

## 'Rebuilding the treasures of travel – 'Lost but now Found'

Webinar organized by Bird Group for a mindful exchange of ideas and initiatives to steer our industry towards growth and rebuild the future of travel.

**New Delhi, November 19, 2021:** Bird Group, pioneers of the travel, aviation and hospitality industry, organized a strategic webinar – **Rebuilding the Treasures of Travel**. Lost but now Found under the Bird Group Leadership Initiative series. The panelists represented global leaders of travel technology, aviation, training and the Ministries of Civil Aviation & Tourism, Government of India and exchanged global perspectives which all could collectively benefit from. As we tread on the path to recovery, from isolation to being reunited, the webinar focused strategically on the role that all stake holders could play to harmonize systems and processes and arrive at a systematic plan to open the skies. The very interestingly planned webinar, moderated by **Mrs. Rupinder Brar**, Additional Director General, Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, had an eminent panel which included **Ms. Mieke De Schepper**, Executive Vice President and Managing Director Asia Pacific, Amadeus; **Dr. Shefali Juneja**, Permanent India Representative on the Council of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO); **Ms. Stephanie Siouffi**, IATA Training Director, International Air Transport Association (IATA); **Mr. Amber Dubey**, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Civil Aviation, Government of India ; **Ms. Virginia Messina**, Senior Vice President Advocacy & Communications, World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC). The panelists shared a bird's eye view of challenges created by the pandemic and to find possible solutions to address them through a mindful exchange of thoughts and information on global initiatives. **Speaking at the webinar Mrs. Radha Bhatia, Chairperson said** "The Bird Group Leadership Initiative Series was designed to bring great minds together. Travel, Tourism, Hospitality and Aviation are indeed the roots of an economy, industries which were most impacted by the pandemic. This is the first of its series designed to be a stepping stone in that direction. In India per se, research shows that 72% of the travellers are eager to travel and hope to do so in the next year. 95% of Indian travellers are willing to provide personal information and health data for the effective use of digital health passports. It is time to align all forces, to make travel safe and stress free. It is time to rebuild the industry by creating more and more job opportunities by providing focussed training and skilling. It is now time to prepare for take-off."

**Speaking during the webinar, Mr. Amber Dubey, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Civil Aviation** said "We are already witnessing green shoots of recovery in the aviation sector with the sale of Air India , expansion of IndiGo and a new airline Akasa launching soon. Domestic travel has been picking up and has seen an unprecedented surge in the festive season. It would soon be back to pre-covid levels." He further added, "The government's decision to restart the visa for international tourists will be a shot in the arm for the travel industry. The next step would be to allow more air carriers to operate between India and these countries. The government is actively considering this. Sooner than later it will happen."

**Highlighting the need for systematic reopening of global aviation sector, Dr. Shefali Juneja, Permanent India Representative on the Council of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) said** "There is a dire need for a synchronized global reopening of the aviation sector. Uniform travel policy across the globe is the need of the hour to help the traveler have the faith in system again. To foster this , countries have to swiftly move to digitization of health records such vaccination, tests, and other health records. The health records should be intra digitally available in systems to make the travel smooth for the travelers."

**Emphasizing on integrated technology Ms. Mieke De Schepper, Executive Vice President and Managing Director Asia Pacific, Amadeus said** "A confluence of an integrated technology approach, uniform regulations, simplified quarantine and testing rules will help to find solutions to make the international travel smooth for travelers and guidelines manageable for governments." With special emphasis on the crucial role of **global technology, regulations, training and skilling**, the webinar presented a global perspective on the future of travel and the imperative need to rebuild confidence, not just in the industry but also travelers, both incoming and outbound, especially amidst an environment of changing guidelines, rules and restrictions.

#### **ABOUT BIRD GROUP**

Founded in 1971 in India, Bird Group is amongst the largest and most diversified group of various entities within the industry. With businesses as diverse as pioneering back-office processing to being the representative for many of the world leading airlines; from managing the backbone of the technological framework for airline IT and distribution to managing crucial relationships of international service providers, Bird Group has ensured that a comprehensive portfolio of service offering has been created to add value to an extensive client base and add new potential customers. Today, Bird Group's core business includes Travel Technology, Aviation Services, Hospitality, Retail and Education.

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