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Chairman, Airport Authority of India

FLYING COLOURS OF DEVELOPMENT

"AAI is automating the operations at the airports with state-of-the-art technology so as to bring efficiency and reduce the dwell-time," says

V P Agrawal,
Chairman, Airport Authority of India.
In conversation with
Nayana Singh

What measures are being taken by AAI for improving connectivity of Airports?

There are whole lot of factors that affect connectivity of Airports including inherent traffic from catchment areas, willingness and viability of airlines to operate regular flights and suitable government policies & incentives like subsidies etc. AAI on its part has been on forefront, incurring an expenditure of around Rs 12,000 crores during the 11th Plan for development of airports to boost connectivity across India. AAI went about upgrading and modernizing Chennai, Kolkata airports, 35 non-metro airports and 10 other airports across the country. Out of these most of the airports including Chennai and Kolkata have been completed. With the aim of making Air connectivity affordable and accessible to the people residing in remote/unconnected area, AAI is making a roadmap for development of low cost regional airports. Plans are on anvil to provide air connectivity in tier II and tier III cities of India by development of low cost airports. In the first phase places having some basic airport infrastructure will be developed and operationalised, subsequently Greenfield airports will be developed.

According to the Planning Commission of India, improving the quality of transport infrastructure is part of the requirement to achieve high growth by 2017. In lines of that, what is the current status of Airport Infrastructure and the roadmap for modernizing Airport infrastructure?

To improve the quality of Transport infrastructure, development of the airports were undertaken both with public as well as private investment. Airports Authority of India the public entity invested heavily mostly from the internal resources to develop more than 50 airports including Kolkata, Chennai, 35 non-metro and 10 other airports in tier2 and tier3 cities.

Overall investment of AAI during the 11th plan is pegged at approx. 12,000 crores against total spending on airport sector of approx. 36,000 crores.

In private sector Hyderabad and Bangalore airports were developed as Greenfield airports with investment of approx. 5000 crores, Delhi and Mumbai were developed through joint venture under PPP model with approx. investment of Rs. 20,000 crores. Some of the other airports in private sector that are under progress and where operations are expected in near future are Gulbarga, Shimoga, Durgapur etc. which are Greenfield airports. Airport authority is also developing new Greenfield airport at Pakyong, Gangtok, Sikkim at a cost of

Innovations by AAI

1. Use of Solar energy for electricity at various airports.
2. Recycling of paper to cater for stationary throughout AAI.
3. Designing low cost airport models.
4. Waste water recycling
5. Reducing separation between the aircrafts to increase capacity in air.
6. Introduction of PBN procedures for operational efficiency.
7. Straightening of routes thereby reducing travel time and precious fuel.
8. Reducing emissions in all phases of flight.
9. Use of eco- friendly self-propelled electrically operated: conveyor belts, towable conveyor belts, fork-lifts, Battery operated: tugs & push back, Ultra Low Floor True Flat Bedded Passenger Carrying Coaches.
10. Use of electronic surveillance for complete path of passenger.



approx. Rs. 300 crores.

Work has been completed at Ahmedabad, Amritsar, Aurangabad, Agartala, Agra (CE), Bhopal, Chandigarh, Calicut, Dehradun, Dibrugarh, Indore, Jaipur, Lucknow, Madurai, Mangalore, Mysore, Raipur, Surat, Srinagar, Trivandrum, Udaipur, Varanasi, Coimbatore, Ranchi and Bhubhaneswar for expansion of existing Terminal Building. These terminals have modern state-of-the-art passenger facilities besides comfortable lounges, user friendly amenities and good ambience.

Work is in progress for New Terminal Building at Khajuraho, Goa and Vadodara and for expansion of Terminal Building at Imphal. New Civil Enclave at Bhatinda is awaiting commissioning. Construction of New Civil Enclave is in progress at Bikaner and Chandigarh (Mohali Side) and planned at Jammu. Construction of New Terminal Building is also planned at Coimbatore and Port Blair.

There is a proposal for expansion of Terminal Building at Calicut by constructing a new International Arrival Hall, expansion of Terminal Building at Jammu to augment passenger handling capacity and expansion of Terminal Building & extension of runway at Jaipur. In the 12th plan investments of about Rs. 65,000 crores is expected on airport development out of which approx. 17,000 crores will be by AAI and balance through private participation and PPP.

12th plan will envisage investment in upgradation and modernization of non operational airports in tier2 and tier3 airports to improve connectivity and development of Greenfield airports approved by GoI apart from associated infrastructure like MRO, Ground handling, Training etc. . We plan to initiate work to upgrade about 30 airports in the 12th plan as plans to provide regional connectivity. The airports are all across India e.g. Raxaul, Portblair in East, Sholapur, Kolhapur, Bhavnagar in West, Hubli, Thanjavur, Agatti in South, Pantnagar, Ludhiana, Ajmer in North and Tezu, Rupsi in North east to name a few.

What has been AAI's experience with the global meltdown?

AAI was no exception to global meltdown, however, the effect on AAI was less severe and we were able to face the challenge upfront by deployment of effective strategies. It was ensured that projects started in good times were not stalled due to resource crunch faced due to recession. It was also ensured that resources were optimized and essential proj-

Following IT projects have been initiated by Airports Authority of India for integration of airports and processes at different airports

1. Airport Operations Control Centre (AOCC) at 10 airports: Common Airports Operations Data base (AODB) is planned to drive the Airports Operations Control Centre at each of these 10 airports to provide a platform for the collaborative decision making amongst all the airport stakeholders. AOCC will optimize and automate the airport operations at these airports with state-of-the-art technology so as to bring efficiency and reduce the dwell-time. The central system is to be implemented at the Chennai airport by end of August, 2013.
2. Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP): The ERP covering the functions of Finance, HR, Material Management and project systems across all the locations of India is in progress and the project has gone live w.e.f. 26.03.2013. The ERP project will help in standardizing the processes in the key functions of HR, Finance, Material Management & Project Systems across India in addition to providing unified reporting structure to the senior management through dash boards.
3. No Objection Certificate Application System (NOCAS): The prime objective of this application is to automate and streamline the process of issue of no objection certificates through GIS based application to handle request of general public for grant of No Object Certificate for construction related activities in the vicinity of airports. This is already in operations.
4. Airports Information Management System (AIMS): It provides a total of 14 modules covering all areas of functioning of an airport and is being used for all kinds of revenue billing, MIS reporting about all aspects of airport operations at about 74 airports.
5. GIS Based Land & Asset Management System (GLAMS): This GIS Based application for land and Asset Management is working at 18 airports. All GIS assets are superimposed on the latest satellite image.
6. AAI website: is hosted as www.aai.aero and is being used widely for dissemination of information about the organisation. All AAI tenders, contract information etc. is also being hosted on the website.

ects with respect to operations and capacity enhancement were given go ahead while scaling down some of the projects which were not immediately required. AAI took Global meltdown as an opportunity to provide sufficient airport capacity ahead of demand which was required once the demand picked up. Further, AAI was able to maintain its financial performance and showed reasonable profits.

Progress in respect of air connectivity in North East Region-

Government of India and NEC has given special attention to NER region and the efforts have given rich dividends. Routes dispersal guidelines put in place have resulted in air connectivity to/from 11 airports in the North-Eastern Region. However, some parts of the NER still remain unconnected by air services or partly connected perhaps due to non-availability of suitable type of aircraft. Over a period of time, the air connectivity in the North-Eastern Region has grown from 290 flights per week in 2007 to 370 flights per week in 2011. However there has been a setback off late due to closure of operations by Kingfisher. In addition to scheduled air services, non-scheduled

air services are being provided by North East Shuttle (a non-scheduled operator) with small aircraft. Pawan Hans Helicopters Ltd is also providing helicopters services in Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Tripura and Sikkim with subsidy from Central Govt. for carriage of passengers, emergency/medical evacuation, VIP transportation and Tourism. The air

bag so far. PPP has allowed for infusing sufficient funds, sharing of risks, enabling faster implementation, improved quality of service, generation of additional revenue streams and improved management. Successful projects have been delivered at Cochin, Hyderabad, Bangalore, Delhi and Mumbai in form of private or JV airports. However the invest-

"AAI TOOK GLOBAL MELTDOWN AS AN OPPORTUNITY TO PROVIDE SUFFICIENT AIRPORT CAPACITY AHEAD OF DEMAND"

connectivity to North Eastern region can be further improved by deployment of smaller aircrafts and development of small airports. To integrate the North-Eastern states with rest of the country AAI has embarked upon a plan for developing low cost airports at Along, Dapari, Itanagar, Tezu etc.

How fruitful and result oriented are the projects undertaken as Public Private Partnership in aviation sector?

The experience with PPP has been mixed

ments have been only at the airports which were already profit centres and there are hardly any takers for tier-2 and Tier-3 airports. Constrained public finances, scale of investments and greater focus on social sectors require greater investments by private sector in airports in smaller cities, however, development at all these airports are catered to by Airports Authority of India from internal resources. Most of these airports are not commercially viable and private sector eyes these airports only when they are matured enough and financially viable. 