

TAAI's TRAVEL & TOURISM INITIATIVE

NAMAS TAAI

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TAAI 2016

63rd
CONVENTION & EXHIBITION OF TAAI
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THE PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

Dare To Dream and *To Deliver*

The only failure is “Not Trying”

I am a student of a thought *“Potential Unexpressed turns to pain”* and discovered immense benefit from this valuable learning. Many, unfortunately, do not give a real hard push to that enormous potential we all carry to support us go beyond. It is the fear of risk that looms large in our thought process. Unwillingness to dare keeps us away from the thrill of accomplishing what is not comprehended. As a result, one does not try the un-attempted or aims at difficult to achieve goals.

All life is “leadership” and is about how one model is a character that gets emulated. Leadership is leading one-self first, before leading others. It demands a firm resolve to rise above self. There is a huge “responsibility” aspect in leadership when one represents others. In such situations, one must attempt and push hard to accomplish the not-easily possible. We must beat the saying *“The only failure is not trying”*.

TAAI is huge. TAAI holds industry leadership and remains unparalleled. TAAI belongs to an enterprising, experienced and the elite among industry leaders. TAAI must therefore go all out to create newer benchmarks. There is little option but to reflect formidability in all that we do. TAAI is only as strong and as big as its members. Our image is the sum-total of what our members contribute and achieve. The vital handshake between TAAI & its resourceful members must be continuous; consistent and collaborative. Every aspect of our way forward must be illuminated with mega goals and overwhelming achievements, for that is what TAAI truly is.

For TAAI to have architected and delivered the most incredible and high value 63rd Convention & Exhibition - the “Indian Travel Congress 2016” at the most wonderful city - Abu Dhabi and at the most fascinating venue - Emirates Palace, is no ordinary feat. Held in the most astounding of global locations; creating a classy design and content and importantly raising the bar to a new level is testimony to our willingness to dare. It will be a challenge to maintain this level, surely.

TAAI attained this fantastic success of a superb event in just about five weeks. It confirms, *“We have not failed, because we tried”* and *“loudly reflects that we have expressed our potential”*.

The TAAI committee dared. It attempted the most challenging. It never looked back and got ready to ride the wave of change. *Change appears impossible first, questions the attempt next; but at the end, presents a big thrill. It proves that one can dare and one can lead.*

Our most profound gratitude is expressed here to all those who believed in us and stood by us. Abu Dhabi Tourism & Culture Authority inspired us to take this decision. A big **Thank You** for your big support.

To our Partners - Sponsors for their valuable contributions - our sincere gratitude to you. To our speakers - to our esteemed Media and Media partners (this was the largest media delegation to a TAAI convention) for supporting our content and visibility - we are highly obliged. To all attendees who trusted TAAI and joined us; we could not have done it without you. To my super committee - the Managing Committee, our Chairpersons and those who supported in the delivery - these stars of TAAI will be always recalled for the great show that was put up.

THANK YOU.

Let's continue the grind. Let's dare, more. Let's beat the myth that *“impossible is unachievable”*. *Sometimes, it is.*

Life is short. Let's be of use. There's little life in what we do, when what we do does not grow.

Let's do it together.

Warm regards

Sunil Kumar R
President, TAAI
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COVER STORY

63rd Convention & Exhibition of TAAI Abu Dhabi, 2016



Tomorrow Begins Now



TAAI hosted its 63rd annual convention in the beautiful city of Abu Dhabi, continuing its record of offering the best locations and experiences to its delegates. Unlike any other platform, the convention was an ideal mix of business sessions and leisure activities that encouraged TAAI members to look beyond customary convention routines and prepare for tomorrow's challenges. By **Saloni Bhatia**



The impressive three day TAAI Convention saw industry stakeholders come together to acknowledge the accomplishments as an industry and also focus on tapping the future potential. The convention was conceived in an inspirational format to get the best of both worlds, business as well as leisure. The pre and post event tours highlighted the iconic locations of Abu Dhabi while showcasing the deeply rooted culture of the country. While the inaugural session was held at the Emirates Palace, one of the costliest hotels to be built in the world, the final gala dinner was hosted at Ferrari World, one of the leading tourist attractions of the Middle East. As a destination, Abu Dhabi has been built by infusing future technology in an artistic way and hence was the best location for this year's convention.

The agents supported the business sessions in huge numbers and the Abu Dhabi Tourism & Culture Authority (TCA Abu Dhabi) made sure that they got a taste of the vibrant capital of the United Arab Emirates. Even before the delegation arrived, the TAAI team had started making efforts to bridge the tourism gap between the two countries. The team met with several local tourism stakeholders who were also present during the business sessions at the Emirates Palace.

As a platform for connecting people, the convention succeeded in bringing together the eminent leaders who have made a difference to the tourism industry in the past years. It served as a connect between the visionaries, planners and executors. Here we bring you a few highlights from this year's convention.

DAY 1 **ENTERING THE WORLD OF** **EMIRATE LUXURY**

The inaugural ceremony was held at the Emirates Palace, showcasing the hotel's luxurious offerings. The first to be inaugurated was the India Travel Trade Expo (ITTE) near the ballroom area. As you all know ITTE is TAAI's B2B exhibition that enables direct meetings among the buyers and sellers. Apart from adding business value to the convention, it was a tremendous opportunity to meet more players on the local front. One could see stalls crowded with people making new contacts and connecting with the new stakeholders. Shortly after, the gates opened to the magnificence of the Grand Ballroom at Emirates Palace welcoming the guests to an unforgettable experience.



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Welcoming the guests, Sunil Kumar, President, TAAI, stated, "There was a strong need for collaboration between the two countries and it is an honour for TAAI to support the tourism of this beautiful city. As a destination, Abu Dhabi is just a few hours away from India, connected through major airlines. There has been a 20 per cent year on year growth in Indian inbound tourists to the Emirate capital. It simply stood out as the convention choice because of its diversity. From the thrills of Yas Island, to the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Al Ain, a place where the desert meets the seas and the hub of Saadiyat Island, the place has everything for an Indian explorer. The aura, glamour and richness of the city makes it an ideal destination in the Middle East and through this event we plan to build more tourism for both the countries. We look forward to work towards changing the perception of this country among Indian tourists."

Saif Saeed Ghobash, director general, TCA Abu Dhabi, said, "I welcome the TAAI delegates to this beautiful city of Abu Dhabi and thank them for giving us this opportunity to showcase this city. India is an important market for our country - the largest overseas source for hotel guests."





TAAI-TCA Abu Dhabi: Strengthening tourism ties

Bejan Dinshaw, country manager – India, Abu Dhabi Tourism & Culture Authority (TCA Abu Dhabi), shares the significance of the 63rd TAAI Convention in strengthening travel trade between Abu Dhabi and India, and the MICE potential of the Emirate. By Steena Joy

What will hosting the TAAI convention mean for tourism in Abu Dhabi? What is your post event perspective of the TAAI Convention?

We received an amazing response during and after the 63rd TAAI Convention. All the delegates had a great time at our destination Abu Dhabi. Moreover, most of them availed the pre and post tours to explore more at the destination.

After hosting more than 600 delegates from across India, the travel agents explored the destination themselves. The travel fraternity also got clarity on the destination in order to sell the packages back in India. At the convention, Indian travel agents met the local stakeholders which furthermore strengthened their personal relationships for further association. Just days after the convention, stakeholders started receiving calls from tour operators across India inquiring about the packages. It is definitely a positive push for our destination, which has thereby strengthened our relationship with the trade fraternity.

In the first half of this year, 152,423 Indians checked into Abu Dhabi hotels which has been a 20 per cent year-over-year increase. Indian guests accounted for seven per cent of all hotel stays in the Emirate, with a longer-than-average stay of 3.4 nights. After hosting this convention, we are expecting further hike in the coming year.

How important is India as a source market for MICE in Abu Dhabi?

India is a key market for corporate



Bejan Dinshaw

and incentive groups, and offers great potential from the weddings sector as a convenient wedding celebration destination. There will be continued investment in the Abu Dhabi Convention Bureau to position Abu Dhabi as a leading business events destination and attract and host major conference and congress meetings. It will work in a coordinated joined-up approach bringing government, government related entities, public and private sectors together under 'one Abu Dhabi' for bid developments to target conferences, congress and association meetings from sectors identified as pillars of 2030 Vision – education, medical, transport, environmental, sustainable energy etc.

Abu Dhabi has the facilities to host large groups and intimate wedding

At the TAAI convention, Indian travel agents met the local stakeholders which furthermore strengthened their personal relationships for further association. Just days after the convention, stakeholders started receiving calls from tour operators across India inquiring about the packages. It is definitely a positive push for our destination, which has thereby strengthened our relationship with the trade fraternity

celebrations, while offering the depth and diversity of experiences for add-on elements. We also have an extensive network of professional conference organisers and destination management companies to help plan festivities, supported by an Abu Dhabi Convention Bureau scheme which offers a range of incentives to support wedding planners.

The convention bureau also continues to offer the Advantage Abu Dhabi incentive programme which acts as a catalyst to support and stimulate the sector for attracting business events to Abu Dhabi, and we are improving event licensing system to ease application process for all event hosts and planners. I believe these actions will appeal to the India market.



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Ghobash added, “In the first half of this year, we have already received 152,000 tourists which represents a 20 per cent year on year increase from the India market. The Indian guest accounts for seven per cent of our hotel stays with an average of 3.4 hotel room nights, which is slightly longer than their average stay in the Emirates. There is enormous potential in tourism as we are connected to 15 different cities in India through 300 flights a week.”

Abu Dhabi offers a world of adventure through Ferrari World in Yas Island, a sustainable tourism experience in Masdar City, the art hub at Saadiyat Island and a cultural experience in Al Ain among many



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others. “There is a lot to explore in the city from the luxurious environs of the Emirates and the Corniche area. And there is more to come as new attractions come alive at Yas and Saadiyat Island. Our destinations are ideal to meet the needs of Indian travellers,” Ghobash added.

He concluded by saying, “You have come to the right place for such a theme as Tomorrow truly Begins Now in the city of Abu Dhabi. Tomorrow Begins Here in Abu Dhabi - by selecting us as your partners, you will most certainly transcend that routine.” His address was followed by regional dance performances representing the culture of Abu Dhabi that were thoroughly enjoyed by people. The room brimmed with an aura that reflected an energy among people who were determined to

move forward. Speaking on the occasion, Bejan Dinshaw, country manager, TCA Abu Dhabi, stated, “Our association with TAAI unleashes the true potential of the country. There is tremendous exposure to the travel agents pan India as the local stakeholders are also paying attention to the India market now. It is time to realise what a new destination like Abu Dhabi has to offer in terms of experiential tourism.”

TAAI always applauds the commitment of industry stakeholders to make a difference in the tourism sector. The gala night also witnessed the key industry people receive awards. Zubin Karkaria, CEO, VFS Global India and Dev Kavrat, managing director, Trawelltag were honoured for their outstanding contributions to the



industry. Sham Nijhawan, chairman, Nijhawan Group was presented with the Lifetime Achievement honour. As the first day came to an end, the delegates had seen a glimpse of the culture and luxury that Abu Dhabi had in store for them.



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**DAY 2
CREATING OPPORTUNITIES
THAN SEEKING THEM**

The specialty of attending a TAAI convention is that it helps one gain a wholesome experience, be it from meeting new people, attending business sessions or exploring a new city. This year was no exception as the TAAI Managing Committee had given sincere thought in organising the business sessions to complement the theme- 'Tomorrow Begins Now- Rising Above the Routine'. The delegates were seated well within time to witness the business talks unfold. The first keynote address for the day was by Ashwini Kakkar, Director, Mercury Travels and past president, TAAI. Concentrating on the evolution of the travel industry, Kakkar presented some valuable facts for the audience to ponder upon. He remarked, "Innovation is taking route in the industry and companies are rising with a bigger market share. With 10 billion dollars being spent on online travel, 12 per cent of which is spent by Indians, the country will soon account for one third of travel across the world."

Talking about the hotel segment, he added, "Brands are rising by the day and there are more than 800,000 properties across the world. But the company which has shown exceptional growth in the segment is Airbnb and surprisingly they do not own any property. Valued at US \$26 billion, the company's worth is equal to IHG and





Hilton put together. This shows us a glimpse of how technology can change the demographic of the travel segment.”

The customer segment has shifted to millennials who are making major decisions through online portals. While 35 per cent people still prefer a travel agent, the agents only charge a quarter of what it was years ago. It is time we

play to our strengths and create a new, unique personalised experience for the customers. This is only possible if we adapt technology and tap on new opportunities, concluded Kakkar. His speech garnered everybody's attention to the fact that technology has indeed made drastic changes in the travel sector and will continue to cause disruption with new innovations.

IMPACT OF GLOBAL TOURISM

Kakkar's address was followed by a panel discussion on 'Growth, Prospects and Impact of Global Tourism'. The panel was chaired by Micheal Goh, senior vice president, Star Cruises; Dhananjay Saliانkar, regional manager, Starwood and Shaji Thomas, director, Ras Al Khaimah Tourism Development Authority. The three individuals



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provided deep insights on the growth in the sector and the potential of immense opportunities in the future.

Saliankar believes that hotels are the backbone of the industry. He addressed the audience with his views on how to retain customers. He stated, "A brand needs to be focused on certain loyalty programmes that help retain the customer's interest in staying with the same portfolio whenever he travels. SPG's loyalty programme and SPG app are the latest additions to the brand's initiative in retaining customers. The keyless checkins or ordering a meal while on the way to the hotel through an app held the brand keep a customer engaged."





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There is disruption in the industry as many online portals are coming with innovative ideas to use unused inventory. Therefore, he emphasised on the fact that guest acquisition will continue to be challenging unless a brand doesn't engage in interactive activities and latest trends.

Goh added to the conversation by pointing out the true cruise potential of the India market. He stated, "In 2015, more than 125,000 Indians travelled on cruise ships in Asia and Europe. While the market has grown 36 per cent since 2012, there is a desperate need of infrastructure, government support and feasible business formats." He laid out more facts about the cruise travel market and urged the agents to tap on the opportunity. Thomas thanked the agents for their immense support in the past few months. Ras Al Khaimah has seen 22 per cent rise in Indian hotel guests this year and continues to grow as a destination. Thomas, informed, "There will be 50 million people travelling out of India by 2020. To tap the India market, we will be focusing on weddings as well as soft adventure sports. As a destination, we have a lot to offer if you support us further."

Another panel held on the challenges and opportunities in aviation was chaired by Ihab Sorial, president, Oman Air; Pankaj Srivastava, director of commercial, Air India; Sanjay Kumar, chief commercial officer, IndiGo; Praveen Iyer, vice president, commercial, India, Jet Airways and Neraja Bhatia, vice president, commercial, Indian sub continent, Etihad Airways. The panel unified on the view that more needed to be done to



promote connectivity of India with the world. Each member laid emphasis on increasing connectivity to India and within. At the end of the session, some lucky delegates were awarded gifts which included an airplane ride over Abu Dhabi among many other things.

Special city tours were organised by Abu Dhabi Tourism & Culture Authority (TCA Abu Dhabi) for the delegates and media. Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque was one of the iconic destinations on the tours and the delegates got the opportunity to witness the architectural wonder. The delegates were so in awe of the beauty and culture of the city that the conversations continued all the way back to the hotel.

The grand dinner on the second day was called 'Namaste India' to commemorate the 30th anniversary of the first flight by Air India on October 15, 1932. All the delegates were dressed in Indian wear to mark this historic occasion in the travel movement in India. It was a beautiful night beaming in the glory of a promising connect between India and Abu Dhabi. Applauding TAAI's effort in bringing a large delegation to a terrific city, Neeraj



Ghei, past president, TAAI, commented, "TAAI has picked the perfect theme in hosting the convention here in Abu Dhabi as the city truly reflects the future. It is important to know how to keep evolving amidst the technological advancements happening around the country. The agents have an added advantage by knowing the best in their business. Always ask yourself, 'What can I do, that the customer cannot do?'" The evening also saw the launch of the Convention Special edition of NAMASTAAI, TAAI's inhouse magazine.

TAAI conventions have been a great platform for networking on an international level and promoting businesses. The strategy is to represent India's travel trade in the best possible way and generate business opportunities from untapped destinations. This not only gives a fillip to business but also enhances the knowledge of members. The end of second day left the delegates to think of the changes happening around them and act on it.

DAY 3 A FERRARI FAREWELL

The final day of the event was a mix of in-depth business sessions and an exclusive farewell dinner at Ferrari World. As the convention neared its end, the delegates had seen some iconic locations in Abu Dhabi and witnessed emirati culture at its best.

The last day of the convention began with great fervour and enthusiasm as the delegates looked forward to business sessions on their final day at the palace. Addressing the gathering on the importance of tapping the correct



The 63rd TAAI Convention in Abu Dhabi saw quite a few esteemed speakers who gave valuable insights in their fields of expertise.

We thank them for their contribution in making this convention a grand success





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opportunity, Sunil Kumar, President, TAAI, opined, "We need to rise and see technology as a vehicle to move forward. Seeing examples like Google and airBnB, it is important to know that everything is going to be technology driven." Ending with Albert Einstein's quote, 'A ship is always safe on the shore, but that is not what it is built for', Kumar stated that it was time to move away from the shore and not remained anchored there.

Next up on stage was, Kapil Kaul, CEO, Centre for Aviation, India, who shared his insights on how to ride the wave of opportunities. Kaul opined, "The size of growth in the industry has been remarkable in the last 40 years but we might have a capacity crunch seeing the numbers. Today's seat factor has reached 90 per cent which means there is dire need of more infrastructure. The new aviation policy lays emphasis on regional growth but one cannot deny the fact that there is a design fault in our network. Only creating political dynamic, institutional dynamic and infrastructural dynamic can improve the system. At this stage it is important to think beyond current situation, have knowledge of the industry and be prepared for the future. Only better structural infrastructure and good connectivity can make the dream of Make in India possible."

The session was followed by a presentation by Louvre, Abu Dhabi and Amadeus. Abu Dhabi is planning to create Saadiyat Island as the art hub of the world and Louvre would be one of the three museums on the island, opening in March 2017. Designed by Pritzker Prize-winning architect Jean Nouvel, the museum will feature artifacts from all around the world, making it an interesting attraction for Indian travellers. Ernest Sanchez Beaumont, head of commercial strategy and business management, Amadeus, presented an informative report on how technology is empowering travel. The report had useful insights for travel agents on booming markets, travel trends and customer behaviour.

The concluding session of the day was chaired by Jasper Hyseus, director of sales, Le Meridien and Ankush Nijhawan,



Managing Director, Nijhawan Group. They spoke on the topic 'Where's the Opportunity', pointing out the potential areas of tourism growth. Hyseus talked about the various golf tourism facilities in the country. He mentioned, "MICE, weddings and golf are potential markets for Indian travellers to explore in Abu Dhabi. In 2017, there will be a 12 per cent increase in the number of rooms in order to cater to more tourists."

Ankush Nijhawan remarked that with the dramatic shift of travel bookings online, agents need to quickly adapt to changes. He shared some brief experiences from his work in the industry focusing on the process of evolving to be relevant. Addressing his fellow delegates, he asserted, "You know your business the best so leverage on the customer strength and bring tech into play for growth in business. It is important to give the product a dynamic packaging real time and technological boost. Social media can be used for marketing a product."

As the TAAI team spread smiles by distributing prizes to the delegates, people gathered to bid farewell to the luxury of Emirates Palace. The delegates were awarded prizes for visiting each stall and getting a stamp on their TAAI passport which showcased their dedication towards a new opportunity.

Many other prizes were handed over to the delegates courtesy of the esteemed sponsors of the convention like Dubai Park tickets, business class tickets by IndiGo, etc. The delegates were once again taken on city tours to showcase a different side of Abu Dhabi. Some also picked to directly reach Ferrari World and enjoy thrilling rides before the farewell event. Post the tours everyone reached Ferrari World dressed in the theme of black and red. The night was exclusively planned for TAAI delegates so that they were the only guests present in the entire venue. After three days of informative business sessions, the evening gave delegates the time to relax and enjoy.

The farewell gala dinner hosted by Yas Island was nothing short of perfection. It was made sure that the evening was packed with endless entertainment and good food reflecting true hospitality of Abu Dhabi. An exceptional show was organised displaying the variety of events held at Ferrari World. The eating area was completely transformed to match the theme of an Indian celebration with marigold flowers. There were many Indian dishes served to the guests to showcase the culinary diversity available at Ferrari World.

Lucrative prizes were handed out to a few lucky winners which included Ferrari

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COVER STORY



watches, a Ferrari ride and two nights stay at the Emirates Palace. The audience cheered as the winners were announced. As one of the most visited destination by Indians, Ferrari World plans to expand further in order to attract more Indian tourists. Yochabel Dunstan, head of sales, Farah Experiences, informed, “35 per cent of our guests come from India and the market has shown immense growth in the past years. We have included some new rides this year and also opened special restaurants serving Indian food. The market importance stands out because we also planned to serve Jain meals for Indian tourists. We are also in talks to host an Indian wedding since Ferrari World offers a unique location for destination weddings.”

The last day could truly be summarised as a nourishing experience for the delegates filled with fun and learning. The convention ended with a new hope of future ties and connections. The stakeholders from both the countries showed commitment to come forward and promote the destination's true potential.

The dedication of the TAAI team one again proved why it has been successful in changing the tourist numbers of a destination after a convention.





Feedback from our gracious Hosts

Abu Dhabi Tourism & Culture Authority

Thank you so much again for selecting Abu Dhabi to conduct your 63rd convention. On behalf of TCA, we would like to thank you for all the hard work and efforts you have put to come up with such successful convention. You have done a great job before and during the convention, from planning to apply. We are pleased from the result of the convention, it was absolutely successful.

It was great to have you all here! We in Abu Dhabi wanted to share your aims of ensuring high ethical standards in the industry, improving standards of service and performance, and encouraging cooperation. We hope we proved there are significant opportunities to seize and develop. The Indian market has now become the Emirate's largest overseas source of hotel guests. Yet, we believe that there is still enormous potential for you and for Abu Dhabi to leverage.

The theme you have selected was totally right - 'Tomorrow Begins Now - Rise Above The Routine'. We believe you have come to the right place for that theme! Tomorrow begins here in Abu Dhabi. By selecting us as your partners, you will most certainly exceed the routine. Finally, we would like to say keep up the great work, everyone is very proud of you and the chair members. Looking forward to seeing you again.

**Best regards,
Anood Khalifa, Asia & CIS Acting Unit Head, Destination Promotion Department**



It was a great opportunity to host the 63rd TAAI Convention in Abu Dhabi. I believe we have mutually benefitted by the exposure to all TAAI members. Abu Dhabi is expected to see a surge in inbound business and leisure tourism from India following our hosting of the convention. The feedback from the event has been nothing short of exceptional and many of our stakeholders believe this is the start of a relationship which can only go from strength-to-strength with follow-up meetings on business prospects already in the pipeline. The year 2016 has been great for our destination in the India market. The recorded figures till September 2016 is 236,968 Indians, checked into Abu Dhabi hotels accounting with a longer-than-average stay of 3.12 nights. This makes it a 20 per cent year-over-year increase in guest nights.

Currently three airlines fly to Abu Dhabi from 15 cities in India - accounting for more than 300 flights a week. Indian travellers are no more than four hours flying time away. This makes Abu Dhabi a great short-break alternative.

Bejan Dinshaw, Country Manager - India, Abu Dhabi Tourism & Culture Authority

Ferrari World - YAS ISLAND

Wow. What an honor and a privilege to have TAAI celebrate on Yas Island. I want to extend a special thank you to each of you for making this event happen in Abu Dhabi. India is a key market for the UAE and for Abu Dhabi to have hosted your convention I have no doubt that we will see a positive impact on the future business of Abu Dhabi and Yas Island.

Looking forward to connecting with all of you in the future. Thank you again.

**Kyron Dijon Portwig,
Farah Experiences LLC (Yas Island)**

Miral Asset Management LLC - Yas Island - Ferrari World

The TAAI represents an excellent partnership for Abu Dhabi and Yas Island to collaborate on working in a collaborative approach with all professionals of the Travel and Tourism Industry in India.

"For Yas Island, we want our visitors to make memories to last a lifetime and for us do be a destination like no other. Our collaboration with the TAAI strengthens our relationship with top travel producers in India and makes us better identify the Indian travel trends and makes us better understand what the Indian travelers are looking for in terms of travel experience", says Gerardo Ilanes, Director of Destination Management for Yas Island.

Yas Island offers top level experiences and attractions like Ferrari World Abu Dhabi, Yas Waterworld and Yas Mall, amazing MICE facilities, pristine beaches and the warmth of Emirati hospitality in the sparkling Arabian Gulf.



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Glimpses of the Abu Dhabi Convention



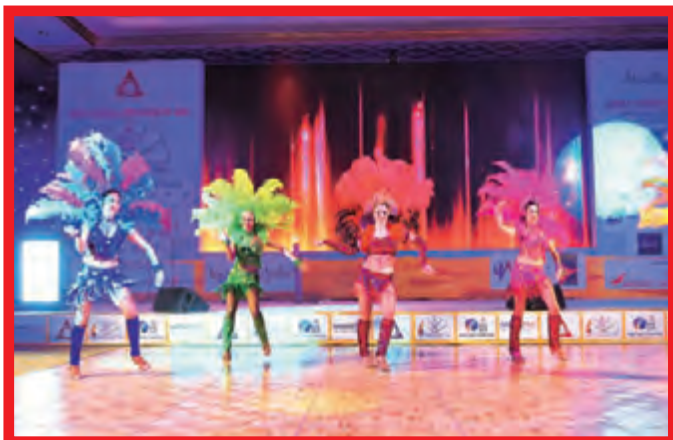


COVER STORY



The inaugural ceremony was held in the magnificent Grand Ballroom at Emirates Palace welcoming TAAI delegates to an unforgettable experience





**The opening day
also saw cultural
performances that
showcased Abu Dhabi,
the host destination**





COVER STORY



On Day 2 of the convention, there was a panel discussion where major airlines like Oman Air, Air India, Etihad Airways, Jet Airways, IndiGo participated



COVER STORY





COVER STORY



Our wonderful audience supported us all the way and made each session a full house!





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COVER STORY





The India Travel Trade Expo (ITTE), TAAI's B2B exhibition that enables direct meetings among the buyers and sellers, saw a huge participation at this convention





COVER STORY

MEDIA REPRESENTATION AT TAAI CONVENTION



TAAI Convention at Abu Dhabi attracted an excellent turnout of media who came to support the coverage of this most exclusive convention. TAAI expresses its gratitude to these media stalwarts for their presence and for the extensive coverage through television, digital, social media and travel magazines. Here are some reflections of our esteemed media present at our Convention in Abu Dhabi.

The 63rd TAAI convention in Abu Dhabi was a well-conceived event. It was a genuine mix of business and leisure activities as the agents got a chance to witness the true hospitality of the city. The business sessions were well synchronised with the theme 'Tomorrow Begins Now'. All the panelists laid importance on the use of technology in travel and tapping the opportunity well in time. Some presentations introduced us to the upcoming locations that would hold immense potential as travel destinations in the coming future.

Saloni Bhatia, Express TravelWorld

It was a great experience at the convention. Thanks to the TAAI Team who in such a short time arranged a memorable convention. The theme of the convention - "Tomorrow Begins Now" - Rise Above Routine, was excellent. Seminar topics and exhibition participation was awesome. I thank President Sunil Kumar and Team for making it such a grand success. Soon the venue will become a new upcoming destination for conventions after TAAI chose Abu Dhabi as its convention venue.

Shailendra Kesari, Editor & Publisher, Safari Plus



Hats off to the TAAI Managing Committee for pulling off an event of this standard considering it had only a month and a half to execute. Surely one of the best conventions this year. Excellent hotels and hospitality, unique new destination for the India market and unbound enthusiasm amid the Indian travel community made this event even more special.

Rohit Hangal, Managing Editor, Voyager's World, Bangalore



Our Thanks to Media

Times TV Network

(A one-hour episode was broadcasted on ET NOW on November 26 & 27, 2016).

Travel Writers Association of India (TWAI)

3 Daily reviews and coverage of convention promoted to thousands of viewers via social media/You Tube.

TRAVELTV.NEWS

Extensive digital promotion of the successful event through the special video created.

Travel World Online

Their detailed video was well promoted in various channels .

Our most valuable PRINT & Online Media

They have extended wide coverage of the TAAI Convention 2016.



MEDIA REPRESENTATION AT TAAI CONVENTION



Let me start by congratulating you and your Team for putting up a great and successful show in Abu Dhabi. It was indeed a grand event put together in less than 40 days. We would be more than happy to collaborate with TAAI for the next event.

Anita J,
Travel Writers Association of India

This indeed was a dream come true, thank you TCA, Emirates Palace and TAAI for this once in a lifetime opportunity. Can't wait to come back and experience the royal Emirates hospitality of this colossal palace. And thank you friends and everybody who helped me win.

Sonika Bohra (won a one night stay for Best Pic of Abu Dhabi competition by Emirates Palace), Sampan Media Pvt. Ltd



TAAI's annual convention in Abu Dhabi ticked all the right notes. One of the best annual conventions of the Travel Agents Association of India (TAAI) in the recent times, the event in Abu Dhabi was a testimony to leadership skills. The association's President Sunil Kumar and the Managing Committee of TAAI ensured that the annual convention in Abu Dhabi was a grand affair. Coupled with it, the compact business sessions made the event a huge success.

Ravi Arora, Wonderlust





TAAI TALK

Some of the wonderful feedback we got from delegates after the successful TAAI Convention in Abu Dhabi

We have enjoyed excellent support of the industry and of TAAI right from the beginning and continue to receive the same, for which we are indeed grateful. I would also like to compliment you and your organizing team for an excellent event on 14 October. I personally found that the evening was very well planned and executed. I had an opportunity to interact with a few of the participants and they were all very pleased with the way the entire Convention was managed and had very positive things to say – so kudos to you and your team. I do hope TAAI had a fulfilling and enriching Convention in Abu Dhabi and I look forward to the next one.

Zubin Karkaria, CEO, VFS Global

The whole event and our tour went well. We can realize your hard work and efforts for this convention. It is always proud and glad for us to tell and convey each one that we attended this glorious convention. Emirates Palace and Ferrari World experiences are enjoyed by us .. sincere thanks to all of you for giving us such great opportunity.

V C Krishnarajh, Travel Professionals, Coimbatore

Congratulations to The Managing & Convention Committee... the result was a 'Dream Come True'. Kudos to all involved in making this possible. Thanks, once again for the heavenly experience. Tomorrow has begun, in style.

Timoteo L Colaco, Par Avion Travels & Tours, Goa



Our heartiest congratulations for the successful 63rd convention. The event was extremely well planned, was spic & span and was very useful. The country - venue chosen, hotels - arrangements made, topics for discussion, speakers choice was AT ITS BEST. Specially - the Emirates Palace & programme at Ferrari World was marvellous. We all cherished the entire event and we are thankful for the TAAI for making extensive arrangements.

S N K Chidambara, SRI SATHYA SAI TOURISTS, Bengaluru

The Abu Dhabi TAAI Convention was one of a kind experience. Right from the moment we landed .. all went like clock work, superbly hosted. You have set a bench mark which will be hard to follow. The superb venue .. choice of speakers who gave us a direction for our future .. the very friendly atmosphere, we wished for the convention to go on and having the Ferrari World, all to ourselves. Thanking you and looking forward to the next TAAI convention -

Usha Khaitan, Amba Airlinks Pvt Ltd, Chandigarh

It was a marvellous convention in Abu Dhabi hospitality and arrangements were awesome. Thanks for giving for us such a great experience.

Sushil Uppal, Gem Travel Services, Chandigarh

A pleasure to be a part of the 63rd TAAI Convention held at Emirates Palace in Abu Dhabi. After many years this convention reminded me of the good old times when one would look forward to the grandeur associated with the event. The Emirates Palace will undoubtedly go down as the best ever venue for a TAAI convention. The Yas Island Gala farewell dinner provided the perfect icing on the cake.

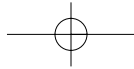
Manoj Saraf, Gainwell Travel & Leisure, Kolkata

The convention was a light showing the way to new entrants like myself of the various channels to explore and succeed. It also gave an opportunity to the delegates to explore the locations and understand the culture followed viz tour of the Grand Mosque. The gala night at the Yas Ferrari Park made a great ending to the three days.

Dilip Sharma, Restop Travels & Tours, Bengaluru

I congratulate you and the entire Convention Team for arranging such a magnificent programme, including the Post-Convention tour. I have been attending almost all the conventions since 2005 - I hope to attend the next convention -

T Thangzalam Haokip, Haokip Travels, Imphal, Manipur


TAAI TALK


Let me congratulate you and your team for organising a successful event in Abu Dhabi. The venue, conference arrangements, entertainments, etc. were all flawless.

Santosh George, DAMAC Hotels and Resorts Management LLC

I extend my appreciation for the amazing work done by you and your team for organising such a beautiful event which was thoroughly a treat & breathtaking to watch. Your professionalism has impressed the entire members. We consider ourselves proud to be honoured. The exhibition, the atmosphere created was electrifying and awesome. Your committee ensured a smooth flow of events. I praise you and your team on a job well done & hope to continue the same power & enthusiasm in the future conventions like this.

Asif Patel, Ruby World Travel, Sholapur



You have actually made it possible along with your Team to show the tourism fraternity in India and in Abu Dhabi that TAAI is an institution in itself which bears personalities of calibre and status. There may be very few people who can match the intensity of your knowledge and quality on how to get the job done with full respect and regard. My M.D. & father Sd Gurbachan Singh Sawhney feels that this was the most auspicious respectful handling of the Convention with about 700 participants conceived, conveyed & completed. "Hats off" to you sir.

**Kanwarjit Singh G Sawhney,
Bakshi Transport Service (P)
Ltd, New Delhi**

On behalf of Emaar Entertainment,, I would like to express our gratitude for the opportunity to be part of the 63rd Convention & Exhibition of TAAI. It's been a great pleasure and I was personally delighted to attend the event. I thank each and every member for their great efforts in accurately scheduling meetings, as well as the outstanding planning, and executing of the event. We look forward to a continuous productive and prosperous relationship in the future.

**Najat Yousfi,
Emaar Entertainment**

Hats off for the planning, efficiency, stage management, presentation, oratory, inspiration and motivation... everything was outstanding. We really appreciate the hard work put in by you and your team, for this convention. The selection of venue, sightseeing, business sessions, everything went off very well. We are also very thankful to Abu Dhabi Tourism for the excellent arrangement made for us for Pre Tour of Al Ain - which is an outstanding destination where one can really see culture of Arabia, natural beauty and the transformation of the desert.

**Rajan Dani, Tradewings Ltd,
Mumbai; Tradewings Institute
of Management Ltd, Mumbai;
Bogmallo Beach Resort, Goa**

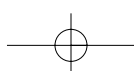
We congratulate for organizing an outstandingly successful convention. The ambience of the Convention in Emirates Palace was magnificent indeed!! We are truly delighted for the care taken during our stay in Abu Dhabi by TAAI Team officials.

We congratulate the TAAI Officials and Managing Committee members and chairpersons under the leadership of President Sunil Kumar. The sparkling experience of Ferrari World will be memorable indeed for ever. We also thank the Abu Dhabi Tourism board for the support extended to us.

**Aparesw Goswami,
Travel Cruise India Pvt Ltd,
Patna**

I extend my heartiest congratulations to you and your team to have put up an excellent TAAI Convention at Abu Dhabi. Your effort to excel and endeavour is worth praising. The entire programme was well conducted and executed too. This experience of TAAI Convention at Abu Dhabi shall always be cherished and re-lived. The accomplishment of a successful event is something to learn from, as care was taken not to leave any stone unturned. We were awestruck by the magnificent Emirates Palace and to experience the royalty was a treat.

**Bharat P Shah, Parag Travels
Pvt Ltd, Bhavnagar, Gujarat**





TAAI TALK

It was our pleasure and honour to be a part of TAAI Convention at Abu Dhabi which can be termed as one of the best TAAI conventions by far. The convention exhibition was very useful and valuable as it gave us an opportunity to connect with the exhibitors and vendors from various regions. The pre tour at Ras Al Khaimah too was an amazing experience and we appreciate the hospitality. This will surely help us in promoting Abu Dhabi as a tourism and MICE destination and also promote Indian inbound and outbound tourism industry.

Sanjay Mehta, Transglobe Travels, Rajkot

It was a 'dream-come-true' to be in Abu Dhabi as a delegate. I was so delighted on the hotel stay and the 'wow' Emirates Palace. What a surprise were the lunches and dinners - so well spread with an Indian touch. It was a great experience at Emirates Palace with whopping prizes won by people with a few of them winning 500 dirhams cash prize; that was really great! The best part was the gala dinner at Ferrari World, which was impossible for any association to deal with, but you did it with confidence. In addition, special thanks to Jay Bhatia and B Lokesh for free visa for all delegates and their spouses. In short, the entire convention was a huge success and I am sure the entire group (delegates, spouses and children) all were happy. I wish the current TAAI Team to continue to bring such 'wow' feelings in future too for conventions or chapter meets. We took a post-tour to Al Ain and Ms Sara from TCA Abu Dhabi was with us and gave us a fabulous tour with a stay in the five-star hotel, Rotana Al Ain. Many thanks to TCA Abu Dhabi officials too.

Vipul Shah, Visa Consultancy Services, Mumbai

We heartily congratulate TAAI for giving us an outstanding convention experience which was very unique and probably first of such kind. The venue, was a class apart and we will remember it for a lifetime. Speakers and topics were food for thought and gave many takeaways. You have raised the bar of performance to levels which will need a lot of sweat and years to be reached by anyone. Putting up all these in 41 days, exhibited your leadership skills and a hands-on control on every moment of the convention. Your oratory and leadership skills were a good takeaway. Words are not enough to thank you and your team. A special mention for my golf buddy B Lokesh, on whose insistence I became a member of TAAI, and I call it divine intervention.

Arun Iyer, MAA Air Ticket Centre, Mumbai

I have no words to express the dedication and hard work being put in by TAAI Team members to make this convention successful. TAAI has always lived up to its motto 'Deal with someone you know'. We salute your entire team

Praveen Shelley, Jodhpur

We are still recovering from the aftermath of the TAAI Convention at Abu Dhabi, which was dazzling, to say the least. The brilliant venues and seamlessly executed convention is something everyone will remember for a long long time. Congratulations to you for achieving such a feat. The team can only perform well if the leader can lead them effectively.

Anita Sharma, International Travel Forum, Indore

It was a great experience to attend TAAI convention in Abu Dhabi. I have attended numerous conventions but it was my first TAAI convention. Every thing was arranged immaculately and all the events were covered in the right perspective. I will never miss any future conventions of TAAI and wish all the organisers for their great efforts.

Baljit Singh Shergill, UNIGLOBE Shergill Travel, Chandigarh

THE AMAZING TEAM BEHIND THE SUCCESSFUL CONVENTION




*The magazine you're holding has four corners.
The room you're sitting in has four corners.
The car you drive has four corners.
The mobile you use has four corners.
Four narrow corners. Is there all to life?
Look beyond.
To the four corners of the earth.
Four corners of adventure.
Discovery. Romance. Beauty.
Go forth. Take off. Getaway.
Round the corner. Faraway places.
The familiar. Off the beaten path.
You may look at the night sky in wonder.
But remember: the small planet has big wonders
to explore and to behold.*

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UFTAA Golden Jubilee Congress



TAAI President Sunil Kumar does it again. After successfully leading TAAI to organise the most outstanding 63rd Convention and Exhibition of TAAI during October, 2016, at Abu Dhabi, which earned tremendous admiration and appreciation from many quarters, he has once again reflected a positive and far reaching leadership by effectively leading United Federation of Travel Agents' Association (UFTAA) to celebrate its Golden Jubilee Congress at Istanbul during November, 2016.

Marzban Antia, Vice President of TAAI, represented TAAI at the UFTAA Congress and AGA. He was accompanied by Anil Kumar, member of TAAI Managing Committee. There were several members of TAAI, active and allied, who joined the congress at Istanbul.

UFTAA Congress 2016 has been a record of recent times. Delegates from 26 countries across the world participated and the event gained prominence for UFTAA. Kumar's leadership and this outstanding congress is considered as a major turn-around for a growing UFTAA. TURSAB, the association of



Turkish travel agents, played host to the association, while Ministry of Culture and Tourism of Turkey, supported the gala dinner. Turkish Airlines was the airline partner who supported with complimentary travel passages to congress delegates from all over the world, on its online routes.

The three-day event witnessed the UFTAA Board Meeting and dinner, UFTAA Annual General Assembly (business session), Golden Jubilee inauguration and dinner, UFTAA Forum (sessions on travel and tourism) and the gala dinner. Delegates were also offered city tour of Istanbul and were hosted well.



Hilton Bosphorus, Istanbul, was the Congress Hotel. Both the evenings of November 25 and 26, 2016, were full of festivity, charm and offered great ambience amidst exclusive settings with most unique entertainment. UFTAA was



able to encourage the participation of eight media delegates from India who covered the event well.

Earlier at the Annual General Assembly of UFTAA, held on November 25, 2016, Kumar was re-elected as the President of UFTAA for 2016-2017.

The new UFTAA Board for the year 2016-2017 include:

- **President:** Sunil Kumar Rumalla (India)
- **Vice President:** Yossef Fatael (Israel)
- **Vice President, Finance:** S G Kaka (Kenya)

Board of Directors:

- Richard Lohento (Benin)
- Mario Bevacqua (Italy)
- Leonce Diarra (Burkina Faso)

- Madhusudan Acharya (Nepal)
- Cetin Gurcun (Turkey)

Ramesh Marwah, a well known leader from New Delhi who retired from the aviation industry, was appointed as the CEO of UFTAA during September, 2016. At the Congress AGA, he was elevated as the Secretary General of UFTAA.



Sunil Kumar re-elected as UFTAA President

Sunil Kumar, current President of TAAI, has been re-elected to serve United Federation of Travel Agents' Associations (UFTAA) as the President for 2016-2017 term, at the Golden Jubilee Congress' Annual General Assembly of UFTAA held in Istanbul recently.

The new UFTAA Board for 2016-2017 has the following members: Sunil Kumar, President (India); Yossi Fatael, Vice President (Israel); S G Kaka, Vice President, Finance (Kenya); Mario Bevacqua (Italy); Richard Lohento (Benin); Leonce Diarra (Burkina Faso); Madhusudan Acharya (Nepal); Cetin Gurcun (Turkey). Ramesh Marwah (India) will serve as the Secretary General of UFTAA.



Sunil Kumar – Keynote speaker at Golden Jubilee Convention of NATTA



Nepal Association of Tour & Travel Agents (NATTA) celebrated its Golden Jubilee on December 9-10, 2016 at Kathmandu. It was a large convention and well attended by leaders representing all industry verticals – travel agencies and tour operators, airlines, hospitality, transport and media. Government's presence through the participation of several ministers and former ministers was a highlight.

Sunil Kumar, President of UFTAA and TAAI, was the keynote speaker at the grand inaugural ceremony. His eloquent and accomplished address on tourism, its perspective, India and rest of South Asian Connect and the need to push levels was a major highlight of NATTA's convention.

Kumar also addressed the delegates at their business sessions as well as the round-table attended by delegates of 12 countries. The need to work as a strong South Asian (SAARC) team to support each other and interdepend to foster a healthy travel and tourism industry was successfully reiterated by Kumar on behalf of UFTAA.

Later, Yossi Fatael, Vice President of UFTAA, conducted a detailed session at the General Body Meeting of NATTA on the subject of IATA Resolution 8XX featuring NewGen ISS program.





TAAI President addresses TAASL & IATA AASL on NewGen ISS & industry trends



On December 2, 2016, President Sunil Kumar addressed the members of Travel Agents Association of Sri Lanka and IATA Agents Association of Sri Lanka at a specially convened meeting at Colombo that was organised for his address to the industry.

Kumar explained about the IATA Resolution 8XX which was adopted at the 2016 PA Conference that was held in September, 2016 and debriefed members on NewGen ISS and its key areas – Agency Accreditation Models, Credit Management, Easy Pay, Global Default Insurance.



Kumar also focused on the “Remittance Holding Capacity” which is currently under review and not tabled for a decision by the PA Conference that was

held. Industry trends and the massive growth in the next 15 years was also shared by him. The session concluded with a Q&A.



“One’s destination is never a place, but a new way of seeing things.”

Henry Miller



Historic day for Tourism and Hospitality industry: TAAI signs MoU with D Y Patil University



D Y Patil University's School of Hospitality and Tourism Studies (SHTS) in Navi Mumbai and TAAI signed a MoU for 3 years on December 2, 2016, to enhance the academia and industry partnership for the post-graduation degree M.Sc in Hospitality & Tourism Studies. Vandana Mishra Chaturvedi, Director, SHTS, signed the MoU with TAAI which was represented by Tourism Council Chairman & Hon Treasurer, Jay Bhatia.

D Y Patil University (DYPU) was established in 2002 in Navi Mumbai with a vision to provide quality education in all spheres of high learning and health services in India. The university has evolved to become a leader in nine specific constituents graduating students in different fields.

Globalisation has the potential of offering new possibilities and expanded services in many industries. Travel, tourism and hospitality industry has become a force to be

reckoned with. The industry is responsible for more than 10 per cent of global employment. This means one in every 10 jobs worldwide making the industry having the highest potential for growth. Tourism is one of the key revenue factors for developing and emerging economies and the source of high foreign exchange earner for many countries including India.

While hospitality and tourism has traditionally been an industry that emphasised hands-on experience, the



competitive nature of the business now requires a combination of experience and higher education to build a successful management career. In India, with the open visa policies, tourism to and from India is growing day by day and there is a need and demand for qualified personnel in the industry. The hospitality sector too is growing with the infrastructure reforms also coming in, more and more hotels are being developed. Chaturvedi in her address acknowledged the efforts of Western Region Chairman, Sampat Damani as instrumental in getting the MoU signed.

TAAI will assist SHTS in designing the M.Sc curriculum so as to make it more industry relevant. Both

SHTS and TAAI will collaboratively work towards effective development and delivery of this study programme being offered to its students which is a 2 year postgraduate course.

Bhatia, said, "With the recent developments in transportation and communication, both domestic and international travel has become very easy. Whether your purpose of travel is business, adventure or just a vacation – a large segment of personnel belonging to the travel, tourism and hospitality industry are there to make your experience trouble free".

Chaturvedi added, "This is a wonderful opportunity for our students to have the support of such a

renowned association like TAAI. This will give them excellent exposure to the world of travel, tourism and hospitality." As tourism and hospitality are service oriented sectors, it has become imperative that this industry helps to develop personal skills. "Within the industry there are so many career options on offer that the scope of employment is beyond boundaries," remarked Bhatia.

TAAI has associated with this programme to ensure that the postgraduate degree programme is not just theoretical but also industry relevant. TAAI's goal is to work mutually with the educationist to ensure talent development. TAAI will ensure internships and placements suitably for all students, conducting of workshops and training programmes, facilitating the students with guest lectures from mentors and experienced persons of the industry, thus preparing the students to enter the world of tourism and hospitality.

Sampat Damani opined, "Patience, flexibility and excellent interpersonal skills have to be developed by the students. Cultural sensitivity and awareness are critical, as tourism professionals deal with different countries and cultures." One must remember, tourism is more than just making a profit. It benefits students in different fields.

Bhatia will be representing TAAI as an Advisory Board Member of SHTS at DYPU.



**"An investment in Knowledge
pays the best interest"**

Benjamin Franklin



TAAI participates in Conference on Film Tourism 'India: The Focal Hub' in Delhi



TAAI's Northern Region Chairman, Rajan Sehgal was the moderator at a panel discussion consisting of seven Ambassadors from seven European countries at the Global Conference on Film Tourism - 'India: The Focal Hub' on September 16, 2016 in New Delhi.

Well-known film personalities, Prakash Jha and Madhu Bhandarkar were also present along with members of the travel and film fraternity.

The Ambassadors who participated in the panel discussion shared their perspectives on the importance of the film as a powerful medium and the attractiveness of tourism locations at the conference. Film shooting locations have changed tremendously over the past decades and many international destinations even have attractive incentives offered for choosing a country and often the beauty of the location increases chances for the success of the films.

Yogesh Srivastav, Director, PHD Chamber expressed his sincere gratitude to TAAI's support for the conference and to the Chairman for sharing his valuable thoughts on some new upcoming policies which gave the real picture of promoting Film Tourism in India and the way forward to develop India as a hotspot of Film Tourism on the global map.





TAAI attends India Japan Tourism Meet



An India Japan Tourism Meet was held on October 24 in Delhi under the aegis of Indo-Japan Tourism Council.

The meet was organised for the first time in India and was supported by the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India and Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI). Suman Billa, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Tourism, Government of India was also present, besides officials from FICCI and the travel trade. The Japanese delegation included Japan Tourism Agency, Japan National Tourism Organisation (JNTO), Japan Association of Travel Agents (JATA), All Nippon Travel Agents Association (ANTA).

Japan and India have had the best of relations and now the two countries are further deepening cooperation in the field of economic and investments and expanding travel and tourism relations. The meet was a great opportunity for both governments and tourism industry to get together under one roof and discuss the expansion of bilateral travel and tourism relations

TAAI Northern Region Chairman Rajan Sehgal represented TAAI at the meet as a panelist. Japan and India have had the best of relations and now the two countries are further deepening cooperation in the field of economic and investments and expanding travel and tourism relations.

Jyotsna Suri, Chairperson – FICCI Tourism Committee and immediate past president – FICCI thanked Rajan Sehgal for his inputs, insight and most importantly sparing his valuable time to participate in the plenary session of the meet.

The meet was a great opportunity for both governments and tourism industry to get together under one roof and discuss the expansion of bilateral travel and tourism relations.



October 7th another 'red letter day' for TAAI Western Region

TAAI Western Region joined hands with Maharashtra Tourism Development Corporation (MTDC) and 'Jivhala' to give Senior Citizens of Mumbai to experience and see Mumbai in a manner they always wanted but were unable to do so. Madhuri Kanga, Hon Treasurer, TAAI WR took the initiative to get MTDC on board and requested them to take senior citizens for a Mumbai Darshan on their recently launched 'Mumbai Darshan' programme. This group of senior citizens from 'Jivhala' (meaning love and affection in Marathi) came from many walks of life - architects, entrepreneurs, singers, chefs, homemakers, businessmen etc.

The event was flagged off by Swati Kale, GM. MTDC, in the august presence of Sampat Damani, Chairman, TAAI Western Region, Madhuri Kanga, Hon. Treasurer, TAAI Western Region and Vandana Mishra, Principal, Travel & Hospitality Division, D Y Patil Group. The enchanting journey began with a 'Darshan' of Shree Siddhivinayak temple at Prabhadevi. The trip began after taking the blessings of Lord Ganesh. The comfortable AC bus covered most of the prominent landmarks in the city and covering the prestigious Bhau Daji Laud Museum in the premises of the Jijamata Udyan in Byculla which was the highlight of the city tour. Once the seniors were inside the museum they were all excited with the visit, being dumbstruck by its grandeur. Enveloped



in the lush greens of the Udyan, sits this museum formerly known as the Victoria & Albert Museum which was initially a treasure house of the decorative and industrial arts and was later renamed as Bhau Daji Laud Museum.



Next stop was to South Mumbai driving past the Gateway of India, and Mumbai's other iconic structures like The Prince of Wales Museum, The Rajabai Tower, The Oval Maidan, finally onto Marine Drive, looking past the skyline on the seafront, the Taraporevala Aquarium and then to the famous Hanging Gardens. At the Kamala Nehru Park, under the shamiana, the seniors were given a lunch break. Hot packed lunch was served after which there was a very nice interactive session of introduction, where they displayed their singing talents on the floor. The program was conceived by Madhuri to be the ice breaker for the day. After lunch the bus moved to North Mumbai driving past Haji Ali, the beautifully structured VP Stadium, Nehru Centre and then on to the sea link to experience the fantastic view from the sea link, followed by Lilavati Hospital to go back to South Mumbai.

Madhuri Kanga made the entire day moments to cherish for the Senior Citizens, a day they would always relate to their grandchildren, to rejoice and remember! On their part MTDC left no stone unturned to take all the care and compassion for each and everyone. Just as a parent handholds and walks besides his or her child, so did MTDC with them. The MTDC staff were an epitome of hospitality and care. The tour ended at 6.00 p.m. at Dadar with each one of the senior citizens taking back fond memories of the ever bustling Mumbai City and the same will always be etched in their minds.

Thank you MTDC and Jivhala once again. A great job performed by TAAI's very own Madhuri who too cherishes the minutes, the hours well spent...





Northern Region TAAI TEAM wins



TAAI team of Northern Region Chairman Rajan Sehgal, Treasurer Gaurav Dogra, Vice President Claridges Hotel (member) Atul Lall and Ms Maha a professional from Morocco participated in the International India Hero Pro Am event on November 9, 2016 at the DLF Golf and Country Club, Delhi.

TAAI team won the tournament's award and also complimentary air tickets to any destination in Europe as offered by Swiss Air. What's more, Rajan Sehgal achieved the rare feat of a HOLE IN ONE in the tournament.

Interaction with Austria

TAAI-NR Chairman arranged a special meeting with Austrian vice minister for Culture & Foreign Policy – H E Dr Teresa Indjein, along with advisor and charge de affaire, Austrian Embassy, H E Georg Zehntner with Yogesh Srivastava, Director PHD Chamber of Commerce for talks on various concerns of the trade and tourism industry.



Dr Teresa Indjein visited the Rail Museum in New Delhi and was welcomed by Dr AK Minocha, Chairman and CMD IRCTC, along with Rajan Sehgal



TAAI Southern Region and SriLankan Airlines come together



Hema RV Chander, Chairperson, TAAI – SR and her office bearers, along with SriLankan Airlines, organised a special product presentation of the airlines which was well attended by the travel fraternity on November 9, 2016. This fruitful event was held at The Park followed by cocktails and dinner.

Members were appreciative of the efforts put in by the office bearers to arrange the special evening that helped them to gain more knowledge of the beautiful country.

Picture shows TAAI – SR office bearers with S P Mohan, Head of SriLankan Airlines, S Mittal, Director, Translanka Airtravels and other staff of SriLankan Airlines.



“What separates the winners from the losers is how a person reacts to each new twist of fate”

*Donald Trump
President-elect of the USA*



TAAI Badminton League 2016 -Tigerair Cup organised by UP & UK Chapter

The TAAI Badminton League 2016 - Tigerair Cup was organised by TAAI UP & UK Chapter on September 11, 2016 at Babu Banarsi Das Badminton Academy, Lucknow. And what an exciting day it was for all gathered at the Academy!

The first leg of the league saw keen participation by travel agents, tour operators, airlines, GDS, hotels and other allied partners including their families. Amazing prizes awaited the winners! The Couple Return Tickets for Singapore (by Tigerair), Abu Dhabi (by Jet Airways), Muscat (by Oman Air), any domestic destination (by IndiGo and GoAir) and Premium Economy Tickets by Vistara added to everyone's thrill. Lots of gift hampers by Oman Air, Saudia and Travelport made the day for participants. The different



categories for players were Men, Men (Sr.), Women, Boys under eighteen and Girls under eighteen. The Tigerair Cup with couple ticket was one by Amir Nazar of M/s Travel Help beating Mohd Rais of Travel Care. All matches were keenly fought and the following were declared winners:

Travel Agents Men - Sr Category: Rizwan Alam of Pearl International Tours & Travels won the title by beating Rashid Fuzail of Riya Travel & Tours (I) Pvt Ltd.

Airline Men Category: Prabhjot Saluja of IndiGo lifted the cup by beating Maneesh Kumar Singh of JTB Travels.

Women's Title: Shazia Fuzail of Holiday Care bagged the title by beating Supriya Sharma of Sheeraz Tours.

Girls' Title: Zoya Abidi Zaidi d/o G A Zaidi (Nationwide Travels) won by beating Nandini Sharma d/o Sameer Sharma (Oman Air).

Boys' Title: Mohd Abbas s/o Ali Abbas (Nationwide Travels) won by beating Shahkar Haider Zaidi s/o G H Zaidi (Nationwide Travels).

Chairman Sunil Satyawakta and his team left no stone unturned in seeing that the TAAI Badminton League 2016 - Tigerair Cup was an astounding success. Pictures below tell the story!





Lucknow Airport to get new terminal



Airports Authority of India (AAI) is planning to construct a new integrated terminal building (T3) with state-of-the-art technology and all modern, international facilities at Lucknow Airport.

As per the directives of the Airports Economic Regulatory Authority (AERA), due consultation with all stakeholders including state administration and local government bodies, airlines, FICCI, CII, ASSOCHAM, association of hotels, tour and travels companies, etc were discussed at the Airport Users Consultative Committee (AUCC) meeting held on October 25, 2016 at the International Terminal CCSI Airport, Lucknow. The District Magistrate of Lucknow presided over the meeting Sunil B Satyawakta, Chairperson of Uttar Pradesh & Uttarakhand Chapter, who represented TAAI in the said meeting.

The terminal will have facilities for business centres, conference rooms, ATM and shopping, hospitality desks, VIP rooms, childcare rooms, cafeterias, internet corners, various washrooms besides facilities for the physically challenged.





TAAI UP & UK Chairman inducted on Advisory Committee

The Hon'ble Vice Chancellor of Banaras Hindu University approved of the constitution of an Advisory Committee as per UGC guidelines for DDU Kaushal Kendra, Rajiv Gandhi South Campus, Barakachha. TAAI is proud of the fact that Chairperson of TAAI - Uttar Pradesh & Uttarakhand Chapter, Sunil B Satyawakta, has been inducted as a 'MEMBER' in 'Representatives of

Sector Skill relevant to the Specialisation' category of this Committee and he has been interacting earnestly with the students.

The Banaras Hindu University is a leading residential and internationally reputed temple of learning established in 1916. It is situated at half a mile away from the bank of Ganga in the holy city of Varanasi- "the sacred city".

The Banaras Hindu University is a leading residential and internationally reputed temple of learning established in 1916

TAAI at MP Tourism roadshow in Lucknow

TAAI UP & UK Chapter Chairman Sunil B Satyawakta was invited as chief guest at the Madhya Pradesh Tourism Roadshow, held at Hotel Clarks Avadh, Lucknow.

The Madhya Pradesh State Tourism Development Corporation (MPSTDC) organised this roadshow in the state to showcase tourist destinations in the Central Indian state known for its wildlife. The tourism roadshow themed, 'Let's Talk Madhya Pradesh', gave a glimpse into the rich and diverse heritage of the state. The



idea behind the initiative was to ensure more people from Lucknow visited Madhya Pradesh and to apprise residents of this city about the prosperous, diverse and



colourful blend of cultures of Madhya Pradesh.

O B I T U A R Y



TAAI is deeply saddened by the demise of Sylvester Thomas, an industrious and highly committed leader from TAAI Southern Region who has been a great strength to the Managing Committees that he served for a long period of time.

Sylvester Thomas had an in-depth knowledge of established industry practices and carried a far-sighted vision for our association as well. He

was extremely pro-active on changes that were implemented from time to time and always guided the association to encounter such changes. His demise is a great loss to TAAI.

Losing a colleague with invaluable contribution to the association and who stood for principles on all fronts, is no ordinary loss.

May his soul rest in peace.



TAAI TALK

NEWS FROM REGIONS & CHAPTERS



BULA! Gujarat Chapter finds happiness in the Southern Pacific.....FIJI!

TAAI Gujarat Chapter Chairman, Paras Lakhia and his office bearers Virendra Shah, Secretary and Prashant Madlani, Treasurer along with MC Member Shreeram Patel arranged this once-in-a-lifetime visit where a group of ten TAAI Gujarat Chapter members, in collaboration with Tourism Fiji and Fiji Airways, were invited to a familiarisation trip to the island nation of Fiji for 5 nights/6 days - all thanks to Pranav Kapadia of Global Destinations, Mumbai, who was instrumental in organising this memorable trip. The accommodation, meals, transfers and sightseeing were fully hosted by Tourism Fiji for the members to gain experience of the island nation which is important from the Indian market perspective.

Fiji is an archipelago of 333 sun-kissed, picture perfect islands tucked away in the South Pacific, close to Australia and New Zealand. For the perfect holiday, one can choose from affordable accommodation all the way through to exclusive 5-

star resorts or even a private island all to themselves. One can choose to relax and unwind in one of Fiji's world-class spas and beaches or indulge in the many activities and experiences that Fiji has to offer - from sky diving to dirt biking to river rafting to scuba diving to trekking to cultural tours. Fijian Indians are the second largest majority representing approximately 37.5 per cent of the population, and although English and Fijian are the official languages of Fiji; Hindustani (Hindi) is quite predominant and widely spoken in Fiji.

The connectivity to Fiji is very convenient after Fiji Airways started a direct flight twice weekly, in April 2016, from Singapore's Changi airport to Nadi International airport and return. Nadi is the third-largest conurbation, located in the Western Division on the island of Viti Levu, the largest island of Fiji. Members flew direct from Ahmedabad to Singapore and took the connecting flight from Singapore to Nadi on Fiji Airways.



On their arrival, the members were accommodated at the Sheraton Fiji Resort and after breakfast were taken to the Double Tree Resort for site inspection, followed by lunch at the property. Members then experienced the thrill-seeking adventure activity of Zip Lining at Momi Bay for a few hours, followed by dinner and lights out at the Sheraton Fiji Resort.

The next day after breakfast, members showcased their culinary abilities by taking a cooking class at Flavors of Fiji Cooking School by preparing authentic Fijian dishes and desserts and also learned how the Fijian Indians cooked Indian food locally. The day ended by transferring to The Pearl South Pacific Resort at Pacific Harbour, where the members inspected the resort property and then retired for the night.

Members also got the opportunity to do a site inspection followed by hosted lunch at the Nanuku Auberge Resort the next day and the itinerary continued with a visit to Kula Eco Park at Sigatoka which is an ecological preserve housing indigenous flora and fauna, including reptiles, bird life, amphibians, tropical fish, the Fiji flying fox (Fiji's only native mammal), insects, butterflies and a wide range of trees and shrubs.

The delegates then arrived at the Intercontinental Fiji Golf Resort & Spa, at Natadola Beach, where the day concluded with a site inspection and enjoyed the local tribal dance with a tradition of Flaming of the Torches. The next day, members were taken for a visit in a self-driven golf cart buggy to the world renowned 18-hole championship golf course which has a sparkling backdrop of coral reefs and the Pacific Ocean on 15 out of the 18 holes. Members then did a property visit of the Yatul Beach Resort & Spa which is in close proximity of the Intercontinental and then checked-in to the Outrigger Fiji Beach Resort, a site visit and viewed a beautiful sunset atop a hill at the Bebe Spa.

An experience of their lifetime awaited the members the following day where they arrived at Port Denarau and took a chartered speedboat to Lomani Island Resort, located at Malolo Lailai island, for site inspection. After lunch, they went by speedboat to Cloud 9, Fiji's only two-level floating paradise island located at the beautiful Ro Ro Reef in the Mamanuca Islands, where they did snorkeling in the middle of the Pacific Ocean surrounded by nothing but turquoise blue water, coral reefs and the horizon!

Members proceeded for their next accommodation at The Palms Denarau and enjoyed the rest of their day at leisure and the evening concluded with a hosted Indian dinner at the Nila Resort. In the final leg of the itinerary, they took a whole day Captain Cook Cruise from Port Denarau which included activities like scuba diving, snorkeling, paddle boarding, beach volleyball and glass-bottom boat for marine life viewing.

A truly picturesque, enriching, enthralling and breathtaking experience it has been for our members to visit this exquisite destination, the TAAI Gujarat Chapter expresses their sincere gratitude to Tourism Fiji and Fiji Airways for hosting such a magnificent trip.





TAAI Rajasthan Chapter organises cricket tournament



Chairman Manoj Sogani and his office bearers arranged an exciting cricket tournament for their members in pursuance of their mission of branding TAAI and promoting friendly relations between travel agents, airlines, airport managers, insurance companies and Hoteliers. On October 23, 2016 the four teams competed at the Sanskar School Cricket Ground. This was the chapter's second cricket tournament after the one held in January 2016.

The four playing teams in the presence of more than 100 enthusiastic trade partners geared up for the match. Some enterprising strokes were put up by teams Amadeus, Bajaj Allianz, Tata AIG and Future General who demonstrated their cricketing skills.

All matches were played in a very professional manner and Rajasthan Chapter led by its chairman took the winning trophy home much to the joy and excitement of the members.

The tournament was followed by delicious snacks and tea and later by lunch as per time schedule for all the invitees and players.

Looking at the overwhelming response and demand for more such



matches, the Chapter is keen to have a grand tournament in Jan-Feb, 2017 subject to availability of the lush green ground.

Chairman Manoj Sogani thanked all the sponsors, participants and trade

partner at the end of tournament with special thanks to Chapter's secretary Dashrath and treasurer Sunil and Rajiv who all worked as a team to make the event the talk of the trade.



Punjab Chapter meeting with new incoming Chairman



TAAI Punjab Chapter held their meeting on November 2, 2016 in Jalandhar. The proceedings started with outgoing Chairman, Rajeshwar Kumar Dang welcoming the new Chairman Kirpal Singh and thanking the house for all the support rendered to him during his tenure.

Pending payment of annual membership fees by some members and other matters pertaining to the industry were

discussed. The present situation of demonetisation of currency notes of Rs 1000 & Rs 500 effecting every agent was also taken up.

Members were treated to a sumptuous dinner post meeting and looked forward to their second meet soon.



Award

Mr Gurbachan Singh Sawhney and Kanwarjit Singh Sawhney from Bakshi Transport Service P Ltd (TAAI member) receive the National Tourism Award in the category of Tourism Transport Operators for the year 2014 -2015 from Mahesh Sharma, Minister of Tourism & Culture



Nagpur Chapter members meet with CMD Air India



On November, 3rd, 2016, Ashwini Lohani, CMD Air India and Mukesh Bhatia Regional Director, WR Mumbai, visited Nagpur for a very interactive get together with TAAI Nagpur Chapter members and Air India staff held at the Air India office in Nagpur.

During this meeting, Chairman Jatindra Nakade along with his team and members, put up several important concerns with the CMD, such as :

- * Reimbursement of Service tax on commission and PLB,
- * Group fare amount deposit, (currently agents are depositing 25% and later 100% . Hence investment is 125% which should reduce to 100% by collecting 75%),
- * Convenience fee to be charged on website of Air India so that Travel Agents are more competitive,
- * Discussion on Ministry of Finance's circular regarding ticketing by Government offices and additional target in terms of additional PLB to be shared with the market to get more incentive on incremental sale.

Lohani give his valuable time to the members and patiently heard all their suggestions and for the all above points mooted, he immediately requested Harmandeep S Anand, TAAI's Ex Hon Secretary General to meet with AI's Accounts department in Mumbai for further discussions which he did and

had good interaction with Mukesh Bhatia, Regional Director, Accounts and Ravi Bodade, General Manager Commercial and had the opportunity to discuss various aspects for the mutual benefit of AI and the travel fraternity. It was a very fruitful meeting and ended on a positive note wherein Anand presented a nine -point letter listing down all the concerns to the CMD. Positive outcomes of the same were already made visible through various mails of the evening by Lohani.

Chairman Mr Nakade also presented Lohani with a request letter for additional flights into /from Nagpur which he promised to look into such as evening flight to Delhi (suitable for International connections both incoming and outgoing and also Domestic sectors for further connections), to Chennai, as there is no South connectivity from Nagpur by Air India OR to Bengaluru with onward connection down South to Kochi. As there is heavy traffic for Ahmedabad & Goa from Nagpur, a request to connect via Pune, to



Ahmedabad thrice a week & Pune Goa 4 times a week- definitely earning sectors. Also Nagpur to Jaipur via Pune & Ahmedabad 4 times a week.

In fact there is long pending demand for a flight to Kolkata via Bhubaneswar and a consideration to look at seamless connections to Air India's International Destinations Ex - Nagpur with customs and immigration facilities at Nagpur itself for passengers boarding from Nagpur. The CMD was informed about the heavy demand to South East Asia from Nagpur with a request for connections to Bangkok, Singapore and Hong Kong and of course additional flight to Mumbai as well.

TAAI members attending the meet, were happy to see the highly noticeable change for good that AI was considering immediately.

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Kerala Chapter present at Spice Route Culinary Festival



Path-breaking Spice Route Culinary Festival, featuring choicest cuisines from 15 nations along the ancient maritime tradeway and Kerala, was held from September 23 to 26, 2016.

The Festival was organised by Kerala Tourism in association with UNESCO and the Union Tourism Ministry, at Bolgatty Palace and Island resort. Seventeen teams of prominent chefs from Egypt, Iran, Lebanon, Germany, Spain, Portugal, Thailand, Oman, Turkey, Qatar, Netherlands, France, Malaysia, Italy and Japan sampled the cultural and culinary offerings of 'God's Own Country', took part in a demonstration on traditional Kerala cooking and participated in an interactive discussion session on the first day.

On the second day, they visited and procured local ingredients from markets before tabling the choicest cuisines from their homelands for the festival's centerpiece international cooking



competition on the last day. The list of luminaries also featured diplomats, embassy representatives and eminent delegates from these countries, besides officials from UNESCO. Ambassador of the Netherlands H.E. Alphonsus Stoelinga attended as well as Shigeru Aoyagi, Director and UNESCO Representative to Bhutan, India, Sri Lanka and Maldives, along with a number of Consul Generals and other high-ranking officials.

TAAI Kerala Chapter chairman Ross Masood was invited to take an active part in the event and he interacted with Principal Secretary (Tourism) Dr Venu V and Kerala Tourism Director U V Jose. TAAI members too visited the festival.

Said Dr Venu, "Kerala's history as a Spice Route hub is reflected in its present-day cosmopolitanism and participatory ethic."

Ethical tourism will ensure Kerala's continued success: Suman Billa

Seminar on Responsible Tourism at KTM

A one-of-its-kind Travel Mart - The Kerala Travel Mart - is the only mart in the country focusing on a single destination. What makes KTM unique is the fact that it is organised by the various tourism stakeholders in partnership with the Dept. of Tourism, Govt. of Kerala.

TAAI Kerala Chapter Chairman, Ross Masood and his team made sure that their Chapter members attended the Kerala Travel Mart and made the most of the opportunities they were given at the well-attended Expo. Some members also availed of stalls and were happy with the support from their own members. The

Kerala Tourism Board appreciated the efforts of TAAI Kerala Chapter that regularly supports this annual event hosted by the Board. In fact many KTM board members are members of TAAI.

Suman Billa, Joint Secretary, India Tourism said at Kerala Tourism Mart's Responsible Tourism Seminar, in Kochi. "Kerala has done so well because it can create experiences that are close to the earth, As a destination, the way forward is to develop unique experiences by staying on the agenda of Responsible Tourism." Billa was instrumental in promoting the Responsible Tourism initiative in Kerala as

the state's then tourism secretary. So is also K Rupesh Kumar one of the initiators of the Responsible Tourism programme, when it was introduced in Kumarakom in 2006.

In the first phase, it was started in Kumarakom, Thekkady, Vythiri and Kovalam, and later Ambalavayal, Bekal and Kumbalangi. According to Billa a huge income almost Rs 4 crore, is being generated through responsible tourism initiatives in the seven destinations, and though it does not seem like much, it directly benefits the local community.



South Tamil Nadu Chapter meets Consul General of Indonesia from Mumbai

South Tamil Nadu Chapter Chairman M S Paramasivam, attended the meeting with Saut Siringoringo, Consul General of Indonesia, Mumbai, in Tiruchi along with his members on November 21, 2016.

“With more and more Indian tourists travelling to Indonesia, there is a strong need for providing direct air connectivity between the two countries,” said the Consul General. Thus Garuda Indonesia, the national airline of Indonesia, was to launch a direct flight service between Jakarta and Mumbai in December.

“It is sad that there is still not much direct air connectivity between the two countries despite the rising tourist arrivals from India. I am confident that more Indonesian airlines will fly here, given the huge market,” said the Consul General, indicating that direct flight services from Indonesia could be introduced to a few more Indian destinations, including Chennai, by March next year.

Providing statistics on tourist arrivals from India, Siringoringo said 2,10,000 Indian tourists had travelled to Indonesia in 2014 and the figure rose to 2,70,000 in 2015. “I am optimistic that the figure will cross 3,50,000 this year,” he said. Siringoringo was on a visit to the city to explore opportunities for strengthening bilateral ties between the two countries. Indonesia was also keen on promoting destinations other than Bali. “We are improving services and infrastructure in at least 10 other destinations,” he added.

Siringoringo observed that there was good scope for increasing bilateral trade between India and Indonesia, which currently stood at around US\$ 16 billion. “Though it is good, there is still an imbalance. It is also low when compared to Indonesia’s bilateral trade with China. I don’t see any reason why bilateral trade between Indonesia and India should lag behind,” he said.



However, he opined that there is strong intent on both sides and expressed optimism that bilateral trade would increase. There is also much potential for diversification of trade, as currently Indonesia largely exported coal and palm oil to India. There was scope for diversification in areas such as pharmaceuticals and food industry too.

Apart from interactions with members of the CII and the travel industry, Siringoringo also had an interaction with a section of students pursuing higher education in Tiruchi. “About 20 students are studying here and I got a very positive feedback from them on the city and the education here,” he said. About 100 Indonesian students were pursuing higher studies

in South India, he added. Pointing out that India and Indonesia enjoyed good relations historically, he said a cultural performance on Ramayana by a folk dance troupe from Indonesia is slated to be held in India next year. “It is very important to improve people to people contact,” he said.

TAAI had held its annual Convention in Bali in 2015 with over 600 delegates and this in turn has contributed to the promotion of this beautiful city with large scale awareness of it as a destination for the discerning traveller.

Managing Committee Member R Venkatachalam honoured Saut Siringoringo, Consul General of Indonesia, Mumbai, with a shawl.



TrawellTag Cover-More announces its association with Yatra.com in providing global assistance & travel insurance

TrawellTag Cover-More, India's foremost dedicated provider of travel assistance and insurance has partnered with one of India's rapidly growing online travel agent, Yatra.com. It is a significant step for TrawellTag Cover-More as it establishes itself in the e-commerce segment, extending the company's reach into new markets.

TrawellTag Cover-More India Founder & CEO, Mr Dev Karvat said. "We are delighted to partner with Yatra.com to provide our unique travel insurance and global assistance services to their customers opting for both domestic and overseas travel. The association enables us to provide customised benefits for both leisure and corporate travellers. Yatra.com customers can now secure their travel against all predicted risks and inconveniences including medical emergencies, loss of baggage, passport or driving license, trip delays or cancellations and much more."

Commenting on the association, Dhruv Shringi, co-founder & CEO, Yatra.com said, "TrawellTag Cover-More was a natural choice as we share a common commitment; creating the



most convenient travel experience for our customers. They bring along with them an impressive product range and technical know-how, more than a decade of domain expertise and a global presence which extends their service offering worldwide." Mr Karvat further said, "Our business model for

Yatra.com focuses on changing customer needs and forecasted travel risks. The backbone of this model is a one-of-its kind software IMPULSE, an analytics engine that collects a feed of traveller data from the booking platform and crunches this in real time to generate customised offers for the travellers."



"Man cannot discover new oceans unless he has the courage to lose sight of the shore."

– Andre Gide, French author

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TAAI TORCHBEARERS

GOLDEN JUBILEE YEAR

In the late 1990s, TAAI spread its wings internationally by associating with world bodies like MATTA and UFTAA.

In 2000, the Association completed 50 years of service to India's travel agent community



TAAI TORCHBEARERS



THE MAKING OF TAAI



In 1995 Neeraj Ghei was elected as Vice President and in the year 1997, she took over as the youngest and the first lady President of TAAI. With her youthful enthusiasm, she was all charged up to charter a new course for the Association to face the challenges of the fast changing industry where automation and commission capping was a major threat. After a long debate, lasting a few decades, the TAAI team succeeded in establishing a Liaison Office at Delhi.

During her tenure, TAAI was finally able to convince the Government of India to recognise the economic importance of tourism and grant the travel agents a status of an Export House. The first ever consumer and trade exhibition, "Travelogue" was held at Bombay in 1998 and it is now an annual event. The membership base of the Association was enlarged and liberalised to include GSAs and CRS companies.

She probably created a history of some sorts which plunged the Association into a crisis by not filing her nomination for the usual second term as President. It led to an unprecedented constitutional crisis as the Association had no candidature for the President and there was no provision in the Articles to cope with this situation. Amidst hectic, friendly and legal consultations and very sound and sincere advice from seniors like Adi and Vinoo, she finally in an emotionally charged atmosphere relented.

65 years ago, the Association took birth when a large majority of its current members were not even born. Those were the days when Indians going abroad were far and few and the diplomatic missions used to welcome applications for issue of visas

Ghei always felt that the secret of an Association's success lies in recognising and appreciating the potential of human capital – the potential of its members and the ability of the leadership to nurture and mobilise this talent for the larger good of the membership and the industry.

Pradip Madhavji was elected TAAI President from 1999-2001. It was his proud privilege to lead the Association in its Golden Jubilee Year. 65 years ago, the Association took birth in Mumbai when a large majority of its current members were not even born. Those were the days when Indians going abroad were far and few and the diplomatic missions used to welcome applications for issue of visas. Things have materially changed now and with the number of Indians going abroad shooting up from a few hundreds then to a few millions today, it has resulted in the number of recognised IATA agents

nearing the 2000 mark. TAAI made rapid strides in the recent past by getting honours and recognition from some of the world organisations. The Association has signed, in the recent past, Memorandum of Understanding with international organisations like MATTA, HAI, FHRAI and WTO.

Events such as the Golden Jubilee come but once in the life of any organisation. TAAI has made attempts to provide assistance and support to the travel agency community at large and more particularly to its members. TAAI is the only travel industry association which has a strong representation of both travel agents and tour operators. It further widened the network by taking into its fold in excess of 100 active and associate members. TAAI also commissioned additional chapters in J&K as also in Punjab. TAAI now had a strong voice in the world body UFTAA with a seat of the Regional Director of the SAARC region being offered to India. Additionally, TAAI was able to secure equal representation between travel agent community and the airlines to deal in matters of mutual interest under the platform of APJC. It was for the first time that travel agents and airlines have equal representation in the nodal body for the review of travel related issues. Madhavji firmly believed that "Together, we can achieve more."

Jehangir N Katgara was president 2001-2003. His father, the late Nariman



TAAI TORCHBEARERS

THE MAKING OF TAAI



Katgara, founded TAAI and his constant counsel to Jehangir was “You must always give back to the industry from which you enjoy so much”.

His father’s work was amply recognised by TAAI with the Agastya Award, and PATA honoured him by bestowing a Life Membership. Jehangir’s uncle Adi was also a recipient of the Agastya Award. In addition to several awards, received by him, he was declared the first ever “International Travel Agent of the Year” by ASTA. He was also nominated by IATO to its “Hall of Fame”. After Jehangir Katgara took over as President in September 2001, Swissair declared bankruptcy a month

later. Immediate action had to be taken to protect the interest of the agents and consumers, resulting in IATA through BSP withholding our dues to the airline; barely had this got sorted out, when Sabena went bust!

Soon thereafter, the IATA airlines sent an advice that come January 1, 2002, the agents’ remuneration would be reduced from 9 per cent to 7 per cent, an emergency meeting had to be called, since it was already the last week of December and the only day available was December. Being Christmas Day, walking into this meeting, Jehangir Katgara felt like he was going to be the stuffing for the turkey! However, by

the end of the day, the conclusion was more like a Christmas cake rather than a roasted turkey!

Then again, Jetair and Indian Airlines joined forces to reduce the agents’ commissions. After much deliberations and discussions with agents and the airlines, an amicable conclusion was reached and members were quite astonished when the concerned airlines ended up paying out more than what they had asked for. Had the airlines taken the agents into confidence and worked in tandem, it would not have been necessary for them to enter into a fare war as seen today.



“The secret lies in recognising and appreciating the potential of human capital”

Neeraj Ghei



“I firmly believe that together we can achieve more”

Pradip Madhavji



“How can I forget the late Madhavrao Scindia who had the hall bursting to capacity at the Goa convention in 1996”

Jehangir Katgara



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Please note: Availing Premium Lounge services does not affect the processing time or decision of your visa. The processing time and decision of your visa remains the sole prerogative of UKVI. | Premium Lounge services are offered to UK visa applicants only in the above mentioned select cities in India. | Premium Lounge service costs will be charged in addition to the visa application fee. | Above mentioned Premium Lounge service costs are inclusive of all taxes.

About VFS Global: VFS Global is the world's largest outsourcing and technology services specialist for governments and diplomatic missions worldwide. With **2309 Application Centres**, operations in **127 countries** across **five continents** and **over 130 million applications processed** as on 31 October 2016, VFS Global serves the interests of **51 client governments**. VFS Global's worldwide operations are certified **ISO 9001:2008** for Quality Management System, **ISO 27001:2013** for Information Security Management System and **ISO 14001:2004** for Environmental Management System. For more information, please visit www.vfsglobal.com



Go skiing in Greece this winter!

With its breathtaking alpine landscape and idyllic white mountain setting, Greece is fast emerging as an unconventional winter destination. Here's why...

Greece is best known for its picturesque landscape, sun-kissed beaches with stunning outcroppings of rock, and turquoise water, enjoyed by millions of tourists each year. Indians especially love the mild climate of the Mediterranean coasts, but further inland, the beauty of Greece's alpine landscape is emerging as a big draw for travellers in the winter.

The heart of Greek winter beats on snow-covered mountain tops, where ski enthusiasts – craving for adventure – can experience the sought-after intensity and adrenalin rush. Although Greece is a country where the sun shines most of the year, it also boasts of some very good skiing

resorts with ultra-modern facilities that can satisfy even the most demanding skiers, offering an unforgettable experience down spectacular ski runs.

Skiing appeared for the first time in Greece in the 1920s and has had rising numbers of devoted fans ever since. Today, after almost a century, countless adventure seekers – both novices and experts – are visiting the snow-covered mountain slopes across the country, to display their passion and skill for skiing! Of course, prior to deciding to visit one of Greece's ski resorts, do not forget to get informed about the hours

of operation as well as the weather conditions in the area.

So this winter, enjoy a ski run in some of the best-known skiing resorts of the country, and feast your eyes on the beauty of the snow-clad mountaintops of the Greek alps!

SKI DOWN THE FABLED MT. PARNASSOS

Wax your skis and travel fast on the highest mountains in Greece. According to Greek mythology, it was on Mt. Parnassos, that the Greek God Zeus granted Deukalion's wishes to create human race anew. Ski down the fabled mountain that



stole the glory from Mt. Olympus, being linked with the worship of god Apollo and his retinue of the Nine Muses, and the establishment of the Oracle of Delphi.

GET AN ADRENALIN RUSH ON MT. VÓRAS

Home to the Kaimáktsalan ski resort, one of the most popular ski resorts in Europe, vacationers enjoy the unspoilt wilderness of Mt. Vóras at 2,500 mt above sea level. Here the trails are groomed, the air is pure, and the scenery magnificent. The resort operates from late November till early May covering the longest ski season in Greece.

THE PRECIOUS GEM OF PINDOS!

In the heart of the most important mountain range in Greece, the Vassilitsa Ski Centre offer fun-packed winter vacations for the whole family. Imposing snow-covered mountains loom in the distance, while beautiful lakes and the Grevená valley create peaceful scenery.

WINE TASTING ON MT. HELMÓS

Mt. Helmós is another mythological mountain that offers you the magic of sliding smoothly down snowy slopes, and enjoying extreme mountain sports. Ski down this mountain, and feel like an

Olympic downhill gold medalist. Discover wonders of nature, peer into Greece's modern history, and allow yourself the indulgence in wine-tasting at the nearby vineyards.

HIT THE SLOPES ON SNOW-COVERED MT. MAINALO!

Mt. Mainalo is the mountain of legends and traditions – home to the mythological Pan, the half human goat-legged god and the Nymphs. Nature, history and culture meet in Mainalo, a place blessed with pristine, rugged landscapes and picturesque villages steeped in history.


TAAI TRAVELOGUES

DESTINATION AWARENESS

A unique events destination: Ferrari World

The world's first and only Ferrari branded theme park is situated in the beautiful city of Abu Dhabi. Located on Yas Island, the amusement park holds the record for the largest frame structure ever built and was recently host to TAAI's 63rd Convention Farewell Gala Event

By Saloni Bhatia



Ferrari World which opened in 2010 features the world's fastest roller coaster dubbed Formula Rossa which reaches 52 metres of height in 4.9 seconds at 240km/h. The place is a paradise for Ferrari fans for the ultimate speed experience. The park offers endless entertainment with numerous rides, world wide cuisines and programmes. Recently, the destination was awarded the 'Middle East's Leading Tourist Attraction' for the second consecutive year at the World Travel

Awards Gala event. Recently, the delegates of the 63rd TAAI convention in Abu Dhabi had an amazing experience as an exclusive dinner was hosted at the venue. A special showcase of entertainment shows and delectable Indian cuisine was organised for TAAI. The delegates enjoyed the privilege of being the only guests present at the park post the closing time.

Guests can indulge in racing challenges at The Karting Academy

which is similar to gaming zones on computers. The 290 metre long track inspired by the Yas Marina circuit serves as the racing track. The adrenaline rush builds up for the exciting journey ahead. It is best to reach the park early and sign up for the race as it is a timed service. For all Ferrari fans there is an exhibition known as the 'Galleri Ferrari' showcasing the range of models from 1947 through the latest Ferrari drive, and a limited edition of the F355 Serie



Fiorano. Owned by private collectors, the cars are a mix of classic and contemporary designs. There are many other exciting things at the park that keep you occupied throughout the day.

There are driving lessons for children, high roller coasters for adults and entertainment shows that families can enjoy together. Another ride, military bi-plane scales 63 metres high at a 51 degree incline making it the fastest roller coaster at the speed of up to 120 km/h. Another roller coaster added to the park is Flying Aces, a triple record breaking roller coaster. Inspired by the legendary 'ace of aces' aviator, Count Francesco Baracca, the ride is an addition to the new entertainment offerings at the park. Flying Aces has been able to create a lot of hype in the region becoming a top-of-mind attraction for thousands of thrill-seekers and theme-park enthusiasts.

The kids can watch and later also receive instructions to ride from trained experts. After which they can get on the road, behind the wheel of a fun-sized 430 GT Spider. Khalil's Car Wash is an interesting experience for the kids apart from the interactive activities they place offers. They can slide down the carwash, drive remote controlled Ferraris and pedal cars.



One of the must not to miss experiences at Ferrari World is the 'Speed of Magic'. While you sit on your seat, a mischievous Ferrari driver takes you through a 4D fantasy adventure. You fly over cliffs, ice caves, and dive into oceans as the latest technology teases your senses with changes in temperature, moisture, light and movement along the way.

The Ferrari Store holds some great souvenirs that you can take back home as memories of your experiences. From a fun toy car 'pick and mix' in the Ferrari Past & Present store, to a range of sleek Italian fashion, jewellery and

accessories in the adjoining Ferrari Store, there's a purchase waiting for everyone.

There are also numerous dining options at the Ferrari World as it hosts visitors from across the world. Ferrari World offers a venue like no other, be it events or entertainment. There are five dining options at the park which offer delectable cuisines. In fact, in order to serve the Indian customers the park has also launched special vegetarian meals which can be arranged on request. The theme park is also open to the idea of destination weddings from the Indian travel fraternity.


TAAI TRAILBLAZERS

SHARING BEST PRACTICES

TAAI's Achievers: You make us proud!

Success stories from our members

"The achievements of an organisation are the results of the combined efforts of each individual" - Vince Lombardi

TAAI has been pioneering all major verticals of travel, tourism, hospitality and MICE industry. We are now into "Education" with tremendous emphasis on connecting with the future and encouraging professional coaching in travel and tourism. As an association, we are proud of our members' accomplishments and believe that such best practices must be shared and such leadership must get emulated.

We present our Trailblazer, our Past President Ashwini Kakkar

Mercury Travels: A mercurial rise

Mercury Travels Ltd is one of the most widely recognised and respected Indian companies in the area of travel, tourism and is an Authorised Dealer (AD II) for travel-related foreign exchange. The company has been a forerunner in travel related services for around 70 years and enjoys an excellent reputation for providing reliable, personalized and professional services. It is a joint venture between the Oberoi Group and Ashwini Kakkar.

Ashwini Kakkar, Executive Vice – Chairman of the company is a Mechanical Engineer with a Post-Graduate from Indian Institute of Management Kolkata, MBA from INSEAD France, with a Law Education from the Government Law College Mumbai and a gold medallist Diploma holder in French. Mercury Travels has a comprehensive portfolio of travel-related services that include outbound

Mercury Travels has a comprehensive portfolio of travel-related services that include outbound holidays, inbound holidays, business travel management, MICE, foreign exchange and travel insurance. It has around 400 employees across its network of 22 offices that spans 16 cities in India

holidays, inbound holidays, business travel management, MICE, foreign exchange and travel insurance. It has around 400 employees across its network of 22 offices that spans 16 cities in India. It has marketing offices in New York, London, Frankfurt, Hamburg and Barcelona. Mercury Travels offers

customised leisure holiday programmes to over 80 countries with focus on ensuring customer delight.

Mercury Travels is not the only company Kakkar has a stake in. There is **Mercury Himalayan Exploration**, a youth and adventure outfit which he runs with the country's most prominent mountaineer, Colonel Kumar. It offers the largest trekking and adventure travel network in the Indian sub-continent. It also specialises in a variety of activities including white water rafting, para gliding, para sailing, skiing, heli skiing, off roading experiences trips to Everest base camp, desert safaris and river and ocean sailing and boating experiences etc.

Kakkar is also a shareholder and Chairman of Via.com which is a B2B2C internet and mobile commerce travel company operating across India, South



Ashwini Kakkar

East Asia and the Middle East. The company has gross sales of US\$ one billion per annum and has been consistently profitable over many years.

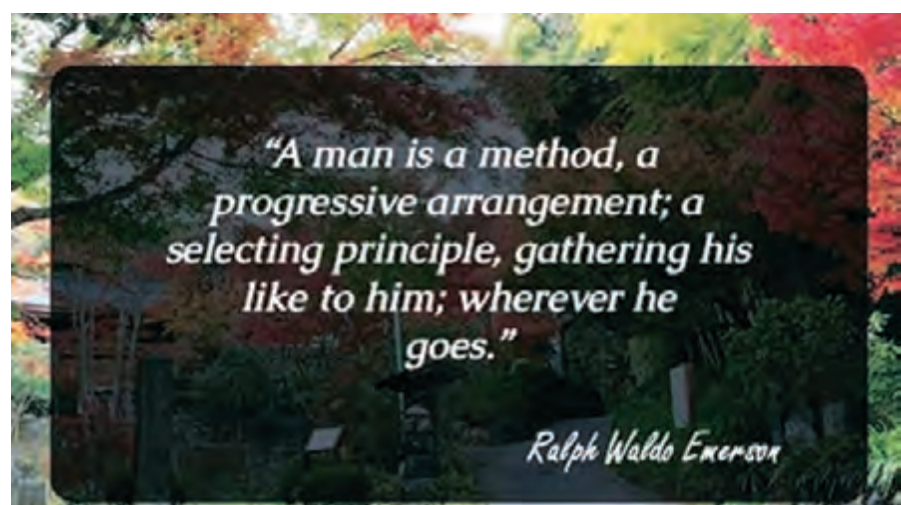
Then there is **Usmart Education Ltd**, a wholly owned subsidiary company of Mercury Travels which acquired Kuoni Academy in 2014. Kuoni Academy provides Corporate Trainings on International & Domestic Destinations, Selling Skills and Management Development Programmes for the industry. It focuses on grooming people who want to join the travel, tourism, aviation and hospitality businesses and also provides further education and relearning in these areas.

He is also the Chairman of the NGO - **Fight Hunger Foundation** which has grown to operate in over 450 villages in Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Maharashtra. The foundation works towards the prevention, detection and treatment of malnutrition in India, with the goal to not only address the malnutrition

crisis but also provide sustainable solutions to prevent such instances.

He was knighted by the French Government in 2007 with **Chevalier Dans L'Ordre de Merite**, in recognition of his contribution in promoting Indo - French relations, an honour equivalent to Padma Vibhushan in India. He has been Past President of

Bombay Chamber of Commerce & Industry as also to Travel Agents Association of India, World Travel & Tourism Council (India Initiative) and sits on many corporate boards of companies in India and abroad. Kakkar is an avid art collector having a significant collection of modern and contemporary Indian art. He is a linguist, proficient in six languages.




TAAI TRAILBLAZERS

SHARING BEST PRACTICES

President of France François Hollande bestows the prestigious National Order of Merit on Zubin Karkaria

Zubin Karkaria has been recently presented with the "Award of Excellence" at the 63rd Convention & Exhibition of TAAI, held at Abu Dhabi" towards the gigantic leap and growth he accomplished as an industry leader and for his outstanding contribution

Zubin Karkaria, CEO, VFS Global, and Kuoni Group, was appointed 'Chevalier de l'Ordre National du Mérite' (Knight of the National Order of Merit) by the President of the French Republic, François Hollande.

The prestigious French award was conferred on Karkaria by H E Alexandre Ziegler, Ambassador of France to India, on behalf of President Hollande, at a ceremony at The Taj Mahal Palace, in Mumbai, India, on December 02, 2016.

The distinction recognises Karkaria's exemplary contributions in developing France as a tourist destination through leisure travel and the management of visa services across the world. Having pioneered the concept of visa process outsourcing in 2001 with the launch of VFS Global, Karkaria has contributed to the increased inbound tourism into France. VFS Global today serves the Government of France through 52 visa application centres in 19 countries around the globe.

The French Government distinction 'Ordre National du Mérite' (National Order of Merit) was instituted in 1963 by General Charles de Gaulle. It is awarded for distinguished services rendered in public, civil, military posts, or a private profession. Speaking about Karkaria's achievements, H E Ziegler said, "France is proud to be the top global



H E Alexandre Ziegler, Ambassador of France to India, confers on Zubin Karkaria, CEO, VFS Global, the Chevalier de l'Ordre National du Mérite (Knight of the National Order of Merit) on behalf of the President of the French Republic Francois Hollande, in Mumbai, on December 02, 2016

tourist destination, as well as a fast-growing destination for the Indian traveller. Over five lakh Indian visitors chose France last year and we want to welcome many more. It is an honour to confer the Ordre national du Mérite on Karkaria who played a stellar role in this success in conceiving the visa facilitation system and promoting France as a travel destination, thus contributing to developing people-to-people contacts between France and India."

Commenting on the recognition, Karkaria said, "I am deeply honoured and humbled to be judged worthy of receiving this recognition from the Honourable President of France. I have always believed in the enormous potential France has as a destination, and over the years, it has been my privilege to work with Atout France,

France's Tourism Development agency, and many other stakeholders from the travel fraternity in promoting and facilitating travel to this beautiful country. I am grateful to the Government of France and Atout France for the trust they have placed in the Kuoni Group and in VFS Global, and of course, to all our employees for their engagement and passion to deliver first-class services every day. This recognition is truly inspirational for me and our team to aim higher in our commitment to excellence in developing travel and tourism to France." Karkaria, who has been a part of the travel industry for more than 25 years, established visa processing multinational VFS Global in 2001. In 2015, he became the first Asian to head the Switzerland headquartered Kuoni Group, VFS Global's parent company.



The road link

New Flexible Autos link provides Dolphin customers with access to over 300 car-rental suppliers

London-based travel software developer Dolphin Dynamics has released a new connection with Flexible Autos for travel agencies using its Dolphin booking system

The new XML feed is the latest connection in a growing list of links with travel suppliers enabling Dolphin customers to search, price, compare and book flight, accommodation, car-rental, transfer and tours suppliers. Enabling users to eliminate the time consuming task of shopping across multiple website, whilst promoting directional selling and maximising margins.

The Flexible Autos connection provides Dolphin users with guaranteed availability and instant supplier confirmation with over 300 car-rental suppliers. Including Alamo, Europcar, Enterprise rent-a-car, AVIS, National Car Rental, Hertz, Sixt, Thrifty and many more. With fully inclusive prices, Delivery and Collection services and Net and Commissionable Account options available.

Commenting on the new connectivity, Roberto Da Re, CEO at Dolphin Dynamics commented "Providing our customers with maximum choice and enabling them to process enquiries and bookings efficiently, is key to helping them get the most from their investment in our system. As a leading car-rental broker Flexible Car Hire provides customers with instant access to both global and regional car suppliers and helps them provide an improved service whilst reducing their cost of sale".

Flexible Autos are a Global company - as well as working with over 300 suppliers offering car hire in over 17,000

locations with offices in France, Spain, Belgium, Dubai and China, and also provide a car rental service in the Nordics, Italy, Ireland and Portugal. Plus the company is currently developing Germany, Australasia and other international markets under the UAE.

Dolphin Dynamics is a software development company that specialises in developing integrated information

solutions for the travel industry. Since its first product release in 1996, Dolphin Dynamics has installed its software at over 850 client sites, large and small, for a total of over 13,000 users in 26 countries worldwide. With a combined staff of over 80 across the group, Dolphin Dynamics also provides customised solutions and consulting via its internal technical consultants and external partners.




TAAI TECHNOLOGY

TECHNOLOGY UPDATES

Check into hotels of the future

When travellers check into a hotel in 2060, they can experience augmented reality, artificial intelligence, morphing beds, robotics, touchscreen interface, hyper connectivity and more



AHotels of the Future study by Hotels.com, which has partnered with renowned futurist Dr James Canton of the Institute for Global Futures, uncovers how the travel and hotel experience will be different in a year, 25 years and as far ahead as 2060.

The way travellers choose a destination, book a trip, travel there and the in-stay experience will be said to be dramatically different in the future.

Dr Canton explains, "Trends in technology, science, energy and entertainment will vastly change the hotel experience for travellers. The emergence of a new travel design science,

which is a combination of using big data, artificial intelligence and predicting travellers' dreams, will mean the whole travel experience will change. The future of travel is really exciting, as we'll see predictive travel analytics anticipating what consumers want from their experience before booking. The hotel booking itself will be helped along by artificial intelligence software agents, using data mining and intuitive computing. The new travel design science will help create highly personalised in-stay experiences. And it doesn't end when you check out, because new analytics will also ensure lifelong travel fulfillment."

ROBOBUTLERS

These autonomous robots can be designed online before arrival and can be programmed with special talents, skills, languages and information. They will do everything from greeting guests at the airport, to offering gourmet food service, room makeup, companionship, education, entertainment, business advice and concierge services.

MORPHING HOTELS

These are hotels which self-assemble and morph from one design to another based on consumer's votes. These crowdsourced hotels will use nanotechnology and machines that can self-assemble environments, buildings or



even entire physical worlds. This could all be possible in the next 20 years.

3D MAKERS IN EVERY ROOM

The study suggests that 3D printers will transform the travel experience and specifically the in-room experience. This technology will generate in real time items that guests desire, such as a new pair of shoes, clothes, pharmaceuticals, even computers or wearable phones. Additionally, 3D shopping will be available, where consumers download from the cloud, retail goods that they want to design on demand.

NEURO-DREAMING

A hotel bed will no longer just be a place to enjoy a comfortable night's sleep, as future travellers will be able to choose their own dreams. Hotels will give guests access to neurotechnology to program their dreams and they can choose a dream theme to either relax, enhance, learn or enjoy.

POP-UP HOTELS

The next generation of pop-up hotels will be based on special mobile crowdsourcing, where the theme and location is decided by votes. The pop-up hotel designs that win the most votes will be programmed to self-assemble using 3D printers, use continuously generating bio-solar cells and feature nanotechnology. These hotels will exist for a limited time and HotelCoin, the digital Blockchain currency, will be used by consumers to pay with their wearable mobile app.

WELLNESS AND LONGEVITY HOTEL SPAS

The spa 2.0 – the next generation of wellness spas – will see the hotel spa of the future, based on DNA analysis and promoting living longer. Guests will receive personalised prevention treatments, prediction and health enhancement programmes designed to refresh health, fitness and understand future health risks. These will use the latest genetic medicine treatment, mind refreshing drugs, brain fitness and prevent disease.

AIRPORT TRANSFER OF THE FUTURE

Future transports include self-driving pods, RoboFlying cars, which will help



avoid the traffic, and larger developments such as the Hyper Loop – supersonic air travel – covering hundreds of kilometres in seconds.

DNA MOBILE PAYMENTS

DNA will be used to confirm identity in making travel bookings and payments online. When guests check into the hotel, all that will be needed is DNA fingerprints to confirm who they are.

TRAVEL AVATAR

The booking of hotels will be done by one's own travel avatar – like a digital software agent. Travel avatar will manage bookings, like a personal version of Apple's Siri or Amazon's Alexa. Avatars will communicate, negotiate and design the whole travel experience.

ECO-HOTELS

Many hotels already focus on sustainability and being eco-friendly, but in future every hotel will be fully sustainable. They are expected to excel in energy efficiency, buy and sell energy off the renewable energy grid, use safe and clean products, use the latest solar and geothermal technology and have a carbon neutral footprint. Eco-hotels will also be socially aware, with products and workers, all producing a positive social impact in the community.

AUGMENTED REALITY HOTELS

Travellers will be able to stay at hotels that are part physical and part virtual. While virtual reality is simply a recreation of a real life setting, an augmented reality experience blends the

physical real world with virtual reality. Millions of innovative scenarios will therefore be possible – an excursion to Africa or a trip Machu Picchu in Peru. Augmented reality hotels will customise the adventure, history or drama travel experience.

GOURMET GENOMICS IN RESTAURANTS

Hotel restaurants will start to feature food designed for the individual's palate, all based on DNA analysis. Before guests even arrive at the hotel, their diet and nutrition menu will be designed, based on their DNA.

IMMERSIVE-THEMED HOTELS

Hotels in the future will have themes based on immersive worlds, becoming entertainment experiences. Travellers can expect a fully interactive live event location, where the hotel is in character with in-world. Consumers could interact in real-time or by virtual reality.

Smart hotel room By 2060, the hotel rooms will have features such as entering your room via face recognition, multiple sensors attuned to guests, talk-back TV, reactive and interactive touchscreen, smart toilets, mirrors streaming real-time news, neuro-enhanced aromas from interactive spa walls, special towels with pollution wipe nano coatings, wireless temperature controls that adjust automatically, self-assembling and personalised bed and pillows based on neuro-feedback, and in-room personalised experiences like watching a holographic music concert.



People worldwide living longer, healthier lives, says a study

The last few generations of humans have enjoyed the biggest life expectancy boost in primate history

The last few generations of humans have enjoyed the biggest life expectancy boost in primate history, a new study of mortality patterns in humans, monkeys and apes suggests. The gains are partly due to advances in medicine and public health that have increased the odds of survival for human infants and reduced the death toll from childhood illness, researchers said.

Yet males still lag behind females – not just in humans but across the primate family tree, they said. “The male disadvantage has deep evolutionary roots,” said Susan Alberts, biology professor at Duke University in the US.

An international team from the US, Germany, Denmark, Kenya and Canada compiled records of births and deaths for more than a million people worldwide, from the 18th century to the present. The data included people in post-industrial societies such as Sweden and Japan, people born in pre-industrial times, and modern hunter-gatherers, who provide a baseline for how long people might have lived before supermarkets and modern medicine.

The researchers combined these measurements with similar data for six species of wild primates that have been studied continuously for three to five decades, including Verreaux’s sifaka lemurs, muriqui monkeys, capuchins, baboons, chimpanzees and gorillas. The data confirm a growing body of research suggesting that humans are making more rapid and dramatic gains than ever before seen in the primate family tree. For example, in the last 200 years life expectancy in Sweden has jumped from the mid-30s to over 80, meaning that a baby born today can hope to live more



than twice as long as one born in the early 19th century. The data show that today’s longest-lived human populations have a similar 40- to 50-year advantage over people who live traditional lifestyles, such as the Hadza hunter-gatherers of Tanzania and the Ache people of Paraguay.

In contrast, these modern hunter-gatherers – the best lens we have into the lives of early humans – live on average just 10 to 20 years longer than wild primates such as muriquis or chimpanzees, from which human ancestors diverged millions of years ago. One indicator of healthcare improvement

is infant mortality, which strikes fewer than three in 1000 babies born in Sweden or Japan today. However, it was more than 40 times higher for those born two centuries ago, and is still high among hunter-gatherers and wild primates.

The researchers also studied lifespan equality, a measure similar to income equality that indicates whether longevity is distributed evenly across society, or only enjoyed by a few. They found that, for both humans and wild primates, every gain in average lifespan is accompanied by a gain in lifespan equality.

(PTI)



Welcome to our New Members

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

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

NAME OF THE AGENCY	CITY	REPRESENTATIVES
1 International Pilgrimage Revolution Pvt. Ltd., Aluva	ALUVA	Mr. Rens Manuel, Mrs. Sunu Jomon
2 Evershine Holidays	BANGALORE	Mrs. Merlyn Kurian, Mr. Shaji Mathews
3 Manish Tour N Travels	BANGALORE	Mr. B. Srinivasa Babu, Mr. Umesh K.
4 Guru Dev Tourism Private Limited	CHANDIGARH	Mr. Sukhwinder Paul Singh, Amandeep Kaur
5 Travego Holidays & Visas	CHENNAI	Mr. V. Kalyanasundaram, Mr. V. Mohan
6 Express Holidays	COIMBATORE	Mr. P. Ranjith Kumar, Mr. P. Kunguma Ganesh
7 Shubhyatra	GUWAHATI	Mr. Sachin Jain, Mr. Arnab Sinha
8 Nouf Tours And Travels	HYDERABAD	Mr. Syed Naveed Ur Rahman, Mrs. Muneer Unnisa Begum
9 Leisure Travels	JAMMU	Mr. Rajiv Gupta, Mr. Surinder Kumar
10 Shree Absolutely Travels Pvt. Ltd.	KOLKATA	Mr. Manoj Kumar Singh, Ms. Syeda Farkhanda Madhat
11 International Education Consultants	MOHALI	Mr. Prince Manak, Wg. Cdr. H. S. Manak
12 Shree Harsiddhi Forex Pvt. Ltd.	MUMBAI	Mr. Jay Shah, Mr. Jashwant Shah
13 WOV Travel Company Private Limited	MUMBAI	Mr. Kaushal Bhuvra, Mr. Edwin Alphanso
14 Heritage Passages Pvt. Ltd.	MUMBAI	Mr. Satesh Bedi
15 Kafe Holidays	MUMBAI	Mr. Vishal Ashar
16 L'Orient Travels	MUMBAI	Mr. Hector D'Souza, Mr. Gerard D'Souza
17 FSR Travels Pvt. Ltd.	NEW DELHI	Mr. Siddarth Bhatia, Mr. Ravin Arora
18 Destination Planners Private Limited	NEW DELHI	Mr. Gaggan Sharma, Ms. Garima Bedi
19 Business Bytes Travel Services	PANCHKULA	Mr. Puneet Arora, Mr. T. R. Arora
20 CruiseClub Vacations Pvt. Ltd.	PUNE	Mr. Tarique Hussain, Mr. Kiran Bhandari
21 Vconnect Travel & Holidays	PUNE	Mr. Bhushan Rathod, Mr. Shreedhar Deshpande
22 Tamarind Holidays	PUNE	Mr. Amol Karandikar, Ms. Manisha Karandikar
23 East West Travels	SRINAGAR	Mr. Ajaz Ahmad Bazaz, Mr. Nasir Wani
24 Euphoria Travel Services Pvt. Ltd.	SRINAGAR	Mr. Irshad Ahmad Hazari, Mr. Amir Amin Dar
25 Wonderful Vacations	TIRUPUR	Mr. P. Gokul Ram, Ms. P. Kavitha



HOROSCOPE



Be grateful for all the blessings that life is bringing your way is the message from Angel Tarot and Oracle Cards, for January and February.

By Sudipta Dev



PISCES

Better organisation of your plans and projects will lead to positive results, do not get carried away by unrealistic goals. It is also the time for you to forgive and focus on healing yourself. Children are

affecting your romantic life. You also need to bring in more playfulness into your love life. For health issues be assured that faith will heal or attract the right healer (doctor). Focus on how you can positively contribute in making this world a better place for spiritual growth.



ARIES

There is going to be a significant change in your life / career which will have a long-term impact. This is the time to focus on a new high. Those who are married or are in a committed relationship

need to find time alone together. Caffeine is detrimental to your health, cut it from your life. Seek a quiet time and contemplate on the questions about life that you know is your spiritual pathfinder.



TAURUS

You will be rewarded with public recognition at the work place, it might be a pat on the back from your boss or a promotion. Visualise the best for your love life for a positive outcome. If your health condition is not

improving then there is an indication that you need to change your doctor or at least take a second / third opinion. Understand that your purpose in life

goes much beyond your immediate environs. It extends to loving and healing the world.



GEMINI

Do not ignore those who love and care for you even if you have to take out precious time from your busy career. Be more understanding of people at work. Adopt a childlike simplicity in matters of the

heart to heal your relationship. Be intuitive about your health concerns and constantly pray for guidance. You are emotionally sensitive, respect this gift from God.



CANCER

If you are attracted to someone then do not hesitate in taking the next step. Take a second opinion for any health concerns. It is time for you to move on to the next phase in your life.

This is a phase of spiritual transformation. You are being watched over and guided by spiritual masters, be grateful and feel honoured.



LEO

You have worked hard and now it is the time to enjoy the benefits. Make the effort to improve your relationship with your partner, the result will be worth it. If you are getting new ideas, pay attention to

it as these are divine guidance from God and your higher self. Your prayers have led you to this.

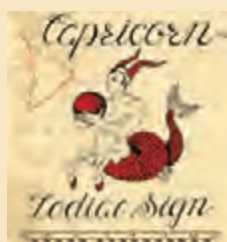


LIBRA

Unexpected opportunities might come your way, so do not hesitate in following your dreams. Your deep rooted attraction towards someone is connected to your past life. Good sleep is essential for your health so

pray for sound sleep. Be open to receiving intuitive messages about your body.

relationship must be more trustful. Adopt an organic lifestyle for better health. Your spiritual journey will be enhanced and accentuated by your sensitive nature.



CAPRICORN

This is the time of abundance. Follow your dreams and while you grow yourself do not forget to nurture other people. You will find great joy in love so give it all you have. Be careful about keeping

yourself hydrated. Drink lots of water for better health and energy. If you have unusual spiritual experiences, be thankful for the blessing.



VIRGO

Following the completion of a project you can expect a contented and happy life, both at home and at work. Be clear about your expectations with your partner, honesty pays. If you are contemplating

alternative healing for a health issue, go for it. Your life purpose is connected with helping mother nature, and that should guide your many actions.



AQUARIUS

This is the time for you to focus on honouring your commitments. Give your best to ensure successful completion of the projects. You might fall in love again, with an idea or a new person. Take steps to

follow where your heart is guiding you. Doing charity work for children will enhance your spiritual and physical well being. Choose only positive thoughts for all the desired outcomes.



SCORPIO

This is the perfect time for you to go in for retraining for career growth. Find happiness in little joys of life. Those in committed



SAGITTARIUS

Do not feel that you are unnecessarily trapped in a situation – this is just an illusion. Take strong and effective action. Heal the past by being forgiving in all aspects of life. To get the right medication and treatment, pray to be guided to the best doctor. Remember to put in your own effort and research. Prayer will help in cutting the cords from past relationships that do not serve any purpose now.


TAAI TALK

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Join TAAI and get prominently connected with industry leaders. About 2,300 companies / organisations / agencies make TAAI formidable and India's oldest and largest travel and tourism association. TAAI membership is open to all travel companies, Tour Operators, MICE Specialists, Airlines, Tourism Boards including National/ Regional Tourism Authorities, Hotels, Technology Companies, Transporters, Cruise Companies, Educational Institutions, Service providers in areas of Visas, Foreign Exchange, Consulting, Media and organisations involved with any activity that is related to travel and tourism industry. TAAI also offers 'Overseas Membership' to those beyond India get connected with the most trustworthy.

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Benefits of TAAI Membership

- Your company is no more a stand-alone one in our endeavour to strengthen Principal-Agency relationship.

- IATA matters – TAAI is on board of APJC and actively deliberates on behalf of travel agencies on all policy matters concerning day-to-day business activity. TAAI is in active relationship with IATA and helps formulate industry policies including training, settlement matters, accreditation policies, joint bank guarantee towards financial security, etc.

- TAAI is actively involved with United Federation of Travel Agents Associations (UFTAA). UFTAA is represented on PAPGJC (Passenger Agency Program Global Joint Council) where association matters pertaining to governing resolutions by IATA are taken forward.

- Through its programs TAAI helps promote highest standard of professionalism and ethics among

members in their dealing with the public and among each other.

- TAAI offers numerous opportunities in training, skill development and tourism certification including destination education – for owners, managers, frontline staff and all those who have chosen travel and tourism as their career.

- TAAI is active in updating members on evolving visa formalities and maintains a closer connect with embassies, high commissions & consulates in fostering learning.

- TAAI offers B2B opportunities through jointly held road shows and familiarisation trips in cooperation with Tourism Boards and National Tourism Organisations, through active networking at Conventions and through several events including active partnership and support status with trade exhibition organisers.

- TAAI's annual convention, popular as 'The Indian Travel Congress' is an excellent opportunity for members to take home updates and learning through our business sessions, strong networking, interaction opportunities with overseas Destination Management Companies and invaluable connectivity that supports greater success in business.

- TAAI works closely with Government of India Tourism Offices and State Tourism Boards and is active in events/meetings organised to further the promotion of Indian tourism globally. TAAI is invited for 'Hotel Classification' and 'Airport Advisory'. TAAI also endeavours to closely work with Ministry of Civil Aviation, on aviation matters.

- There are more areas through which any industry stakeholder can immensely benefit by becoming a member of TAAI and join this most prestigious forum.

ADVERTISE IN NAMASTAAI



Print media is an effective form of advertising. NAMASTAAI from TAAI is aimed at drawing the attention of our agency members and their personnel. Our much awaited magazine NAMASTAAI is now before you to support you in reaching your target audience. NAMASTAAI has unique features that will reflect the strength of TAAI and its dynamics, combining quality of sound-byte editorial with the fascination of new happenings and topical news of the industry.

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NAMASTAAI will have high quality images for internal and external news represented with full colour and gloss, allowing a clearer picture of your product, giving the trade a better idea of your company and its portfolio. Be it any demographic, be ensured that NAMASTAAI will guarantee that your advertisement will reach your intended audience. And remember the Shelf Life! Exclusive magazines are typically kept for a longer period of time and re-read often because of their excellent printing quality and content.

NAMASTAAI'S REACH

Over 4,000 copies of TAAI's NAMASTAAI will be sent to key leaders of our Travel and Tourism industry, besides TAAI members.

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

There will be an E-form of NAMASTAAI as well. It will be placed on our popular website www.taai.in / www.travelagentsofindia.com to help our reach go beyond India and to our overseas members/partners including Tourism Authorities.

ADVERTISING RATES

Here is a special offer for our Members

Back Cover :	Rs 2 Lakhs
Inner Covers :	Rs 1 Lakh each
Full Page :	Rs 50,000
Half Page (Horizontal / Vertical) :	Rs 30,000
Quarter Page Box :	Rs 15,000

Special rate for a minimum of 3 issues; 6 issues; or 12 issues

MAGAZINE ADVERTISING SPECIFICATIONS

Print :	Offset
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Advertisement Size Full Page (W x H)	
Non bleed Size:	18cm x 26.7cm,
Bleed Size:	21.5cm x 30.7cm
Half Page (W x H)	
Non bleed Size :	18cm x 13.5cm
Colors :	Multi Colour Printing
Inside pages:	90 gsm Art Paper
Cover :	250 gsm Art Card

Preferred Advertisement File Format :

High-resolution PDF, EPS or TIFF format

For Centrespread: Avoid Text & Visuals in centre

For advertising enquiries, email us at "namastaai@taai.in" or contact

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TAAI Convention

A great experience to be associated with!



Convention & Exhibition of TAAI - Indian Travel Congress

No matter when - where - what the theme and focus is all about, TAAI Conventions have been an excellent opportunity for Delegates to network into a most purposeful business relationship. Be it the convention content including the "knowledge sessions" or the business exhibition opportunity; or be it the grandeur of a TAAI Convention or the focus on ambience and luxury that is offered; or be it the entertainment or the pre-post tours or TAAI's pioneering effort in promoting a destination - there is no other activity that can match the vastness and class of a TAAI Convention to support all those associated with the event. TAAI Conventions, year-on-year, strongly reflect a superb design and offer memories of a life-time to the delegates by encouraging their presence at our conventions.

Here's our list of Conventions & Exhibitions of TAAI organised by TAAI. We assure the NTOs, Tourism Boards, DMCs, our principals, partners and associates to continue to upgrade the quality of our event, consistently.

TAAI Conventions: 1951-2016			
YEAR	CONVENTION VENUE	YEAR	CONVENTION VENUE
1951	Bombay	1988	Singapore
1952	Bombay	1984	Srinagar
1953	Calcutta	1985	Bangalore
1954	Varanasi	1986	New Delhi
1955	Srinagar	1987	Kathmandu
1956	Colombo	1988	Srinagar
1957	Jaipur	1989	Madras
1958	Simla	1990	Calcutta
1959	Mussorie	1991	Goa
1960	Darjeeling	1992	Hyderabad
1961	Delhi	1993	Jaipur
1962	Srinagar	1994	Kathmandu
1963	Hyderabad	1995	Calcutta
1964	Agra	1996	Goa
1965	Srinagar	1997	Colombo
1966	Cochin	1998	Hyderabad
1967	Ostachmand	1999	Bangalore
1968	Srinagar	2000	Agra
1969	Kathmandu	2001	Mumbai
1970	Bangalore	2002	Kuwait
1971	Pune	2003	Malaysia
1972	Srinagar	2004	Kolkata
1973	New Delhi	2005	Sri Lanka
1974	Calcutta	2006	Hyderabad
1975	Madras	2007	Chennai
1976	Bombay	2008	London, UK
	Aurangabad	2009	Dubai
1977	Agra	2010	Thailand
1978	Bangalore	2011	Turkey
1979	Kathmandu	2012	Bangalore
1980	New Delhi	2013	Bali
1981	Colombo	2014	Abu Dhabi
1982	Madras		



TRAVEL AGENTS ASSOCIATION OF INDIA