

Travel insurance demand up as skies open

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Chennai: Travel insurance demand is seeing a surge after international commercial flights resumed normal operations on March 27. A larger proportion of international travellers are buying insurance now as compared to pre-pandemic levels.

The boom in travel insurance bookings has enthused insurers, who are looking at strong growth, two years after Covid hit the overseas travel insurance vertical due to lockdowns and international travel restrictions. The US, Canada, the UK, the UAE and Schengen countries have emerged as the top destinations for Indians travelling for leisure, corporate and education.

Online insurance platform

Policybazaar said there is a 25% increase in bookings in the week starting from March 27 as compared to the previous week. This number is expected to grow in the coming months when air ticket prices stabilise and holiday season kicks in.

Bajaj Allianz General Insurance anticipates the travel insurance penetration will go past 35%, in terms of insurance taken to the total number of travellers, from around 18% in the pre-pandemic period. ICICI Lombard General Insurance sees increased demand for travel insurance in leisure and business segments, with the leisure segment witnessing a boom due to revenge travel.

Policybazaar has already seen a jump of 40% in terms of bookings for overseas travel insurance between March and

SHARE OF PEOPLE BUYING COVER RISES

> Travel insurance industry is expecting strong growth this year as international flight restrictions were removed by the government on March 27

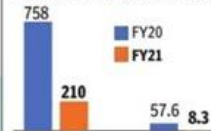
> Insurance cos expect travel to increase once fares stabilise & holiday season starts

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> Bajaj Allianz General Insurance expects travel

February this year. The overseas travel insurance growth has doubled for both Bajaj Allianz General Insurance and ICICI Lombard General Insurance compared to the previous year. "We anticipate this de-

Covid had hit travel cover biz



Source: Irdai

insurance penetration to go past 35% from around 18% in the pre-pandemic period

mand would go up even further by another 1.5x in the April-June quarter." Sourabh Chatterjee, head (IT, web sales & travel), Bajaj Allianz General Insurance, told TOI.

Amit Chhabra, head (he-

alth & travel insurance), Policybazaar, said that travel insurance policies cover flight cancellation and delays, apart from health issues.

But tourism sector experts have a word of caution for travel insurance post-Covid. Sanjiv Agarwal, chairman & CEO, Fairfest Media, said that foreign countries have just started opening up for tourism. So, it is important for every traveller to do due diligence and take an overseas travel policy that covers this risk (quarantine) also, he added.

Subramanyam Brahmajoyula, head (reinsurance & product development), SBI General Insurance, said that there is a heightened need for travellers to safeguard themselves against any unforeseen circumstances now.