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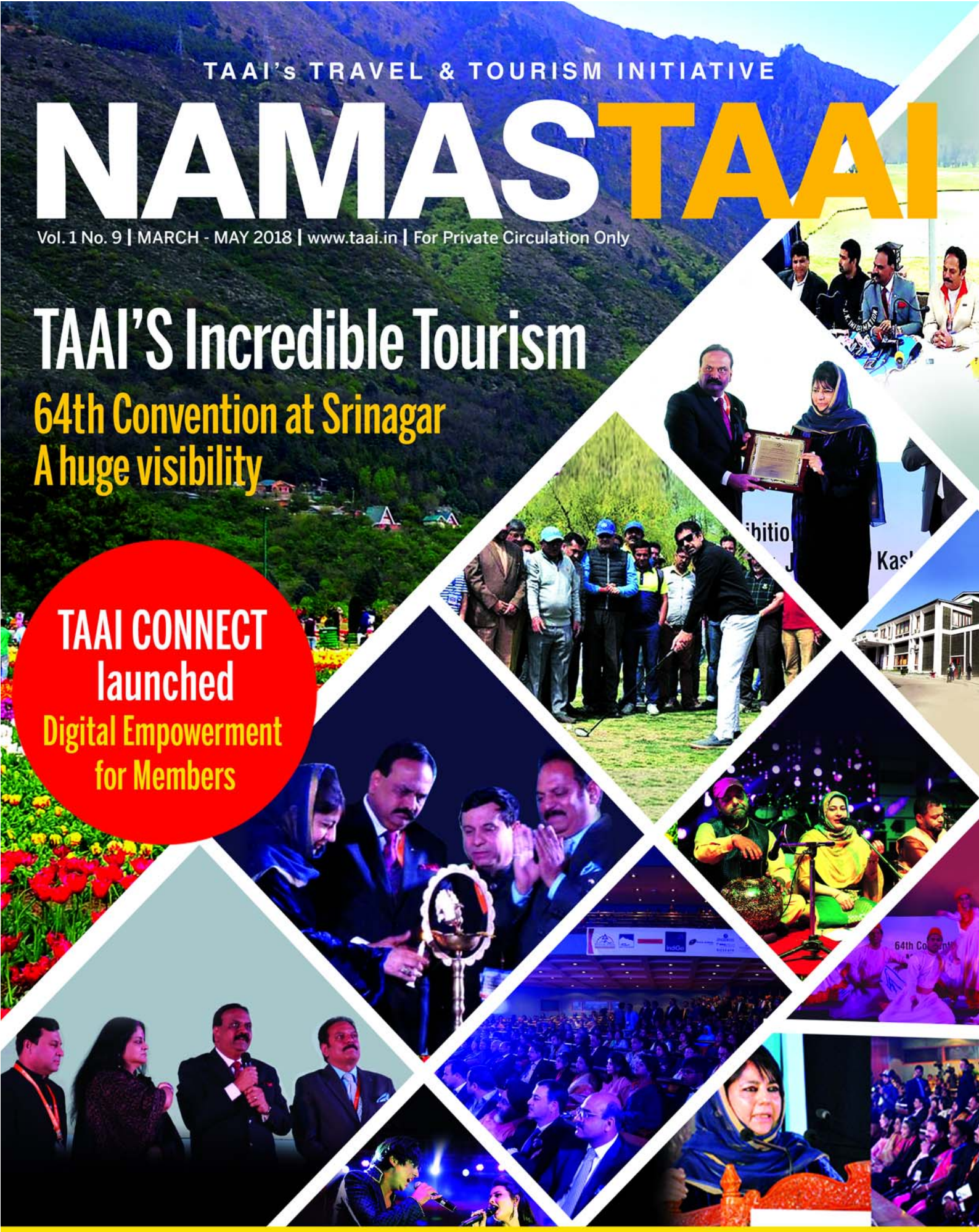
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THE PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

TAAI CONVENTION & KASHMIR

It's the gift of a 'great opportunity'

Aap Aaye Bahaar Ayee, says CM Mehbooba Mufti

Believe you can, and you are half way there, is an old saying, emulated well by TAAI Managing Committee. Getting back to Kashmir, after 30+ years is truly magical. We delivered another most outstanding happening in a dreamlike manner - TAAI Convention at Srinagar had large numbers beyond expectations. This was achieved in just about 45 days.

TAAI Conventions are a huge opportunity to the destination that hosts them. Several destinations have blossomed with more inbound resulting due to these conventions. The visibility they gain is phenomenal. TAAI @ Kashmir brought back rich memories of TAAI Conventions of the 80's and the unforgettable moments these conventions created. March 27 to 30, 2018 witnessed this historic and momentous happening. Delegates were gifted with an absolutely fantastic experience.

It started as a 'limited edition' event. The large numbers surprised us. They were well rewarded. Each of the three days was dedicated to offer them an experience that was extraordinary and rare.

The superb role by the Hon'ble Government of J&K, particularly, its Ministry of Tourism is exceptional. The local authorities, tourism organisations and our ***very own TAAI J&K Chapter*** were awesome. They packed the event with generous courtesies.



TAAI Conventions are a huge opportunity to the destination that hosts them. The visibility they gain is phenomenal. TAAI @ Kashmir brought back rich memories of TAAI Conventions of the 80's and the unforgettable moments these conventions created

Hon'ble Chief Minister Mehbooba Mufti accompanied by her team of ministers moved our hearts with her most emotional, eloquent and touching address on the opening day. We are grateful to her and the leaders for considering us so well. ***Aap Aaye Bahaar Ayee*** was her acknowledgement to TAAI. ***(You have come and you brought the bloom time for us)***. She thanked TAAI for the hand-holding extended by bringing this convention to Srinagar.

Organising conventions is a huge challenge and a highly professional approach needs to be applied. TAAI tries its best to gift privileges to delegates. This was only possible due to our partners and sponsors who played a key role. The networking, Travel & Trade Expo, Knowledge sessions, Entertainment, Cuisine and Cultural presentations - presented the most outstanding industry event of the country. It was our 64th Convention. That is a great testimony to our people connect.

You don't have to be great to start; But you do have to start, to be great, said Zig Zigler. Truly this has been a important start in favour of India - in favour of Kashmir. Thank you for joining us – and do stay tuned, for the events TAAI will unfold.

Warm regards

Sunil Kumar R
President, TAAI
sunilkindia@gmail.com

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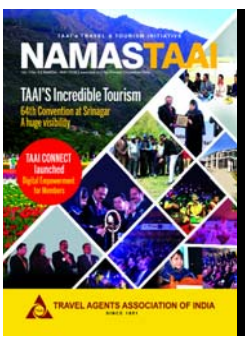


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ABOUT THE COVER IMAGE

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Managing Committee meetings in Pahalgam and Delhi

TAAI Managing Committee Meetings are always well attended and deliberative. They result in important decisions and unfold the vision the committee carries. Participants are drawn from 13 Managing Committee members and 20 Regions & Chapter representative chairpersons from all over India.

The Fourth Managing Committee Meeting of TAAI was held on March 26, 2018 at WelcomHotel Pine-n-Peak, Pahalgam, J&K. WelcomHotel Pine-n-Peak played hosts and organised this meeting in the most elaborate manner. The most incredible settings of this magnificent property at Pahalgam, is a huge draw for such MICE events. The large participation of the Committee members and their spouses were amazed by an experience of a rare order. Thank you WelcomHotel Pine-n-Peak.

This fourth MC meeting reviewed the usual business and apart from initiating the TAAI Connect dream along with our technology partners, most meeting was focused on review of the TAAI Convention and roles played. President Sunil Kumar thanked the committee for its preparedness and encouraged everyone to play a visible role to a convention that would always hold great records for TAAI, as in the past. The focus, he said, should be on creating a memorable experience for every delegate. An interaction with Asif Burza, Managing Director of Ahad Group of Hotels, J&K and owners of WelcomHotel Pine-n-Peak saw the great opportunity that lies ahead of the industry in India to optimize the advantage of Kashmir including Pahalgam. TAAI presented the Hotel and its GM with a Plaque in acknowledgement of the excellent hosting to TAAI.

The recently concluded **Fifth Managing Committee** meeting of TAAI was held on May 8, 2018 at Hotel Pullman Aerocity, New Delhi. The event was co-hosted by Hotel Pullman and TAAI expressed gratitude to this very special hotel in Aero City. The Committee reviewed the success of the 64th Convention & Exhibition of TAAI that was held in Srinagar. President Sunil Kumar congratulated the members of the committee for an outstanding performance, once again. The committee was highly appreciative of the excellent results TAAI registered. He also shared the message of greetings and gratitude received from the hon'ble Minister of Tourism, J&K and the Director Tourism, Kashmir. The detailed reports by the office bearers; MC members assigned with portfolios; Region & Chapter performances and finalising the schedule outline for the annual members meetings of the Regions & Chapters of India, were discussed in detail.





WelcomHotel Pine-n-Peak





The TAAI Connect initiative was deliberated to review progress. Comprehensive plans were drawn. TAAI's presence at the ATM, Dubai, which gave TAAI tremendous visibility with many global vendors and partnered with our technology partner TPConnects, Dubai. The meeting witnessed another detailed interaction on the review and initial challenges, with the team from TPConnects, Dubai, who assured TAAI of total support and shared their willingness to address matters governing the TAAI Connect. There was great excitement shared on this initiative offering members opportunities to go online and optimise selling. The growing challenges posed by airlines in the areas of ADMs, web-parity and agency remuneration continued to figure prominently. Few areas were shortlisted for our next immediate steps to support members with as much handholding. General Manager of the hotel, Tristan Beau de Lomenie - Director of Operation, LUXE Hotels India, joined briefly and addressed the Managing Committee.

TAAI Abu Dhabi Skills Workshops across India

TAAI & Department of Culture & Tourism (DCT), Abu Dhabi, took the skills workshop to more centers across India. TAAI was able to encourage large participation from the travel agencies and tour operators to master the skill of intelligently promoting Abu Dhabi as a tourism and MICE destination. The DCT, Abu Dhabi team led by Bejan Dinshaw, Country Manager, actively toured various TAAI Chapters across India to take this skills workshop forward.

Here are some highlights of this most strategic partnership between DCT, Abu Dhabi & TAAI featuring the workshops held across India.



Excellent turnout at TAAI & DCT, Abu Dhabi Skills workshops



AP & TS CHAPTER

About 54 members participated in this outstanding skills workshop held at Hyderabad on March 1, 2018, at TAJ Banjara, Hyderabad. Bejan Dinshaw made an excellent presentation and the houseful audience were immensely benefitted. It was an interactive occasion. A large delegation of TAAI members from AP & TS Chapter participated.

NAGPUR CHAPTER

Conducted TAAI-Abu Dhabi Skills workshop at Nagpur on March 14, 2018 at Hotel Center Point and was attended by 53 participants. An excellent presentation by the Country Manager of Abu Dhabi Tourism, Bejan Dinshaw and active participation by the members made it a very successful event under the leadership of Chapter Chairman, Kishor Parate.





MP & CG CHAPTER

The TAAI MP & CG Chapter too had good attendance at the skills workshop of DCT, Abu Dhabi which was coordinated by TAAI. The event was held on March 13, 2018 at Hotel Sayaji, Indore.

SOUTHERN REGION

This region also held an Abu Dhabi Tourism Training workshop in collaboration with TAAI on March 3, 2018 in Chennai.



TAAI Connect: TAAI launches Digital Empowerment programme at Srinagar

Partners with TPConnects to offer "Digital" opportunity to agencies across India



Travel Agents Association of India (TAAI), the nodal travel and tourism association of India has unveiled a partnership with TPConnects to roll out its 'Digital Travel India' empowerment Initiative, TAAI-Connect, to travel agencies in India - which also facilitates IATA NDC platform. The announcement included the claim that over 10,000 Indian IATA and Non-IATA travel agencies can benefit from the "TAAI-Connect".



Through the TAAI initiative, India's travel agencies will be provided with their own websites, mobile applications, corporate booking tool and B2B platform. This will all be powered by TPConnects' robust and scalable NDC standard full backend and internet booking engine with payment gateway. TPConnects will also provide technical support and there will be no upfront charges, just a per passenger transaction fee. The IATA NDC standard B2B and B2C platform will help travel agencies and online travel agencies to service their customers better. The platform enables travel agencies to have access to rich content as well as ancillary options.

Travellers will be able to have their preferences recognised when shopping via a travel agency's or online travel site in the same way that they are available on an airline's website - a service that may not be directly available to agents today owing to technology limitations.

Travel agencies who wish to have their own website and mobile application with booking engine are required to register through the TAAI website or email taaiconnect@tpconnects.com.

TAAI CONNECT aims to revolutionise industry

Offers agencies "enhanced capability" – Key features

It is a fast growing market place. Embracing change and employing new methods to do business will drive the future success. Digital Empowerment program by TAAI in partnership with TPConnects aims to bring in a revolutionary change in the industry. The program gifts member agencies with an opportunity to go online. Here are some key features of TAAI Connect initiative.

TAAI Connect – It revolutionizes the way, travel agencies can do business. Aims at smaller agencies in smaller towns to be gifted with enormous capability.

TAAI CONNECT enables agencies that do not have a full-fledged online portal to go online - to offer online services to existing and potential customers.

Travel agencies will be provided with their own websites, mobile applications, corporate booking tool and B2B platform, with a payment gateway.

The platform enables travel agencies with access to rich content as well as ancillary options.

The program will support Agencies to develop a website. The home page will have provision for the agency's company profile; and other content that can market/promote the agency and the product/service. It will integrate with a Booking Engine (Ticketing, Hotels; Tours; Transport; Cruises; Car rentals; and much more to be added). Members can also get their own content integrated. If an agency has an online access with a Hotel engine, it is integrated with TAAI connect.

Ticketing portal will be integrated with the Agencies own GDS of preference. Thus sales deriving from your online-website will be through your own GDS. This will connect the online purchaser to your own ticket stock and / or assigned agency's ticket stock (conditions apply).

A payment gateway connected with agency's bank account is offered for agencies that do not have a payment gateway of their own. The platform supports NDC participating Airlines. This will support the Agencies from avoiding the GDS fee. This "Digital Empowerment" rewards agencies with a MOBILE APP. Agencies can offer products and services to their existing customers through mobile technology. A trend one cannot be away from. A corporate booking tool is also offered to the agencies with TAAI Connect.

An important aspect is that the technology cost an agency requires, when launching its own portal or booking engine, is not required for agencies joining TPConnects. Added value comes from the content offered as well.

TAAI is pursuing discussions with Credit Card Companies; Payment Gateway agencies; content suppliers including hotels; tours; transfers; and much more. TAAI proposes to add as many features into TAAI Connect initiative.

A detailed communication has been sent to member agencies, inviting them, to join TAAI connect, with terms of reference and other important information. A no obligation intention has been asked and the responses are flowing in.



TAAI @ ATM 2018

Travel Agents Association of India (TAAI) made its appearance at ATM 2018 along with our technology partner TPConnects Technologies. Over 40,000 attendees visited the venue which spanned four days from April 22 to 25 at the Dubai World Trade Centre.

Travel partners from across the globe had an opportunity to meet members from TAAI to exchange ideas and connect to discuss future opportunities to work together. TAAI sets an example of how an association is willing to work to enhance the travel agencies and how it is always set on working towards their goals.



This sends a global message of how TAAI always courageously takes innovative steps forward for all travel agencies and how important it is to embrace the new digital services. TAAI-Connect is an initiative spearheaded by the visionary leaders at TAAI to empower travel agencies with a website, mobile application. It showcases how modern technology in the travel industry will set travel agencies on the technology path to help them flourish more efficiently and modernise the way they operate.

TAAI shares the vision of the Government of India to transform India into a digitally empowered society and knowledge economy. We believe that this initiative will empower travel agencies and help drive creativity and choice, resulting in a smooth transaction for the customer. It will create global opportunities for travel agencies and more inbound, outbound travellers. India's travel agents will be fully equipped to compete on a global scale."









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Western Region educates members on new online process for Canada Visa



TAAI Western Region team invited Consul, Bernadette Croke Martin and the Vice Consul, Shafryne Sayani from the Consulate General of Canada to interact with members on the new online process for Canada visa, which has come into effect from September 2017.

A representative from Tourism Canada presented a video. TAAI and Tourism Canada have decided to associate for greater promotion of Canada through an MoU. TAAI will take up the responsibility to conduct roadshows on behalf of Tourism Canada for members in ten Tier 1 and Tier 2 cities in India.





"To other countries
I may go as a tourist,
but to India
I come as a pilgrim"

– Martin Luther King Jr,

Northern Region & VFS: VISA updates

TAAI Northern Region in association with VFS organised a meeting on March 15, 2018. About 40 plus members attended. VFS officials interacted with the members. Future actions were discussed for the upcoming holiday season. Members also gave their inputs and hardships being faced by them. The interactive session was applauded by the members. VFS assured that future interactive sessions would be a regular feature.



NR second Members Meet held at ITC Maurya, New Delhi

TAAI-NR held its second Members Meet on May 3, 2018 at the ITC Maurya, New Delhi wherein about 51 members participated and deliberated upon various initiatives. TAAI is coming up with initiatives for its members i.e. TAAI-JBG and TAAI Connect. The meeting was very interactive and was also graced by the Vice President, Sanjay Narula; Hon. Secretary General, Jyoti Mayal and Rajan Sehgal, Managing Committee Member of TAAI National Committee.

TAAI-NR also invited Pankaj Srivastava, the outgoing Commercial Director of Air India alongwith Anil Khaitan, President, PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industr who were felicitated by the National and Northern Region office bearers. They interacted with the members and assured their full support to TAAI and its members.







TAAI Southern Region & Department of History, Loyola College, Chennai

TAAI Southern Region was involved in the discussion organised at Board Studies meeting of Department of History, Loyola College, Chennai on March 2, 2018. The agenda of this meet was to discuss study trip, result analysis, approval for external examiners and change of course name as M.A History instead of M.A Applied History.



TAAI continues to foster Tourism Studies at Pondicherry University

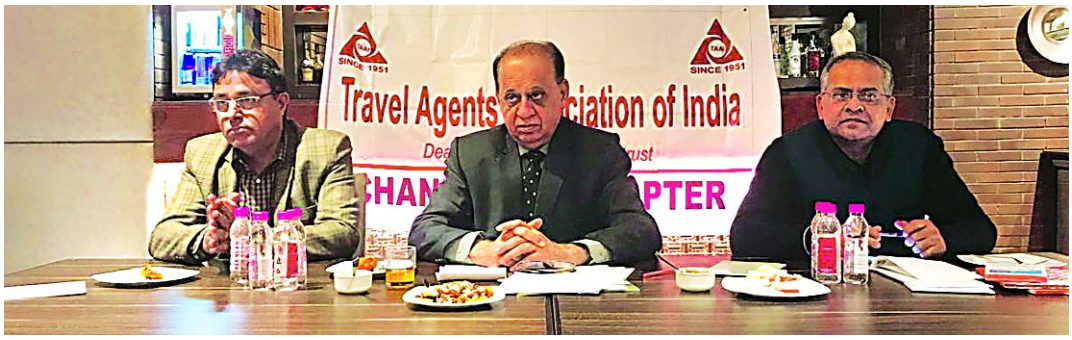


Once again, TAAI played a key role and supported the annual two-day institute-industry interface organised by the Department of Tourism Studies, Pondicherry University, at the popular event – Akanksha on February 16-17, 2018. For several years, at this important event, TAAI presents scholarships to most meritorious students in tourism studies.TAAI - Southern Region Chairman, Shahul Hameed was invited as the Guest of Honour.



Chandigarh Chapter Members Meet to review

Chandigarh Chapter held its chapter meeting at Hotel Oyster, Chandigarh. It was a review meeting and offered members the opportunity to connect with each other.





Chandigarh Chapter second meeting held in Solan





The TAAI Chandigarh Chapter held its members meeting in Solan on April 22, 2018. The highlight of the meeting was the discussion on the success of the TAAI Srinagar Convention. Anil Anand, Chairman of Chandigargh Chapter emphatically urged all the members to promote Jammu and Kashmir as a destination. There was also a discussion relating to the policy of the government on the issue of Air India tickets. In addition to this, there was also a discussion on ways to improve the image of TAAI. Towards the end of the meeting the Chairman conveyed his gratitude to the management of Forest Hill Resort for extending superb hospitality to all the members of TAAI- Chandigarh Chapter.

TRS Destination Training Programme by Gujarat Chapter

The Director of Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT), Mumbai Office, Soraya Homchuen gave a destination presentation along with Rashna Samel. It was a very interactive session owing to the interesting insights of Thailand on wildlife, adventure activities, pilgrimage destination, honeymoon destination and water sports activities.





Gujarat Chapter associates with TAT & SpiceJet for educational trip to Thailand

TAAI Gujarat Chapter organised an educational trip for its members to lesser known places of Thailand from February 25, 2018 to March 2, 2018. This was possible due to co-operation of Spicejet airline and Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT). The 20 participants were thrilled at seeing some amazing places, an eye-opening experience! This will help them package Thailand differently to attract repeat visitors.





South Gujarat Chapter felicitation ceremony



During the 2nd General Meeting on 4th May Netal Patel, Treasurer, South Gujarat Chapter was felicitated on his farewell party.

Saurashtra-Kutchh Chapter Meeting



The Saurashtra-Kutchh chapter held its 2nd General meeting at the Emerald Club in Rajkot. Devendra Shah, Chairman of the Sauchrashtra-Kutchh chapter presided over the meeting and discussed several topics such as the Joint Bank Guarantee and other trade fairs.



MP & CG Chapter holds second meeting

Second Meeting of TAAI MP & CG Chapter was held on April 14, 2018 in Raipur. It was organised in collaboration with the Chhattisgarh Tourism Board. Kedarnath Gupta, Vice-Chairman and M T Nandy, MD, Chhattisgarh Tourism Board urged TAAI members to promote Chhattisgarh as a new attractive and affordable tourist destination.

T K Jose, Chairman, MP & CG Chapter also extended his support and conveyed the message that TAAI had already requested the airlines to start international operations from Raipur to Dubai and Bangkok.





MP & CG Chapter TAAI branding at Indore Airport

The Indore airport was decked up, thanks to TAAI MP & CG Chapter who had created some arches and brought the airport greater attention. The airport witnessed excellent branding from the Chapter.



Karnataka Chapter interacts with Consul General of Indonesia



The office bearers of TAAI Karnataka Chapter led by Chairman Amish Desai interacted with the Consul General of Indonesia in April 2018. MC Member M S Raghavan too joined them. The Consul General complimented TAAI and highlighted that TAAI closely worked with Indonesia tourism. The 2016 TAAI Convention held in Bali was very successful. He drew the attention of the Indonesian delegation to the dramatic increase in number of arrivals into Indonesia in general, and Bali in particular, after the TAAI Convention was held there. The Consul General was honoured by TAAI with a shawl and the traditional Mysore *petha*. A copy of NAMASTAAI was also presented.

Rajasthan Chapter office bearers interact with heads of Las Vegas, California Tourism Boards and Brand USA

The office bearers of TAAI Rajasthan Chapter had a luncheon meeting at Hotel Ram Bagh Palace, Jaipur. It was for updating Product Knowledge in order to provide best of tourism related services to customers travelling to USA. Heads of Las Vegas, California Tourism Board and Brand USA were present.





TAAI AP & TS Chapter interacts on IATA's NewGen ISS & NDC

After a very successful Abu Dhabi Skills Workshop, the meeting of TAAI AP & TS Chapter was held on April 20 at Pavilion of Taj Deccan. It was well attended. Chairman Ajay and Secretary Nagesh invited both the National OBs - Sunil Kumar and Imtiaz Qureshi to share updates on IATA's NewGen ISS & NDC. The event turned out to be extremely fruitful, as the Chapter was also briefed about the TAAI convention at Srinagar in March 2018. The members were excited with the new initiative of TAAI launched at Srinagar, the TAAI Connect programme. There was eagerness and excitement reflected about members going online through the TAAI Connect programme. Members decided to focus on several matters that can be initiated locally through formation of chapter teams. These areas include - Corporate Credit Cards for members; TAAI events to inspire greater attendance and an Annual Dinner too.

Nagpur Chapter meets at Chitnavis Centre

The second meeting of Nagpur Chapter was held on March 3, 2018 at Chitnavis Centre. Twenty two members were present. Yazdi Marker, Area Manager- Maharashtra & Goa and Amit Kumar, Senior Executive - Sales, Nagpur from Jet Airways were invited as special guests and had an interactive discussion with the members. There was also an elaborate discussion on the TAAI Convention in Srinagar and the TAAI Connect programme.







TAAI's historic & successful 64th Convention at Srinagar: A huge visibility

Integration – Inspiration – Innovation for Incredible Tourism, unfolds in favour of Kashmir

The TAAI Convention returned to Kashmir after 30+ years. The 64th TAAI Annual Convention held in Srinagar focused on strengthening industry leadership in the field of aviation, inbound and outbound tourism, MICE and tapping of technology to digitally empower tour operators and travel agents while moving ahead with an aim to develop Jammu & Kashmir as a full-fledged tourist destination to 'an international tourist destination'





MC members escorted by host Chapter members in shikaras on Dal Lake for Convention inaugural ceremony

The Indian Travel Congress 2018 organised by Travel Agents Association of India (TAAI) from March 27-30, 2018 was held in Srinagar, the summer capital city of Jammu & Kashmir to showcase the rich natural heritage and tourism opportunities to the members and create new areas of trade. The 64th Convention and Exhibition of TAAI was held at Sher-I-Kashmir International Conference Centre (SKICC) which was supported by Ministry of Tourism, Jammu & Kashmir, convention hotels, hotel associations, houseboat owners association and other travel and





Chief Minister Mehbooba Mufti thanks TAAI – Awaits more tourism into J&K

Jammu & Kashmir is not just the warmest place on earth because of its people, but it also has a variety of tourism offerings, according to Mehbooba Mufti Sayeed, Hon'ble Chief Minister of the state. She hopes that the TAAI Convention in Srinagar will bring back more tourist footfalls to the state that has often been referred to Paradise on Earth but has been bypassed by tourists because of political unrest.

Speaking at the opening ceremony of the 64th Convention of the Travel Agents Association of India (TAAI) at the Sher-I-Kashmir International Conference Centre (SKICC), Mufti called upon media to refrain from showing J&K in a bad light. "There is no denying that we have problems. And there are incidents, but the way it is portrayed on television, it is as if the whole state is burning. Globally there are problems everywhere, but our problem is that our own country has deserted us." She remembered that her father (Mufti Mohammed Sayeed who served twice as Chief Minister of J&K) used to say that when a



tourist visits us, he invests in peace. "We have a diverse culture and tourism offerings. Jammu & Kashmir, Leh and Ladakh can be packaged together to bring in more tourists, " Mufti said. She thanked TAAI for holding the convention in Srinagar and hoped that it would open doors to more tourist arrivals.



March 26 & 27 :
- TAAI Managing Committee Meeting at Pahalgam

March 27
- TAAI Golf Tournament at Royal Springs Golf Resort, Srinagar
- TAAI Convention Press Conference
- TAAI Convention & Exhibition Inaugural at SKICC
- TAAI Opening Dinner & Entertainment : The LaLiT Grand Palace

March 28
- TAAI ITTE – India Travel Trade Expo @ SKICC
- Knowledge Sessions at SKICC
- Discover Srinagar
- TAAI Theme Dinner at "The Lawns of SKICC"

March 29
- TAAI ITTE – India Travel Trade Expo @ SKICC
- Knowledge Sessions at SKICC
- Discover Srinagar
- TAAI Gala Dinner at "The Lawns of SKICC"









Interview with Mahmood Ahmad Shah, Director Tourism, Kashmir

How keen were you to have the TAAI Convention in Srinagar this year?



If a mega event is happening after a gap of 31 years and when you have a long history with TAAI that is we have had seven conventions held prior to 1990 in Kashmir, So when TAAI showed inclination in coming to Kashmir and that too when they have been doing their conventions overseas, naturally we were upbeat and the stakeholders were also very upbeat about it. When Sunil Kumar and the Managing Committee members expressed their willingness to come to Kashmir, it couldn't have been a better opportunity for us to host this convention at the start of the season and also explore the blossomed tulip garden. So it was almost a perfect timing for the TAAI convention to happen.

If you have to describe in one word about TAAI coming to Srinagar, What would be your first response?

It was really amazing.

What is the impact that TAAI Convention has created for Jammu & Kashmir and for its tourism?

The impact is two-fold, an immediate impact and a long term impact. The immediate impact is that it has given an opportunity for the local stakeholders to interact with the TAAI fraternity with a lot of networking and MoUs were signed. Secondly, the TAAI delegates also got the opportunity to familiarise themselves with the current situation and the different products offered by the State. In addition to this, we were very happy when TAAI announced their visit to Kashmir and TAAI promised to promote Kashmir through social media, stationary and other advertisements which they had at their command. So this was another breakthrough achieved. It has to be a continuous engagement, so when we go on a road show we will now be associating with the Chapter Chairmen and involving TAAI for our roadshows for that purpose. It is not a one-off engagement but a continuous engagement with TAAI.

You said it is going to be a continuous engagement, what do you foresee in the near future or may be later, what sort of partnership you plan to establish with TAAI to support the facility & tourism promotion professionally?

If you look at the state's tourism bank we have tourists coming predominantly from Gujarat, West Bengal and Maharashtra. We have been working on two markets mainly south and central India and this time a lot of TAAI delegates came from South and Central India. Since many delegates came from this region, we also expect our numbers from South and Central India to pick up. For example, we have been going to Bengaluru, Chennai, Nagpur, Raipur, Kanpur, Indore, Raipur, Hyderabad in the last few years so have already been working on these markets and by virtue of this engagement it will further strengthen our ties with travel agents from South and Central India. The moment we started on the south and central markets, the numbers from south haves picked up, it's a huge market and Bengaluru is a market which caters to adventure so adventure opportunities are available. We are also concentrating on Gujarat, Maharashtra and West Bengal; it is not that we are ignoring these markets. Apart from that this market is also open for exhibitions.

At TAAI we had challenges in accepting registrations at the last moment as we had too many and we had to stop them at that time. Had you anticipated such a number?

We had certain problems in terms of staying capacity. We don't have too many five star hotels here and the convention centre can take 750 delegates and that is one of the weaknesses of this destination. TAAI has been having conventions here so we discussed this with TAAI and limited it to travel agents to get mileage as they can market this destination. Another factor that led to such an overwhelming response was that this destination is known across the country and everyone is eager to visit Kashmir.

It is not only that we are working with TAAI but also working with other bodies and operators from states like Gujarat and Maharashtra and they are also inclined to come but we can only host them in the lean season; right now it is full season time for tourists so we are pushing these conventions to the lean season.

Would you want TAAI to come back to Kashmir after a few years?

Of course, yes. We are addressing the accommodation issues. We have Grand Hyatt coming up with a 250 room capacity in couple of years; likewise we also have a Marriott property coming up. The work is already going on for these two hotels. Once they are ready it would be the best time for us to invite the TAAI team for a bigger delegation to this place.

Any other high impacting features?

We are working with the Government of India which is supporting Jammu & Kashmir through the Prime Minister Development Programme, by virtue of which we are addressing the deficiencies in the infrastructure. For instance, we are upgrading the winter facilities in Gulmarg, the lifts, machinery and the infrastructure. We are trying to improve facilities in our resorts, addressing garbage management and the sewage management issues in our resorts. It is paramount to have our destination clean.

tourism associations of the state. Over 600 participants and TAAI members attended the event.

The convention was organised on the theme 'Integration Inspiration Innovation' with its main focus on existing tourism activities and creating fresh opportunities for tourism in Jammu & Kashmir. With TAAI's large member base actively offering industry leadership in the fields of aviation, inbound and outbound tourism, MICE, technology and other industry verticals offering opportunities to network, interactions with prominent leaders at the knowledge sessions, the tour and travel fraternity also witnessed the hospitality of Jammu & Kashmir.



OPENING CEREMONY AT SKICC

The inauguration ceremony was held at the SKICC amidst the gathering of prominent personalities Mehbooba Mufti, Hon'ble Chief Minister, Jammu & Kashmir. She was accompanied by Tassaduq Hussain Mufti, Tourism Minister and Priya Sethi, Minister of State for Tourism and six other ministers. Director Tourism for Kashmir, Mahmood Ahmad Shah, played a key role in coordinating with the TAAI team and Sarmad Hafeez, Secretary Tourism, J&K guided the entire team. Speaking at the opening ceremony of the 64th Convention of (TAAI) at SKICC, Mufti thanked TAAI for organising its 64th convention in









Thank you Partners and Sponsors

IndiGo was the main airline partner for this TAAI convention at Srinagar. IndiGo organised highly subsidised travel for about 450 delegates and provided excellent air fares for delegates from pan India attending the TAAI convention in Srinagar. Other airlines like SpiceJet, GoAir and Air India also supported the event through special fares for TAAI delegates.

TAAI is delighted and expresses gratitude towards all the airlines that have encouraged many delegates to attend the TAAI convention in Srinagar.

This 64th TAAI convention at Srinagar was organised with support from Jammu & Kashmir Tourism and co-sponsored by Royal Arabian Tours, Trawell Tag, Amadeus, Bird Group, Roseate, VFS Global, Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, Interglobe, Travelport, Nijhawan group, TBO Group, FXkart, TPConnects, ITC Hotels, The LaLiT, WelcomHotel Pine and Peak, SATTE, Jetsave and Cox & Kings. The media partners included The Digital Travellers, ET Now, Travel TV.News and Travtalk.



Tamil Nadu Tourism and Gujarat Tourism also participated in the ITTE expo.

Srinagar as she believed that this would open doors to endless tourism possibilities for Jammu & Kashmir.

Also, speaking at the inaugural, Sunil Kumar, president, TAAI, stated, "TAAI has organised its convention in this beautiful city of Srinagar, the city of valleys, lakes and snowcapped peaks, after 30 years. Kashmir is the only state that has an abundant potential to be a full-fledged tourism destination and a place that offers the warmest hospitality. We at TAAI are delighted and thankful to the Government of Jammu & Kashmir for giving us the opportunity of organising our convention here in Jammu & Kashmir. It's high time now that we showcase this warm hospitality to the world. I see this convention as an opportunity for building and strengthening local support with TAAI, strategise and create new associations. This convention will give Kashmir the right kind of exposure and identity which will help in attracting more and more tourists in the state and promote local tourism."

Tassaduq Hussain Mufti addressed the convention, "TAAI convention is an







initiative of the Government of Jammu & Kashmir to help undo the negative perception being created about the tourism scenario. It needs to change so that tourism regains its old glory in the state." Later on, during the course of the event, various cultural performances were held followed by welcome dinner at The LaLiT Grand Palace.

KNOWLEDGE SESSIONS

The next two days at the SKICC enriched the gathering through B2B knowledge sessions and presentations related to tour and travel industry. The Business Sessions of both the days were presented by Vice-President, Sanjay Narula, Hon. Secretary General, Jyoti Mayal and Hon. Treasurer, Imtiaz Qureshi On the second day, various knowledge discussion sessions, ITTE B2B question-answer sessions were held during which lectures and presentations were given by the panel members on topics concerns and solutions related to tourism, aviation, digital empowerment of tour operators and travel agencies.

Expressing his insights on different aspects of credible tourism and its relevance to Jammu & Kashmir and speaking on 'Incredible Tourism-Inspiration', Wahid Siddiq, historian and former vice chancellor, IUST (Islamic University of Science & Technology) said, "There has been a considerable fall in the number of tourists visiting Kashmir. This is largely because of the missing credibility factor. Tour and travel operators do not present a clear picture to the tourist as a result of which, tourist influx decreases. Also, the travel agencies try to squeeze as much as they can from the domestic and foreign tourists hampering inbound tourism. This approach needs to be changed." Adding to the solutions for this problem, Siddiq added, "According to me, the best marketing strategy is to 'Know your Client'. We need to fill the gaps in the existing tourism infrastructure. All we need to do is to address the skill, product integrity, believe in teamwork." Questions were raised by other delegates during the session after his address. On being asked as what should be the strategy to change the perception in the minds of tourists regarding Kashmir, Siddiq said, "I think on the overall large scale if the tourism industry is going to strategise, you need the equivalent of an economic intelligence unit much more scale down to think about different group of people and think from a sociological, political, economic point of view and then look at a particular cause. This is what I call knowledge creation. "

Following Siddiq's address, Abdul Hadi Shaikh, CEO and co-founder, FXkart.com informed the gathering about his new website flyremit.com. He said, "Fund remittance from India has always been an hassle and involves a lot of paperwork which usually slows down the entire process. But flyremit.com, is entirely a paperless platform for transferring funds outside India. You can even find all tax rates over the website's interface; find latest live global market rates on the websites. You can also register the beneficiary, upload the invoice online and the KYC can also be done online with the click of a button. With all these features one can transfer funds on time, avoid the hassle of the documentation and track live Forex rates online. We also display the detailed breakup of your transaction online transparently, which is not an option with routine bank procedure. This way we aim to provide the travel agents and travel consultants the efficiency that they need in servicing their clients."

Media at TAAI Convention

A lot of media were associated with the TAAI Convention in Srinagar. Each of them were presented with an Appreciation Award for their participation in the Convention. Publications that were present for the Convention included Express TravelWorld, Todays Traveller / Newswire, Travel News Digest, TTG Asia, Asia News, Safari India, New India Publications, TravelBiz Monitor, The Digital Travellers, Travtalk India, MICE Talk, traveltv.news, Travel Span, Global Media, Mice Book India, Travel World Online, Travel Trends Today, Travel Trade Journal, Wonderlust, Whereabouts Media, Travel & Hospitality (TnH), Voyager's World, Mice Mirror, EMM Burda International Media India Group, Golf Plus magazine, T3FS, Travel Scapes, Tourism India, The Economic Times and Sadhana TV.

TAAI thanks our Media Partners for their support and patronage.



CAPA

A number of delegates and experts from tourism and trade industry also spoke on different aspects of aviation. During the second session, speaking on 'Fast Forward Future- An unstoppable industry awaits you', lead speaker Kapil Kaul, CEO, Centre for Asia Pacific Aviation (CAPA)-India, New Delhi said, "In order to boost tourism, there is a strong need for civic infrastructure development. Besides, institutional framework within the industry is needed so that trickledown effect on the local economy is considerable."

Taking account of low tourist footfall in Jammu & Kashmir, Kaul said, "Because of the lack of tourism infrastructure in the Valley, there are less tourist arrivals. There are a limited

THE TAAI GOLF TOURNAMENT

Inaugurated by Tassaduq Hussain Mufti, Minister for Tourism, Jammu & Kashmir, the TAAI Golf Tournament witnessed its tee-off on March 27, 2018, to celebrate and mark TAAI's 64th Convention & Exhibition. This event was held in one of the most renowned golf courses of the world – The Royal Springs Golf Course. The tournament was played between two teams - TAAI delegate team and the J&K Tourism team, both with around 35 golfers showcasing their golfing skills.



number of five-star hotels in Kashmir which is also attributed to the fall in tourist arrival." Commenting further on high ticket prices, Kaul added, "Rise and fall in the air ticket fares are mostly due to the demand and supply aspect. So, the earlier you book, the cheaper your ticket will be. Also, Srinagar airport should extend its operational hours in order to make the most out of the existing airline infrastructure."

During his address, he also highlighted the future travel trends. Kaul stated, "During the last two to three decades, we have added roughly 150-160 million passengers. In the next two years, there will be a 15 to 20 per cent growth in domestic tourist arrivals and around 12 per cent growth in foreign tourist arrivals."

FUTURE TRENDS IN TRAVEL BUSINESS

During the third session, there was a panel discussion on the topic 'Business Trends and NewGen ISS' moderated by Yossi Fatael, Vice



Press conference at SKICC

President, UFTAA (Universal Federation of Travel Agents Association), backed by panelists Rodney D'Cruz, Assistant Director, International Air Transport Association (IATA) India; Praveen Chugh, President, Travel Agents Federation of India (TAFI) and Sunil Kumar, President, TAAI. The panel brainstormed about the important road forward to NDC and how travel agents could grow by the same, how the business could be easier to transact and most importantly that they want IATA to be the mouthpiece of the agents and not only the airlines. In between knowledge sessions, tea breaks, presentations and lucky delegates awards supported by TBO (Travel Boutique Online) group were also held.



Knowledge sessions held on digital innovations and empowerment also invited questions from tour and travel fraternity. During the fourth session, speaking on the topic 'Innovation drives the Future' and use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and other technologies, Nakul Anand, Executive Director, ITC Hotels and Chairman, FAITH (The Federation of Associations in Indian Tourism & Hospitality) said, "Technologies like use of connected intelligence along with artificial intelligence, automated search algorithms, blockchains and other technology-driven platforms will help provide a seamless experience for the tourists."





HOUSEBOAT EXPERIENCES

Houseboat name: Bulbul

Houseboat Experience: We had a very good experience. The houseboat was well furnished and the rooms had all the amenities that we normally find in a hotel. The food, some of it made as per our request, was very delicious. Special mention must be made of the service...it was excellent. It is an experience worth repeating.

Vivek, MTPA

Houseboat name: Marco Polo, Nigeen Lake

Houseboat experience was good.

Mayur Bhatt, Bhatt Travels (Overseas) Pvt Ltd

Houseboat name: Khilona, Nigeen Lake

We (I and my spouse) had a lifetime's experience in 'Khilona' (Nigeen Lake) as the management and staff of the 'houseboat' were very courteous and gave us an excellent service, besides welcoming us with smiles. It reminded me of the Bollywood movies of the 70s which were shot in the houseboats. I thank the owner/management and the staff of 'Khilona' for their kind co-operation and will recommend a houseboat stay to my clients.

T Thangzalam Haokip, Haokip Travels (Imphal, Manipur)









After the knowledge sessions, the delegates explored different places of tourist attraction in Srinagar under 'Discover Srinagar', city tour of Srinagar offered free of cost to the delegates. A gala dinner was hosted in the evening at SKICC premises by the Dal Lake, for the delegates.

AVIATION PUSH TO TOURISM

Speaking at the inaugural ceremony at TAAI's 64th convention, Aditya Ghosh, President, IndiGo, India's leading low cost airline, emphasised over the urgent need for having fully functional airport at Srinagar. During his address, Ghosh said that if the government lowers the sales tax on the aviation fuel and keeps Srinagar's airport functional 24x7, then this measure would help to create more jobs in the aviation industry.

"The goal of national civil aviation policy of the Government of India is to ensure that there are half a billion domestic air travellers in India in next nine years. It would seem like an impossible task but if we grow at 25 to 30 per cent every year, we may well get to that half a billion mark before the next decade is out," Ghosh said. He also cited examples of relation and contribution of travel trade and tourism industry to country's GDP. He said, "Travel and tourism alone contribute to almost 9.4 percent of country's GDP. This is a clear indication that travel and tourism business in India nurtures





about 41 million jobs in India, which is third highest in the world in terms of figures. In the next 10 years, travel and tourism industry in India is expected to contribute about US$ 500 billion to the revenue generated by tourism industry each year."

TAAI CONNECT

Knowledge sessions were also held on technology and role of the internet in travel and tourism industry during which the delegates spoke on online transactions, internet penetration in India and digital empowerment of every tour and travel agency.

The next day session commenced with discussions on tech and digital empowerment. Expressing his insights on the topic, 'Are you Tech Ready? Embrace-Enable-Empower-Elevate', Rajendran Vellapalath, CEO, TPConnects said, "Currently internet penetration in India is growing rapidly and is expected to reach 635 million by 2021, up from current 460 million. We can drive customer satisfaction through digital transformation and empowerment. And looking at the current scenario, it has become the need of the hour that TAAI needs to digitally empower its agents. Be it a travel agent living in a metropolitan city to that one travel agent living in a



TAAI GOLF TOURNAMENT AWARDS





village or small town." Sandeep Dwivedi, COO, ITQ and Niranjan Gupta, CEO, Rainbow CTM were also part of the discussion. It was a very educative discussion on technology and how it is important but that the human touch is important too. We should use technology to our benefit to improve our business.

Extending its partnership to TAAI, Dubai based IT provider and travel aggregator TPConnects, announced the launch of TAAI Connect, an application to digitally empower its members. The digital platform comes with the option where TAAI members can attach their own portal to the system initiate integrated ticketing, GDS, payment gateway, mobile applications, corporate booking tool, and upload own products on the B2B as well as the B2C compliant platform.

TAAI SIGNS MoU WITH PHDCCI

TAAI and the PHD Chamber of Commerce & Industry (PHDCCI) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on the second day of the event for the promotion of tourism. Sunil Kumar, President, TAAI and Anil Khaitan, President, PHDCCI signed the MoU.

The tour and travel fraternity also benefitted from the knowledge session held on 'Tourism an Opportunity' presided by Sarmad Hafeez, Secretary Tourism, Government of Jammu & Kashmir; Asif Burza, Managing Director, Ahad Group of Hotels, Jammu & Kashmir; E M Najeeb, Chairman and Managing Director, Great India Tours and Bejan Dinshaw, Country Manager, India, Abu Dhabi Tourism and Cultural Authority. This was a very interactive discussion on how every traveller is a story teller and no one can be a bigger ambassador than the travel agents to promote tourism into the country. Also how government and private partnerships were important to promote tourism.

Praising the picturesque tourist locations and beauty of Kashmir, Najeeb said, "Kashmir is a real paradise, no doubt about it. This is what I have experienced over the past few days. The state has kept the monuments, roads and every small thing well managed and the people here are extremely hospitable. Such experiences will bring a lot of tourists to India. Also, cross-promoting Kashmir will give a boost to the tourist influx into the state and I request secretary tourism to promote Kerala tourism."

Speaking about the importance of offering travel experience in tourism and travel trade, Burza said, "Digital platforms and online portals can sell a room but they cannot sell an experience. In Pahalgam, we started a village walk wherein a group of tourists was taken to the villages in order to make them feel as if they were a part of that village where they could see the daily activities, eat the traditional food and connect with the locals. So, travel and tour companies today, need to offer such experience enriching activities to the tourist in order to make him feel at home."

Third panel discussion during the day was moderated by Yogesh Gondal, Editor, New India Publications. The panel included Mohd Ashraf, former Director General Tourism - J&K;

Murari Mohan Jha, UBM India; Jyoti Mayal, Hon. Secretary General, TAAI and Mahmood Ahmad Shah, Director Tourism, Kashmir.

The panel discussed how media should play a responsible and sensitive role so that tourism does not get affected in any state or country. Media could help in the growth of any country. It was suggested that a task force should be set up to see the implementation of the right messages going to the world.

A lunch was hosted thereafter by Vivanta by Taj at the famous Indira Gandhi Memorial Tulip Gardens in Srinagar.

PRE AND POST TOUR EXPERIENCE AND HOUSEBOAT STAY

Prior and post the convention, the delegates were offered a complimentary one night stay in the houseboats on Dal and Nigeen Lakes on March 26 and 30, 2018. These houseboats are furnished with single, double and triple bedded rooms and have all the amenities similar to a luxury hotel. One time complimentary breakfast was served to the delegates along with Dal Lake view on a Shikara during their stay in the houseboats.

Also, two-night pre tours (March 25-March 27) and post tours (March 30-April 1), to Pahalgam and Gulmarg was also offered to the delegates so that they could feel the incredibility and serenity of these two hill stations and promote the same to their clientele.

INDIA TRAVEL TRADE EXPO 2018 (ITTE)

Alongside the convention, was the ITTE (India Travel Trade Expo 2018) that was inaugurated on the first day of the convention. It offered an excellent B2B opportunity to the visiting delegates to connect with suppliers.

The exhibition saw excellent participation from both the local as well as international tourism stakeholders. Different local tourism and travel stakeholders had set up their stalls for the delegates.









CONVENTION CENTRE AND ACCOMMODATION

The convention was organised at the Sher-I-Kashmir International Conference Centre (SKICC) in Srinagar. Designed by Joseph Stein, SKICC stands on the banks of Dal Lake and is surrounded by mountains. It is equipped with infrastructure of international standard best suitable for contemporary requirements of MICE. SKICC has a climate conditioned auditorium with a capacity of housing 750 delegates along with latest audio-visual systems, simultaneous interpretation systems and video conferencing facility backed up by broadband Wi-Fi. The venue has hosted visits of the President and Prime Minister of India. The delegates had a wonderful time during their stay in the hotels provided to them by the managing committee. Delegates had been accommodated in different hotels namely:

- The LaLiT Grand Palace
- Vivanta by Taj-Dal View Lake Resort
- Radisson, Srinagar
- ITC's - Fortune Resort Heevan
- Four Points by Sheraton, Srinagar
- Hotel Metropolis
- Heritage by Heevan
- Kashmir Mahal Resorts.

MINISTERS IN ATTENDANCE

The TAAI convention was attended and supported by Ministry of Tourism, Jammu & Kashmir and Ministry of Tourism, Government of India. Mufti Sayeed, Chief Minister, Jammu & Kashmir extended her warm regards to the organising committee of TAAI, Tassaduq Hussain Mufti, Minister for Tourism, Jammu & Kashmir also expressed his gratitude towards the congregation of delegates.

Priya Sethi, Minister of State, Jammu & Kashmir highlighted the need to recognise Kashmir's potential as a full-fledged tourist destination. The event was also graced by Sarmad Hafeez, Secretary Tourism, Jammu & Kashmir and Mahmood Ahmad Shah, Director Tourism, Kashmir.

AWARDS

TAAI felicitated Chief Minister, Jammu & Kashmir as a token of honour and respect for letting them organise 64th convention of TAAI here in Srinagar. TAAI also felicitated Tassaduq Hussain Mufti, Minister for Tourism, Jammu & Kashmir for his presence.

TAAI also recognised and honoured Nakul Anand, Executive Director, ITC Hotels and Chairman, FAITH; Aditya Ghosh, President, IndiGo; Jyotsna Suri, Chairman and Managing Director, LaLiT Group of Hotels and Dev Karwat of Trawell Tag for their support and presence throughout the convention.



TAAI Convention @ Kashmir – A huge success
Delegates share experiences (Excerpts)



Our family has been in the travel business for over fifty years. My grandfather, Bhagwan Kanuga, former SG, TAAI and VP, UFTAA, my father, Anoop Kanuga, MC member and myself made our way to the picturesque destination of Kashmir. Not only did the convention give me an insight into the travel industry, the expertise imparted by the senior TAAI members, made it a huge learning experience. The business sessions were very informative and interesting, covering all relevant industry topics. Sunil Kumar, the President himself is a man full of energy and enthusiasm and inspired the entire TAAI Committee and all its members to put up a great show and ensure the event was a success and it was indeed. It was a moment of honour for our family when my grandfather received the award for his outstanding contribution to the industry and TAAI.

The warm welcome, security measures, perfect organisation are what made my journey memorable. When I look back at our Kashmir trip, it strikes me as one of the most beautiful places I have seen, with the bounty of nature - Tulip Garden, the Dal Lake - surrounding us and what made it even more special was to share this journey with the two senior generations of my family and TAAI.

Akshaan Kanuga
Bathija Travels P Ltd , Mumbai
(Son of Anoop Kanuga)





The 64th Convention & Exhibition of Travel Agents Association of India (TAAI) was successfully held in Srinagar, the summer capital of the state of Jammu & Kashmir, with TAAI and the J&K Government going the extra mile to make this event successful and memorable. The occasion was a wonderful opportunity to know Kashmir once again. TAAI organised this limited edition convention in Srinagar to showcase this beautiful Indian state to our members and many others from the industry. Having seen and experienced this incredible destination, we are hopeful that our members will promote Kashmir aggressively among their clients. There is a misapprehension that Kashmir is an unsafe destination. The region is completely safe for tourism. Few sporadic incidents should not deter tourism from visiting this wonderful place; this convention will definitely go a long way in allaying the fear about security and safety in the state and promoting tourism. I am sure Jammu & Kashmir, especially Kashmir will once again emerge as a favourite destination among travellers after the successful conclusion of our TAAI convention in Srinagar.

Neeraj Malhotra
Chairman, TAAI Northern Region,
Ganpati Travels, New Delhi



It was a great pleasure to participate in the 64th Convention & Exhibition of TAAI Indian Travel Congress held at Srinagar, Jammu & Kashmir in March alongwith my wife and children. TAAI conventions are always a great attraction to the industry leaders promoting travel, tourism and hospitality.... It was a wonderful experience and we enjoyed houseboats in Srinagar. During the stay at Srinagar, the arrangements made by the organisers were excellent. J&K has been endowed with nature's best and that is why it has been an object of interest for many travel enthusiasts. We visited Gulmarg, dubbed as a Skiers' Paradise and it is indeed amongst the best places to visit in Jammu & Kashmir. Meadow of Flowers as it is popularly called, Gulmarg is a heaven for adventure enthusiasts as well. Along with prominent skiing options, trekking, snowboarding, golfing and mountain biking are the prime options that Gulmarg overwhelms us. We also visited Kongdori, Shark Fin and Apparwath Peak not only for skiing, but also to witness the splendid natural landscape of Gulmarg. Also we enjoyed the cable car ride, visited Nagin Valley for trekking, Khilanmarg, Frozen Lake and Bota Pathri.

We visited Pahalgam to witness the green meadows and the lofty mountains. All through our journey we engaged in activities like horse riding, trekking and golfing. Pahalgam is a hill station and safe area for tourists which is the starting point of Amarnath Yatra that take place every year. The moment we arrive at this pristine land, we are wonderstruck by the sumptuousness, green fields and farms of saffron, the valleys were green and very beautiful. It was really a wonderful experience we had throughout in Jammu & Kashmir to remember for a long time. I hope we can conduct such conventions in the near future again at Jammu & Kashmir for bringing more tourism into the state.

K Shahul Hameed
Chairman, TAAI Southern Region
Al- Awhad Travels (P) Ltd, Chennai

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for choosing Srinagar on 64th TAAI Convention which played a positive role to dispel fear psychosis. Congratulations to TAAI and entire team who are driven by a passion for tourism and love for bringing humanity together for its role in promoting J & K tourism industry.

Our heartfelt reverence to entire TAAI team and my sincere appreciation and personal thanks to the Ministry of Tourism, J&K; Department of Tourism and entire team who put their efforts to make this Convention a great success and for hosting this mega event. Also appreciate all travel fraternity/associations who worked day and night to make this event a great success.

Abdul Hamid Narwari
MD, Earth Explorers Travel and Tours P Ltd, Srinagar



First of all we are very happy to have been a part of this convention. From the top to grass root level, the management was excellent. All the days I must say were a fantastic experience for my colleagues and me. The selection of the venue was also superb. Kashmir is great and gorgeous, a heaven on earth. When we stepped into Kashmir, the climate was good and it was the perfect timing for the convention. The convention targeted important topics, conversations, subjects, and dialogues along with presentations on all aspects covered by proper highlights. I observed that the government, tourism board and media strongly supported the event. The hospitality of TAAI & TAAI Jammu & Kashmir Chapter was speechless and it was superb teamwork at the ground level, hotels, convention venue, transportation, taking care of delegates, food and sightseeing, etc.

Devendra Shah
Chairman, TAAI Saurashtra-Kutchh Chapter
Devendra Travels & Tours, Rajkot

It was a wonderful gathering of all trade and media people, well around 650 delegates had attended the same. The arrangement was fantastic and well organised and you can call it a 100 per cent successful convention in all respects. Now it is our responsibility to promote Kashmir in large, and they need more and more tourists, so that their standard of living will improve, as tourism is the only source of their bread and butter, it is necessary that we all must promote Kashmir, Jammu and Leh Ladakh also. And all credit goes to the local TAAI Chapter, who has wholeheartedly supported the event.

Kishor Parate
Chairman, Nagpur Chapter
Flight Travel House,
Dharampeth , Nagpur

TAAI convention boosted the tourism sector in Kashmir and also generated good volume of employment. Hospitality of the hotels and the convention centre (SKICC) was excellent and of five-star standard and the transportation arrangement was excellent. Even though the state of Kashmir is affected by terrorism, the people of Kashmir are against terrorism and they promote tourism in Kashmir by organising these types of conferences and meetings in coordination with various industry commerce associations of different states.

T K Jose
Chairman, TAAI MP & Chattisgarh Chapter
Jose Travels, Indore

The convention was historic and great. The hospitality extended to the delegates by Jammu & Kashmir Chapter and Ministry of Tourism of Kashmir was excellent. The sessions conducted during the convention were truly inspiring and knowledgeable. It was indeed a dream come true for me when I visited Kashmir with my spouse and my son. Phalgham is the most beautiful and picturesque valley on earth. I will promote tourism and will definitely visit this popular hill station again which is flanked by mountain peaks and pine trees.

Sita Antao
Chairperson, Goa Chapter
Meeting Point Travel, Salcete, Goa



It was the first time I attended a TAAI convention - I can say with confidence that TAAI convention at Srinagar was indeed a grand success. We could meet travel agents and allied business personnel and have a good interaction to expand business and cooperate and connect to give a better experience to our clients.

Knowledge sessions with keynote address by you, Aditya Ghosh, Kapil Kaul and Nakul Anand were very good and highlighted the various opportunities and difficulties of travel and tourism industry.

Our accommodation at The Metropolis and the vehicle provided to us along with the sightseeing at Srinagar was indeed a memorable experience. I cannot thank you enough for the same sir. Looking forward to attending the next TAAI convention.

Prashant P
Flywel Travels, New Delhi

Undoubtedly, this is the best ever convention I have ever attended in the past 15 years. Pictorial city of Dal Lake, spectacular gardens, stunning tulips, classic hotels, houseboats, furnished with equipment, venue of SKICC with lavish dinners and amazingly organised lunch at the Tulip Garden. The pre and post tours were safely managed with local sightseeing in all new vehicles with trained chauffeurs. The Chief Minister's address to the audience was important and impressive with an appeal to bring more and more people to Kashmir to help the state. Zahoor, Sunil and his team and of course the people of Kashmir, participants, Government of Jammu & Kashmir were the pillars of this successful convention.

Manoj Sogani
Chairman, Rajasthan Chapter
BCS Tours And Travels Pvt Ltd, Jaipur

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Delegate Feedback

We present some of the feedback we received from our delegates. All were appreciative of the arrangements, the knowledge sessions and the great venue which made the TAAI Convention a memorable one

"It was very nicely put together in terms of venues and knowledge sessions. The VVIP treatment meted out to the delegates by everyone in J&K made it all the more special. This was my fifth visit to Kashmir and initially I was wary of attending the convention as there was nothing in Srinagar that I hadn't seen before but like Sunil Kumar rightly pointed out, the TAAI Convention made it different and all the more special. The opportunity to interact with the stalwarts of the industry and meet our colleagues in the travel trade helps us realign ourselves with today's market trends. A special mention of the J&K team for the wonderful idea of the Tulip Garden Lunch which made it all the more special"

Anita Sharma, International Travel Forum, Indore



"Good interactive session"

Seema Sharma, Interglobe Air Transport, Delhi

"The convention helped with networking & the business sessions were very informative. All the arrangements were fantastic, from transfers to hotel accommodation to other facilities. The venue was the highlight. Kashmir is beautiful & should be promoted for tourism by us all "

Phalguni Parikh
Interglobe Technology Quotient, Kolkata

"It was a very good experience exploring Srinagar specially one night at the houseboat in Dal Lake. Right from transportation arrangement to attending sessions, everything was perfectly coordinated and flawless. I would love to associate with TAAI's future events"

Arun Kumar Das
PIB accredited journalist, New Delhi

"I appreciated all the arrangements of TAAI Convention whether it is about meetings and networking or about accommodation and all other arrangements well managed by the team. Special thanks to the Team of TAAI for such great efforts to make this happen"

Bhimeshwar Arya
Flywell Travels, New Delhi

"Very well organised and coordinated convention in all sectors that were very important. Good combination of work and pleasure / sightseeing which was needed to see this 'Heaven on Earth – Kashmir'. Special mention and thanks to TAAI J&K Chapter - chairman and his entire team for their almost 24x7 on the job duties performed. Hats off to them!"

Sriram Prayaga
Tourism Corporation Of Gujarat - Gujarat Tourism

"This was a great experience"

Anita Meattle
TravelSpider, New Delhi

"Very well organised and well managed event. Arrangements were awesome. Drivers were very courteous and helpful"

Ritu Bakshi
ONYX Hospitality c/o Outbound Marketing India, Delhi





"The meticulous planning done for the event reflected well. Kudos to the whole team of TAAI who managed this grand convention in city like Srinagar. The knowledge sessions where amazing. Particularly the insightful speech by Aditya Ghosh of IndiGo on the opening day of the convention is still fresh in my memory"

Ashfaq Syed
Kashmir Trails, Srinagar, J&K

"Thanks to TAAI for organising a fabulous and successful convention and enabling me to make a tryst with Heaven on Earth and see nature at its best in all its grandeur and pristine beauty - mesmerising landscapes dotted with lakes, snow-clad mountains, wooden houses, mosques (with a few temples here and there), Kashmiri cuisine and so much more. Seeing is believing. Contrary to popular perception, Kashmir is all peace, warmth and hospitality. I also got to see Asia's largest tulip garden almost kissing the Zabarvan foothills"

Rajesh Kumar
EMM Burda International, Gurgaon

"Sessions were very informative and engaging. TAAI President steered the convention in the right direction to leverage collective strength of TAAI members. The sessions rightfully focussed on digital trends and emerging opportunities. Due importance is given and emphasis is laid on creating experiences"

Challoju Kiran, Fortune Park Hotels, Mumbai

"Exceptionally good arrangements were made. Sessions and topics discussed were very informative. Everything was meticulously managed like the venue for the event, technical sessions, air tickets, accommodation, transport by Innovas, widespread vegetarian and non veg food, post tour and prizes. Complimentary house boat was the additional attraction"

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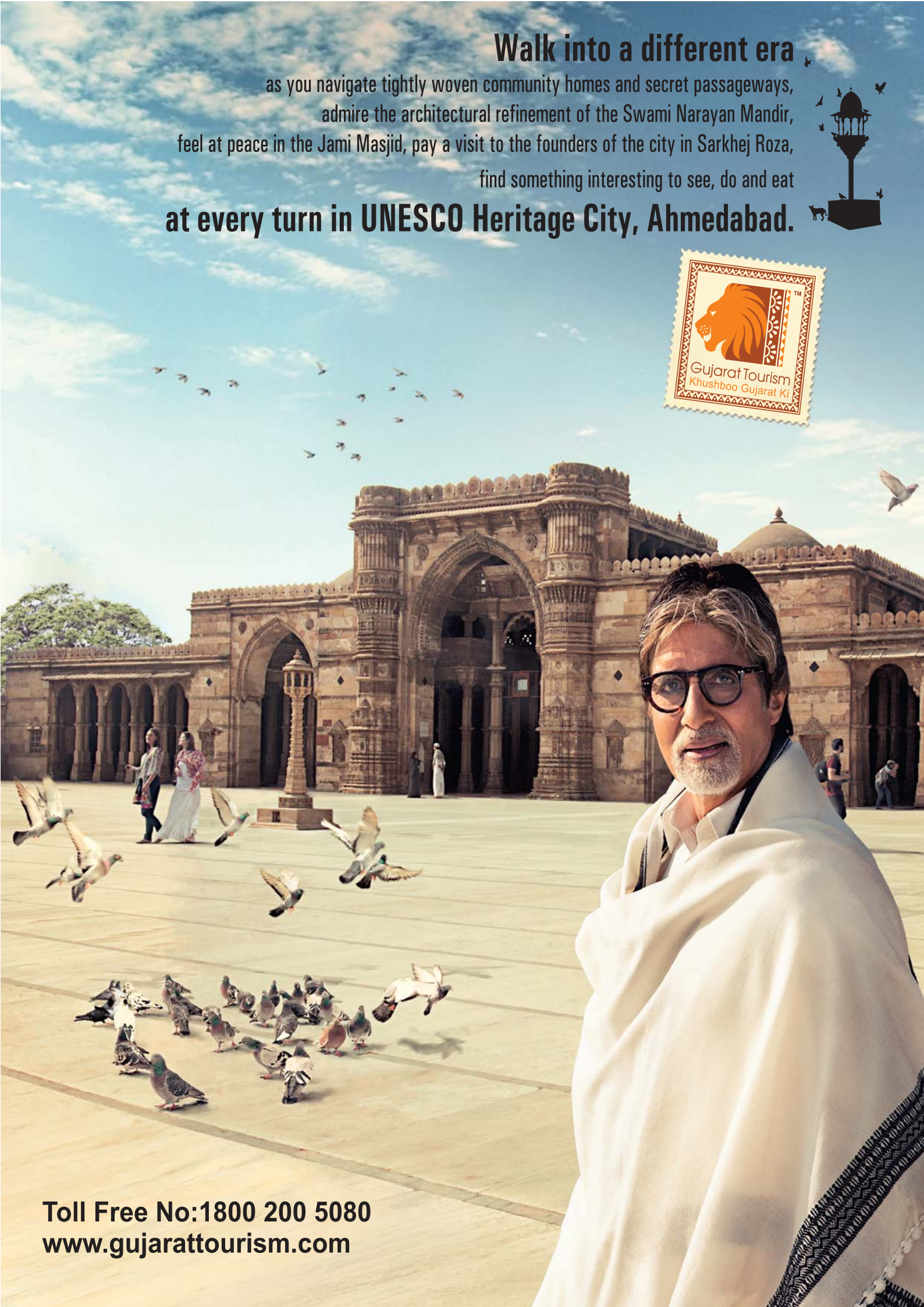

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FESTIVALS

India as a country with its unified diversity houses many cultures and religions. This has led to the celebration of numerous festivals across the year. One of the most colourful festivals celebrated in the world, Holi, is representative of India's essence and vibrancy. Among the famous places to celebrate Holi in India, Mathura, Vrindavan, Dwarka and Kumaon region of Uttarakhand are the best. The festival of lights, Diwali is one of the Indian festivals which is celebrated with great fervour and enthusiasm across the country in different ways. According to Hindu beliefs, when Rama and Sita returned to Ayodhya after an exile of 14 years after defeating Ravana, the people welcomed them with lighting of lamps. Navratri is a nine day festival celebrated in the worship of the Hindu goddesses Durga, Lakshmi and Saraswati. The devotees fast during the day and come out to celebrate through dance in the evening. The festival is celebrated all over India but in different ways. In the western area, specially in the state of Gujarat it is a joyous occasion where people step out to enjoy the garba nights or dandiyaraas. In West Bengal, it is celebrated as Durga Puja where people gather in pandals and worship the goddess.

Another huge religious festival of India is Eid-ul-Fitr which is followed by the month long fasting. The Muslim community is seen celebrating with Iftar parties which see active participation from other communities. Goa Carnival is a perfect example of the vibrant culture and festivity mood of the state. The four day extravaganza brings together travellers from all around the globe. A festival known for its colourful delights, Konark Dance Festival sees renowned classical dancers from all over the country get together to pay tribute to the Sun temple at Konark. A celebration of the cultural heritage of the Nagas, the Hornbill Festival is one of the biggest cultural carnivals of the north east. It is a weeklong celebration where all the Naga tribes come together. Gujarat is known to be the land of distinct culture and one of the most widely celebrated festivals of this region is the International Kite Festival. It is celebrated every year on January 14 and also commonly known as Uttaraya and Makar Sankranti in northern India. In Tamil Nadu, this festival is celebrated as Pongal on January 15.



FOOD & FLAVOURS

India's cuisine culture is as diverse as its cultural heritage. Exploring the finer nuances of India's food heritage would take a lifetime for any traveller. However, a visit to the cuisine capitals of the country would give them an insight to the best of India's rich and evolving food culture.

In the north, the Kashmiri cuisine has evolved over hundreds of years, and strongly represents several influences such as Central Asian, Persia, and the north Indian plains. The most notable ingredient in Kashmir cuisine is mutton (lamb). Wazwan, a multi-course meal in Kashmiri cuisine and a matter of pride in Kashmiri culture and identity, includes dishes that are meat-based (lamb, chicken, fish). Amritsar is a great city to experience the best of Punjabi cuisine. Some favourites



include stuffed paranthas and dairy products (in particular paneer), maa ki dal (lentil) and sarson da saag (mustard leaves). Uttar Pradesh has also been greatly influenced by Mughal (Mughlai cuisine) cooking techniques which is very popular worldwide. Lucknowi biryani, Tundey kabab, kulcha nihari are the most famous dishes from the capital of UP that have attracted visitors to the city to experience the food in its traditional eateries.

The cuisine of Madhya Pradesh is a confluence of tastes. True to its exquisiteness and taste, MP's cuisine has its influence from Rajasthani and Gujarati cuisines. The food of Chattisgarh is primarily tribal cuisine, while in the west, the cuisine of Maharashtra is widely influenced by seafood and coconut. The coastal region of Maharashtra boasts of Konkan cuisine, which is a combination of Malvani, Gaud Saraswat Brahmin and Goan cuisines. Mumbai is the food capital of the state and offers an entire range of Maharashtrian cuisine along with a harmonised combination of Christian, Mughal, Parsi and Gujarati cuisines. The sweet and spicy vegetarian fare of Gujarati cuisine is popular across the country. The traditional Gujarati Thali is the perfect example of the best in Gujarati cuisine. Goan cuisine offers a blend of the east and the west, from mouth-watering fish curry to aroma of Feni, Goans have an assorted platter reflecting the traditional style of cooking.

The southern states have a rich cuisine heritage. While Andhra Pradesh food is known for its heavy use of spices and chillies, Telugu cuisine has a distinctive identity of its own from Hyderabadi cuisine, the most famous of which is the Hyderabadi biryani. In Karnataka, masala dosa, rava idli, and medu vada are popular. Kerala cuisine has a wide range of dishes prepared using fish, poultry and meat. The traditional Kerala Sadhya, served on banana leaf is much liked by both locals and tourists. Appam, idiyappam and puttu are favourite breakfast dishes. In Tamilnadu, sambhar, vathal kuzhambu, idli, dosa, uthappam and pongal are popular. Chettinad cuisine has a distinct taste of its own and is famous for its use of meat marinated in spices.

Bengali cuisine is well known for its fish preparations, which are cooked in various ways – steamed, stewed with vegetables, cooked in mustard / poppy seed paste. Panchphoran (five spices) is a typical aspect of Bengali cuisine. Milk based Bengali desserts are also much savoured across the country, in particular rosogolla, rajbhog, ras malai, cham cham, etc. In the northeastern states, Khaar (a meat delicacy), duck meat curry and maasor tenga (tangy fish curry) are much relished. Boiled rice cakes wrapped in leaves is a favourite snack in Arunachal Pradesh, while in Meghalaya rice is combined with spicy meat and fish preparations. Mizoram's cuisine is a blend of Chinese and north Indian cuisines. Dried fish, prawns and ghost chilli are common ingredients of Naga cuisine, while Sikkim has its own unique dietary culture.

FLORA AND FAUNA

In the melange of tourism offerings, India's flora and fauna enjoys a prominent place with its numerous forestlands spread across the country. The increasing interest among tourists to explore the flora and fauna treasures of India is further facilitated by the emergence of eco tourism and wildlife tourism. The northern region of India is home to numerous national parks, housing a myriad of wildlife. These include Dachigam National Park, Hemis National Park, Pin Valley National Park, Great Himalayan National Park, Corbett National Park, Rajaji National Park, Ranthambore National Park and many more. Starting from the tip of India, the Himalayan range is one of the richest hotspots for animal life. While the Dal Lake is a bird watcher's paradise, the Dachigam National Park harbours the last viable population of the endangered Hangul or Kashmir Stag. Pin Valley National Park in Himachal Pradesh is characterised by alpine pasture or dry alpine scrub forest. So far more than 400 plants species have been reported in this area, which is rich in medicinal herbs and spices. There are more than 20 species of animals and birds in the park. Pin Valley National Park is specially renowned for the endangered snow leopard. Corbett Tiger Reserve in Uttarakhand has captured the imagination of many with its diverse wildlife and landscapes. The most famous of Corbett's wild residents are the Royal Bengal tigers and the Asiatic elephant.

The western region prides itself being home to Gir National Park – the only place with wild lions, outside Africa. Maharashtra has some of the largest wildlife sanctuaries located in ecological hotspots that attract both, researchers and tourists in huge numbers. Of these, the Melghat Tiger Reserve is one of the best known in the country. Located amidst the bustling city of Mumbai, the Sanjay Gandhi National Park provides a window to a fascinating world of animals and birds. The park is home to 274 species of birds along with 42 kinds of mammals, of which the most renowned is the elusive leopard. Nagpur's Tadoba is probably one of India's finest tiger reserves. In the east, Odisha's Similipal Tiger Reserve is the only home for the unique melanistic tiger in the world. Chilika Lake in Odisha also imbibes one of the most supportive ecosystems, Chilka Wildlife Sanctuary, in the region. It is also popularly known as Nalabana Bird Sanctuary. Further in West Bengal, Sundarbans – a UNESCO World Heritage Site – is the largest single block of tidal, halophytic mangrove forests in the world and is also home to one of India's most iconic wildlife species, the Royal Bengal Tiger. Kaziranga National Park in the northeastern state of Assam is home to more than 70 per cent of one-horned rhinoceros in the world.



Down south, Bandipur National Park in Karnataka is part of the Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve totaling 2,183 sq km, making it the largest protected area in southern India and largest habitat of wild elephants in south Asia. Further down, Kerala's Periyar Tiger Reserve is another example of rich bio diversity. Sprawled over an area of 925 sq km, Periyar is one of the 27 tiger reserves in India. It is a repository of rare, endemic and endangered flora and fauna and forms the major watershed of two important rivers of Kerala, the Periyar and Pamba.



Dive into the adventurous world of Sonmarg!

Sonmarg is located in the Ganderbal district of Jammu and Kashmir and is synonymous with 'meadow of gold'. The valley is home to a variety of peaks like Kolhoi Peak, Amarnath Peak and Sirbal Peak. The destination is about 85 km away from Srinagar and is a treat to the eyes while driving through the enchanting Himalayan Mountains

The beauty of Sonmarg is hard to miss! The two important features that define Sonmarg are its vast leisure valleys and adrenaline rushing activities. Capturing the highlights of the region will definitely make you want to head there for a surreal and fulfilling experience. With green valleys and surrounding thick forests, Sonmarg is an ideal place for hiking and camping along the riverside. Summers are the ideal time for exploring the hiking trails. The natural beauty with snow-covered mountains is a welcome sight for many travellers.

A TREAT FOR ADVENTURE SEEKERS

WHITE RIVER RAFTING AT SHUTKARI BRIDGE

A long whitewater river rafting expedition is carried out from Baltal to Shutkari Bridge and offers grade level four rapids on the Indus River. The rafting is great for experienced as well as novice rafters and is one of the best experiences you will ever have at Sonmarg.

THE THAJIWAS GLACIER

There are a lot of trekking trails in Sonmarg for those who love exploring the countryside. Expedition to the Thajiwas glacier at an altitude of 9,186 feet is a silvery scene set against the emerald meadows and a clear blue sky. There are numerous waterfalls







around the enchanting glacier. During winters, it is covered under a blanket of snow and becomes a hotbed of snow related adventures. Skiing, ice skating and sledging on frozen glaciers are some of the activities adventure seekers can indulge in. The trek is hard and long but the captivating views make the experience worthwhile.

STUNNING BLUE WATER LAKES

Krishnasar Lake, one of the most mesmerising lakes in the chain of many Himalayan lakes, is a good spot for picnics. The place is surrounded by dense alpines and creates a breathtaking view at a height of 3801 m above sea level. Another popular lake is the Vishansar lake which is about a kilometre long and more than half a kilometre wide. The Neelum River - a tributary of the Jhelum River originates from this lake that is fed by several glaciers. The surroundings of Vishansar Lake consist of snow-clad peaks, glaciers, mountain gorges, green pastures and colourful alpine flowers, which make the entire scenery breathtaking. During the winter season, it stays in a frozen state, whereas lush vegetation encompasses it with the arrival of summers. The place is frequently visited by nature lovers in the search of tranquil peace and soothing natural beauty.

AMARNATH YATRA

Enveloped by alpine trees, Sonmarg is a base camp for the pilgrims of the holy Amarnath Yatra along the exotic grasslands of Baltal. The yatra is organised during the months of July-August every year, and thousands of devotees make their journey to the cave where Lord Shiva revealed the secret of everlasting life to his wife Parvati.

ZOJI LA PASS

Zoji La Pass is located about nine km from Sonmarg and is a very important link between Kashmir and Ladakh. It is known for its thick snow covered layers along the road. Historically, the pass was captured by Pakistan in a war and was later re-captured by the Indian forces for which this place becomes a must visit as it was the highest land where tanks were used.

TAMIL NADU

Cultural hotspot

Apart from eight UNESCO World Heritage Sites, Tamil Nadu also offers a display of classical arts, music and literature to its visitors. The state attracts a huge number of pilgrim travellers because of its religous sites that boasts of Tamil architecture



Tamil Nadu called as 'The Land of Tamils' is situated in the southernmost part of the Indian Peninsula. Bordered by the union territory of Puducherry and the south Indian states, Tamil Nadu also shares a maritime border with Sri Lanka.



PLACES TO SEE

CHENNAI

Chennai, the capital city of Tamil Nadu is known as the 'Detroit of India' for the amount of automobile industries located here. There are many legends surrounding its name, one originating from the time when the place was just a



fishing village located to the north of the Fort St George.

KODAIKANAL

This town in Tamil Nadu welcomes visitors with its long stretches of forests and kurinji, flowers which blossom once in twelve years. For bicycle-enthusiasts, cycling along these roads is a real treat and other than that, activities like horse riding, boating and trekking can also be done.

KANYAKUMARI

Also known as Cape Comorin, Kumari and Kumari Munai, Kanyakumari is 705 kms from Chennai. A 'rocky mainland' on the Indian Ocean in Tamil Nadu, it is located at the southern most tip of the Indian Subcontinent. Locals call it Koodal which means it is situated at the confluence of three oceans, Bay of Bengal, Arabian Sea and Indian Ocean. It is very popular among travellers as its the only place on earth, where you can see the sunrise and sunset from the ocean.

VELANKANNI

12 kms from Nagapattinam, Velankanni is an important revered Christian pilgrim center of Tamil Nadu. Dedicated to 'Our Lady of Health', the place is also known as 'Sacred Arogya Matha Church'. The Church has a façade with tall spires and the wings present in the shape of a cross. Legend says that Virgin Mary appeared before a shepherd and asked for milk to feed Infant Jesus. Since then the milk pitcher of this shepherd kept filling with fresh milk always. It's famous for its annual Feast of Our Lady celebrated as a 10 days festival during August-September.

TOURISM ATTRACTIONS

BANDIPUR NATIONAL PARK

The Bandipur National Park is an 874 sq km forest reserve and is famous for its small population of tigers. The Park was once the private hunting ground of the Maharajas of Mysore harbouring Indian elephants, gaurs (bison), spotted deer, antelopes and several other native species. Built in the 14th century, the Himavad Gopalaswamy Temple offers breathtaking views from the park's highest peak.

MEENAKSHI TEMPLE

Also known as Minakshi-Sundareshwara Temple, the Meenakshi Amman Temple, is one of the oldest and most important temples in India. Situated in the city of Madurai, the temple has a great mythological significance. It is said that Lord Shiva assumed the form of Sundareswarar and married Parvati (Meenakshi) at the site where the temple is currently located. Its unique architecture led it into nomination for the seven wonders of the world. During the 'Tirukalyanam Festival', the temple attracts more than a million devotees. Despite it being so crowded, the temple was named as the 'Best Swachh Iconic Place' in India.

MARINA BEACH

The Marina Beach, spreads from the mouth of the Cooum river in the north to the Lighthouse in the south. At a 12-kilometer stretch, it is popularly regarded as the second longest beach in the world. The promenade road near the beach has a number of historical buildings and statues that speak of a bygone time. The beach also has a lighthouse that is about 50 meters high and provides panaromic views of Marina Beach and the rest of the city. One can even visit India's first aquarium which was built on the Marina Beach back in 1909.

GUJARAT

Land of the Legends

Known as the Land of the Legends, Gujarat was named after Gujjars, who ruled the state for a long time. Home to the main central areas of the Indus Valley Civilisation, the state contains ancient metropolitan cities from the Indus Valley such as Lothal, Gola Dhoro and Dholavira

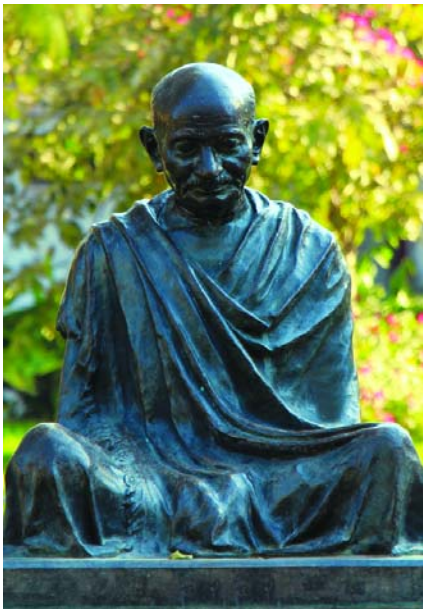

Dholavira
Excavation Site

At least 50 of the Indus Valley settlement ruins have been discovered in Gujarat. The cultural mix coupled with 4500 years of history has endowed Gujarat with some of the greatest historical monuments. Ahmedabad has specimens of Indo-Sarcenic architecture and Palitana has a profusion of temples in the Jain style. A major tourist destination, its monuments represent the great religions of Asia like Hinduism, Islam, Parsi, Buddhism, Jainism and Sikhism.

PLACES TO SEE

AHMEDABAD

Located in the heart of Gujarat, Ahmedabad, which is a bustling metropolis with reputed institutes and a growing economy, it is deeply rooted in years of tradition. Known for its association with Mahatma Gandhi, it also offers some splendid views of medieval Islamic architecture. Just outside the city, Sarkhej Roza is an inheritance of the Gujarat Sultanate and provides an idyllic retreat for tourists. For nature lovers, Nal Sarovar, an extensive wetland that attracts thousands of migratory birds during winter is a must visit. The neighbouring Gandhinagar District is home to Adalaj which is a classic example of Gujarat's stepwells.



KUTCH

This culturally rich land welcomes visitors with its interesting mud architecture and an array of craft

traditions and apparel each having a handcrafted feel. Each community has dance, craft, oral traditions and dress which is unique to them. The Great Rann of Kutch, a salt marsh located in the Thar Desert is about 7,505.22 sq kms in size and is said to be one of the largest salt deserts in the world. The name 'Rann' comes from the Hindi word ran which means 'desert'. An annual three month long festival is held during winter called the Rann Utsav where tourists can experience the full moon on salt deserts while getting a taste of the local cuisine and hospitality.

RAJKOT

This city was the administrative headquarters of the Saurashtra region while today is the district headquarters. Situated on the Aji River, the place is famous for its regal architecture. Apart from being an industrial center, its also a prominent hub for the body building of vehicles. Rajkot had a long association with Gandhi, who spent his early years in Rajkot. His father was a Diwan to the local ruler during this time. The house where he lived is now maintained as a museum. The district is also famous for its handicraft and textile center especially its Bandhani, Patola saris, fine silverwork and beadwork. The towns of Morbi and Wankaner host beautiful royal estates, some of which have been converted into heritage hotels.



TOURISM ATTRACTIONS

SABARMATI ASHRAM

Sabarmati Ashram, known before as 'Satyagraha Ashram' is situated in Ahmedabad at the Kocharab Bungalow of Jivanlal Desai, a barrister. It was later shifted to the banks of Sabarmati river and then came to be known as 'Sabarmati Ashram'. Gandhi had stayed at the Ashram from the period 1915 to 1933. While at Sabarmati, Gandhi had lived in a small cottage known as 'Hridaya (Heart) Kunj'. Visitors can find some of the things which he used like a writing desk, a yarn spun by him, a khadi kurta and some of his letters. Another important feature of the Ashram is Gandhi Sangrahalaya, a museum which has five units and a library along with two photo-galleries and an auditorium. The museum houses an exhibition on Gandhi's life 'My life is My Message' and 'Gandhiji in Ahmedabad'.

GIR NATIONAL PARK

The Gir National Park & Wildlife Sanctuary comprises of 1412 sq km of deciduous forest and flora, acacia, scrub jungle, grasslands and rocky hills. The sanctuary has large water bodies like the Kamleshwar Dam which is good for marsh crocodiles, birds and reptiles. Having about 400 lions and 300 leopards, Gir has one of the major big cat concentrations in India. Visitors may also sight deers such as Sambar and Chital, antelopes such as four-horned antelope, Blue Bull, Wild Boar and Indian gazelle.



OUR TRAILBLAZER MEMBER : COX & KINGS

260 and marching on

Cox & Kings has come a long way from being an army agent to now selling packaged holidays for leisure travel. But whichever role the company plays, it has always focussed on the needs of its consumers and looks for ways to constantly innovate



Historically, Cox & Kings has been an army agent, a travel agent, a printer and publisher. It has also worked as a news agent, cargo agent, ship-owner, banker, insurance agent, and dealer of several travel-related activities. Its core activities now include the sale of packaged holidays for leisure travel.

Cox & Kings traces its origins to 1758, when Richard Cox's career took off with Lord Ligonier leading the Flanders campaign of the War of Austrian Succession. In one letter sent back to London, Richard Cox makes a demand that 'suitable winter provisions and housing should be made available for the three English companies' and he became entwined with logistics and the general welfare of the troops. Ligonier made Cox his private secretary in the late 1740s, went on to become the colonel of the First Foot Guards in 1757, and rewarded Cox with the post of 'military agent' after the incumbent died in May 1758. Thus was born Cox & Co.

There were about a dozen main agents working for the army at the time and each regimental colonel chose one to serve their troops. These agents arranged the payment of officers and men, organised the provision of clothing, acted as intermediaries for the buying and selling of officers' commissions and acted on any special requests from the regimental adjutant.

In recent times, around 2009, Cox & Kings was listed on the stock exchanges in India and was the first Indian travel multinational company. In 2011, it acquired HolidayBreak in the UK. Today, the company has operations spread across 22 countries and four continents.

Speaking about the reasons for success, Peter Kerkar, Group CEO, Cox & Kings,

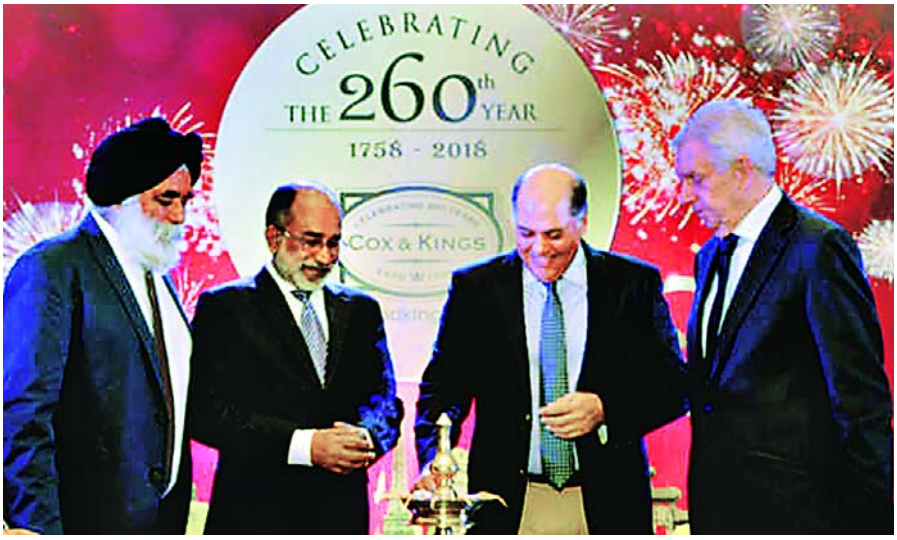
said,"Just the fact that we are market leaders in the areas that we actually operate in, making us number one as far as the outbound travel from India goes, we are also the number one hybrid hostel operator in the world and the number one education travel company. I think this is what makes us special that we have the ability to stay one step ahead of the competition."

The company has always been at the forefront of innovation. Last year, it introduced two new products in the market, Enable Travel, a vertical that caters to customers with a physical disability and Trip 360, which is a sustainable initiative in the growing travel space. Kerkar lauded the role of Ms Urrshila Kerkar for her vision and dynamism in launching these two new products.

Speaking about the future, Kerkar said. "I think, our future looks pretty clear, we will continue to innovate and dominate."

On the different verticals in the group, he added, "Within the group, we have stakes in Lateroom.com, we have stakes in Superbreak, we have stakes in lots of various companies that actually are online players and today do their entire business online with three and a half million people that we service online. So, we are taking some of the learnings that we have had in India now on our journey of the last few decades when we first launched the outbound product, into the UK, into America, into Australia and it's fantastic in terms of this sort of synergy that we have across the globe.

Kerkar lauded the role played by staff in this long eventful journey. He said, ₹₹People are of primary importance because that is the one thing that differentiates us from everybody else in the world. It is simply a stepping point for us to go into the future because everything that made us relevant for the last 260 years is still relevant but we still have to adapt so that we can come back and be as successful in the next decades or even in our case I should call it next hundreds of years, so, all I can do is thank everybody who has made this success possible. When all of us present have gone and disappeared, I feel that Cox & Kings will still be around, it will be a household name and probably even stronger than it is today.



(L-R): Karan Anand, head, relationships, Cox & Kings; hon. minister of state for tourism, K J Alphons; Peter Kerkar, group CEO, Cox & Kings and Anthony B M Good, OBE – global chairman, Cox & Kings lighting the lamp to commence the celebration of Cox & Kings' 260th Anniversary in Delhi



Peter Kerkar, group CEO, Cox & Kings presenting the plaque to the hon. minister of state for tourism, K J Alphons at Cox & Kings' 260th anniversary celebration held in Delhi on February 28, 2018

COX & KINGS CELEBRATES 260TH ANNIVERSARY WITH TRAVEL INDUSTRY LEADERS

Industry leaders of the Indian travel and hospitality industry, diplomats and several business leaders gathered at a evening gala hosted by Cox & Kings at the Shangri-La's Eros Hotel, New Delhi, to mark the 260th anniversary of Cox and Kings, also the world's oldest travel company. The evening was graced by K J Alphons, minister of state (Independent Charge) for tourism, who lauded the company for its continuous service to the tourism industry.

Hon'ble tourism minister, K J Alphons said, "I am very happy to be a part of Cox & Kings 260 year celebration and congratulate everyone who has contributed to this rich legacy by enabling holidays and spreading happiness into the

world. The tourism sector in India is looking very positive this year as we have crossed the 10 million mark for foreign tourist arrivals and earned revenue of 27 billion dollars through foreign tourist arrivals. This has been possible because of companies like Cox & Kings who have been working together with the government. In the next three years, we aim to double the foreign tourists inflow and the revenue we earn from the foreign tourist arrivals and that is only possible if the industry continues to work together."

With a legacy that dates back to 1758, when Cox & Kings was appointed as general agents to the regiment of Foot Guard in India, the company has established itself as a brand in all travel-related services globally and has been at the forefront of thought leadership and innovation within the industry.

Speaking at the event, Peter Kerkar, Group CEO, Cox & Kings said, "We are unique in the leisure space with an unrivalled tradition of 260 years of service to our customers. It is with pride that I commend our staff for making our company so successful and more particularly relevant even today. Our longevity is a testimony to their ingenuity and transformative spirit that Cox & Kings remains a world leader in the travel, education and hotel space." Touted as the leader in travel innovation, the travel company has several firsts to its name. That includes chartering a special plane to view the longest solar eclipse of the 21st century, introducing Russia's first luxury train 'Bolshoi Express', launching state of the art luxury railway journeys in India, revamping many Indian palaces as wedding destinations to facilitate their upkeep, offering tailor made packages to the world's largest pilgrimage, the Maha Kumbh Mela, and acquiring a mountain in the heart of the Swiss Alps to boost outbound tourism. The evening witnessed the launch of a series of year-long events and exciting offers curated for customers.



Accolades

Cox & Kings is one of the founding members of the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) and also a member of premier industry associations across the world. Over the years the company has won many awards which stand testimony to its excellence in service. Cox & Kings has been the recipient of various accolades both in India and internationally. It has been winning the prestigious World Travel Award in different categories since 2013. The title of Asia's Leading Luxury Tour Operator was retained for the 3rd time in 2017 after bagging it in 2015 and 2016. It won the title of India's Leading Tour Operator in the year 2013, 2015, 2016, 2017 and India's Leading Travel Agency for the 5th Consecutive time. In 2017, Cox & Kings also won Hospitality India Travel Award in Best Domestic Tour Operator and Best Outbound Tour Operator categories. It bagged the Best Experiential Travel Company by India Travel Award West. Continuing with its winning legacy, Cox & Kings won the coveted SATTE Award and Travel and Lifestyle Leadership Award for Best Outbound Tour Operator. The prestigious PATA Gold award 2017 was also presented to Cox & Kings for Marketing Media in Social Media category.

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GST analysis for travel industry by GST Guru

Manish Gadia & Sumit Jhunjhunwala



We present the updates on GST for air ticketing and tourism industry - for the member agencies to refer to and be guided. Readers are requested to consult your own tax advisors / practitioners and what is given here is based on our GST Guru's interpretation and cannot hold TAAI and GMJ responsible for any unintended mistake of interpretation or any action taken on the basis of this Note The first financial year post introduction of GST has concluded, but there are few compliances and checks to that every business needs to be compliant about. Some of such important compliances relating to Input Tax Credit that are applicable for tours and travels industry are listed below.

REVERSAL OF INPUT TAX CREDIT

1. Non-payment of Invoices of Inward Supplies: As per the rules of Input Tax Credit, after issuance of tax invoice if

DUE DATES FOR FILING OF GST RETURN FOR Q1 OF F.Y. 2018-19

Sl. No	Month	Last date for filing of return in FORM GSTR-3B
1	April 2018	20th May, 2018
2	May 2018	20th June, 2018
3	June 2018	20th July, 2018

Sl. No	Month	Last date for filing of return in FORM GSTR-1	
		Aggregate turnover > Rs. 1.5 crore	Aggregate turnover < Rs. 1.5 crore (Quarterly)
1	April 2018	31st May, 2018	31st July, 2018
2	May 2018	10th June, 2018	
3	June 2018	10th July, 2018	

MAJOR GST RATES FOR TRAVEL AND TOURISM INDUSTRY

The present day GST rates in this sector are summarised below for reference;

Description	GST Rate	Input Tax Credit
Accommodation in hotels, inns, guest houses, etc. where declared tariff >=Rs.1000 < Rs.2500 per room per day	12.00%	Full ITC available
Accommodation in hotels, inns, guest houses, etc where declared tariff >=Rs.2500 < Rs.7500 per room per day	18.00%	Full ITC available
Accommodation in hotels, inns, guest houses, etc where declared tariff >=Rs.7500 and above	28.00%	Full ITC available
Transport of Passengers / Rent a Cab Services, with fuel cost included in the price charged for services	5.00%	ITC of GST charged by another Rent A Cab Operator / Transporter of Passengers available. No other ITC available
	12.00%	Full ITC available
Transport of Passengers / Rent a Cab Services (with or without fuel cost)	18.00%	Full ITC available
Transport of Passengers by Rail in 1st Class or A/c Coach	5.00%	No ITC on Inputs and Capital goods
Transport of Passengers by Air in Economy Class	5.00%	No ITC on Inputs and Capital goods
Transport of Passengers by Air in Other than economy class	12.00%	Full ITC available
Tour Operator Service	5.00%	ITC of GST charged by another Tour Operator providing tour services available.
No other ITC available*		
Tour Operator Service	18.00%	Full ITC available

**** GST charged by Hotels, Cab Operators, Airlines, Local Guides, etc. shall not be available as ITC to a Tour Operator who is paying GST @ 5% on his tour services.***

receiver does not made the full payment of amount within 180 days then the credit taken on that invoice is to be reversed. And whenever the payment is made, the receiver can take the credit of the amount. Therefore the aging analysis of the debtors and creditors is to be done. All old invoices issued on or before October 2, 2017, should have been paid before March 31, 2018. For all such the invoices where payment is still pending to be made as on March 31,2018, the receiver is liable to reverse the Input Tax Credit of GST taken along with interest.

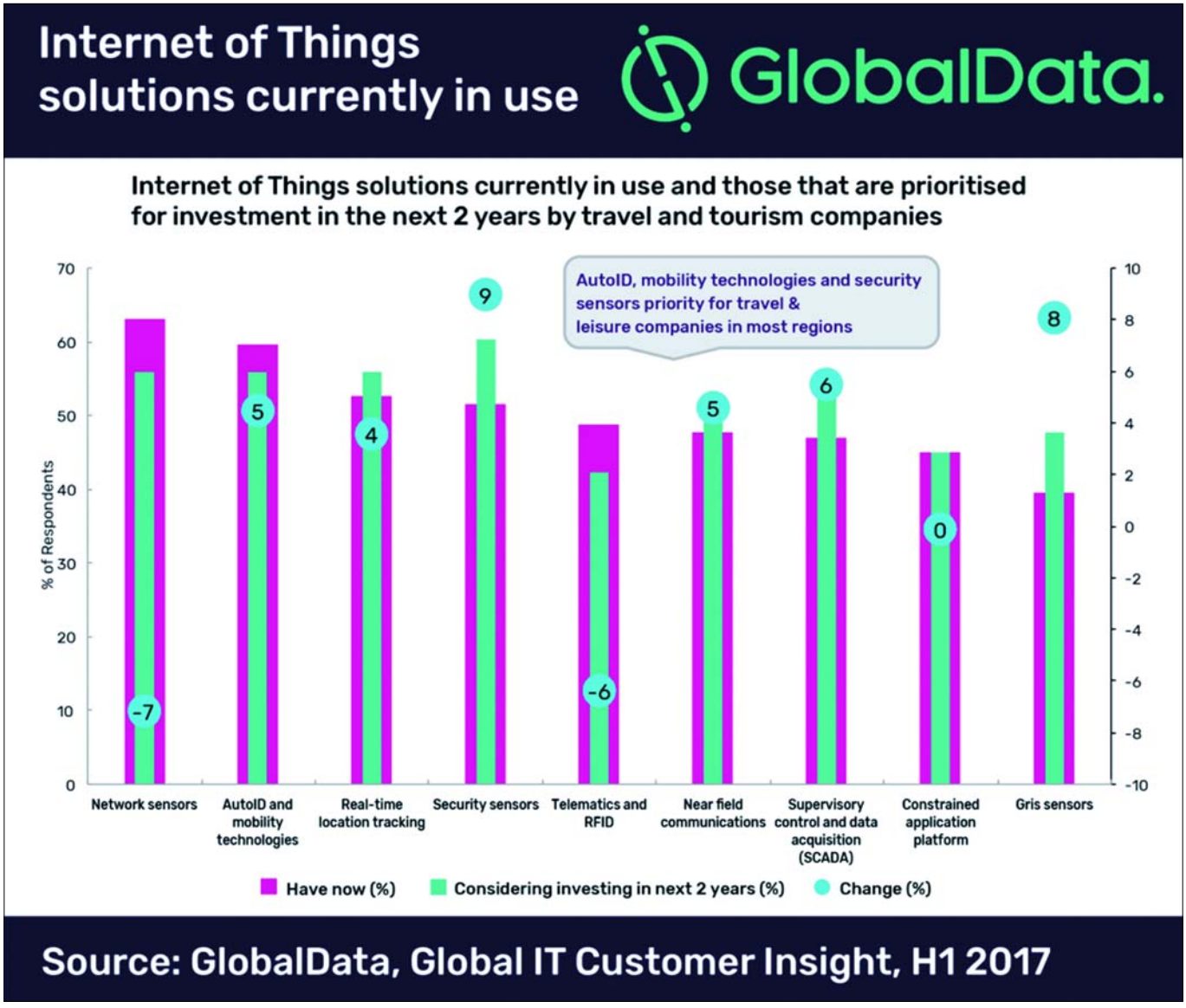
2. Input Tax Credit attributable to exempt Supply: A travel agent may be engaged in providing exempt supplies such as tour services to a foreign tourist in relation to a tour wholly conducted outside India or the travel agent may be engaged in providing supplies attracting lower GST rate with restrictions on usage of Input Tax Credit such as Tour Operator Service, Transportation of Passengers by Motor Vehicle/Rent A Cab Service which attract GST @ 5 per cent. Such services on which lower GST rate is being applied are also considered as exempt supplies.

Hence in terms of provisions of GST laws, the common Input Tax Credit attributable to such exempt supplies needs to be reversed on a month to month basis (provisionally) and on annual basis (Final). The procedure for the same is prescribed in Rule 42 and 43 of CGST Rules. Members are advised to consult their respective Tax practitioner/Consultant and ensure compliance of law.

Disclaimer:
The discussions and interpretations set forth in this material are based on the statutory laws and draft rules in public domain as of the date of this material i.e. April 17, 2018. If there is a change, including a change having a retrospective effect, in the statutory laws, the discussions and comments expressed in this material would necessarily have to be re-evaluated in light of the changes. TAAI and GMJ do not have responsibility of updating this note.

Top 6 technology trends to watch out for in 2018

The advent of technology is fostering a change in the travel and tourism industry regarding how companies interact with customers. Consequently, travel companies are adopting various technologies to improve operational efficiencies and meet customers' expectations, according to leading data and analytics company, GlobalData



GlobalData's report 'Technology Trends in Travel & Tourism', found that travel companies are using various technologies to engage with customers at every stage of their journey. Elena Mogos, Associate Analyst for Digital Travel & Tourism at GlobalData, comments, "Travel still revolves around meaningful human interactions. However, to be successful, companies need to create a balance between the technological innovations and the human element. Improving the customer experience must always be on the back of travel and tourism companies' minds when investing in technology."

Here are the six trends to watch out for in travel and tourism industry in 2018:

Augmented and Virtual Reality (AR and VR): The past few years have seen an increase in AR or VR popularity among travel and tourism companies, and the trend is set to continue. These technologies are being used either for content marketing or to enhance the customers' experiences. For example, airlines have started using VR technology to show travellers the cabins in advance, in order to increase ticket or ancillary services sales.

Artificial Intelligence (AI): AI is behind many evolving technologies and innovations in the travel and tourism sector. The ways in which it helps the industry can be classified into three major categories: Machine Learning, ChatBots or TravelBots, and Robots. Thanks to AI, operations which usually require human intervention and a lot of time to learn new skills, can be automated, thus speeding up processes, while improving quality and performance, and decreasing costs.

Internet of Things (IoT): IoT has a lot of potential to shape the future of the travel and tourism industry, and companies have started to realize that. An example of an industry player using IoT to reduce anxiety and stress levels associated with lost bags is Lufthansa. Passengers can track their baggage via a link found on their mobile boarding pass in the Lufthansa app.



Thanks to AI, operations which usually require human intervention and a lot of time to learn new skills, can be automated, thus speeding up processes, while improving quality and performance, and decreasing costs

Voice Technology: Voice technology is another digital novelty that is beginning to disrupt the travel and tourism sector, as more and more customers switch from typed-in search to voice interactions. More and more hotels have started experimenting with voice-activated devices. Among them are: W Austin of Marriott International, Kimpton Alexis Hotel, and Westin Buffalo.

Wi-Fi connectivity: When travelling, people want to always be connected, either to get destination ideas, options regarding places to visit or eat, find directions to points of interest, or share their experience with friends via social media or other connectivity platforms. As a result, investing in network services helps companies offer a more seamless and highly personalized experience to customers, boosts operational efficiency, real-time decision making, strengthens the physical (via CCTV) and the cybersecurity, along with data privacy.

Wearable devices: Despite a sluggish start, travel and tourism companies are gradually using this technology to offer customers a more personalised and united experience. For instance, the Walt Disney Company deployed a wearable, customisable, RFID-equipped MagicBand, which connects to the theme park infrastructure, to reduce waiting times and track guests' locations and activities.

2018 Travel Trends Report: Experiences, tours & activities

TripAdvisor's new report showcases some of the top 2018 tourism trends for the experiences segment

TripAdvisor bookings data revealed that iconic sites remain wildly popular, while travellers are expanding their horizons and bringing growth to new, non-traditional and experiential categories.

Iconic landmarks and sites remain the most-booked by travelers globally...

Travellers are becoming increasingly interested in new experiences, but they're still loyal to the world's most iconic sites. In 2017, the most-booked experiences globally were a combined skip-the-line pass for the Vatican Museums, St Peter's and Sistine Chapel, the Chicago River Architecture Cruise, and a skip-the-line pass for a walking tour of Ancient Rome and the Colosseum. Bookable options for The Sagrada Familia, Eiffel Tower, and the Empire State Building also featured in the top ten.

Travellers are becoming increasingly interested in new experiences, but they're still loyal to the world's most iconic sites

...while cultural categories like food tours, cooking classes, and historical and heritage experiences are seeing bookings skyrocket

Globally, travellers are expanding their horizons, and several categories grew quickly in 2017. Historic and heritage experiences (such as a Charleston Harbor History Tour and a Tour of Historic Fenway Park) saw the most growth (+125 per cent in bookings), and culinary is a clear trend: cooking classes and food tours both appeared among the top five categories, each with 57 per cent bookings' growth. By gross booking value, food tours saw the most growth in 2017.

US travelers are booking more cooking and restaurant experiences...

In line with global trends, US bookings placed cooking classes and food tours in the top ten, with 51 per cent and 49 per cent growth respectively. An interactive Spanish Cooking Experience in







Barcelona where travelers learn to make paella and Spanish tapas with a local chef, and a guided Street Food Tour in Rome with pizza, pastries, and sightseeing, were among the fastest growing experiences for US and global travellers.

...and getting active in the great outdoors

Historical and heritage experiences may have topped the list of fastest-growing categories for US travelers (+98 per cent in bookings), but aquatic activities dominated the top ten, taking half of the top spots. Sunset cruises (+89 per cent in bookings), snorkeling (+64 per cent), sailing trips (+55 per cent), catamaran cruises (+51 per cent), and kayaking and canoeing experiences (+49 per cent) all ranked in the year's fastest-growing categories.

Travellers around the world are increasingly opting out of line-ups.

Skip-the-line access at some of the world's busiest landmarks and sites (like the Colosseum) appeared in both the most-popular and fastest-growing lists for global travellers.

Fast facts on skip-the-line experiences:

- Two of the three most popular products in 2017 were skip-the-line, and likewise for four of the ten fastest-growing experiences in 2017.
- TripAdvisor lists more than 1,200 skip-the-line tickets globally, with options at some of the most popular sites in the world, including the Eiffel Tower, the Sagrada Familia, and the London Eye.
- Skip-the-line tours were also the second-fastest growing category for US travellers by gross booking value in 2017.

Guides and operators added 30,000 new experiences to TripAdvisor last year, increasing the number of available experiences, tours, and attractions by 50 per cent

New options range from entry tickets for famous sites to cooking classes, day cruises, and multi-day adventure tours. Options are expanding quickly, and a trolley tour of Newport's famous mansions, a combination tour of Tulum's ruins and snorkel trip in the cenotes, and a full-day tour of Abu Dhabi from Dubai are among the most popular new experiences.

"We're seeing more travellers balancing their itineraries with a mix of classic sightseeing and more unique local experiences. Of course travellers heading to Rome want to explore the Vatican and the Sistine Chapel, but they're also booking experiences like food tours to enhance their trip, and see the city like a local," said Laurel Greatrix, director of communications.

"Travellers are also being more economical with their time. Skip-the-line tour options are among the fastest-growing tours in the world, and were among the fastest growing categories for US travellers in particular, allowing travellers to see more than just the back of someone's head," Greatrix added.

Coping with success

WTTC and McKinsey have prepared a report on managing overcrowding in tourism destinations. This is an excerpt.



Travel & Tourism (T&T) is one of the world's fastest-growing sectors. In 2017, T&T will contribute nearly US$ 7.9 trillion to the global economy, or 10.2 per cent of global gross domestic product (GDP). But while some places capture a significant share of the T&T pie, others barely get a nibble. Moreover, some destinations are in danger of being loved to death. After all, it is hard to maintain a sense of wonder before Michelangelo's Pieta when elbow to elbow with strangers. With the world getting richer - one billion more people will be in the global middle class by2030 - and travel becoming ever more accessible, T&T will continue to grow. More places will likely be threatened by their own popularity in environmental, social, or aesthetic terms. Some governments are taking action. The number of visitors to Iceland nearly quadrupled from 2010 to 2016, leading the government to limit access to some fragile natural resources because of concerns about environmental damage.

In 2016, the government of Thailand, citing the effects of too many people, banned public access to three popular islands: Koh Khai Naiin, Koh Khai Nok, and Koh Khai Nui. So it is fair to ask: Could overcrowding threaten more of the world's natural and cultural wonders?

The term "overcrowded" is imprecise, and the world's great attractions draw crowds for a reason. We would not want to dampen the expression of human curiosity that is the basis of tourism. Still, industry players - and travellers themselves -widely acknowledge the problem. To date, little has been done to systematically understand and address it. Why?

Overcrowding is not exactly alike in any two destinations. We focus on five types of problems associated with tourist overcrowding: alienated local residents, a degraded tourist experience, overloaded infrastructure, damage to nature, and threats to culture and heritage. Some

places endure two or more of these problems at the same time, but once localities determine their most important issues, they can select the most suitable solutions.

Overcrowding is currently more a matter of sensibility than data. Not everyone will agree when popularity tips into overcrowding. To provide an empirical foundation for destinations and help local leaders assess their situation and identify vulnerabilities, we created a diagnostic based on simple, widely available indicators, including tourist arrivals, social media reviews, seasonality, and pollution.

Overcrowding is easier to prevent than to recover from. Good tourism management practices and stringent planning are key to the sustainable development of tourism. Our research and interviews with tourism experts highlighted the following four best practices - regardless of whether a destination is facing overcrowding:

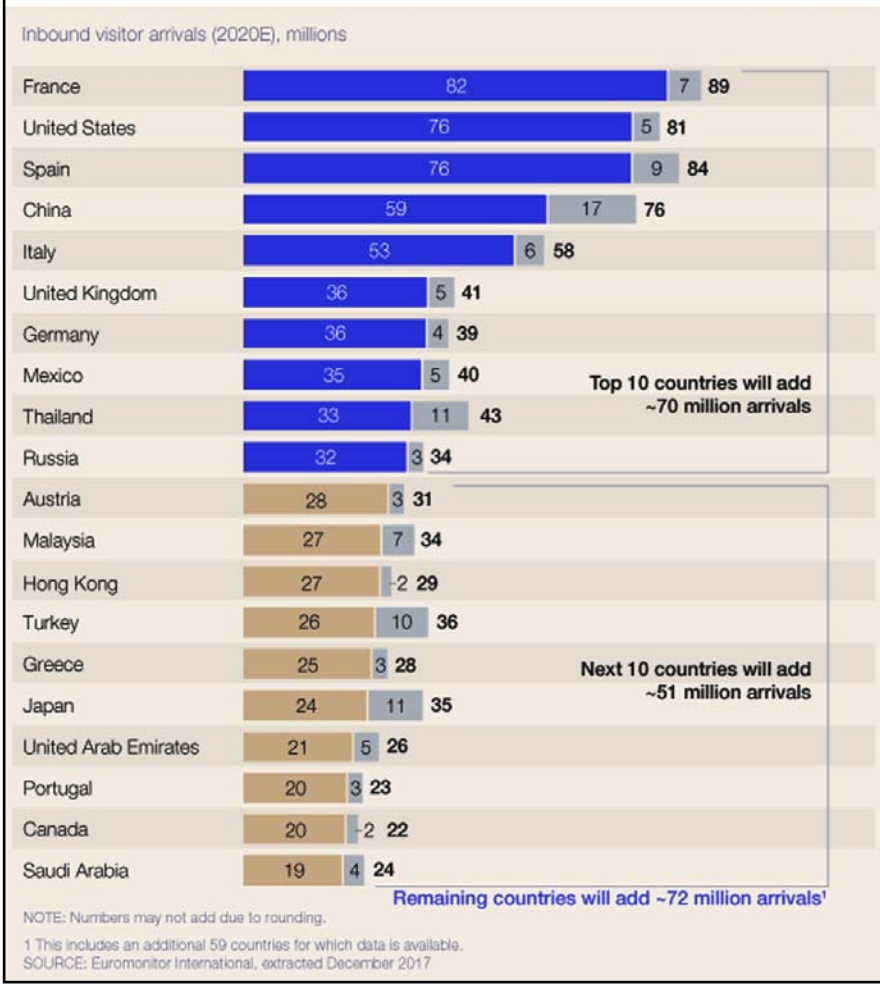
1. Build a comprehensive fact base and update it regularly. Countries, regions, cities, and sites must begin by gathering detailed data and developing their analytics capabilities to inform and refine tourism strategies.

2. Conduct rigorous, long-term planning to encourage sustainable growth. Destinations need to shift their focus from promotion to broader planning and management challenges. Those with a clear, long-term strategy built upon a solid fact base are more likely to achieve sustainable growth and mitigate - or even prevent - overcrowding.

3. Involve all sections of society - commercial, public, and social. The perfect data and strategy can only work if all stakeholders are engaged throughout the process. Tourism authorities should create committees and other formal mechanisms to work with stakeholders, including local communities, to discuss problems and devise solutions.

4. Find new sources of funding. Once data, strategy, and stakeholders are aligned, destinations can explore a growing number of innovative approaches to finance investments in infrastructure and sustainability.

Exhibit 3: By 2020, the top 20 most popular destinations will add more visitors than the rest of the world combined.



There is no easy fix to overcrowding. Once destinations have sorted out the fact base, strategy, stakeholders, and funding, they must then identify and execute practical actions, both for the long and the short term. Among the possibilities:

1. Smooth visitors over time. Many destinations suffer from imbalances of visitors during certain seasons, days of the week, and times of day, as well as during headline events. Destinations must develop tactics to "smooth" these imbalances so communities and businesses can continue to reap the benefits of tourism.

2. Spread visitors across sites. Spreading visitors geographically can help distribute tourists more evenly across residential and under-visited areas and thwart bottlenecks in overcrowded locations.

3. Adjust pricing to balance supply and demand. Pricing can be an effective way to better align demand with supply. But while increasing the costs of visiting a destination or site is likely to limit the number of visitors, it also raises considerations of elitism and the ability of domestic tourists to access their own heritage.

4. Regulate accommodation supply. Some destinations place direct controls on the supply of tourism accommodation - including beds in both hotels and short term rentals.

5. Limit access and activities. When overcrowding reaches a critical stage, the tactics above may not be enough to mitigate or recover from it. As such, some destinations are limiting or even banning certain tourist activities.

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Do the FQNATC/CXR to view the airlines on ATC
Refer to the help pages on Amadeus type HE ATC for more details

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Entries: Refer to the help pages on Amadeus type HE OFFERS for more details)



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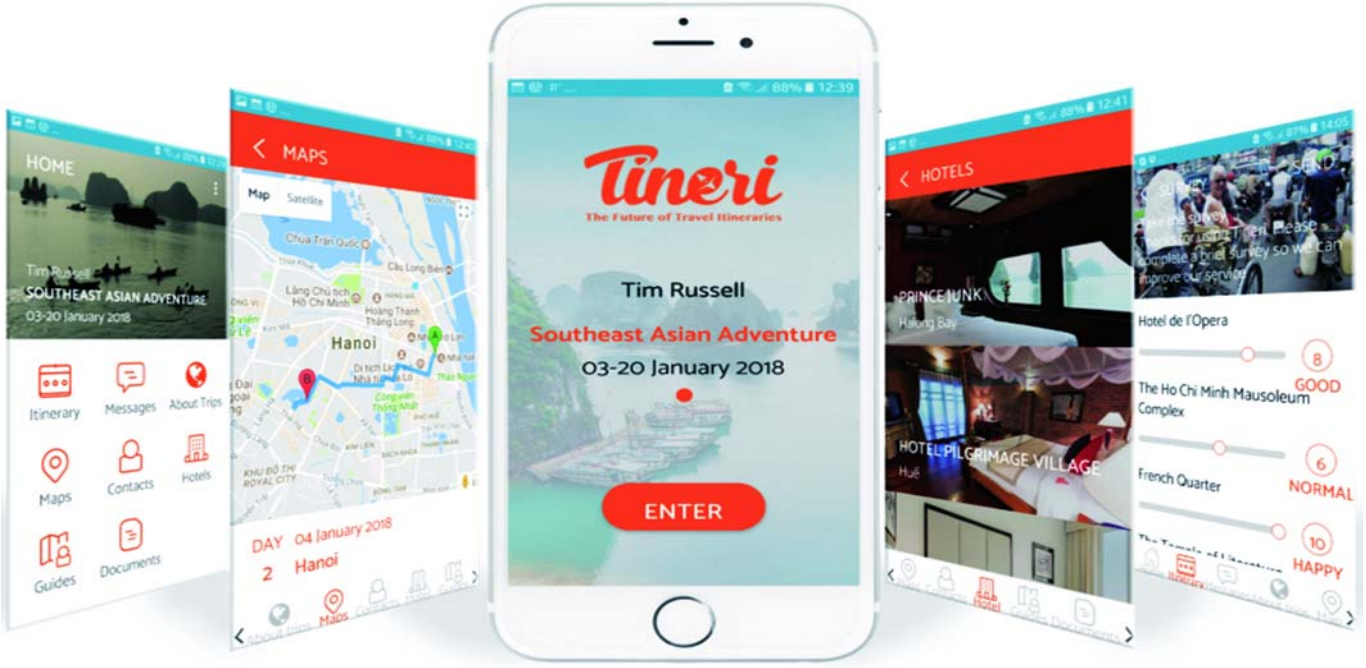
AMADEUS DYNAMIC TRAVEL DOCUMENTS (ADTD)

This is a web based, fully graphical itinerary solution which captures the total trip information from Amadeus PNR with huge customisation possibilities (agency logo, look & feel) along with choice to display airport guides, agency remarks, CO2 emissions, terminal information, social media hyperlinks,checkmytrip link, foreign languages (upto 16),destination guides,weather,city maps, currency conversion,driving directions, flight check-in, airport information & maps etc.

Entries: Travel Consultants can do the IEP-EML-emailid@domain.com

Tour operator mobile app Tineri enables third party integrations with new API

Tineri mobile solution for tour operators, DMCs and other travel providers has introduced its API, which will enable third party solutions to integrate with its content management system



Tineri allows tour operators and travel agents to provide their clients with a stylish, engaging and user-friendly mobile app that brings itineraries to life, makes communication and feedback easier, and provides an enhanced travel experience. Tineri recently released its API. Built on the principles of RESTful API architecture, the Tineri API is designed to receive data in JSON format which is then fed into Tineri's CMS system, allowing tour operators with existing reservations/operations systems to use Tineri's sleek, stylish mobile solution without having to enter data into the Tineri CMS. Users can 'connect' the two systems either by creating API requests, using a third-party API solution (such as Postman), or by adding a dedicated Tineri API UI in their own solution, to easily upload their own itinerary content to the app.

As well as the release of the API, Tineri will shortly complete its integration with well-known tour operator solution Travel Studio, a product developed by Tineri's majority stakeholders, UK travel technology specialists Open Destinations.

"We're very excited at the release of this key new development," said Tim Russell, Tineri's founder. "We know how busy tour operators are and so being able to integrate their existing systems with Tineri will help them keep file handling time to a minimum, enabling them to provide their own itinerary content and a hugely enhanced service to their clients without too much extra effort."

The API is just the first in an upcoming series of new Tineri developments including multi-language versions, full DMC B2B functionality, and mobile/PDF quotations.



New generation automated border control at Dubai International Airport

The SmartGates are able to expedite passenger clearance at Dubai Airports' borders, offering a speedy self-service transaction by way of multi-biometric verification, sustained by passport, Emirates ID and SmartGate cards authentication



Dubai International Airport has rolled out of the latest generation of Automated Border Control SmartGates has gone live as part of a transformation program which aims at offering passengers a state-of-the art Border Control experience as well as enhancing the immigration security process.

The General Directorate of Residency and Foreigners Affairs (GDRFA) from Dubai awarded the challenge to Emaratech and partner Vision-Box. This ground-breaking project includes the development, delivery and maintenance of a new generation of multimodal biometric passenger flow solution comprising 122 SmartGates, deployed across all three Dubai International Airport terminals.

Brigadier General Talal Al Shanqiti, assistant director general for Ports Affairs at the GDRFA in Dubai, said, "The installation of the new smart gates in Terminal 1 arrivals area is part of an integrated development project to provide passengers with facilities and services that make their travel through Dubai International a quick and easy. Passport control is a critical process as part of which maintaining a high level of security is our top priority. This new system helps us strike a balance between achieving that objective while

The installation of the new smart gates in Terminal I arrivals area is part of an integrated development project to provide passengers with facilities and services that make their travel through Dubai International a quick and easy

also ensuring a better experience for the passengers through speed and efficiency."

In addition to the enhancement of the departure procedures with new SmartGates last year, a new bank is already in operation at arrivals, offering passengers a speedy border clearance.

The new SmartGates exhibit a stunning, exclusive design, remarkable ergonomics and attention to detail, perfectly fitting and adding on to the airport's carefully thought interiors. A renewed clearance experience, featuring a passenger-centric interface with proactive adjustments and new smart-led guidance, centralizes all operations inside the SmartGates.

According to Miguel Leitmann, CEO at Vision-Box, "As expected, the project shows incredible pioneering character and forward-thinking attitude. It's a perfect combination between a robust border control strategy and orientation to service excellence. It brings together state-of-the-art border security technology, the most modern human-machine interaction and a magnificent design. We are happy to provide such a top-notch experience for passengers travelling through Dubai and to be trusted by GDRFA and Emaratech for this cutting-edge project."

The project further includes the introduction of SmartGates at the Dubai World Central – Al Maktoum International Airport.

97% of Indians want to travel sustainably in 2018: Survey

A research conducted by Booking.com has revealed that awareness of eco-friendly accommodation options is growing constantly, and 88 per cent of Indian travellers show a willingness to absorb extra cost to ensure they are travelling more sustainably in 2018

IT'S GOOD TO GO GREEN

Proving that sustainability measures don't need to come at an inconvenience, many Indian travellers indicated they engage in sustainable travel behaviour because the activity itself adds a positive experience to their trip.

Sustainable vacation activities that add to vacation enjoyment	Percentage of Indian travellers who do this
Buying locally made products instead of mass-produced tourist souvenirs	69.00%
Being adventurous and using public transport instead of a taxi	62.00%
Going out of the way to find a local restaurant that only uses local ingredients	61.00%
Skipping tourist highlights in favour of less busy and often more rewarding sights	48.00%
Opting for a unique place to stay that also a certified eco-accommodation over a traditional hotel	58.00%



To celebrate Earth Day on 22 April, Booking.com, released the findings from its latest global 'Sustainable Travel Report', which states that awareness of eco-friendly accommodation options is growing, with Indian travellers seeking to book more greener stays than ever. The research highlights that 97 per cent of Indian travellers want to travel sustainably in 2018 with 88 per cent of them willing to pay an extra premium to ensure the same. The study also reveals that while 73 per cent of current Indian travellers always or often opt for sustainable travel, around 32 per cent are willing to pay atleast 15 per cent more to ensure as low an impact on the environment as possible.

The research highlights that 97 per cent of Indian travellers want to travel sustainably in 2018 with 88 per cent of them willing to pay an extra premium to ensure the same

According to Vikas Bhola, head for the Indian Sub-Continent, Booking.com, "Sustainable travel is a subjective term that has different connotations for different people. As Indian travellers increasingly look to explore and experience the world in a sustainable way, we continue to look at ways that can help make it even easier for them to do that, whether by highlighting eco-friendly properties or enabling people to filter their search results on Booking.com. This research reaffirms that sustainable travel is within reach for all of us, which is encouraging as we together strive to make a positive impact for a more sustainable future."

ECO-INSPIRATION

When it comes to what inspires people to travel more sustainably, it seems that travel itself is the biggest motivator.

The factors that inspire sustainable travel	Percentage Indian travellers who found this inspiring
Being impressed by natural sights during their own travels (e.g. coral reefs, rain forest)	75%
Noticing a visible impact of tourism at the destinations they have visited	68%
Seeing the positive effect that sustainable tourism can have on the local people	72%
Seeing the unsustainable effects of tourism in their home country	57%
Feeling guilty about the impact their vacation has had on the environment	51%

OVERCOMING ECO-BARRIERS

While perceived extra cost remains the top barrier for Indians wanting to travel more sustainably, 88 per cent of travellers would be willing to spend at least 5 per cent more on their travel to ensure it was as low impact on the environment as possible. The research states that Indian travellers are the most willing to pay the premium closely followed by Brazilians and Chinese.

Top Indian obstacles to traveling more sustainably	Percentage of Indian travellers who do this
Costs – not being able to afford the extra expenditure	37%
Information/lack of certification – not knowing how to make my travel more sustainable	45%
Time – travelling sustainably would be too time consuming	38%
Destination – travelling sustainably would limit travel to less appealing destinations	34%
Luxury/comfort – sustainable travel does not meet the level of luxury / comfort accustomed to	34%

(NOTE: Research was commissioned by Booking.com and independently conducted among a sample of adults who have taken a trip in the last 12 months/plan to take a trip in the next 12 months. In total 12,134 respondents were surveyed (1000+ from (12 markets) Australia, Canada, China, Germany, Spain, France, India, Italy, Japan, Brazil, the UK and the US). Respondents completed an online survey in February and March 2018. This result focuses on Indian travellers which consisted of 1018 respondents.)

CHANGING YOUR MEAL SCHEDULE CAN HELP LOSE WEIGHT

Trying to lose weight? Changing your eating schedule - such as having an early dinner or even skipping it - can help reduce hunger pangs and boost fat burning

Eating a very early dinner, or even skipping dinner, may have some benefits for losing weight, although further studies need to take place to confirm that theory. "Eating only during a much smaller window of time than people are typically used to may help with weight loss," said Courtney Peterson, an associate professor at University of Alabama at Birmingham in the US. "We found that eating between 8 am and 2 pm followed by an 18-hour daily fast kept appetite levels more even throughout the day, in comparison to eating between 8 am and 8 pm, which is what the average American does," said Peterson. The study is the first human test of early time-restricted feeding (eTRF). This meal-timing strategy reduced swings in hunger and altered fat and carbohydrate burning patterns, which may help with losing weight. With eTRF, people eat their last meal by the mid-afternoon and do not eat again until breakfast the next morning.

Previous animal studies showed that eTRF helped rodents burn more fat. The human body has an internal clock, and many aspects of metabolism are at their optimal functioning in the morning. Therefore, eating in alignment with the body's circadian clock by eating earlier in the day may positively influence health.

This first test of eTRF in humans follows rodent studies of this approach to weight loss, which previously found that eTRF reduced body fat and decreased the risk of chronic diseases in rodents. During the human study, researchers followed 11 men and women with excess weight over four days of eating between 8 am and 2 pm, and four days of eating between 8 am and 8 pm. Researchers then tested the impact of eTRF on calories burned, fat burned and appetite. Participants tried both eating schedules, ate the same number of calories both times and completed all testing under supervision.

Researchers found that, although eTRF did not affect how many total calories participants burned, it reduced daily hunger swings and increased fat burning during several hours at night. It also improved metabolic flexibility, which is the body's ability to switch between burning carbs and burning fats. "Whether eTRF helps with long-term weight loss or improves other aspects of health is still unknown. A larger, more comprehensive study will need to take place to find out," Peterson said.



WATER SPORTS MAY EXPOSE YOU TO ANTIBIOTIC-RESISTANT BACTERIA



Love to play water sports like surfing or bodyboarding? Beware, you may be three times more likely to swallow antibiotic-resistant Escherichia coli or E.coli bacteria in your guts

Surfers have been found to swallow ten times more sea water than sea swimmers, making them more vulnerable to E.coli bacteria. Regular surfers were also found four times as likely to harbour bacteria that contain mobile genes that make bacteria resistant to the antibiotic. This is significant because the genes can be passed between bacteria — potentially spreading the ability to resist antibiotic treatment between bacteria, according to researchers. "Antimicrobial resistance has been globally recognised as one of the greatest health challenges of our time, and there is now an increasing focus on how resistance can be spread through our natural environments," said Anne Leonard, from the University of Exeter.

Scientists compared faecal samples from 300 surfers and non-surfers to assess whether the surfers' guts contained E.coli bacteria that were able to grow in the presence of cefotaxime. The study, published in the journal Environment International, found that 13 of 143 (9 per cent) of surfers were colonised by these resistant bacteria, compared to just four of 130 (3 per cent) of non-surfers swabbed. A treatment with cefotaxime — a commonly used and clinically important antibiotic previously prescribed to kill off E.coli bacteria — showed that the bacteria has acquired genes that enable them to survive this treatment, the study showed.

According to the 2016 O'Neill report commissioned by the UK government, antimicrobial resistant infections could kill one person every three seconds by the year 2050 if current trends continue. There is an urgent need to curb antibiotic-resistance or else we may be entering an era in which antibiotics are no longer effective to kill simple, and previously treatable, bacterial infections, warned the World Health Organisation.

Welcome to our New Members

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

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

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



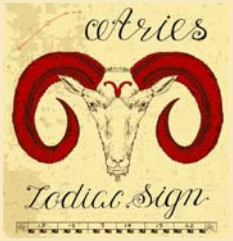
Benefits of TAAI Membership

- Your company is no more a stand-alone one in our endeavour to strengthen Principal-Agency relationship.
- IATA matters – TAAI is on board of APJC and actively deliberates on behalf of travel agencies on all policy matters concerning day-to-day business activity. TAAI is in active relationship with IATA and helps formulate industry policies including training, settlement matters, accreditation policies, joint bank guarantee towards financial security, etc.
- TAAI is actively involved with United Federation of Travel Agents Associations (UFTAA). UFTAA is represented on PAPGJC (Passenger Agency Program Global Joint Council) where association matters pertaining to governing resolutions by IATA are taken forward.
- Through its programs TAAI helps promote highest standard of professionalism and ethics among members in their dealing with the public and among each other.
- TAAI offers numerous opportunities in training, skill development and tourism certification including destination education – for owners, managers, frontline staff and all those who have chosen travel and tourism as their career.
- TAAI is active in updating members on evolving visa formalities and maintains a closer connect with embassies, high commissions & consulates in fostering learning.
- TAAI offers B2B opportunities through jointly held road shows and familiarisation trips in cooperation with Tourism Boards and National Tourism Organisations, through active networking at Conventions and through several events including active partnership and support status with trade exhibition organisers.
- TAAI's annual convention, popular as 'The Indian Travel Congress' is an excellent opportunity for members to take home updates and learning through our business sessions, strong networking, interaction opportunities with overseas Destination Management Companies and invaluable connectivity that supports greater success in business.
- TAAI works closely with Government of India Tourism Offices and State Tourism Boards and is active in events/meetings organised to further the promotion of Indian tourism globally. TAAI is invited for 'Hotel Classification' and 'Airport Advisory'. TAAI also endeavours to closely work with Ministry of Civil Aviation, on aviation matters.
- There are more areas through which any industry stakeholder can immensely benefit by becoming a member of TAAI and join this most prestigious forum.



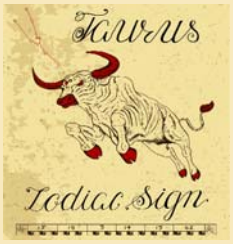
Striking the right balance in various aspects of life and taking judicious decisions will be the highlight in the upcoming months of June and July 2018, say the Angel Tarot and Oracle Cards

By Sudipta Dev



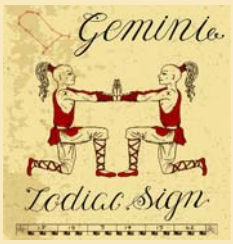
ARIES

You have made long-term plans which will lead to abundance. For now you need to concentrate on the immediate situation in hand and be careful about your decisions. A balance in your approach to life and major decisions will be essential in upcoming months. You have always tried your best to be just, this is one of your greatest strengths – to stand up what you think is right.



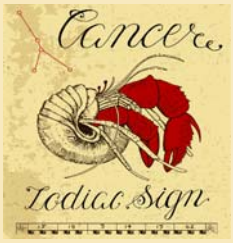
TAURUS

A significant life event had happened, which has led to a powerful revelation. Currently you are on a roll, your strong will power and discipline will make you achieve your dreams and give public recognition. Be careful of stress related health issues, and do not hesitate to ask for help.



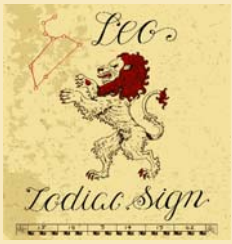
GEMINI

You have been blessed with inner strength, but you need to release harsh judgements. Forgive and move on. A celebration is on the cards. While you focus on having more fun, be careful about the decisions you make – avoid locking horns, which might lead to situations leading to a stalemate.



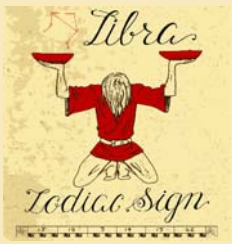
CANCER

Take people into confidence and open your heart to trust. You would need to share your innermost thoughts and concerns with them. Do not hesitate to seek their help, even if your ego tries to hold you back. The difficult situation you have been combating will be a thing of the past.



LEO

You have experienced the joys of a secure family life. You already have or are about to receive some good news about financial matters. Do not be too stingy or too generous, try to be more judicious while spending. In personal life you might be a bit more adventurous, which will be a good thing for you.



LIBRA

It has been a time of spiritual transformation for you. With a new phase of your life, there is a strong possibility of a new person playing a dominant role in either your personal life or workspace.



The near future indicates new learnings, which could be either work related including refresher courses, reskilling, or for spiritual development.



VIRGO

There is a need to bring about a balance in life, including money matters. There might be new career opportunities for you. See to it that you do not get bogged down by bothersome details about a situation, and avoid conflict as much as possible.



SCORPIO

The opportunity that you had missed in the near past should not be a deterrent in enjoying the fruits of your hard work. Do not get disappointed by a temporary halt to your plans. The future indicates abundance and fulfilment of your dreams and those of your family.



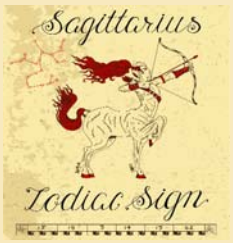
CAPRICORN

You are a down to earth and practical person, this is your greatest strength. Your family life, work life and love life benefits from your focused approach in dealing with different situations and problems. It is important for you to know who your true well wishers are and take them into confidence in difficult times.



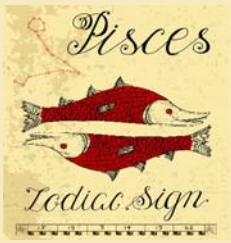
AQUARIUS

You have been preoccupied with too many things, be more playful towards life. You will receive important psychic insights with the new moon. Follow your dreams and unexpected opportunities will come up for you. Take a leap of faith if you have to.



SAGITTARIUS

You have been known to make objective decisions. Remove from your life what does not serve you. Try and be a team player. You will get recognition for your hard work and perseverance. Your health will also improve in the upcoming months and there are indications of intimate relationships.



PISCES

You might feel that you have made some unwise decisions in the past. Learn from them and move on. However, be cautious about other people's motives, particularly at work. Your personal relationships develop to a new level of understanding. You will be required to look at things from a different perspective. Don't be disappointed by temporary stalling of projects.

ADVERTISE IN NAMASTAAI

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

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NAMASTAAI'S REACH

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

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

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

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Bleed Size:	21.5cm x 30.7cm
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Non bleed Size :	18cm x 13.5cm
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Cover :	250 gsm Art Card

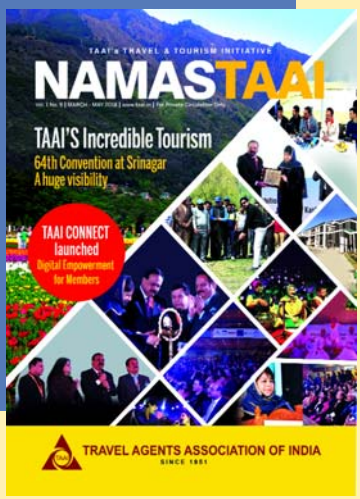
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