

The International Institute for Peace Through Tourism and TAFI President Speaks out on GAZA



Ajay Prakash, the president of the International Institute for Peace Through Tourism welcomes the statement released today by the UN Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process urging the parties to exhaust every effort to achieve an extended humanitarian ceasefire and pursue a more peaceful future.

Ajay Prakash said: ***“On behalf of the global travel and tourism industry, one of the drivers of world peace, we also urge all parties to take this critical window and do everything possible to open this window wider and stop the suffering of humans.”***

The travel and tourism industry has always been an important income earner and a driver for peace for Israel and Palestine.

World Tourism Network Chairman Statement

Juergen Steinmetz, chairman of the World Tourism Network, a close partner for IIPT for more than 20 years, applauds Ajay Prakash for speaking out and appreciates the statement by the UN Special Coordinator.

Northern India Chapter held their Members meeting on 30th Oct '23 at “The ParkHotel” New Delhi.

Bi Monthly meeting of Travel Agents Federation of India, Northern India Chapter was held on Monday **30th October 2023** at 11.00AM at **“The ParkHotel”** Parliament Street, New Delhi. Special focus was on **A Presentation on TCS/GST by CA Arjun Akruwala**, Managing Partner ASA GST ADVISORY SERVICES. **Mr Ajay Prakash, President, Mr Anil Kalsi, Vice President** attended along with a large membership turnout. Mr Akruwala gave a clear view of the GST provisions and answered many members' questions. Some Snaps taken during the event:



Mr Anil Kalsi, Vice President TAFI was invited by IndiAirport

Mr Anil Kalsi, Vice President of TAFI was invited by IndiAirport held by PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industry at the Yashobhoomi Convention Centre Dwarka , New Delhi on 22nd Nov 2023.

Mr Kalsi was a panellist on the session '**Sustainable Aviation**' Translating best practices into Reality. The session dwelled on growth in Indian aviation, Udaan, digitisation at airports, travel industry collaborations, and the need for experienced and skilled manpower.

State Minister for Civil Aviation. Dr Gen V K Singh, was the Chief Guest at the conference.



US increases staff strength, opens new consulates in India to reduce visa delays



The US is increasing the staff strength and opening new consulates to reduce waiting time for visa issuance from India, confirmed **US Ambassador Eric Garcetti**. The new consulates will come up in **Ahmedabad**, while one consulate was recently opened in Hyderabad. In an interactive session organised by the **Observer Research Foundation (ORF)**, Garcetti said, "I had a look at the new premises for establishing a consulate in Ahmedabad yesterday. Some more people have already joined the Hyderabad consulate as we are increasing the staff strength in the city and premises are being taken up in Bengaluru and Ahmedabad for setting up new consulates." He also said that the US embassy is likely to issue 10-15 per cent more visas than usual in the current calendar year. The delay in issuance of visas was due to the large number of applicants, said the Ambassador, further adding that other large countries such as Mexico and Brazil also faced similar issues. Meanwhile, the **US Embassy** also announced that its India team processed more visa applications in 2023 than in any previous year. "We'll be serving thousands of students, workers, tourists, and more in the coming weeks just in time for the busy holiday travel season," it said on social media. Indian applicants faced long delays in issuance of US visas, primarily due to the large volume of applications. The Joe Biden administration had expanded its visa waiver programme further to reduce wait times for appointments. It had, in April, said that travellers with clearance received or department authorisation on their previous visas can use the visa interview waiver process to apply for a new visa. The Biden administration also announced that Indian professionals would not be required to leave the US for the renewal of their H-1B visas. In June, State Department spokesperson Matthew Miller said US consular teams have been making a huge push to process as many visa applications as possible in India, including in those visa categories that are key to the bilateral relationship.

IndiGo soars to new heights, achieves milestone of 2000+ daily flights



IndiGo, India's leading airline, has etched its name in the annals of Indian aviation history by surpassing the monumental milestone of operating over 2000 planned flights daily. This significant achievement not only makes IndiGo the first airline in the country to reach this operational pinnacle but also positions it among the top 10 airlines globally in both frequency and seat capacity, according to the latest *OAG Data for October 2023*. This milestone underscores the airline's unwavering growth on both domestic and international fronts. IndiGo's daily schedule now boasts 2000+ flights, encompassing cargo operations, as well as charters for the Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF) and the Army. Achieving this milestone within a mere 17 years since its inception in 2006, IndiGo's commitment to operational efficiency, reliability, and customer-centricity. **Pieter Elbers, Chief Executive Officer**, IndiGo, commented on this remarkable achievement, stating, "As we celebrate surpassing the milestone of 2000 scheduled daily flights, we reflect on IndiGo's journey of reshaping the Indian aviation landscape. Our commitment to giving wings to the nation is palpable in our mission to connect people and aspirations across India. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to our valued customers and partners for their continuous support as we look forward to soaring to new heights together."

Kerala Tourism shines at India International Trade Fair 2023, emerges as most favoured destination for tourists



The Kerala Tourism Pavilion has successfully turned the spotlight on the enchanting beauty and diverse offerings of "**God's own country**" at the **India-International Trade Fair (IIFT) 2023 in New Delhi**. From caravan tourism to destination weddings, Kerala stands out as an affordable and multifaceted destination for global travellers. The pavilion showcased Kerala's rich landscape, backwaters, and cultural tapestry, offering tourists a comprehensive package that includes beaches, mountains, backwaters, pilgrimage sites including the Padmanabhaswamy Temple and Kodungalloor Juma Masjid, arts, festivals, waterfalls, monuments, and the renowned Ayurveda culture. The 34 picturesque backwaters of Kerala, connected to the sea through estuaries, took centre stage. Visitors were enticed with the promise of unforgettable backwater cruises on boats and houseboats, providing a unique opportunity to savour Kerala's delectable cuisine. The pavilion highlighted Kerala's potential for medical tourism, showcasing the state's rich Ayurveda culture. **New York Times Magazine** declared Kerala the best wedding destination of 2023, and the state's first destination wedding centre near Shanghumukham Beach, Thiruvananthapuram, was unveiled, signalling Kerala's emergence as a sought-after wedding locale. **The Kanthalloor panchayat** in Idukki district also received a gold medal in responsible tourism, further boosting the state's global appeal. Statistics revealed a record-breaking influx of domestic tourists to Kerala, with 1.59 crore arrivals in the first nine months of 2023, signifying a remarkable increase of 25.88 lakh people compared to the previous year. The pavilion's showcase of cultural experiences and the emphasis on responsible tourism. The Kerala Tourism Pavilion has successfully positioned the state as a global tourism hotspot, inviting visitors to explore the unparalleled beauty of God's own land. With affordability and diverse experiences, Kerala beckons adventurers, honeymooners, & cultural enthusiasts alike to immerse themselves in its captivating allure.

4.6 lakh flyers on World Cup eve set record after lean Diwali



The World Cup final did what Diwali could not this year — give a boost to air traffic. Saturday saw almost 4.6 lakh domestic flyers — the highest-ever figure. This Diwali season surprisingly saw lean daily flyer numbers, often under four lakh. Industry insiders blame it on the very high advance fares set by airlines more than a month before Diwali, expecting bumper travel this festive season. Instead, those high fares made travellers opt for AC classes of premium trains. Union aviation minister **Jyotiraditya Scindia** tweeted Sunday: “A historic milestone for the Indian aviation sector! On November 18, we set a new record by carrying **4,56,748 domestic passengers**”. Mumbai Airport handled its highest ever one-day traffic on Saturday 18th Nov. “A historic achievement! Mumbai Airport’s new milestone — a single-runway airport serving a record-breaking 1,61,760 passengers in a single day (on November 18),” Adani Group chairman Gautam Adani tweeted Sunday. The surge came after a tepid November, with domestic air travel remaining subdued — very unusual for a festive period. “Airlines had hiked advance booking fares since September-end for travel during the festive season from late October. That dissuaded a lot of people who then decided to book AC class of premium trains as they feared not getting train reservation closer to travel date in the peak season. During the actual peak travel season, airlines realised lean travel numbers (often below four lakh daily domestic) and then lowered fares. It is always the other way around lower advance and higher spot fares,” said an airline veteran who did not wish to be named.

flynas launches its 1st daily flight between Riyadh & Bahrain



flynas, the national air carrier of Saudi and a Middle-eastern low cost carrier, has launched its first direct flight between Riyadh and Bahrain on Wednesday, November 15. This collaboration between Flynas, Bahrain International Airport, and Bahrain Tourism and Exhibition Authority marks the addition of Bahrain to Flynas' expanding roster of regional destinations directly connected to Saudi

Arabia. This initiative aligns seamlessly with Flynas' growth and expansion strategy, initiated last year, encapsulated under the slogan 'We Connect the World to the Kingdom.' It mirrors the national tourism strategy aimed at attracting an impressive 100 million annual tourists and welcoming 300 million travellers by 2030. Additionally, it underscores Flynas' commitment to linking the Kingdom with a network of 250 international destinations. On this occasion, the first flight was welcomed at King Khalid International Airport in Riyadh in the presence of representatives of flynas and Riyadh Airports Company, while the first flight received a ceremonial welcome upon arrival at Bahrain International Airport.

AirIndia introduces non-stop flights between Mumbai & Melbourne



Air India has announced its **inaugural non-stop flight service connecting Mumbai and Melbourne**, starting from **December 15, 2023**. This addition to Air India's ever expanding global route network marks a significant milestone for both the airline and travellers. The non-stop service will operate **three times a week**, providing a convenient and efficient connection between the vibrant city of Mumbai and the cultural hub of Melbourne. **Air India** is the exclusive non-stop operator connecting these two cities, offering a streamlined travel experience for passengers. The introduction of the Mumbai-Melbourne route presents an annual increase of nearly **40,000 available seats** into the Australian state of Victoria.

Maharashtra Govt to acquire Air India building for INR 1601 cr.



Air India building at Nariman Point in Mumbai for **INR 1,601 crore**. The decision was taken at a meeting of the state cabinet in Mumbai. The meeting, chaired by Chief Minister Eknath Shinde, also decided to waive off around INR 250 crore unrealised income and interest on the property, an official said.

The building was constructed in 1974 on land owned by the state government, which will now use it for its office space. After the 2012 fire at Mantralaya, the state secretariat building in south Mumbai, four major departments public health, medical education, water supply and sanitation, and rural development have been operating from GT Hospital. These departments, along with others, may be shifted to the Air India building, an official said. The 23-storey building is owned by Air India Assets Holding Limited, a company created by the union ministry of civil aviation in 2018 to manage all Air India-owned properties. Nine floors of the building are vacant at present. Three floors house GST offices while the income-tax department has eight floors. The ground and first floors are currently with Air India, and the government has communicated to Air India Assets Holding Company that it should hand over the building free of encumbrances. One of Mumbai's iconic buildings, the sea-facing Air India tower came up on state government-owned land in 1974. It was built by John Burgee of the New York-based architectural firm Johnson/Burgee. Burgee was known for his contribution to post-modern architecture. The building was one of the targets of the 1993 serial bomb blasts in Mumbai. A car bomb exploded in the building's basement garage, killing 20 people and destroying the offices of the Bank of Oman located above.

IndiGo and Qantas strengthens ties with extended codeshare partnership

In a move to enhance **connectivity between India and Australia**, **IndiGo**, has officially announced the extension of its codeshare agreement with **Qantas**, Australia's national airline. The expanded partnership introduces four new Australian destinations for IndiGo customers - Sydney, Melbourne, Perth, and Brisbane, with Melbourne going live immediately and Sydney, Perth, and Brisbane to be added in the coming weeks. This development is expected to provide passengers with more seamless travel options between the two nations. Under this collaboration, IndiGo customers gain access to a broader range of travel choices, as they can now fly to Singapore and effortlessly connect to Qantas' flights operating between Singapore and Melbourne. This strategic move not only enhances the travel experience for passengers but also strengthens the bilateral relationship between India and Australia, aligning with the **Australia-India Economic Cooperation and Trade Agreement**. The codeshare partnership between Qantas and IndiGo was first established in 2022, enabling Qantas customers on non-stop flights between Australia and India to connect to 21 destinations across India on IndiGo flights. The extension of this collaboration now reciprocally opens up Australian cities for IndiGo customers.

Snippets

- Srilanka Announces Visa Free entry effective 27 Nov '23 to Indian Citizens.**
- Malaysia will let tourists from China and India enter without a visa from December 1st, 2023.**
- TAFI launch, nationwide consumer campaign 'Without a Travel Agent, You're on Your Own,'**
- Thailand lifted visa requirements for visitors from India & Taiwan from 10 Nov'23 to 10 May '24**

Malaysia to allow visa-free entry to Indian citizen



Malaysia will scrap entry visa requirements for Indian citizens visiting the nation beginning **December 1**, **Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim** announced. Indian nationals may stay for up to **30 days visa-free**, Anwar said in a speech at his People's Justice Party's annual congress in Putrajaya on Sunday. However, Indian nationals would be subject to security screening, he added. "Initial screenings will be conducted for all tourists and visitors to Malaysia. Security is a different matter. If there are criminal records or the risk of terrorism, they will not be allowed to enter," Anwar said. Indians so far had been able to enter Malaysia with a visa-on-arrival. The cost of the Malaysia Visa on Arrival for Indians including the processing fee was RM 200 (Rs 3,558). Currently, there are **158 flights with 30,032 seats** offered weekly between India and Malaysia through **Malaysia Airlines, Batik Air, AirAsia and IndiGo**, said the agency under the **Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture Malaysia**. Along with Indian citizens, Chinese nationals will also be allowed visa-free entry from December 1, the prime minister said. Malaysia is counting on extra tourist arrivals — and their spending — to support economic growth. Anwar last month announced plans to improve visa facilities next year to encourage the entry of tourists and investors, "especially from India and China." Malaysia will scrap entry visa requirements for citizens of China and India visiting the nation beginning Dec. 1, according to Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim. Chinese and Indian nationals may stay for up to 30 days visa-free, Anwar said in a speech at his People's Justice Party's annual congress in Putrajaya on Sunday. This would be subject to security screening, he added. Malaysia is counting on extra tourist arrivals — and their spending — to support economic growth. Effective from **November 10**, **Thailand** has eliminated the need for a visa for Indian visitors, granting a generous **30-day stay**. This favourable policy is set to **last until May 10 next year**, with the possibility of an extension if the demand continues to rise, as suggested by the Thai government. The Tourism Authority of Thailand expressed their enthusiasm, stating, "We want more travellers to visit Thailand." Highlighting the growth in Indian tourism, they revealed that in 2022, the country welcomed 965,994 Indian tourists. Remarkably, from January 1 to October 31 this year, the number surged to an impressive 1,302,483 Indian tourists.



IndiGo to become the first airline to launch flights from Noida International Airport

Noida International Airport (NIA) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) **with IndiGo**, India's largest airline today. With this development, IndiGo became the launch carrier for the airport. Under this arrangement, NIA and IndiGo will work together to develop and strengthen air connectivity within Uttar Pradesh and beyond. The partnership will also explore new and innovative ideas to gain operational efficiency and enhanced customer experience. **Mr Christoph Schnellmann, Chief Executive Officer of Noida International Airport**, said. We are excited to sign this MoU with IndiGo, which has a strong base both in domestic and international markets. The partnership between NIA and IndiGo will not only help bolster air connectivity but also innovate, ensuring an exceptional customer experience for our customers alike. By leveraging IndiGo's extensive route network and expertise, we aim to provide our passengers with unparalleled connectivity and an exceptional travel experience. Speaking on the occasion, **Mr. Pieter Elbers, Chief Executive Officer of IndiGo**, said, We are thrilled to announce our MoU with Noida International Airport, to become the launch carrier at the upcoming airport. As India's leading airline, IndiGo has always been at the forefront of enhancing connectivity and giving wings to the nation. Our operations at NIA will provide the people of Uttar Pradesh with seamless connectivity across our unparalleled network. We look forward to the inauguration of the new airport in 2024.

IndiGo plans premium class of seats, loyalty programme by 2024-end



IndiGo may reportedly introduce a premium class of seats as the airline looks to bring in more business flyers and take on Air India's international routes. The airline might also offer hot food and a loyalty programme by the **end of 2024**. According to a report that quoted people in the know, IndiGo is planning to introduce a dual-class configuration in 35 Airbus A321 aircraft that will be fitted with a premium cabin with eight rows of seats with two on each side. The prices of these premium seats are yet to be finalised, the report added. The report quoted a person in the know who said that eight rows with extra legroom seating will be installed, providing 36 inches of legroom or seat pitch for travellers to stretch out or work comfortably. IndiGo's seat pitch on its Airbus A320 and A321 aircraft is 30 inches on average with three seats each side. Customers who pay extra will receive priority boarding, complimentary in-flight food and greater flexibility to make changes to their itinerary, mentioned the report. IndiGo commands 60 per cent share in the domestic market and has managed to stay profitable in an economy that has seen multiple airlines go bust because of their expenses. It is now eyeing a leadership position in the overseas segment too.

India resumes e-visa services for Canadians



India resumed e-visa services for Canadian nationals on Wednesday 22nd Nov..

"Indian eVisa facility has been restored with effect from 22 November 2023, for all eligible Canadian citizens," the Indian High Commission in Ottawa tweeted. Last month, India had restored visa services in some categories including entry visa, business visa, medical visa and conference visa. But tourist visas have still not been restored for Canadian citizens. "What had happened was that we had temporarily suspended visa services because the situation in Canada made it difficult for our diplomats to go to office and do the necessary work for assessing visas. As the situation there has become more secure or relatively improved, I think we have found it possible for the visa services to progressively resume. The physical visa had started in many categories. So at that time itself we had said, we will be looking at... so I think it was a logical step," **External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar** said, responding to questions on the issue. This is being perceived as a major de-escalatory move by India, a potential "door-opener" though Trudeau and his government have not withdrawn his allegation, which was dismissed by Delhi as "absurd" and "motivated".

DGCA slaps Rs 10 lakh penalty on Air India over non-compliance with norms on passenger facilities

Aviation regulator Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has slapped a penalty of Rs 10 lakh on Air India for non-compliance with stipulated norms on facilities and compensation to be provided to passengers affected by instances such as flight delays, cancellations, and being made to travel on unserviceable seats. This is the second time such an action has been taken against Air India in the past one-and-a-half years. In June 2022, the DGCA had imposed a penalty of Rs 10 lakh on the Tata group airline over violation of regulations pertaining to boarding denials. "DGCA carried out inspections at Delhi, Kochi & Bangalore Airports of Scheduled Domestic Operators in the months of May & September, 2023 to ascertain the discharge of their obligations related to facilities/compensation provided to the passengers as per provisions laid down in DGCA regulations. During the inspections of the airlines, it was observed that Air India was not complying with the provisions of relevant CAR, the regulator said in Statement

Air India returns to Amsterdam on December 17, 2023



The Dutch government had outlined plans to slash aircraft movements at Schiphol by 8 per cent from 2019 levels from next summer, which meant airlines would be forced to cull 9,070 flights from their schedules over the summer season. However, on November 14, 2023, bowing down to pressure from airlines, the European Commission, and perhaps the US Department of Transport, which lodged a formal complaint from US carriers for Schiphol's cutbacks (causing JetBlue to lose their slots), the Dutch government retracted its proposal to limit the number of flights through AMS. One week later, Air India has put up on sale their flight to Amsterdam again. The flight will resume on December 17, 2023, and operate four times a week. The airline will deploy its Boeing 787-8 Dreamliner aircraft, which can accommodate 256 passengers across two classes – 238 in economy and 18 in business class. It will operate on Monday/Wednesday/Friday/Sunday, with an afternoon departure from Delhi and the return trip from Amsterdam starting late evening. Air India regained its operations in Amsterdam in December 2023 which were initially caused by reduction of slot availability at Schiphol. Air India is now offering the flight on sale again, four times a week, effective December 17, 2023.

Visit Venice on a Wednesday – or pay the new tax



Visitors to Venice who have a hotel booking in the city will be spared the new tax being introduced on peak weekends next year. In a pilot programme, day-trippers will each pay €5 (US\$5.45) to enter the UNESCO World Heritage city on peak weekends in a bid to reduce crowds, encourage longer visits and improve the quality of life for residents. Venice mayor Luigi Brugnaro said the fee is an experiment in regulating tourist flows by incentivising visitors to avoid high-traffic periods and come on other days. "Our attempt is to make a more liveable city," he said at a news conference. Cruise passengers are likely to be most impacted by the fee as they return to the ships every night rather than stay in a city hotel. In all, 29 days from April to mid-July – including most weekends – will be subject to the day-tripper fee during peak hours from 8.30am until 4pm. Exemptions apply for residents and Venetian-born visitors, students and workers, as well as tourists who have hotel or other lodging reservations.

Phuket: Air India is on the way



Air India will launch a service from New Delhi to Phuket, on 15 December initially operating the route four times a week, with an increase to daily service in January. Air India's interline partnership with Bangkok Airways will allow travellers to connect to other destinations in Thailand, as well as those served by Bangkok Airways in Laos and Cambodia. Air India says the new Phuket service is part of the airline's expansion plans in South-east Asia.

The carrier will fly its Airbus A320neo between New Delhi's Indira Gandhi International Airport and Phuket International, with up to 162 seats onboard, including 12 in Business Class. Air India currently offers daily nonstop flights to Bangkok from Delhi and Mumbai, and six flights a week from Kolkata.

As travel demand soars, 2024 predictions point to over 71 mn more seats: FCM Report.



The **Q3-2023** continued the trend from **H1-2023**, signalling a levelling of the rapid travel growth that started late 2021, and whilst travel demand was growing and positive, the increases have moderated for a third quarter. The key outtake from the **FCM Consulting's** latest Global Quarterly Trend Report showed that **Q1-2024** is forecast to have over **71.8 million** (+5.3%) more seats (both domestically and internationally) than in 2019, for the same period. The final 2023 seat capacity is forecast to be -2.2% down in 2019. Taking a look at air seat growth regionally, Africa leads the way with a predicted increase of **14 %**, followed by the Middle East (up **11 %**), Latin America (**8 %** increase), North America (up **8%**), Asia (**7%** rise), Australasia (**flat**), and Europe **down 2%**. The report stated that one of the biggest impediments to recovery so far has been a lack of airline capacity and competition. Conditions are gradually improving, which is expected to benefit travellers as the year progresses, but the concern remains regarding the lack of available seats on services between Australia and Europe, via the Middle East. As reported by **IATA in August 2023**, global **Passenger Load Factors (PLF)** were at **84.6 %**, with domestic PLF sitting at **83.5%**, and international PLF reporting **85.4 %**. Domestic PLF across major markets was led by the USA at **84.5%**, followed by **India at 83.9%**, Brazil at **83.1 %**, Japan (**82.5%**), and Australia at **82.3%**. International PLF was led by North America at **87.7%**, as the highest performing region compared to the lowest, Africa at **76.2%**.



EAGLE CREST

DMC - UAE

YOUR TRUSTED DMC FOR UAE

The Ultimate UAE Experience, with Eagle Crest Tourism LLC!



Why Choose Us?

- ✈ Excursions
- 🏨 Hotels
- 🚗 Transfers
- 🛂 Visa Services
- 👤 Tailor Made Packages
- 👥 Group Tours
- 🕒 24/7 Support



POWERED BY



www.etrav.in

Eagle Crest Tourism LLC!
1406-1407, Sobha Sapphire Business Bay
Dubai - United Arab Emirates.

www.eaglecrestdmc.com
dubaisales@eaglecrestdmc.com

UAE 24/7 Support line : +971 569259296 | INDIA 24/7 Support line : +91 7400015345



IATA urges swift government action to propel aviation decarbonisation efforts

The International Air Transport Association (IATA) anticipates government action to facilitate aviation's decarbonisation, as agreed upon during the Third Conference on Aviation Alternative Fuels (CAAF/3) hosted by The International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) in Dubai. During the pivotal CAAF/3 conference, multiple critical agreements were forged, signifying a stride towards sustainable aviation. Among these agreements, a cornerstone was the establishment of a global framework aimed at promoting the production of Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF) across all geographies worldwide. The primary objective set forth was ambitious yet crucial: to ensure that aviation fuel by 2030 becomes 5% less carbon intensive compared to the fossil fuel currently employed within the industry. CAAF/3 also acknowledged the differing capacities of various states to adopt and advance in the field of sustainable aviation. Recognising these discrepancies, the conference introduced measures such as capacity building initiatives, the proposition of a "Finvest Hub" and voluntary technology transfers. These measures were designed to facilitate and ensure the participation of all countries in a globally integrated SAF market. This necessitated the establishment of a robust accounting framework for SAF. Expressing the urgency of the situation, **Willie Walsh, IATA's Director General**, underscored the indispensable role of SAF in achieving the industry's commitment to **net-zero emissions by 2050**. Walsh urged immediate and robust policy implementations by governments worldwide to facilitate the exponential growth of a global SAF market. IATA noted that the demand for SAF within the aviation industry significantly exceeds the current availability. Despite limited access, airlines have demonstrated their commitment by purchasing all produced SAF in 2022, incurring an additional cost of approximately USD 500 million due to its premium pricing over traditional jet fuel. Airlines have also entered into forward purchase agreements totaling around USD 45 billion, reflecting a substantial commitment to future SAF procurement. Walsh further stressed the necessity for governments to act promptly on the CAAF/3 declarations by implementing policies that foster innovation, stimulate production, promote competition, and attract financing. The objective is to address the burgeoning demand for SAF across the globe comprehensively.

Soon, flyers at Bengaluru airport will not have to put gadgets in tray for security checking

Passengers departing from Kempegowda International Airport in Bengaluru will soon experience a more efficient security screening process due to the introduction of advanced **CTX (Computer Tomography X-ray)** machines. Bengaluru International Airport Limited (BIAL), the operator of KIA, will soon start the trial of the CTX machine at **Terminal 2 of Bengaluru airport**. Meanwhile, airport officials said that after the installation of the CTX machine, "passengers will be able to leave their electronic items (laptops, etc.) and LAGs (liquids, aerosols, and gels) in their bags and go through a quicker screening process". Following the installation of the CTX machine, travellers will no longer be required to remove electronic devices such as mobile phones and laptops from their bags during security checks. This innovation allows passengers to leave their electronic items and items containing liquids, aerosols, and gels (LAGs) in their bags, streamlining the screening procedure and significantly reducing processing time at security checkpoints. The CTX machines, utilising computed tomography technology akin to CT scan machines, create 3D models of passengers' cabin bags. This technology, implemented in major airports globally, not only accelerates security procedures but also enhances the detection of prohibited items.



Singapore Tourism Board Falls Short of Expected Tourist Arrivals in 2023

In **October**, Singapore experienced a decline in international visitor arrivals for the third consecutive month, dropping to **1,125,948** visitors based on the data provided by the Singapore Tourism Board. Singapore tourism saw a slight decrease from **September's visitor count**, but it remained significantly higher than the number of visitors in October 2022, marking a **37.8% increase**. Analysts note that the tourism patterns in 2023 followed seasonal trends, with peaks in July and August due to inbound Chinese arrivals, followed by a decline in September and October. These patterns were similar to pre-pandemic trends, according to **DBS Bank analyst Geraldine Wong**. **Indonesia** remained the leading source of visitors to Singapore, with **180,881** tourists, showing an increase from September's count of 175,601 tourists. **China** followed as the next significant source country, with **122,764** visitors in October, slightly decreasing from 135,677 visitors in September. Ms. Wong highlighted changes in Chinese travel patterns due to safety concerns in Thailand and Japan, possibly redirecting some travellers to Singapore for the time being. Ms. Wong doesn't think the shift in Chinese travel was sufficient to counter seasonal patterns, mentioning that trends influenced by current news tend to diminish rapidly. Additionally, she observed that during **Golden Week (Oct 1 to 7)**, many Chinese travellers opted for domestic trips, which was disappointing for hoteliers expecting more demand from Chinese tourists. **India** surpassed Malaysia and Australia to secure the **third position** in visitor arrivals to Singapore, with **94,332** people visiting, marking an increase from 81,014 visitors in the previous month. In October, **Malaysia recorded 88,641** international arrivals, a slight decrease from **89,384** in September. Meanwhile, Australia, ranking fifth, contributed **88,032 visitors**, down from 104,497 the previous month. In total for 2023, Singapore has welcomed approximately **11.3 million visitor arrivals**, falling short of the Singapore Tourism Board's expected range of *12 to 14 million arrivals* for the full year.

TN govt gives nod for acquiring 3,774 acres of patta land for Greenfield airport for Chennai



The **Tamil Nadu government** has issued orders to facilitate **acquisition of 3,774.01** acres of patta land in Parandur and 19 other villages in Kancheepuram district for setting up a greenfield airport for Chennai, and the people who are likely to be displaced by the project staunchly opposed the move and held protests. The government has also cleared the decks for the **alienation of 1,972.12 acres of government lands** in the 19 villages for the airport project. The Government Order for administrative sanction for the special land acquisition and financial sanction has been issued. Supported by environment activists, villagers descended upon the Kancheepuram collectorate and staged a protest urging the state government to drop its move to acquire their patta (land owned by them) lands. For over a year, people in villages including Eganapuram have been holding daily protests against the land acquisition for the airport project, which is expected to come up at an outlay of approximately **INR 20,000 crore**. The lands for the second airport would be acquired under the provisions of the Tamil Nadu Acquisition of Lands for Industrial Purposes Act, 1997, in Kancheepuram and Sriperumbudur Taluks in favour of TIDCO for setting up the greenfield airport at Parandur. **Totally, about 5,746.18 acres** of land including 3,774.01 acres of patta land and 1,972.17 acres of government lands to be alienated are required for the project. The state government has proposed to set up a greenfield international airport to augment airport infrastructure and facilities to cater to the ever-growing air connectivity needs of passenger transportation and cargo movement to and from the state. "It is a strategic imperative to have robust air connectivity for a wide range of economic reasons for industrial growth, tourism, healthcare, logistics, and e-commerce," the order issued recently said.

Land reclamation plan to create 800-ha 'Long Island' along Singapore's east coast



An artist's impression of a possible view from 'Long Island' towards East Coast Park. The project will stretch from Marina East to Tanah Merah.

SINGAPORE will embark on a land reclamation project to create a "Long Island" on the eastern coast of Singapore, Minister for National Development Desmond Lee announced on Tuesday (Nov 28). The project will involve the reclamation of three new tracts of land, set at a higher level, away from the current coastline. It will stretch from Marina East to Tanah Merah and is expected to span around 800 ha – double the size of the Marina Bay area. This will also create an enclosed waterbody, which will over time become a new freshwater reservoir, he said. The project is part of the government's plans to create more land and optimise Singapore's resources to meet the needs of future generations, Lee said. "They could build homes (on the reclaimed Long Island), create jobs, develop services and amenities." Long Island will also strengthen the country's water resilience while protecting the country from rising sea levels, he noted. Land reclamation has long been Singapore's key strategy to increase its usable land area. In the past 60 years, the space-scarce country has expanded by nearly 25 per cent, from 581.5 square kilometres (sq km) in 1960 to 725.7 sq km in 2019.

Air India Express offers 30% off across its network with 'Christmas comes Early' Sale!

Air India Express launched its "Christmas comes Early" Sale, offering up to **30% off domestic and international flights** across major channels for bookings made until November 2023 and for travel from **2nd December 2023 to 30th May 2024**. Logged-in members get an extra treat with complimentary Xpress Ahead Services and zero convenience fees on the airline's award-winning mobile app and website, airindiaexpress.com. The airline is offering fab deals on routes such as *Bengaluru-Kochi, Bengaluru-Kannur, Bengaluru-Mangalore, Bengaluru-Thiruvananthapuram, Chennai-Thiruvananthapuram, Kannur-Thiruvananthapuram, and Bengaluru-Tiruchirappalli*, along with discounted sale fares across its network. The airline recently launched a host of new routes connecting Hyderabad with Lucknow, Kochi and Amritsar. Members of the Tata NeuPass Rewards Program also earn up to 8% NeuCoins, in addition to exclusive member benefits like exclusive deals on meals, seats, baggage, change and cancellation fee waivers, and more. In addition to loyalty members, students, senior citizens, SMEs, dependents, and members of the armed forces can also avail special fares on airindiaexpress.com. Air India Express operates over 300 flights daily to 30 domestic and 14 international destinations with a fleet of 57 aircraft, comprising 29 Boeing 737s and 28 Airbus A320s. Air India Express recently unveiled its refreshed brand identity, inviting travellers to 'Fly as You Are' with digitally empowered personalisation, offering a wide range of Gourmet hot meals, comfortable seating, in-flight experience hub AirFlix, and a suite of exclusive loyalty benefits. The refreshed brand identity reflects the airline's vision to inspire new possibilities and make meaningful connections with unmatched Indian warmth.

Snippets

- India's largest tiger reserve to be set up in Madhya Pradesh's Damoh.
- Direct Kolhapur-Tirupati flight to be replaced by connection via Hyderabad.
- Punjab CM launches 'Mukhyamantri Teerth Yatra' scheme.
- Railways readies to save cost and better passenger experience on Vande Bharat trains.