

# Global travel agents' body objects to IATA's latest billing plan amendment

New Delhi, (UNI)

The Universal Federation of Travel Agents' Associations (UFTAA), a global body of travel agents, has opposed the decision by the International Air Transport Association (IATA) to impose globally standardised Billing and Settlement Plan (BSP) remittance periods.

UFTAA has alleged that the BSP amendments decided upon by IATA - the trade body of airline companies in the world - would eliminate the long-standing ability of local markets to determine credit terms through joint governance.

UFTAA has sent a communication to IATA expressing serious concern over the recently concluded Mail Vote by the Conference, adopting the pro-



posal to amend Resolution 812, Section 6.5.3.7, on IATA's Global Standardisation of BSP Remittance Periods.

In the communication, UFTAA stressed that the decision of IATA to amend Resolution 812 was not merely a technical adjustment but a fundamental

market intervention. By centrally dictating credit and remittance terms worldwide, airlines acting collectively through IATA are exercising structural monopoly power over the global airline clearing system, the Federation alleged. The BSP is a mandatory and indispensable

settlement infrastructure, and unilateral changes to its credit conditions amount to abuse of collective dominance, UFTAA said. "Credit terms are a core element of economic policy. Imposing uniform conditions across diverse markets effectively overrides local commercial practices, financial systems, and payment cultures, intervening in national economies without regulatory mandate or democratic legitimacy," UFTAA alleged in a statement.

While taking the unilateral action, the IATA hasn't offered any evidence-based economic justification to support a one-size-fits-all approach. UFTAA further notes that there is no precedent in any other global industry where suppliers col-

lectively dictate credit terms to intermediaries across all markets through a private association.

This exceptional conduct raises serious concerns about market fairness and competitive balance, the trade body of travel agents said. In a statement issued on behalf of Sunil Kumar R, president of UFTAA and Yossi Fatael, vice president, the Association leadership called for the immediate reconsideration of the global remittance decision and urged a return back to the earlier resolution, which is locally governed, economically justified, and proportionate arrangements that protect competition, market integrity, and the long-term interests of passengers.

## Empowering Micro & Small Businesses: Axis Finance Rolls Out Vyapar Business Loan with Easy Access to Credit

Mumbai: Axis Finance Limited (AFL), one of India's fastest-growing non-banking financial companies (NBFCs), today announced the launch of 'Axis Finance Vyapar Business Loan' - a collateral-free credit solution designed to meet the financing needs of micro and small businesses across semi-urban and rural markets in India.

Vyapar Business Loan aims to empower micro and small entrepreneurs across the retail, service, and trading segments by offering loans of up to ₹10 lakh, flexible tenures, and zero collateral requirements. The product offers a convenient financing solution for working capital, business expansion, or equipment upgrades.

## POCO M8 5G Debuts in India With Curved AMOLED Display, Military-Grade Durability and EV-Grade 5,520mAh Battery



POCO today announced the launch of POCO M8 5G in India, bringing a meaningful upgrade to everyday entertainment through a combination of a slim, lightweight design, immersive AMOLED visuals, dependable performance, and all-day battery life. Designed for users who rely on their smartphones for streaming, gaming, social media, photography, and daily productivity, POCO M8 5G focuses on practical upgrades that enhance real-world usage.

Commenting on the launch, Sandeep Singh Arora, Chief Business Officer, Xiaomi India, said, "POCO M8 5G represents a comprehensive evolution of the series, reflecting our focus on delivering meaningful innovation at accessible price points. The combination of a curved AMOLED display, a slim and refined form factor, and features that remain rare in this segment underscores POCO's intent to elevate everyday smartphone experiences. As the industry continues to move up the price curve, POCO M8 5G remains firmly anchored in value and superior performance, offering consumers a carefully balanced blend of design, perfor-

mance, and advanced capabilities without compromise."

Designed for All-Day Entertainment, Wherever You Are

POCO M8 5G is built around how Indian users actually consume content on the move, outdoors, and across long hours. Its 6.77-inch Flow AMOLED display with a 120Hz refresh rate delivers smooth scrolling and fluid visuals whether users are binge-watching shows, gaming, or browsing social feeds. With 3200 nits of high peak brightness and advanced dimming technology, the display remains comfortable and legible even under bright outdoor conditions, making it ideal for commuting, travel, and outdoor use.

For audio, dual stereo speakers with Dolby Atmos® deliver a rich and immersive acoustic experience, producing clear dialogue, balanced mids, and impactful sound during movie streaming, video calls, and casual music listening. Tuned for clarity and spatial depth, the audio remains loud and intelligible even in noisy environments, helping users stay engaged with their content whether they are indoors, commuting, or outdoors.

## Himalaya BabyCare Launches New Campaign Promising Worry-Free Care for Baby's First Winter



cially those soft, chubby cheeks.

Responding with warmth and reassurance, the narrative shifts from concern to confidence as she makes a simple yet powerful promise—"Hum

hone hi nahi denge", a declaration that her baby's cheeks will remain soft, no matter how harsh the weather. Rooted in emotion and everyday realism, the film reinforces Himalaya Gentle Baby Lotion and Gentle Baby Cream as trusted winter essentials for babies.

The communication highlights Himalaya Gentle Baby Lotion and Cream with a skin-friendly pH of 5.5, powered by the Penta Moisture Lock formulation to deeply moisturize and help protect the baby's delicate

skin barrier during winter.

By blending maternal instinct with science-backed reassurance, the DVC reaffirms Himalaya BabyCare's role as a dependable partner for parents navigating their baby's first winter.

Speaking about the campaign, Mr. Chakravarthi N. V., Director - BabyCare, Himalaya Wellness Company, said, "At Himalaya BabyCare, we understand that a baby's first winter can bring many questions and concerns for new parents.

## Bharat Taxi and the GST Question: Empowering Drivers Requires Policy Clarity

The introduction of Bharat Taxi, a driver-owned, subscription-based ride-hailing platform, marks an important moment in India's evolving gig economy. Conceived as a cooperative, low-commission alternative to traditional aggregators, the platform seeks to restore earnings control and dignity to auto and cab drivers who form the backbone of India's urban and semi-urban mobility network.

Yet, as this promising model begins to scale, a fundamental policy question looms large: will India's tax system support such driver-empowering

innovations, or unintentionally weaken them?

At the heart of the issue is the proposed 5% GST on ride fares under subscription-based (SaaS) ride-hailing models. Unlike commission-driven platforms, which collect fares and deduct a percentage, SaaS models operate differently. Drivers pay a fixed subscription fee for access to technology that helps them discover passengers. Fares are negotiated directly between drivers and passengers and collected offline. The platform neither controls pricing nor handles payments.

This distinction is critical. Treating SaaS platforms, such as traditional e-commerce aggregators, for GST purposes blurs the legal and functional realities. Section 9(5) of the GST law imposes tax liability on e-commerce operators only when they control the supply and collect consideration. In SaaS models, neither condition is met.

The emergence of Bharat Taxi makes this distinction impossible to ignore. Designed as a cooperative, it illustrates a conscious policy turn towards driver ownership and reduced platform dominance. Taxing ride

## RR Kabel announces the winners of Kabel Star S4

Bhopal: RR Kabel, India's leading consumer electrical and wire and cable manufacturer, proudly announces the winners of its Kabel Star Scholarship Program 2025 in Bhopal. The Scholarship Program, an industry-leading initiative, is tailored for children of electricians who have successfully completed their 10th-grade exams this year. Aligning with RR Kabel's vision of an educated and empowered India, the program has allocated over ₹1 crore each year to encourage and support the higher secondary education of these promising students. Nationwide, close to 4000 students have been selected to receive individual scholarships of ₹10,000 each till now. These outstanding scholars have not only secured financial support for their higher secondary education but have also taken a significant step towards realizing their aspirations.

## FHRAI Concludes DPDP Rules 2025 Awareness Summit with Strong Emphasis on Data Protection and Cybersecurity

New Delhi: The Federation of Hotel and Restaurant Associations of India (FHRAI), in association with the Hotel and Restaurant Association Western India (HRAWI), successfully concluded the Industry Awareness Summit on the Digital Personal Data Protection Rules 2025 at Omni Residency, Indore. The Summit focused on building clarity, preparedness and sector specific understanding of India's new data protection framework and its relevance for the hospitality industry.

The Summit was organised in the context of the Digital Personal Data Protection Rules 2025 notified under the Digital Personal Data Protection Act 2023, which mark a significant shift in India's approach to data governance. The discussions highlighted how data protection has emerged as a core operational and strategic priority, particularly for the hospitality sector, which relies extensively on digital platforms



and technology driven services for guest engagement, service delivery and business growth.

The Summit was graced by Tulsiram Silawat, Hon'ble Minister of Water Resources, Govt. of Madhya Pradesh, as Chief Guest. Industry leadership was represented by Mr. Surendra Kumar Jaiswal, President, FHRAI, Mr. Jimmy Shaw, President, HRAWI, Garish Oberoi,

Hony. Secretary, FHRAI, and Mr. Sumit Suri, Executive Committee Member, HRAWI and President, Indore Hotel Association. Other dignitaries included Mr. K Syama Raju immediate Past President of FHRAI and Mr. Pradeep Shetty Past President of FHRAI.

Dr. Mohan Yadav, Chief Minister Madhya Pradesh, said in a video message, "Madhya Pradesh has immense possibilities in the hospitality industry. We are supporting the industry by promoting all forms of tourism such as forest, religious, cultural etc. We expect lot of new hotel projects in the state with up to 30 per cent subsidy on investments for large projects."

Tulsiram Silawat, Minister of Water Resources, Madhya Pradesh, said, "The Madhya Pradesh government dedicated the year 2025 to industry policies. We can assure you that the state's tourism and hospitality policy is among the best in the country today."

## Axis Bank engaged over 995 schools across India to host SPLASH 2025 - its annual Art, Craft, and Literature competition

Mumbai: Axis Bank, one of the largest private sector banks in India, successfully hosted SPLASH 2025, the 13th edition of its annual art, craft and literature competition, engaging students from over 995 schools across the country. Inspired by Axis Bank's brand philosophy - 'dil se open', this year's edition witnessed enthusiastic participation from more than 2.66 lakh students on the theme 'Dreams', encouraging these young minds to unleash their imagination and creativity.

In the western region, the Bank conducted the competition across 224 schools in Mumbai, Thane, Pune, Bhopal, Sagar, and Jabalpur to name a few. Over 45,000 students participated, submitting entries under two sub-themes: 'A Day in My Dream Life' for the 7-10 years age group, and 'The Future as I Dream It' for those aged 11-14 years.

Aligned with the theme, Axis Bank also launched the 'AI Dream Generator', an interactive digital tool designed to help children bring their dreams to life. From flying cars and talking animals to building cities on the moon, children can enter their dreams and choose their favourite medium-art, craft, or literature-to see their imagination come to life. The competition will culminate with six national winners and six national runners-up, who will be awarded ₹1 lakh and ₹50,000 each, respectively. They will also have the opportunity to attend a special Art and Craft Workshop at Tash-



keel, Dubai. The artwork of these winners will be showcased at the Museum of Art and Photography (MAP), Bengaluru. Additionally, the top 400 qualifiers will receive exciting goodies and vouchers from partner brands like Ixigo and American Tourister.

About Axis Bank: Axis Bank is one of the largest private sector banks in India. Axis Bank offers the entire spectrum of services to customer segments covering Large and Mid-Corporates, SME, Agriculture, and Retail Businesses. It has 5,976 domestic branches (including extension counters) and 13,177 ATMs and cash recyclers spread across the country as on 30th September 2025.

## Aviva Life Insurance Launches Smart Vitals: A First-of-its-Kind Fixed Health Benefit Plan with Wellness Rewards

New Delhi: Aviva India, a leading private life insurance company, has announced the launch of the Aviva Smart Vitals plan, an individual non-linked, non-participating, pure risk health insurance fixed benefit plan that provides comprehensive protection against critical illnesses. The base sum insured starts at ₹10 lakhs, with policyholders eligible to enhance coverage up to 2x the base sum insured through wellness-linked step-based rewards. Customers earn quarterly Wellness Additions of 2.5%, 5%, or 7.5% depending on their average daily steps.

The Smart Vitals plan provides a lump-sum benefit upon first diagnosis of any of the 49 covered critical illnesses and procedures. These include conditions such as cancer, kidney failure, heart ailments, brain surgery, stroke, and many others. Wellness benefits are tracked via Aviva's Wellness360 App, and policyholders also get a smart tracking device (Loop by CarePlix X Smart

Ring) at no additional cost (this is only valid for the policyholders who have opted for ₹15 or ₹20 lakhs base sum insured) to monitor activity. Unlike traditional Medigap plans which only reimburse hospitalization costs, Smart Vitals offers a fixed benefit that can be used freely for treatment, recovery, or other financial needs.

Commenting on the launch, Mr. Asit Rath, CEO & MD, Aviva India, said, "Insurance is no longer just about protection; it must also empower people to live healthier lives. With lifestyle-related illnesses on the rise, the need for financial preparedness combined with proactive wellness has never been greater. Aviva Smart Vitals is a pioneering solution that addresses this shift by offering comprehensive critical illness cover along with wellness-linked rewards that encourage positive lifestyle choices. It reflects our commitment to innovation, customer-centricity, and building financial resilience for families across India."

