



FORTNIGHTLY NEWSLETTER

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TRAVEL AGENTS FEDERATION OF INDIA

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EDITORIAL



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This edition of the TAFI Newsletter is designed to keep you informed, prepared, and inspired in an increasingly dynamic travel environment. Inside, you will find important chapter updates, industry collaborations, and education-focused initiatives that highlight the federation's continued commitment to strengthening our professional community.

Key developments in aviation, operational shifts, and evolving visa regulations underline how essential it is for travel professionals to stay alert and updated. The newsletter also brings valuable global tourism insights, spotlighting emerging opportunities, sustainability-driven projects, and destination trends shaping outbound and inbound travel.

A special focus on technology explores how AI and automation are gradually transforming travel agency workflows, encouraging members to embrace innovation strategically.

Alongside industry intelligence, you will discover member engagement features, talent highlights, interactive segments, and upcoming international travel events.

Every section has been curated to add value to your business and professional growth. We encourage you to read this issue in full and stay ahead of change.

Disclaimer: The information sent to the members is from various sources. Information is posted in good faith and for general information purposes only. TAFI does not make any warranties about the completeness, reliability and accuracy of the information.

NATIONAL NEWS



Tourism Malaysia successfully hosted its Visit Malaysia 2026 Networking Evening on 24th February at Pullman New Delhi Aerocity

Mr Anil Kalsi, TAFI VP was a panellist on the High Profile Panel sharing insights on increase of premium business to Malaysia. The discussion focused on India's rapidly expanding high value outbound market and Malaysia's positioning as a preferred destination across luxury, weddings, and corporate travel.



The Travel Agents Federation of India - (TAFI) had a stall in SATTE 2026, hosted at the state-of-the-art Yashobhoomi Convention Center in Dwarka, New Delhi from 25th February 2026 till 27th February 2026. TAFI had a good response.

1ST NJC MEETING IN NEW DELHI



NJC meeting was held on 26th February 2026 at Welcome Hotel by ITC, Dwarka from 10.00 am till 05:00 pm. This was our 1st NJC meeting which took place. The office bearers , Management committee members and Representatives from Chapters were present in the meeting. Chapter Representatives shared their Way Forward plan to the Team, Ideas for 40th Ruby year celebration of TAFI was discussed and shared along with many integral matters were shared. The overall outcome of the meeting was fruitful and the whole team is looking forward to a wonderful year.

CHAPTER NEWS

WESTERN INDIA



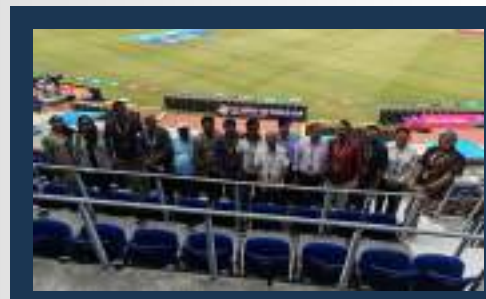
The Travel Agents Federation of India (TAFI) Western India Chapter met on 12 February 2026 at NSCI, Mumbai, with 110+ members. Chairman Jay Kantawala stressed collaboration, while Secretary Arun Iyer addressed industry challenges and promoted TAFI's awareness videos. SOPA Lodges, WOTF Group (with Global Destinations), and Manoj Samuel, CEO, Riya Travel, presented to the members; new members were inducted.



The Travel Agents Federation of India – Western India Chapter (TAFI WI) signed an MoU with Jai Hind College, Mumbai, in the presence of Mr. Jay Kantawala, Mr. Arun Iyer, Dr. Archana Mishra, and Dr. Vijay Dhabolkar. The partnership will offer internships, industry exposure, workshops, research, and placements, strengthening industry-academia ties and nurturing future tourism professionals.

TAMIL NADU

TAFI Tamil Nadu made their presence in the Newzealand Vs Canada match that happened in Chennai on 17th February 2026 in M.A. Chidambaram Stadium (Chepauk). This arrangements was sponsored by Emirates.



The Tamil Nadu chapter Chairman Mr C K Raja, Secretary Mr V Ramu honoured Dr Ganesanathan Ketheeswaran on the occasion of 78th Independence day of Sri Lanka at Hotel Leela palace, Chennai on 23rd Feb 2026.

CHAPTER NEWS

TAMIL NADU

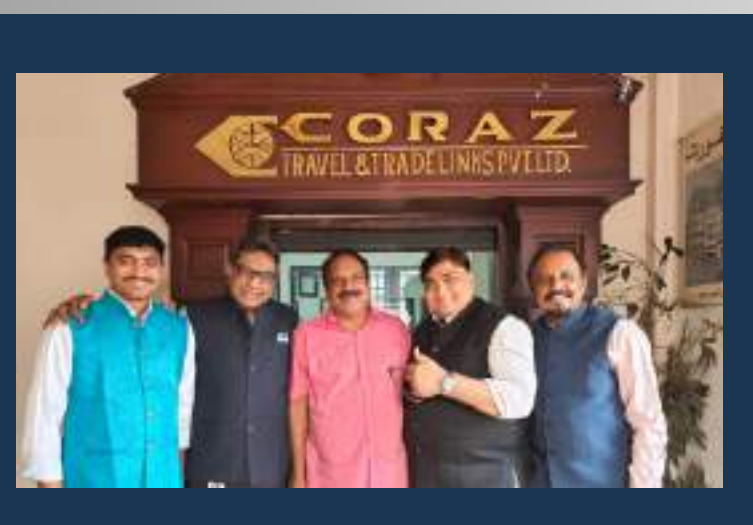


TAFI Tamil Nadu Leadership team - Chairman Mr.C.K.Raja, National MC member Mr.Bright Manohar, National MC Member Ms.Sumita Kashyap and Committee member Mr.Vaitheeswaran participated in Valedictory function on Tourism Education organised by the India Tourism to create awareness on Tourism Education to Schools in Chennai on 11th February 2026

KERALA



VFS Global honored the Travel Agents Federation of India (TAFI) National and Kerala Chapter teams at the “Beat The Peak 2026” event in Kochi on 16 February. The memento was received by TAFI leaders Paulose K. Mathew, P.P. Augusthy, Tibin Thomas, and Anoop Kumar K.S., with Mr. Mathew also presenting a memento to VFS Global to reaffirm their partnership. The event, which included a promotion of the TAFI Newsletter, was attended by VFS leadership including Asia Regional Head Mr. Sharad Gowani, Sales Head Ms. Anahita Avari, South India Manager Mr. M. Venugopal, Sales Manager Mr. Govind, and Cochin Head Mr. Deepak Nagaraj.



National Managing committee , Mr.Paulose Mathew had a discussion with VFS team Asia head Mr Sharad Gowani ,Mr Venugopal Region head ,Mr Govind Sales Manger ,Mr Deepak Nagaraj Head VFS Cochin in Cochin regarding strengthening ties between TAFI and VFS Global

CHAPTER NEWS

GUJARAT



The TAFI Gujarat Chapter held its Bimonthly Meeting on 21st February 2026 at Hotel Express Towers, Vadodara, with over 60 members attending. The session began with the National Anthem and Chairman Mr. Dilip Masrani's welcome address.

Treasurer Mr. Rajneesh Bhatnagar presented updates and announced an AI training programme on 28th March 2026. Committee members were felicitated for Stakeholders Meet - Season 2, with mementos presented by General Secretary Mr. Hitank Shah. The meeting ended with thanks by Mr. Rajneesh Bhatnagar.

JAMMU AND KASHMIR

J&K Reopens 14 Tourist Destinations Ahead of 2026 Season

The administration of Jammu and Kashmir has announced the reopening of 14 key tourist destinations, providing a major boost to the region's tourism industry ahead of the 2026 travel season. The decision, taken after a comprehensive security review, reflects renewed confidence and preparedness to welcome visitors from across the country and abroad.

The reopening was ordered by Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha, with enhanced safety measures in place to ensure a smooth and secure experience for travellers. Tourism stakeholders have welcomed the move, describing it as a positive and timely step toward revitalizing the local economy.

With improved arrangements and growing optimism, Jammu & Kashmir looks forward to a vibrant and successful tourist season in the coming months.

EASTERN INDIA

TAFI Eastern India hosted a Networking Lunch at Hotel Kenilworth on 24th February 2026, bringing together members and travel trade partners for an engaging afternoon of industry exchange. The British Deputy High Commission shared key updates on UK e-Visa procedures, while event sponsor Holidays Carnival Group showcased its European destination services.



The gathering received notable coverage from The Times of India and The Telegraph, further highlighting its success.

AIRLINE



IndiGo extends suspension of Central Asia, Caucasus flights amid Iran airspace disruptions Affecting connectivity to international destinations. Operations to parts of Central Asia and the Caucasus will remain disrupted longer than expected.

SpiceJet to more than double capacity in 2026; receives MoU for 10 new aircraft. The airline, which doubled capacity in the last quarter, aims to cross 220 crore Available Seat Kilometres (ASKMs) and operate over 300 daily flights by Winter 2026.



The ePlane Company builds India's first electric air taxi digital twin using NVIDIA Omniverse. The initiative marks a milestone for India's aerospace sector, enabling multi-physics simulation and AI-led validation of its e200x eVTOL aircraft ahead of certification and flight testing.

Air India, AI Express to shift domestic ops to T2 from March 29 at Ahmedabad's Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel International Airport



TOURISM



India emerges as high-growth market for Greece: INSETE. Better recognition, air connectivity propels Brand Greece positioning India as a key high-growth long-haul market alongside China, while the United States, Canada and Australia continue to provide a stable base of long-haul travellers.

With 102 million visitors in 2025, France retains global tourism crown. With average spend of EUR 760, economic impact of tourism rises 9 pc but France was outsmarted by European rival Spain which registered tourism revenues of over USD 124 billion.



Karnataka restarts tiger reserve safaris in Bandipur & Nagarahole amid debate over human-wildlife conflict. The temporary halt had significantly affected tourism-linked businesses and local employment across the Bandipur-Nagarahole-Kabini landscape, one of India's most prominent wildlife tourism circuits.

Rs 25 cr 'Swadesh Darshan' project to push Bundelkhand tourism. Sustainability features form a core component of the project. Solar panels, rainwater harvesting systems, grass pavers and integrated waste management mechanisms are being incorporated



VISA AND HOSPITALITY



UK to require digital travel permission for most visitors from February 25 eVisas and Electronic Travel Authorisations to replace visa stickers. Physical visas to the United Kingdom in passports will soon disappear as travellers must obtain digital permission before travel.

DGCA proposes 30-day ban for unruly flyers. This significant shift from current rules aims to enable quicker responses to safety threats posed by unruly behavior, such as smoking, intoxication, or misuse of emergency equipment.



Japan ends walk-in visa submissions at VFS centres in southern India All visa categories impacted by rule change. Securing a time slot is now mandatory for Japan visa applicants in southern India after VFS Global ended walk-in submissions at centres in Chennai, Kochi, Hyderabad and Puducherry to manage rising demand.

India to restore full visa services in Bangladesh after year-long suspension Travel, business and student mobility set to resume from March. According to officials at Indian High Commission in Dhaka, technical upgrades to visa processing systems and enhanced security arrangements are being completed ahead of the rollout.



FORTS OF INDIA

Part 15- Kangra Fort, Location : Kangra district of Himachal Pradesh



One of the oldest forts in India, with a long and storied history. This fort stands on a hillock between two rivers (Manjhi and Banganga), among the foothills of the Dhauladhar range. The fort is the largest in the Indian Himalayas.

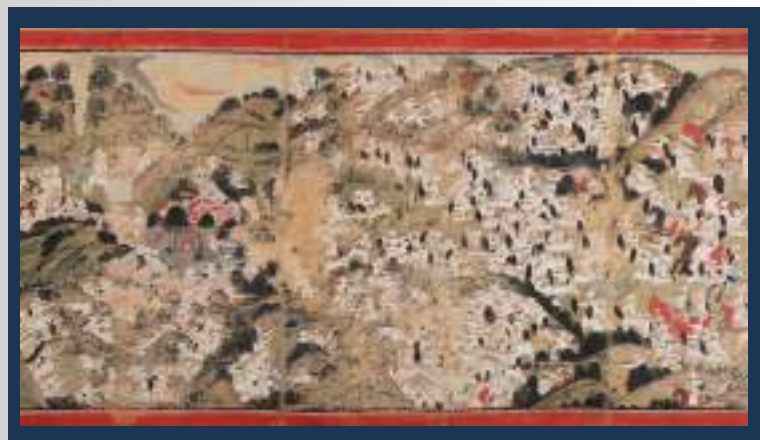
The Kangra Fort is also the oldest fort in the Himalayas and, according to Indian mythology, has a legendary history spanning approximately 4,000 years. The earliest still existing remains inside the fort are Jain and Hindu temples dated to c. 9-10 century A.D.



The entrance to the fort is through a small courtyard enclosed between two gates which were built during the Sikh period, as appears from an inscription over the entrance.

From here a long and narrow passage leads up to the top of the fort, through the Ahani and Amiri Darwaza (gate), both attributed to Nawab Saif Ali Khan, the first Mughal Governor of Kangra.

About 500 feet from the outer gate the passage turns round at a very sharp angle and passes through the Jehangiri Darwaza. The area Kangra Fort is spread across 463 acres



Athens & Rhodes – A Balanced Experience for the Indian Traveller



Some destinations are holidays. Some are simply itineraries. And then there are places that stay with you long after the journey ends. Greece is one of them. A recent visit covering Athens and Rhodes offered more than a familiar European experience. It revealed a destination that combines history, romance, culture, and ease of travel — making it highly relevant for today's Indian outbound traveller.

ATHENS: WHERE THE PAST MEETS THE PRESENT

Athens is not just a capital city; it is a living reminder of the foundations of civilization. Standing beneath the Acropolis and the Parthenon, one cannot help but feel connected to centuries of history philosophy, democracy, art, and mythology that shaped the modern world.

Yet Athens is far from being a city of monuments alone. It offers charming neighbourhood walks through Plaka and Monastiraki, rooftop dining with Acropolis views, boutique and luxury accommodation options, and a vibrant culinary culture.

The city presents a seamless blend of heritage and contemporary lifestyle, making it suitable for honeymooners, families, and culturally inclined travellers alike.

RHODES: HISTORY WITH ISLAND CHARM

If Athens feels grand, Rhodes feels intimate. The UNESCO-listed Rhodes Old Town transports visitors into a medieval world of cobbled streets, fortified walls, and historic landmarks such as the Palace of the Grand Master. At the same time, the island offers pristine waters, relaxed seaside resorts, and a slower Mediterranean pace. Rhodes appeals to travelers seeking cultural depth without crowds, beach relaxation with character, and heritage stays within historic surroundings.

A STRONG ITINERARY FOR THE INDIAN MARKET

The Athens-Rhodes combination works exceptionally well as a 6-8 night programme and offers iconic world heritage experiences, romantic dining, island relaxation, and easy domestic flight connectivity.

For Indian travellers, this itinerary delivers the right mix of structure and leisure — creating meaningful yet comfortable holidays.

LEARNING THROUGH EXPERIENCE

This visit was undertaken in association with TAFI Western India and Global Destinations & WOFT Group, providing valuable firsthand exposure to hotels, logistics, ground handling, and destination readiness. Such educational journeys are critical for the travel trade. Firsthand knowledge enables travel professionals to design itineraries that are well-paced, operationally smooth, and experience-focused.

WHY GREECE STANDS OUT

Athens and Rhodes together capture the essence of Greece — historic yet vibrant, scenic yet accessible, romantic yet versatile. Some destinations impress you during the journey. Greece stays with you — in its light, its stories, and its unhurried rhythm.

Blog: <https://constanttravels.in/blogs/some-places-are-trips-greece-is-a-love-story->

AI A NEW CO-WORKER: WHAT IT MEANS FOR TRAVEL AGENCIES

Article by Saivisal K B, Sree Sai Travels and Services, Thrissur, Kerala



Recently in the AI era Anthropic released its new agentic AI named Claude “co-worker”, is an AI assistant designed to work with people inside real business workflows, not just answer questions in a chat box. For us this means AI can start behaving like a smart junior colleague who understands your customers, tools and basic rules rather than a distant, generic bot.

Instead of only helping you write emails or simple replies, this new Claude co-worker can be connected (through secure extensions and plugins) to the systems your office already uses CRMs, customer records and other internal tools. That allows it to see important context like client history, preferences and policy, and then assist travel agents like a digital team member sitting beside your staff, suggesting options and drafts, while your human team makes the final decisions. Over time, this kind of support can cut down repetitive searching and typing, allowing staff to focus more on advising, upselling and building relationships.

Beyond the desk, Claude-style co-worker tools can even automate routine online actions. Using a self-hosted helper on your own laptop, something like an internal “ClawdBot” or “OpenClaw” agent, you can let AI control a browser window under your supervision to complete simple, repetitive tasks. For example, it could navigate an airline website, perform web check-in for a PNR, select pre-agreed seats and download boarding passes, while your staff simply review the result and send it to the client. This keeps control with the agency but removes a lot of manual clicking that eats into staff time.

For travel agency leaders across India, the message is simple: this is the moment to start experimenting with AI as a true colleague at work. Begin with small pilots where Claude helps staff draft responses, summarise enquiries, complete web check-ins and prepare options, always under human supervision. Train your team to see AI as a partner, not a threat and you can turn this new co-worker into a real advantage for your customers, your employees and your business.

BEYOND TRAVEL - THE TAFI TALENT HUB

Celebrating the creativity, artistry, and imagination of travel professionals.



**Introducing: Rai Pradyumn Krishna,
Photographer
Travel Assistance Bureau**



Place: Keoladeo National Park, Bharatpur

Rai Pradyumn Krishna s/o Rai Achal Krishna, Travel Assistance Bureau is an avid photographer and an innovative cook. He waits for hours to catch the right click. He does not let his autism affect his abilities.

At Keoladeo National Park in Bharatpur, every frame feels like a quiet masterpiece of the wild. A UNESCO World Heritage Site, this extraordinary wetland is home to over 370 species of birds, drawing migratory wonders from across continents. Its tranquil marshes and open skies create the perfect canvas for elegant herons and other avian beauties, making it a dream destination for bird lovers and photographers alike.

EVENTS CALENDAR

2026

	Event	Date	Place	Website
1	ITB Berlin	Mar 3-5 2026	Berlin	https://www.itb.com/en
2	IITM	Mar 20-21 2026	Ahmedabad	https://iitmindia.com/
3	NATAS TRAVEL	Mar 27 - 29 2026	Singapore	https://www.natastravelfair.travel/
4	MATTA FAIR	Apr 3 - 5 2026	Kuala Lumpur	https://www.mattafair.org.my/index.php/en/about/amf.html
5	WTM	Apr 13-15 2026	Capetown	https://www.wtm.com/africa/en-gb.html
6	ATM	May 4-7 2026	Dubai	https://www.wtm.com/atm/en-gb.html
7	IMEX Germany	May 20-22	Messe Frankfurt, Germany	https://imex-frankfurt.com/newfront
8	ITB China	May 27-29 2026	Shanghai World Expo Center, China	https://www.itb.com/en

TAFI QUIZ TIME

Test your TAFI Knowledge !

Who can Participate and how ?

- Should be a TAFI Member (Authorised or Alternative Member) to participate and should have paid the membership Fees up to date.
- First 5 qualified Answers will be considered as winners. Answers to be sent to editor@tafi.org.in ONLY.
- Any other form of communication to the editor will become invalid participation.
- The Decision of the Editor on the Qualified list will be final and cannot be challenged.
- Winners will be communicated and recognized in the next TAFI Newsletter Publication.
- The Winners will get an Amazon Voucher (or Similar) worth Rs 1000
- The cut-off date for Members to send in the answers for every newsletter Publication will be within 24 hours window of the date of 1st Circulation.
- The Editorial Team reserves the right to amend the Terms & Conditions without any prior notice.
- Winners will be considered based on apt answers for all the questions asked.
- Only 1st answer sent to us by mail will be considered for the contest.

Who are Allied Members of TAFI?

Click to Answer editor@tafi.org.in

Winners of 16th February 2026

Answer to Quiz on 16 Feb 2026:

Question : Which Type of Membership has Voting Rights & can Stand for Election in TAFI ?

Answer: Active Members

1. Ajay Chundayil, Sky Days
2. Jibin Mathew, Trinity
3. Sanjeev Paikat, Calicut
4. Saivisal, Sree Sai Travels
5. Pama Air Travels

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Readers,

We hope you are enjoying the content shared with you through our fortnightly Newsletter. We would like to encourage readers to communicate to “ The Editor “and share your views and concerns pertaining to the industry . We will endeavour to address your concerns to the best of our ability. The best “ letter to the Editor” and its response will be published . We encourage you to add your Name , Designation, Company Name and Photo while communicating to the Editor and get recognized.

Email Id to communicate: editor@tafi.org.in

Yours faithfully

The Editor

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Waking up in India is
like waking up to life itself.

- Reymond Page

