

AAI leaps ahead in air cargo

V P Agrawal, Chairman, Airports Authority of India shares the future plans for development and modernisation of air cargo infrastructure.



V P Agrawal, Chairman, Airports Authority of India, in his zeal to fulfill his dream of creating airport infrastructure in the remotest corners of our country, so as to provide desired connectivity to these places and also, to ensure that our fellow countrymen in these far flung places reap the benefit of the development and thus, contribute towards the growth of our country, has undoubtedly brought about a perceivable change in the 'Skyline' of Indian civil aviation, especially the airport infrastructure to the forefront.

To ascertain and take stock of the situation as prevailing on ground in respect of air cargo infrastructure, we could not have thought of a better person, than the man in the seat. Accordingly, we approached him and he was kind/gracious to accommodate us in his very busy schedule. He not only gave us a peek into the prevailing ground realities but also, shared with us the futuristic development plans.

- There has been appreciable growth over the past decade, in fact it has been in consonance with the market predictions at large.
- In order to cater to the growth of cargo, AAI has taken up extension of the existing cargo terminals with state-of-the-art technology apart from introducing automation at its major airports, which include Chennai and Kolkata.
- AAI has made elaborate plans to modernise as well as

automate its cargo terminals so as to keep pace with the time and requirement of the trade / airlines.

- AAI is selling the Regional Airport concept whereby the Capital and Commercial cities in the states where infrastructure is now improved, would be exploited under the Regional Airport concept to provide for Hub & Node types of airport operations. In this direction, AAI has decided to undertake domestic cargo handling at metro/non-metro airports in a phased manner (including by modifying the old/redundant PAX Terminals at non-metro airports) so as to improve the existing infrastructure.
- To maintain the cool chain of perishable produce, AAI with the assistance of APEDA has created state of the art centre for perishable cargo to encourage the export of perishable cargo from India.
- In order to impart skilled training to the officials for carrying out efficient cargo handling operations Indian Aviation Academy (IAA) under the aegis of NIAMAR Society has been created with three stakeholders namely AAI, DGCA and BCAS.
- AAI's corporate vision for 2012 - To be world-class organization providing leadership in air traffic services and airport management and meeting India a major hub in Asia Pacific region by 2016.

PROJECTS IN HAND

- Launching of Ground Handling Agency at AAI airports
- Cargo Potential Studies at non-metro airports
- Cargo Infrastructural Development Plan

PROJECTS PLANNED

- Development of Cargo Hub City(s)
- Cargo Strategy formulated by AAI

PROJECTS COMPLETED

- Implementation of e-Trade/EDI connectivity
- Launch the introduction of Bar Code interface in cargo operations
- Finalisation of Citizen Charter of the Cargo Department