

A MAN WITH A VISION ON A MISSION

V.P. AGRAWAL being a 'Visionary' & 'Perfectionist' is creative, full of passion, gainfully makes use of his expertise to 'water' his business ventures so that the branches soar upwards; providing a wealth of shelter, shade and sense of well being to the workforce under him. He possess the unique virtue of positive attitude, courage to explore vibrant new ideas coupled with ability to see beyond today, and he does not see just the tree but envisions the entire forest. Thus, ensuring harvesting the fruit of excellence and making him landscaper of the future. He can easily be categorised as an 'Entrepreneur who nurture's growth, change & hope'. He tills the entrepreneurial space, preparing the ground to plant and sow the seeds of business. He nurtures and grows healthy work environment, ensuring that the roots are solid, strong and well nourished. He has embarked on a 'Mission' to bring about perceivable change in Indian airport infrastructure/aerial skyline.

Recipient of the ArchiDesign Infrastructure Man of the Year Award 2009, his able/dynamic stewardship has started to manifest as AAI has bagged EPC World Award 2010 in the Aviation & Airport segment & also 2nd position (Ahemdabad Airport), 3rd position (Joint winners, Amritsar & Trivandrum) at the National Competition for Professionals on Structured Steel Design and Construction for the year 2009-10. Appended below are some excerpts from a recent interview...

The current infrastructure facility available at Indian airports...

We at the Airports Authority of India having witnessed the phenomenal growth in the aviation sector, thought it prudent to upgrade and modernize the infrastructure commensurate not only to meet the expectations of the air travelling populace but also, the aviation fraternity at large by creating world class facilities so as to make air travel more comfortable and enjoyable. Accordingly, we ventured upon modernisation of the airport infrastructure on a large scale. Therefore, it would be appropriate if I were to state with confidence that the infrastructure facilities at Indian Airports are looking upwards. As on date, there are no real dire areas which demand immediate attention for the simple reason that all critical areas have been well taken care of in our plans in hand with respect to the modernisation. However we are fully conscious of the fact that modernisation and upgradation is a continuous process, so as to be at par with the other airports the world over.

Main focus areas for Airport Authority...

Well, when one talks of focus area one can ill afford to over-

look the fact that aviation sector being peculiar in nature, because of the enormous visibility it attracts & therefore demanding of stakeholders to tread with caution because of the worldwide ramifications it would create. Accordingly, multifarious challenges/focus areas are staring right at our face which undoubtedly require to be prioritized so as to address them in right & earnest manner. Appended below are some of the areas which attract our attention:

- To create world class infrastructure so as to meet the aspirations of the air travelling populace, especially since they are well travelled globally, hence better informed, experienced and have been exposed to world class standards the world over. To create more and better user friendly airports, ensuring optimum, judicious utilisation of the ever and fast changing technology. This would undoubtedly go a long way in gaining the confidence of the travelling public.
- Whilst developing world class airport infrastructure, the need to bear in mind is the financial viability, especially taking into consideration the fluctuating global economy. This would undoubtedly call for judicious cost cutting without compromising on quality and on time performance.
- The security scenario being what it is, demands not only constant and close monitoring but also, close liaison with other agencies responsible for maintenance of law and order, so as to ensure the highest level of security for air travellers is achieved and maintained.
- With the phenomenal influx in air traffic in our air space the need to give due cognizance to air safety aspect, wherein, it would be mandatory for us to not only to ensure integration of ATS automation systems of Chennai and Kolkata airports with tower automation of the major airports of India but also, radar networking for efficient traffic flow management to achieve seamless surveillance coverage of continental air space.
- To meaningfully contribute towards the growth of aviation in this part of the globe and also, its sustainability to develop fuel efficient and seamless air-routes, taking into account the satellite-based technology as per the time frame set by the ICAO.

Growth of the Indian aviation industry...

Our Former Minister Shri. Praful Patel had visualised the aviation sector to witness a great upsurge by 2011, which I dare say is coming true. Well, as on date, the Indian avia-





V.P. Agrawal, Chairman, AAI, welcomes the Hon'ble Prime Minister of India Dr. Manmohan Singh to inaugurate the New International Terminal Building at Thiruvananthapuram Airport on 12th February 2011

tion industry is one of the fastest growing aviation industries in the world. The industry boasts of a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 18 percent and there are 454 airports and airstrips in the country, of which 16 are designated as international airports. These facts by themselves are a testimony to the growth saga of Indian aviation industry, in which AAI has been playing a key role & is the 'Face of Aviation Ministry' as described by Shri. K.K. Nambiar the former Secy MCA . The increase in traffic during December 2009, manifested in increase of revenues by almost US\$ 21.4 million. Airports Authority of India accrued better margins in 2009-10, and to substantiate my statement look at the passengers carried by domestic airlines from January-February 2010 which stood at 8,056,000 as against 6,761,000 in the corresponding period of 2009 . Growth of 19.2 percent was absolutely unexpected.

The upgradation and modernization of airports...

The airports that have been taken up or were on the anvil to be taken up for upgrading and modernisation in the current 5-Year Plan are: Ahmedabad, Amritsar, Aurangabad, Agatti, Agartala, Agra, Bhopal, Bhubneshwar, Chandigarh, Chennai, Coimbatore, Dehradun, Dimapur, Goa, Guwahati, Indore, Imphal, Jaipur, Jammu, Khajuraho, Kolkata, Lucknow, Madurai, Mangalore, Nagpur, Patna, Port Blair, Pune, Ranchi, Rajkot, Raipur, Trichi, Trivandurm, Udaipur, Vadodra, Varanasi, and Vishakapatnam.

Appointing the architects and designers...

The Airports Authority of India appoints architects through calling Expressions of Interest (EOI) and follows the guide-

lines as stipulated by Council of Architecture. As and where the project demands foreign tie-ups, we do not shy away and based on merits of the case do take recourse to the same. Well, let's not forget the aim of the whole exercise being development of world class airport structure & thus, it is the end product that matters and not the means.

The GAGAN system...

The Airports Authority of India (AAI) and Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) have jointly developed a GPS Aided Geo Augmented Navigation (GAGAN) system which is a planned implementation of a Satellite Based Navigation System. GAGAN is supposed to provide a civil aeronautical navigation signal that is consistent with International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs), as established by the Global Navigation Satellite System Panel (GNSSP). Through GAGAN, our endeavour is to establish a full complement of Satellite based Augmentation System (SBAS) consisting of 15 Indian Reference Stations (INRES), 3 Indian Navigation Land Uplink Stations (INLUS), 2 Indian Mission Control Centres (INMCC), 3 Geo-stationary Navigation payload in C and L bands and with all the associated Software and Communication links.

GAGAN system will undoubtedly enhance efficiency and also, go a long way to bring down the cost as it assists the aircraft to take recourse to direct routing which in turn will result in fuel savings. It will help to reduce workload both of Flight Crew and ATCOs. And more importantly, it will ensure a Global Coverage with improved safety measures. ■