant, he explained. The meeting also discussed the issue of refunds from the airlines

which are stalled for various reasons causing hardship to the agencies.

TAAI Kerala Chapter held a meeting with Cochin Port Trust on 3rd March to focus on developing the 2000 acres of Portland into a tourism hub. TAAI Chairman suggested that the projects should be innovative instead of putting up statues and giant wheels. The project should be a totally eco-friendly one which will aim at zero-waste policy. The Port Trust is looking for investors in the plan.

A meeting of stakeholders from the tourism industry was called by the Minister of Tourism on 10th March at Trivandrum. K N Shastri, Chairman participated in the meeting. The Secretary for Tourism noted all the points proposed and assured to get back on the issues raised in the meeting. There was a joint opinion expressed, that the tourism industry cannot sustain itself to keep staff and pay salary during the COVID days. Most of the companies will work with only limited staff, who will get the sustenance allowance rather than salary, as the industry has come to a complete standstill.

The planning commission of Kerala called for a meeting of tourism stakeholders on 30th March. It was a virtual meeting led by the tourism director.

— kerala@taai.in



**K. N. Shastri,**  
Chairman,  
Kerala Chapter



**Mariamma Jose,**  
Hon. Secretary,  
Kerala Chapter



**Anson Paul,**  
Hon. Treasurer,  
Kerala Chapter





TAAI Gujarat chapter meeting with top officials of Airlines, GDS, VFS and other stake holders.



**Virendra Shah,**  
Chairman,  
Gujarat Chapter



TAAI Gujarat Chapter members met with Jawahar Chavda, State Tourism Minister and handed over white paper along with other associations for development of tourism in Gujarat



**Prashant Madlani,**  
Hon. Secretary,  
Gujarat Chapter



**Viral Shah,**  
Hon. Treasurer,  
Gujarat Chapter

TAAI Gujarat Chapter organised a Mega Webinar – Digital Conclave Impact of Covid-19 on Tourism Industry & Way forward on 13 April. Jenu Devan, MD & Commissioner of Tourism; Jyoti Mayal, President, TAAI; Ritika Modi, Uniglobe President South Asia; Carl Vaz, Chairman & CEO, Charson Advisory, were some of the eminent attendees of the webinar.



— [gujarat@taai.in](mailto:gujarat@taai.in)





Meeting held with Air India on 13th March at Taj Krishna attended by TAAI members. South India Commercial Manager and Station Manager of Andhra Telangana played great hosts for the travel fraternity in these two states.



**Nagesh Pampati,**  
Chairman,  
Andhra Pradesh &  
Telangana Chapter



**Saibabu Badam,**  
Hon. Secretary,  
Andhra Pradesh &  
Telangana Chapter



**Padhi Srinivas Kumar,**  
Hon. Treasurer,  
Andhra Pradesh &  
Telangana Chapter

TAAI Andhra Pradesh & Telangana Chapter was represented by Think Strawberries. The chapter held various online trainings for members which were very informative and appreciated by all. During the webinars presentations were conducted by Smita Garg.





**Air Asia**

**TAAI**  
SINCE 1951  
AP & TS Chapter

**Air Asia Product Presentation**  
Date - 28th May 2020  
Time - 12.00  
Join zoom meeting  
<https://airasia.zoom.us/j/98571978790>  
Meeting ID: 985 7197 8790  
Password: 321901



**TAAI**  
SINCE 1951

**TAAI Andhra & Telangana**

Topic : Azerbaijan Tourism Board & Pasha Travel  
Time : Apr 23,2020 11:00 am

Join Zoom Meetin  
Meeting ID : 756 043 2972  
Password : pasha@1234

**Baku, Azerbaijan**

A Zoom meeting was organised by the TAAI Andhra Pradesh & Telangana Chapter with Azerbaijan Tourism Board and Pasha Travel.

Product presentation of Air Asia organised by MP & CG Chapter.



TAAI met with Air India station manager and submitted a letter requesting them to expedite the refunds, and also requested access to sell Vande Bharat Mission flights by agents. TAAI Andhra Pradesh & Telangana Chapter is the first and the only chapter to take up this initiative.



MP & CG Chapter members visited the Minister of Tourism Telangana, Srinivas Goud. In view of the imposed lock down, request was made to him to support the travel community of the two states by offering them subsidies and aid to meet the administrative expenditure of the travel agencies.

— apts@taai.in

The previous few years had set up the travel and hospitality industry for a phenomenal growth trajectory, all in terms of leisure travel, corporate travel and MICE. But struck by the global chaos of Coronavirus early this year, and its domino effect, the travel industry has not only borne the brunt of being a catalyst for the spread but has and continues to bear the severe brunt as a victim. While the industry has been and seen through a number of pandemics in the past, this one has hit home (literally and metaphorically) particularly hard, purely as a result of uncertainty and media sensationalism.

The impact of this on travel agents have been far and wide, with the adverse ones gaining more attention, but definitely some favourable ones that cannot be overlooked.

At the risk of being repetitive, travel agents have been grappling with liquid cash restraints and essentially a dip into savings to support the net cash outflow required to keep their respective businesses afloat. Lockdowns and crippled consumer confidence have essentially left the agents with nothing

to sell and no one to sell to.

On the other hand, the downtime has allowed for long-overdue business practices to be reflected upon and reviewed for the better. Integration of operations has to lead to efficiency across businesses. The sheer times of desperation has led to unique innovations within the industry, operations and otherwise, thus shaping the way for a brighter and more structured future. The unity within the industry associations and platforms and their efforts to safeguard the interests of the fraternity have been commendable.

This, in turn, has highlighted and corrected some supply chain malpractices, eliminated the free riders, while of course benefitting Travel Agents focussed on ethical business for the customer. In a way, despite being at the cost of the end customer, this pandemic has brought the travel industry a full circle with the role of the Travel Agent being undeniable for reliable and hassle-free journeys and all travel accompaniments.

— pune@taai.in



**Bahram P Zadeh,**  
Chairman,  
Pune Chapter



**Shaishav Parekh,**  
Hon. Secretary,  
Pune Chapter



**Sateesh Bhambure,**  
Hon. Treasurer,  
Pune Chapter





The first meeting of TAAI Punjab Chapter was held on 15th April. Twenty-eight members from TAAI Punjab Chapter attended the meeting. Jyoti Mayal, President, TAAI; Jay Mehta, Vice-President, TAAI; and Shreeram Patel, Treasurer, TAAI, along with the office bearers addressed members about the impact of COVID-19 on travel trade. The President explained all the efforts being made by TAAI office bearers for providing relief to the association members due to Covid-19 pandemic effect with Govt. of India. Mayal addressed all questions raised by the members. Dang suggested Mayal, to take up the issuance of the tickets for relief flights being operated by Canadian Govt. for Canadian Citizens, as they allow only three travel agents for the issuance of tickets. Also, the issue of airlines refunds and staff salaries were discussed at the meeting.

The second meeting was held on 16th April. Bettaiah Lokesh, Hon. Secretary-General, TAAI joined the members to discuss salary issues for April. At the meeting, the members of TAAI Punjab Chapter decided to pay 50% salaries for April 2020 to the staff and review the same again for May 2020.

The members also demanded refunds / date change without any price impact. The respective agent can levy service charges at his discretion.

A letter has been sent from TAAI through MOCCA for direction to the Chief Secretary to prevent any harassment

of travel agents by their customers for refunds till Airlines refund the amount. The letter also demanded a consolidated document of the refund policy for domestic and international carriers.

The members also urged for the list of defaulter sub-agents to be circulated to all TAAI and PATA members so that no one provides them further service.

The third online interaction was a webinar conducted by Cross Hotels & Resorts on 14th May, for TAAI Punjab Chapter. The webinar was addressed by Harish Chhetri, Mitesh, and Seema Datt.

This webinar was exclusively held for TAAI Punjab chapter members and provided in-depth product knowledge. It was a live chat session where a sample itinerary was explained.

The fourth online meeting of the TAAI Punjab Chapter was held on 16th May. The main agenda of the meeting was to discuss staff salaries for May and June 2020.

The travel industry is going through its worst phase, where all travel activities have stopped since Mid-March, and the future is uncertain. It is still unknown as to what the shape of travel will be, when it eventually opens up.

The chapter requested the TAAI Punjab Chapter members to give sustenance salary to their employees for May and June 2020. They also mentioned that one can revert to full wages when the business recovers.

— punjab@taai.in



**Gurjeet Singh Sekhon,**  
Chairman, Punjab Chapter



**Narinder Davesar,**  
Hon. Secretary, Punjab Chapter



**Pankul Sharma,**  
Hon. Treasurer, Punjab Chapter





**Malcom T. Pandol,**  
Chairman, South Gujarat Chapter



**Kantilal M. Sohagia,**  
Hon. Secretary, South Gujarat Chapter



**Vishal Mahendrakumar Shah**  
Hon. Treasurer, South Gujarat Chapter



**F**rom the beginning of the 2020 Pandemic, the Travel Industry was heavily affected and TAAI South Gujarat Chapter team backed the members, with moral support and motivation.

TAAI South Gujarat Chapter includes cities of Gujarat i.e. – Vadodra, Surat, Navsari, etc. The strength of more than 60 members is benefited by this chapter.

In February, there was a joint meeting of South Gujarat Chapter, Gujarat Chapter, and Saurashtra-Kutch Chapter on Jalesh Cruise, in the presence of more than 80 members.

During the first week of March, one of the chapter members, Arvind Mistry was selected as a member in the Surat Airport Advisory committee. The team congratulated and felicitated Mistry and C.R.Patil, Chairman of Surat Airport

Advisory committee.

The team had two chapter meetings in April and May 2020, for discussing refund issues from Airlines and L.C.C., salary issues, and membership drive increase. The members were also given ideas and pieces of advice on how to uplift their business post lockdown period.

After the lockdown, the team had successfully organized around a minimum of 1 to 2 educative webinars every day with Hotels, and Tourism Boards, which received appreciation from all members.

The team also had joint webinars on 18th April with all 3 Gujarat Chapters. Jawahar Chavda, the Tourism Minister of Gujarat, was a part of the webinar and he gave his opinions on the industry's loss and potential solutions.

— southgujarat@taai.in





**Devan Shah,**  
Chairman,  
Saurashtra-Kutch  
Chapter



Mahabat Maqbara Palace  
Junagadh, Gujarat



**Gopal Anantrai  
Unadkat**  
Hon. Secretary,  
Saurashtra-Kutch  
Chapter



2nd general meeting at Bhuj just before the lock down



**Amit Gandhi,**  
Hon. Treasurer,  
Saurashtra-Kutch  
Chapter



TAAI Saurashtra & Gujarat Chapter organised the first virtual zoom meeting on April, 3rd, where more than 85% members participated and discussed about COVID-19 and its impact to the industry.

— saurashtrakutch@taai.in



**Sainath Krishna  
Prabhu Dharwatkar,**  
Chairman,  
Goa Chapter



**Valigno Dias,**  
Hon. Secretary,  
Goa Chapter



**Afrohodite Colaco,**  
Hon. Treasurer,  
Goa Chapter



Arambol Beach, Goa

**A**s the unlocking process has begun, TAAI Goa Chapter has started taking views from the members as to how to move forward. The members are planning to meet to solve issues such as credit shell, new

SOP's etc.

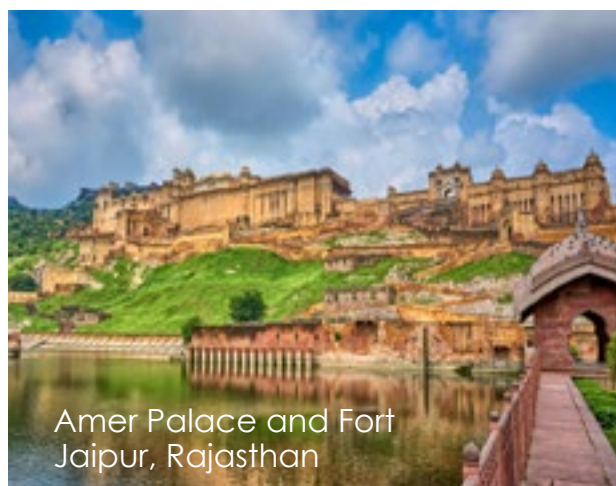
The TAAI Goa Chapter is now working on a plan to educate the members in order to face the new world order.

— goa@taai.in



Betalbatim Beach, South Goa

Usually, our Chapter meetings are outstation and a numbers of activities like cricket tournaments, familiarisation tours are very common in the TAAI Rajasthan Chapter but during the lockdown, we could only have a couple of online meetings. During this period, while we briefed our members on all concerned issues and managing committee outcomes, we also helped stranded people to travel within India, free of cost, with the help of our different chapters.



**Manoj Kumar Sogani,**  
Chairman,  
Rajasthan Chapter



**Sunil Jain,**  
Hon. Secretary,  
Rajasthan Chapter



**Arvind Kumar Pareek,**  
Hon. Treasurer,  
Rajasthan Chapter

We have seen the worst in the past couple of months and we are truly hope to take notes and move forward for a better future. In the face of unprecedented chaos and disruption, travel agents have shown how agile and resilient they can be. When the COVID-19 pandemic first hit in March, the travel industry was one of the hardest hit by the sudden influx of customer issues for refunds, cancellations and bookings. As countries closed borders and airlines grounded flights, many stranded travellers turned to travel agents to get them safely back home.

The biggest issue that remains, is how to sustain profitability during recovery to run offices smoothly. As borders open up, and the first travellers venture back on the roads and in the skies, travel agents that align their pricing strategy and booking policies with new traveller expectations around flexibility and personalisation will be in the best position to restore consumer confidence and secure their cash flow to service future demand. Here are some insights for travel agents to chart their course for recovery and inspire consumers to travel again.

- Every local, regional, and international market is likely to recover differently, so it is important to align your revenue strategy based on key indicators of which travel segments will pick up and when. For example, border closures, social distancing rules, and limits on large groups have been common government guidelines around the world. This suggests that local travel, such as short weekend getaways or regional road trips, are more likely to fuel bookings in the short term.
- Leverage your data and partner with various trade organisations, tourism boards and technology providers to maximize your visibility into local market

recovery.

- By analysing potential and existing customers, competitor promotions and market demand, we can better address the evolved value chain and line up the right messages, offers and promotions at the right time.
  - The more flexible you are with your pricing strategies, the more competitive you will be. By giving travellers the ability to switch their bookings later and proactively notifying them during the booking process, travel agents can prevent clients from outright cancelling trips and reschedule business as much as possible. A policy that offers flexibility paid with a higher level of personalisation, reassurance and empathy, will have a lasting impact on clients' trust and loyalty, and bolster their reputation.
  - Adoption of the right technology can enable travel agents to be flexible with traveller needs, their changes in travel plans, and ensure their health and safety through their entire journey.
  - Dynamic messaging and flexible digital marketing can help with switch-selling, which will be more effective for travel agents to personalise travel options. With travellers looking at new leisure travel options locally, domestic or intra-regional packages and diversification beyond air will be important.
  - Automated tools like Amadeus Ticket Changer can help travel agencies keep a record of all passengers affected by travel disruptions and handle schedule changes to better manage clients' future travel plans.
- Finally, by having the right strategy, tools and people in place, travel agents can establish trust, restore confidence, and better position their business for future growth.

— rajasthan@taai.in





**Rajesh Agarwal,**  
Chairman,  
Nagpur Chapter



**Alok Vaidya,**  
Hon. Secretary,  
Nagpur Chapter



**Irshad Abde  
Musa Mehdi,**  
Hon. Treasurer,  
Nagpur Chapter

**O**nline travel agents (OTAs) have nearly obliterated the travel agency industry that was once responsible for booking tickets and hotels.

Or so you may have thought.

According to the Statistics of Dec 2019, the travel agency business is booming with the industry expected to rake in nearly USD 17.3 billion in revenue by 2020; up from 12.2 billion in 2010.

A major chunk of revenue continues to come from commissions and service fees. But the source of these commissions has been changing over the years. When airlines stopped paying high commissions back in the 1990s, travel agents started to lean heavily on add-on services such as hotel and transport for commissions.

With services such as Airbnb and Uber now available in almost every major city, commissions from these services too are likely to dwindle in future.

At present, travel agents depend on two categories of travellers for their revenue. A good number of corporate business travellers still rely on partner agencies for their tickets. In the consumer segment, holiday packages and custom itinerary planning services have been taking off with an increase in international holidaying. The drop in commissions is mostly made up for, by the corresponding rise in the scale and value of such bookings.

This is however not a long-term fix. A number of start-ups offering online itinerary planning services are already making a mark and a number of OTAs today offer holiday packages on their websites.

The travel agency industry is already in consolidation mode with larger players constantly acquiring smaller and niche TAs to increase market share. The future of the travel agent depends on innovation.

## ADD VALUE

Over the past three decades, the business model of the travel agent has merely been to identify and focus on channels that have not been disrupted by new tech. When airline commissions disappeared, agents moved to taxi and hotel booking, and when they got disrupted, they set their eyes on package tours. But this is not likely to last long.

One of the best ways to survive disruption is by reinventing your model and adding value. The average traveller is beset with a number of problems - finding the right hotel, getting plugged in with internet in a new country, currency exchange, landing at a tourist spot in the wrong/crowded season, and so on.

While there are online start-ups that address each of these many issues, the average traveller doesn't recognise the need for these services until they are too late.

A travel agent may, however, bring together all these different services under one roof. A tour package that includes all these value-added services to clients is likely to retain and grow their business.

TAs may also look at expanding their offerings to include exotic and unexplored holiday destinations that are not part of the average holiday experience today. The idea is to create value that a traveller does not get with



traditional OTAs and market that offering.

The challenge here, however, is that if there is business potential to something, competition swoops in. Adding new value to your offering thus needs to be a continuous process.

## CONSULTING ADVICE

Travel agents get access to thousands of data points that a regular traveller is not exposed to. This provides them with a unique perspective on travelling. Add to this, the ability to mine thousands or even millions of flight and travel-related data using which, the agent can provide unique insights to travellers.

One app-based startup, for instance, advises its users on the average wait time at each of the many attractions at destinations like Walt Disney World. The startup then uses this information to optimize the schedule for its users. As a travel agent, you may offer paid consultations on similar insights to your clients. Such data-driven insights could help travellers know the optimal travel plan for their vacation, places to avoid, and also the best hotel to stay while on a holiday.

There are two challenges here for a travel consultant. Firstly, most agents cater to passengers outbound from their city to other parts of the country or the world. It may not be realistic for an agent to keep a tab of insights from across the world. Secondly, travel agents house thousands of local data points that do not come in handy with a bulk of their clients who are outbound.

A lot of modern travel agents are being equipped with tech systems that can consolidate insights from around the world. This makes it easy for the agent to consult their clients on questions specific to particular destinations or travel routes.

More importantly, TA partnerships are emerging as one of the most effective ways to keep the industry alive. A growing number of travel agents today partner with fellow agents from other parts of the world to share and serve each other. For instance, an agent from India may tie-up with agents located in cities like New York City, Tokyo, Sydney or London. Often times, cheap domestic flights and trains in these places may not be accessible or known to agents from other parts of the world. Having a local partner book for you can thus be more value-adding.

Another aspect of this partnership is data sharing. Consolidated data points from hundreds of travel agents could help each of these businesses derive meaningful insights that could help agents with their consulting.

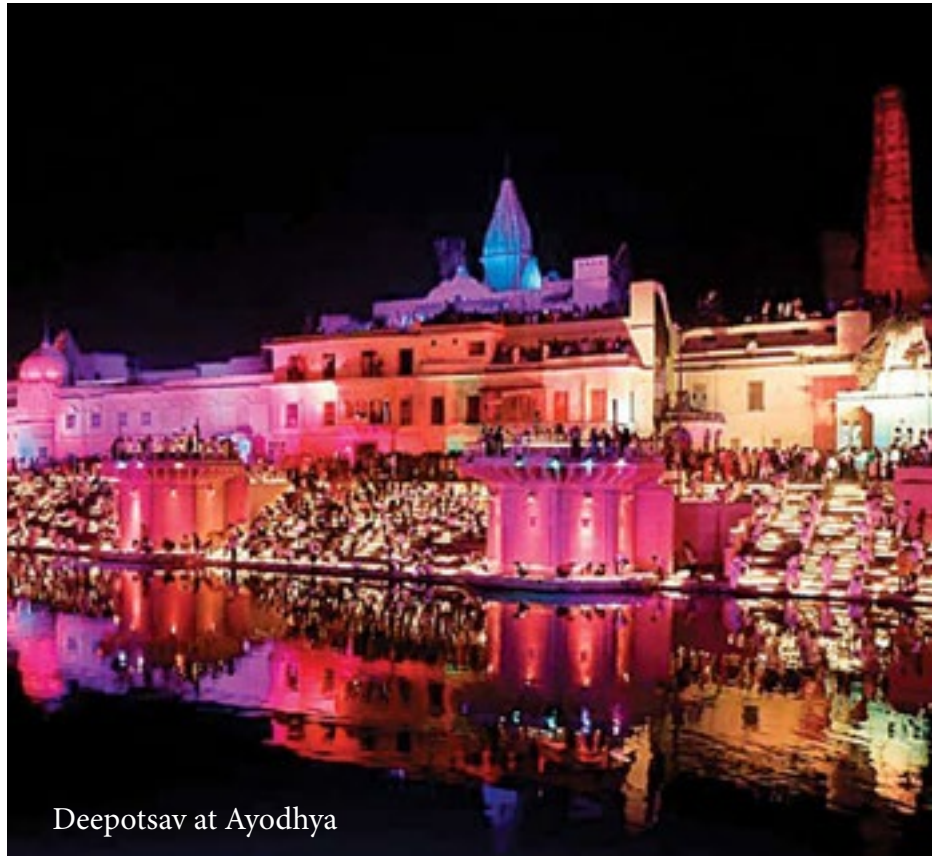
## THE FUTURE IS WITH TECHNOLOGY

In all likelihood, the travel agent business is not going away anytime soon. But agents who fail to update themselves with modern tech may see their business fade away. The future of the travel agency business lies with providing value that technology cannot offer by itself. Consulting and value addition are areas that are likely to grow over the next decade.

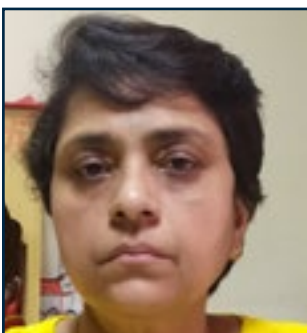
— nagpur@taai.in



**Syed Mohammad Farhan Warsi,**  
Chairman, Uttar Pradesh & Uttarakhand



Deepotsav at Ayodhya



**Gayatri Khanna**  
Hon. Secretary,  
Uttar Pradesh & Uttarakhand Chapter

**M**embers of Uttar Pradesh & Uttarakhand Chapter congratulated TAAI for releasing the digital copy of NamasTAAI. The chapter members appreciated the continued efforts made by the Jyoti Mayal, President, TAAI to revive the tourism sector.

“Ayodhya has been added as a new pilgrim destination to our region. Ayodhya is located on the eastern banks of Sarayu river. It is 135 kms from Lucknow. Ayodhya city recently become famous after the foundation stone laying ceremony done on the 5th of August by PM Narendra Modi.

Ayodhya is the birth place of Lord Ram. The Ram Navami festival is celebrated in April, when thousands of devotees visit the Ram Navami Mela to celebrate the birth of Lord Ram on the ninth day of the Navratri festival. This festival falls under the Hindu month of Chaitra and is considered one among the five most sacred festivals according to the Hindu religion. With the recent foundation stone laying ceremony inaugurated by honorable Prime Minister, we are expecting a good tourism footfall to visit the birth place of Lord Ram.”

— upuk@taai.in



**Swati Dimri,**  
Hon. Treasurer,  
Uttar Pradesh & Uttarakhand Chapter





**Harraj Singh Sidhu,**  
Chairman,  
Chandigarh Chapter



**Puneet Arora,**  
Hon. Secretary,  
Chandigarh Chapter



**Naveen Kumar,**  
Hon. Treasurer,  
Chandigarh Chapter



**T**he travel and tourism industry is bearing the brunt of the coronavirus pandemic's damage. Recovery of domestic travel businesses should be our first step to revive the industry. Hygiene and safety should be any destination's first priority. Once we are able to revive

domestic tourism it will automatically increase the economic growth of the country and also provide jobs to many people. We are hoping for the best support from our Government and will take the necessary steps towards it."

— chandigarh@taai.in



Waterfall at Rock Garden, Chandigarh



TAAI MP & CG Chairman Mr Hemendra Singh Jadon & Treasurer Mr Amit Navlani met Ms Usha Thakur (Tourism Minister M.P.) and had a discussion on various points on tourism.



**Hemendra Singh Jadon,**  
Chairman,  
Madhya Pradesh &  
Chattisgarh Chapter



**Mahendra Pratap Singh,**  
Hon. Secretary,  
Madhya Pradesh &  
Chattisgarh Chapter

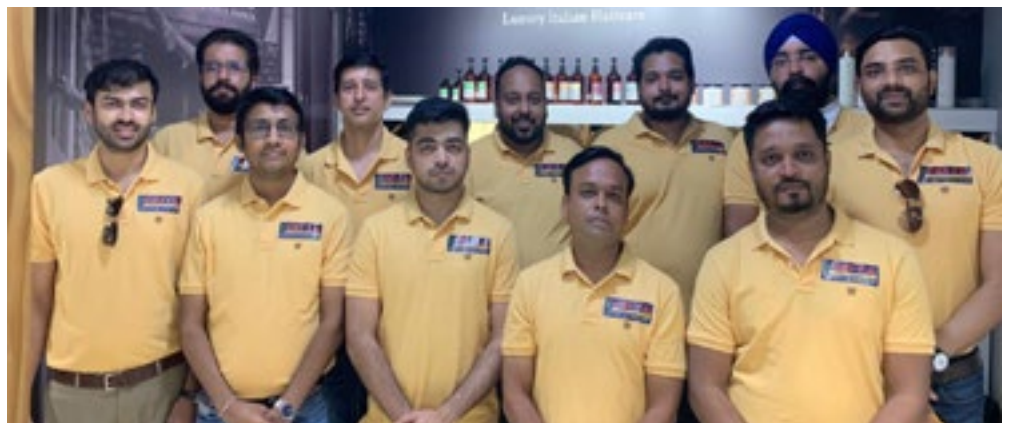


**Amit Navlani,**  
Hon. Treasurer,  
Madhya Pradesh &  
Chattisgarh Chapter



\*During Lockdown we arrange webinars of- Almaty, Vietnam, Navada, Bhutan, Andaman Island, Philippines, Jordan & Maldives, Leisure Group of Hotels, Jumeirah group of Hotels.

## HONORING THE HEROES OF HUMANITY



TAAI MP & CG chapter's Raipur members celebrated "Doctors Day" in a unique way by honoring 11 doctors from different parts of Raipur city. The members visited the doctors in their clinics / hospitals and thanked them for their service to society. These doctors were also presented with a protective face shield to keep them safe while rendering their services. Along with it, a few bottles of hand sanitizers, face masks and some posters about COVID 19 awareness were also provided which in turn could be distributed amongst the underprivileged people who visit these clinics.

Chapter chairman Mr. Hemendra Singh Jadon appreciated Raipur member's noble work.  
— mpcg@taai.in

The chapter meetings of South Tamilnadu were held on 8th April, 28th April and 16th June. On 28th April, all the national office bearers attended the meeting, which discussed about airline refunds and various other issues.

The chapter did about 40 webinars in the month of April and May. The members of the chapter acquired knowledge about various international destinations and these webinars were conducted by Tourism Boards, DMCs and Cruise Liners. The members had also interacted with financial consultants and future business advisers through the webinars.

In one of these webinars, TAAI

National Managing Committee Member, Ramasamy Venkatachalam proposed the exploration of Tamilnadu. The state has beaches, hills, desert, forests. It also has several religious places and offers medical tourism. The chapter planned to conduct webinars with all chapters of TAAI to promote Tamilnadu as a tourism destination.

The chapter's past president, Paramasivam, and MC member, Venkatachalam, met with Vellamunndi Natarajan, Tourism Minister of Tamilnadu and discussed about unemployment and job loss in the tourism industry.

— southtamilnadu@taai.in



**Jaffer Sadiq,**  
Chairman,  
South Tamilnadu  
Chapter



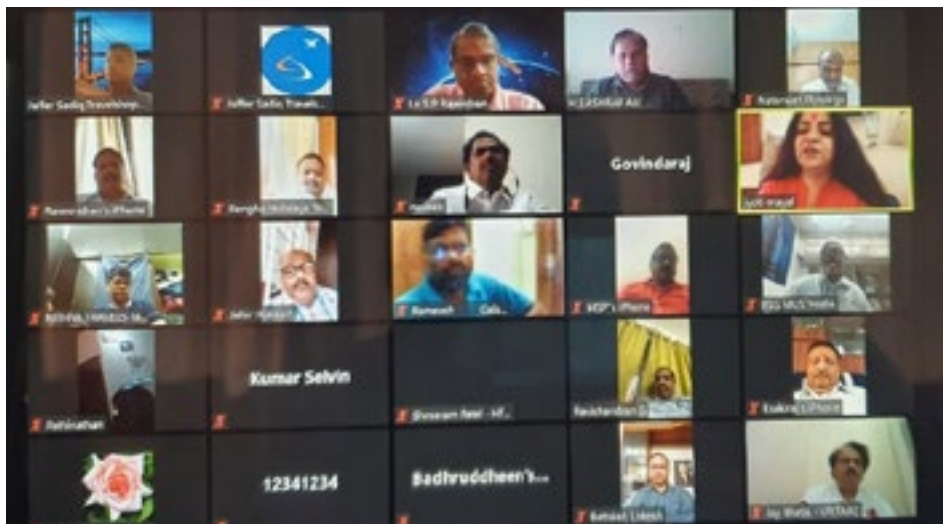
**Ln. S.P. Rajendran,**  
Hon. Secretary, South  
Tamilnadu Chapter



**G. Raveendran,**  
Hon. Treasurer, South  
Tamilnadu Chapter



Air India Express interaction meet with business partners & media held in Tiruchy. Chief Guest Air India Express CEO Mr. Shyam Sundar, Chief Commercial Officer Mrs. Tara Naidu and Air India Airport Manager Mr. Saravana Kumar explained about the new routes to our members. Our MC Venkatachalam and Our Past Chairman Paramasivam honoured the guests.



# Jammu and Kashmir Chapter

## Panelists :



**Mahmood Shah (KAS)**  
Dir. Industries & Commerce  
Jammu & Kashmir



**Farooq Shah IAS**  
Ex. Secretary, Tourism  
Jammu & Kashmir



**G.R. Siah**  
Past President HBOA  
Jammu & Kashmir



**Dr. M. Hussain Mir (KAS)**  
Former Spcl. Secretary, Tourism  
Jammu & Kashmir



**Nasir Shah**  
Chairman, PILTOF  
Jammu & Kashmir



**Shamim Shah**  
Secretary General JKTA  
Jammu & Kashmir



**Ibrahim Siah**  
President SKAL  
Jammu & Kashmir



**Zahoor Qari,**  
Chairman,  
Jammu &  
Kashmir Chapter



**Tanvir Hassan Dar,**  
Hon. Secretary, Jammu  
& Kashmir Chapter



**Sameer Ahmad  
Baktoo,**  
Hon. Treasurer Jammu  
& Kashmir Chapter

**D**ue to the lockdown, J & K Chapter was unable to hold any webinar meetings with its members because of 2G internet connectivity. However, the office-bearers of J & K Chapter had discussions with the past chairmen - Ghulam Rasool Siah, Nasir A Shah, Haji Khazir Mohammad Dar and Shamim A Shah regarding TAAI's role for its members who are in bad shape since August, 2020. Keeping the financial crunch in view, it was unanimously suggested to waive off the AMF for all the J & K Chapter members including Ladakh, who are not in a position to pay AMF for the year 2020-2021.

TAAI J & K Chapter expressed its anguish over the drafting of New Houseboat Policy without taking on board the main stakeholders who could be affected by miscalculations in the policy. TAAI J & K Chapter put forward their reactions in all the leading newspapers of the valley, suggesting rolling it back, as it was having many loopholes. According to the chapter, the new policy will not only be detrimental for the survival of centuries-old floating luxuries but will also affect the livelihood of its owners.

The chapter attended a webinar session on 25th April. The eminent panellists were Jyoti Mayal, President,

TAAI; Jay Bhatia, Vice President, TAAI and Mahmood Ahmad Shah, Director, Industries & Commerce, Government of Jammu & Kashmir where the tourism situation was discussed. Members praised both Jyoti Mayal and Mehmood Shah for raising J & K Tourism Promotion issue among the panellists who were from Central Govt. and desired necessary measures to be taken for revival of tourism.

On 20th July, the J&K Government and private players in the industry had a webinar session organised by Travel World titled "Jammu & Kashmir Tourism Challenges and Opportunities" in which the key speakers were Mehmood A Shah (KAS), (Director Industries & Commerce), Farooq A Shah (IAS) Ex-Secretary Tourism, Dr. M.Hussain Mir (KAS) Ex Sp. Secretary Tourism, G R Siah, Past TAAI Chairman & President HBOA, Nasir A Shah, Chairman IATO & Past Chairman TAAI, Shamim A Shah, Past Chairman TAAI, Ibrahim Siah, President, SKAL, and Zahoor Qari Chairman, TAAI.

The chapter attended all national webinar meetings, suggested their views and requested support from the national office bearers and managing committee members for the revival of tourism in J & K.

—jk@taai.in



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# Tourism Professionals: A Kite flying in the hurricane

assets/pdfs/travel-and-tourism-in-times-of-covid-19.pdf . Below is the concise version of some of the measures recommended for:

## TOUR OPERATORS:

- Service Exports from India Scheme (SEIS) scrips to be restored.
- No landing fees for Goa, i.e. charters land for free to encourage flights to come back
- Same ticket prices for foreigners and Indians for entry to historical monuments.

## ONLINE TRAVEL AGENTS (OTA):

- For the revival of travel agencies, a GST holiday for tour packages and all reservation services rendered by travel agents in line with the tax holiday requested for civil aviation and hospitality sectors
- Tax Collected at Source (TCS) exemption for online travel aggregators (OTA) in line with the GST holiday.
- The deferred amount may be recovered over a period of 24 months, after 12 months, without any interest on over dues.
- Union Budget 2020 proposed a new TDS levy and proposed TCS should be rolled back

## TRAVEL AGENTS:

- Salaries and establishment costs to be supported which will give relief to 53,000+ travel agents, more than 1.3 lakhs tour operators (domestic, inbound, adventure, cruise and outbound), more than 2,700 MICE organisers and 19 lakh plus tourist transporters
- PF contribution to be waived off for the next 12 months
- Employees to be allowed to withdraw EPF for up to six months from their EPF accounts
- ESI contribution to be deferred for 12 months. The insurance corpus of ESI needs to be used now to provide wages to all
- Professional tax to be waived off till March 2021
- Immediate release of cancellations and advances of travel agents and tour operators from AIRLINES/IATA: MOT and MOCA to be addressed.
- BSP period for IATA carriers to be extended to 15 days.
- MOCA should underwrite these payments to travel agents & tour operators
- Complete tax holiday for tourism, travel

and hospitality industry for a period of 12 months FY2019-20 Reseller model for air travel agents to be permitted for corporates/customers with GST number with the agents directly on payment basis

- Unlock inter-head credit of GST across IGST, CGST, SGST for tour operators.
- Rollback of TCS introduced in Budget 2020 by the finance minister
- LTA for Indians twice a year for domestic and international travel.

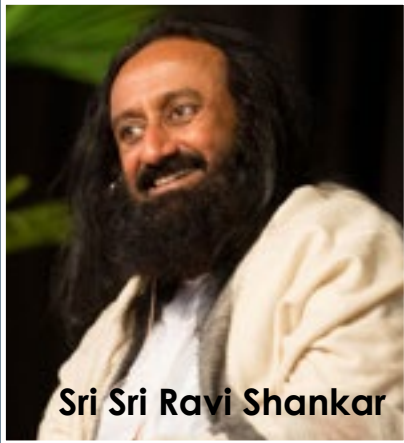
Indian Airlines in their twitter handle <https://twitter.com/airindia/status/1288397013185204224> has advised not to give any extra amount to travel agents for booking tickets, which is not a stand expected from a National Carrier. This has a direct implication on the livelihood of 50K+ travel agents and indirectly affecting more than 19 lakh tour and tourism transporters which are also dependent on such type of ancillary services. Government interventions are required on an urgent basis, in this black era of zero per cent commission, cancellations, pandemic, travel restrictions and No Work scenario. Although to overcome this economic catastrophe, Ministry of Tourism, Government of India has set up a National Tourism Taskforce in its revival plan to bring back tourism in its lost glory, but a major recovery strategy wherein all the stakeholders benefit should be considered on an immediate basis, like level playing field, curb of unhealthy competition between airline and agents, giving unfair treatment to agents should be addressed immediately. This requires a thorough analysis which can help not only big players but also many other medium and small enterprises to sustain in this calamity. Nearly 87.5 million people across the country are directly or indirectly dependent on this sector for livelihood. From a small souvenir shop owner to the employees working in Airlines, hotels, motels, travel agencies, tour operators, local guides, photographers are worried about the uncertainty blooming around this industry. Although business travels in coming months will be reinstated with a major concern of hygiene and safety, but the leisure travel will be still at stake. This industry has one of the most skilled workforces, and losing them in this juncture will jeopardize the whole system.

The world is facing one of the biggest ever economic disruptions, which is happening due to the outbreak that started in China, Wuhan province. This Novel Coronavirus 2019 (Covid-19) within months engulfed more than 200+ countries and has disrupted the working of businesses across the globe. The nationwide lockdown and restrictions on movement have left many companies and industries in the brim of bankruptcy. The major effect is seen in the tourism industry. The pandemic has resulted in suspension of flights and cancellations of bookings be it air ticket, railway ticket, hotel reservations, tour package, bus bookings or taxi services. Due to which every sector of the industry has incurred huge losses.

As per Forbes (<https://www.forbes.com/sites/laurabegleybloom/2020/06/27/airlines-coronavirus-travel-bankruptcy/#44c6f7a75f69>), 14 airlines have filed for bankruptcy which shows a glimpse of the worst scenario the industry is facing. As per the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) report, the estimated GDP losses of USD 3.3 trillion are more than double the size of the international tourism industry alone in the worst-case scenario. FICCI report on Indian tourism sector shows an estimated loss of INR 17 billion to Indian Railways, 40 million job losses and USD 17 billion in revenue in the next year. It also reports a cascading effect on approximately 1.75 lakh daily earners of Agra city only which is one of the most preferred international destinations.

FICCI has recommended extensive list of measures to the Government, on every sector of tourism.. The detailed report is available on <https://www.grantthornton.in/globalassets/1.-member-firms/india/>

**Mamta Solanki, Sandip Solanki**  
(Orange City Tours & Travels, Nagpur)  
Member TAAI – Nagpur Chapter



**Sri Sri Ravi Shankar**

# TAAI hosts motivational webinar with Sri Sri Ravi Shankar

**G**urudev Sri Sri Ravi Shankar an Indian spiritual leader who founded the art of living. He is also a humanitarian leader, spiritual teacher and an ambassador of peace. His vision a stress free , violence – free society has united millions of people all over the world through service projects and program's of the Art of living.

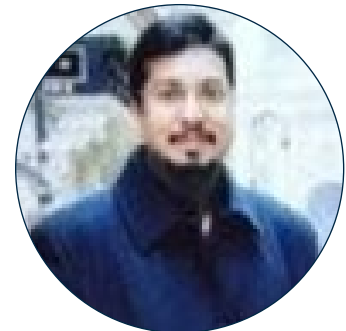
TAAI was fortunate to present t our members a conversation with

Gurudev Sri Sri Ravi Shankar who consented to guide us through his knowledge and motivate us on our way forward on "HITTING reset : TRAVEL inwards".

TAAI invited Guest speakers from the industry to attend the webinar which was held on the 22nd June 2020, to gain insight from the talk and be motivated Gurudev through his vast experience and how he sees resetting tourism.



**Naveen Kundu -  
Managing Director  
Ebixcash india**



**Prashant Pitti –  
Co- Founder.  
Ease My Trip**



**Rupinder Brar, Additional  
Director General, Ministry of  
Tourism, Government of India**



TAAI has taken on a very strong leadership role in difficult times. Not only are they organizing training webinars, they also are organizing webinars for spiritual improvement and I had the privilege to be part of one such webinar which was attended by Gurudev Sri Sri. It was a huge learning as Gurudev had answers to all our challenges, motivating and humbling. Thank you TAAI and do continue your great work.

**— Vasudha Sondhi.  
– Managing Director/OMPL Group**



"It was an amazing experience to be part of this webinar and have an opportunity to interact and hear Sri Sri Ravi Shankarji. Gurudev ji's wisdom, compassion and positive outlook were highly inspiring in these trying times. Thank you TAAI "

**— Sheema Vohra.  
– Managing Director/Sartha Global Marketing**



"It was brilliant to talk to none other than Gurudev himself, at a time that the entire world was and is living under a cloud of the unknown future. We are a people's industry, hence leaning on a strong EQ quotient. We thank Gurudev for the inspiration and guidance for showing us the path and giving us internal strength to deal with the current situation. "

**— Meena Bhatia  
– Vice President & General Manager/Le Meridien Hotel**

# TAAI participates in “Building a resilient future for Travel Agencies – The Blueprint for Digital Transformation” webinar



Enterprises are now entering the unlock phase. In the new normal, the industry needs to be prepared to face disruptions head-on, and get back in action. While people may begin to travel, there is bound to be a lot of uncertainty and apprehension around how to begin the long journey to recovery. Leaders need to consider imminent challenges to build resilient business models. Jyoti Mayal, President, TAAI participated in a webinar which was organised by Wipro on “Building a resilient future for Travel Agencies – The Blueprint for Digital

Transformation”, which was focused on the pressing points of the industry on 3rd July. Leading travel and technology experts from Sabre Travel Network, Thomas Cook India, Designit, and Wipro, along with TAAI members attended the event. The experts shared insights on preparation for the recovery ahead, usage of automation to enable faster response times and help mitigate risks, post Covid-19 revival strategies for travel agencies, and best practices to establish robust operations.



**GMJ**

## IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON SERVICE SECTOR & THE WAY FORWARD

August 1, 2020, Saturday, 5:30 - 7:00 PM

YouTube Channel - GMJ  
 admin@gmj.co.in  
 98214-58624

Anjan Chatterjee, CMD, Speciality Restaurants Ltd.  
 Abhishek Chakraborty, Executive Director, DTDC Express Ltd.  
 Jyoti Mayal, President, Travel Agents Association of India

Jyoti Mayal, President, TAAI participated in a panel discussion on “Impact of COVID-19 on Service Sector & the Way Forward” organised by GMJ’s Learning series on 1st August . Other eminent panellists were Anjan Chatterjee, CMD, Speciality Restaurants Ltd. and Abhishek Chakraborty, ED, DTDC Express Ltd.

**9 July, Thursday**  
**11:00 HRS**

**PANEL DISCUSSION MODERATED BY**  
*Vishal Yadav*




Institute of Tourism Studies  
University of Lucknow

---

**" Women empowerment through Tourism "**

Mr. Vishal Yadav



Moderator

Ms. Jyoti Mayal



Ms. Priyanka Nijhawan



Ms. Neha Arora



Jyoti Mayal, President, TAAI; and Vice Chairperson, FAITH participated in a session on "Women empowerment through Tourism". The session was moderated by Vishal Yadav from IDMS group. The other eminent panellists in the session were Priyanka Nijhawan, Director, Representations Nijhawan Group & ex Chair Woman of the CII-IWN Delhi Chapter and Neha Arora, Founder, Planet-Abled.

**WEBINAR**  
**Destination Readiness**  
Unpacking Kenya's Health & Safety Protocols for the Tourism Sector



Betty Ichon



Alex Tanel



Allan Kilavuka  
HQ CEO



Alex Gitari  
HQ CEO KSA



Mike Macharia  
KACC CEO



Fred Kalgun  
KATO CEO

MODERATORS

PANELISTS



Safe  
travels




**Date: 5th August 2020**  
**TIME: 4.30 PM - 6:00 PM EAT**

To Register  
<https://tinyurl.com/yyp4paf6>

TAAI participated in a webinar - MagicalKenya Destination Readiness in association with Kenya Tourism Board, on 5th August. The webinar revolved around various health and safety protocols being adopted by Kenya to welcome guests.

Healthworld.com



Live Panel Discussion

## A/B testing and economic impact, organisational impact – India's learnings from other countries

JULY 17, 2020 @ 12:00 PM

REGISTER NOW

With the rise of COVID-19 cases and work on vaccines on in full-swing, containment measures such as lockdowns are being implemented worldwide. The organisational and economic impact of lockdowns are still a burden on nations. Healthcare professionals have had to change their ways of working, like for instance digitising their reach to patients.

ETHealthworld.com and Roche Diagnostics India are organising the first-of-its-kind learning & knowledge sharing panel discussion, which will provide healthcare professionals and decision makers with insights on high-affinity A/B testing for India. Participants will also gain insights into the nuances related to the challenges thrown by the pandemic, and their best available solutions, with some global practices as examples.

### Key Discussion Points

- Understanding the economic impact brought on by COVID-19
- Assessing the need for A/B in India and its role in organisational working
- Leveraging A/B testing: What it is and how it can help
- A/B Testing protocols undertaken by countries globally and ways to adopt them domestically

### Panelists



**Jyoti Mayal**  
President, TAAI



**Dr. Nandini Sethuraman**  
MD Associate Consultant, Dept of Microbiology, Apollo Hospitals



**Dr. Peter Ramage**  
Senior International Medical Affairs Manager, Roche Diagnostics International



**Dr. V. Ramasubramanian**  
Senior Consultant, Apollo Hospital



**Dr. Shraavan Subramanyam (Moderator)**  
MD, India and Neighbouring Markets, Roche Diagnostics India



**Chandrasekar Mani**  
Vice President - Technologies & Infrastructure, Thyrocare

Jyoti Mayal, President, TAAI, was one of the eminent panellists of the webinar titled “A/B testing and economic impact, organisational impact - India’s learnings from other countries” organised by ETHealthworld.com and Roche Diagnostics India, on 17th July. The webinar provided healthcare professionals and decision makers with insights on high-affinity A/B testing for India. Participants also gained insights into the nuances related to the challenges thrown by the pandemic, and the best available solutions. Dr. Nandini Sethuraman, MD Associate Consultant, Dept of Microbiology, Apollo Hospitals; Dr. Peter Ramage, Senior International Medical Affairs Manager, Roche Diagnostics International; Dr. V. Ramasubramanian, Senior Consultant, Apollo Hospital; Dr. Shraavan Subramanyam (Moderator), MD, India and Neighbouring Markets, Roche Diagnostics India; Chandrasekar Mani, Vice President - Technologies & Infrastructure, Thyrocare were also panellists of the webinar.



'Discussion on Are we ready to Travel

Jyoti Mayal  
President, TAAI

Live Today on Instagram at 7PM

Follow on Instagram  
: MayalJyoti  
: TheNaveenSoni

and watch

Jyoti Mayal, President, TAAI joined a live session titled ‘Are We Ready to Travel’ on Instagram. The session covered various topic such as, changes and demand for travel post-COVID, preparation of airlines, measures being taken by the hotels and other service providers.



**CANADA** FOR GLOWING HEARTS

**WEBINAR ON MY CANADIAN SUMMER**

Maligne Lake, Alberta

**REGISTER NOW**  
 Date: Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> July 2020  
 Time: 3:00 pm - 4:30 pm (IST)

**SPEAKER: CARL VAZ**  
 Managing Director, Destination Canada - India USA

TO KNOW MORE CALL: PRANALI RANE. T: 22 6172 7113 | E: pranali.rane@informa.com

TAAI participated in a webinar titled ‘My Canadian Summer’, on 30th July. Jyoti Mayal, President, TAAI, and Anoop Kanuga, Chairman – Tourism Services Council, Managing Committee Member, TAAI were present at the webinar.



**CA Manish Gadia**  
 Partner,  
 GMJ & Co., Chartered  
 Accountants



**B M Gupta**  
 Whole-Time Director,  
 Tourism Finance  
 Corporation of India Ltd

TAAI - National Office Bearers, Jyoti Mayal, President; Jay Bhatia, Vice President; Bettaiah Lokesh, Hon. Secretary General; Shreeram Patel, Hon. National Treasurer, and Mehboob Shaikh, Chairman, Taxation Council (TAAI) organised and participated in a webinar on GST and benefits of MSME for Travel & Tourism Industry, on 12th June. Panellists CA Manish Gadia, Partner, GMJ & Co., Chartered Accountants and B M Gupta, Whole-Time Director, Tourism Finance Corporation of India Ltd, interacted with the travel agents on GST and gave insights on MSME.

## TAKING YOU TO THE SKIES AGAIN

Join us 28<sup>th</sup> July 2020 @1500-1530 hrs.

**TOPICS:**

- Our commitment to you:** Assurance of our commitment to our key stakeholders during this time.
- Taking you to the skies again:** A commercial update to update you on our various initiatives as flights increase from Singapore to select countries in July.
- Caring for your well-being:** SIA enhanced health & safety measures to keeping our passengers safe, when they take to the skies with us again.
- Rebooking with greater flexibility:** A recap of our Covid-19 commercial policies for travelers, corporates and frequent fliers.
- Kris connect Value Proposition:** Introduction to A360 highlighting available functions and its main pillars.

Join us to gain more insights.

TAAI Northern Region organised a webinar in association with Singapore Airlines on 28th July.

### YOU ARE INVITED TO OUR GLOBAL VIRTUAL INAUGURATION OF

## TOURISMO JOBS

**Tuesday, August 4<sup>th</sup>, 2020**  
 @ 12:00pm USA EDT / 5:00pm UK / 9:30pm India

**EMPLOYERS • JOBSEEKERS • STARTUPS**

PRESENTED BY

**AKASH KOLAPRATH**  
Founder  
Tourismo Jobs - USA

**LISA SIMON**  
Activities Director  
ITIA  
USA

**TOM ADITYA**  
Mayor  
Bradley Stoke  
United Kingdom

**ELLA TORRES ESQ.**  
Orange County  
Mayor's Office  
Orlando, Florida USA

**JYOTI MAYAL**  
President  
Travel Agents  
Association Of India  
India

OUR HONORED PANELISTS

**CHRIS ELLIS**  
CEO  
Tourismo Jobs - USA

**SHEEMA VOHRA**  
Managing Director  
Sertis Global Marketing  
India

**RICK STILL**  
Managing Director  
Lu-Clu  
Latin America

**NORBERT SIMON**  
Sr. Marketing Director  
Sea World Parks  
Germany

**WATCH OUR VIRTUAL INAUGURATION STREAM LIVE!**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89851963892>
<https://facebook.com/tourismojobsnow>

Jyoti Mayal, President, TAAI was one of the eminent panelists at the virtual inaugural event of Turismo Jobs, held on 4th August. The panellists discussed about pressing issues such as, pay cuts, layoffs happening in the industry, and solutions to problems.

# Ready to travel again? A safe, convenient visa application experience awaits you



VFS Global's Visa At Your Doorstep service enables customers to apply for a visa from the comfort and safety of their home.

**A**fter many months of lockdowns the world over, as international borders begin to re-open slowly, it is clear that Travel 2.0 is going to be a rather evolved ecosystem, rife with new security processes, more vigilant health and sanitation regulations, and a highly cautious traveller. Though it may be very gradual, the travel industry will definitely recover at some time, as international students, business travellers, and international holiday goers resume travelling.

Visa applications have traditionally been an in-person process due to biometric enrolment. Going forward, tools and processes that allow travel agents and their customers to complete visa processes safely or even remotely, will soon become the new normal. Take a look at some of the services by VFS Global that can help make your overall visa application experience safe and comfortable.

## VISA APPLICATION AT YOUR DOORSTEP

'Visa At Your Doorstep' is a technology-enabled service that brings the visa application process in a safe and secure manner to your doorstep at your preferred time and location. A team of trained staff will visit you at a location of your choice to enrol your biometric data and collect visa application documents. This means you no longer have to worry about stepping out to a public space - you can apply for visas within the safety of your homes, while also ensuring a secure method of biometric enrolment. The staff visiting you at your preferred location will observe all health and safety measures in line with guidelines from the World Health Organisation and local authorities, including physical distancing, temperature checks, disinfection of equipment, and usage of face masks and gloves throughout the process. This service is available in India for visa applications for Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Hungary, France, Luxembourg, Malta, Portugal, Latvia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Switzerland, Germany and the UK.

Special incentives are available for travel partners using this service. For details, contact your local VFS Global representative.

## PREMIUM LOUNGE

As countries cautiously reopen their borders, international travellers are being wary about new health and travel

regulations. To help eliminate any concerns or confusion around visa applications, at the Premium Lounge, you are handheld throughout the entire visa application process by a trained staff. This means you are personally guided through each step of the submission process. This service provides you with personalised attention and assistance, ensuring that you complete all your necessary documentation accurately, and by avoiding the risk of being in a crowded space, though physical distance is practised everywhere in our application centres. Keeping your health and safety in mind, like the rest of the Visa Application Centre, the Premium Lounge is also cleaned and sanitised multiple time a day, by well-trained staff who are always equipped with personal protective gear.

## GET YOUR PASSPORT DELIVERED TO YOUR DOORSTEP

VFS Global also provides your passport to be delivered to you at home, so that you can avoid a trip to the visa application centre to collect it. Once a decision on your visa application has been made, you can opt for the passport and documents to be delivered to your doorstep by courier.

## HEALTH AND SAFETY MEASURES AT VFS GLOBAL

VFS Global has established standardised protective measures across its centres, including specific physical distancing and sanitisation mandates, in line with guidelines from the World Health Organisation and local authorities. Customers exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms, including high fever, cough, and difficulty in breathing will not be permitted to enter the centre. Additionally, all customers and VFS Global employees are required to wear a face mask and observe physical distancing within the centre.

With these services, you can rest easy when applying for your next visa, without compromising on your health and safety. Having taken care of each step of visa application, globetrotters can now set out to make new travel memories - in a smarter, safer and more efficient manner.



# TAAI makes Headlines

The relentless efforts of TAAI have been showcased in the press across India and globally. Here are some of the glimpses.

**TAAI Appeals to Ministry of Civil Aviation to Reach Beyond Air Bubbles**

Dr. Anil Mishra | ETN India | Aug 18, 2020

See full Article

The **Travel Agents Association of India (TAAI)** has forwarded an appeal today to Shri Hardeep Singh Puri, Minister of Civil Aviation (MoCA), requesting to permit airlines to commence scheduled flights and carry passengers to underserved markets beyond air bubbles. This is subsequent to the meeting held by the TAAI President with Mr. Puri on August 20 along with the Minister of Tourism, Shri Prahlad Singh Patel.

The air bubbles permit point-to-point services between only a few countries which have signed the agreement with India.

The President of TAAI, Mrs. Jyoti Mayal, stated: "We have appealed to permit and open the criteria for airlines to carry passengers to various other countries beyond their hubs to the underserved markets. This

**Tourism ministry enters agreement with FICCI ladies organisation, TAAI to promote women in tourism**

Swati Mathur | TNN | Aug 21, 2020, 15:52 IST

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**NEW DELHI:** The tourism ministry on Friday entered into an agreement with the **Travel Agents Association of India** and the **FICCI ladies organisation (FLO)** to promote women in tourism and allied activities.

The initiative entails FLO and TAAI working with state tourism departments and tourism corporations to emphasise the role tourism can play as a model for sustainable livelihood for women and to ensure their economic upliftment. FLO and TAAI will be facilitators in the process of connecting women with ministry

**Travel Agents Association of India on Air India Express Crash**

TAAI volunteers assistance to government and families

Linda Maheshwari | eTN editor | August 18, 2020 21:33

The **Travel Agents Association of India (TAAI)** has expressed shock and concern over the **Air India Express aircraft AXJ-1344** that crash landed at

King's receives the Safer Tourism Seal as the first country in the world...  
Breaking Travel Industry News & Affairs | News & Trends

**TAAI backs houseboat owners, asks Govt to preserve floating heritage**

"Take main stakeholders on board for new policy"

**J&K Bank to de sector-specific road-maps**  
Executive-level committee with trade represent.

Shri. Anil Mishra, President of TAAI, said that the crash of the Air India Express aircraft AXJ-1344 was a tragedy and that the TAAI has expressed its deepest sympathy to the bereaved families. He also mentioned that the TAAI has volunteered its services to assist the government in handling the aftermath of the crash.

The reports which we have received about the new houseboat policy being suggested by CoI proposed by the government has many loopholes which will not only be detrimental for the survival of centuries old floating heritage but will also

Shri. Anil Mishra, President of TAAI, said that the crash of the Air India Express aircraft AXJ-1344 was a tragedy and that the TAAI has expressed its deepest sympathy to the bereaved families. He also mentioned that the TAAI has volunteered its services to assist the government in handling the aftermath of the crash.

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**ASSOCIATIONS**

Saturday, 08 August, 2020, 11:00 PM [IST]

## TAAI volunteers to offer assistance to Kerala & families of victims of Kozhikode crash

The Travel Agents Association of India (TAAI) has expressed shock and concern over the Air India Express aircraft AI31244 that crash landed at Kozhikode Airport last evening. TAAI has reached out to the Kerala Chief Minister's Office to offer help. The association has come out with support to the state and families of the victims to offer any kind of assistance.

"Our members have volunteered to assist all government/airline officials and help the injured passengers and assist the families of the deceased," stated Jyoti Misra, President, TAAI.

"We also urge DGCA and MoCA to appropriately probe the accident. Safety of human life is utmost important and should not be compromised at any level. Our members in Kerala and across the country shall be available to assist and can be contacted for assistance of any nature," a joint statement by the national office bearers reads.

"We are particularly saddened that all the passengers were returning on the Vande Bharat flight back to their homeland, India from Dubai, due to the pandemic, to relocate and connect back with their families. We pray for the speedy recovery of the injured in this accident and convey our heartfelt condolences to the families of the passengers, crew/pilot who lost their lives."

## Travel agents appeal to government to restart international scheduled flights

Mumbai 7 | TNN | Aug 26, 2020, 10:20 IST

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MUMBAI: Travel agents have appealed to the government to restart international scheduled airline flights to under-served countries that are beyond air bubbles agreement and allow agents to sell tickets on these flights.

In the appeal sent to the ministry of civil aviation on Wednesday, the Travel Agents Association of India (TAAI) said that this was the right time to recommence international scheduled airline operations as "global skies open up". The appeal followed a meeting TAAI had with the civil aviation minister on August 13, said a press note issued by TAAI.

## International Skill Hub to be set up in Goa under Government's Skill India Mission

By India Education Diary Bureau Staff - August 11, 2020

MOU SIGNING CEREMONY BETWEEN GOVERNMENT OF GOA AND NATIONAL SKILL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION



Goa: In its commitment towards Skill India Mission and aligning with Hon'ble Prime Minister's vision of 'Aam Aadmi Bharat', National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC), operating under the aegis of Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE), today signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Directorate of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (DSE), Government of Goa to set up an International Skill Hub in the state.

## Air India allowing travel agents to sell seats only on select Vande Bharat flights, alleges TAAI

New Delhi, Aug 7 (PTI) Air India is allowing travel agents to sell seats only on select flights under the Vande Bharat Mission and "other operations have been blocked", the Travel Agents Association of India (TAAI) has alleged.

In a statement late on Thursday night, it alleged that at a juncture when economies are trying to revive and come back on their feet, Air India continues to play "narcissistic".

"After our repeated request to your good selves, agents were permitted to book on the GDS (global distribution system), but new inventories have been blocked and selective sectors are only being permitted. This is totally unfair and biased," it added.

The TAAI has over 2,500 travel agent companies as its members.

"We once again request you (Civil Aviation Ministry and Air India) to ensure that accredited member travel agents are given due respect and permitted to promote and sell airline seats... or all sectors that are being operated by Air India under the Vande Bharat Mission," it said.

Moreover, Air India should withdraw its statements asking the passengers to report any issue of overcharging by travel agents for flights under Vande Bharat Mission.

I am happy to know that after many years a TAAI President jointly met the Aviation Minister and Tourism Minister to present the industry's unfortunate case. It is heartening to see Hardeep Singh Puri, Union Minister for Civil Aviation and Prahlad Singh Patel, Union Tourism Minister, together giving a patient hearing to the problems of the industry, and assuring their support.

I am hopeful that the important issues (opening of domestic tourism in India, restarting of domestic and international flights, refunds, etc.) that were discussed in the meeting will be addressed by the government soon.

— Sheldon Santwan, Editor & CEO, TravelBiz Monitor

# Welcome to our New Members

**T**AAI 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.

SR. NO.	NAME OF AGENCY	CITY	REPRESENTATIVE I	REPRESENTATIVE II
1	Wondervisit.com	GURGAON	Mr. Amit Aggarwal	Ms. Nameeta Aggarwal
2	Y.R.A. Enterprises Pvt. Ltd. T/A ONE2GO TRAVELS	INDORE	Mr. Aman Agrawal	Mr. Yash Agrawal
3	Satyam Travels & Tours	JAIPUR	Mr. Arvind Kumar Pareek	Ms. Ayushi Joshi
4	Seven Wonders Vacations Pvt. Ltd.	JAIPUR	Mr. Nitin Dubey	Mr. Praful Kumar Maheshwari
5	Dishaan Holidays Pvt. Ltd.	MEHSANA	Mr. Nilesh Barot	Ms. Jagruti Barot



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One webinar of 1 hour for a particular chapter Rs.10,000/- plus GST

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One webinar for pan India members for one hour Rs. 40,000/- plus GST