

Travel insurance to gain pace in post-Covid world, say experts

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Hyderabad: The Covid-19 pandemic has changed life as we know it and travel too. While worldwide, people got stranded during the lockdown, there were many who were forced to travel in the middle of the pandemic.

People's perception of risk has changed and this is expected to give a boost to travel insurance in the coming days, said insurance experts. The Indian travel market is one of the biggest in the world. As per reports, around 36% of Indian households take trips, both within and outside the country.

While the major challenge so far has been the lack of awareness, Sanjay Datta, chief - underwriting, claims and reinsurance of ICICI Lombard General Insurance, said mandatory insurance requirements imposed by countries like Schengen group and high medical treatment

STANDARD INSURANCE PRODUCTS

► Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) has issued guidelines for standard travel insurance products from April 2021. It has sought comments from stakeholders

► It has issued guidelines for five variants under domestic travel and four variants under overseas travel



Standard travel insurance product is still under discussion. However, it will help the customers as plans and coverage across insurers will be similar

Gurdeep Singh Batra | HEAD - RETAIL UNDERWRITING, BAJAJ ALLIANZ GENERAL INSURANCE

Stating that travel insurance is gradually growing post unlock, Gurdeep Singh Batra, head-retail underwriting, Bajaj Allianz General Insurance, said, most embassies have made travel insurance mandatory along with visa application forms.

Prasun Sikdar, MD & CEO, ManipalCigna Health Insurance Company Limited, said due to the pandemic, the focus has started to shift to more customer-centered services, comprehensive policies and flexibility.

Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) has issued guidelines for standard travel insurance products from April 2021. "Customers looking for a more comprehensive travel policy with additional covers and higher sum insured will be able to avail other plans offered by insurers, specifically in countries where medical treatment is costly," he said.

costs in US and Canada have been the only key drivers of travel insurance purchases so far.

"Even though there are a number of products available in the market, the safety net that travel insurance provides is not very well understood. With Covid-19, customers will understand the need for

domestic travel insurance for medical as well as non-medical reasons like sudden flight cancellations, delays and this should help in the uptake of domestic travel insurance also," he said. The opportunity lies in customising products as per customers, like products for self-drive domestic travel, he added.