

AITTC Newsletter

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We welcome you to the second issue of our bi-monthly newsletter for 2015, hoping the New Year has started well for all.

In this issue we express our distress with the recent murder of IT professional Ms Prabha Arun Kumar in Parramatta, the news of which is being reported by all of major media outlets in India. The snowballing effect from this has the potential of creating a "perception" that Sydney/Australia is not safe for women. While it's a matter of concern for the tourism industry, it is assuring to note that NSW Government is treating this fatal incident with highest possible priority to bring the perpetrators to justice. AITTC has touched base on this matter with Destination NSW to offer possible help to dilute any possible negative effect on tourism from India to NSW.

This period saw two successful travel delegations from India, proclaiming the growing significance of Australia- India bilateral travel. Organized by Destination NSW, a group of leading outbound tour operators came for a fam trip to NSW. This delegation was led by Paramjit Bawa, Destination NSW India Manager based in Mumbai. Second was a group of inbound tour operators from Indian Association of Tour Operators (IATO) on a road show to Australia and New Zealand. They were led by Girish Shankar, Additional Secretary from the Indian Ministry of Tourism. The road shows were most professionally organized by the Indian Tourism office in Sydney.



We are still working on strategic events for this year. High on consideration is a workshop cum training session on India for front office staff of Australian travel and tour operators selling India products. Also planning in progress for an interactive industry wide symposium to identify issues and potential solutions for growth of bilateral tourism.

In this context we sincerely request our members and stakeholders to make suggestions on future AITTC events that may be beneficial to the industry. Opportunities for sponsoring any of our events are available, so if interested to contribute then please do not hesitate contact us.

Provided below is some more industry news that may be of importance to you:

NSW State Government India Strategy

NSW is strengthening its economic relationship with India by positioning itself as a global leader in infrastructure development. To do this the NSW Government released its India Strategy recently. The strategy outlines ways NSW will boost its trade, investment, education and tourism relationships with India. One of the key action is to grow two way tourism and to achieve that the document lists following actions:

- Increase the value of tourism from India to NSW to \$0.5 billion by 2020.
- Increase marketing and development activity into more geographic source markets.
- Secure additional partners to promote Sydney and NSW in India.
- Target market segments that offer the greatest propensity to travel to NSW including travel for holidays and visiting friends and relatives.
- Improve the quality and range of visitor experiences promoted to the Indian market.
- Increase travel trade support and education programs.
- Support aviation and route development.
- Expand commercial and government partnerships



New South Wales State Tourism

NSW Premier Mike Baird, who is facing an election next month, has proposed a major funding boost to attract high profile events to the state. He said the move would help secure NSW's reputation as the "Undisputed home" of major events in Australia. As well as extending successful events such as the Vivid Sydney festival, the additional money could also be used to bid for world premier concert tours for major musical acts as well as international sporting events such as baseball or gridiron matches. "More major events will attract more tourists to NSW who will provide a boost to the state economy when they stay at local hotels, eat out at local restaurants and take cabs home," Baird said. A total of \$123 million in tourism funding is proposed, of which \$73.25m would go to attracting events including \$22m set

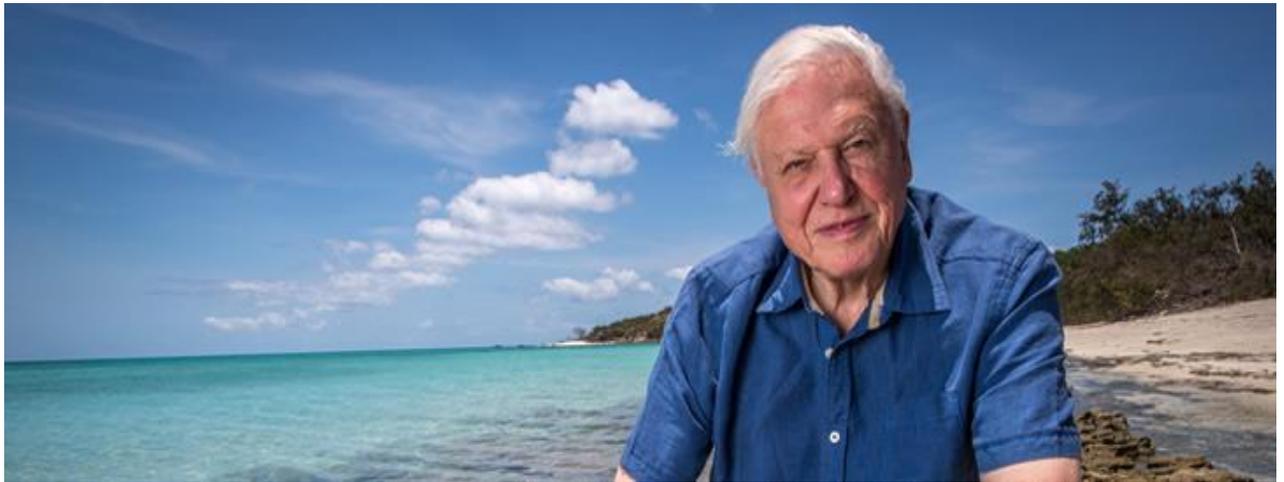
aside for Western Sydney. \$40.6 million would be devoted to growing regional tourism, and \$9.5 million would be spent on targeting inbound arrivals from “priority international markets”. The travel and tourism industry has responded to Baird’s strategy, with hotel giant Accor pledging its support for the initiative. Accor chief operating officer Simon McGrath welcomed the campaign move, saying it will give Sydney “the competitive edge” over other state capitals and other cities in the Asia-Pacific. “Pleasingly the Baird Government understands that tourism has moved into the top three of economic contributors in most countries worldwide.

ICC 2015 World Cup Cricket boosts tourism

The current world Cup Cricket tournament has significantly inspired tourism from India. Every match India has played witnessed record attendance, in particular matches against Pakistan in Adelaide, against South Africa and Bangladesh in Melbourne and against Australia in Sydney drew large number of Indian fans from India and overseas where Indian diaspora is strong. The state tourisms have strongly benefitted from this with suggestions for more of India playing cricket in down under



David Attenborough to film the Great Barrier Reef



David Attenborough returns to the Great Barrier Reef nearly 60 years after his first visit, as part of a new multi-platform media project between Atlantic Productions and Tourism Australia aimed at inspiring greater interest and more visits to the world’s largest coral reef system.

Tourism Australia announced the new collaboration in March at its inaugural Destination Australia Conference in Sydney.

Expected to air early in 2016 and anticipated to be distributed across more than 130 countries, the three-part documentary series will form a key part of a renewed push by Tourism Australia to promote Australia’s aquatic and coastal experiences.

Indian travel industry delegation in Australia

In order to create even further growth for India, a delegation from Indian Association of Tour Operators (IATO), comprising of over 25 travel agents and tour operators met more than 300 travel industry professionals in Sydney and Melbourne, Mr Girish Shankar, Additional Secretary Ministry of Tourism who led the delegation spoke about the popularity of the newly introduced “Visa on Arrival” facilities for Australian citizens which pledges to facilitate growth of tourist numbers.



Tourism Arrival in India

Foreign Tourist arrival during the period Jan-Dec 2014 were 7.46 million compared to 6.97 million during same period last year, resulting a growth of 7.1%. During Dec 2014 Australia was one of the top 15 source countries for foreign tourists, contributing 4.47% with USA at the top with 17.6 %.



Jet moves back in to black

Jet Airways experienced a strong upturn in fortunes in the quarter ending 31 December 2014, returning to the black following seven consecutive three-monthly losses. The Indian carrier, which is being transformed by Etihad Airways, posted its first operating profit since December 2012 as the effects of its turnaround plans started to take hold. Profits were small, at just INR30 million (US\$485,000), but this marked a considerable improvement from the INR2.84 billion loss recorded in the same period 12 months previous.

New premium economy class in Singapore Airlines

Singapore Airlines has revealed that its new premium economy class will be made available on flights to Mumbai and Delhi. The two Indian cities form part of the initial roll-out of the new cabin, which will commence on 9 August 2015 on the Singapore-Sydney route. The new class will offer seats ranging from 18.5 to 19.5 inches (47-49.5cm) in width, with an eight-inch recline. Seats will also include 13.3-inch HD in-flight entertainment screens, two USB ports, power outlets and additional storage space. Premium economy passengers will be offered a greater choice of F&B, including champagne, priority check-in and a larger baggage allowance.

Australian World Orchestra to tour India with Zubin Mehta

The Australian World Orchestra (AWO) today announced that it will be touring India in October 2015 at the invitation, and under the baton, of internationally renowned Indian conductor, Maestro Zubin Mehta. The tour has been made possible with the support of the Australian Government, announced earlier today. The AWO will perform two concerts in Mumbai on 25 and 26 October, one concert in Chennai on 28 October and one concert in New Delhi on 30 October.



New Menu in Air India down under flights keeping cricket world cup spirit

Marrying two of India's national passion, cricket and cuisine Air India launched a new menu keeping in line with the current ICC world Cup spirit. The revamped menu, served onboard flights between India and Australia throughout the tournament, is in line with Air India's bid to look into new ways to increase traffic between the two nations. The new menu includes dishes named in honour of famous cricketers, and include an Indian style chicken named as Dhoni's Swashbuckling Super Sixer, a paneer (cottage cheese) dish is called Raina's Cheesy Pull Shot, fish of the day called Captain Smith's Catch of the Season, and a traditional rasamalai designated as Sachin's Sweet Drive.



While primarily serving a significant VFR market out of Sydney and Melbourne, the carrier's Australian manager, Madhu Mathen said they have seen growth in leisure and corporate segments since launching services in September 2013. Operating a single Dreamliner 787 between the Delhi, Melbourne and Sydney, Mathen said the two-class configuration will remain with its business class reaching around

60% capacity. Currently off the back of India's peak travel season which runs from November to January, Mathen said the carrier operated at 85% load levels on its Australian services which runs a triangular route Sydney and Melbourne to Delhi. The Air India flight from Delhi also offers passengers the option to see both Melbourne and Sydney under the one ticket.

Air India currently operates 18 Dreamliner 787 but has 9 more on order.

New India Tour

“Hidden Lands, Forgotten Frontiers” is a small group 14-day journey starting in Kolkata, continuing to Guwahati and into Arunachal Pradesh and Majuli Island. Tour dates are November 19-December 3, 2015. This tour will be escorted by John Zubrzycki who worked in India as a diplomat, consultant and foreign correspondent and has spent years searching out its hidden gems. He has written two books on India, both historical biographies, as well as numerous features. He has travelled extensively throughout the northeastern states, and considers them to be the most magical and interesting parts of India. For more information visit - www.travelonQ.com.au / small group tours



Air India celebrated International Women's Day

Operating all-female crew on a number of international and domestic air services, Air India celebrated International Woman's Day on March. The Star Alliance carrier also marked the occasion on the ground to highlight its pride of place for women employees. On the day, AI also operated its first all-women long haul Boeing 787 Dreamliner service from Delhi to Melbourne on flight AI302, with the crew.



World's tallest Temple in India

Vrindavan Chandrodaya Mandir is going to be the world's tallest temple. Currently under-construction at Mathura, India at a cost of US\$49 million it will be one of the most expensively built temple in world by ISKCON. The temple has a footprint of about 5 acres, rises to a height of about 213 meters or 70 floors. The project is set in 62 acres of land and will includes 12 acres for parking and a helipad. The temple is planned to be vibrant with festivals and religious activities throughout the year.



Second Best Exotic Marigold Hotel

Starring Judi Dench, Richard Gere, Dev Patel and Maggie Smith, this movie has inspired many Australian tour operators to frame tours to India with a hook to film which follow a group of British retirees, played by a veritable pantheon of senior British actors, as they lightly seek love, redemption and meaning in the late years at a hotel that they've made into a second home.



Sandip Hor – sandip.hor@aittc.net.au.

Nicole Lenoir Jordan – nicole@fivestarpr.com.au

News items has been sourced from various media releases