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Central & state Ministries need to work together to build on India's tourism momentum globally: FAITH

The tourism scene in India has been established on the world forum and the ministries of the Central and state governments need to work together "to build on this momentum and not to lost it" as India is set to become a global leader in the sector, said Aashish Gupta, CEO, Federation of Associations in Indian Tourism and Hospitality (FAITH).

"I think we are formally placed in terms of branding our travel destinations and it's now the (tourism) industry and the government... not just the ministry of tourism but other ministries in the central and with the state government... (they) need to work together to ensure that we build on this momentum and not lose it," he said in HT Tourism conclave. "The tourism industry had to go through a lot due to the pandemic but it is recovering well and we have a long way to go," he added.



Aashish Gupta
 CEO, FAITH

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SIA to complete merger of Vistara-AI at the earliest

Singapore Airlines has said it aims to complete the merger of Vistara with Air India "as soon as possible" subject to remaining approvals from relevant authorities. Once the proposed merger, which was approved by the



Competition Commission of India (CCI) on September 1, is complete, Singapore Airlines will have a 25.1 per cent stake in Air India. "Singapore Airlines continues to work with our partner Tata Sons and aims to complete the merger as soon as possible, subject to the remaining approvals from the relevant authorities," an airline spokesperson said in an e-mailed statement.



Vistara to start direct flights between Mumbai & Frankfurt from 15 November

Vistara has announced direct 6x weekly flights between Mumbai and Frankfurt, starting from 15 November 2023. This new route is in addition to Vistara's 6x weekly service between Delhi and Frankfurt which has been getting good response since its launch in February 2021.

With the addition of this new long-haul route, Vistara further enhances connectivity between Europe and India as it continues to grow its international network. The airline will operate its Boeing 787-9 Dreamliner featuring a three-class cabin configuration, offering the choice of travelling in Business, Premium Economy, and Economy cabins. Bookings for the flights are being progressively opened on all channels, including Vistara's website, mobile app, and through travel agents.

Business travel in APAC forecast to reach USD 800bn by 2027

Business travel in Asia Pacific is forecast for significant growth, with travel spending gaining 41% to USD 567 billion this year and rising to USD 800 billion by 2027. China's reopening and robust domestic demand will be a big catalyst for the growth.

Additionally, today's business traveller in APAC may spend less overall per business trip but may index higher on food and beverage and hotel expenses as well as the desire for more premium options and blended (or "bleisure") travel than their fellow corporate travellers in other global regions. This is according to regional forecasts and trends for APAC from the 2023 GBTA Business Travel Outlook (BTI) which were unveiled onstage at the GBTA APAC Conference in Singapore by GBTA CEO, Suzanne Neufang.



Chennai's Refex Group to invest INR 1,300cr for growth of biz travel

Chennai-based Refex Group, through its green mobility venture, will invest INR 1,300 crore in the next three years for expanding business. Refex Green Mobility provides third-party employee transportation using electric vehicles (EV).



Refex Green operates in Bengaluru and will introduce some 10,000 vehicles for expanding

to new cities like Hyderabad, Pune and Delhi. The company commenced its operations in Chennai with 49 cars. "We are planning to invest around INR 1,300 crore in the next three years to expand our presence across the country," said Anil Jain, MD, Refex Group. Refex Green started operations in March 2023 from Bengaluru as an all-EV initiative and will cater to business travel.

SalamAir to suspend flights to India from Oct 1

Oman's low-cost carrier, SalamAir, will stop its flight operations to India starting on Saturday, October 1. The decision to stop the service comes as a result of the restrictions imposed on the provision of aviation rights allocations to the Indian sectors.

SalamAir currently operates flights to four major cities in India – Jaipur, Lucknow, Calicut and Thiruvananthapuram – at affordable fares for expatriates living in Oman.

