

Airports where pilots could fear to land

On October 25, 2024, there was an incident involving a Qatar Airways Boeing 787 that was operating as a scheduled flight from Colombo, Sri Lanka to Doha, Qatar. After landing and taxiing at slow speed to the assigned bay, the plane's right main landing gear sank into a ramp area, which in turn collapsed. As the plane's main landing gear wheels had sunk in deep, the right engine made contact with the ground and sustained damage. It is fortunate that the incident did not happen on the runway or on the taxi track when the plane would have been at a higher speed.

Social media posts indicate that a Japanese company contracted to build the airport at Doha – most of it is on reclaimed land – had suggested that the whole area would need to be concreted as the soil was not strong enough to handle the stress that would be induced by heavy aircraft movement. As the cost was prohibitive, a cheaper option was chosen. It is surprising that a cash-rich country would cut costs on an important infrastructure project that is one of the most important in the fast growing aviation scene.

Singapore's Changi airport, Hong Kong's new airport at Chek Lap Kok island, and Male airport (the Maldives) are built on reclaimed land and have been functioning and expanding rapidly. They have not encountered the kind of problem seen at Doha. However, it is certain that Qatar will leave no stone unturned in correcting any deficiency found in the airport operational area constructions.

Chennai airport's expansion

Why is this incident of interest to India? People may not be aware of the original expansion plan of Chennai airport that had been proposed in 2007. The design project was originally given to the firm, Larsen & Toubro (L&T), with the Airports Authority of India (AAI) involved in the requirements. Under the plan, a parallel runway to the existing main runway was to be constructed, and the old secondary runway was to be extended across the Adyar river (which flows near the airport area), with a bridge to connect the two runways. L&T carried out the soil testing for the bridge to be built across the river, which would hold the taxi track and the area assigned for the parallel runway. It appears that the firm found the soil for the area required for the parallel runway to be unsuitable, and the proposal for a parallel runway was dropped.

The AAI then proposed that the taxi track across the river be converted into the extended secondary runway and that L&T needed to do fresh soil testing for the expanded project. For reasons best known to L&T and the AAI, L&T dropped out of the project. Instead, the project was awarded to an unknown construction company, Consolidated Construction Consortium Limited (CCCL), which, at that stage, had no experience of building even a road bridge. The



Captain A. (Mohan) Ranganathan

a former airline instructor pilot and aviation safety adviser. He is also a former member of the Civil Aviation Safety Advisory Council (CASAC), India

In the expansion plans at Chennai airport and the greenfield project at Parandur, there are runway safety issues that cannot be brushed aside

AAI claimed that the bridge construction design had been approved by IIT Madras. This writer has a letter from the Head of the Department of Structural Engineering, IIT Madras, stating that they had only validated the numbers given by the AAI.

Safety violations, unaddressed issues

In the Environment Clearance No. 10-140/2007-IA-III dt. 25/8/- 1, it was indicated by the AAI that the runway bridge, with a span of 200 metres by 415m and a structural grid of 20 mx10m, on a RCC column of 1.2m diameter and 1.4m high above a high floodline, would be constructed on the Adyar river. The flood level in earlier floods was 13m and so the bottom of the bridge should have been 14.4m above mean sea level. The pillars supporting the bridge across the Adyar were to be 1.2m in diameter, but the pillars constructed are 0.86m in diameter. The area that the bridge was to occupy was 200m x 417m but it was stretched to 617m. The most serious violation was the caveat that the bridge had to be built 1.4m higher than the flood level of the Adyar river in the earlier floods. But the bridge has been built four metres below the permitted level. During the catastrophic floods in Chennai in 2015, the gushing water flow in the Adyar river was blocked by this structure, resulting in an accelerated water flow through the lower portion of the secondary runway. This resulted in the Coast Guard hanger, private aircraft parked on the tarmac and also an Army bridge near the Indian Army's Officers Training Academy (which is next to the airport) being destroyed.

The floods in 2015 were blamed on the delayed opening of the sluice gates of Chembarambakkam lake (one of Chennai's water supply sources) which lies 14 kilometres west of the airport. Environmentalists say the water discharge from Chembarambakkam contributes only around 30% of the water flow in the Adyar river, with the rest from overflow from flooded waterbodies further west such as Mudichur, Sriperumbudur and Parandur (the planned site of Chennai's second airport) We have seen what Chennai and the surroundings went through during the deluges in 2021 and 2023. Weather pundits expect extreme weather events ahead.

This brings us back to Doha and its connection with Chennai airport. The AAI completed the Chennai runway extension more than 12 years ago and the AAI claims that it is designed for Airbus A380 operations. Recently, in a review of operations at Chennai airport, a Cabinet Minister in the Tamil Nadu government said that efforts are on to get Code F aircraft (much larger widebody aircraft such as the A380) to operate to Chennai. He said the AAI is working on this. To operate such aircraft, you need a runway and taxi track width of 60m. This would need even wider spacing from the existing main runway. The runways in Chennai are only 45m wide. If one applies the standards set by the International

Civil Aviation Organization, no Code F plane can operate. Can the AAI explain why no widebody aircraft can operate on the secondary runway, even though it was completed 12 years ago?

A greenfield project

Now to the much proclaimed greenfield Parandur airport project. The plan here is for the acquisition of 4,000 acres of land for a new international airport which is an area rich in waterbodies. To have such an airport built to international standards, soil testing and concreting of the entire area will have to be done in order to operate large aircraft. Based on the experience of the dropped parallel runway project at the existing Chennai airport, are crores of tax-payers' money going to be sunk in a project which will destroy the many waterbodies at Parandur? If 4,000 acres of concrete – and for a depth of at least 4m – are to cover waterbodies, can one imagine where flood waters from those destroyed waterbodies would flow? We are in an era of climate change. Let us not forget that constructing an airport on reclaimed land that is situated in an area of waterbodies is a specialised subject, and the costs are prohibitive.

Readers may wonder why this writer has mentioned the depth of a concrete tarmac. Readers might be aware of hard landings of 2g or 3g. In simple terms, 'g' is the acceleration due to gravity. So, a 2g landing for an aircraft that weighs 400 tons is equivalent to the weight on its wheels of an impact of 800 tons. Apart from such an impact, if an aircraft lands when there is a strong crosswind, the wheels, rather than being straight, may be at 30°-45° angle to the runway. On touchdown, the aircraft's wheels straighten as the aircraft moves along the runway. The runway surface, apart from the impact of the aircraft, will also be subject to a twisting force. The Minister has talked about a plan for even larger planes landing at the existing Chennai airport. And Parandur airport is being planned in an area with waterbodies. One can imagine the huge twisting impact that an aircraft weighing 600 tons will have on a runway when landing in a crosswind. There has to be a professional in charge who has good knowledge on how to design a runway and operational area structures, and who also has knowledge of operational issues.

We have read reports of several bridges built in recent times across India collapsing like a pack of cards. Lives have been lost. We must not lose sight of the issue of safety.

Bengaluru has now established itself as the aviation gateway to the south, a position Chennai once held. Tamil Nadu has lost its premium gateway position because of procrastination, bad planning and design. The fact is also that inflated numbers projecting rising air passenger numbers in Tamil Nadu cannot conceal the truth. Passenger numbers have not even touched 40% of their original projections. It seems to be a case of fools rushing in where angels fear to tread.



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE HINDU

CHENNAI

4 NOVEMBER 2024

IN BRIEF



Chennai airport receives yet another hoax bomb threat

Chennai airport once again received a hoax bomb threat claiming explosives were planted on two flights, airport sources said. On Saturday, around 3.30 p.m., a threat message was received via social media platform X, the sources said. Following this, an emergency meeting with airlines, airport, and security officials was called and an extensive search was carried out. Similar to earlier threats, this, too, was found to be a hoax. The airport had received consecutive bomb threats in recent times.

जेवर एयरपोर्ट से उड़ान भरने के लिए जल्द शुरू होगी बुकिंग

● 17 अप्रैल 2025 को
30 उड़ानें शुरू होंगी

पायनियर समाचार सेवा। नोएडा

ग्रेटर नोएडा शहर की बगल में स्थापित हो रहे जेवर एयरपोर्ट से बड़ी खबर आ रही है। जेवर एयरपोर्ट की बड़ी खबर यह है कि यहां से हवाई यात्रा की उड़ान भरने के लिए फ्लाइट की टिकटों की बुकिंग जल्दी ही शुरू होने वाली है।

जेवर एयरपोर्ट से फ्लाइट की टिकट बुकिंग शुरू होते ही उत्तर प्रदेश के नागरिकों का वह सपना पूरा हो जाएगा जब उत्तर प्रदेश की धरती पर एशिया का सबसे बड़ा एयरपोर्ट यानि कि जेवर एयरपोर्ट शुरू हो जाएगा। जेवर एयरपोर्ट का उद्घाटन 29 दिसंबर 2024 को होना था।

जेवर एयरपोर्ट का काम अधूरा रहने के कारण जेवर एयरपोर्ट के उद्घाटन की तारीख को आगे बढ़ा दिया गया है। जेवर एयरपोर्ट के उद्घाटन की तारीख 17 अप्रैल 2025 तय की गयी है। 17 अप्रैल ही वह तारीख है जब 17 अप्रैल 1976 को नोएडा शहर की स्थापना हुई थी। इसी कारण जेवर एयरपोर्ट के उद्घाटन की तारीख भी 17 अप्रैल रखी गयी है।



आपको बता दें कि जेवर एयरपोर्ट का असली नाम नोएडा के नाम पर नोएडा इंटरनेशनल एयरपोर्ट रखा गया है। नोएडा इंटरनेशनल एयरपोर्ट जेवर तथा उसके आसपास के गांवों की जमीन पर स्थापित हुआ है। इस कारण इसका प्रचलित नाम जेवर एयरपोर्ट पड़ गया है।

जेवर एयरपोर्ट से 17 अप्रैल को उड़ाने वाली फ्लाइट्स के टिकटों की बुकिंग 15 जनवरी 2025 से शुरू हो जाएगी। 15 जनवरी 2025 से कोई भी नागरिक जेवर एयरपोर्ट से फ्लाइट की बुकिंग करा सकता है। जेवर एयरपोर्ट

से पहले दिन यानि 17 अप्रैल 2025 को 30 उड़ानें शुरू होंगी। इनमें से तीन उड़ानें इंटरनेशनल होंगी। इसके अलावा एयरपोर्ट से उड़ाने वाली पहली फ्लाइट में उन किसानों को फ्री में लखनऊ ले जाया जाएगा, जिन्होंने जेवर एयरपोर्ट के लिए अपनी जमीनें दी थीं। पहले दिन तीन अंतरराष्ट्रीय फ्लाइट्स होंगी। ये फ्लाइट्स ज्यूरिख, सिंगापुर और दुबई के लिए उड़ान भरेंगी। जेवर एयरपोर्ट से पहली दो उड़ानें उत्तर प्रदेश की राजधानी लखनऊ के लिए होंगी। पहली दो फ्लाइट में से एक केवल उन किसानों

के लिए समर्पित होगी जिन्होंने एयरपोर्ट के लिए अपनी जमीन दी है किसानों के इस समर्पण का सम्मान देने के लिए ही यह पहल की गई है।

17 अप्रैल 2025 को उद्घाटन के मौके पर एक फ्लाइट में उत्तर प्रदेश के मुख्यमंत्री योगी आदित्यनाथ समेत अन्य वीआईपी रहेंगे और एक फ्लाइट में केवल किसान रहेंगे। 210 सीट वाली इस फ्लाइट में कौन कौन किसान बैठेंगे इसकी लिस्ट जल्द ही फाइनल की जाएगी। इस प्रकार जेवर एयरपोर्ट का सपना अब जल्दी ही पूरी तरह से साकार होने वाला है।

चीन पर लगाम : एलएसी की निगरानी अब हुई और भी आसान

भारत ने बनाई सबसे ऊंची हवाई पट्टी

नई दिल्ली। भारत-चीन सीमा पर निगरानी की दिशा में सेना को एक बड़ी कामयाबी मिली है। लद्दाख में भारत का सबसे ऊंची हवाई पट्टी जल्द शुरू हो जाएगी। इससे भारत की राष्ट्रीय सुरक्षा तो बेहतर होगी ही, एलएसी से कनेक्टिविटी भी अच्छी हो जाएगी। यह एयरफील्ड पूर्वी लद्दाख में मुद्-न्यौमा पर है। एडवांस लैंडिंग ग्राउंड करीब 13 हजार 700 फीट की ऊंचाई पर है जो चीन की सीमा एलएसी के काफी करीब है। इसके पूरा होने के बाद सेना के तेजी से मूवमेंट में आसानी होगी। इसके

अलावा इस क्षेत्र में भारतीय सेना को रणनीतिक फायदा भी मिलेगा। न्यौमा एलएसी पर तीन किलोमीटर का रनवे भी है। यह इमरजेंसी ऑपरेशन के दौरान काम आएगा। साल 2021 में शुरू हुए इस प्रोजेक्ट का बजट 214 करोड़ रुपए का था। एलएसी के करीब एयरस्ट्रिप बन जाने से सेना के लिए यह सामरिक रूप से बेहद अहम हो गया है। भारतीय सेना उत्तरी सीमा से भी पहले यहां पर जवानों और हथियारों की तैनाती कर सकती है। अगर चीन की तरफ से कोई खतरा महसूस होता है तो ऐसी स्थिति



में न्यौमा बहुत ज्यादा अहम होगा। आमतौर पर इन जगहों पर ग्राउंड

ट्रांसपोर्ट बहुत चैलेंजिंग होता है। लेकिन अब एयरफोर्स दूर-दराज और पहाड़ी इलाकों में सीधे अपने मिशन को अंजाम दे सकती है। मुद्-न्यौमा एलएसी के पूरे होने का समय भी काफी अहम है। चार साल पहले एलएसी पर गलवान घाटी में तनाव के बाद भारतीय सेना पूरी तरह चौकसी है। इसके बाद से लद्दाख और अन्य सीमावर्ती इलाकों में इंफ्रास्ट्रक्चर प्रोजेक्ट्स का काम बहुत तेजी से चल रहा है। इस कड़ी में न्यौमा एक नया जुड़ा है। नए बने रास्तों, टनल्स और पुलों से मुश्किल

इलाकों में भारत के लिए लॉजिस्टिक सपोर्ट पहुंचाना बहुत आसान हो गया है। हाल ही में डेमचौक और डेपसैंग में सैनिकों के पीछे हटने के बाद से इस एयरफील्ड की अहमियत और बढ़ गई है। डिसएंगेजमेंट के बाद अब गश्त शुरू होगी। ऐसे में न्यौमा के बन जाने से इन इलाकों की देखरेख में काफी आसानी होगी। बता दें कि भारत ने संवेदनशील सीमाई इलाकों में बुनियादी ढांचों के विकास में तेजी दिखाई है। इससे संकेत मिलता है कि वह इन क्षेत्रों की सुरक्षा के लिए किस कदर प्रतिबद्ध है।

Corporate Communications Directorate

THE TELEGRAPH

KOLKATA

4 NOVEMBER 2024

Touts and illegal parking back at airport

SNEHAL SENGUPTA

Dum Dum: Taxi touts are back at the city airport roaming freely in front of the terminal.

And in keeping with the return of the illegal operatives, the old menace of illegal parking of taxis in the lanes meant for the exit of app cabs has reared its head again.

Metro visited the airport on Sunday afternoon and found taxi touts scouting for easy targets in front of gate numbers 4A, 4B, 5A and 5B — used by international passengers — at the arrival level.

Touts were also spotted outside the gates used by domestic passengers. The touts, cashing in on the surge in the number of fliers during the festive season, were offering passengers rides in “air-conditioned luxury vehicles” at exorbitant rates.

The men were operating freely despite frequent patrolling by police vehicles in front of the terminal.

The number of touts had gone down after the Bidhannagar Police Commissionerate launched a drive against them. At least 50 touts were arrested earlier this year.

The cops had also fixed six CCTV cameras in the taxi bay and on the booking kiosk for prepaid taxis for increased surveillance.



Yellow taxis and other commercial vehicles parked illegally on the exit bay at the airport on Sunday. The bay is meant for free movement of app cabs and taxis. Picture by Gautam Bose

However, this newspaper came across more than a dozen touts stalking and harassing passengers in front of the terminal building on Sunday.

At the arrival level, at least five touts approached a family of three as soon as they stepped out of the terminal through gates 3A and 3B.

Monica Ingudam, 36, who arrived from Imphal with her sister and friend, told this newspaper that the touts had asked them for Rs 1,300 for a ride to their hotel in New Town.

“We had already booked an app cab. The cab fare was around Rs 380. The men who approached us with the offer of an ‘AC ride’ demanded Rs 1,300 because they said we were carrying too much luggage and the driver had to pay an airport toll tax,” Ingudam said.

Many yellow taxis and other commercial vehicles were parked illegally in the lanes, opposite the entrance to the parking lot, which are meant for the exit of app cabs and taxis.

The stretch has only six

designated pick-up points for yellow taxis registered with Yatri Sathi, an app run by the state government. Besides, app cab aggregators Ola and Uber have 14 pick-up points on the same kerbside.

But in violation of rules, many yellow taxis and vehicles with commercial number plates were parked parallel to each other in front of the entrance to the parking lot, eating up most of the three lanes and creating bottlenecks.

The police had succeeded in preventing illegal parking in the exit lanes for several

months but the violation has resumed.

Yellow taxis are supposed to be parked in the parking lot and drive to the pick-up points only to pick up passengers.

There were a couple of civic police volunteers but they did little to help keep the lanes free.

Officers in the police patrol vehicles, too, looked the other way.

Vehicles, many of which were fitted with beacons or boards announcing they were used by government officials, were parked in the lane adjoining the terminal, despite “No Parking” signboards installed at regular intervals.

Many of the vehicles were parked for more than an hour.

A senior officer in the Bidhannagar commissionerate’s airport division said they conduct regular drives against touts.

“Their number could have gone up as this is the festive season. A renewed drive is on the cards. We will also request airport officials to ensure the exit lanes remain free of illegal parking,” said the officer.

The officer said patrol vehicles have been deployed in front of the terminal and on the approach roads on both levels.

“We try to avoid traffic snarls in front of the terminal, especially during rush hours.”



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE TIMES OF INDIA

HYDERABAD

4 NOVEMBER 2024

Bomb threats for 4 flights, security beefed up at RGIA

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Hyderabad: Four flights received bomb threats late Saturday, prompting RGI airport authorities to enhance security measures and activate emergency protocols. The threat messages on X specifically targeted three IndiGo flights and one Air India flight.

According to sources, one of the three IndiGo flights, 6E-162 (Goa to Kolkata), was diverted to an isolation bay at RGI airport. CISF teams, police, and other enforcement agencies conducted thorough searches of the aircraft, ultimately declaring the



threat a hoax. After complete sanitization and security clearance, the flight was permitted to take off.

Similar threat messages were received for two flights that had already departed from Hyderabad. Cases have been registered at the RGI airport police station, and an investigation is underway to

identify the X account holder, said K Srinivas Rao, ACP, Shamshabad division, Cyberabad. While the threats were determined to be hoaxes, an emergency security situation remains in effect, and checks at the airport and surrounding areas are ongoing as a precautionary measure, added sources.



Corporate Communications Directorate

AMAR UJALA

DELHI

5 NOVEMBER 2024

उड़ान के दौरान मंजूरी होने पर ही मिलेगी वाई-फाई सेवा

नई दिल्ली। सरकार ने सोमवार को स्पष्ट किया कि उड़ान के दौरान यात्री वाई-फाई के जरिये इंटरनेट सेवाओं का इस्तेमाल केवल तभी कर पाएंगे जब 3,000 मीटर की ऊंचाई पर पहुंच चुके विमान में इलेक्ट्रॉनिक उपकरणों का उपयोग करने की अनुमति होगी। सरकार ने उड़ान और समुद्री संपर्क नियम, 2018 के तहत विमान के भारतीय हवाई क्षेत्र में 3,000 मीटर की ऊंचाई पर पहुंचने के बाद ही मोबाइल संचार सेवाएं देने की अनुमति दी है। व्यूरो

Govt allows internet services on flights through Wi-Fi

Our Bureau
New Delhi

In a fillip to in-flight and maritime connectivity, the Centre has permitted internet services in aircraft through Wi-Fi “notwithstanding the minimum height in Indian airspace”.

A Gazette notification issued on Monday clarified that passengers will be able to avail themselves of internet services in aircraft even at an altitude of 3,000 metres.

NEW RULES

“Notwithstanding the minimum height in Indian airspace referred to in sub-rule (1), Internet services through Wi-Fi in aircraft shall be made available when electronic devices are permitted to be used in the aircraft... They shall come into force on the date of their publication in the Official Gazette,” said the Depart-



Airlines can tie up with mobile service providers like Airtel and Reliance Jio

ment of Telecommunications (DoT). These rules may be called the Flight and Maritime Connectivity (Amendment) Rules, 2024, it added.

DELAYED BUT DONE

Several international airline companies have been providing such services for a long time. These were kept at bay in India due to security concerns. With the amended rules, Indian airlines can

now provide in-flight connectivity on domestic routes. For this purpose, airlines can tie up with mobile service providers such as Bharti Airtel, Reliance Jio or Vodafone-Idea.

“As domestic airlines introduce in-flight Wi-Fi, this move marks a significant step towards meeting evolving passenger expectations. However, affordability will be crucial to its success in the domestic market. Offering quality connection at competitive prices will determine how widely-adopted and impactful this service becomes, as cost-sensitive travellers increasingly expect connectivity without a steep price tag,” Jagannarayan Padmanabhan, Senior Director at Crisil, told *businessline*.

Airlines that strike the right balance here can enhance customer experience while differentiating themselves in a highly-competitive space, he added.

IndiGo gets DGCA nod to renew wet lease on 11 A320 aircraft

Rohit Vaid
New Delhi

India's largest airline IndiGo has received the Centre's approval to renew the wet lease on 11 Airbus A320 aircraft, a move that is expected to bolster its operational capacity and enhance service efficiency, sources told *businessline*.

The approval of the Directorate-General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) comes amid increasing passenger demand and the airline's ongoing effort to expand its fleet despite the Aircraft on Ground (AOG) issue caused by engine snag.

The lease renewal will allow IndiGo to maintain its competitive edge in the fast-growing aviation market, sources said.

WHAT IS WET LEASE?

Last year, the DGCA had permitted IndiGo to take 11 A320 aircraft on wet lease from SmartLynx Airlines. Under a wet lease, the aircraft is accompanied by crew and engineers. This is a short-term arrangement to handle supply-side issues.

The airline now has over 20 A320ceo aircraft on damp and secondary lease and six Boeing 737s taken from Qatar Airways.

As of November 4, IndiGo had an operating fleet of 384 aircraft, including 24 A320ceo, 200 A320neo, 112 A321neo, 45 ATR, and three A321 freighters.



The airline was faced with a severe shortage of aircraft, following powder metal issue in the Pratt and Whitney engines

Responding to a *businessline* query, Abhijit DasGupta, Senior Vice-President, Network Planning and Revenue Management at IndiGo, said, "As part of our strategy to mitigate supply chain challenges and meet long-term capacity guidance, we are in the process of extending leases for some aircraft.

"This will ensure that we have adequate capacity to support the growing demand. We will continue to work with the OEMs and implement measures to minimise the impact of AOGs on our capacity in FY24-25."

The airline has been facing aircraft shortage due to grounding caused primarily by the powder metal issue in the Pratt and Whitney engines that power the A320neo aircraft. In the second quarter, IndiGo's management said that aircraft grounding impacted the airline's performance.

The airline has reported a net loss of ₹987 crore in Q2 down from a net profit of

₹189 crore in the corresponding previous quarter. "In a traditionally weaker second quarter, results were further impacted by headwinds related to groundings and fuel costs," IndiGo's Chief Executive Pieter Elbers had said.

Even though the exact number of grounded aircraft is not known, estimates put it over 60.

AOG DECLINING

In a post-earnings analyst call, IndiGo's Chief Financial Officer, Gaurav Negi, said that the airline's AOGs have been reducing and should come down to mid-40s by April 2025.

This, he said, would bring down the spending on AOG mitigation measures. In the second quarter, IndiGo's operating lease liability stood at ₹47,779.4 crore.

Negi added that as and when the situation of AOG improves, the airline will start returning the damp leased aircraft.



Corporate Communications Directorate

BUSINESS LINE

DELHI

5 NOVEMBER 2024

Bengaluru's Star Air to 'spread wings, grow fleet to 25 aircraft in 3 years'

Aneesh Phadnis
Mumbai

Bengaluru-based Star Air has announced a major fleet expansion plan that could propel it as the largest pure play regional airline.

Currently, Star Air has nine aircraft (4 Embraer E175s and 5 Embraer E145s).

On Monday it announced plans to grow its fleet size to 25 aircraft in three years tapping growth opportunities in tier II and tier III markets.

While it will induct two E175 aircraft in the current fiscal, four more will join the fleet in FY26.

Star Air operates 36-48 flights daily on Udan and non-Udan routes and will increase services to 56 in six



months on induction of new aircraft.

Udan refers to *Ude Desh ka Aam Aadmi*, the government's flagship regional con-

nectivity programme.

The Sanjay Ghodawat group airline's expansion plan comes as the government prepares to extend the Udan scheme beyond 2027. IndiGo, which is the largest operator of Udan flights, is considering another aircraft order. The newest regional airline, Fly 91 also plans to ramp up its fleet to 32 planes in five years.

On the other hand, Alliance Air is struggling. Alliance Air is the largest pure play regional airline with 21 aircraft. However the government-owned airline is hamstrung by fund shortage and grounded aircraft. Alliance Air is operating only around 14 planes now, and has scheduled 26 per cent

fewer flights in the winter schedule compared with last year. In contrast, Star Air is scheduled to operate over 45 per cent more flights per week in the winter season.

COST-FOCUSED

"We are cost-focused from day one. We believe slow and steady works for us," said Captain Simran S Tiwana, CEO, Star Air.

Around 65 per cent of Star Air's network comprises Udan routes.

The airline is increasing operations on non-Udan routes, and is also exploring operations from Jewar and Navi Mumbai airports. "We recently launched flights to Ahmedabad and Tirupati from Kolhapur," Tiwana said.

चंडीगढ़ से यूके, यूएसए की फ्लाइट के लिए ओपन स्काय, एयरलाइंस से चल रही है बात

फॉरेन एयरलाइंस को यहां से फ्लाइट ऑपरेट करने के लिए एग्रीमेंट की जरूरत नहीं

भास्कर न्यूज | चंडीगढ़

शहीद भगत सिंह इंटरनेशनल एयरपोर्ट से इंटरनेशनल फ्लाइट बढ़ाने की लेकर सीआईआई और पीएचडी चैंबर ऑफ कॉमर्स ने अभियान शुरू कर दिया है। सीआईआई की ओर से इसका जिम्मा संभाल रहे डॉ. पीजे सिंह ने बताया कि चंडीगढ़ से यूके और यूएसए के लिए डोमेस्टिक एयरलाइंस को यहां से इन डेस्टिनेशन के लिए फ्लाइट शुरू करने में ज्यादा दिक्कत नहीं है।

यूके और यूएसए के लिए यहां से ओपन स्काय है। ऐसे में प्रयास किए जा रहे हैं कि डोमेस्टिक एयरलाइंस को इसके लिए तैयार किया जाए। सीआईआई और पीएचडी चैंबर

पैसेंजर फुटफॉल की जानकारी के लिए कंसल्टेंट हायर

डॉ. पीजे सिंह ने बताया कि एयरलाइंस को यहां से इंटरनेशनल फ्लाइट ऑपरेट करने के लिए आकर्षित करने के लिए उन्हें बताएंगे कि यूके, यूएसए, कनाडा और अन्य कंट्रीज के लिए कितने लोग जाना चाहते हैं। इसका सही अंदाजा लगाने के लिए तीन कंसल्टेंट कंपनी को नियुक्त किया गया है। इनमें कापा, केपीएमजी, टू स्काई जैसी कंसल्टेंसी कंपनीज को हायर किया जा रहा है। ये कंपनियां चंडीगढ़, पंजाब, हरियाणा और हिमाचल से किस-किस देश के लिए पैसेंजर फुटफॉल कितना है, इसकी स्टडी करके एक डेटा तैयार करकी देंगी। यह डेटा मंत्रालय और एयरलाइंस से शेयर किया जाएगा। इसके अलावा इंटरनेशनल बुकिंग करने वाले एग्रीगेटर्स की भी मदद ली जा रही है।

ऑफ कॉमर्स सरकार, मंत्रालय और स्थानीय मेंबर ऑफ पार्लियामेंट की मदद से इन डेस्टिनेशन के लिए मार्च तक फ्लाइट शुरू करने के लिए प्रयास तेज कर दिए हैं। पंजाब सरकार भी मार्च तक यहां से यूके और सिंगापुर के बीच सीधी फ्लाइट शुरू करने को

लेकर हरसंभव प्रयास कर रही है। वहीं पॉइंट ऑफ कॉल भी यहां पर लागू है। इसका मतलब यह है कि भारत सरकार की ओर से फॉरेन एयरलाइंस को यहां से फ्लाइट ऑपरेट करने के लिए किसी तरह की एग्रीमेंट की जरूरत नहीं है।

Akasa Air FY24 Revenue Soars 339%, Losses Up Over Two-fold

Forum Gandhi

Mumbai: Akasa Air reported a revenue of ₹3,069.6 crore in FY24, a 339.2% jump from ₹698.7 crore a year ago. However, its losses after tax more than doubled to ₹1,670.1 crore from ₹44.5 crore a year ago, as expenses surged with the airline expanding rapidly, according to a document filed to the Registrar of Companies (RoC), reviewed by ET.

These are the first full fiscal results of the airline. Late Rakesh Jhunjhunwala-backed SNV Aviation started its operations in August 2022 under the name Akasa Air.

When asked about Akasa's losses, CFO Ankur Goel told ET that an airline takes a few years to stabilise before it breaks even. However, "our capacity tripled this fiscal year, leading to a 10% increase in revenue per available seat kilometre (RASK). This growth reflects impro-

vements across the board at Akasa, ensuring RASK rises annually."

For the coming fiscal, Goel said, "RASK will continue to rise annually as our internal capabilities, brand presence, and airport visibility grow. In FY 25, our capacity will increase by 50-55% compared to FY24, leading to a revenue increase of approximately 50% instead of 300%."

Akasa's total expenses for FY24 rose sharply to ₹4,814.4 crore, as

against ₹1,522.3 million last year. According to Goel, the airline invested heavily in expansion of its fleet, brand building, employee addition among other things which added to its expenses.

Interest and other finance costs were ₹406.1 crore, compared to ₹141.2

crore the prior year. This rise is associated with higher lease obligations and accounting standards, according to Goel.

Employee benefits costs surged to ₹774.9 crore in FY24, up from ₹232.4 crore in FY23, driven by an increase in total employees from 2,400 to 3,800. Goel attributed the tripling of costs primarily to the hiring of additional pilots.

"The company is also focusing on ensuring adequate liquidity in the business and is working on various initiatives towards this. Considering the future business projections, the management believes that the company will be able to realise its assets and will be able to meet its liabilities at the amounts stated in books and commitments in the normal course of business," the management said in its annual report.

As of March 31, 2024, the company operated a fleet of 24 aircraft.



The airline invested in expansion of fleet, brand building and staff addition, CFO Ankur Goel said



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE FINANCIAL EXPRESS

DELHI

5 NOVEMBER 2024

Flyers can access in-flight WiFi only when allowed

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
New Delhi, November 4

THE GOVERNMENT ON Mon-

day clarified that in-flight passengers will be able to use internet services through WiFi only when electronic devices are permitted to be used in the aircraft even after it attains altitude of 3,000 metres in Indian airspace.

Under Flight and Maritime Connectivity Rules, 2018, the government has mandated that In-flight and Maritime Connectivity service providers shall provide the operation of mobile

The newly notified rule will be called Flight and Maritime Connectivity (Amendment) Rules, 2024

communication services in aircraft at a minimum height of 3,000 metres in Indian airspace to avoid interference with ter-

restrial mobile networks.

"Notwithstanding the minimum height in Indian airspace referred to in sub-rule (1), internet services through Wi-Fi in aircraft shall be

made available when electronic devices are permitted to be used in the aircraft," as per the new rule notified on Monday.

The newly notified rule will be called Flight and Maritime Connectivity (Amendment) Rules, 2024.



Corporate Communications Directorate

HINDUSTAN

DELHI

5 NOVEMBER 2024

विमानन में महिलाओं की भूमिका बढ़ी : द्रौपदी मुर्मू

नई दिल्ली, एजेंसी। राष्ट्रपति द्रौपदी मुर्मू ने सोमवार को कहा कि देश के नागरिक उड्डयन क्षेत्र में विभिन्न परिचालन और तकनीकी विभागों में महिलाएं महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका निभा रही हैं। उन्होंने बताया कि 15 प्रतिशत हवाई यातायात नियंत्रक, 11 प्रतिशत फ्लाइट डिस्पैचर और नौ प्रतिशत एयरोस्पेस इंजीनियर महिलाएं हैं। राष्ट्रपति भवन में भारतीय विमानन क्षेत्र की महिलाओं के एक समूह के साथ



राष्ट्रपति ने महिलाओं को आगे बढ़ाने पर जोर दिया

बातचीत में मुर्मू ने यह भी कहा कि विमानन उद्योग में महिलाओं की भागीदारी बढ़ाने के साथ इस क्षेत्र में आगे बढ़ने के लिए समान अवसर देने होंगे।



Corporate Communications Directorate

JANSATTA

DELHI

5 NOVEMBER 2024

नागर विमानन क्षेत्र में महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका निभा रही हैं महिलाएं : मुर्मू

जनसत्ता ब्यूरो
नई दिल्ली, 4 नवंबर।

राष्ट्रपति द्रौपदी मुर्मू ने सोमवार को कहा कि देश के नागर विमानन क्षेत्र में महिलाएं परिचालन तथा तकनीकी क्षेत्रों में विभिन्न महत्वपूर्ण पदों पर काम कर रही हैं।

एक आधिकारिक बयान के अनुसार, यहां राष्ट्रपति भवन में भारतीय विमानन क्षेत्र की महिलाओं के एक समूह के साथ बातचीत में मुर्मू ने इस बात पर जोर दिया कि विमानन उद्योग में महिलाओं की भागीदारी बढ़ाने के साथ-साथ इस क्षेत्र में आगे बढ़ने के लिए समान अवसर पेश करना भी आवश्यक है। बयान के अनुसार, मुर्मू ने कहा कि शिक्षा तथा उचित प्रशिक्षण के अलावा परिवार के सदस्यों का सहयोग भी जरूरी है। राष्ट्रपति

कार्यालय की ओर से जारी बयान में कहा गया, 'अक्सर देखा जाता है कि कई महिलाएं उच्च शिक्षा हासिल करने के बावजूद परिवार से सहयोग न मिलने के कारण अपने सपने पूरे नहीं कर पाती हैं।' राष्ट्रपति ने क्षेत्र में सफलता हासिल कर चुकी महिलाओं से आग्रह किया कि वे अन्य महिलाओं के लिए मार्गदर्शक बनें तथा उन्हें अपना करियर चुनने व अपने सपनों को साकार करने के लिए प्रोत्साहित करें।

मुर्मू ने कहा कि भारत के नागर विमानन क्षेत्र में महिलाएं परिचालन तथा तकनीकी क्षेत्रों में विभिन्न महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका निभा रही हैं। मुर्मू ने कहा, '15 फीसद हवाई यातायात नियंत्रक महिलाएं हैं, 11 फीसद 'फ्लाइट डिस्पैचर' महिलाएं हैं और नौ फीसद एयरस्पेस इंजीनियर महिलाएं हैं।'



मुलाकात

राष्ट्रपति द्रौपदी मुर्मू सोमवार को नई दिल्ली में राष्ट्रपति भवन में भारतीय विमानन क्षेत्र की सफल महिलाओं से बातचीत करती हुई।

छठ पर लूट! दुबई और मलेशिया जाना सस्ता, लेकिन बिहार जाना हुआ बेहद महंगा

मुंबई, एजेंसी। दिवाली के बाद छठ पूजा के लिए ट्रेन और फ्लाइट टिकटों की मांग बढ़ गई है। हालिया रिपोर्टों के मुताबिक, देशभर से बिहार और झारखंड की उड़ानों के लिए हवाई किराया बढ़ गया है। पटना और दरभंगा के लिए उड़ानों की लागत अब दुबई, मलेशिया, बैंकॉक और सिंगापुर जैसे अंतरराष्ट्रीय गंतव्यों के किराए से अधिक है। रिपोर्ट में दिल्ली, मुंबई, अहमदाबाद और सूरत सहित शहरों से बिहार की उड़ानों के लिए हवाई किराए में उल्लेखनीय वृद्धि का संकेत दिया गया है। न्यूज 18 की रिपोर्ट के मुताबिक ट्रैवल एजेंट राकेश अरोड़ा ने कहा कि त्योहारी सीजन के दौरान किराए में बढ़ोतरी आम बात है, लेकिन इस साल बढ़ोतरी विशेष रूप से भारी है। ऊंची कीमतों के बावजूद, टिकटों की कमी बनी हुई



है। दिल्ली और मुंबई से पटना और दरभंगा के लिए उड़ान का किराया 13,000 रुपये से 18,000 रुपये तक है। इसी तरह, 4-6 नवंबर के बीच यात्रा के लिए सूरत से पटना का किराया 13,000 रुपये से 18,000 रुपये तक है। इसकी तुलना में, दिल्ली से दुबई, मलेशिया, बैंकॉक और सिंगापुर के लिए अंतरराष्ट्रीय उड़ानों का किराया वर्तमान में 10,000 रुपये से 20,000 रुपये तक है। आपको बता दें कि छठ पूजा के दौरान, देश भर से हजारों लोग यूपी, बिहार और झारखंड की यात्रा करते हैं, जिसके परिणामस्वरूप ट्रेनें खचाखच भरी रहती हैं। अधिक

शुल्क वसूलने के बावजूद ट्रैवल एजेंट टिकट सुरक्षित नहीं कर पा रहे हैं। हवाई किराए में यह बढ़ोतरी अस्थायी है, क्योंकि छठ पूजा के बाद किराए सामान्य होने की उम्मीद है। रिपोर्टों से पता चलता है कि, जैसे-जैसे दिवाली और छठ पूजा नजदीक आ रही है, बड़ी हुई क्षमता और तेल की कीमतों में हालिया गिरावट के कारण पिछले साल की तुलना में औसत घरेलू हवाई किराए में 20-25 प्रतिशत की कमी आई है। पटना और दरभंगा के लिए उड़ानों की लागत अब दुबई, मलेशिया, बैंकॉक और सिंगापुर जैसे अंतरराष्ट्रीय गंतव्यों के किराए से अधिक है। रिपोर्ट में दिल्ली, मुंबई, अहमदाबाद और सूरत सहित शहरों से बिहार की उड़ानों के लिए हवाई किराए में उल्लेखनीय वृद्धि का संकेत दिया गया है।



Corporate Communications Directorate

MILLENNIUM POST

DELHI

5 NOVEMBER 2024

In-flight passengers can access WiFi services only when allowed: New rules

NEW DELHI: The government on Monday clarified that in-flight passengers will be able to use internet services through WiFi only when electronic devices are permitted to be used in the aircraft even after it attains altitude of 3,000 metres in Indian airspace.

Under Flight and Maritime Connectivity Rules, 2018, the government has mandated that In-flight and Maritime Connectivity service providers shall provide the operation of mobile communication services in aircraft at a minimum height of 3,000 metres in Indian airspace to avoid interference with terrestrial mobile networks. **Continued on P4**

In-flight WiFi

“Notwithstanding the minimum height in Indian airspace referred to in sub-rule (1), internet services through Wi-Fi in aircraft shall be made available when electronic devices are permitted to be used in the aircraft,” as per the new rule notified on Monday.

The newly notified rule will be called Flight and Maritime Connectivity (Amendment) Rules, 2024.

AGENCIES



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Women playing key role in various areas in India's civil aviation: Droupadi Murmu

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

President Droupadi Murmu on Monday said women are playing a key role in various operational and technical areas in the country's civil aviation sector.

Interacting with a group of women achievers in the Indian aviation sector at the Rashtrapati Bhavan here, she emphasised that along with increasing the participation of women in the aviation industry, equal opportunities moving forward in this field are also necessary, an official statement said.

Murmu said apart from education and proper training, the support of family members is also important, it said.

"It is often seen that many women are not able to fulfil their dreams even after receiving higher education due to a lack of support from the family," the president was quoted as having said in the statement issued by her office.

She urged the women achievers to become guides for other women and encourage them to choose

their careers and realise their dreams, the statement said.

According to the president, women are playing a key role in various operational and technical areas in India's civil aviation sector.

The meeting took place under the 'President with the People' initiative which aims to establish a deeper connect with people and recognise their contributions, the statement said.

Murmu said, "Fifteen per cent of Air Traffic Controllers are women, 11 per cent of flight dispatchers are women, and 9 per cent of aerospace engineers are women".

She also noted that 18 per cent of pilots who received commercial licenses last year were women.

The president appreciated all women achievers who think innovatively and dare to tread new paths.

She said that the inclusive efforts of the government have given a boost to the progress of women in the civil aviation sector.

"More and more women are now choosing aviation as their career," the president said.