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GREAT Tourism Week - All India Schedule

Week 1 - West India

CITY	VENUE	DATE	
Ahmedabad	Radisson Blu	17th August, Monday	1st Wave
Mumbai	Trident BKC	19th August, Wednesday	
Pune	Taj Blue Diamond	21st August, Friday	

Week 2 - North & East India

CITY	VENUE	DATE	
Kolkata	Taj Bengal	7th September, Monday	2nd Wave
Delhi	The Lalit	9th September, Wednesday	
Lucknow	Taj Gominagar	11th September, Friday	

Week 3 - South India

CITY	VENUE	DATE	
Chennai	Taj Coromandel	14th September, Monday	3rd Wave
Bengaluru	Taj Westend	16th September, Wednesday	
Hyderabad	Taj Krishna	18th September, Friday	

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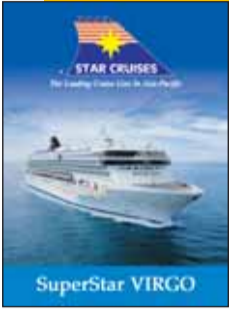
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Lohani wind beneath AI wings

Ashwani Lohani, who is currently the MD of Madhya Pradesh Tourism Development Corporation, will now take over from Rohit Nandan as the new Chairman and Managing Director of Air India.

PEDEN DOMA BHUTIA

Having achieved a turnaround of ITDC as its CMD and successfully launched the *Hindustan Ka Dil Dekho* campaign for Madhya Pradesh Tourism, 'Mr Turnaround' - **Ashwani Lohani**, is now set to make the Maharajah fly high again. Lohani, who is currently the MD of MP Tourism Development Corp, will now take over from Rohit Nandan as the new Chairman and Managing Director of Air India. A qualified mechanical engineer, Lohani

belongs to the Indian Railways Services Mechanical engineering 1980 batch.

Unlike many bureaucrats, Lohani is highly active on social media platforms, he is a regular on Twitter and also runs his own blog. In his blog dated August 21, 2015, titled 'On the move once again', he shares news of his appointment at Air India. Calling it a dream to head the national carrier, he writes, "This time to head the beleaguered Air India, the erstwhile Maharajah of the nation with its

trademark logo. The sheen has been lost but not the inner strength, this is my firm belief



Ashwani Lohani

and this alone gives me the hope that the skies can be ruled once again. And it shall happen... My experience in running commercial enterprises is that

leadership by apex management indeed remains the primary issue, while the mundane takes priority and that too in a reactive manner. Providing

proactive leadership is the crux and playing on the front foot the easiest way to demonstrate the same, is what I believe in."

At a time when the government is finding it difficult to make the airline more sustainable, Lohani's appointment comes as a relief. He sounds optimistic in his blog, as he concludes, "Like always before I shall not fail this time also, perhaps my last innings in the service of the nation, is a promise that I have made to myself. May God give me the strength."

This time to head the beleaguered Air India, the erstwhile Maharajah of the nation with its trademark logo. The sheen has been lost but not the inner strength



'FTAs will continue to rise'



Girish Shankar
Additional Secretary, Ministry of Tourism

TT BUREAU

India witnessed 10.6 per cent growth in foreign tourist arrivals (FTAs) last year. But the point of concern currently is the grim fact that in the first six months of 2015, the growth in FTA has been sluggish. This was revealed by **Girish Shankar**, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Tourism.

Giving more details about the slow growth of FTAs in the first six months of 2015, he said, "There has been about 5 per cent growth in the first six months of this year. This was the situation in 2014 as well as India has still not picked up as a summer destination. But we are expecting a better growth in the next six months. And we are hopeful that the growth this year will

surpass our FTA growth of 10.6 per cent last year." Shankar was speaking at the MOT workshop organised by the PATA India Chapter.

Addressing the challenges of travel agents and the hurdles in the way of eTV, he said, "This 15th August, we have unveiled eTV for another 36 countries. Another remarkable development is the open-

ing up of this facility at seven new airports. I understand that you (travel agents) are facing challenges and feel that the eTV should be available 60 or even 90 days in advance and not just 30 days earlier. We also understand that single-entry eTV prevents travellers from going to other countries such as Sri Lanka

Contd. on page 22 ▶

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One PTM, three events

The 38th PATA Travel Mart that takes place in Bengaluru from September 6-8 has changed the format this year, so there will be three major events- the Technology Forum, the Investment Forum and the PATA Travel Mart in itself. Here's what one can look forward to at the mart.



♦ PATA Travel Mart 2015 is being hosted by Department of Tourism, Government of Karnataka. The 38th PATA Travel Mart will take place in Bengaluru, India on September 6-8, 2015 at Bangalore International Exhibition Center (BIEC), India's first LEED Certified exhibition and conference facility, recognised by the US Green Building Council for its environmentally friendly design.

♦ PATA Travel Mart has changed the format this year, so there will be three major events- the Technology Forum, the Investment Forum and the PATA Travel Mart in itself. PATA is co-organising a Technology Forum with a leading organisation specialising in Bengaluru - Phocuswright - who are known for quality events and thought leadership. The Investment Forum in partnership with hospitality consulting firm, Horwath HTL, will focus on two specific areas, government and policy, and commercial and private, allowing delegates to gain greater insights and knowledge to grow their business.



♦ Building upon a first successful year of Responsible Travel Pavilion at the 2014 PATA Travel Mart in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, PATA is once again offering PTM delegates the opportunity to showcase their responsible and sustainable business practices. The Pavilion will be located in the main hall of the BIEC. Exhibitors in the Responsible Travel Pavilion receive further opportunity to network and do business with like-minded organisations – to share their knowledge, experiences, and lessons learned in an informal setting.

♦ Over 1200 delegates and international media representing 61 countries and almost all Indian states are participating in the mart. Twelve hotels from the city are the "Official Hotels", which will accommodate these delegates.

♦ PATA is also introducing a 'Travel Technology Pavilion', which will provide travel and tourism technology businesses with a platform to promote and build business, network with relevant suppliers and discover the very latest products, services and solutions from top travel technology professionals.

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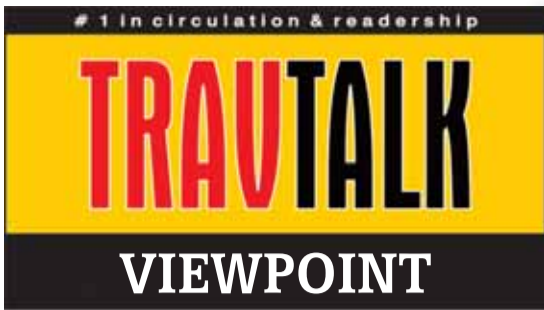
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Winds of change

The travel and tourism industry has a lot to look forward to in these coming months. The PATA Travel Mart (PTM) returns to India for the third time this September. After having successfully held Marts in Hyderabad in 2008 and New Delhi in 2011, this time our very own 'Silicon Valley' will play host to Asia Pacific's premier travel trade show. Besides the Mart, PTM 2015 will also include the Tourism Investment Forum, the Travel Technology Conference in partnership with Phocuswright, and PTM Talks. Furthermore, in addition to the Responsible Travel Pavilion introduced at PTM in Cambodia last year, this year's Mart will feature a Technology Pavilion providing a business platform for travel technology professionals to feature their products and services to both PATA members and travel industry stakeholders. The three-day event, is expected to facilitate over 10,000 pre-matched appointments and bring together qualified international buyers and sellers for face-to-face meetings, educational forums and networking functions.

On the domestic front, it's good news that ADTOI has resumed operations last month. The association should now look at marketing new destinations and adopt more innovative strategies to access decision makers, meet new clients, expand network and build or maintain existing relationships. Also, concluding all its Regions and Chapter elections, TAAI is getting ready for its national elections this September. The industry is looking forward to the upcoming IAAI elections this October as well.

Globally, the travel industry is looking at novelty be it in terms of products, services or even business strategies. And India is no different. How the travel industry will take these opportunities and discussions to the next level and bring out solutions, only time will tell. The world is watching and we have to make our mark. So with the upcoming season, we hope winds of change will continue to blow.



Source: Expedia's Holiday Activity Report 2015

Thailand says Kingdom safe for travel

In the wake of the August 17 blast in Bangkok, the Royal Thai Government has assured its citizens and the international community that the Kingdom is safe for travel. **Maj. Gen. Sansern Kaewkamnerd**, Government spokesperson, disclosed that the Prime Minister had assigned him to disseminate the government's message to its citizens and the global community.



Maj. Gen. Sansern Kaewkamnerd Government Spokesperson

The message read, "The Royal Thai Government wishes to reassure the public that the situation is under complete control of the security officials.

to patrol every area so as to accord maximum security to the general public.

In addition, the Royal Thai Government would like to convey to all foreigners who are planning on traveling to Thailand, be they for tourism, trade, educational

or business purposes, or MICE, that the Government shall be doing its utmost to provide a safe and secure environment

for the duration of your stay in Thailand and that you will experience Thai friendliness and hospitality as always," it read.



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Shot in the arm for medical tourism

With the Medical & Wellness Tourism Summit just around the corner, Yogesh Srivastav, Director, PHD Chamber, says the summit will help brand India as a better destination for this branch of tourism and will discuss strategies to market India aggressively not just in Asia or the SAARC nations but also in Africa, the Americas and Europe.

PEDEN DOMA BHUTIA

QWhat is the objective of organising this summit?

Recognising the centuries-old medical and wellness domain - ranging from Ayurvedic, yoga, spa and oil treatments - India has always been the epicenter among global travellers for medicine. Our aim is to project India as the most favoured destination for medical and wellness tourism across the globe by inviting all the stakeholders on a common platform and thereby also sharing the global best practices which are likely to benefit the Indian industry.

QWhat do we need to do to improve medical and wellness tourism in India?

Considering India as an upcoming hub for medical and wellness tourism, the government should market "Destination India" as the prime choice for medical and wellness destination thereby promoting tourism. What is needed is a unique strategy to market India aggressively not only in Asian or SAARC countries, but also in Africa, the Americas and Europe.

QWhat are the hurdles to promote this branch of tourism in India?

India is on the threshold of a healthcare revolution and emerging as the destination for medical tourism. But somewhere, we lack providing the visitors with a smooth transit which hinders the growth of the sector. Some areas which need to be highlighted are:

- ❖ Since the patients are already travelling on Medical Visa, the need to register in the Foreign Regional registration Office (FRRO) is insignificant. Moreover, it's cumbersome for a patient, already suffering from an ailment, to come and register themselves at FRRO, excluding a few of the SAARC countries, for which FRRO registration is mandatory.
- ❖ Another hindrance is levying of high taxes. A tourist has to spend a lot of money to avail the tourism related services because a sales tax levied on these services is two-fold higher than that of any other developed country.
- ❖ The Government must ensure that the negativity associated with the country in terms of harassment

/ molestation / political instability / other crimes must be subdued and managed by any means. The security of international tourists should be of foremost concern.

QHow has the response to the summit been?

PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industry aims at creating a strong platform to exchange best practices and experi-

ences, discuss challenges and opportunities, future perspectives and changes in Medical & Wellness Tourism sector. The response has been outstanding so far, considering the fact that Medical and Wellness Tourism is an upcoming niche tourism market and PHD Chamber has successfully organised the same for the last two years.



“Considering India as an upcoming hub for medical and wellness tourism, the government should market 'Destination India' as the prime choice for medical and wellness destination thereby promoting tourism.”

Yogesh Srivastav
Director, PHD Chamber

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Make Destination India truly Incredible

In his special address at the FICCI Tourism Investors Meet, **Amitabh Kant**, Secretary of Department of Industrial Promotion and Policy (DIPP), said that the tourism sector had a multiplier effect on the economy and is a sector that requires all the thrust. Calling India a sleeping giant in the world of travel and tourism, he suggested various measures to introduce the right set of initiatives and achieve the desired tourist inflow.



“ States should focus on civil governance to enhance the quality of tourism assets – heritage sites, destinations etc. Just pick five tourist destinations, develop them and turn them into world-class tourist attractions. ”



“ A new innovative communication strategy is needed for Incredible India 2.0 to penetrate the global market and digital media should be leveraged to this end. ”

“ Open up the visa regime and the civil aviation sector. The e-Tourist Visa is a radical step forward. Our skies are too controlled, the country’s aviation policy should not be linked to our national carrier. More carriers should fly into the regional cities. There is a need to connect regional cities with international airports to allow free movement of tourists from places across the globe. ”

“ The MICE market is a huge area for tourism development. We need to build 300 exhibition and convention centres across the country to harness this market. This mass movement of reexhibition and convention centres will drive a new industry. ”

“ There is also a need to imbibe and embed the culture of hospitality from school level. To improve quality of experience on ground, private sector should look at capacity building and focus on skill development. We should have more skilled manpower in the form of taxi drivers and guides. Tourism is a multi-sectoral industry and we need to lay focus on skill development in tourism.. ”

“ Community participation is a must to make tourism flourish. For anything, be it rural tourism or heritage tourism, we need to create experiences, for this the state government should work in close participation to help local entrepreneurship flourish. ”

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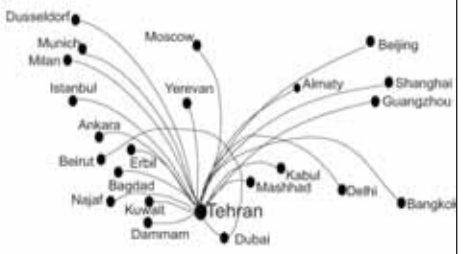
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Agents seek clarity on NDC standard

Confusion and misinformation abound after the landmark presentation on NDC by IATA. But TAAI and TAFI look to help their members gain some clarity on it.



TT BUREAU

Little knowledge is a dangerous thing. Despite conducting a detailed session on its new NDC standard for the India market, the International Air Transport Association (IATA) has left many an agent asking for more information. The good part is that the travel associations are aware that their members have been left dissatisfied

mented. We will definitely seek clarification or ask for a presentation again and in more cities. We also have a recording of the session which we have shared with all our chapters. They have made a presentation to the members and most of them are now aware of what NDC looks like in the first stage at least. But they have a lot of questions like how is it going to be implemented and

how it will affect the industry," Ahmed said.

He added that since TAFI is a member of the World Travel Agents Associations Alliance (WTAAA), it has requested IATA to be in the panel to understand NDC's impacts and benefits. "We are part of the committee and we are compiling all the feedback we received after the presentation and make a white

paper through WTAAA. Since NDC is going to come, we want to see how it is. Instead of just opposing anything we want to see if it will be beneficial to our members and how. So at this moment, yes, it looks beneficial. Maybe there are some disadvantages but until there is no clarification we will participate in it, initiate a dialogue with IATA and seek more clarity on it," Ahmed said. 

APJC update

In the latest Agency Programme Joint Council (APJC) meeting, it was decided through IATA that there will be no more cheque collections effective January 1, 2016 because the logistics of it are difficult to handle. Payments will be done via online transfer, an RTGS, NEFT or direct debit. The remittance day will continue to be the ninth day after the last day of billing. Another important decision was also taken on the implementation of the Joint Bank Guarantee, which got delayed due to a clause of unlimited liability. This was clarified in the meeting and the scheme is likely to be implemented from January 1, 2016. Agents will now have one more guarantee apart from bank guarantee to IATA and the insurance guarantee.



Jay Bhatia
Chairman (Tourism Council)
TAAI

and in the dark. So, both the Travel Agents Association of India (TAAI) and the Travel Agents Federation of India (TAFI) are making efforts to help their respective members.

Jay Bhatia, Chairman (Tourism Council), TAAI, said, "We just had the IATA global head – Tony Tyler – visit India in July and make a presentation on NDC that was attended by more than 250 agents, mostly from Mumbai. But we are looking forward to having more presentations so that the awareness about NDC among the members across the coun-



Zakir Ahmed
National President
TAFI

try is enhanced. We have spoken to IATA and they are looking forward to making more presentations across the country along with TAAI."

According to **Zakir Ahmed**, National President, TAFI, NDC is a big question mark. "Yes, the members have understood it but there are still issues that will require clarity. We are going to conduct regular sessions maybe in the next six months because India will be among the first few countries where NDC will be imple-



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Trade welcomes eTV for 36 new nations

In a bid to increase inbound arrivals in India, the Government has now extended the e-Tourist Visa facility to 36 more countries from August 15, 2015, bringing the total number of countries under the scheme to 113. The government has also rolled out the eTV facility at seven more airports.

 MEGHA PAUL



Luxury travel is on the rise from markets such as the US and Far East and this step will only boost more inbound in the country. UK, which was long pending, has been added to this list. This is indeed a welcome step. We can expect more customers opting for experiential holidays as this is the new trend. Having said that, it's absolutely essential to extend this facility to at least 90 or 60 days in advance so that the benefits of eTV can be more obvious.

Vikram Madhok
Managing Director, Abercrombie & Kent India



With the recent clearance of eTV, we understand the importance of tourism as a strong revenue generator for the country. Goa, over the years, has emerged as a tourist hotspot, for Indian as well as foreign tourists. Our plan for 2015 is to draw the attention of the world to all that Goa has to offer, such as its rich arts, its fusion of Indo-Portuguese cuisine, its unique culture, century old traditions, monuments of historic significance, eco-tourism, adventure, heritage and hinterland tourism, festival tourism, wedding tourism, religious tourism, etc.

Ameya Abhyankar
Director, Department of Tourism-Goa



Weekend trips, corporate team-building trips, incentives, conferences and annual conventions will facilitate the growth in domestic tourism. The trend towards more FITs and ad-hoc groups will continue. We will also see immense growth from the inbound segment, with the new introduction of the online visas. There has been an increase in room inventory with a number of international hotel chains and brands entering the country as well.

Subhash Goyal
Chairman, STIC Travel Group



This is a welcome step and the travel industry expects a big spurt in inbound by the end of this year. Going forward, we still need to respond well enough to the aspirations of the experiential travellers. There should be a mechanism in place to improve it. In today's age, we truly need to see a new version of Incredible India. We should work on safety-related apps and helplines on a pan-India basis in this technology age.

Pronab Sarkar
MD, Swagatam Tours



This is a great game-changer. It will create the first point of seamless travel. Also, seven more airports will have this facility, which is another welcome step. But the first step is to make the travellers decide to come to India. Thus, we need to make our products more innovative. We need to develop what I call the 3As -- accessibility, accommodation and amenities.

Sanjay Basu
Sr. Vice President, Far Horizon Tours



This is a welcome initiative. The best part is opening eTV for the UK. We have a number of charters coming from the UK. The challenge till now was that we could not have last-minute sales for charters. This will open the markets even further. Goa is expected to receive about six flights every week this winter. The extension of eTV will boost interest among other charter operators as well.

Arjun Sharma
MD, Select Group

Contd. on page 12 ►

Fantastic Fares to the Isle of Paradise, Seychelles

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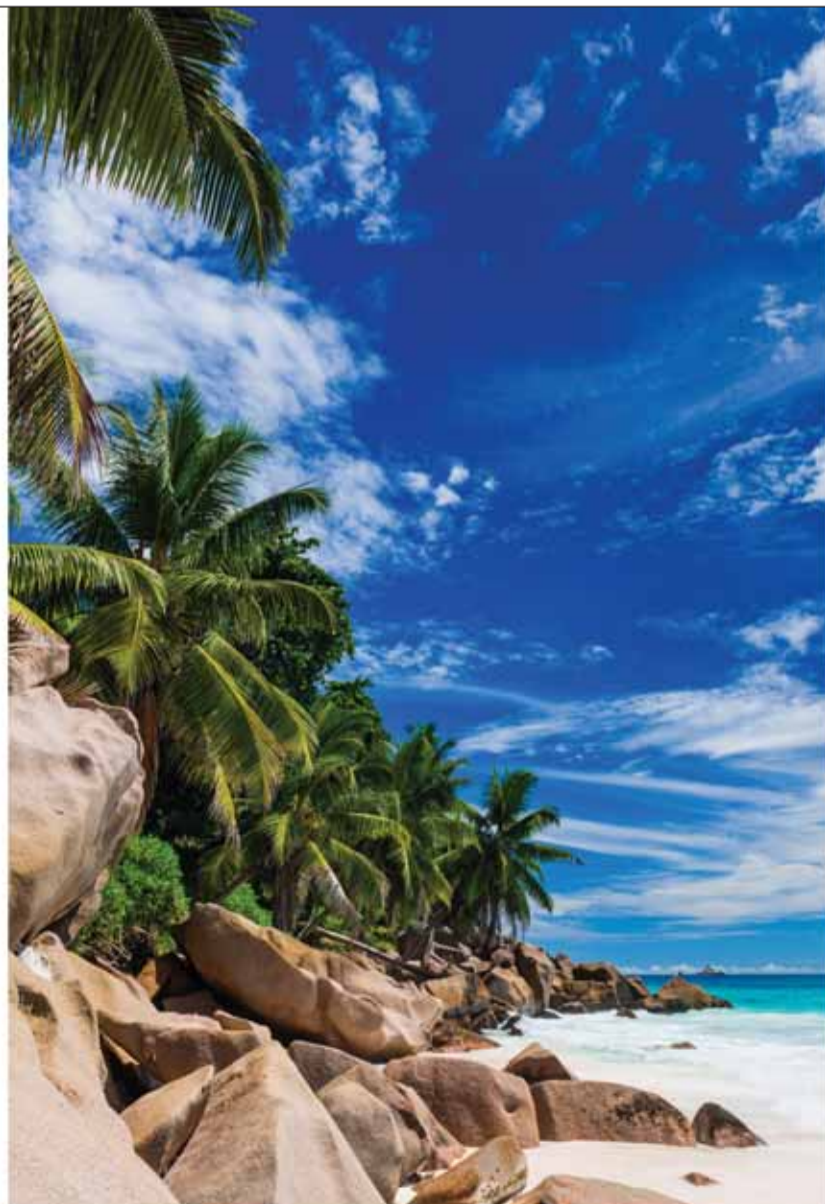
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We welcome this step. Seeing the huge opportunity, we are working on plans to further expand our markets and operations in existing verticals such as inbound segment. We have also undertaken feasibility studies to enter events, destination wedding and air ticketing segments as we see great synergy with our current activities and operations.

Amit Aggarwal
Director, Wish Bone India

eTV is a big game-changer for India as a travel destination. I believe that India need not have wait till 2020 to see the international inbound to double. It would happen in the next couple of years. As we predict an increased demand for hotels, we are looking at opening 10 to 12 new hotels in 2015. We are bringing our luxury brands like St Regis and W into India. We also see tremendous opportunities in conversion space this year. Hopefully, 2015 will be one of the most successful years after 2007 for Starwood Hotels in India.



Dilip Puri
Managing Director-India, Starwood Hotels & Resorts



Indian tourism has reached a stage wherein we should be now talking about ease of doing travel to the country. On the experiential front to the ultimate spenders, we still are not responding well enough to their aspirations. There should be a mechanism in place to improve it. In today's age, we truly need to see a new version of Incredible India. We should work on safety-related apps and helplines on a pan-India basis in this technology age.

Priya Paul
Chairperson, The Park Hotels

With the recent development in terms of eTV, we only see happy times for the inbound market. The inbound from many of our conventional markets, especially the UK will grow tremendously. Offbeat destinations like North East will see better growth than previous years and so will specialised luxury and wedding segments. Other segments which will see good growth are the adventure and sports segments. Educational travel and incentive travel will show significant increases as compared with the previous year.



Sunil C Gupta
Director, Travel Bureau

GPS 2016 to travel to 5 cities

The Global Panorama Showcase that focuses on tourism products from Central India has tweaked its format. It will start with Nagpur on January 8, 2016 and then go on to four more cities.



Nagpur-based Jagsons Travels is setting the stage for a bigger Global Panorama Showcase (GPS) in 2016. Starting from just one city in its first edition, GPS 2016 will now touch five cities, starting from Nagpur from January 8-10, 2016, and then travel to four more cities.

Harmandeep Singh Anand, MD, Jagsons Travels, and Secretary General, Travel Agents Association of India (TAAI), says, "We have short-listed the cities and have planned to travel to Ahmedabad in west, Kolkata in east, Trichy in south and Chandigarh in north. The show will start from Nagpur on January 8, 2016 and will be a three-day show — two days for the trade and the last day for B2C. The other cities will be for two days and only focus on the trade. We are yet to finalise the dates for other cities," he said.

Anand added that this year's edition will have two new aspects. "We will have a hosted buyer programme this year

— domestic and international — for which we are looking for airline partners. We will get the buyers hosted from those cities that the airline connects

national buyers from destinations like Georgia, Armenia, Russia, Turkey, Egypt, Jordan, the UAE and Kenya.

Five-city GPS

The main idea behind a travelling show, Anand explains is to increase awareness about tourism products among the trade in smaller markets and get them in contact with the right people. "Their product knowledge is limited and they rely heavily on someone else's experience to sell to their clients. A travel agent sitting in Jhalna, Rajkot or Mehsana does not have too much exposure and access to information, the DMCs or the tourism boards. We want to bridge this gap and bring the information and contacts to them on their home turf," he adds.

Taking the show to multiple cities will ensure participation from surrounding regions as well. "Ahmedabad will be the host city so that we can get agents even from nearby cities like Mt Abu and Udaipur up to Jaipur thereby covering parts of Rajasthan as well. For the east, we can bring in agents from cash-rich Bhubaneswar, Guwahati, Darjeeling and parts of the North East as well," he says.



"We will have a hosted buyer programme this year — domestic and international — for which we are looking for airline partners."

Harmandeep Singh Anand
MD, Jagsons Travels, and Secretary General, TAAI

with Nagpur. Our preference would be to get more buyers from Tier II and III cities. We will get about 120-150 domestic hosted buyers, depending on the number of exhibitors finalised," he revealed.

Hosted buyers

He expects about 150-odd exhibitors to participate this year that will include at least 30 per cent local suppliers from Central India. GPS will also host over 40-50 inter-

national buyers from destinations like Georgia, Armenia, Russia, Turkey, Egypt, Jordan, the UAE and Kenya.

It is already in discussion with Air Arabia for this. Anand expects at least 600 buyers this year from roughly 475 buyers that attended last year with the changed format. "We will also get domestic tourism boards involved specially Maharashtra Tourism Development Corporation (MTDC) and MP Tourism. Registration for exhibitors has been opened since August 2015," he added.

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25/10/2016	Round Robin: Session 2	3245	1645
26/10/2015	Round Robin: Session 3	3395	1645
27/10/2015	Round Robin: Session 4	1345	845
27/10/2015	Round Robin: Session 5	2945	1645
28/10/2015	Round Robin: Session 6	1345	845
28/10/2015	Round Robin: Session 7	2945	1645
29/10/2015	Round Robin: Session 8	1345	845
29/10/2015	Round Robin: Session 9	2995	1645
30/10/2015	Round Robin: Session 10	4745	2945
31/10/2015	Semi-Finals: Session 11	4745	2945
31/10/2015	Semi-Finals: Session 12	5895	3695
1/11/2015	Finals: Session 13	7045	4245

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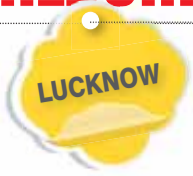
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Philippines courts the Nawabs

The Department of Tourism (DOT), Philippines organised a four-city roadshow for its travel trade partners based in Nagpur, Chandigarh, Lucknow and Delhi. The Lucknow roadshow witnessed big participation from the travel agents of the region. The objective of this B2B roadshow was to educate and update them about Philippines' existing and new tourism product offerings.



Rains no more a deterrent for tourists

The monsoon season in India was long considered a wet blanket for the tourism industry with hotel and resort occupancies falling by nearly 50 per cent. With a surge in inbound and domestic travel in recent years during the rainy season, airlines, tour operators and state tourism boards are chasing monsoons for better business.

 MEGHA PAUL



Maharashtra has witnessed an increase in the number of domestic tourists during the monsoon season, especially in Mahabaleshwar, Matheran, Malshej Ghat, Lonavala, Kalra, Khandala, Igtapuri, Bhandardara and Amboli. The World Heritage sites, Ajanta & Ellora Caves in Aurangabad also receive large numbers of tourists and the hospitality establishments located in these places witness almost a 100 per cent booking during monsoon. We also have a master plan for the development of destinations such as Malshej Ghat, Bhandardara and Kalra, which are also popular monsoon destinations. The corporation will develop adventure sports opportunities and also recreational facilities at the properties.

Chandrashekhar S Jaiswal
Deputy General Manager, Maharashtra Tourism Development Corporation (MTDC)

Monsoon tourism is picking up great in the state. Goa's traditional reputation as a half-yearly tourism destination is converted into a 365-day affair, as the hospitality industry across the board readies itself for tourists even when the rain churns the seas into frenzy. Goa is promoting monsoon tourism in a big way at travel exhibitions and with special deals on offer at hotels and resorts as well. It is not only domestic tourists that Goa is targeting for the rainy season. The GCC is another important market for this period because of the contrasting weather conditions. We recently organised fam trips for the Chinese and UAE tour operators to boost tourist footfalls in the state.



Ameya Abhyankar
Director, Goa Tourism

This used to be a lean period for travelling traditionally but that is changing fast. In our state, domestic tourists have started coming out in large numbers during the monsoons. That has been a recent phenomenon. Indians like to experience the rain. The forests and the fields look lush green during this time. Nature is at its best. Rivers are in full glory. It's a very unique landscape which is on offer. The rainy season holds less appeal for most Europeans, who tend to seek sunny destinations. Chhattisgarh is actively trying to promote itself as a monsoon destination for domestic travellers now.



Santosh K. Misra
Managing Director, Chhattisgarh Tourism Board (CTB)



None of the northern states in our country are cashing in on the monsoons. Every state with monsoon-related fairs and festivals should be marketed as prime destinations during this season. For example — Punjab should showcase green vistas during rains and the culture and folk songs of the season. The monsoon season is the best season to tap honeymooning couples as well.

Subhash Goyal
Chairman, STIC Travels

Contd. on page 22 ▶

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The fun side of Philippines

The Philippines roadshow concluded in India's capital city, Delhi. DOT Philippines along with a 15-member delegation interacted with key travel and tour operators, MICE and up-market leisure operators in the region. The programme for the roadshow included presentations by officials of DOT Philippines, DMCs and hotels from Philippines in addition to Q&A, detailed networking sessions and special lucky draw for the participants.



Agents have a new role as advisors

The first non-French to head a country for Atout France, Sheetal Munshaw is back at the NTO with all guns blazing. Her priority is to promote France's diversity and expose more regions to Indians.

HAZEL JAIN

QWhat have you been focusing on since you've taken over?

Coming back to Atout France feels like a natural extension and we are already in the thick of very many things. A lot of effort is being put in to keep projecting France as a multi-faceted destination. We are not a monolithic destination; it has huge diversity and we are going to try and promote it. Places like Nice and Chamonix have done really well. Champagne, Midi-Pyrenees and Marseilles are the other new regions that have shown interest in coming to India. We will also have a B2B campaign with Midi-Pyrenees.

QHow are the tourist figures doing?

We have good news. France received 400,000 passengers to France in 2014 which is an 18 per cent increase as compared to 2013. Visa facilitation has definitely helped boost the figures and

has led to visas being issued within 48 hours in Mumbai.

QWhat kind of travellers are you looking to tap?

There still are travellers who want to do whirlwind helicopter trips. But there are also



Sheetal Munshaw
Director
(India) for Atout France

those who need two-three international holidays a year because they look at travel as a part of lifestyle. Travellers now are very young, even 18-year olds. There is a new generation of travel and there is a new way in which people travel, which is more experiential.

In such a scenario, the travel agent has become more of a travel advisor or a concierge, which is why it is important to get them exposed to different products so that they can be a step ahead of the client and be able to advise them.

QWhat activities can the trade look forward to?

After Champagne, we have another delegation coming down in September for our three-city annual roadshow Rendezvous en France. We will go to Bengaluru also this year apart from Mumbai and New Delhi, which will be the first time for us in a decade. This is also because Air France is keenly looking at Bengaluru. We have about 24 partners with us and new regions coming in as well. Marseilles has come in for the



Chamonix Village

first time. So there is definitely more and more interest in the Indian market from the French side as well.

We are also focusing a lot on MICE and we have about 10 travel agencies going to Strasbourg in October for our MICE summit called France Meeting Hub. Of course, familiarisation trips will continue; they have a much more important role to play today than it ever did. We will continue to have our evenings with Air France and Accor which we

do every year under the banner of Beaujolais. The format may change but the partnerships continue.

QDo you plan to promote a new product to the Indian market?

Yes, we are going to look at winter tourism next year. In January, we will have the Grand Ski, which is our winter B2B showcase. We have seen a rising interest in winter tourism from India so we are not just targeting a summer market. We

think India has come of age for this product.

Apart from this, wine and culinary tourism will be a big focus area for us. We will continue to talk to the travellers through the travel trade who are interested in food and wine, culinary tours, gastronomy, self drives – basically all the niche segments that are now up and coming. And we will keep adding new regions because travellers have now understood that France is whole lot more than Paris.



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PHITEX 2015 to host Indian buyers from Sept 1-3

■ The Department of Tourism, Philippines, through its marketing and promotions agency, the Tourism Promotions Board (TPB), will be organising the 14th Philippine Travel Exchange (PHITEX 2015) to be held from Sept 1-3, 2015 at Marriott Hotel, Manila and SMX, Mall of Asia. PHITEX is an annual marketing event aimed at strengthening the country's brand image and encouraging the participants to promote affordable and competitive tourism packages. This year's theme is "#PHITEX@360°". 360° signifies and encompasses all aspects in shaping a culture of excellence of the Philippine tourism industry. **SanJeet**, Tourism Attaché, Philippines Tourism Marketing Office India, said, "PHITEX 2015 is a featured event of Visit The Philippines Year (VPY 2015) campaign and an important event to be a part of, especially for all MICE professionals. Aside from gaining useful business insights from the seminars, the B2B sessions also offer a great business opportunity for both Filipino sellers and foreign buyers and help attract more foreigners to invest and travel in the Philippines

After SA, it's China study tour

After the 16-city roadshow with South African Tourism, TAAI is getting ready to replicate it with other destinations. Coming up is a study tour to China for its Western Region members.



HAZEL JAIN

The Travel Agents Association of India (TAAI) is going into overdrive with its renewed focus on education this year. After a marathon 16-city roadshow it conducted with South African Tourism, the association is in the process of tying up with a number of international tourism boards to conduct educational workshops for its members and their frontline staff.

Revealing this, **Jay Bhatia**, Chairman (Tourism Council), TAAI, who says, "We

have been talking to a lot of tourism boards. We got a fantastic response during the South African Tourism roadshow training more than 1,700 frontline staff across the country. We are looking to doing the same for more countries like Luxemburg, Korea and Sri Lanka now. We are also in talks with the respective tourism authorities for this." The association had also signed an MoU with Zanzibar Tourism Promotion Centre India.

EDW to China

Meanwhile, the TAAI Western Region has organised



Sampat Damani
Chairman
TAAI Western Region

China is in demand now not only for business travel but also for leisure, specially after the local currency has been devalued

a four-day study cum educational familiarisation tour to Shanghai and Beijing in partnership with Air China this

October. **Sampat Damani**, Chairman, TAAI Western Region, said, "China is in demand now not only for business travel but also for leisure, specially after the local currency has been devalued. It is going to be shopper's paradise. It is also coming up as MICE destination."

Damani added that this will be part of its Educational Destination Workshop (EDW) programme. TAAI Western Region had done a similar EDW to Bhutan. It has worked out a package of ₹45,000 for two nights in Shanghai and two nights in Beijing, all inclusive. "Our commitment is to educate our members. We have been allotted 40 seats and the response has been so overwhelming that all 40 seats were registered within 24 hours of our rolling out the programme. As a matter of fact, there is more and more demand coming for it and we already have 15 agents in the waiting list. We may increase the size to 50 agents depending on Air China's availability," he says.

All 40 agents who have signed up are from Mumbai and are all decision-makers, not the frontline staff. The chairman has requested China National Tourist Office to be present at the press meet the association has organised in Beijing with the local media. There will also be a few suppliers who will meet the Indian agents and make product presentations. While the NTO is not sponsoring anything, Damani hopes that it will provide some value add-ons to agents who will be promoting the destination.

TAAI national elections



After concluding all its Regions and Chapter elections (four Regions and 16 Chapters), the Travel Agents Association of India (TAAI) is getting ready for its national elections. Revealing this is **Marzban Antia**, Treasurer, TAAI, who said, "Our AGM and the national elections will be held together this year and we expect it to happen by end of September this year.

However, it is premature to name the members who will be standing for the national body elections."

Heading East

➔ The TAAI Western Region will organise a four-day study cum educational familiarisation tour to Shanghai and Beijing in partnership with Air China this October costing ₹45,000 all inclusive

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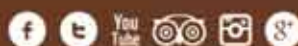
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Thailand informs and amazes Delhi students



To introduce Thailand as a land of history, culture and wonder to the students of schools in the Delhi-NCR region, and generate awareness about the country, Tourism Authority of Thailand organised a unique quiz on Thailand. The programme was supported by Royal Thai Embassy New Delhi and Thai Airways International. The Quiz was organised and monitored and hosted by QuizCraft Global. This quiz took place on the occasion of Her Majesty Queen Sirikit's birthday, August 12, 2015, at Sri Sathya Sai International Centre (Auditorium), Lodhi Road, New Delhi. The event was for students of classes 9 to 12.

For a super, natural experience

Monica Leeck, Manager, Market Development Asia, Destination British Columbia, talks about the new brand image of British Columbia.



TT BUREAU

“The way that we’re portraying our new products and brand is: We’ve maintained the tagline ‘Super, Natural British Columbia’ because we really feel that it speaks about what we have to offer in British Columbia, but we’ve changed the look of our logo so it looks more natural, we’ve also changed the look of our images so it really reflects the true spirit of British Columbia. From the cities, the wilderness, the



Monica Leeck
Manager, Market Development Asia, Destination British Columbia

rainforests. You will see a lot of images of our coastal areas because we have this beautiful long Pacific coastline as well as skiing. We always have to remind people that Rocky Mountains are also in BC. So again, it’s not necessarily new products but it’s showing the same in a new light, in a new way so people understand it differently.

We have seen that Indians love to visit British Columbia, especially Vancouver, where there is a large Indian community and has many Indian restaurants. Earlier it used to be a majority of VFR travellers but now we see a lot of visitors coming for the experience of the province.”

Things To Do

- Wilderness or car-accessible camping, single or multi-day hiking treks through backcountry; cycling along city paths or mountain biking down steep vertical terrain
- Visit art exhibits and art galleries in large cities such as Vancouver to small communities such as Wells



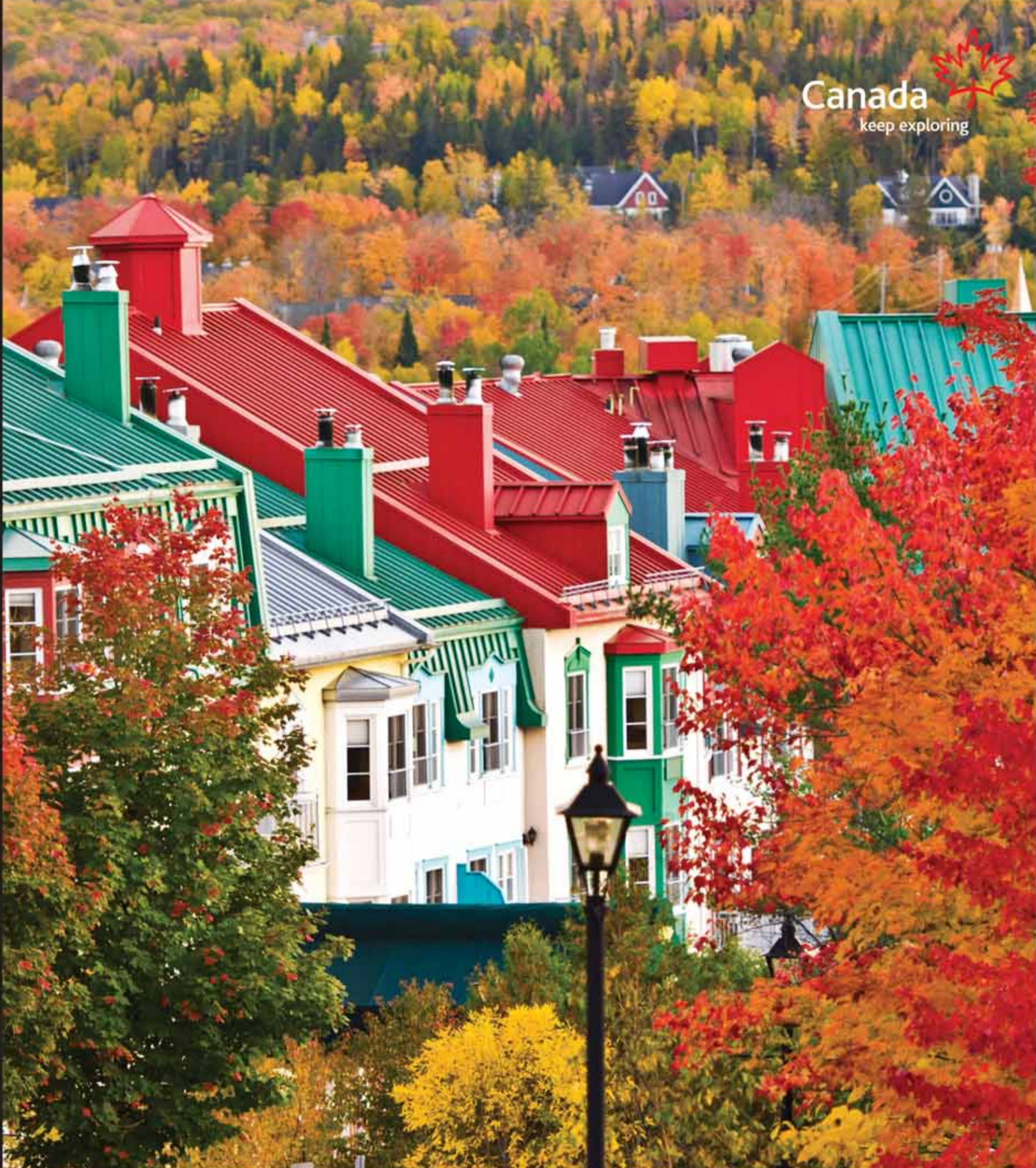
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Media-savvy MOT

► Contd. from page 3

and Nepal or Bhutan. We have taken this up with the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) and are working on both these issues.”

According to Shankar, MOT is also consolidating its presence in terms of media communications in various source countries.

“In terms of strengthening our presence with regards to media, we are appointing PR agencies in five important markets in Germany, Japan, China, the US and the UK. They will act as our taskforce for disseminating the right kind of information on tourism events in our country,” he added.

Challenges for eTV

- ❖ Tour operators can not apply for visa on behalf of their clients/groups
- ❖ Youth availed eTV more than elderly tourists for whom the process remains cumbersome.
- ❖ Visa applicants should be informed about the helpline via email that a visit to SAARC Countries should be permitted while applying for eTV as many tourists combine India with Nepal/Sri Lanka/Bhutan/ Maldives.
- ❖ While eTV is an excellent initiative, to be able to get a visa only within 30 days of travel was not conducive to international travel practices.
- ❖ Tourists plan long haul holidays upto one year in advance and want to secure their travel plans.
- ❖ Airport facility planning needs to be enhanced. Baggage delays are a big culprit in the overall experience.
- ❖ eTV is still not available at seaports and cruise travellers need to procure a traditional visa, to visit India, Visa-On-Arrival could easily be implemented by holding the travel documents on entry.
- ❖ Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, is appointing PR agencies in five important markets in Germany, Japan, China, the US and the UK.

It's raining tourists in India

► Contd. from page 15

The myth about India being not so popular during the monsoon season is fast changing. When it comes to monsoon tourism, Goa and Kerala are the ground breakers which paved the path for several other states. But we need more states to join this bandwagon. States that are looking at flourishing tourist seasons need to improve infrastructure – roads, airline services and hotels. Monsoon is the time when MICE tourism, conferences and events can also be held as rates can be better.



Arjun Sharma
Chairman, Le Passage to India

The very fact that we are beckoning tourists by telling them offers will be better as this is lean or off-season is unfortunate. ‘Lean period’ or ‘off-season’ tag disheartens tourists from visiting during the monsoon months. India is blessed with two iconic natural assets – the monsoon and the Himalayas. We should capitalise on our natural beauty – the hills, wildlife sanctuaries and national parks, gurgling rivers, lush green rainforests. However, the monsoon season is also plagued with landslides, floods and waterlogged road. What we need is participation from the government and private players in the tourism sector to enhance the tourism circuits. Infrastructure development is a must for promotion of monsoon tourism in the country.



Sanjay Basu
Managing Director, Far Horizon Tours

Korea's Gyeongnam ties up with OTOAI and Cox & Kings

■ In a significant step to attract Indian tourists to Gyeongnam province in Korea, the Tourism Division of Gyeongnam Development Corporation, Cox & Kings Travel India; Outbound Travel Agent Association of India and Korea Tourism Organisation signed an MoU on August 10 and August 12, 2015 respectively. Korea Tourism Organisation; the

Tourism Business Division of Gyeongnam Development Corporation; OTOAI and Cox & Kings will engage in activities of attracting tourism to the region. While Korea Tourism Organisation will espouse Cox and Kings to develop year round promotional activities of the tourism products for Gyeongnam. OTOAI will make efforts, for pro-

moting the region, so that, the Indian tourist frequently visit Republic of Korea in large numbers in connection to the procession path for the marriage of Queen Heo.

According to **Byungsun Lee**, Director, Korea Tourism Organisation India, says “The joint effort will be mutually bene-

ficial in terms of business to travel partners and both the tourism organisations in augmenting the outbound travel to Korea. Korea Tourism Organisation is always keen on co-working with the travel partners in India and is always inclined to support the tourism promotions for Korea in all aspects.”

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Agents open up at PATA workshop

PATA India and MOT came together to host a workshop for the travel agents. The workshop was attended by the Tourism Ministry officials who gave updates on the recent initiatives taken up by the Ministry.



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IAAI polls this October

After the association's Maharashtra Chapter elections, IAAI is now getting ready for its national elections combined with its convention in October.

 TT BUREAU

The new team that took over the Managing Committee for IATA Agents Association of India (IAAI) Maharashtra Chapter recently was more or less unchanged. **Chetan Momaya** continues as the President of the Maharashtra Chapter, while Pune-based **Devendra Ghule** and **Aruna Shetty** will take over as Vice Presidents.



Chetan Momaya
President
Maharashtra Chapter, IAAI



Biji Eapen
National President
IAAI

Speaking about the immediate plan for the team, Momaya said, "We have been talking to the Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai (MCGM) and have already shared our suggestions to tackle some of the issues that we travel agents are having with them. Tour operators can now function 24x7 provided every employee in the agency puts in not more than 48 hours per week."

Since the Chapter elections were combined with the AGM, **Biji Eapen**, National President of IAAI, was also present. He said, "Our elections are very different. It is

open to the media and the new team takes an oath."

He also revealed that the national body elections will be held along with its annual convention in October possibly in Chennai after all the state/chapter elections are over. "The new teams will be coming for the national elections. We are looking at Tamil Nadu this time and not Delhi or Mumbai because two of our main leaders who passed away recently are from this state and we want to pay homage to them. We are currently looking at the feasibility of conducting our elec-

tions and convention there," Eapen said.

Updating the members about the association's case filed for commission, he said, "Our struggle with the commissions started in 2008 and now we are very close to reaching a verdict by the Kerala High Court. The final hearing will be by August end with the commission mandated to us again." He also voiced the travel trade fraternity's mutual worry regarding weekly payments. "More than 32 countries out of 162 enjoy a credit period of 30 days. Even Greece gets 15 days! Then why India on weekly basis?" he questioned. 

Buy holidays now, travel any time

The newly launched BOGO Card offers flexibility to travel 200 days in a year at a fixed price and can be redeemed for travel 14 days prior to the date of departure for a date that extends up to 12 months from the date of purchase.



Revolutionising the online travel space, TripFactory has launched an innovative pre-paid 'Book & Go' (BOGO) Travel Cards recently. With an objective to provide hassle-free travel solutions to the aspirational but budget-constrained travellers, the BOGO cards ensure pocket-friendly travel packages that enable travellers

TripFactory, remarks, "Buying a holiday should be as simple as recharging your phone. A simple recharge card, you buy, you know what it contains and then you use it, without surprises. This is what we have attempted to create. We want to create a simple way for everyone to be able to holiday, starting from choosing, buying a quality product, packed with value, fun and enjoyment. That



is where a fixed price BOGO card comes in, targeted at the value sensitive consumer, in all two, three, four and five-star

categories, this is sure to be a big excitement, relief and value to consumers."

Apart from the cities covered with airports within India, BOGO Card holidays also covers few important international cities which are high on budget travellers aspirational list, such as Dubai,

Bangkok, Singapore, Hong Kong, Abu Dhabi, Colombo, Kathmandu, etc. Going forward, TripFactory has plans to cover more domestic and international cities into the list, he adds.

Launched two years earlier, online platform TripFactory enables consumers plan their holiday. "We are today the largest online holiday platform

in terms of choice and content for holidays. We try to provide answers to all sorts of queries of consumers," Gupta informs. "We only sell holidays. Our technology, investment, resources, etc. are all geared to create best holiday experience to consumers," he says when asked about the differentiating factors of TripFactory in comparison to other OTAs.



Vinay Gupta
Founder & Chairman,
TripFactory

We want to create a simple way for everyone to be able to holiday, starting from choosing, buying a quality product, packed with value, fun and enjoyment. That is where a fixed price BOGO card comes in

to fly and stay at any airport city at economical and at the same time value-for-money prices. Starting at as little as ₹ 4,999 for domestic leisure destinations such as Goa, inclusive of round ticket airfares, four days three nights stay, breakfast and all taxes, these cards are also available for eight international destinations for as low as ₹ 19,999. Travellers can choose their travel dates as per their convenience within a period of 12 months from the date of purchase of the card.

Launched in Delhi, Mumbai and Bengaluru, BOGO Cards can be redeemed for travel 14 days prior to the date of departure for a date that extends up to 12 months from the date of purchase.

Talking about the new development and how BOGO Cards are poised to be an industry game changer, **Vinay Gupta**, Founder & Chairman,

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Mittu Chandilya appointed MD of AirAsia India

AirAsia has announced the appointment of **Mittu Chandilya** as Managing Director of AirAsia India in addition to his role as its CEO. The AirAsia India Board appointed Chandilya as the Managing Director and as first full time independent Executive



Mittu Chandilya
ITA Winner, MD & CEO
AirAsia India

Director of the company. On the appointment, **Tony Fernandes**, Group CEO, AirAsia said, "Mittu has done an exemplary job leading AirAsia India in a market where we have been challenged with headwinds at every turn. There is tremendous opportunity for growth and we are in an excellent position to capitalise on the opportunity with our strong brand and value proposition. We are not ones to give up easily and I know Mittu will continue to lead the charge as we move full steam ahead in achieving our dream of changing Indian aviation."

Going bullish in Sri Lanka

TravelBullz has now completed five years and has five offices across the world and soon starting operations in Sri Lanka. KD Singh, Managing Director, TravelBullz, aims to revitalise the company as a new one and hopes the next five years to be more dynamic than what the last five years have been.

SAMAPTI DAS

Q Tell us something about the company and the journey till now.

We have completed five years now and have five offices across the world. The latest addition that we are formally going to announce soon would be Sri Lanka operations. With over 60,000 guests travelling on our network this year, we have over 78 per cent of our business which is completely online B2B business where travel agents make bookings on our web portal. Over 100,000 quotations are made by different travel agents across the world. India is one of the largest contributors to this business but Middle East is picking up at a good pace. We are setting up our own sales team based in Dubai to take care of Middle East and GCC markets.

Q What is the new product that you have introduced?

We have come up with Thailand Series Product as the flagship product. This will continue for the other destinations where we offer at least 20 - 25 per cent discounted pricing to the travel agents and partners which then helps them to increase the GOP on each of



KD Singh
Managing Director, TravelBullz

"Travel agents are the reason that we are in business today. We now transact with over 1000 travel agents annually across while we have 2500 database of travel agents who have earlier transacted with us."

their files. This is done or achieved by pre buying a whole lot of inventory with preferred partners across all destinations and it helps us to increase footprint with our customers across the globe.

Q What is the USP of the company?

TravelBullz was formed to revolutionise and redefine the wholesale business in India where quality delivery is the only way to do business. We believe that a happy customer comes back to a travel agent and a happy travel agent

comes back to TravelBullz and that's how the whole chain continues and we prosper.

Q How have you placed the company in the Indian travel space?

TravelBullz from a B2B perspective brings best of both worlds to our travel agents. While we offer most of our products online and seamlessly to all our customers, we also offer human interface through our call centre based in Delhi which helps bridge the

gap between an offline and online travel agency business. Right now we are only focussed on outbound but in 2016 we will focus on domestic and inbound tourism which would then make us one of the most comprehensive wholesale companies available across the globe.

Q How helpful the Indian travel agents are for your business?

Travel agents are the reason that we are in business today. We now transact with over 1000 travel agents annually across while we have 2,500 database of travel agents who have earlier transacted with us.

New Initiatives

- Starting operations in Sri Lanka soon
- Setting up new sales team in Dubai
- Introduced Thailand series as the new Flagship product

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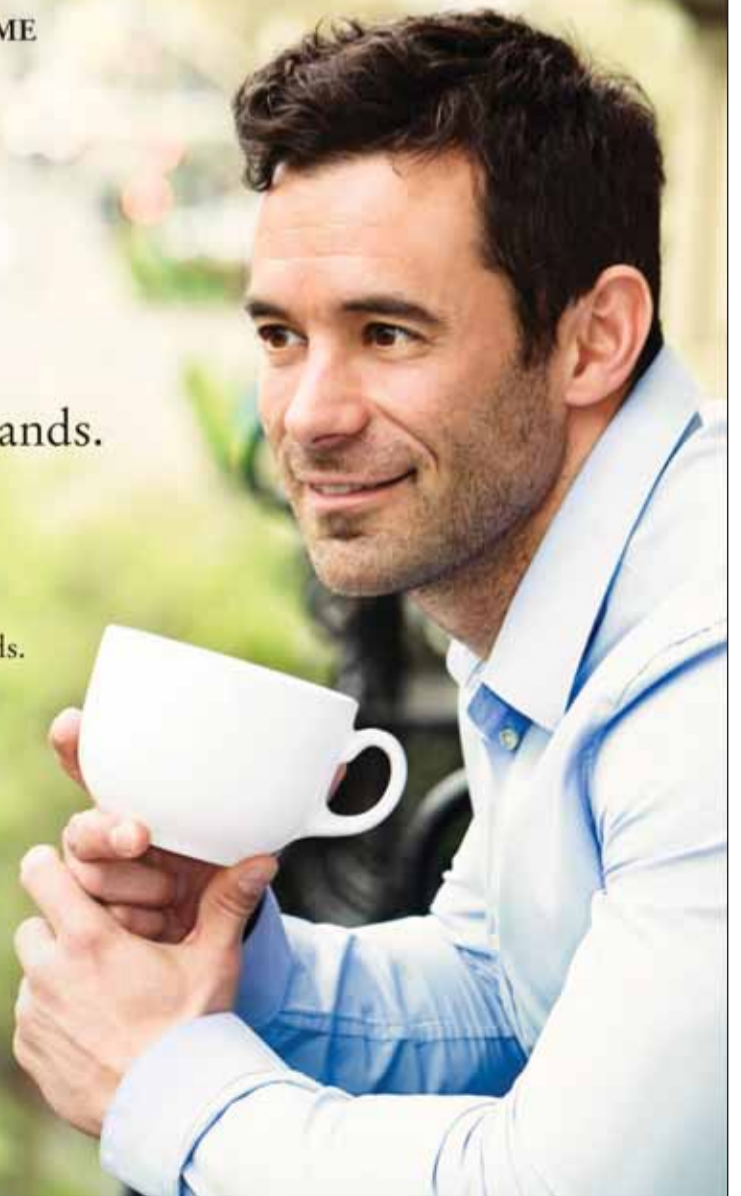
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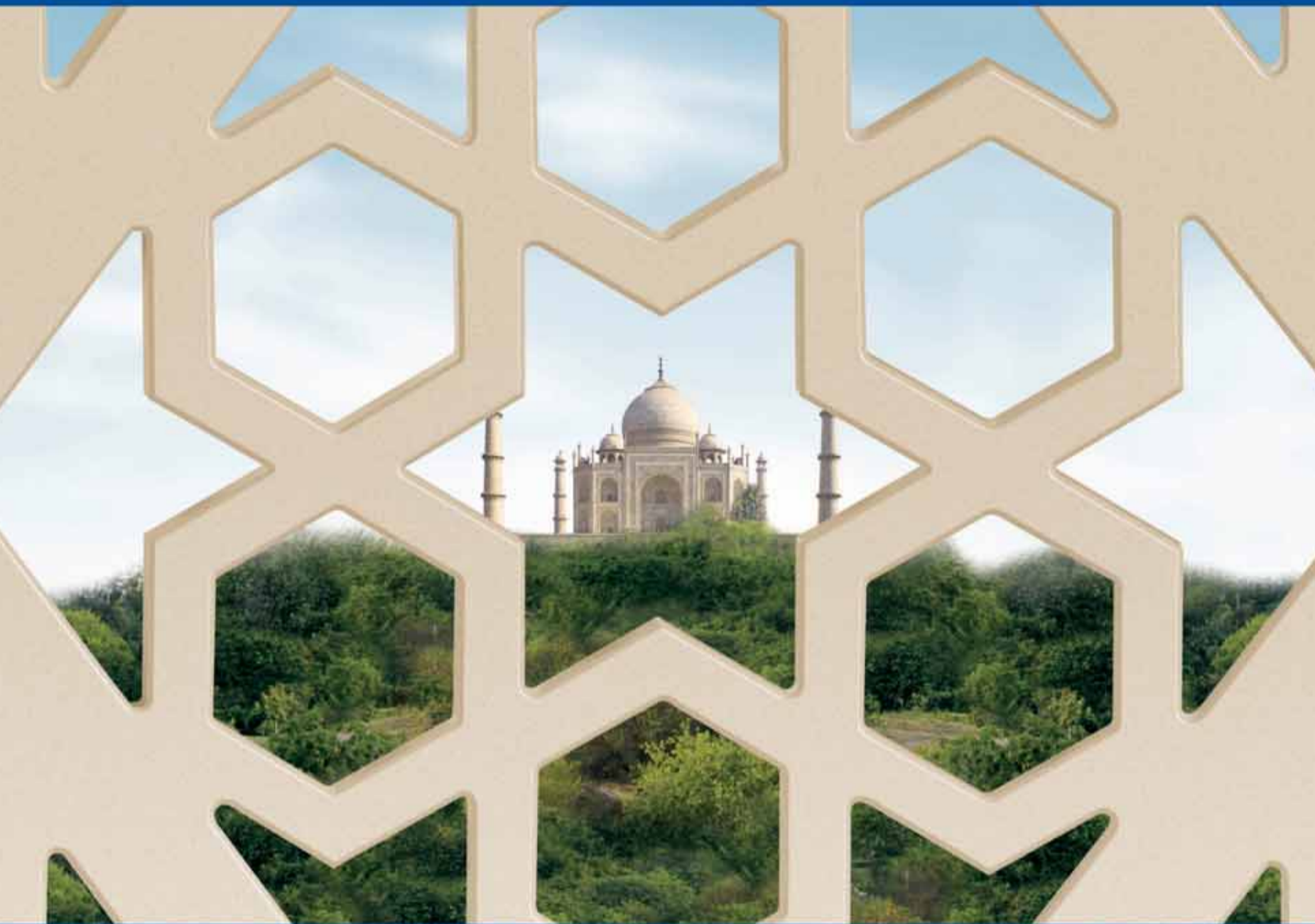
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Learning from past for a brighter future

Skål Delhi recently had its Annual General Meeting (AGM) at The Park Hotel in New Delhi. The main points covered at the AGM were the new initiatives and events that Skål has in pipeline. It was also a reflection of what the organisation did in the years 2014 and 2015. Feedback from the members was also a part of the AGM.



The home of pandas beckons

During the Sichuan tourism delegation's visit to India recently, a memorandum of cooperation was signed between the Outbound Tour Operators Association of India and the Sichuan Tourism delegation.

TT BUREAU

Representatives from Sichuan Tourism recently visited Delhi to woo Indians to their country. Famous for being home to the panda, a total of 85 per cent of the world's panda population reside in the mountainous region of the province. The highlight of the event was a memorandum of cooperation signed between the Outbound Tour Operators Association of India and the Sichuan Tourism delegation.

The 12 fans of the giant panda from six European countries - who are on a journey as a part of a contest to meet giant pandas in Sichuan - were also present at the event.

Arun Srivastava, Regional Director (Northern India), Ministry of Tourism, who was present at the event, said that 2015 is special as China is celebrating 'Visit India' year, "This is the first official Chinese delegation visit after Prime Minister Narendra Modi's tour of China. A day before his visit to China, another Chinese delegation had visited us. Hopefully, more of such visits should be happening in India."

Acknowledging the efforts of the tourism department to promote Sichuan region in India, **Guldeep Singh Sahni**, President, Outbound Tour Operators Association of India, added, "India's outbound sector is growing with 18.63 million people having travelled out of India in the last year. This year, the numbers will cross 20 million.

We are really looking at China as a close tourism partner." Sahni also encouraged the tourism delegation from Sichuan to meet and collaborate with as many Indian travel agents as possible.

Located in the upper reaches of the Yangtze River, Sichuan, China's fifth largest province, has an area of 485,000 square kilometers and

a population of more than 87.5 million. Its capital is the top tourist city in China: Chengdu.

In recent years, more and more provincial tourism boards from China are trying to tap the Indian tourism market. This event was also part of Chinese action plan towards strengthening China-India tourism relationship during the period of 2015-2016.



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Vistara adds Bhubaneswar to its network

Starting October 1, 2015 Vistara will offer daily flight on the Delhi-Bhubaneswar route. As bookings for Bhubaneswar open on August 26, Vistara's fast growing network now stands at a total of 11 destinations across metros and non-metros. The introduction of Bhubaneswar, Vistara's third destination in the east, coincides with the airline's next phase of expansion, where the focus will be on scaling up operations and strengthening the value proposition to suit customers' demand. Vistara is also offering a complimentary Premium Economy Class ticket (terms and conditions apply) to its Business Class customers, travelling from August 12 to September 30, 2015.



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The JATA Tourism Expo Japan has been receiving high reputation from the attendants of over 100 countries/regions and regarded as one of the most attractive and productive tourism events in the world.



The Japan Travel and Tourism Association (JTAA) and Japan Association of Travel Agents (JATA) are launching the second annual JATA Tourism Expo Japan 2015 that will be held from September 24 through 27, 2015, at Tokyo Big Sight.

JATA Tourism Expo Japan is designed to promote tourism both overseas and inbound to Japan, as well as domestic tourism within the country. It sees the tourism industry partnering with other sectors and regions in a nationwide effort to host the world's largest tourism-related event.

The first step in this direction was the 2014 goal of "A new journey." The second JATA Tourism Expo Japan is ramping up our goals and aiming to be the locus for all things related to the travel industry as Japan moves towards 2020.

This year, in addition to the Japan Night 2015, a city-based MICE event hosted out of Marunouchi, there will be the first International Tourism Leaders Meeting, which focuses on the ASEAN



region. It will also host the inaugural Japan Tourism Award, which is conferred on organisations and individuals that have made notable con-

tributions to the growth and development of the tourism industry. Also on the schedule is an exhibit which brings together domestic and global

tourism information in one place, promotions in advance of the opening of the new Hokkaido bullet train line, and a gourmet project featuring popular rice bowl dishes from throughout Japan. Special exhibits from central Asian countries are the must-sees at the event.

In addition, the international tourism forum will be an

opportunity to discuss issues of "Tourism and Culture" and explore Japan's mission in the global tourism space. Being held concurrently with the Expo are the Visit Japan Travel Mart (VJTM) and Visit Japan MICE Mart (VJMM), held by the Japan National Tourism Organisation. This makes for a triple-pronged event that covers overseas travel, inbound travel to

Japan, and domestic travel within the country. The first JATA Tourism Expo Japan was conducted under the theme of "The Power of Travel" with the attendance of 1,129 tourism organisations /companies from 151 countries/regions and 47 prefectures in Japan exhibiting 1,817 booths. The record visitors number 157,589 surpassed expectations.



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Thai Airways' special offer to New Zealand

Thai Airways International is offering special fares, starting at ₹69,827, from Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai, Bangaluru, Kolkata and Hyderabad to Auckland, New Zealand until September 30. Tourism New Zealand has entered into partnership with



Thai Airways to drive high-value travel out of the Indian market. The campaign will run till September 2015 with travel validity until March 2016.

Thai Airways International is the flag carrier of Thailand and flies to 76 destinations in 35 countries using a fleet of 100 aircrafts. Currently Thai is operating 55 flights from 8 cities in India including seasonal flights and carry approximately 1 million passengers and 45,000 tons of cargo in a year.

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Healthy start for WTM Wellness Lounge

The inaugural WTM Wellness Lounge at World Travel Market London 2015 – the leading global event for the travel industry – has proved to be a hit with exhibitors from Iceland to India.

TT BUREAU

The WTM London's inaugural Wellness Lounge is sold out! Taking place on November 4-5, WTM Wellness Lounge has already sold all of its allotted exhibition space – more than three months in advance. Among the 25 exhibitors are Blue Lagoon – one of Iceland's most famous attractions and well known for its geothermal seawater – and India's award-winning Somatheeram Ayurveda Group.

The lounge has attracted 20 brand new exhibitors to WTM London, keen to raise their profile on a global stage. These include Anand Collection, which represents upmarket properties and resorts; the Hotels Plaza Andorra chain; Healing Hotels of the World, which represents properties across the globe; and the 5-star boutique Fortress Resort and Spa in Sri Lanka. Europe is well represented, with hotels and spas from Portugal, Turkey, Corfu, Germany, France, Netherlands, Switzerland, Slovenia and Spain. Another exhibitor is Lifehouse Spa and Hotel, in Essex – located about an hour from ExCeL in London, where WTM takes place each year – while further afield, there are exhibitors from Malaysia and St Lucia.

Simon Press, Senior Director, WTM London, says, "The success of our new Wellness Lounge reflects the rapid growth of the wellness industry generally. The global wellness market is now valued at \$3.4 trillion (Global Spa & Wellness Economy Monitor 2014) and is growing fast, as more people want to improve their physical and mental well-being during their leisure time."

The new wellness hub offers suppliers an exclusive platform to meet contacts and conduct business in the comfort of the dedicated lounge. The package for suppliers includes private pods within the lounge; a

breakfast with wellness buyers; priority access to WTM Speed Networking sessions; and an online networking tool to connect with the wider WTM audience. Other benefits include an invitation to the Wellness Travel Awards Reception on November 4; exposure to the WTM Buyer

database through a dedicated email profiling all Wellness Lounge suppliers; promotion in the WTM Catalogue, WTM Routeplanner and online Exhibitor Directory; and access to 250 spa/wellness buyer contacts from the WTM visitor database.



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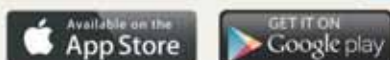
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Air Astana reconnects Kazakhstan and India

In a bid to promote tourism relations between the two countries, Air Astana organised a fam trip to Almaty. Twelve top agents were chosen from across the country to explore the enchanting beauty that Almaty has to offer. For adventure to culture and great good, the city and its surroundings had our Indian travel fraternity spellbound. A short flight away and easy on your pocket, Almaty's tourism offerings include the scenic beauty along with some great nightlife and a little bit of Bollywood! With immense MICE potential, this Central Asian country is on its way to see high Indian arrivals.



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31st IATO Convention puts

The Indian Association of Tour Operators' (IATO) annual convention held in Indore from August 20 to 23 was unique in many ways. For one, the choice of Indore itself was unusual, as the city is new and smaller than the other locations for the mega event, which attracted 1,260 delegates, and over 350 had to be denied participation due to lack of accomodation.



ANIL MATHUR

Both IATO and Madhya Pradesh Government showed great enthusiasm in hosting the convention in Indore, where the venue, The Grand Bhagwati Palace, came in for much praise.

Tourism Minister **Dr. Mahesh Sharma** asked the tour operators to make full use of the growing China outbound market, especially since the e-Tourist Visa (eTV) facility is now available.

Chief Minister **Shivraj Singh Chouhan** called for better infrastructure and connectivity in the state so that Buddhist tourists from other countries can come to see the religious places. He said that much focus is being given to the coming mega Kumbh festival in Ujjain.

Interestingly, Chief Secretary **Anthony J C Desa** emphasised that 90 per cent of the ₹ 600 crores earmarked for the event will be spent on creating long-term, permanent infrastructure.



Indore on global tourism map



On eTV, IATO President **Subhash Goyal** called for multiple entry and extending the validity of the visa to 60 days, so that tourists coming to India can also visit neighbouring countries and then return to India.

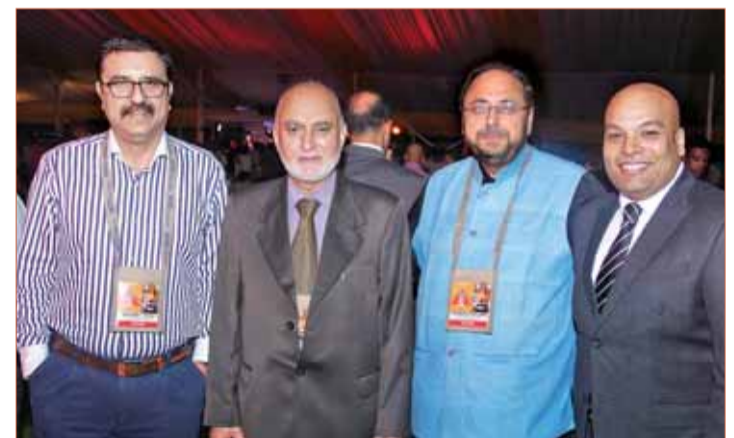
asked to take advantage of the incentives being given to the tourism industry. The sessions did generate some points, with agents being cautioned against the online on-slaughter.

ciation membership would promote new and existing attractions of the host State.

Sharma revealed that the Union Finance Minister has been asked to see that tourism gets infrastructure status. In the business sessions, delegates were

Giving attention to new products like Cruise, MICE, and Rural, Heritage and Responsible Tourism were some other take-aways from Indore. Convention Chairman **Pronab Sarkar** said that the asso-

For the mega Simhastha fair in 2016, facilities are being augmented for tourists, said the Chief Secretary, adding that 90 per cent of construction work in Ujjain is on a permanent basis, which will boost tourism even after the Simhastha, during which a world religious conference is planned.



At IATO, MP gears up for Kumbh festival

▶ Contd. from page 37



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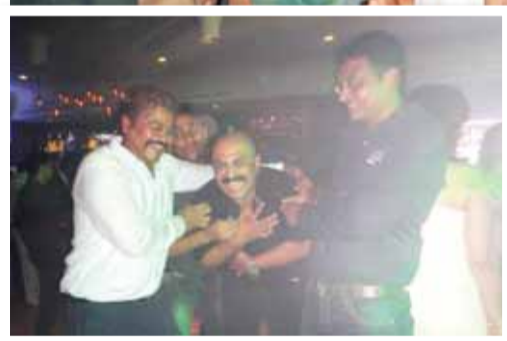


Creating Synergy amongst

The awesome foursome of Siddharth Jain, Ajay Chhabria, Ankur Kalra and Rohit Shorey spread the Delhi magic in Mumbai for the first time at Café Infinoto in BKC. The travel trade fraternity along with their three-year close-knit WhatsApp trade group gave expression to their passion and brought out the importance of networking and glamour in the travel business.



the Travel Fraternity



EVENT TALK

SEPTEMBER 2015

INTERNATIONAL

2-4	Miami	La Cita
24-27	Tokyo	JATA
24-26	Kazakhstan	Astana Leisure

NATIONAL

1	Delhi	Tourism Queensland & Tourism Victoria Roadshow
1	Mumbai	Switzerland Tourism Workshop
2	Chennai	Switzerland Tourism Workshop
3-4	Ahmedabad	Switzerland Tourism Workshop
1-3	Jaipur	IBTM India
3-5	Gurgaon	India International Travel Mart
6-8	Bengaluru	PATA Travel Mart
7	Kolkata	VisitBritain's 'Great Tourism Week' Roadshow
7-8	Delhi	Switzerland Tourism Workshop
8	Delhi	Atout France Networking
8	Delhi	Atout France B2B Workshop
8	Bengaluru	Vietnam Embassy B2B Roadshow
9	Bengaluru	Atout France B2B Workshop
9	Delhi	Visit Florida VIP Luncheon
9	Delhi	VisitBritain's 'Great Tourism Week' Roadshow
10	Mumbai	Atout France B2B Workshop
10	Mumbai	Vietnam Embassy B2B Roadshow
11-13	Ahmedabad	Travel & Tourism Fair
11	Lucknow	VisitBritain's 'Great Tourism Week' Roadshow
11	Mumbai	Atout France Sales calls
14	Chennai	VisitBritain's 'Great Tourism Week' Roadshow
16	Bengaluru	VisitBritain's 'Great Tourism Week' Roadshow
16	Hyderabad	Hyderabad Fair
17	Mumbai	Scandinavian, Baltic and Nordic Countries Workshop
18	Delhi	Scandinavian, Baltic and Nordic Countries Workshop
18	Hyderabad	VisitBritain's 'Great Tourism Week' Roadshow
18-20	Surat	Travel & Tourism Fair
24-26	Mumbai	Travel & Tourism Fair
28-30	Mumbai	Maharashtra International Travel Mart

OCTOBER 2015

NATIONAL

2-4	Pune	Travel and Tourism Fair
5	Mumbai	Thailand Luxury Roadshow 2015
7	Chandigarh	Tourism Authority of Thailand Luxury Roadshow
9	Delhi	Tourism Authority of Thailand Luxury Roadshow
9-11	Indore	India International Travel Exhibition
9-11	Nagpur	Holiday Expo
9-11	Goa	Travel & Tourism Fair
10-11	Gurgaon	Vkonect Luxury B2B event
14	Goa	West India Travel Awards
15	Goa	India Cargo Awards West & South
16-18	Lucknow	India Travel Mart
16-18	Bhopal	Madhya Pradesh Travel Mart
26	Delhi	Scandinavian Tourism Board Media Brief
26	Mumbai	Spain Tourism Office Leisure Workshop
27	Delhi	Scandinavian Tourism Board Travel Trade Seminar
27	Mumbai	Spain Tourism Office MICE Workshop
28	Delhi	Spain Tourism Office Leisure Workshop
29	Delhi	Spain Tourism Office MICE Workshop
30- Nov 1	Noida	India Travel Mart

For more information, contact us at: talk@ddppi.com

120 crore windfall for Assam

Assam Tourism has been allocated a ₹ 120 crore budget this year with 10 per cent of it kept aside only for promotional activities.



HAZEL JAIN

Assam Tourism has cleared the cobwebs and restarted promotions after it got a fillip in the form of ₹ 120 crore budget from the government. It recently embarked on a five-city roadshow with three more cities to follow. Speaking on the sidelines of the Mumbai show was **Ashutosh Agnihotri**, IAS, Commissioner & Secretary, Tourism Department, Government of Assam. "Assam Tourism's budget this year is ₹ 120 crore which includes a promotional budget of about ₹ 12 crore. This is flexible and if need be we will spend more on promotion as branding and perception-building is extremely important," he said.

The roadshow took off from Ahmedabad and travelled to Hyderabad, Bengaluru, Pune and Mumbai. Agnihotri added that the main agenda of this activity was to promote Assam as a safe tourist destination. "Through these roadshows we want to dispel the



Ashutosh Agnihotri
IAS, Commissioner & Secretary,
Tourism Department, Government of Assam

myths and misgivings about Assam. It is absolutely safe," he added.

Sharing tourist figures of 2014, **Manoj Kumar Deka**, Director of Tourism, Government of Assam, said, "For the last decade or so, Assam was known for all the wrong reasons. We want to get rid of that perception. It is now a thing of the past and Assam is now absolutely safe. Last year Assam welcomed 46 lakh domestic tourists and 25,000 international tourists and they have all returned safely."



Manoj Kumar Deka
Director of Tourism
Government of Assam

Assam Tourism will cover a few more cities in the coming months. These will include Kochi, Kolkata and Gurgaon. "We are trying to cover most parts of the country. We got a fantastic response in Mumbai – even we didn't expect so many tour operators to attend. We are also planning familiarisation trips for Pune and Mumbai agents. Assam has a lot to offer. Unfortunately, a lot of people particularly in the south are not aware of them," Deka said.

He added that while the budget earlier was not much, the present government has

been generous. "Apart from the money, the government also has a lot of schemes that they are promoting like Swadesh Darshan that looks after integrated development of theme based tourist circuits and PRASAD which is a national mission on pilgrimage rejuvenation and spiritual augmentation drive. We want to make Assam a year-round destination so this year we promoted monsoons as well," Deka added.

Agnihotri said, "We want to engage the private sector through PPP initiatives. We have already taken three initiatives in this regard. These include development of a golf course in Guwahati, five-star category resorts near Assam's five national parks, and development of another river cruise because it is getting very popular. Private sector is also investing in hospitality, like now we have two five-star hotels already in Guwahati, Radisson Blu and Vivanta by Taj. We have a Marriott and a Novotel coming up soon." 🏹

Easy visas key for cruising

With just triple-digit numbers from India for cruising last year, Dubai Cruise Tourism is hoping that it's four-city roadshow as well as easy, multiple-entry visas will up the numbers.



TT BUREAU

Dubai Cruise Tourism was admittedly late in promoting its products in India last year – much after the season was over – and it directly hit the numbers. **Jamal Humaid Al Falasi**, Director, Dubai

The low numbers, he said, were also due to the visa problems. Now, Dubai has eased the visa process and offering multiple entries to Asians. "The multiple-entry visas will definitely encourage more visits to Dubai. We have now made visas easy for



“We have now made visas easy for Indians, the flight is short and cruise holidays can be done at any time of the year. So travellers will save money cruising in Dubai rather than going to another country.”

Jamal Humaid Al Falasi
Director, Dubai Cruise Tourism

Cruise Tourism, who was in India recently for its four-city roadshow, says, "We covered the same cities even last year but we were late for the season so we didn't get good numbers – only 500 to 700 in 2014. So we came in early this year and in time for the holiday season."

Indians, the flight is short and cruise holidays can be done at any time of the year. So travellers will save money cruising in Dubai rather than going to another country. Not many people know that Dubai also offer cruising options and we are working on improving that," Falasi said.

The roadshow started with Bengaluru and went on to Chennai, Mumbai and New Delhi. Falasi said that each city saw about 250 people attend the event. "I can see a lot of interest from the travel agents for cruise packages. This is encouraging and gives us a reason to come back to India next year again for the third time. We plan to add more cities next year, maybe Kolkata. Right now, we are studying how the demand is and from where," he added.

There were three cruise liner companies that had partnered with Dubai Cruise Tourism for the roadshow – Costa Cruises, MSC Cruises

and Royal Caribbean International. Dubai recently opened the Emirate's third cruise terminal.

After this roadshow, Falasi expects an increase of at least 20 per cent this year. "It also depends on how the agents will sell it. There are four-five-seven night packages for Dubai cruises. We are also in the process of updating our Dubai Tourism website with information on Dubai cruises and contacts of authorised agencies that offer cruise packages. India is an important market for us with huge potential," he said. Dubai Cruise will be part of the next roadshow organised by Dubai Tourism in India. 🏹

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VISA TALK



South Africa: Long Stay Visa

High Commission of the Republic of South Africa, Delhi has announced that personal presence of the applicant is mandatory when applying for South Africa Long Stay visas.



South Africa: Additional requirements for Dependent visa

Applicants applying for long term Dependent visa have to submit the below mentioned documents along with the visa application.

1. One way air ticket booking
2. An attested copy of Parental Consent Affidavit, not more than 3 months old. Original should be kept by the applicant while traveling to South Africa.



Change in Passport Collection Procedure: Italy

Embassy of Italy, Delhi has announced that representatives cannot collect the documents on behalf of an applicant from Italy Visa Application Centres in North Zone except in following conditions:

- a) Immediate Family Member (i.e. Parents, Children, Siblings)
- b) One member of a group collecting for the entire group.
- c) A person collecting on behalf of Govt. officials if authorized on the Govt. letter head or department.
- d) Representative of a company - Authorization letter on the letter head of the company and the official ID card.

However, applicants who do not wish to collect their documents in person and whose documents cannot be collected by one of the above, will get their passports back by courier at an additional cost of Rs. 300/- to the dispatch address mentioned in the Covering letter which has to be submitted along with the visa application.



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Visa Snippets:

- a) Consulate General of Argentina, Mumbai has announced that Medical Travel Insurance is mandatory when applying for Argentina Short Stay Visa.
- b) High Commission of The Republic of Cyprus, Delhi has announced that Cyprus visa applications will be submitted through VFS centres at below mentioned locations.

Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata, Chennai, Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Pune, Ahmedabad, Chandigarh, Jalandhar, Puducherry, Cochin.

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Kolkata : 07042692244, 7042692242

Big player for MICE, weddings

Carving a niche for itself in the ever-competitive events segment, GNH Hotel & Resorts maintains a huge network of travel agents while having considerable presence on online platforms.



TT BUREAU

The Nikunj managed by GNH Hotel & Resorts in New Delhi is a player in building and operating banqueting resort hotels and a perfect destination for weddings and corporate events. Here, innovative design, modern technology and eco-friendly practices have been enhanced with new ideas and bright insights. The property is committed to developing exceptional facilities to transform hospitality into an enjoyable and unforgettable experience.

Deepak Saini, Founder & Managing Director, GNH Hotel & Resorts, claims that the company has an experience of more than two decades in providing the best customised services. "We customise the entire package as per the requirements of our clients. Grand Notting Hills Hotels & Resorts which manages and operates Nikunj [earlier known as Nitesh Kunj] near IGI Airport keeps on doing pro-

motional events for the travel trade industry such as hosting EEMA functions. We also actively participate in travel and tourism roadshows, exhibitions and travel marts. We supplement these offline activ-

is a popular venue for upscale weddings and MICE events in the NCR. It provides banquetting and conference facilities for anything from 25 to 2,000 people indoors and 300 to 5,000 people in the

has been playing a very important role in recent times and to keep up with the market dynamics, GNH Hotel & Resorts is investing a lot of resources in adopting new technological advancements that this industry witnesses. E-commerce platforms including online travel agents (OTAs) are also being widely used by the incoming and domestic travellers, which is an interesting trend."



"We also actively participate in travel and tourism roadshows, exhibitions and travel marts. We supplement these offline activities with considerable presence on e-platforms."

Deepak Saini
Founder & Managing Director
GNH Hotel & Resorts

ities with considerable presence on e-platforms."

Two other properties — Notting Hills and Jewels Garden in Gurgaon — are also part of GNH Hotel & Resorts portfolio. The Nikunj

outdoor banquetting space which is perfect for both corporate functions as well as weddings.

Speaking about how technology is changing the industry, he says, "Technology

Perfect Venue

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Asst. Manager / Manager Accounts

Candidate must have about 3-5 years of experience of working with an outbound travel agency. Knowledge of regulations and documentation related to client travel and remittances will be essential.

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Trance Hotels

Hyderabad

Former Chief Operating Officer of Vivanta by Taj, **Veer Vijay Singh** has founded a hotel management company, Trance Hotels and Resorts. As Managing Director & CEO, Singh will handle the management of mid-market (3-star) to upscale (4-star) hotels in India and overseas under its brands Trance Urbane, Trance Heritage, Trance Resort and V by Trance. Singh has previously overseen operations of hotels in Australia, Sri Lanka, Malaysia, Bhutan, Egypt, Dubai and Africa. He has also served as Director on the boards of TAL Lanka Hotels PLC, United Hotels, Indiatravel, and Taj Trade and Transport.



Park Plaza

Noida

Ramendra Pratap Singh has joined Park Plaza Noida as the new General Manager. He comes with a work experience of over 16 years. Singh began his career with Corbett Riverside Resort and has worked with Chokhi Dhani followed by a stint with Leisure Hotels Limited. Prior to joining Park Plaza Noida, Ramendra worked with Radisson Blu Hotel Indore as Director Sales & Marketing and Executive Assistant Manager.



Country Inn & Suites By Carlson

Bhiwadi

After successfully handling the operations of Country Inn & Suites by Carlson, Ajmer, for over four years, **Manu Vashishth** has now been transferred to Country Inn & Suites by Carlson, Bhiwadi as its General Manager. Vashishth has previously worked with hotel brands such as Fortune, Jaypee, Taj and Clarks spanning over 14 years of experience. He holds Bachelor's degree in Hotel Management from Mangalore University.



Byke Hotels & Resorts

Mumbai

Puspadhanu Saha has been appointed as Assistant General Manager at The Byke Suraj Plaza, Thane. Saha brings with him over 15 years of experience in the hospitality industry. In his new role, Saha will be responsible for the overall management, operations & revenue generation for the Unit. He comes with a wealthy experience in the various hospitality disciplines, F&B & Operations. Prior to his current role, he was associated with Panoramic Universal Group & Royal Orchid.



Hyatt Pune

Pune

Hyatt Pune Kalyani Nagar has appointed **Sohaib Kidwai** as the new Director Sales and Marketing. He brings with him an experience of 10 years in hospitality. In his new role, Kidwai will be taking care of sales, events, marketing, revenue management and digital marketing. He has previously worked JW Marriott Mumbai, Renaissance Mumbai, Grand Hyatt Mumbai to name a few. Prior to joining Hyatt Pune, he was associated with Park Hyatt Chennai as a Director of Sales. He holds a MBA in Marketing Management from Symbiosis, B.A. in Hotel Management from the University of Huddersfield, UK.



Crowne Plaza

Jaipur

Chandan Thakur has been appointed as Director Food & Beverage at Crowne Plaza Jaipur. A seasoned hotelier, he has over 16 years of experience in the industry specialising in Food and Beverage. Thakur has played an instrumental role in opening of three international hotels in Mumbai & Pune. He has worked with renowned names from hospitality industry, such as Rajvilas Jaipur, Grand Hyatt Mumbai, Westin Pune & Le Meridien Kochi. He is an avid learner and holds a certificate in "Advanced Program in Strategy for Leaders" from IIM Lucknow.



Hyatt Regency

Chennai

Sourav Rakshit has been appointed as the Assistant Director Food & Beverage at Hyatt Regency Chennai. Rakshit started his career with Hyatt Regency Kolkata in 2002 where he managed most of the outlets in the property. In 2011 he got transferred as an Outlet Manager to Hyatt Regency Mumbai, where he served for a year. In 2012, he joined Hyatt Raipur as the Food & Beverage Manager where he served his last before joining Hyatt Regency Chennai. Sourav holds a B.Sc. degree from Calcutta University and a hotel management degree from IHM CT & AN.



Park Plaza

Ludhiana

Prerna Gupta has been appointed by Park Plaza Ludhiana (part of Sarovar Hotels & Resorts) as Assistant Manager-Public Relations. With her seven years of experience in the industry, Gupta looks into the conception, coordination and execution of the brand market reputation by means of new advertising and promotional strategies. She was previously associated with Hyatt Amritsar as its PR Executive. She holds a Masters' degree in Business Administration from Sikkim Manipal University.



Gaurav Misra has been appointed as Rooms Division Manager at Crowne Plaza Jaipur. Misra joins Crowne Plaza from Hyatt Regency Mumbai where he was working as a Front Office Manager.



He has handled Housekeeping & Front Office functions in various capacities in the upscale and business travel segments. His most recent position was Front Office Manager. Prior to this, he has served 9 years with the Oberoi Group. During this period he worked at the Oberoi Rajvilas, Trident Nariman Point & was part of the pre-opening team at the Trident Bandra Kurla Complex.

TALKING People

Vishal Singh, GM, Hyatt Pune, says he likes to unwind on the pristine beaches of Goa. "Within India, as clichéd as it may sound, it's Goa. The beaches are a given, but it is mostly the clear relaxed air that I like. From the minute you land you experience a calming effect. Goa is my go-to place for a short vacation," says Singh. His international favourite is Orlando, Florida. "Great restaurants, tourist spots, public transport, weather, scenic beauty etc. The city is well known for its theme parks which are like mini cities themselves. One cannot get enough of this city," he adds.



"Weekends are more about catching up with family, friends, movies, local events and visiting nearby destinations," Singh adds.

Nicholas Dumbbell, GM, Bengaluru Marriott Hotel, Whitefield, says, "For me, travelling and visiting new places is all about learning and experiencing the local cultures and behaviors as opposed to the history or scenic beauty the destination has to offer," he says. He makes it a point to travel and explore any destination with his family. His preferred Indian destinations are Rajasthan and Kochi and looks forward to visiting Andaman Islands and Kolkata.



David Hopcroft, GM, Le Meridien Gurgaon, says travel sits right at the top in terms of priority when he get some time off work. "Travelling with family not only means spending quality time with them but it also means gathering new experiences collectively. I choose quaint, isolated and picturesque locations for my expeditions. Great flora, fauna and food around helps me calm down and recharge," he says. Hopcroft says he likes to go out for nature walks and local adventure trips, besides exploring the city. "Walking or using the local transport helps me see the place from a different perspective."



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LH Premium Economy: A class apart

After being in India for over 55 years now, the German carrier is gearing up to offer better products and services in this market. In a conversation with **TRAVTALK**, Wolfgang Will, Director, Lufthansa Passenger Airlines, South Asia, explains the strategic importance of India for the airliner. Excerpts:



MEGHA PAUL

Q How important is India for Lufthansa?

We have been in India for the past 55 years and this reflects the country's importance for our airline. The Indian market has become extremely competitive in the last five years. In a bid to meet the needs of the travellers here, we have continuously expanded our services. We have

added new routes as well. Last year was very satisfactory for us. We also commenced our A380 oper-



tributed across India. Obviously, Delhi and Mumbai are vital markets. But Bengaluru, Chennai and Pune are becoming lucrative markets for us as well.

Q Is the airline being used more for direct or transit operations?

Currently, we have more passengers from India that are using Lufthansa as a transit carrier. About 75 per cent of the passengers fall under this category. In fact, this is the trend globally. We have positioned ourselves as a strong hub with airports in Frankfurt and Munich. The vast majority of passengers are going beyond Frankfurt or Munich to destinations within Europe or North Atlantic. We cover 280 destinations worldwide

Q How is your 'premium economy class' doing in the country?

“Lufthansa is adding a €16 Distribution Cost Charge to GDS bookings of Lufthansa, Swiss, Austrian Airlines and Brussels Airlines flights from September 1. This is a fee we apply on bookings via global distribution system. It is priced in the fare. There is no additional burden as it comes along with the ticket price.”

Wolfgang Will

Director, Lufthansa Passenger Airlines, South Asia

ations last year and from Day 1, we had full flights. We are not divulging the numbers but we get high load factors, which is over 85 per cent. Our customers are dis-

We launched a brand new service, 'premium economy class' last year in November. With this, we have now unveiled a fourth compartment as an

industry. And it's just another fee and this is governed by the market forces. But it's the end price that matters. This is a fee we apply on bookings via global distribution system. It is priced in the fare. There is no additional burden as it comes along with the ticket price. It is one of the fees that we are familiar with today and is a part of the hand price of the ticket.

First television commercial for Indian Market

2014 was also a significant year for Lufthansa in the Indian market with the roll-out of its first television commercial for the local market. India is the first and only Lufthansa market worldwide to have a local television commercial. Lufthansa is also the only international airline operating in India to launch a complete local television commercial for the Indian market.

Unveiled under Lufthansa's "Non Stop You" positioning, the new television commercial is delivered through the prism of Lufthansa's "More Indian than you think" philosophy and aims to let the audiences discover the emotional and Indian side of the brand. Reflecting the Soul of Germany, with a Heart of India, the new commercial from Lufthansa banks on the importance of family orientation in India and captures an endearing relationship of a grandfather and grandson to tell the story in a simple yet enticing way. The storyline set in Mumbai forms the landscape of the TVC and showcases the "Indian side" of the brand through a number of its product and service offering – Indian food, entertainment and Indian crew onboard.

Better Connectivity

➔ Premium Economy is on all Boeing 747-8 routes including Bengaluru, Buenos Aires, Chicago, Hong Kong, Los Angeles, Mexico City, Peking, Sao Paulo, Seoul, Tokyo-Haneda and Washington D.C.



Punctuality: truly German.
Precision: truly German.
Hospitality: truly Indian.

More Indian than you think

Nonstop you

Lufthansa

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