

*Tamilnadu Chapter Had its AGM for 2020-21 at Germanus Hotel & Resort at Kodaikanal.



TAFI Tamilnadu Chapter had its **AGM 2020-21** at **Germanus Springs Hotel & Resorts, KODAIKANAL**, Princess of Hills. It was attended by 45 members. It was 2 nights Package offered to members. Apart from members from Chennai- Trichy, Madurai and Kumbakonam Agents who had also attended the AGM. The AGM was held on 26th February & started at 6 pm as per Agenda in the Notice circulated to members. After the AGM, there was an interactive session moderated by our Senior Member **Mr. Somaskandan** with subject on **“Present Travel Trade Status”**. Members present actively participated. The session was electrifying and members express and exchange their views on present day Travel Trade matter affecting them. **TAAI South Tamilnadu Chapter, Chairman Mr. Jaffar Sadiq** and its past chairman **Mr. Paramsivam** who were also members of TAFI TN Chapter, felicitated the elected Office Bearers of the Chapter and 2 National MC from Tamilnadu **Mr. Baskar** and **Mr. Lalith Jain**. Thereafter ASEGO – a Travel Insurance Company showcased their products. The presentation enlightens our members about additional earning from ancillary services like Travel, Health, Auto Insurance and many flexible options which were not available in the market. Office Bearers felicitated the **Mr. Dhinay Shah**, of AESEGO, Zonal Head-Sales and **Mr. Senthil**, Director of Sales of the Germanus Springs Hotel and Resorts. The event was closed followed by fellowship and Dinner. The AGM started at 6 pm and went on till 9.30 pm hence the entertainment-“Karaoke” session was not able held but postpone to next day evening (27th Feb) with fellowship and dinner. As 27 Feb was birthday of TN Chapter MC **Mr. Raju Varghese’s** birthday it was also celebrated with cake cutting. Members were enthralled by singing their favorite songs in Tamil, Hindi and English. 2ndday event closed@ 11 pm.



For more Photos of AGM Ctrl + click this link: <https://photos.app.goo.gl/hrmR1QkCacJpq68RA>

[*India extends international travel & visa restrictions till further orders.](#)

Amidst the ongoing speculations around the early resumption of scheduled international commercial flights, the Government of India has made the announcement to further extend the Covid-19 related restrictions placed on travel and visa. **In an order**, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (**DGCA**) informed about the decision when the travel and tourism industry was expecting no extension and hoping for regular flights from March 15. Earlier, reports suggested that the government is mulling to remove the exiting travel and visa restrictions and resume scheduled international commercial flights to and from India. But the travel and tourism industry have to wait a little longer as a decision is expected around end of first fortnight of March 2022. As per the revised circular shared by the DGCA, the current restrictions will continue to apply till **‘further orders.’** However, the international air operations will continue to ply on the basis of the air bubble arrangement along all existing cargo operations will also continue as usual despite the restrictions. The ban on regular international flights has proved to be a big setback for the industry reeling under the impact of Covid-19 and curtailed tourism-related business. With no international tourism business for the third consecutive tourism season, the travel trade and the industry in the country will continue to face challenges to their survival. Commenting on the government's decision, **Ajay**



President Ajay Prakash

Prakash, President, Travel Agents Federation of India (TAFI) the travel trade is extremely disappointed at the decision to suspend scheduled international passenger flights “until further orders.” “The entire travel & tourism industry has been crippled over the last 23 months; the Government has failed to provide any tangible relief even as thousands of businesses have been bankrupted and lakhs of people have lost their jobs. Travellers are being harassed with sky high airfares on account of the reduced inventory but none of this seems to matter to the powers that be,” he said. “Scheduled flights were to resume from 15 December last year but two and a half months later we are still clueless on when that might finally happen. The whole world is opening up and welcoming travellers. India has among the highest vaccination and lowest infection rates in the world. What are we waiting for? We strongly appeal to the Hon’ble PM to take an informed decision and to open the Indian skies to international traffic without any further delay,” he further added.

[*Delhi Chief Minister launches one-stop app for tourists:](#)

The Delhi government on Monday launched a mobile phone app, **“Dekho Meri Dilli”**, that will act as a one-stop center for tourism related information and tickets to all major tourist spots in Delhi, including popular market places and eateries. The app, built by the Delhi government’s tourism department, was launched by Chief Minister **Arvind Kejriwal** on Monday, 28th Feb, on the occasion of World Tourism Day. The “Dekho Meri Dilli” app offers six unique ways to discover Delhi and helps one plan a city tour ranging from half a day to six days. It also provides access to Google Maps to the required destination, and lists public and paid toilet facilities nearest to the user. After launching the application, Kejriwal said the app has been created with the intention of making tourists stay longer in the city and spend more on various businesses. “This app will be extremely useful to all those who come to Delhi from across the world. Delhi is a historical city, but it is also very modern and technologically driven. If anyone wants to understand the history of this country, they cannot do that without visiting Delhi. Delhi boasts of amazing food, engaging entertainment and the most revered monuments. But until the launch of this app, we lacked information about all of these. Every information about tourism in Delhi will be available on this app in an organized, user-friendly, and effective manner,” Delhi CM Kejriwal said.

*IATA urges countries to remove travel barriers for fully vaccinated Passengers:



There is a cautious optimism in the air travel industry as airline ticket sales rebounded in the four largest domestic markets - India, US, China and Russia - in early February after previous weakness caused by Omicron led to disruptions in demand, capacity and labor force, said International Air Transport Association (IATA). As air travel increases, IATA has urged countries to remove travel barriers, including quarantine and testing, for those fully vaccinated with a WHO-approved vaccine and enabling quarantine-free travel for non-vaccinated travellers with a negative pre-departure

antigen test result. The four markets saw their combined share of total traffic rise substantially during the crisis (50 per cent of global passenger numbers in 2021 versus 34 per cent in 2019). Since travellers tend to book closer to the travel date amid pandemic uncertainty. The US has been the strongest performer, with ticket sales for all future travel reaching 98 per cent of 2019 levels in early February; India was at 60 per cent; and China 80 per cent and Russia 75 per cent. In India and the US, cases have been falling from their January peak, but the pandemic continues to escalate in Russia. "Travel restrictions have had a severe impact on people and on economies. It is time for their removal as we learn to live and travel in a world that will have risks of Covid for the foreseeable future. This means putting a stop to the singling out of the travelling population for special measures. Many governments have recognized this already and removed restrictions. Many more need to follow," said Willie Walsh, IATA's Director General.

*Tatas may review Air India CEO choice if government ok delayed



Tata Sons will evaluate new leadership for Air India, including the appointment of a COO, as uncertainty looms over the security clearance for CEO-appointee **Ilker Ayci**. Rules require an airline company to receive a go-ahead from the government before key managerial personnel take charge. Ayci's proximity to Turkish president Recep Tayyip Erdogan, who is not exactly known as a friend of India, among other reasons, has created a buzz on social media ever since Tata Sons

announced the Turkish national as the next CEO of Air India. "Various options will be considered, including the appointment of a COO, if there is a delay in the security clearance of Ayci," said a source. Recruitment firm Egon Zehnder had shortlisted five professionals from five top airlines in the world. Tata Sons selected Ayci, 51, from that list. The Turkish national is expected to take charge of Air India on or before April 1. "There is still some time. In the event of Ayci not getting security clearance, Tata Sons will select the next best from the remaining four for the CEO's role in Air India. Tata Sons declined to comment on the situation. If it eventually says that Ayci will not be joining Air India, it will be the second such instance under chairman N Chandrasekaran when the appointment of an expat as head of a company has not gone through. Last year, the Tatas announced that German national Marc Llistosella, whom it had hired to lead Tata Motors. It compensated Llistosella, for withdrawing the employment contract. Tata Motors has been without a CEO since last July. Turning around the fortunes of the struggling Air India is one of Chandrasekaran's key goals following the renewal of his tenure as chairman at Tata Sons. Tatas selected Ayci for turning around Turkish Airlines, and it broke into the premier club of world's top 10 airlines by market share.

****FLASH NEWS: Ilker Ayci**, has declined the Tata Group's offer to be the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) & Managing Director of Air India, aviation industry sources said on Tuesday, 1st March

***Heathrow Airport records worst passenger numbers in 50 years:**



Heathrow Airport endured its worst financial year in history in 2021, with passenger numbers falling to a near 50-year low due to the UK's Covid-19 travel restrictions. Bosses at the West London airport are now banking on a strong summer season to recover from the battering taken last year when 19.4 million people passed through its doors – the lowest number since 1972. The UK's changing travel rules system and the additional Omicron restrictions imposed late last year meant Heathrow was the only European airport to see a reduction in traffic. Cargo, mainly carried on passenger planes, was 12 per cent down on pre-pandemic levels. Cost savings of £870 million (\$1.18 billion) were accrued over the past two years but cumulative losses during the pandemic have risen to £3.8bn due to lower passengers and high fixed costs. Heathrow said the current number of passengers was 23 per cent behind forecast. Despite the sluggish start to the year, the airport – Europe's busiest before the pandemic struck – expects to meet its target of 45.5 million passengers by the end of 2022. This month, pre-travel and post-arrival Covid-testing rules for vaccinated travellers in England were scrapped, as was the 10-day isolation requirement for unvaccinated people. But while the removal of rules in the UK has boosted outbound travel, testing requirements in other countries continue to affect inbound tourism and business travel. Sixty-three per cent of Heathrow's markets retain some form of travel restriction or testing requirements.

***New arrival terminal at Delhi airport's T1 to be operational from Thursday, 24 Feb**



The newly-constructed arrival terminal at T1 of the airport in the national capital will be operational from Thursday. The Indira Gandhi International Airport (IGIA), operated by DIAL, has three terminals T1, T2 and T3. The **state-of-the-art** arrival facility is set to receive passengers from IndiGo's flight from Goa, 6E-6532. It is scheduled to arrive at around 3.20 am on February 24, said in a statement on Wednesday. With the opening of the new arrival hall, the entire arrivals operations of T1 will shift from the existing facility to the new

one. Currently, IndiGo and SpiceJet operate flights from T1. Departure operations, however, will continue from the existing terminal, and will eventually be integrated with the new arrival hall post completion of the expansion works, the statement said. Developed by DIAL, the new arrival terminal is part of **Delhi Airport's** ongoing phase 3A expansion project. DIAL said the facility would offer a distinctive experience with a contemporary 'meet and greet' zone, plush forecourt area, including landscaping and kiosks for food and beverage, retail and expanded parking area for cars. On the city side, the pickup lanes outside the arrival terminal have been realigned and widened with three additional lanes, taking the total number of lanes to 11, the airport operator said. In line with DIAL's green initiatives, the new arrival terminal has been built as a green building, keeping globally renowned LEED green building standards in mind, the statement said. LEED provides a framework for healthy, efficient, carbon and cost-saving green buildings. As part of it, DIAL has used the daylight concept in the terminal building, which will reduce electricity consumption, as there will be ample natural light during the day.

[*As runway repair work at Port Blair Airport disrupts tourism, FHRAI appeals to MoCA](#)

Apex hospitality body **Federation of Hotel & Restaurant Associations of India (FHRAI)** has sought urgent intervention of **the Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA)** to look into the proposed closure of the only civil airport in Andaman & Nicobar Island after last week it was announced that the Port Blair airport is scheduled to remain closed for four days a week for three months due to runway repair works. The association has submitted a representation to the Union Minister of Civil Aviation, Jyotiraditya Scindia requesting action in avoiding disruptions in flight movements at the airport. The Andaman & Nicobar Command has directed shutting down the only runway of Veer Savarkar International Airport in Port Blair for four days a week from March to May 2022 for its re-carpeting work and a NOTAM has been issued in this regard. FHRAI has stated that the closure of the airport poses a serious threat to the hospitality and tourism industry in the UT which has already suffered 75- 80 per cent revenue loss due to the pandemic. With advanced technology options available today, FHRAI has appealed to the Ministry to explore alternatives to carry out the work at the airport without shutting down operations. The operations were mostly ad-hoc with limited flights due to the NOTAM for use of runway only till 2 pm. This allowed operations of only about ten flights compared to two-dozen flights in the pre-Covid times. "Today many advanced technology options are available that the government can explore to carry out the work at the airport without shutting down the operations. We request the Ministry of Civil Aviation to adopt innovative technologies to avoid disruption in flight movements at the Port Blair Airport," said **Gurbaxish Singh Kohli**, Vice President, FHRAI.

[*Jet Airways: Former Sri Lankan Airlines CEO Vipula Gunatilleka appointed as CFO:](#)



The new proposed promoter of the grounded-full-service carrier **Jet Airways**, Jalan Kalrock Consortium has announced the appointment of **Vipula Gunatilleka** as the new Chief Financial Officer (**CFO**) of the airline. The former Sri Lankan Airlines CEO will assume responsibilities from March 1, 2022. Gunatilleka served as the CEO of Sri Lankan Airlines until January 2022 when he led the island nation's national carrier throughout the pandemic. Gunatilleka was appointed by Sri Lankan to restructure the airline and in less than two years after assuming the duties as the CEO, it recorded positive EBITDA/Cash Flow for the fiscal year 2019-20. He was the CFO & Board Member of TAAG Angola Airlines from November 2015 to July 2018 under Emirates Management. Gunatilleka played a pivotal role to turn around the loss-making national carrier of Angola. Gunatilleka qualified as a Chartered Accountant in 1987 after which he did his MBA from the University of Colombo, Sri Lanka, is also a qualified Chartered Management Accountant (FCMA) from UK and Certified Public Accountant (FCPA) from Australia. He is known for his astute knowledge in aircraft financing, strategic planning, cost-efficient business modelling, and openness to adopting hybrid models to keep business costs low and efficiency high. Speaking on his plans, Gunatilleka said, "I am very excited to join the company and I look forward to contributing my knowledge of last 30 years in Jet Airways' resurgence in its new avatar. We will capitalize on the strong brand value that Jet Airways has in the market and use it to rebuild the lost ground. I first joined Sri Lankan Airlines as its CFO in 2001, when it was part of the Emirates Group and was establishing its feet in the Indo-Pacific Sub-Continent. Having spent sufficient time in leadership roles in the aviation industry including as CEO of Sri Lankan Airlines until January 2022, I am aware of the responsibility that lingers on the shoulders of the leadership team, especially the CFO and I am confident Jet Airways will soon regain its lost glory

***Vietnam reopens international air routes:**



As part of efforts to resume socio-economic activities, Vietnam has reopened air routes to 20 countries and regions, compared to 28 in the 2019 winter flight schedule before the Covid-19 pandemic, a transport official said. The resumed routes included those to Australia, China, Japan, South Korea, Singapore, France, Germany, Russia, and the United States, Xinhua news agency quoted Tran Bao Ngoc, Director of the Transportation Department, as saying on Tuesday. Eight destinations to which air routes haven't been resumed consist of Brunei, India, Indonesia, Myanmar, Finland, Italy, and Switzerland. There are currently 370 international flights from or to Vietnam per week each way, compared to a high of 4,185 in the 2019 winter flight schedule, the transport official said. Meanwhile, six local carriers, namely Vietnam Airlines, Vietjet Air, Pacific Airlines, Bamboo Airways, Vietravel Airlines, and Vasco, are operating 56 domestic air routes with 2,570 flights per week each way, down two routes and 217 flights from the pre-pandemic schedule in 2019. Vietnamese aviation authorities have officially lifted all restrictions on the frequency of international flights since February 15, marking the first time after two years the network returned to normal operation. The government is working over a plan to fully reopen its border for international tourists starting March 15.

***Air transport bubble agreement between India and Thailand comes into effect**



The air transport bubble agreement between India and Thailand has now come into effect with the Aviation Ministry confirming the decision. According to an update on the Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA)'s website, India has signed and finalized the agreement allowing bilateral flights between both countries. With this arrangement, Indian and Thai airlines are now permitted to operate flights, carrying selected categories of passengers on such flights. With this, India has air bubble agreements with 37 countries, which includes, Afghanistan, Australia, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Canada, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Germany, Iraq, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Kuwait, Maldives, Mauritius, Nepal, Netherlands, Nigeria, Oman, Qatar, Russia, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, Seychelles, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Switzerland, Tanzania, Thailand, Ukraine, UAE, United Kingdom, USA, and Uzbekistan. The Indian government had earlier that they had a proposal from 10 countries to sign the air bubble agreement including Thailand.

***Israel to reopen for tourism from March 1:**

Removing all barriers and restrictions for tourists, Israel has announced reopening for tourism allowing all tourists irrespective of their vaccination status to the without the need to quarantine on arrival. Under new travel guidelines effective from March 1, the only requirement is a negative RT-PCR test before departure and subsequently another test on arrival in Israel. As decided and announced by Israeli Prime Minister Naftali Bennett and Health Minister Nitzan Horowitz, with the involvement of Tourism Minister Yoel Razvozov, the decision has been taken after considering a steady decline in the mortality rates across the world due to Covid-19 and realizing the need to open tourism. We are confident that visitor numbers will gradually recover to pre-pandemic numbers as consumer confidence grows in line with the gradual easing of restriction

***VTL travellers to Singapore from India: On-arrival PCR test not mandatory from 22 Feb.**



In a major relief for Indian travellers planning to visit **Singapore**, new travel rules for **Vaccinated Travel Lane (VTL)** travellers are announced by the Singaporean government. In a communication, the Singapore Airlines (SIA) announced revision to entry and testing requirement and said that fully vaccinated passengers travelling to Singapore on VTL flights from Chennai, Delhi and Mumbai airports are **no longer** required to take an **on-arrival PCR test** at Changi Airport effective February 22. Instead, they will be required to take a supervised self-swab Antigen Rapid Test (ART) at any test centre located across Singapore within 24 hours of arrival. The travel history requirement has also been reduced to **seven days** from **14 days** as travellers must not have any travel history (including transit) outside of VTL countries/regions, or outside of countries/regions listed as Category I (Macao, Mainland China, and Taiwan) by Singapore's Ministry of Health to be eligible for boarding a VTL flight. Additionally, Long-Term Pass holders will no longer have to apply for a Vaccinated Travel Pass (VTP) to travel to Singapore on a VTL flight. However, a VTP is still required for short-term visitors and work permit holders. According to the new rules, if the on-arrival ART test comes negative, no further ART/PCR tests are required throughout the visitor's stay in Singapore. A testing notice with a weblink to book tests will be issued to travellers upon their entry into Singapore. Passengers departing from India and entering Singapore on the SIA's VTL services are still required to furnish a negative PCR or professionally administered ART test within two days of flight departure.

***'Most beautiful building on Earth' opens in Dubai:**



DUBAI opened its **Museum of the Future** on Tuesday, 22 Feb, a spectacular structure it is touting as the world's most beautiful building. The museum, a seven-storey hollow silver ellipse decorated with Arabic calligraphy of quotes from Dubai's ruler, Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al-Maktoum, and thousands of metres (yards) of LED lights, takes pride of place on Sheikh Zayed Road, the city's main highway. While its contents are yet to be revealed, it will exhibit design and technology innovations, taking the visitor on a "journey to the year 2071", organizers said. Roadside signboards described the museum, just minutes away from the world's tallest construction, the Burj Khalifa, as the "most beautiful building on Earth" ahead of its gala opening. It is the latest

addition to the United Arab Emirates' (UAE) collection of flashy architecture and comes after the USD 7-billion Expo world fair, featuring a swathe of futuristic designs, opened on Dubai's outskirts on 30 September. The UAE's capital Abu Dhabi is home to a branch of the Louvre, whose license was extended by a decade last year to 2047 at a cost of 165 million euros (USD 186 million). Since French President Emmanuel Macron opened the Louvre Abu Dhabi in late 2017, it attracted some two million visitors in its first two years, before Covid hit. The wealthy UAE has made no secret of intentions to boost its soft power as a trading and tourism hub and to diversify its economy away from oil. It has also sought to expand its space sector, sending its first astronaut into space in 2019 and a probe named "Amal" (Hope) into orbit around Mars in 2021- the first Arab country to pull off such a feat.

[*US Waives In-Person Interview for Many Visas For Indians Till December: Report](#)



The United States has waived in-person interview requirements for many visa applicants, including students and workers, at its diplomatic missions in India through December 31 this year, a senior American diplomat has told Indian community leaders. These applicants eligible for the waiver are students (**F, M, and academic J visas**), workers (**H-1, H-2, H-3, and individual L visas**), Culture and extraordinary ability (**O, P, and Q visas**), reported news agency PTI. "This is much-needed support to visa applicants. This would be very helpful to our friends and immediate family members and remove a lot of their concerns and remove inconveniences," **Ajay Jain Bhutoria**, South Asian Community Leader and US President Joe Biden's Advisor for Asian Americans, said after his meeting with Assistant Secretary of State for South Central Asia, **Donal Lu**. Donal Lu informed that through December 31, of this year, the US Department of State is authorized to waive in-person interview requirements for certain applicants and their qualifying derivatives in various non-immigrant visa classifications. **To be eligible** for the **expanded interview waiver programme**, applicants seeking these visa classifications must have previously been issued **any category of US visa**; have never been **refused a US visa** and have **no indication of ineligibility** or **potential visa ineligibility**. They also need to be a resident or national of the country in which they are applying; among other, the State Department said. The US embassy in New Delhi and its consulates in Chennai, Hyderabad, Kolkata and Mumbai will release more than 20,000 additional waiver (drop box) appointments for Spring 2022 to allow qualified applicants to make use of the new interview waiver authority, according to a notice posted on the website of the US Embassy in New Delhi.

[*Aeroflot cancels all flights to the U.S., Mexico, Cuba and the Dominican Republic](#)

Aeroflot Russian Airlines announced today it is suspending all flights to the United States, Mexico, Cuba and the Dominican Republic due to Canadian airspace restrictions. Aeroflot is going to have a lot of aircraft on the ground. Due to the closure of Canadian airspace, Aeroflot's transatlantic flights, to many destinations in this route have been cancelled. Sanctions continue to be invoked against Russia and Russian companies. The U.K. has banned Aeroflot and Russian aircraft from their airspace. In response, Russia has banned British registered aircraft from its airspace. As a result, British Airways has cancelled its flights to Moscow. British Airways issued this short statement: "We have suspended our flights to Moscow and also the use of Russian airspace, following the confirmation of Russian government restrictions" A new cold war is descending on Europe.

[*Israel to reopen for tourism from March 1st.](#)



Removing all barriers and restrictions for tourists, Israel has announced reopening for tourism allowing all tourists irrespective of their vaccination status to the without the need to quarantine on arrival. Under new travel guidelines effective from **March 1**, the only requirement is a negative RT-PCR test before departure and subsequently another test on arrival in Israel. As decided and announced by Israeli Prime Minister Naftali Bennett and Health Minister Nitzan Horowitz, with the involvement of Tourism Minister Yoel Razvozov, the decision has been taken after considering a steady decline in the mortality rates across the world due to Covid-19 and realizing the need to open tourism. Now onwards, tourists of all ages, **both vaccinated and unvaccinated**, will be allowed to enter Israel. So far, only

those vaccinated against Covid-19 are allowed to enter Middle Eastern countries after it closed its borders to foreign visitors for the first time in March 2020. Israeli nationals for travel out of the country are also not required to take an antigen test before departure. Unvaccinated locals will also no longer have to be quarantined if the RT-PCR test at Ben-Gurion International Airport comes back negative. Sharing joy over the announcement and expressing early optimism of revival of tourism from the Indian subcontinent, Sammy Yahia, Israel's Director of Tourism to India and Philippines, said, "This is the news we have been waiting for since the first wave of the pandemic brought the world to a standstill two years ago. We are confident that visitor numbers will gradually recover to pre-pandemic numbers as consumer confidence grows in line with the gradual easing of restrictions. Our first, and most important priority is the safety and wellbeing of all those who wish to travel to Israel.

***Operation Ganga gains speed: IndiGo, AI Express & SpiceJet join Air India in bringing Indians**



Given the large number of Indians who require to be evacuated from conflict zone Ukraine, other Indian airlines — IndiGo, Air India Express and SpiceJet — have also started operating flights to Bucharest and Budapest. Till now only Air India has been deploying its wide body Boeing 787 on Ukraine flights (one commercial and all other government of India charters). The non-AI flights will operate one-stop to India given the limited range of their single sidles aisles like Airbus A320/21 or Boeing 737s. AI Express operated a Boeing 737

from Mumbai to Bucharest on Monday. The flight, say people in the know, will return one-stop via Kuwait to Mumbai with 182 Indian nationals on Monday 28 Feb, morning. Now a Tata Group airline along with parent AI, AI Express will operate as many charters as needed to bring back Indians safely home. IndiGo is operating two evacuation flights using A321 aircraft, one each from Delhi to Bucharest and Budapest, via Istanbul. An IndiGo spokesperson said: "We are closely liaising with the government to offer our support for more such evacuations flights. IndiGo stands committed to the citizens of India and will continue to contribute to the country in every possible way." A SpiceJet spokesman said the budget airline is operating an evacuation flight to Budapest, using its Boeing 737 MAX. "The aircraft will fly to Budapest from Delhi and the return flight will operate via Kutaisi, Georgia. SpiceJet is planning to operate more evacuation flights and is in discussion with authorities," he added. Close to 20,000 Indians are believed to be in Ukraine. India has made arrangements for them to ccess over to neighboring countries like Romania and Hungary from where they are being flown to India.

***RT PCR test Not Required for traveling to Andaman**

In an order dated 2nd Mar' 22 from Civil Aviation Principal Secretary of Andaman, Covid-19 RTPCR test is not required for traveling to Andaman. Those who have taken both the doses of Covid-19 vaccine 14 days prior to their movement have to produce valid vaccination certificate. Non vaccinated or partially vaccinated persons have to carry a negative RTPCR report obtained 48 hours within the travel.

*** Non-EU Travelers Now Permitted to Enter Italy for Travel Purposes effective 1st March '22**

Travelers from non-European countries can now enter Italy for travel purposes under facilitated rules as the pre-entry testing requirement, and the non-essential travel ban has been abolished. The news on the easing of the travel rules for third-country nationals was announced by the Minister of Health of Italy, Roberto Speranza, last



week. Speranza said that starting from March 1, travellers from non-EU countries would be subject to the same entry rules as travellers from EU countries when reaching Italy, SchengenVisaInfo.com reports. This means that travellers from non-EU countries can enter Italy restriction-free starting from today, provided that they present a valid vaccination or recovery certificate or a negative COVID-19 test result. The decision of the Italian authorities to relax their entry rules for travellers from non-EU countries follows the recommendation of the EU Council. The Council advised all

the EU Member States to remove the non-essential travel ban for all third-country nationals who have been recovered or vaccinated against the virus. In addition, the Council also adopted new rules on the issuance of recovery certificates. The Council said that the Member States can now issue recovery certificates based on a positive rapid antigen test result.

***Oman cancels mandatory PCR test requirements for fully vaccinated travellers**

In a major development, Oman has cancelled the mandatory PCR test requirements for fully vaccinated inbound passengers, the Supreme Committee announced on Monday. Travellers need to present an approved Covid-19 vaccination certificate (two doses). The decision comes into effect from March 1, 2022. The committee also said face mask will be optional in open places while it will be mandatory in closed places. The committee also allowed hotels at 100% capacity. The committee also decided to resume the direct education system by 100% in all academic levels, while adhering to all precautionary health measures, starting from Sunday, March 6, 2022.

***Fully Vaccinated persons travelling to Sri Lanka are exempted from Pre-Depart RT PCR Test**

In an update dated 1st Mar'22, Fully vaccinated Passengers or children below the age of 12 years traveling to Sri Lanka are exempted from Pre Departure RT PCR/ Rapid Antigen Test All test reports and required documents when entering, including proof of vaccination shall be in English. Self-swabs of RAT are not acceptable. If a Traveler with a single dose of vaccine for COVID-19 was infected with COVID-19 more than 6 months prior to the departure flight into Sri Lanka, then the traveler shall require a negative pre-departure PCR test/RAT. PCR test shall be done within 72 hrs prior to departure, or a RAT done within 48hrs prior to Departure. All other Travellers of 12 years and above who are NOT FULLY VACCINATED shall mandatorily obtain a negative pre-departure COVID-19 PCR Test report done within 72 hours prior to departure OR a negative Rapid Antigen Test report done within 48 hours prior to departure.

Quote for thoughts

- **We are not given a good life or bad life. It's up to us to make it Good or Bad**
- **A dreamer has his eyes closed and visionary has his eyes open – 'Martin Luther King Jr.'**
- **When "I" is replaced by "We" even illness becomes wellness – 'Malcolm X'**
- **To resist or flow with life in every moment are the only choices we have. One is suffering & other is Joy.**
- **Faith and Prayer both are invisible, but they make impossible things possible.**
- **Anything makes you weak-physically, intellectually and spiritually, reject it as poison – 'Swami Vivekananda'**
- **If you are working on something exciting that you really care about , you don't have to pushed. The vision pulls you – 'Steve Jobs'**