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NITI Aayog to examine viability of UDAN scheme

The NITI Aayog has floated a request for proposal (RFP) to appoint a consultancy firm for evaluating the viability of UDAN (regional connectivity scheme) in the absence of viability gap funding.

This exercise is aimed at evaluating the relevance of the scheme and also if the scheme has benefitted passengers making air travel economical. "The focus of the desk research is to understand how VGF, including the NER (Northeast Region) can be improved and assess its effectiveness through a fiscal and economic lens," the RFP document said.



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41% surge in airfares likely to slow down long-term aviation recovery



According to the Airports Council International (ACI Asia-Pacific), India has recorded the highest surge in airfares among other countries in the Asia Pacific and Middle East regions. The rise in airfares in India, which stands at 41 per cent, has raised concerns about the long-term recovery of the civil aviation industry. Other countries experiencing significant fare hikes include the United Arab Emirates (34 per cent), Singapore (30 per cent), and Australia (23 per cent).

Railways slash fares up to 25% for AC chair car & executive class

To boost train travel on trains facing low occupancy, the government is offering up to 25 per cent discount in the base fare of "AC chair car and executive classes of all trains having AC seating accommodation", depending on the "fares of competitive modes of transport".



According to the Railway Board order, zonal railways will monitor trains for 30 days, and if the occupancy is less than 50 per cent in AC chair car and AC Executive class, they can offer up to 25 per cent cut in the base fare to "optimise utilisation of accommodation in trains".

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SpiceJet appoints EaseMyTrip as its GSA for India

EaseMyTrip.com, one of the largest online travel tech portals in India signs a General Sales Agreement (GSA) with SpiceJet Airline to sell, promote, and market passenger tickets and other product and services to passengers in India. EaseMyTrip is entering into an arrangement with SpiceJet as a strategic intervention which is an attempt for both companies to expand their services in the Indian market. This GSA agreement will commence from 1st August 2023.



Goa seeks 'Digital Nomad Visa' from Centre to attract foreign tourists

Goa's Tourism Minister, Rohan Khaunte, has expressed a desire for the Central government to facilitate a 'Digital Nomad Visa' in order to attract foreign digital nomads who wish to work while holidaying in Goa. Khaunte believes that this provision would not only boost the financial profile of the coastal state, which heavily relies on tourism, but also create employment opportunities and open new avenues for homestays.



Rohan Khaunte

Assam records over 1 crore tourist footfall in 2022-23

Assam has witnessed a massive footfall of over one crore domestic travellers in 2022-23, following a surge in tourists' interest in visiting the state. In the year 2022-23, the state recorded at least 1,00,12,195 domestic tourists from the entire country. Assam witnessed visitor footfall of 17 lakh during 2021-22, and 13.5 lakh during 2020-21, according to data provided by the state government.




SKAL India Congress to be held in Bengaluru and Mysuru

Skal International will hold Skal India Congress 2023 in Mysuru and Bengaluru between October 4-7 this year. In this direction, a curtain raiser programme was held recently in Mysuru where the website and logo of Skal India Congress 2023 was launched by Pratap Simha, Mysuru MP, in the presence of representatives from the tourism industry and Skal International India. Dignitaries present in the event were Carl Vaz, President, SKAL International India, Sudipta Deb, Chairman, SKAL India Congress, Prashanth B S, President, SKAL International Mysuru, Ayappa Somaiah, President, SKAL International Bengaluru.