

*IATA - Insurance Option revival sought:



(By: P. Sampath Kumar, - Consultant -TAFI legal and industry affairs)

The insurance option which was available to Agents in India till a few years back ceased due to the fact the said Insurance company decided to discontinue in providing Cover to IATA against Agents payment default over unspecified concerns.

In such a situation IATA India office tried to look for an alternative Insurance company operating in India who was willing to provide a Cover as per its requirements. No insurance company came forward. Thus, the Insurance option was no longer available.

Then there was another matter in 2017 IATA announced plans for a global Default cover and years later IATA signed an Agreement and secured a single "Global Default Insurance" cover against Agent's payment default with a said Insurance Company, who fulfilled the criteria of covering risk as required and to be a part must criteria set requirement by IRDA hence, non-operational in India.

Now, it is reliably learnt that the said insurance company which gave IATA the **global risk insurance cover** against Agent default, has become a part of an insurance company which has **a setup in India**. This information has been brought to the attention of IATA and asked that Indian Agents to be accorded the cover as Agents in rest of the world, by the next cycle when Agents are required to give their annual financial security to retain accreditation.

Now there is no reason for IATA not to extend Insurance option to Agents in India as a valid financial security option, along with Bank Guarantee option. We now await action by IATA India and more details as to the cost factor, for the Insurance Cover. We will keep you posted of developments in due course. (This subject matter has been shared in my personal capacity)

*RECONCILIATION OF INCOME UNDER GST AND INCOME TAX: -

By H.M. Talha, Chartered Accountant, Consultant IT Matters



Reconciliation of income under GST and income tax is important to ensure that there are no discrepancies or inconsistencies in the reporting of income. Here are the steps to reconcile income under GST and income tax:

1. **Collect data:** Collect data related to sales and purchases from both GST returns and income tax returns. Ensure that the data is accurate and complete.
2. **Compare data:** Compare the data collected from both GST returns and Account Books to identify any differences. This may include differences in the amount of sales and purchases, as well as differences in the dates and other details.
3. **Identify the reasons for differences:** Analyze the reasons for the differences identified in step 2. This may include errors in reporting, differences in the accounting period, or differences in the treatment of certain transactions.
4. **Adjust the data:** Make adjustments to the data as necessary to ensure that it is consistent and accurate. This may involve correcting errors in reporting, adjusting the treatment of certain transactions, or reconciling differences in the accounting period.
5. **Reconcile the data:** Once the data has been adjusted, reconcile the data from both GST returns and account books to ensure that they match.
6. **Document the reconciliation:** Document the reconciliation process and the adjustments made to the data in case of any future audits or inquiries.

Reconciling income under GST and income tax is important to avoid penalties and interest charges for incorrect reporting of income. It is recommended to seek professional help from a tax consultant or an accountant to ensure that the reconciliation process is done correctly.

Flash News: CBDT vide circular dated 28-03-2023 has extended the due date for Linking of PAN-Aadhaar to 30th JUNE 2023.

*India's travel industry may not overtake China soon but still presents numerous opportunities:



India's airline industry may be on a strong growth trajectory — but don't expect India's outbound travel to overtake China's soon, aviation analysts say. Travel demand to and from India is expected to grow as the country's middle class expands and more residents travel abroad for the first time, Brendan Sobie, independent analyst at Sobie Aviation said. But "don't expect India to be a bigger outbound market than China anytime soon." The South Asian nation may be set to overtake China as the world's most populous country, but there remains a "massive gap" between their aviation markets, Sobie said. "The gap between China and India is huge," Lalitya Dhavala, valuations consultant at travel analytics firm Cirium told CNBC. Although India has the world's third largest aviation market, "China's total fleet is almost five times the existing Indian fleet, for an almost equal population," she said, highlighting it was "indicating room for expansion." In addition, only 7.3% of India's current population holds a passport, Dhavala highlighted. The analysts agree there's potential for growth in India's domestic and international travel market. In comparison to China, India has a larger share of young adults, with 40% of its population under 25 years old, Dhavala said. "This generation is on a rising economic trajectory with a growing desire and appetite to travel and explore the world." "India is going to become one of those key pillars of global aviation, and the next few years ... is India's story as much as anyone's," Air India CEO Campbell Wilson told CNBC this week when asked if India's travel industry could potentially overtake China's.

*IndiGo Projects a 350 Aircraft Fleet by Next Year



While IndiGo comfortably commands more than half of India's domestic market share, several changes are underway in Indian aviation that could challenge that dominance over the next few years. Not the kind to be complacent, IndiGo recently revealed plans for fleet expansion over the next year as well as a long-term vision until the end of this decade. Budget carrier and India's largest airline IndiGo plans to have 350 airplanes by the end of the next financial year. The airline hosted a presentation at the analysts/investors meeting on March 23rd and gave growth projections for the coming year. As per a report, IndiGo says it will end this fiscal with around 306 aircraft and will have carried more than 85 million passengers. And that's not all. The airline is estimating to up its passenger volume to 100 million by next year and increase its network by another 10–15 destinations. The airline plans to close this year with 104 destinations, which it hopes will increase to 115 in another 12 months. With Air India's expansion plans unsettling established carriers abroad, back home, IndiGo plans to keep the competition alive by projecting to double in size. by 2030. IndiGo already has nearly 500 aircraft on order, which will keep its fleet young and active for many years.

*Freeze on Flying rights Divide Aviation Industry

MIDDLE EAST FOCUS			CONNECTING THE DOTS		
57 % of Indian and Gulf traffic are carried by Middle East airlines			69% of foreign traffic from India to Gulf are carried to Europe and North America from Middle East hubs using sixth freedom rights		
FY	Middle East Airlines (%)	Indian Airlines (%)	FY	Connecting traffic (%)	Point to Point (%)
2017-18	56.3	43.7	2017-18	67.0	33.0
2018-19	55.5	44.5	2018-19	67.1	32.9
2019-20	56.8	43.2	2019-20	69.4	30.6

Source: CAPA Advisory
Data as on August 2021

Differences have erupted in the aviation industry over the government's policy of not increasing flying rights to other nations. Global airline CEOs say the policy stifles capacity expansion and hurt consumers. Home grown. Tata-owned Air India, on the other hand, is said to be in favor of the freeze as it plans to increase direct connectivity through long haul flights. Air India has put in for 70 wide body aircraft with which it aims to increase flights to Europe and US. Sources said that market leader

IndiGo and new entrants like Akasa want an expansion of flying rights as they want to launch new flights. "IndiGo with its huge fleet needs more international rights while Akasa which will launch international flights by end of this year has limited options," a senior executive of an airline said. In the absence of flying rights to destinations like Dubai, Singapore, Akasa will have to look for less lucrative destinations like Oman and Dammam, Saudi Arabia. **Akasa Air CEO Vinay Dube** said while his airline is ready to look at alternate destinations, there needs to be a review of bilateral rights. Flying rights are allocated on a bilateral reciprocal basis. For most Middle East countries, Indian carriers have been unable to utilize their quota while foreign airlines have exhausted theirs. In 2016, India in its National Civil Aviation Policy framed the guidelines saying that unless the utilization from the Indian side reaches 80%, additional flying rights will not be granted. In the case of destinations like Dubai, Sharjah, Jeddah however both sides have exhausted their quota. **Bilal Eksi, CEO of Turkish Airlines** said that while he sees nothing wrong for a country to frame its own flying rights

policy, too much protectionism discourages competition and hurts consumers. "Competition should be encouraged giving options to passengers so the airlines strive to improve their service standards. Currently, 3,000 seats each can be offered per week on both ways between India and Turkey. But the utilizations from India remains low as IndiGo is the only airline to have flights to Istanbul. "We want to launch more flights as there is huge demand. Government officials said India's apprehension comes from the fact that cash rich Gulf airlines with their large wide body fleet will exploit the sixth freedom rights which allows it to fly Indian passengers to Europe and North America via their home country. Indian carriers which don't have enough wide bodies stick to flying between India and Middle East where the ticket value is lower. "We want Indian airlines to have their wide body fleet so that Indian airports can develop their own hub. We have **86 international carriers coming into India and only 5 Indian carriers taking people to international destinations** outside India. These 5 carriers that fly overseas hold only 36% market share. We have to look at increasing international to international traffic." **civil aviation minister Jyotiraditya Scindia** had told ET earlier. Experts said that the government is likely to maintain the stance for one to two years to encourage Indian airlines. "The government has a clear view on this subject. As a tactical move, it wants a mega Indian carrier of size, scale and quality to emerge over the years. I don't see this changing soon," Kapil Kaul, CEO, India of CAPA.

***UK's Gatwick Airport tempts Indian airlines with lower flier costs**



The UK's second-busiest airport Gatwick is looking to woo Indian carriers to launch services to and from India, with the aviation sector still struggling to reach pre-pandemic levels. "We had conversations with IndiGo, and have had them for many years. We are interested to engage with it. We are super keen to attract IndiGo and any other airline based in India, and has the aircraft capability to fly to UK. Pre-covid, IndiGo had slots at Gatwick, so it is a clear intent. I am pretty sure as the years progress, and it has the right aircraft equipment, it may start flights," said Jonathan Pollard, Gatwick Airport's chief commercial officer, in an interview. It has also been in talks with Air India, which is starting a few flights, connecting Gatwick to Amritsar, Ahmedabad, Goa and Kochi from 26 March. Gatwick expects to attract more airlines than Heathrow, and is offering cost benefits to Indian airlines. The airport is 50% cheaper than Heathrow in terms of cost per passenger—£15. Heathrow, the largest airport in the UK, has been the first choice for Indian carriers. Pollard said passenger traffic at Gatwick largely depends on international flights, which was at 86% of pre-covid levels in October, and may continue through 2023 as well. The airport operator expects to reach 2019 levels only in 2024. While Gatwick Airport is hiring more staff, anticipating higher demand in the summer season, it expects the net staff strength to be lower by around 10% b'cos of increased deployment of technology. European airports had also faced a high number of flight cancellations in 2022 due to a shortage of ground staff for handling incoming and outgoing flights. Gatwick, the eighth busiest airport in Europe, is eyeing more flights from India as over 60% of the traffic between the UK and India operates via various international airport hubs including Dubai, Abu Dhabi, Doha and Frankfurt.

***Another New Saudi Carrier: NEOM Airlines To Launch Next Year:**



There seems to be enough space for more initiatives, as there is now confirmation of a new startup carrier that promises to differentiate itself with innovation and sustainability from the get-go. As reported by Zawya on 23 Mar'23, **NEOM Airlines**, a carrier intended to serve the planned megacity of NEOM, will begin operations at the end of the **fourth quarter of 2024** The planned airline's **Chief Executive Officer is Klaus Goersch**, a former Chief Operating Officer of British Airways and Air Canada. He commented on the intended launch and the "two-step approach" in its development on the project's website, "We are there to enable the destination. **NEOM's resorts** will be going live in early 2024, so we need to service that demand quickly, initially retrofitting existing aircraft with existing technology. But come 2026 onwards, there will be new innovative aircraft – whether it be electric, hydrogen-powered or supersonic – and next-generation interiors coming online from us. We are already in discussions with plane, interior, and seat manufacturers. Goersch further commented, "Other airlines are focused on the trip because they don't participate in the front end or the back end of the trip. For us, things will be different. The Gulf airlines have done this to a degree, but we will take it to a new level. Be ready for a completely different travel experience. Some of the stand-out features NEOM Airlines is planning include large screen IFE at every seat, 6G WIFI to accommodate gaming, and biometric security clearing without the need for special gates or visa presentation at the airport.

*India's gov't eases leasing rules, Indigo, Air India goes Shopping:



The Indian government has eased its rules for leasing aircraft, including wet leasing, to address the growing capacity gap in this rapidly recovering market, minister of civil aviation **Jyotiraditya Scindia** said during an event in New Delhi. "Surprisingly and shockingly, the situation has turned the other way [after the Covid-19 crisis]. Now we do not have enough airplanes to fly our passengers," he said. The minister did not outline specific steps taken by the government to facilitate leasing, and he did not clarify whether he was referencing last year's changes that extended the maximum duration of a wet lease from three to 12 months or to other more recent changes.

Benefiting from the new rules, IndiGo Airlines has been wet-leasing a B777-300(ER) from Turkish Airlines since February 1, 2023, and plans to add another such aircraft from the same operator shortly. Meanwhile, Air India (AI, Mumbai International) **CEO Campbell Wilson** said that the flag carrier was out on the market for financing for its recently announced giant order for 470 aircraft, valued, after discounts, at up to USD70 billion. He said that the airline was seeking lessor offers for "portions" of the order, although he also conceded that as deliveries were spread out over time, the carrier would not be seeking full financing at once. Wilson added that despite a number of high-profile airline bankruptcies in India in the past, including Kingfisher Airlines and Jet Airways, the backing of new owners Tata Sons was broadening Air India's financing options. "The benefit of having a strong, patient capital provider like Tata does accord us a lot of flexibility," he stressed.

*American Airlines Eyes Growth in India with Partnership Expansion



American Airlines has partnered with dnata to be its General Sales Agent (GSA) in India. The carrier currently flies daily between **New York JFK and Delhi** but has other planned or hinted-at other routes, including serving Bangalore and Mumbai. American inked a codeshare agreement with budget giant IndiGo last year to grow its reach in the country too. Today, American has selected Dubai-based dnata as its sales agent, GSA, in India.

Representation Services is the arm of the Emirati company that handles GSA and is quite familiar with American Airlines. **Simon Woodford, Vice President of Global Air Services** at dnata Travel Group, commented on the deal, saying, "The expansion of our partnership with American Airlines into India is a testament to our excellent cooperation, spanning almost five decades. We will continue to work hard to ensure American Airlines achieves its business objectives and delivers on its growth plans across the country, in a highly competitive business environment. Its future plans have been thrown into doubt. While Mumbai-New York was a likely second route, it is now feasible due to airspace restrictions. Bangalore-Seattle, has been teed up since early 2020, but the COVID-19 and Air India's swift entry and re-entry to Bangalore-San Francisco seems to have halted this idea too. For now, the growth in India remains limited to doubling services to Delhi or adding a route to the west coast, likely San Francisco. One good thing is that demand is not low on these routes, and passengers are increasingly open to ultra-long-haul services rather than one-stops in the Middle East, which was largely the norm until the pandemic hit. Helped by lower fares and convenience for passengers, American is not giving up on the Indian market and looks here to stay this time around.

*Indian airports' revenues to rise to \$3.9 billion next fiscal year



Indian airport operators are projected to report 26 per cent rise in revenues at USD 3.9 billion in the next financial year, aviation consultancy CAPA India said on Wednesday. For 2023-24, air passenger traffic, including domestic and international, is expected to be 395 million, it said while presenting the outlook for the airports. Out of the total, domestic air passengers will rise to 320 million from 275 million this fiscal. During this period, the international air passenger count will increase to 75 million from 58 million. "India is forecast to see domestic airport pax rise to 700 million passengers, and international airport pax to 160 million passengers by FY2030," CAPA India said. It said Indian airports' revenue

of USD 3.9 billion (Rs 32,390 crore) in the next fiscal will be 26 per cent higher than anticipated in 2022-23. The outlook was presented at the CAPA India aviation summit here. Stefano Barconi, Director General of ACI Asia Pacific, said airports' health was affected significantly amid the pandemic and that air passenger traffic is still in recovery mode. Airports Council International (ACI) Asia Pacific represents more than 600 airports.

***Air India Will Absorb All Vistara Employees Following the Merger**



All of the 5,000+ employees of Vistara will find roles in Air India following the merger of the two airlines. Vistara's Chief Executive Officer Vinod Kannan spoke in an interview at the CAPA Aviation Summit in New Delhi and said, "There will be opportunities for everyone in the bigger unit. All of them will be absorbed in the new combined entity". Kannan also highlighted that almost 80% of Vistara's staff works in operational roles.

These include pilots, cabin crew, and engineers, among others. With Vistara's planes eventually becoming one with Air India's fleet, all employees will make a shift as well. What also works for both airlines is that under government ownership, Air India did not hire people for several departments for the last 15 years. As such, finding new opportunities and similar roles should not be that big of a problem. Kannan added, "The assurance (to Vistara staff) is that we will find a place for you. It may not be like-tolike in the same title and same designation etc., but it will be something that you will be comfortable with". Kannan also assured Vistara customers that they could continue expecting the same style of product and services even after the merger, as Air India itself is in the process of upgrading its aircraft cabins and customer service experience.

***Women Empowerment: In India 15 per cent of pilots are women:**



As much as 15 per cent of pilots in India are women, which is almost three times the global average of 5 per cent, according to an official release on Thursday (23 Mar). However, currently, there is no special Programme in the government to encourage pilot training for women and backward classes including SCs/STs, it said. Also, there are currently 67 expat pilots working with various air operators in the country, it said. As per data received from various Indian scheduled airlines, a total of 244 pilots have been recruited in 2021, the release noted and that industry estimates suggest that the country may require 1,000 pilots per annum over the next five years. The annual requirement of commercial pilots depends upon various factors such as financial health of an airline, airline expansion plan and growth in the aviation sector, the release stated. As per the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), there are approximately 10,000 pilots including 67 foreign nationals employed with various domestic airlines in India, it added. According to the release, there are 35 DGCA approved Flight Training Organizations (FTOs) in the country, operating at 53 bases.

***Indigo co-founders are the wealthiest aviation billionaires in the world: report**



Indigo co-founders **Rakesh Gangwal** and **Rahul Bhatia** have emerged as the wealthiest aviation billionaires with a wealth of US\$ 3.6 billion and US\$ 3.3 billion respectively, according to the **2023 Hurun Global Rich List**. Kolkata-born Gangwal, who lives in San Francisco, held a 33.78 per cent stake in InterGlobe Aviation, the parent company of IndiGo airlines. His first foray in the aviation industry was in 1980 when he worked as an associate with Booz & Allen Hamilton Inc. Before starting IndiGo airlines in 2006, Gangwal was chairman, president and CEO of WorldSpan Technologies between 2003 and 2007. he

resigned from the Board of Directors in February 2022 and later that year sold 2.74 per cent stake that was worth Rs 2,005 crore. Following Gangwal's resignation, Rahul Bhatia took full charge of the airlines. He was appointed the Managing Director of InterGlobe Aviation in February 2022 for a five-year period. InterGlobe, in 2022, partnered with logistics firm UPS in a joint venture to establish a new logistics brand called Movin, in India. Worldwide, the 2023 M3M Hurun Global Rich List saw the addition of 16 Indian billionaires and country occupied the third position in the list which added the most number of billionaires. Indian billionaires have added approximately 360 billion dollars to their total wealth in the last five years.

***Adani to increase airports business in India amid aviation boom:**

India's Adani Group will focus on expanding its aviation business and plans to bid for more government-run airports when they come up for privatization, Adani Airports' chief executive said on 22 March. The South Asian nation is the world's fastest-growing aviation market, with demand for air travel outstripping the supply of planes. Some major airports are already reaching full capacity even as airlines continue to order more planes. Air India last month placed a record order for 470 jets and domestic rival IndiGo is in talks for a new order of more than 500 planes, this month, even as it waits to take delivery of the same number from an older order. "Our ambition is to do more airports in India," Adani Airports CEO Arun Bansal said, adding that the government's airport privatisation policy is publicly known, "and we intend to bid for that". Adani already owns and operates seven airports, including six that it won as part of the government's first Privatisation drive, and a new airport it is building in Navi Mumbai on the outskirts of India's financial capital. The government has plans to privatise 25 more airports under a public-private partnership until 2025 and Bansal said the group would look at bidding "if the conditions are right".

***Singapore, Qatar & Oman Could Akasa Air's First Few Offshore Destinations:**



Earlier this month, *Simple Flying* got to speak with Akasa Air's co-founder and Head of Operations **Neelu Khatri**, who said that the Middle East and Southeast Asia are on the airline's radar for international flying. Following this, at the CAPA Aviation Summit in Delhi, the carrier's Chief Commercial Officer, **Praveen Iyer**, gave further updates on where Akasa could be flying initially in these regions. International destinations Akasa Air has been tight-lipped about where it could fly internationally, mainly due to regulatory permissions and route allowances. *Simple Flying* analyzed the carrier's offshore options a few days ago, taking into

account the range of its fleet. The Middle East and Southeast Asia were obvious conclusions, but anything beyond that was anybody's guess. And while the airline has still not made any official announcements, its CCO Praveen Iyer has said that Singapore and several regions in the Gulf, such as Dammam (Saudi Arabia), Qatar, and Oman, could be the first few locations the airline could start with. At the CAPA aviation conference, Iyer said, "We see a few markets where we don't see capacity they should have. I can see Singapore, and a couple of markets in the Middle East and Gulf as well. Dammam is open skies. In the UAE, there are a couple of options barring Dubai, as well as Qatar and Oman. But, it is all about how airlines plan their networking by managing it." He further explained that Akasa began the application process earlier this month, and the real work will now begin, to decide where the carrier could fly to, given the constraints. Akasa has 19 planes in its fleet and is short of just one more to meet regulatory requirements of having a minimum of 20 airplanes to start international flights.

***Brand USA held screening of "Into the Nature's Wild" and hosted reception for agents:**



Ms. Judith Ravin, US Consul General, Chennai



Carlton L. Benson

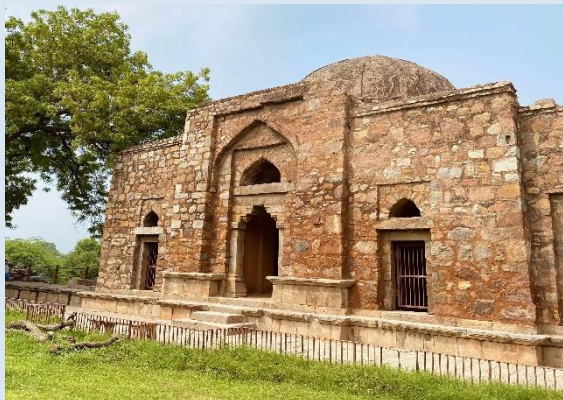


John Harington
The Astronaut



On 24th March'23 Brand USA organized a fun filled afternoon with screening of 3D movie titles "**Into the Nature's Wild**" at PVR Cinema at **Express Avenue Mall**. This movie was narrated by Academy Award Winner **Actor Morgan Freeman** and it is about Natures Wild across USA from coastline of Oregon and the wildlife of Alaska to Ancient canyons of Southwest and the rolling hills of Appalachian Trail. Setting out this journey three trail blazers **Astronaut John Herrington**, **Alaskan Pilot Ariel Tweto** and long-distance **hiker Ms. Jennifer Pharr Davis** who share a passion for connecting people to experiences in the wild. As they wind their way through the scenic byways, ancient homelands, secret gems and hidden trails of the natural world audience could discover the special human connection we all share with nature. Full insight of USA unexplored by Indian travelers. Official from US Consulate too participated including the Consul General Ms. Judith Ravin along with the agents. Later a reception was hosted in honor of Astronaut **Mr. John Harington** at Taj Coromandel Hotel with wine & beer with appetizers. Even transfer was arranged to Taj Coromandel from E A Mall. **Ms. Judith Ravin, Consul General, US Consulate**, Chennai addressed the audience followed by **Mr. Carlton L. Benson, Non-Immigrant Visa Chief** who explained how hard he and his officers working to reduce the wait time for B1/B2 Visa Interview and added that they had introduced "Super Saturday", working on Saturdays to reduce the wait time for Visa Interview. The man of the moment **Mr. John the Astronaut** had an electrifying interaction with audience and shared his experience he had encountered while traveling across USA.

*Delhi Tourism to commence heritage walks on 6 circuits from March 25



To showcase the charm of the major hubs in the capital and share the in-depth knowledge about all the monuments and the related history, **Delhi Tourism** has selected six circuits for heritage walks starting from **March 25, 2023**. "Focusing on providing a fully immersive experience, we have identified six different walks, two are of Old Delhi, one in **Shahjahanabad**, the food walk. Then there is the walk of **Qutub Minar** and **Mehrauli archeological Park**, a walk of **Hauz Khas**, and a **walk of museums and memorials**. These heritage walks will be launched on March 25 at 8:00 am by the **Minister of Tourism Delhi** government, **Atishi** at Hauz Khas. It will continue on Saturdays and Sundays from 6:30 am to 9:30 am," **Geetika**

Sharma, General Manager, Delhi Tourism announced. Taking approximately three hours, these will be guided walks conducted by the **government licensed guides** having in depth knowledge about these circuits, said Sharma. These guides accredited by the Ministry of Tourism have been selected after a thorough interaction process, she said. "Picking Hauz Khas for instance, this walk will cover everything, including going back to the water history of Delhi, as to how Delhites in the medieval times were getting water from Baolis, natural lakes and other water bodies. "With an idea to make Delhi a more friendly tourism hub, we have started training for police personnel, and all the personnel involved in providing hospitality services, the taxi drivers, or people who run these kiosks near the tourist monuments. We just did training for a batch of 50 police personnel last week and we are continuously upskilling them through training," she added. "Going forward, we would also like to make utmost use of emerging technologies like AI at our key attractions so as to make an experience memorable for both G20 delegates and other visitors," said Sharma.

*Rajasthan tourism receives record investors in addition to visitors this year:



In 2019, the tourism department witnessed registrations of 187 new projects, but the s has increased to 206. Rajasthan is now home to all branded properties, both domestic international. The upscale hotel chains like Raffles, Grand Hyatt, and W Hotels have co Jaipur and under various stages of development. In the past 2 months in 2023, 87 project have registered with the tourism department and if the trend continues, this year will new records in the investments. Tourism is on a roll in

Rajasthan, not just in visitors' count which has doubled in 2022 compared to pre-Covid year peak, but also in investments. In 2019, the tourism department witnessed registrations of 187 new projects, but the same has increased to 206. Rajasthan is now home to all branded properties, both domestic and international. The upscale hotel chains like Raffles, Grand Hyatt, and W Hotels have come to Jaipur and under various stages of development. In the past 2 months in 2023, 87 projects have registered with the tourism department and if the trend continues, this year will set new records in the investments. **Gayatri Rathore**, principal secretary (tourism) said, "The main reason behind the heavy influx of investors in the sector has been the policies of the state government. No state can match the incentives we provide to the tourism industry." In fact, Rajasthan has been the first state in the country to provide industry status benefits to the hospitality sector. Under the scheme, hotels and resorts get 30% tariff rebate on electricity, which accounts for the biggest operating cost after manpower for a hotel. Similarly, there is 80% relief on urban development tax for the tourism units. **Ranvijay Singh**, joint secretary of Hotels and Restaurants Association of Rajasthan, said, "We are not just a great tourist destination, but our policies are the best in the country. It's unique combination which cannot be found anywhere in the country. That is reflected in the investment activity. Even bigger cities do not have the brand of hotels Rajasthan has." In fact, in the past two and half months, the proposed investments are closer to half what has been proposed in whole of 2022.

***Emirates to launch first A380 servi to Bali**



The airline’s superjumbo is the first commercial A380 flight to land in Indonesia. The n class Emirates A380 service will replace one of the two daily services to Bali currently operated by a 2-class Boeing 777-300ER aircraft. The airline’s flagship aircraft is currently deployed to 41 destinations, including Dubai and is likely to expand to nearly 50 destinations by the end of the summer. World’s largest international airline, Emirates will deploy its signature A380 aircraft to Bali starting from **June 1, 2023**, marking a milestone in Indonesia’s aviation history as the first A380 service to the country. The new 2-class Emirates A380 service will replace one of the two daily services to Bali currently operated by a 2-class Boeing 777-300ER aircraft. The airline’s debut A380 flight EK368, will depart from Dubai International Airport (DXB) at 03:25 hrs (local time), arriving in Denpasar International Airport (DPS) at 16:35 hrs (local time). The returning flight, EK369, will depart Bali at 19:40 hrs. arriving in Dubai at 00:45 hrs. (local time). class products and services, and we’re excited to offer our travelers the opportunity to experience its uniqueness and unmatched beauty on flights to and from Bali. Needless to say that we’ve been working closely with our partners at Bali’s Ngurah Rai International Airport to ensure our A380 operations will be seamless and smooth. We’d like to thank the authorities and our partners for all their support.” Emirates continues to expand its A380 network to meet increasing travel demand globally. The airline’s flagship aircraft is currently deployed to 41 destinations, including Dubai and is likely to expand to nearly 50 destinations by the end of the summer.

***EL AL resumes non-stop flight services from Delhi & Mumbai**



Israel’s national carrier EL AL resumed operation of its non-stop flight services from Delhi and Mumbai, after a hiatus of three years, starting late October. The airline will operate four non-stop weekly flights from Mumbai to Israel on the Boeing 737 with economy and business class, and two nonstop weekly flights to Delhi on either the Boeing 787 or Boeing 777. The sale of the tickets for these flights will commence from next month, the Israel Tourism Ministry said in a statement. The overfly agreement with Saudi Arabia and Oman for Israeli airlines was recently finalized, allowing for a shorter flight duration of 5.5 hours for Mumbai and 6.5 hours for Delhi, the statement said. “We anticipate there will be high demand for these flights due to vast business activity between the two countries, as well as constant growth in Indian tourism to Israel,” **Shlomi Zafrani, EL AL VP of Commerce and International Affairs**, said. Air India is scheduled to increase the frequencies of its existing three daily flights per week to five daily flights per week from March 26, as per the statement. In addition, the now Tata Group-owned airline will be starting to operate direct flights on the sectors from Mumbai and Bengaluru by June and October, respectively, with competitive prices, it added.

***Salil Nath to be the new Etihad Airways General Manager for India subcontinent:**



The national airline of the UAE, Etihad Airways has appointed **Salil Nath as General Manager** of the Indian Subcontinent. Nath will be succeeding **Neerja Bhatia**, who is retiring after 18 years of service at Etihad Airways. Based in New Delhi, Salil will be responsible for all commercial activities across a key cluster for the Etihad network within the central region - India, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Maldives & Seychelles. Since joining Etihad in 2012, Nath has served as the Regional Sales Manager of key sectors starting with Bangalore-Hyderabad, followed by the North and East India. During the Covid-19 restructuring, he took on the additional responsibility of managing Central India as well as Bangladesh & Seychelles. Commenting on the development **Amer Khan, Vice President**, Middle East, Africa, & The Sub-Continent, Etihad Airways, said, “India plays a crucial role in Etihad Airways’ growth strategy, contributing significantly to the airline’s global operations, and we are honored to support demand in one of the fastest-growing aviation markets in the world. As we look to expand our operations, we are delighted to have Salil take up the new role, leading Etihad’s commercial activities in the region.” “Neerja’s astute leadership over the years has been a defining factor for the growth of the airline in the Indian subcontinent. On behalf of Etihad Airways, we extend our heartfelt gratitude for Neerja’s unwavering support and dedication,” Khan added.

***Boeing gets order for 78 – “787 Dreamliners” from two Saudi airlines**



Two Saudi Arabian airlines announced plans to order 78 Boeing 787 Dreamliners, a big win for Boeing that marks the fifth largest commercial order by value in its history. State-owned Saudi Arabian Airlines (Saudia) and new national airline Riyadh Air will each buy 39 widebody 787s from the US-based plane maker. The deal contains options for 10 additional Dreamliners for Saudia and 33 for Riyadh Air. Reuters reported details of the planned order on Monday citing sources. “It’s like the biggest I’ve ever seen,” Calhoun said of 787 demands. “The world wants to connect in this post-COVID moment.” Calhoun said the plane maker was standing by its 787-production guidance announced in November “and we’re confident we can do it.” The Federal Aviation Administration on Friday approved Boeing’s plan to resume deliveries of the 787. Boeing shares were up 2.3 per cent in early trading. Saudi Arabia’s Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman announced on Sunday the creation of Riyadh Air, with industry veteran Tony Douglas as its chief executive, as the kingdom moves to compete with regional transport and travel hubs. “We’ve got a blank sheet of paper,” Douglas told.

***Airline SunExpress sees demand recovery for Turkey after earthquakes:**



SunExpress, a joint venture between Turkish Airlines and Lufthansa, said on Tuesday that summer bookings to Turkey spiked as of this month after a brief drop following February’s devastating earthquakes. The airline expects to carry more than 12 million passengers this year, Chief Executive Max Kownatzki told Reuters on the sidelines of a news conference in Istanbul. Within days after the massive earthquakes that killed more than 48,000 people and left millions homeless in Turkey, bookings fell by 50 per cent, Kownatzki said. “Within the first week right after the earthquake we have seen significant demand drops, roughly 50- 52 per cent in international demand. But in week two, we had an uptick in demand...We saw the hit for roughly 10 days and after those 10 days demand has absolutely recovered,” Kownatzki said. “According to beginning of March numbers, we had 60 per cent higher advanced bookings than last year. Antalya-based SunExpress carried 10.7 million passengers mainly between Turkey and European countries last year with an 85 per cent load factor, exceeding the pre-pandemic levels, according to information provided at the news conference. Turkey, facing high inflation and a chronic current account deficit, expects to generate USD 56 billion in tourism revenues this year.

Hong Kong air passenger traffic surges 24-fold to 2.1 million:



The volume of airline passengers who passed through Hong Kong’s airport in February increased more than 20-fold from the previous year, but the monthly figure accounted for less than 40 per cent of pre-pandemic levels. Figures released by the Airport Authority on Sunday showed a surge in traffic at the city’s airport last month, with site handling around 2.1 million travelers, around 24 times greater than a year before. But a lawmaker for the city’s tourism sector said the volume of passenger traffic could have increased further if the government had better handle a ground worker recruiting “bottleneck” before airlines began ramping up their carrying capacities. The rebound came after Hong Kong began gradually rolling back its stringent coronavirus curbs towards the end of last year, including the lifting of most entry restrictions for foreign arrivals in December. “Due to the relaxation of travel restrictions, all passenger segments experienced significant growths, particularly Hong Kong residents,” the authority said, adding that traffic to and from Southeast Asia and Japan had recorded the most significant increases. But the city had yet to reach levels prior to the start of the Covid-19 pandemic in early 2020, with the volume of air passengers in February of this year making up only 35.6 per cent of those recorded for the same month in 2019, when the figure reached 5.9 million. During the first two months of 2023, the city handled 4.2 million passengers, representing an around 26-fold increase from the same period last year. The figures also showed the number of flight movements reached 32,520, up 60 per cent from the year before. According to the Hong Kong Tourism Board, the number of visitors to the city in February rose threefold to 1.462 million from January, exceeding 1 million for the first time since the start of the pandemic

*Govt conceptualizing installing Computed Tomography X-Ray baggage scanners at airports



The civil aviation ministry is conceptualizing to install X-Ray baggage scanners at airports whereby passengers will not be required to remove electronic items from their hand baggage during the security check. At present, passengers have to remove and keep electronic items in a separate tray during security check at airports. **Minister of State for Civil Aviation V K Singh** informed that the ministry is conceptualizing to install **Computed Tomography X-Ray (CTX) baggage scanners** at airports in which passengers need not to divest **electronic items from their hand baggage**

during security check. "It may increase time efficiency at airports and also enable ease of security check for travelers. The techno-economic feasibility study for the same is currently underway," he said. Further he stated, about Air India disinvestment and debt, the minister said that prior to the transaction of strategic disinvestment, the government provided financial support of **Rs 61,130.96 crore** to **AI Assets Holding Ltd (AIAHL)** in the form of equity for repayment of past government borrowings, government guaranteed SLB Lease rentals and dues/liabilities of Air India. "The strategic investor for Air India took debt amounting to Rs 15,300 crore (85 per cent of Rs 18,000 crore) and deposited remaining Rs 2,700 crore (15 per cent of Rs 18,000 crore) with the government," he had stated. "For the earlier transferred debt of Air India to AIAHL, the Government of India guaranteed NCDs amounting to Rs 21,985 crore in three phases were issued by AIAHL. "Interest on NCDs issued by AIAHL is payable on six monthly basis. The annual outflow in respect of payment of interest of NCDs is approx. Rs 1,107 crore. After completion of the tenure of the NCDs, budgetary support will be provided for principal payment of NCDs," the minister said.

*Etihad starts direct flights between Kolkata and Abu Dhabi



Etihad Airways resumed flight services between Kolkata and Abu Dhabi on Sunday after three years, a statement said. The airlines will operate two flights a day, four days a week -- Tuesday, Thursday, Friday and Sunday -- from Kolkata to Abu Dhabi, the Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose International (NSCBI) Airport said in the statement. The first flight will depart Kolkata at 4.15 am and reach Abu Dhabi at 7.55 am local time. The second one will leave

Kolkata at 9.05 pm and reach its destination at 12.45 am local time, it said. From Abu Dhabi, there will be one direct flight to Kolkata four days a week. It will depart Abu Dhabi at 9 pm local time and reach Kolkata at 3.20 am. Etihad Airways will operate an Airbus A320 aircraft on the route, offering eight seats in business class and 150 in economy class, it said. With the recommencement of services to Kolkata, Etihad will now fly to 14 destinations across the region -- India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Maldives, the airlines earlier said. Last week, low-cost carrier Air Arabia launched its services between Kolkata and Abu Dhabi, flying three days a week. Etihad had stopped its services between Kolkata and Abu Dhabi following the COVID-19 outbreak.

*IndiGo commences new direct flights between Bengaluru-Aurangabad:



IndiGo has commenced new direct flights between **Bengaluru-Aurangabad**, effective **March 28, 2023**. This new route has been introduced to cater to the increasing demand for direct connectivity between the destinations. The new Bengaluru-Aurangabad route will reduce travel time to one and a half hours. **Vinay Malhotra**, Head of Global Sales, IndiGo, said, "We are pleased to introduce faster connectivity between Bengaluru-

Aurangabad through new direct flights. Bengaluru as well as Aurangabad are major silk and cotton production centers, and we are confident that this direct connection will benefit not only those in the textiles business, but also others. Strengthening access to India's high-tech industry. Moreover, Bangalore silk is known for its simplicity, purity, and texture of Silk, which is expertly produced in Karnataka's silk farms. These farms have been around for a while and have grown tremendously with the passage of time and textile industry renovations.

***Knowledge Series: Income Tax:** By H.M. Talha Rahaman, Chartered Accountant, Consultant IT Matters (Session -3 , Continued from Last Issue):

PART – 6: Filing of Income Tax Returns (ITR):

Filing income tax returns is a legal obligation for all individuals and entities who earn income in India. The Income Tax Act, 1961 governs the taxation of income in India and sets out the rules and regulations for filing income tax returns. Here's what you need to know about filing income tax returns in India as per the Income Tax Act, 1961:

1. Who is required to file income tax returns? All individuals and entities who earn income in India are required to file income tax returns. This includes salaried individuals, self-employed professionals, businesses, and companies.
2. What is the due date for filing income tax returns? The due date for filing income tax returns in India is usually July 31st (for individuals etc.) and Sep 30th (for companies etc.) of the assessment year (i.e., the year following the financial year for which the return is being filed). However, the due date may be extended by the government in certain circumstances.
3. What is the penalty for late filing of income tax returns? If you file your income tax returns after the due date, you may be liable to pay a penalty. The penalty amount varies depending on how late the return is filed and the amount of tax owed.
4. How do I file income tax returns? You can file income tax returns online through www.incometax.gov.in, using your PAN as login ID and the password. The link <https://incometaxindia.gov.in/pages/faqs.aspx> gives FAQ on various procedures to file the income tax returns. It's important to note that the Income Tax Act, 1961 is a complex piece of legislation, and it's always advisable to seek professional advice if you have any doubts or questions about your tax obligations.

PART – 7: Payment of Advance Tax:

Advance tax is the tax payable on income that is received or earned during the financial year, and it needs to be paid in advance, rather than waiting until the end of the year to pay it all at once. The Income Tax Act, 1961 lays down the rules and regulations regarding the payment of advance tax. Here's what you need to know:

1. Who is required to pay advance tax? Any person whose estimated tax liability for the financial year is Rs.10,000 or more is required to pay advance tax. This includes salaried individuals, self-employed professionals, businesses, and companies.
2. India are as follows: i. 15th June: 15% of the estimated tax liability ii. 15th September: 45% of the estimated tax liability, less the amount paid in the first instalment iii. 15th December: 75% of the estimated tax liability, less the amount paid in the first two instalments iv. 15th March: 100% of the estimated tax liability, less the amount paid in the first three instalments.
3. What is the penalty for non-payment or under-payment of advance tax? If a taxpayer fails to pay or underpays advance tax, he/she will be liable to pay interest under section 234B and section 234C of the Income Tax Act, 1961. The interest is calculated at the rate of 1% per month or part of the month on the amount of tax that was not paid or underpaid.
4. How to calculate the estimated tax liability? The estimated tax liability can be calculated by estimating the total income for the financial year, deducting allowable deductions, and applying the applicable tax rate. The estimated tax liability can also be calculated based on the previous year's tax liability
5. How to pay advance tax? Advance tax can be paid online through the income tax department's e-filing portal or offline at authorized banks. The payment can be made using net banking, credit card, or debit card. It's important to note that failure to comply with the rules and regulations related to advance tax can result in penalties and interest charges.

It's always advisable to seek professional advice if you have any doubts or questions about your tax obligations.

(To be Continued in the next issue)

