

***TAFI National AGM was held on 18 Oct 2022 at THE MIRADOR HOTEL, Mumbai.**



The 28th AGM of TAFI was well attended. The President mentioned that the travel agency had gone through rough times in the past 2 years but has started to look back almost to its pre covid levels. He had emphasized on two major points namely accelerating Gender equality in the travel and tourism sector in India. He pointed that more women should be encouraged in managerial roles and gender-based pay gaps to be removed while ensuring healthy, safe and wellbeing for women in the workplaces. A pledge was signed by the Managing Committee and members present at the venue He also emphasized that we should educate and inform our clients to be responsive and care for Planet earth. The President Ajay Prakash also in his speech insisted all the Travel Agents should not feel shy in collecting Service Charges, while Airlines are charging for their services like seat, assistance in airport etc. The President congratulated the MC, the volunteers for the Convention, sponsors for a successful convention at Kuching, Malaysia. He also thanked Mr. Anandaveloo for his untiring efforts for bringing out a fortnightly newsletter for the benefit of the membership. He said the revived Newsletter had contents which was beneficial to the travel trade The AGM concluded followed by lunch at the same venue.

***Advisory on Customer Service- By P. Sampath Kumar TAFI Consultant - Legal and Industry Affairs**



The 5 Most Important Things New entrant to the Travel profession, should Know About Customer Service.

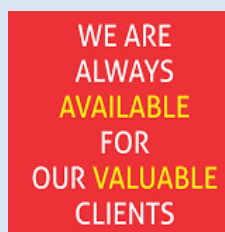
Customer service is at the heart of being a Travel Agent - Advisor. It's why most travelers choose a qualified, skilled, professional, over going directly to multiple suppliers, online booking engines or other low-cost options to fulfill all their Trip requirements. But what does great customer service mean when you're a travel and tourism professional? Is it simply being nice and saying please and thank you? Is it giving the customer exactly what they've asked for because the "customer is always right"? Speaking to a number of long-time professional Agent-Advisors to find out what they think people who are new to the profession should know about customer service. This is the opinion of travel professionals who have been in practice for at least 10 years sharing their wisdom and experience they've learned over the course of their careers. About the things they wish they'd known when they were first starting out.Cont



1. **Honesty** goes a long way. “Be honest with your clients,” Remember the customer has reached out to you for consultation mostly via referral by a trusted friend or relative and sometimes via company advertisement. Knowing and being able to speak on subject matter with some authority. Never turn in the first instance, using APPs like "Google" openly in front of the consumer to answer queries, if in doubt rather inform the consumer will do research by contacting your trusted associates and will get back. Later, If you must Google, do it discreetly moreover as a tool only. Having the ability to anticipate and think four steps ahead of the client confidently to fulfill trip requirements. Unlike in other service professions, the client isn't always right, when it comes to travel. People think they know what they want, but without all the background knowledge that travel professionals have, they're often wrong. It's much better to say "no" and explain why you can't do something. or why it's not the right choice but something else is, acting in their best interest helps build trust – and loyalty – and they'll come to rely on you for the right suggestions. Firstly, seek and ascertain the customers budget for the trip and what are the total requirements. Then if you opine the consumer is genuine only then spend time to work out an estimate of cost to let the customer know whether the Trip is feasible, and the desired services can be achieved from your end. “Saying yes just to appease them, doesn't benefit anyone,”



2. **Listen. Carefully.** “In most cases, the customer wants to be heard, don't interrupt them. Allow them to talk, vent, express frustrations, and then and only after they have finished talking, repeat what you understand them to be saying, and then offer the proper response – whether it be an apology, a thank you for sharing their feedback, etc. I value feedback – whether negative or positive – and thank clients for sharing as it allows you to learn, grow and be more informed and understanding of the needs of clients.” Travel professionals nowadays are just not Agents but Advisors too. Your job is to do more than be the middleman and mere order taker. But to give the best advice, need to understand who the client is and what is required. Don't hesitate to do a bit of background study discreetly about the consumers lifestyle, also, stop at questions about past travel history, how much money they want to spend or what destination they want to visit. Ask them why they want to go there or what they're hoping to experience. It might turn out you have a better suggestion for what they really want. Even if the consumer is price conscious don't let it be the deciding factor when interacting, instead let service, quality and experience factor take precedence when you make suggestions to be the guiding factor as a professional and lastly price can be negotiated.



3. Be reachable to your clients always is key to good customer service. Remember you are a professional and not a mere Administrator or owner or co-owner. **“Answer your phone. Respond promptly,”. Be ‘always’ available to our clients.** We do not work ‘24/7’ but we need to read our emails and texts and visual voicemails no matter what time of day or night (it may be an emergency) especially if you are aware that your client is traveling overseas and maybe in a different time zone of the world. If you aren't responsive, clients will find someone else on the Internet, who is the next time round. Being the ever-responsible human voice and face to which one can relate with, unlike a online faceless recorded entity to address issues or crisis when needed most.



4. Set the bar high and never let it down. Aim for perfection in your knowledge and expertise by acquiring the right Professional skills and training besides your basic qualifications. “Set a high bar so customers realize nowhere else will they be given the ‘white glove’ service you will provide.” Once you've set the bar, you must make sure you keep it up. As mentioned above, that means always being available, listening to what your clients want, and having the best advice.



5. Learn to always keep a dignified professional appearance and posture within the confines of your place of practice or elsewhere in public. Remember to hold your tongue, never voluntarily give away your professional expertise for free. Remember to let the consumer know in advance that your expertise comes at a price which covers costs with a margin of profit for each service you provide. Carefully avoid, if you have a gut feeling consumer is only price shopping or comparing information with another Travel professionals advise. Leave such consumers to DIY alone and learn from their mistakes. Don't buy business, earn it!

***Qatar market braces for football World Cup boom**



The narrow alleys of the century-old market will be a magnet for the one million football followers expected at the tournament, which kicks off on November 20. "There will be huge crowds, we have never experienced anything like this," said Abdul Rahman Mohammed Al-Nama, head of the souq stables that organizes camel and pony rides. Fan zone attractions and temporary stores are being set up around Nama's camel enclosure and the hundreds of small stores selling incense, spices, carpets, gold and even falcons and other birds and animals. When Souq Waqif opened in the early 20th century, traders stood at the entrance

shouting at passers-by to buy their goods. Its name means the "Standing Market". Devastated by a major fire in 2003, most of it has been rebuilt with arched pedestrian alleys, as part of a project to regenerate central Doha. Souvenir stores have packed their shelves. New infrastructure Outside Doha, many new resorts have been built. Qatar wants to use the World Cup to bolster a campaign to increase visitor numbers from 1.5 million a year to six million by 2030. Qatar Airways chief executive Akbar Al Baker said his company is investing "hundreds of millions of dollars" on new infrastructure and promoting tourism. "Qatar can certainly use this opportunity to position itself as a family friendly destination," said **Kamilla Swart-Arries**, associate professor in sport and tourism at Hamad bin Khalifa University. "The World Cup will just amplify and maximize the changing perception that people may currently have about Doha and Qatar. At the World Cup countdown clock on seafront Corniche Road, Bangladeshis, Indians, Nepalis, Pakistanis, Kenyans and Ugandans from Qatar's huge migrant community flock to take selfies next to the modernist structure.

***Heritage sites of Odisha part of walking tour**



Fascinating stories of the past of Odisha will be presented to tourists as the Hindu temple 'Lingaraj', Buddhist pagoda 'Shanti Stupa' and other heritage sites in and around Bhubaneswar are now part of a walking tour. A walking tour is travelling to a historical or cultural site on foot, frequently in an urban setting. The Odisha Tourism Development Corporation (OTDC) has launched a guided walking tour to various heritage sites to promote the state's rich culture and history. '**Odisha Walks**', as it

was christened, will take an enthusiast to 10th-century Mukteswar and 11th-century Lingaraj temples, Shanti Stupa, Khandagiri and Udaygiri caves. Guides will tell the tales of those places to the tourists. "These five guided tours along the identified heritage circuits would help reveal the city's rich architectural treasures, culture, traditions, rituals and customs," OTDC chairperson Lenin Mohanty said. Besides the famous Lingaraj and Mukteswar temples, the 7th-century Parasurameswar Temple in the city is also dedicated to Lord Shiva. The Shanti Stupa or Peace Pagoda was built on the site where the Kalinga War was fought in 261 BC when emperor Ashoka invaded Kalinga, present-day Odisha. A pagoda was built there by the Japan Buddha Sangha and the Kalinga Nippon Buddha Sangha in 1972. Khandagiri and Udaygiri caves with stone carvings created somewhere around 2nd century BC are located 7 kilometres from Bhubaneswar. **The Odisha Walks will be organized from Friday to Sunday every week from 6.30 to 8.30 am.** The OTDC has plans to add more such guided walking tours across different heritage destinations of the state and they will be curated and organized in a phased manner. Tourism director Sachin Ramachandra Jadhav said the initiative would not only promote heritage tourism but also make people aware of the state's rich cultural legacy.

***Singapore Airlines to spend \$2.7 bn redeeming convertible bond**



Singapore Airlines Ltd (SIA) said on Tuesday its strong cash position would allow it to spend S\$3.86 billion (\$2.71 billion) to redeem convertible bonds issued in 2020 that helped it weather the halt in travel during the pandemic. The airline said in a statement that the bonds, which have a conversion price below the current share price, had become its most expensive form of financing even though interest rates

were rising. The bonds with a principal amount of S\$3.5 billion were issued as part of a broader S\$19 billion financial rescue package backed by the airline's majority shareholder, state fund Temasek Holdings. By June 30 this year, as borders opened and travel demand rebounded, the airline had a cash balance of S\$16.1 billion. It reported the second highest quarterly operating profit in its history in the June quarter. The bond redemption, to occur in December at 110.4% of the principal amount, will be funded from existing cash reserves, SIA said. The airline had raised an additional S\$6.2 billion in liquidity through a separate issue of mandatory convertible bonds in 2021. It has not announced plans to redeem those at this stage.

***Several flights, trains cancelled in northeast due to Cyclone Sitrang**



Air connectivity in the northeast has been severely affected due to the impact of Cyclone Sitrang, with at least 10 scheduled flights cancelled since Monday, 24 Oct, morning. Three flights connecting Agartala with Kolkata and two flights connecting Agartala with Shillong and Aizawl, respectively, were cancelled amid poor visibility, adverse climatic conditions and other operational reasons. Three flights from Imphal to Shillong, Delhi and Agartala were also cancelled, besides two other flights connecting Kolkata- Imphal- Dibrugarh and Dibrugarh-Imphal-Kolkata. A source in the Airports Authority of India (AAI) told that the situation is being constantly monitored. The source said on Monday afternoon at 3pm that the next 6-12 hours is going to be critical for the airlines. The Railways are also on high alert to tackle any incident. The Northeast Frontier Railway (NFR) said two intra-state trains - the Agartala-Sabroom-Agartala and the Agartala- Dharmanagar-Agartala have been cancelled in view of the weather alert. NFR chief public relations officer Sabyasachi De said patrolling has been increased in Dima Hasao, Cachar, Karim Ganj and Hailakandi districts of Assam. "We are on high alert in the northeast. The four districts where vigilance has been stepped up are important connecting rail links to the northeastern states. Rain has not yet caused any flooding or landslides. However, as the night goes by, we will know more," De said-on Monday evening.

***Archer Aviation plans to build 250 air taxis in 2025**



Archer Aviation Inc said it aims to make about 250 battery-electric air taxis in 2025 and scale up production in the following years, after setting a goal of getting its aircraft certified by the end of 2024. "In our first year, we will build 250 aircraft, our second year will build 500 aircraft, our third year will build 650 aircraft and then we scale it up to around 2,000 aircraft per year," CEO Adam Goldstein told Reuters in an interview. Archer aims to certify its pilot-plus-four-passenger aircraft, 'Midnight', by end-2024, though the U.S. Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) is still in the process of drawing up certification rules for these futuristic aircraft. "In terms of aircraft production, we have estimated in our Archer model ~20 units in 2025," JPM analyst Bill Peterson said. "We are not negative on the space but think it will take a little longer to play out with the ramp not as steep as these companies had projected in their SPAC decks from over a year ago," he added. Archer shares have fallen 54% so far this year. Once certified, the California-based start-up's electric Vertical Take-Off and Landing (eVTOL) aircraft will compete in a crowded market with dozens of other developers such as Joby Aviation Inc and Vertical Aerospace Ltd vying to revamp urban transportation. The nascent sector, which is backed by industrial heavyweights such as Toyota Motor Corp and Delta Air Lines, still faces significant challenges relating to certification, developing a suitable air traffic management system and battery technology improvements, among others.

***Goa to skip participation in World Travel Mart for first time in two decades**



For the first time in over two decades, the tourism department will not participate in the World Travel Mart, London, as issues pertaining to visas remain unresolved. "We are having a political bottleneck in resolving visa issues, and with e-visas still not being issued to the UK travelers, it will be a futile exercise to participate in the WTM," said Goa Tourism Minister Rohan Khaunte. Over the past two years, the WTM was held virtually, due to the pandemic. Besides visa challenges, other factors also led Goa tourism to back out. Khaunte said the UK is facing financial ups-and-downs, and with inflation being at an all-time high there, the cost of participating will escalate. "High expenses will not justify our participation. It would be a junket if Goa tourism were still to participate," Khaunte said. "It's my view and I have always been vocal about it that Goa tourism should not participate in any foreign travel mart and road show unless there is substantial business to be done," he said. "In consultation with the Goa tourism board and stakeholders, we made a conscious decision that unwarranted participation in trade fairs is to be avoided." The tourism minister also said that Goa tourism did not participate in the Paris event which happened last month. Goa tourism may have some road shows in the United Kingdom if relations between the countries improve.

*IWPA felicitates IndiGo for Women Empowerment in Aviation and Aerospace



Indigo boasts the highest number of women pilots employed by any airline in the world, said the airline's statement. Acknowledging the airline's efforts towards creating a more inclusive and gender-diverse work culture, IndiGo was recently felicitated by Indian Women Pilot Association (IWPA) at the 55th Emerald Golden Jubilee for Women Empowerment in Aviation and Aerospace. IndiGo employed over 680 women pilots, setting an example for the world to see, said the statement. Indian Women Pilot Association (IWPA) keeps its doors open not only to active women flyers

but also to those who, due to one reason or another, have discontinued to fly and to keep alive their interest in aviation. The Association acts as a medium between women wishing to take up flying and the authorities concerned with Working with a similar vision, IndiGo prioritizes women specific needs as part of the 4-pronged well-being effort, which includes equality, physical, emotional and social. Capt. Ashim Mittra, Senior Vice-President-Flight Operations at IndiGo, said, "At IndiGo, we are incredibly proud of being an equal-opportunity employer and always strive to create a culture that embodies inclusivity and diversity in all our practices." "India tops the list with 12.4 percent, twice the global average of women pilots in the world. This award motivates us to aim even higher to witness an even better inclusive work culture that will serve as an example for the aviation industry across the globe," added Captain Mittra.

*Indonesia launches 10-year visa for tourists with USD 130,000 in the bank



Indonesia has entered the race to attract wealthy foreigners into the country using its trump card: Bali. The country has introduced a new "second home visa" of five years and 10 years for those possessing at least IDR 2 billion (USD 130,000) in their bank accounts. The policy will take effect on Christmas. "This a non-fiscal incentive for certain foreigners to make a positive contribution to the Indonesian economy," said Acting Director General for Immigration Widodo Ekatjahjana during a launch ceremony in the resort island. Indonesia joins the likes of countries

like Costa Rica and Mexico - offering long-term stays to lure professionals, retirees and other wealthy people. Indonesia floated plans for a digital nomad visa in 2021, focused on attracting visitors to Bali. Bali gradually began reopening to international tourists on October 14 of last year, and the Indonesian government has been looking to reinvigorate the local economy further by removing restrictions and adding more perks for travelers. The Indonesian government lifted most of its travel restrictions and implemented a quarantine-free trial period and a Visa on Arrival (VOA) scheme on March 7, 2022, for 72 nations, including India.

*Japan holds expo to revive tourism



With tourism coming to a standstill during the pandemic, Japan's tourism industry was no exception. After a four-year hiatus, the "Tourism Expo Japan 2022" was held in Tokyo with the motive of reviving tourism in the country. At the expo, major players from the tourism industry, along with Japanese authorities, set up booths and invited tourists to the country. **Okinawa** is a popular tourist destination. Tourists visit Okinawa to see the beautiful ocean, and mountains, and to taste unique food. Okinawa Prefecture is promoting "Okinawa Karate" as a new way to

attract tourists while they spread awareness regarding the origin of Karate in Okinawa. We want people to experience what it is like in Okinawa, the birthplace of Okinawan karate, so we want them to come to Okinawa and experience it first-hand," said Hayato Sawada, Karate Promotion Division, Okinawa. In addition, Okinawa Prefecture is promoting "workcation," combining work and vacation. In addition, the geographical proximity of Asia is creating new business opportunities. We believe that this style of work and vacation in Okinawa is the best way to combine tourism, work, and industry," said Yuichiro Kawamura, Okinawa Convention and Visitors Bureau. **Hokkaido** is also popular among tourists from Southeast Asia. The local government, Noboribetsu Toya, is trying to attract more tourists by promoting "Upopoi," a museum that allows visitors to experience its nature and Ainu culture. The Ainu have a long history of living in Hokkaido. "The most attractive point in this area is its rich natural beauty. This area is surrounded by mountains and oceans, hot springs, and many large lakes. Therefore, it is the place where people can experience such an extraordinary viewpoint in the city center, including activities in a such rich natural environment," said Foundation for Ainu Culture.

***Government plans to start cruise services on Yamuna River**



The government plans to start cruise services on the Yamuna River, a top official of UP Braj Tirth Vikas Parishad said recently. An order has been placed with Cochin Shipyard by the Union government for two cruises. These cruises will be handed over to the Parishad, its Chief Executive Officer, Nagendra Pratap said. According to officials, the cruise service will commence from Jugal Ghat Vrindavan and terminate at 'Vasudeo Vatika' adjacent to Gokul barrage, with halts at various points. Under the scheme, more than half a dozen jetties would be developed for the 22 km journey from Vrindavan to Gokul, they added. The officials said the Union government is also developing similar river transport in Ayodhya and Varanasi.

***Mandakini & Saraswati Asthpath at Kedarnath to give thrust to cultural tourism:**



Prime Minister Narendra Modi will embark on a visit to Uttarakhand's Kedarnath on October 21 for the launch of various developmental projects. He will also review the progress of the development works of Mandakini Ashtpath and Saraswati Ashtpath in Kedarnath. With the construction of the two Asthpath, cultural tourism is expected to get a huge thrust in the region. The point where there is a confluence of Mandakini or Saraswati is called Sangam snan ghat in the Kedarnath temple. The devotees take a holy dip before going inside the temple to offer prayers. Two roads diverge from here which lead to the temple. The developmental projects that are underway in Kedarnath include Mandakini Ashtpath and Saraswati Ashtpath, which will be inspected by the Prime Minister tomorrow. Two separate bridges have been constructed from Sangam snan ghat to Mandakini Ashtpath and Saraswati Ashtpath, from where the devotees will enter the temple. "A queue management has been readied at the interjection of the two bridges from where the devotees will enter. They will reach the temple directly from this point," the site engineers told. A water ATM has also been set up at Mandakini Ashtpath where 22 water taps have been installed. The devotees will get warm and cold water here. New shops have also been brought up where the materials relating to worship will be available. Kedarnath and Badrinath are one of the most important Hindu shrines. The area is also known for one of the revered Sikh Pilgrim sites - Hemkund Sahib. The connectivity projects being undertaken show the Prime Minister's commitment to ease access and improve basic infrastructure in places of religious significance.

***Norwegian companies to consider expanding operations to Kerala**



Norwegian Companies - Marinor and Corvus Energy - have agreed to consider expanding their operations to Kerala, State Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan said on Saturday. Marinor is one of the leading companies for marine accommodation services while Corvus Energy is a Norwegian supplier for zero-emission and hybrid maritime, offshore, subsea and port applications. Marinor which deals with the marine and offshore accommodation systems has agreed to consider Kerala while setting up their factory in India, the Chief Minister's Office here said quoting Vijayan. The CMO said Marinor was involved in setting up of the cabins and steel furniture for the recently commissioned aircraft carrier of India -- the INS Vikrant. "The company, with presence in 7 countries, has an office in Kochi. Currently, they manufacture furniture abroad and bring them to Kochi. They are looking for manufacturing in Kerala the marine and offshore accommodation systems for the Asian region," a release issued by the CMO said. Marinor CEO Terje Neras has agreed to participate in an investment meet of Norwegian companies proposed by Kerala in January next year. The CEO also responded in a positive manner to cooperate with the marine cluster initiative by the State government. Corvus Energy, which has been engaged in battery technology used on board ships to reduce emissions, has also expressed interest in expanding their operations to Kerala. State Industries Minister P Rajeev and other members of the high-level delegation, who are in Norway, as part of their Europe trip, visited one of the most advanced battery production factories of Corvus Energy. The Chief Minister's visit to Norway is part of the European trip, which would also cover England and Wales, and is envisaged to woo more investments to Kerala in the IT sector, meet stakeholders in Ayurveda and tourism sectors.

*Thailand airports step up Covid checks on Hong Kong, Singapore arrivals



Airports in Thailand are conducting random Covid-19 tests on passengers with respiratory symptoms from Hong Kong and Singapore, in light of both countries' **Omicron's new XBB** subvariant cases. The Department of Disease Control (DDC) stated that 29 people who arrived in Hong Kong on October 14 were tested positive for the XBB strain, of which 24 were detected on arrival and five others tested positive on their second day in Hong Kong, reported Bangkok Post. DDC also said there was no local transmission yet of this subvariant in Thailand. Thailand has stepped up surveillance at

Suvarnabhumi airport and all other airports to conduct random testing on all arrivals from Singapore, Hong Kong and countries with XBB outbreaks and show respiratory symptoms.

*Emirates to codeshare with Indonesia's Batik Air



Emirates has activated its codeshare partnership with Batik Air, an Indonesian airline which is part of the Lion Air Group. The expanded connectivity gives travelers access to 25 points in Indonesia on a single ticket and one baggage policy. As part of the deal, Emirates has placed its code on 8 routes operated by Batik Air via Jakarta to – Balikpapan (BPN), Denpasar (DPS), Medan (KNO), Manado (MDC), Padang (PDG), Surakarta (SOC), Surabaya (SUB) and Makassar (UPG). In addition, Emirates customers can also access 17 more domestic points

in Indonesia via Jakarta and Denpasar to cities such as Praya (LOP), Semarang (SRG), Sorong (SOQ) and more, via an interline agreement. Emirates has been serving Indonesia for over 30 years, since the commencement of its first flight to Jakarta back in 1992. Earlier this year, Emirates launched a codeshare agreement with Indonesia's national carrier, Garuda, allowing customers to access eight domestic points in Indonesia, beyond Jakarta and Bali. Emirates currently has codeshare cooperation agreements in place with 26 airline partners and two rail companies around the world, as well as 110 interline partners worldwide. The airline operates flights to over 130 destinations across 6 continents.

*Air Canada Increase Frequency On Brisbane To Vancouver



Beginning in June 2023, Air Canada will increase its service from four times per week to daily between Brisbane and Vancouver. After returning to the service in July 2022, Air Canada will begin daily service in June, operating a Boeing 787-9 Dreamliner aircraft. "Air Canada has experienced great demand for the Vancouver-Brisbane route since its resumption in July and is delighted to launch these extra frequencies with the assistance of the Queensland Government," said Vic Naughton, Air Canada's Australian and New Zealand

General Manager. "With these daily flights beginning in the northern summer of next year, our operations will be restored to their full pre-COVID level." Flights from Brisbane to Vancouver will depart at 10:15 and arrive at 06:50, with return flights departing Canada at 22:45 and arriving in Brisbane at 06:40. According to Brisbane Airport CEO Gert-Jan de Graaff, the increase is "a positive indicator of the recovery and firmly establishes Queensland as a destination of choice for the North American market in time for their summer period." The \$200 million Attracting Aviation Investment Fund, a partnership between Queensland airports and the state government to increase tourism, helped finance the latest development. "Before the pandemic, Canada was the State's ninth greatest source of tourist visitors, with 67,000 Canadian vacationers staying up to 18 days in Queensland," said Queensland Tourism Minister Stirling Hinchliffe.

*Oman Air launches four weekly flights to Phuket



Oman Air, the national carrier of the Sultanate of Oman, will offer four flights a week between Muscat and Phuket, one of Thailand's most popular resort islands, starting 15 November 2022. The flights will operate on (Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday). The Tuesday flight from Muscat will depart at 09:40 and arrive in Phuket at 18:50. The Thursday flight from Muscat will depart at 22:50 and arrive in Phuket on Sunday at 08:00. The first flight on Saturday will depart Muscat at 09:40 and arrive in Phuket at 18:50, while the second flight will depart at 22:50 and arrive on Sunday at 08:00

*Shefali Juneja elected as chairperson of UN's Air Transport Committee



Shefali Juneja, India's representative to the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), has been elected as the chairperson of United Nations' specialized aviation agency's **Air Transport Committee (ATC)**. Juneja, a 1992 batch officer of the Indian Revenue Service, & served as a Joint Secretary in Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA) before joining the ICAO. India secured this position in ICAO after 28 years when Juneja was unanimously elected to the post on Monday. She is the first woman to represent India in the ICAO. ATC is a standing committee of the ICAO created by the Chicago Convention in 1944. "It is

the most important committee, as it decides on standards in air transport policies," India in ICAO, tweeted, adding "India wins the coveted position in ICAO to become – Chairperson of Air Transport Committee, after 28 years. Congratulating Dr Juneja, Union civil aviation minister Jyotiraditya Scindia tweeted, "Great News! This solidifies India's position in the global aviation ecosystem and strengthens our journey towards becoming the largest civil aviation market. Congratulations, Dr Shefali Juneja & @MoCA team for your commitment & hard work." MoCA officials said that India will be chairing the important committee after 28 years and has had the opportunity of chairing the ATC only twice so far. According to Article 54 d) of the Chicago Convention, the Council appoints and defines the duties of an ATC, which is chosen from among the representatives of the members of the Council. India is set to emerge as the third largest aviation market globally by 2025. In September last year, Juneja was elected as the chairperson of the ICAO'S Aviation Security Committee (ASC) & made an Indian taking charge of the position after a gap of 12 years. Juneja has been serving as India's representative in the council of the ICAO since 2019.

*Indian airports turning into aviation hubs



It has long been India's dream to become a global aviation hub. This dream is now slowly but surely taking shape, thanks largely to domestic airlines and airports working in tandem. A hub is an airport which acts as an intermediary point to get air travelers to their final destination. Similarly, an Indian passenger flying from the US to India might land in Doha (hub for Qatar Airways) before reaching the final destination here. Airlines and airports are trying to make Indian cities into hubs so that flyers from across the country can first fly to these hubs and then connect onwards to international destinations. This has

been made abundantly clear by the two new expatriate chief executive officers at **IndiGo and Air India**. Both have said that while they are not losing sight of the domestic market, they are also focusing on international traffic to and from India. As part of that strategy, at the end of September, IndiGo launched a flight to its 100th destination, Ras Al-Khaimah. This is a clever strategy as the RAK airport is currently underserved, and there are excellent road links to Sharjah and Dubai from there, both points to which IndiGo operates. IndiGo's direct flight to Ras-Al-Khaimah means that flyers who want to visit that city need not fly to Dubai and then find their way. This also means more seats will be available on the India-Dubai route for IndiGo. These could include Beijing, Seoul and European destinations like Amsterdam, Paris and London. Similarly, under Wilson Campbell, Air India is keen to expand its domestic footprint by adding more flights and having more hubs, including one in South India. Campbell is clear that it is not only the diaspora which should be flying Air India, but eventually, it should become an airline on the radar of fifth and sixth freedom traffic that the Middle Eastern carriers, like Emirates, Etihad and Qatar, European carriers, like KLM, and Southeast Asian carriers, like Singapore Airlines, have effectively been able to take away from the Indian carriers. Further, the airline is also eyeing destinations where India has business links or is developing business links, as are those flyers who will be entirely independent for Air India being an Indian carrier and connecting people between point A and point B for which India is a convenient and a logical intermediate point. Recently, the Delhi airport announced that its newly extended international-to-international (I-to-I) transfer area spanning approximately 3,000 sq. mtrs is double the size of the previous I- to-I transfer area. This will help facilitate a quick and efficient airport experience for flyers coming from one international destination and flying to another international destination from Delhi. Indian airlines are already taking baby steps to make this possible. For example, it is not uncommon to see international passengers at Bangkok airport board the Vistara flight to Delhi before connecting to other international destinations like Kathmandu and Dhaka.

Flynas Wins World Travel Award- 8th Time -The Best Low-Cost Airline in Middle East 2022



Flynas, the Saudi air carrier and the leading low-cost airline in the Middle East, won World Travel Award as the Best Low-Cost Airline in the Middle East for the 8th time in a row at a forum held in Amman on Sunday, October 23, 2022. The World Travel award comes after one month after Flynas won the Skytrax award, as the best Low-cost airline in the Middle East 2022 for the fifth time in a row and rated as one of the top 10 low-cost airlines globally, that reflects Flynas commitment and meeting the aspirations of its travelers, as well as achieving its strategy in growth and expansion under the title of “connecting the world to the Kingdom “. Flynas has maintained its excellence in the Aviation sector, in parallel with doubling its operations in 2022 after

increasing its fleet to 38 aircraft and inaugurating 25 new destinations & routes, in the Gulf region, Africa, Asia, and Europe. And rising passenger rates after the recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. The World Travel Awards was founded in 1993 as a prominent annual event to honor and celebrate excellence in all key sectors of travel and tourism, this year's award has been given based on a monthly vote by travel and tourism experts reached 2.3 million votes. The participation numbers of this year are more than any year of the World Travel Award history.

***New Indian Airline Akasa Ekes Out 1% Share of Crowded Skies**



India's newest carrier Akasa Air took a 0.9% share of the domestic market in September, its first full month operating in a country where almost a dozen airlines vie for passengers. The low-cost carrier, backed by the billionaire Rakesh Jhunjhunwala who died in August at the age of 62, is trying to muscle into a market that continues to be dominated by IndiGo, which had a nearly 58% share in September, according to data published by the Directorate General of Civil Aviation. Akasa started flying between Mumbai and Ahmedabad on Aug. 7 using Boeing Co. 737 aircraft. It expanded to Bengaluru and Kochi later in the month, and its website shows it now also flies to New Delhi, Guwahati, Agartala and Chennai. The carrier's debut came at a particularly turbulent time in Indian aviation, which had been rocked by the Covid pandemic as well as a spate of mid-flight incidents involving various carriers that led to inspections by the regulator.

Chief Executive Officer Vinay Dube has said Akasa is financially strong enough to place larger orders and expand its fleet to 72 aircraft within five years. Competition among India carriers in September was fairly even beyond IndiGo, which is operated by Inter Globe Aviation Ltd. Singapore Airlines-backed Vistara and Air India Ltd. both took about 9% market share, and SpiceJet Ltd. grabbed 7.3%, according to the DGCA.

IndiGo Deepens Domestic Connectivity In India



Indian LCC IndiGo will launch four new domestic routes, growing its expansive network in India that currently comprises 74 destinations. From Oct. 30, the airline will commence two 4X-weekly routes: between Ahmedabad (AMD) and Jammu (IXJ); and between Ranchi (IXR) and Bhubaneswar (BBI). From Nov. 1, it will open two 3X-weekly routes: between Bhopal (BHO) and Udaipur (UDR); and between Indore (IDR) and Chandigarh (IXC). IndiGo is the largest domestic carrier in India with around

a 55% market share. The BHO-UDR route will be tied to Indian government programs that provide a mix of tax breaks and subsidies to IndiGo as an incentive to operate the service. IndiGo noted the new routes will touch a combined seven Indian states. “We are pleased to enhance connectivity and accessibility by introducing exclusive flights on new domestic routes,” chief strategy and revenue officer Sanjay Kumar said in a statement. “Enhanced connectivity between the political and commercial capitals of these states will help bolster economic growth through increased trade opportunities and tourist footprint.” In addition to the 74 domestic destinations in its network, the LCC flies to 26 international airports. The announcement of the new domestic routes comes on the heels of IndiGo unveiling plans earlier this month to open a daily Mumbai (BOM)-Istanbul (IST) service from Jan. 1, 2023

***VFS Global launches fast-track service to obtain Indonesia Visa on Arrival**

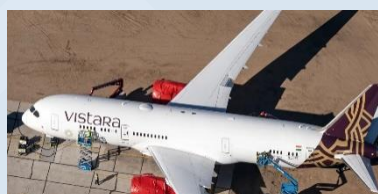


VFS Global has partnered with TLP, the Immigration Department for Republic of Indonesia and Bank Mandiri, to provide a seamless visa application journey by completing the process online, pre-departure, through VFS Global. The service includes



online pre-payment of fees, fast-track access and concierge services to international passengers upon arrival in Jakarta. "Indonesia is a popular destination for travelers across the globe, and we are excited to unveil a service that will make their visa application journey quicker and simpler." said Jiten Vyas, Chief Commercial Official, VFS Global, adding that the fast-track Visa on Arrival service will deliver the applicants a relaxed on-arrival experience with the help of Do-It-Yourself solutions. Travelers belonging to the selected 75 countries are eligible to apply for Indonesia Visa on Arrival by submitting their documents and paying the fees online at www.indonesiavo.vfsevisa.id before their travel. A confirmation will be sent to their registered email ID and the visa processed in advance to be stamped upon arrival. As the payment is cleared online, the on-arrival process involves just the stamping of the visa. Moreover, VFS Global will offer Standard and Express service options. Applicants opting for the Standard service will be able to submit their applications no less than 72 hours prior to the date of departure. Whereas the Express service enables travelers to submit their applications no less than 24 hours prior to the date of departure. The Express service additionally provides end-to-end personalized assistance and guidance, right from the arrival gate through immigration, baggage claim, and customs.

***Vistara Cancels Several Flights To Europe Due To Delayed 787 Delivery**



Vistara's additional flights to Europe will have to wait a little longer as a delay in the delivery of its leased Dreamliner aircraft has forced it to cancel flights in the coming weeks. The airline has had to delay the launch of several new long-haul flights due to the 787 production issues from Boeing. As a stop-gap arrangement, it decided to lease a Dreamliner, but even that has been delayed by a few more days. A delay in the delivery of its leased Boeing 787

Dreamliner aircraft has forced Vistara to cancel around 14 flights from Delhi (DEL) to Frankfurt (FRA) and Paris (CDG). The plane was supposed to arrive this month, but according to a Business Standard report, its delivery has now been pushed to sometime in November. Vistara had planned to double its frequency on Delhi-Frankfurt with six weekly flights, and up its Delhi-Paris flights from two a week to five from October 30th. Tickets for these flights, operated by Vistara's 787s, had already gone on sale. But with the third 787 (leased from Irish lessor AerCap) still not delivered, the airline has had to cancel around eight flights between Delhi and Frankfurt and six flights on the New Delhi-Paris route between October 30th and November 6th. Three years after starting operations, it placed a firm order for six 787-9 Dreamliners, receiving the first two in 2020. Despite the deliveries coinciding with the COVID-19 pandemic, the carrier deployed the widebodies to popular destinations such as London, Paris, Frankfurt, and, for a short while, Tokyo. But the remaining four Dreamliners have so far not left the Boeing factories. Boeing has resumed deliveries of the Dreamliners, with several airlines, including Lufthansa and American Airlines, receiving 787s recently. Hopefully, Vistara's turn will come soon so that it can expand further into Europe as well as inaugurating flights to the US.

***Delhi airport emerges as world's 10th busiest airport: Report:**

The Indira Gandhi International Airport in the national capital has emerged as the world's 10th busiest airport in October, improving its ranking compared to the pre-pandemic period. In its report, aviation analytics firm OAG said Delhi airport has improved its position from 14th place in October 2019, which was the pre-pandemic time. In October 2022, Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport was the busiest in the world. The rankings by OAG are based on scheduled airline capacity in the current month and compared to the equivalent month in 2019, pre-pandemic. The world's top 10 busiest airports list is prepared using total capacity, both domestic and international. After Atlanta, Dubai and Tokyo Haneda airports are at the 2nd and 3rd positions, respectively. When compared to October 2019, 6 of the Top 10 this month were also among the world's Top 10 busiest airports then; airports which have seen their rankings rise, bringing them into the Top 10 now, are Dallas/Fort Worth (from 12th to 4th), Denver (from 20th to 5th), Istanbul (from 13th to 8th), and Delhi (from 14th to 10th)," OAG said in the report on its website.