



Qatar extends validity of Hayya Cards; makes travel insurance mandatory

Qatar has announced two important travel policy updates for visitors to the country. The state's Ministry of Interior has announced the validity of Hayya Cards will be extended until January 24, 2024. Those who obtained a Hayya Card for the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022 can now gain a free multiple-entry permit to Qatar and use of the e-gate system at state ports. The news comes as the Ministry of Public Health (MoPH) has updated the country's entry requirements to make health insurance mandatory for all visitors to Qatar, effective since February 1, 2023. To enter Qatar, visitors must now purchase the Mandatory Visitors' Health Insurance policy, for QAR 50 valid for 30 days, from the list of authorised Qatari providers.

Foreign tourists not exempt from GST: Reddy

There is no proposal to exempt foreign tourists shopping in the country from the Goods and Services Tax (GST), Union Minister for Tourism and Culture G. Kishan Reddy has said.



"As informed by the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs, the Department of Revenue under the Ministry of Finance, there is no proposal at present under consideration of the government to reimburse the GST to foreign tourists at airport on arrival to India," he responded.

AirAsia India to move all domestic operations to T2 at BLR Airport

AirAsia India has announced that the airline would be moving all domestic operations to the newly launched Terminal 2 at Kempegowda International Airport, Bengaluru (BLR Airport) from February 15. AirAsia India would be operating from T2 with state-of-the-art facilities and a majority of departures being facilitated via aerobridge.

Bengaluru is the home base and largest hub for AirAsia India, and will operate 43 daily departures connecting Bengaluru to Delhi, Goa, Mumbai, Hyderabad, Kolkata, Bhubaneswar, Guwahati, Pune, Jaipur, Lucknow, Ranchi, Kochi, Chennai, Visakhapatnam and Surat. The airline will also operate connecting flights from Bengaluru to Imphal and Srinagar on its network.



MTDC signs MoU with Japan's Wakayama Prefecture for 5 years



Maharashtra Tourism Development Corporation (MTDC) and Wakayama Prefecture of Japan completed ten years of cordial relations. The Chief Minister of Maharashtra, Eknath Shinde signed the MoU renewal agreement with the Governor of Wakayama, Kishimoto Shuhei, in the presence of the Deputy Chief Minister of Maharashtra, Devendra Fadnavis, Mangal Prabhat Lodha, Minister of Tourism, Skill Development & Entrepreneurship and Women & Child Development, GoM, and other dignitaries. The MoU between the two is renewed for the next five years – until October 2028.

Air India launches non-stop 4 weekly flights on Delhi-Milan route

Air India has launched a four-times-a-week non-stop connection from Delhi to Milan. The commencement of this flight along with Air India's imminent operations from Delhi to Vienna and to Copenhagen will strengthen the airline's footprint significantly in Europe. Flight AI137 from Delhi to Milan is operating on Wednesdays, Fridays, Sundays and Mondays. It departs Delhi at 1420 hrs and lands at Milan at 1830 hrs (LT). The return flight AI138 will leave Milan at 2000 hrs on the same days to reach Delhi at 0800 hrs the next day. Operated by the next-generation B787-8 Dreamliner, the aircraft features 18 Business Class and 238 Economy Class seats.



Tourism Fiji unveils brand platform, 'Where Happiness Comes Naturally'

Tourism Fiji has unveiled a refreshed take on their renowned 'happiness' brand platform, just over a year on from borders reopening to tourists. The new brand platform, 'Where happiness comes naturally' is a meaningful evolution that pays homage to Fiji's local people, stunning natural environments, rich culture, and the authentic experiences on offer, encouraging travellers to discover a side to Fiji they may not have known existed.

Brent Hill, CEO, Tourism Fiji, said, "With short booking windows becoming the normal, we wanted to roll out 'Where happiness comes naturally' to capture that demand, and welcome even more visitors back to Fiji in 2023, showing them a side of the country that they may not have experienced. We are a small island nation with a lot of happiness to offer, and this new brand platform showcases the vibrant and diverse cultures and traditions that exist within Fiji."

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