



# Corporate Communications Directorate

BUSINESS LINE

DELHI

28 SEPTEMBER 2024

## SC clears decks for GMR to run, upgrade Nagpur airport; closes curative plea of Centre and AAI

Press Trust of India  
New Delhi

The Supreme Court on Friday cleared the decks for private firm GMR Airports to upgrade and operate Nagpur's Babasaheb Ambedkar International Airport (BAIA) by closing the proceedings on a curative plea of the Centre and the Airports Authority of India (AAI).

The Centre and the AAI had filed a curative petition against the dismissal of their review plea by the top court.

### OUTSIDE LEGAL SCOPE

Prior to this, the top court had rejected the petition of the Centre and the AAI against a Bombay High Court judgment, allowing GMR Airports to upgrade and operate the Nagpur airport.



A special four-judge bench of Chief Justice DY Chandrachud and Justices Sanjiv Khanna, BR Gavai and JK Maheshwari closed the proceedings on the curative plea after taking note of the opinion of Solicitor General Tushar Mehta that the petition of the Centre and the AAI did not fall under one of the legal parameters prescribed for entertaining such pleas.

The curative plea is the last legal recourse available to a litigant. Such a plea can be filed if there are certain violations after the dismissal of the main case and the review petition.

The top law officer told the bench that the curative plea may not fall under the 2002 judgment and they cannot argue on the ground of bias and analogous ground that the government was not heard.

### PLEA NIXED

The law officer, however, submitted one aspect, where the impugned judgment said the Centre and the AAI were not the necessary parties to the litigation may be reconsidered because of negative consequences in similar matters.

The bench appreciated the

views of the Solicitor General, and said the curative plea is disposed of as "not pressed". Allowing the submission of the law officer, the bench said, "The observation ... of the judgment that the AAI and the Union of India are not necessary parties would not be the correct position in law."

# SC Clears Decks for GMR to Run Nagpur Airport

Indu Bhan

**New Delhi:** The Supreme Court Friday closed curative petitions filed by the Centre and the Airports Authority of India (AAI) seeking reconsideration of the court's 2022 judgment that had cleared the decks for the GMR Group to operate the Babasaheb Ambedkar International Airport in Nagpur.

While disposing of the Civil Aviation Ministry and the AAI's curative pleas, a four-judge special bench led by Chief Justice DY Chandrachud noted Solicitor General Tushar Mehta's stand that there were no valid grounds to pursue the petitions as they did not meet the threefold parameters required for reopening the case: Bias, lack of hearing, or any analogous grounds.



**The bench led by the Chief Justice closed curative pleas by the Centre and AAI for reconsidering the court's 2022 ruling**

Mehta, acting in his capacity as an officer of the court, said that "there was a view previously that the ground of bias could be pressed, but I am clear that such a ground can never be pressed against an order of this court."

Last month, the top court had asked for the SG's stand on the case. However, the CJI on Friday also clarified that a specific observation in its 2022 judgment, which stated that the Centre or AAI was not necessarily parties in such contractual cases, would not serve as a precedent in future matters.

The apex court on May 9, 2022, upheld the Bombay High Court's decision to quash the order of state-owned MIHAN (Multi-modal International Cargo Hub and Airport at Nagpur), cancelling a contract awarded to the private airport developer to operate the Nagpur airport.

While GMR had emerged as the highest bidder in the tender process for the Nagpur airport in 2019, a year later the Maharashtra government decided to cancel the tender process and issued a letter annulling the bid process. GMR moved the Bombay High Court seeking quashing of the annulment letter. GMR had termed the action of MIHAN in cancelling the annulment process as arbitrary and unreasonable.



# Corporate Communications Directorate

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

DELHI

28 SEPTEMBER 2024

## SC closes govt petition against GMR operation of Nagpur int'l airport

**Utkarsh Anand**

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**NEW DELHI:** The Supreme Court on Friday closed a curative petition filed by the Union government and the Airports Authority of India (AAI), seeking a reconsideration of its 2022 judgment which allowed the GMR Group to manage and operate Nagpur's Babasaheb Ambedkar International Airport.

Solicitor general (SG) Tushar Mehta informed a four-judge bench led by CJI Dhananjaya Y Chandrachud that there were no valid grounds to pursue the petition. He stated that, after a "dispassionate" review of the matter, he found no basis under the curative jurisdiction to challenge the ruling. "There was a view that the ground of bias could be pressed, but I am clear that such a ground can never be pressed against an order of this court," clarified Mehta.

The bench, also comprising justices Sanjiv Khanna, Bhushan R Gavai and JK Maheshwari, acknowledged Mehta's professional stance and concluded the

proceedings, noting that the petition did not meet the stringent criteria required for such cases.

Senior counsel Abhishek Manu Singhvi appeared for GMR Airports.

The original dispute dates back to May 2022, when the Supreme Court upheld a Bombay high court ruling that favoured GMR Airports in a protracted legal battle. MIHAN India Ltd (Multi-Modal International Cargo Hub and Airport at Nagpur), a joint venture tasked with managing the Nagpur airport project, had sought to cancel a contract awarded to GMR in 2019 for the airport's upgradation and operation. MIHAN argued that the bid acceptance letter issued to GMR in March 2019 was not a formal award of the contract, but the high court rejected this claim, calling the cancellation of the contract unjustified. The Supreme Court, in its 2022 judgment, concurred with Bombay high court, ruling that government-awarded contracts must adhere to principles of fairness, and upheld the decision to reinstate GMR's contract.



# Corporate Communications Directorate

MINT

DELHI

28 SEPTEMBER 2024

## Aera's regulatory powers at airports under SC scrutiny

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NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court is set to rule on the powers of the Airports Economic Regulatory Authority (Aera) to regulate tariffs for non-aeronautical services, a decision that could affect the charges that passengers pay for airport facilities and flying.

The SC will decide whether Aera can regulate tariffs for services like ground-handling and cargo operations at airports including New Delhi and Mumbai, the busiest in India.

A three-judge bench of the apex court, comprising Chief Justice of India D.Y. Chandrachud, and justices J.B. Pardiwala and Manoj Mishra has reserved its judgment for 24 September. The bench will deliver separate judgments on the issue of maintainability before addressing the main questions of law raised.

Aera had appealed against a January 2023 judgment by the Telecom Disputes Settlement and Appellate Tribunal, which ruled that non-aeronautical services fall outside Aera's jurisdiction, regardless of whether they are provided by the airport operator or a contractor. The ruling came in response to a plea by airport operators, including Delhi International Airport Ltd and Mumbai International Airport Ltd.

Aera told the Supreme Court that under the Airports Economic Regulatory Author-



Aera argued its role is critical to protect public interest.

ity of India Act, 2008, its role is critical to ensure fair competition and protect the public interest, particularly regarding passenger tariffs.

Aera argued in court, "At least the people who created us certainly call us regulators. Creating a level playing field, fostering healthy competition, regulating tariffs and encouraging investment... for whom? For each passenger—a section representing the public. Are

**The AERA had challenged a 2023 TDSAT order, questioning its jurisdiction on non-aeronautical services at airport**

we going to say they are not in 'public interest'?"

According to experts if the judgment goes against Aera it could lose its powers to regulate the services at airports, and

without regulatory oversight the operators could raise prices, likely passing on these increases to passengers.

"If ground- and cargo-handling services are declared 'non-aeronautical', Aera would lose its right to regulate tariffs for these services," said Mumtax Bhatta, a partner at Economic Laws Practice.

For an extended version of the story, go to [livenint.com](https://livenint.com).



# Corporate Communications Directorate

MILLENNIUM POST

DELHI

28 SEPTEMBER 2024

## SC clears GMR Airports to operate Nagpur airport, closes curative plea of Centre, AAI

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Friday cleared decks for private firm GMR Airports to upgrade and operate Nagpur's Babasaheb Ambedkar International Airport (AAI) by closing the proceedings on a curative plea of the Centre and the Airport Authority of India.

The Centre and the AAI had filed a curative petition against the dismissal of their review plea by the top court.

Prior to this, the apex court had rejected the petition of the Centre and the AAI against a Bombay High Court judgement allowing GMR Airports to upgrade and operate the Nagpur airport.

A special four-judge bench of Chief Justice D Y Chandrachud and Justices Sanjiv Khanna, B R Gavai and JK Maheshwari closed the proceedings on the curative plea against its verdict after taking note of the opinion of Solicitor General Tushar Mehta that the petition of the Centre and the AAI did not



fall under one of legal parameters prescribed for entertaining such pleas.

The curative plea is the last legal recourse available to a litigant and it was devised by the top court by a 2002 judgement in the Rupa Ashok Hurra case and such a plea, after the dismissal of the main case and the review petition, can be filed if there are certain violations.

They are that there should be a violation of the principle of natural justice, apprehension of bias and the abuse of judicial process.

The top law officer told the bench the curative plea may not fall under the 2002 judgement and they cannot argue that ground of bias and

analogous ground that the government was not heard.

"These proceedings cannot be made into an intra court appeal. I must own my decision.... I have not even consulted the Centre," the solicitor general said.

The law officer, however, submitted one aspect where the impugned judgement said the Centre and the AAI were not the necessary parties to the litigation may be reconsidered because of negative consequences in similar matters.

The bench appreciated views of the solicitor general, and said the curative plea is disposed of as "not pressed".

Allowing the submission of the law officer, the bench said,

"The observation ...Of the judgment that the AAI and the Union of India are not necessary parties would not be the correct position in law."

Earlier, the bench had sought the "dispassionate views" of the solicitor general as an officer of the court and not as a lawyer of the Centre and the AAI in the case.

The top court had on May 9, 2022 upheld the Bombay High Court order which quashed a March 2020 communication issued by a joint venture firm cancelling a contract awarded to GMR Airports for the upgradation and operation of the airport.

The Centre and the AAI have filed the curative plea against the 2022 order of the top court.

The special bench had taken up the curative plea in an open court for hearing.

The bench said since it was taking up the curative petition, it has to keep in mind the balance of equity as there are competing interests of the State and the private firm.

Prior to this, the bench had

directed the civil aviation ministry to submit the file notings pertaining to the tender process for the airport.

In 2022, the top court, while upholding the high court's order which quashed the March 2020 communication issued by the joint venture firm, MIHAN India Ltd (Multi Modal international Cargo Hub and Airport at Nagpur), cancelling the award of contract to GMR Airports, had said the impugned judgment was based on sound reasoning and true analysis of facts and did not warrant interference.

"We are of the considered opinion that the findings recorded by the High Court allowing the writ petition are in accordance with law. Those findings do not suffer from any illegality, warranting interference by this court in exercise of the power under Article 136 of the Constitution. All these appeals are hereby dismissed," a bench of Justices Vineet Saran, since retired, and J K Maheshwari had said on May 9, 2022.



# Corporate Communications Directorate

MILLENNIUM POST

KOLKATA

27 SEPTEMBER 2024

## China-bound flight diverted to Kolkata airport

### *Iraqi national 'brought dead'*

**KOLKATA:** An Iraqi Airways flight was diverted to Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose International (NSCBI) Airport, due to a medical emergency on Wednesday night after a passenger fell inside the aircraft and was later declared "brought dead" at the hospital.

According to information shared by Airports Authority of India (AAI), Eastern Region, on September 25, at about 10:12 pm an Iraqi Airways flight no IA-473 bound for Guangzhou (China) from Baghdad got diverted to Kolkata with 100 passengers and 15 crew.

The flight landed safely at 10:18 pm and was parked at bay no.07. All concerned were informed. The Airport Health Organisation (APHO) medical team responded and attended to a female passenger, identified as Deran Sameer Ahmed (16), an Iraqi national, who suddenly fell inside the aircraft 30 minutes before landing. The APHO checked the passenger and found no pulse.

"The doctor referred the passenger to the nearest hospital for further evaluation. Later, at about 01:18 hrs, the said passengers along with two co-passengers were offloaded and after completion of due formalities, exited from OPS gate No.05 by AAI ambulance and further shifted to near Charnock Hospital by AAI ambulance," the statement read. "Later, the diverted flight departed for its destination with 97 passengers and 15 crew at around 01:49 hrs," it was shared.

Meanwhile, it was shared that based on written information by a doctor of a city hospital, an unnatural death case has been started over the death of the passenger.

MPOST



# Corporate Communications Directorate

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THE MORNING STANDARD

DELHI

28 SEPTEMBER 2024

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## Meghalaya govt writes to AAI over seer's flight

**PRASANTA MAZUMDAR** @Guwahati

ON the eve of Sankaracharya Avimuktswarananda Saraswati Maharaj's proposed visit to Meghalaya to take part in the 'Gau Dhvaj Sthapana Bharat Yatra', the state government wrote to Airports Authority of India (AAI) on Friday requesting it to deny permission for the landing of a chartered flight carrying the seer and his team.

Chief Secretary DP Wahlang told the media in Shillong that the decision to write to the AAI was taken to prevent any breakdown of law and order in Ri-Bhoi and East Khasi Hills districts.

Sankaracharya is scheduled to land at the Umroi airport in Ri-Bhoi district and then go to Shillong in East Khasi Hills district where the "yatra against cow slaughtering" has been planned. Various organisations are opposing it. Beef is a delicacy for the tribals in the state.

Wahlang said that the organisers have not taken any permission for any rally or staging any protest.



# Corporate Communications Directorate

FREE PRESS JOURNAL

MUMBAI

27 SEPTEMBER 2024

## Ahm Airport T-2 departure area may open soon

**FPJ NEWS SERVICE**

AHMEDABAD

Around 1.16 crore passengers traveled through the Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel International Airport (SVPI) in the city during the year 2023-24, with over 88,000 flights operating to and from the airport. This marks a 14 per cent increase in passengers compared to the previous year. Given this trend, traveler movement at the SVPI is likely to cross 2 crore by 2027, and keeping this in mind, the airport is undergoing expansion.

As part of this expansion, the departures area of the International Terminal T-2 is being enlarged and is expected to open ahead of Diwali this year. The facility will feature 22 new check-in counters. Notably, two self-baggage drop machines will also be installed in the departure areas, allowing passengers to check in their luggage independently without going to the check-in counters.



# Corporate Communications Directorate

JANSATTA

DELHI

28 SEPTEMBER 2024

## हवाई अड्डों की संख्या 2047 तक बढ़ाकर 350 करने की योजना: राममोहन नायडू

नई दिल्ली, 27 सितंबर (भाषा)।

केंद्रीय नागर विमानन मंत्री किंजरापु राममोहन नायडू ने शुक्रवार को कहा कि सरकार 2047 तक देश में हवाई अड्डों की संख्या बढ़ाकर 350 करने तथा पर्यटन को बढ़ावा देने का प्रयास कर रही है। नायडू ने विश्व पर्यटन दिवस पर यहां विज्ञान भवन में आयोजित कार्यक्रम में कहा कि उनका मंत्रालय ज्यादा से ज्यादा ऐसे स्थानों को जोड़ने पर काम कर रहा है जो आवागमन के साधनों की पहुंच से दूर हैं और अज्ञात स्थलों के नजदीक हैं। नायडू ने घरेलू संपर्क को बढ़ावा देने और विदेशी पर्यटकों के स्वागत के लिए हवाई अड्डों पर बेहतर सुविधाएं और गर्मजोशी भरा आतिथ्य प्रदान करने के सरकार के दृष्टिकोण की बात कही। उन्होंने कहा कि हवाई अड्डों का 'देश के प्रवेश द्वार' होना इसकी वजह है। पर्यटन मंत्रालय के कार्यक्रम में उन्होंने कहा, 'आज हमारे पास 157 हवाई अड्डे हैं। ...लेकिन अगले 20-25 वर्षों में जब हम 2047 में वास्तविक 'विकसित भारत' देखेंगे, तब हम हवाई अड्डों की संख्या को बढ़ाकर 350 करना चाहते हैं।

## हवाई अड्डा संचालन के खिलाफ याचिका का निपटारा

नई दिल्ली (भाषा)। सुप्रीम कोर्ट ने निजी कंपनी 'जीएमआर एयरपोर्ट्स' को नागपुर के 'बाबासाहेब अंबेडकर अंतरराष्ट्रीय हवाई अड्डे' का उन्नयन और संचालन करने की अनुमति देने के अपने फैसले के खिलाफ दायर केंद्र और भारतीय हवाई अड्डा प्राधिकरण (एएआई) की सुधारात्मक याचिका का शुक्रवार को निपटारा कर दिया।

शीर्ष अदालत ने इस याचिका पर कार्यवाही बंद करने का फैसला सॉलिसिटर जनरल तुषार मेहता की इस स्वतंत्र पेशेवर राय पर गौर करने के बाद लिया कि केंद्र और एएआई की सुधारात्मक याचिकाएं इस प्रकार याचिकाओं पर विचार करने के लिए निर्धारित कानूनी मापदंडों के अंतर्गत नहीं आती। सुधारात्मक याचिका, वादी के लिए उपलब्ध अंतिम कानूनी सहायता है और शीर्ष अदालत ने 2002 में रूपा अशोक हुर्रा मामले में दिए फैसले के तहत इसका प्रावधान किया था। इसे मुख्य मामले और पुनरीक्षण याचिका के खारिज होने के बाद तब दायर किया जा सकता है जब प्राकृतिक न्याय के सिद्धांत का उल्लंघन होने, पक्षपात की आशंका होने तथा न्यायिक प्रक्रिया का दुरुपयोग होने की आशंका हो। शुक्रवार को शीर्ष विधि अधिकारी ने प्रधान न्यायाधीश डी वाई चंद्रचूड़, न्यायमूर्ति संजीव खन्ना, न्यायमूर्ति बी आर गवई और न्यायमूर्ति जे के माहेश्वरी की विशेष पीठ से कहा कि केंद्र और एएआई की सुधारात्मक याचिकाएं 2002 के फैसले के तहत नहीं आती हैं और वे पक्षपात के आधार पर दलीलें पेश नहीं कर सकते।



■ शीर्ष अदालत ने सॉलिसिटर जनरल की

राय सुनने के बाद किया निपटारा

■ नागपुर हवाई अड्डे अपग्रेड और संचालन का ठेका जीएमआर कंपनी को देना था

हालांकि, विधि अधिकारी ने साथ ही कहा कि जिस पहलू में यह कहा गया है कि केंद्र और एएआई मुकदमे में आवश्यक पक्षकार नहीं है, उस पर पुनर्विचार किया जा सकता है, क्योंकि इसी प्रकार के मामलों में इसके नकारात्मक परिणाम हो सकते हैं।

पीठ ने सॉलिसिटर जनरल के विचारों की सराहना की और कहा कि सुधारात्मक याचिका का निपटारा किया जाता है। शीर्ष अदालत ने नौ मई, 2022 को बंबई हाईकोर्ट के आदेश को बरकरार रखा था, जिसमें हवाई अड्डे के उन्नयन और संचालन के लिए 'जीएमआर एयरपोर्ट्स' को दिए गए अनुबंध को रद्द करने के संबंध में एक संयुक्त उद्यम कंपनी द्वारा जारी मार्च 2020 के संचार को रद्द कर दिया गया था। केंद्र और एएआई ने शीर्ष अदालत के 2022 के आदेश के खिलाफ सुधारात्मक याचिका दायर की थी।

## हवाई अड्डों की संख्या 2047 तक 350 करने की योजना

नई दिल्ली (भाषा)।

केंद्रीय नागर विमानन मंत्री किजरापु राममोहन नायडू ने शुक्रवार को कहा कि सरकार 2047 तक देश में हवाई अड्डों की संख्या बढ़ाकर 350 करने तथा पर्यटन को बढ़ावा देने का प्रयास कर रही है।

नायडू ने विश्व पर्यटन दिवस पर यहां विज्ञान भवन में आयोजित कार्यक्रम में कहा कि उनका मंत्रालय ज्यादा से ज्यादा ऐसे स्थानों को जोड़ने पर काम कर रहा है जो आवागमन के साधनों की पहुंच से दूर हैं और अज्ञात स्थलों के नजदीक हैं।

नायडू ने घरेलू संपर्क को बढ़ावा देने और विदेशी पर्यटकों के स्वागत के लिए हवाई



अड्डों पर बेहतर सुविधाएं और गर्मजोशी भरा आतिथ्य प्रदान करने के सरकार के दृष्टिकोण की बात कही। उन्होंने कहा कि हवाई अड्डों का 'देश के प्रवेश द्वार' होना इसकी वजह है। पर्यटन मंत्रालय के कार्यक्रम में उन्होंने कहा, "आज हमारे पास 157 हवाई अड्डे हैं। ...लेकिन अगले 20-25 वर्षों में जब हम 2047 में वास्तविक 'विकसित भारत' देखेंगे, तब हम हवाई अड्डों की संख्या को बढ़ाकर 350 करना चाहते हैं।"

उन्होंने केंद्रीय पर्यटन मंत्री गजेंद्र सिंह शेखावत द्वारा 'चलो इंडिया' अभियान के तहत आने वाले समय में एक लाख विदेशी पर्यटकों को वीजा शुल्क से छूट दिए जाने की घोषणा के लिए पर्यटन मंत्रालय को बधाई दी।

नायडू ने कहा, "साल 2014 में भारत में 4.6 करोड़ यात्री आए, और हवाई अड्डों की संख्या 74 से बढ़ाकर 157 हो जाने के बाद आज हम देश में लगभग सात करोड़ लोगों को आते हुए देख रहे हैं। इनमें से 35 प्रतिशत से अधिक लोग केवल छुट्टियों और मनोरंजन के लिए भारत आ रहे हैं।" उन्होंने हवाई यात्रा को आम आदमी के करीब लाने के लिए नरेन्द्र मोदी सरकार की 'उड़ान' योजना की सराहना की।



# Corporate Communications Directorate

THE TIMES OF INDIA

AHMEDABAD

27 SEPTEMBER 2024

## Navi Mumbai airport runway trial on Oct 5

**B B Nayak**

**Navi Mumbai:** Since the runway work of the Navi Mumbai International Airport (NMIA) has been completed, a plane trial will be conducted on Oct 5. This was announced by Cidco chairman, Sanjay Shirsat, after inspecting the airport site on Wednesday.

The under-construction airport is set to undergo a crucial test with the Indian Air Force planes. Prime Minister Narendra Modi is likely to be present during the trial run, signifying an important step forward in the airport's development, said Shirsat, who expressed satisfaction with the progress of the airport project. Shirsat is optimistic that the test will proceed as planned, setting the stage for the airport to commence domestic operations by March 2025, as was announced by the govt earlier, and international flights by June 2025. The airport will feature four terminals, two parallel runwa-

ys, and parking space.

Developed by Adani Airports in collaboration with Cidco under the public-private partnership (PPP) model, the NMIA spans an area of 1,160 hectares. "The ensuing test with IAF planes is an important step towards ensuring that the airport meets international standards. The success of this test will determine if the airport is ready for the next phase of operations. Once operational, it will help reduce the burden on Mumbai's current airport," Shirsat stated. The project is pegged at Rs 16,700 crore.

Meanwhile, the Airports Authority of India completed Instrument Landing System (ILS) testing, which calibrates the flight path to ensure the operational readiness of the airport, last month. NMIA, a greenfield project, is set to become Mumbai's second international aviation hub, as the existing airport approaches its maximum capacity.



# Corporate Communications Directorate

THE TIMES OF INDIA

CHENNAI

27 SEPTEMBER 2024

## Hosur, Parandur airports to have cargo villages

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

**Chennai:** Two new greenfield airports at Hosur and Parandur, proposed in the industrial hubs of Krishnagiri and Kancheepuram districts, respectively, in the state will house cargo villages. Tamilnadu Industrial Development Corporation (TIDCO), which is the nodal agency for developing the two airports, is planning for the facility to meet the requirements of industries in the region.

**Sandeep Nanduri, MD, TIDCO** said, the facility at Parandur will have a capacity to handle one million tonnes of cargo. The airport will have a full fledged cargo facility and a cargo village.

Noting that a proper cargo infrastructure was lacking in the existing airport in the city for various legacy issues, he said, the cargo vil-

lage will also have a direct connectivity to the upcoming Multi-Modal Logistics Park (MMLP) at Mappe-du in the neighbouring Tiruvallur district.



“The Hosur airport will have a similar facility in view of the presence of several industries across the sectors including manufacturing, EV and semiconductors. The planning is going now into the masterplan development and we will ensure that the cargo requirement is taken care of in both airports,” he said, while addressing the ‘Conference on Logistics: Gateway to Growth’ organised by CII here on Thursday.

The state government is also exploring the possibility of developing a high-spe-

ed rail corridor and high-speed freight corridor in association with railways. According to Nanduri, multiple routes are being studied for the purpose.

“This study has covered various routes like Madurai to Chennai to Hosur, Coimbatore to Tuticorin and various possibilities and combinations have been considered. Also, taking into consideration the present railway network in these particular roads, we are also piloting implementation of tracking and tracing infrastructure to streamline cargo movement in the state,” he said. Chennai Port Authority Chairperson Sunil Paliwal said, shore power facility has been enabled at Kamarajar Port in Ennore, which is a significant step towards reducing emissions from vessels during their time at the port.



# Corporate Communications Directorate

BUSINESS STANDARD

DELHI

28 SEPTEMBER 2024

## Have cleared all GST dues, says SpiceJet

Debt-ridden SpiceJet on Friday said it has cleared all its Goods and Services Tax (GST) dues. The airline, which raised ₹3,000 crore through the Qualified Institutional Placement route last week, had GST dues worth over ₹145 crore. As per the preliminary placement document related to ₹3,000 crore fund raise, the airline had GST dues of ₹145.1 crore as on September 15. After receiving the fresh capital of ₹3,000 crore, SpiceJet has also cleared salary dues of employees for July and August as well part of pending June salaries.



PTI

# A-I to check veracity of crew's fatigue reports

## Pilots concerned over the move

DEEPAK PATEL

New Delhi, 27 September

**A**ir India (A-I) has introduced a new internal policy, effective from October 1, under which it will verify the authenticity of fatigue reports submitted by its flight crew and reclassify them as "sick leave" if found to be "unsubstantiated", *Business Standard* has learnt.

The policy is part of a series of new measures being implemented ahead of A-I's merger with Vistara, aimed at "boosting efficiencies" within the airline, according to officials. However, pilots have voiced concerns over the new step.

"This policy needs to be reconsidered, rather than questioning whether a pilot is experiencing 'fatigue' or is 'sick'. The airline entrusts pilots with planes worth millions of dollars and it should extend this trust to other areas as well," one pilot said.

"We may hesitate to report 'fatigue' if it risks being classified as 'sick leave'," added another

## RULE CHANGE



- Air India is implementing a new policy to verify the authenticity of flight crew fatigue reports starting October 1
- DGCA regulations require airlines to effectively utilise these reports to mitigate crew fatigue to boost safety
- Unsubstantiated fatigue reports may be reclassified as sick leave, raising concerns among pilots about potential repercussions
- New fatigue-related duty regulations have been a point of contention between the DGCA and airlines

pilot. All companies grant a limited number of sick leaves (or medical leaves) to their employees. On Monday, Civil Aviation Minister Rammohan Naidu highlighted the need for "robust" stress and fatigue management systems, including for pilots, to ensure flight safety.

Naidu was speaking at a seminar organised by the Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau (AAIB).

Under regulations issued by the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), a fatigue report

is a formal document filed by flight crew members (both pilots and cabin crew) to notify their airline of excessive tiredness that could affect their ability to perform duties safely.

In response to *Business Standard's* queries regarding the new policy, Air India spokesperson said: "Our new Fatigue Protocol is a positive step in preventing fatigue and is followed by leading airlines globally. It is compliant with the regulations and is non-punitive. We will continue to use scientific tools such

as Jeppesen and Boeing Alertness Model (BAM) tool to protect our crew from potentially fatiguing rosters."

On Friday, Henry Donohoe, A-I's senior vice president of Safety, Security, and Quality, approved and issued the airline's new "Crew Fatigue Risk Management Policy". According to the policy, when a pilot or cabin crew member submits a fatigue report through the internal web system, it will be labelled as "Fatigue" in the portal. The report will then undergo review by the airline's senior executives. "After review, in case of unsubstantiated reporting, 'Fatigue' will be replaced with 'Sick' on the crew portal," mentioned the policy.

"If a crew reports fatigue within 12 hours of their scheduled duty or reporting time (as applicable), they will be marked as 'Fatigue' in the crew portal. Immediate escalation of such cases shall be made by the DOPS (day-to-day scheduling management)/flight safety department for addressal to the department head and Fatigue Safety Action Group (FSAG)," the policy noted.

*More on business-standard*



# Corporate Communications Directorate

DRSHBANDHU

DELHI

28 SEPTEMBER 2024

## मेकमाईट्रिप ने 10 प्रमुख एयरलाइंस व आईसीआईसीआई बैंक के साथ की साझेदारी

नई दिल्ली, 27 सितम्बर (एजेंसियां)। ऑनलाइन यात्रा सेवा प्रदाता कंपनी मेकमाईट्रिप ने अंतरराष्ट्रीय बिजनेस क्लास यात्रा को बढ़ावा देने के लिए आज दस प्रमुख एयरलाइंस कंपनी के साथ ही निजी क्षेत्र के आईसीआईसीआई बैंक के साथ साझेदारी की है।

कंपनी ने शुक्रवार को यहां बयान जारी कर बताया कि जैसे-जैसे भारत का यात्रा परिदृश्य विकसित होता जा रहा है, प्रीमियम अनुभव कई यात्रियों के लिए प्राथमिकता बनते जा रहे हैं। मेकमाईट्रिप की नवीनतम हाउ इंडियंस ट्रैवल अब्राड रिपोर्ट के अनुसार, वर्ष 2023 और 2024 के बीच अंतरराष्ट्रीय बिजनेस क्लास उड़ानों की खोज में 10 प्रतिशत की वृद्धि हुई है। परंपरागत रूप से अमेरिका और ब्रिटेन जैसे लंबी दूरी के गंतव्यों से जुड़ा यह चलन अब हांगकांग, श्रीलंका, जापान और सऊदी अरब जैसे गंतव्यों सहित छोटे मार्गों तक विस्तृत हो रहा है। इस बढ़ते जरूरत को पूरा करने के लिए



- यात्रियों के लिए प्राथमिकता बनते जा रहे प्रीमियम अनुभव
- अंतरराष्ट्रीय बिजनेस क्लास उड़ानों की खोज में 10 प्रतिशत की वृद्धि

मेकमाईट्रिप ने 10 प्रमुख अंतरराष्ट्रीय एयरलाइनों एयर अस्ताना, एयर इंडिया, एयर इंडिया एक्सप्रेस, मलेशिया एयरलाइंस, ओमान एयर, क्वांटस, सिंगापुर एयरलाइंस, टर्किश

एयरलाइंस, वर्जिन अटलांटिक और विस्तारा के साथ करार किया है। ये एयरलाइंस बिजनेस क्लास किराए पर 20 प्रतिशत तक की छूट दे रही हैं। इसे और भी आकर्षक बनाने के लिए मेकमाईट्रिप ने आईसीआईसीआई बैंक के साथ साझेदारी की है, जो आईसीआईसीआई बैंक कार्डधारकों को अतिरिक्त 10 हजार रुपए की छूट प्रदान करता है। यात्री 27 सितंबर से 02 अक्टूबर तक बिजनेस क्लास फेस्ट के दौरान इन शानदार ऑफर का लाभ उठा सकते हैं।

मेकमाईट्रिप में मुख्य परिचालन अधिकारी सौजन्य श्रीवास्तव ने कहा कि भारतीय यात्री तेजी से विकसित हो रहे हैं। अपनी यात्रा के हर चरण में सर्वश्रेष्ठ की तलाश कर रहे हैं। बिजनेस क्लास फेस्ट जैसी पहलों के लॉन्च के साथ हमारा लक्ष्य प्रीमियम अनुभवों को सुलभ और पुरस्कृत करना है। हमें खुशी है कि यात्रा ईकोसिस्टम तेजी से हमें प्रीमियम यात्रियों के लिए पसंदीदा प्लेटफॉर्म के रूप में देख रहा है।



# Corporate Communications Directorate

DAINIK JAGRAN

DELHI

28 SEPTEMBER 2024

## स्पाइसजेट ने जीएसटी बकाया का किया भुगतान

नई दिल्ली: कर्ज में डूबी विमानन कंपनी स्पाइसजेट ने शुक्रवार को बताया कि उसने बकाया जीएसटी का पूरा भुगतान कर दिया है। कंपनी पर करीब 145 करोड़ रुपये का जीएसटी बकाया था। स्पाइसजेट ने पिछले सप्ताह ही योग्य संस्थागत निवेशकों से तीन हजार करोड़ रुपये जुटाए हैं। इससे पहले कंपनी ने अपने सभी कर्मचारियों के जुलाई और अगस्त के बकाया वेतन का भुगतान करने की बात कही थी। (प्रेट)

## सेवा में कमी को लेकर एतिहाद एयरवेज यात्री को देगी 50 हजार रुपये मुआवजा

रीतिका मिश्रा • जागरण

नई दिल्ली: दिल्ली राज्य उपभोक्ता विवाद निवारण आयोग ने एतिहाद एयरवेज को स्वीडन की एक नागरिक को उसका केबिन बैग मिलने में देरी होने से उनको हुई शारीरिक और मानसिक पीड़ा के लिए सेवाओं में कमी का दोषी ठहराया। आयोग ने एतिहाद एयरवेज को मुआवजे के लिए दो माह के अंदर 50 हजार रुपये और मुकदमे के खर्च के लिए 25 हजार रुपये का भुगतान करने का आदेश दिया।

उपभोक्ता आयोग की अध्यक्ष न्यायमूर्ति संगीता टींगरा सहगल व सदस्य जेपी अग्रवाल की पीठ ने कहा कि शिकायतकर्ता आशा देवी ने केबिन बैग से उनका कीमती सामान खो जाने को लेकर एयरवेज

- स्वीडन की नागरिक का दिल्ली यात्रा के दौरान रास्ते में केबिन बैग गायब हो गया था
- मुकदमे के खर्च के लिए 25 हजार रुपये का भुगतान करने का भी दिया आदेश

के खिलाफ सेवा में कमी का आरोप लगाते हुए शिकायत दायर की थी। प्रतिवादी की ओर से पेश अधिवक्ता ने दलील दी कि महिला के पास अगर कीमती सामान था तो उसने संपत्ति अनियमितता रिपोर्ट (पीआइआर) में कोई घोषणा क्यों नहीं की। प्रतिवादी की इस दलील पर फोरम ने टिप्पणी करते हुए कहा कि यह बेहद आश्चर्यजनक है कि शिकायतकर्ता ने एयरवेज के पास शिकायत दर्ज करते समय कीमती

सामान का कोई उल्लेख नहीं किया था। आशा देवी ने अपनी शिकायत में बताया कि वो स्वीडन की नागरिक हैं और पीआइओ (भारतीय मूल के व्यक्ति) वीजा के तहत दिल्ली में रह रही हैं। उन्होंने बताया कि स्वीडन से दिल्ली आने के लिए एतिहाद एयरवेज का टिकट खरीदा था। यात्रा में बर्लिन और अबूधाबी में ट्रांजिट था। बर्लिन हवाई अड्डे से जब यात्री बैठ रहे थे तो सभी सीटें भर जाने पर उन्हें बिजनेस क्लास में अपग्रेड कर दिया गया। शिकायतकर्ता ने बताया कि इस दौरान एयरहोस्टेस ने ओवरहेड केबिन लाकर में जगह की कमी के कारण केबिन बैग को किसी दूसरे स्थान पर ले जाने का सुझाव दिया। बाद में एयरहोस्टेस ने खुद ही उनका सामान दूसरी जगह रख दिया।

## नया टर्मिनल बनने के बाद हैदराबाद की उड़ान आज से

जासं, कानपुर: नया टर्मिनल बनने के बाद कानपुर से चौथे शहर हैदराबाद के लिए उड़ान की सुविधा शुक्रवार से मिलने लगेगी। अभी दिल्ली, बेंगलुरु और मुंबई की उड़ान की सुविधा मिल रही है। नई उड़ान की सुविधा सप्ताह में चार दिन मिलेगी।

विमानन कंपनी इंडिगो ने अगस्त में हैदराबाद की उड़ान का एप्रूवल ले लिया था। अगस्त के दूसरे सप्ताह में सांसद रमेश अवस्थी ने 27 सितंबर से हैदराबाद की उड़ान की सुविधा मिलने की बात कही थी। अभी तक इंडिगो यहां से तीन उड़ान की सुविधा दे रही है। बेंगलुरु की उड़ान की सुविधा

### उड़ान का समय

आना- सुबह 11 बजे

जाना- सुबह 11:30 बजे

### इन दिनों में मिलेगी सुविधा

सोमवार, बुधवार, शुक्रवार और रविवार



मंगलवार, गुरुवार, शनिवार को मिलती है। बेंगलुरु की सप्ताह में तीन दिन मिलने वाली यह सुविधा मिलती रहेगी। एयरपोर्ट निदेशक संजय कुमार ने बताया कि सप्ताह के बाकी के चार दिनों में हैदराबाद की उड़ान की सुविधा मिलेगी।

# Ageing fleet and seats hobble AI turnaround

## Ageing fleet and seats hobble AI turnaround

ADITI SHAH & JAMIE FREED  
New Delhi/Sydney, September 27

**TWO YEARS AFTER** Tata Group took control of Air India, re-kitting an ageing fleet amid parts shortages and persistent flight delays stand in the way of the airline's intent to become "a world class airline".

Global shortages are hurting plans for most airlines, but the problem is "more acute" for Air India, CEO Campbell Wilson said, as the carrier is nearing the halfway mark of a five-year turnaround plan but starting a generation behind rivals like Dubai's Emirates and Qatar Airways.

"Our product is obviously a lot more dated. These aircraft haven't had a product refresh since they were delivered in sort of 2010, 2011. And so it's more of an acute need for us," CEO Wilson said in an interview in Sydney. "If we've got legacy seats and legacy in-flight entertainment systems, we're operating with one arm tied behind our back," he said.

The challenges are the biggest at the premium end of

the plane as Air India looks to lure high-spending travellers, added Wilson. Air India has already placed giant orders to upgrade its fleet and just this month kicked off a \$400-million plan to refit old planes.

The carrier's restructuring after decades of decay is being watched by manufacturers and lessors, as well as investors in Singapore Airlines, which is set to own a 25% stake in the carrier from November and has agreed to invest an additional up to \$600 million in the turnaround.

"Air India has a long way to go before being closer to international standards for which it needs to complete the process of re-kitting with new and retrofitted aircraft," Singapore-based independent aviation analyst Brendan Sobie said.

Rebuilding Air India's reputation hinges on getting planes with top-notch premium seats and service in the skies as fast as possible to lure flyers who are reluctant to book the carrier, even if it offers non-stop flights on key international routes, due to poor product and risk of delays.

OF THE 470 new planes the airline has ordered, 70 are widebody jets. It has already taken delivery of six Airbus A350s and leased 11 Boeing 777s.

It is refitting about 67 planes starting with 27 narrowbody ones that will be completed by mid-2025, allowing it to better compete with domestic rival IndiGo's larger and more modern fleet.

The start of the 40 widebody refits, originally slated for this year, has been pushed to early 2025 due to delays in getting its customised business and first class seats.

Seat manufacturers have said they are grappling with a shortage of skilled labour and capacity, Wilson said.

Once the refit starts, it will take about two years to bring the widebody fleet to international standards, he added.

Older jets have led to lower utilisation by about an hour per day on average across Air

India's fleet, and even more for planes flying long-haul routes like to the US, Wilson said.

As an interim solution, Air India is ring-fencing some of its most profitable long-haul sectors like Mumbai to San Francisco and Delhi to London by guaranteeing modern planes. In the year ended March, Air India increased its capacity by 21% from a year ago and pushed up passenger load factors, or the percentage of seats filled, narrowing net losses by 60% to \$532 million and growing its revenues by 24.5% to \$6.15 billion.

"When we can command the prices the product deserves and people have a good view of the reliability and service proposition, we can fly to more high-yield routes and bring back the high-yield customer," Wilson said.

He did not give a target date for reaching profitability.

CAMPBELL WILSON,  
CEO, AIR INDIA

GLOBAL PARTS SHORTAGES ARE HURTING MOST AIRLINES, BUT THE PROBLEM IS MORE ACUTE FOR AIR INDIA

OUR PRODUCT IS OBVIOUSLY A LOT MORE DATED. WE'RE OPERATING WITH ONE ARM TIED BEHIND OUR BACK



Continued on Page 10





# Corporate Communications Directorate

THE FINANCIAL EXPRESS

DELHI

28 SEPTEMBER 2024

## MakeMyTrip partners with 10 airlines, ICICI Bank

**ONLINE TRAVEL COMPANY** MakeMyTrip on Friday said it has partnered with leading airlines to boost international business class travel. Under the collaboration, international airlines include Air Astana, Air India, Air India Express, Malaysia Airlines, Oman Air, Qantas, Singapore Airlines, Turkish Airlines, Virgin Atlantic, and Vistara offer up to 20 percent discount on business class fares on MakeMyTrip plat-

form from September 27 to October 2, the company said in a statement. MakeMyTrip has also partnered with private sector lender ICICI Bank to provide an additional ₹10,000 off for ICICI Bank cardholders.

"The Indian traveller is rapidly evolving, seeking the best at every stage of their travel journey," MakeMyTrip COO, Flights, Holidays and Gulf, Saanjana Shrivastava, added. —PTI



# Corporate Communications Directorate

HINDUSTAN

DELHI

28 SEPTEMBER 2024

## स्पाईजेट ने बकाया जीएसटी चुकाया

नई दिल्ली। स्पाइसजेट ने शुक्रवार को कहा कि उसने अपना जीएसटी का पूरा बकाया चुका दिया है। स्पाइसजेट पर 145 करोड़ रुपये से अधिक का जीएसटी बकाया था। उसने पिछले सप्ताह पात्र संस्थागत नियोजन के जरिये 3,000 करोड़ रुपये जुटाए थे। कंपनी ने 3,000 करोड़ की नई पूंजी प्राप्त करने के बाद बकाया वेतन के साथ-साथ जून के लंबित वेतन का भी भुगतान कर दिया है।



# Corporate Communications Directorate

HINDUSTAN

DELHI

28 SEPTEMBER 2024

## एयरसेवा पोर्टल पर जल्द निर्णय ले केंद्र

नई दिल्ली, प्रसं। दिल्ली हाईकोर्ट ने शुक्रवार को नागरिक उड्डयन मंत्रालय को एयरसेवा पोर्टल की अक्षमताओं से संबंधित प्रतिनिधित्व पर चार सप्ताह में निर्णय लेने का निर्देश दिया।

शिकायत निवारण का पोर्टल कथित तौर पर काफी हद तक अनुत्तरदायी हो गया है, जिससे कई शिकायतें अनसुलझी रह गई हैं। मुख्य न्यायाधीश मनमोहन एवं न्यायमूर्ति तुषार राव गेडेला की पीठ ने नागरिक उड्डयन मंत्रालय को एयरसेवा पोर्टल के काम न करने से संबंधित चिंताओं को दूर करने के लिए निर्देश जारी किया है।



# Corporate Communications Directorate

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

DELHI

28 SEPTEMBER 2024

## Govt mulls formation of dedicated team to monitor surges in airfare

**Neha LM Tripathi**

neha.tripathi@htlive.com

**NEW DELHI:** The government is considering creating a dedicated team to monitor airfare spikes as the festive season approaches, people aware of discussions have said regarding a proposal that aims to address limitations in the current monitoring system, which averages fares and fails to detect sudden price increases.

Civil aviation minister K Ram Mohan Naidu, upon taking office, acknowledged the significant fluctuations in airfares since the Covid-19 pandemic. "I

feel the pain of passengers, being one myself," Naidu said, pledging to review fare mechanisms.

Ajay Prakash, president of the Travel Agents Federation of India, cautioned, "It needs to be seen if the team will have authority to act on airlines charging exorbitant fares. Otherwise, setting up this dedicated team will be futile."

Currently, the Tariff Monitoring Unit under the directorate general of civil aviation (DGCA) oversees fares from 30 days to one day before scheduled flights.

As the festive season nears, fares are already climbing. A return non-stop flight from Ben-

galuru to Delhi for late October showed a minimum fare of ₹26,000 rupees when checked on Friday.

An industry expert, speaking anonymously, argued, "Civil aviation is a seasonal sector with variable fares. There's no point in building dedicated teams unless airfares are regulated."

A former DGCA official said the current system's averaging method often misses fare spikes on specific days and routes. "The new system will flag fare spikes that are higher than normal high fares," an official said, adding the existing monitoring will continue with any new measures.



# Corporate Communications Directorate

HINDUSTAN TIMES

MUMBAI

27 SEPTEMBER 2024

## SPICEJET CLEARS PENDING SALARIES OF ITS EMPLOYEES

**Neha LM Tripathi**

neha.tripathi@htlive.com

**NEW DELHI:** Debt-ridden domestic carrier SpiceJet has cleared all pending salary dues of its employees after securing a fresh capital infusion of ₹3,000 crore, people familiar with the matter said on Thursday.

The low-cost carrier has been postponing salary payments to its staff since June due to liquidity crisis. The airline cleared the pending salary dues on Wednesday evening, much to the respite for its employees.

"Salaries of July and August of all employees and those who hadn't received June salaries were disbursed on Wednesday evening," an airline official said, requesting anonymity. SpiceJet spokesperson confirmed the development, but refused to divulge further details.

The development comes shortly after the debt-ridden airline secured a fresh capital infusion from various investors. On September 23, SpiceJet had announced raising ₹3,000 crore through Qualified Institutional Placement (QIP) and an additional ₹736 crore from the previous funding round, further boosting its financial stability and growth plans.

The airline, which lost over ₹4,000 crore since 2020, is expected to create positive sentiment for itself.

According to Planespotters, an aviation website that tracks fleet details, SpiceJet has a fleet size of 55, of which 37 aircraft are on ground (AOG) while 18 are currently operational.

Many believed that it was curtains for the airline before its chairman and managing director, Ajay Singh, managed to get funds from the investors. This is, however, not the first time that Singh managed to save the airline from going the GoFirst way. Recently in media interviews, Singh said with the fresh funding, it aims to have 100 aircraft by 2026 end. He attributed the airline's downfall to the global grounding of the MAX aircraft and Covid-19.

As of now, the airline not only struggles with the HR issues, but also with its operations — it's on time performance.



# Corporate Communications Directorate

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THE HINDU

CHENNAI

27 SEPTEMBER 2024

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## SpiceJet clears pending salaries till Aug.

**Press Trust of India**

MUMBAI

Domestic carrier SpiceJet has cleared all pending salary dues of its employees after securing a fresh capital infusion of ₹3,000 crore, a source has said.

The salaries for July and August for all employees, as well as the remaining June salaries for those who were partially paid, were deposited into their accounts on Wednesday evening, according to the source. A SpiceJet spokesperson confirmed the disbursement of employees' pending salaries.

“Pending salaries of employees were disbursed on Wednesday evening,” the spokesperson said on Thursday.



# Corporate Communications Directorate

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THE HINDU

CHENNAI

27 SEPTEMBER 2024

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## Dassault Aviation launches subsidiary firm in India

Dassault Aviation of France has announced the incorporation of a subsidiary company in India dedicated exclusively for Maintenance, Repair and Overhaul (MRO) of its military activities, Dassault Aviation MRO India (DAMROI), based in Noida, Uttar Pradesh. The development comes as negotiations with the Indian Navy are in advanced stages for 26 Rafale-M, the marine variant, to operate off Indian aircraft carriers. The Indian Air Force (IAF) operates three squadrons of the Mirage-2000 fighters and 36 Rafale fighter jets.



# Corporate Communications Directorate

MILLENNIUM POST

KOLKATA

27 SEPTEMBER 2024

## SpiceJet clears pending salaries till August

**MUMBAI:** Domestic carrier SpiceJet has cleared all pending salary dues of its employees after securing a fresh capital infusion of Rs 3,000 crore, a source with the knowledge of matter has said.

The salaries for July and August for all employees, as well as the remaining June salaries for those who were partially paid, were deposited into their accounts on Wednesday evening, according to the source.

A SpiceJet spokesperson confirmed the disbursement of employees' pending salaries.

"Pending salaries of employees were disbursed on Wednesday evening," the spokesperson said on Thursday without divulging further details.

SpiceJet had been delaying salaries to its staff for the last couple of months due to a liquidity crunch.

The airline hasn't paid the provident fund for two and a half years while TDS, which is deducted from employees' salaries every month, has also not been deposited with the government.

On September 23, the airline announced raising Rs 3,000 crore through QIP and an additional Rs 736 crore from the previous funding round, further boosting its financial stability and growth plans. PII



# Corporate Communications Directorate

THE MORNING STANDARD

DELHI

28 SEPTEMBER 2024

## HC asks aviation ministry to address AirSewa portal issues

**SHEKHAR SINGH** @New Delhi

THE Delhi High Court on Friday instructed aviation ministry to address inefficiencies in the AirSewa portal within four weeks. The court's directive came in response to a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) highlighting the failure of the portal to function as an effective grievance redressal platform for air travellers.

AirSewa, designed to provide a streamlined process for handling complaints from air passengers, has reportedly become largely unresponsive.

This has resulted in a major backlog of unresolved issues, mainly affecting Indian citizens living abroad who rely on the platform to address travel-related grievances. The PIL was filed by the NGO Pravasi Legal Cell through advocate Manas P Hameed, emphasising the decline in the portal's functionality over the past year.

A bench led by Acting Chief Justice Manmohan and Justice Tushar Rao Gedela directed the ministry to take swift action in resolving these issues. The plea stressed the hardship faced by travellers, mainly those abroad, who must resort to Indian consumer courts for solutions—a process that is often impractical given the geographical and logistical challenges.

The court's intervention comes after repeated representations to the authorities failed to produce any substantial improvements in the AirSewa portal. The petitioner seeks immediate corrective measures.

# Fixing SpiceJet's broken wings

Can the low-cost airline heal enough to effectively compete with IndiGo and Air India?

KUSHAN MITRA ■ NEW DELHI

Days after low-cost carrier SpiceJet raised Rs 3000 crore from institutional investors, the airline promptly cleared pending salary dues estimated to over Rs 80 crore. It is believed that the beleaguered low-cost airline will use much of the remaining funds to settle dues with a host of creditors from leasing companies to airports. However, even if much of the funds the airline has raised will go towards clearing dues, the fact is that SpiceJet did successfully manage to raise this large sum of money. This is despite the airline having to face a litany of problems and constantly being dragged to the courts by everyone from the previous owners, the Maran family of the Sun Group to various leasing firms. In fact, just last week the Supreme Court upheld a

Delhi High Court order mandating the return of three engines used by the airline on their Boeing 737 aircraft. With leasing companies asking the airline to pay up, and taking their aircraft away, the airline is down to just having 21 operational aircraft according to website airfleets.net. This is a precipitous decline from the halcyon days of the airline before Covid when the airline had almost five times as many aircraft in its fleet and was the first Indian operator of the Boeing 737 MAX aircraft. However, the one-two punch of the coronavirus shutdown and the grounding of the Boeing 737MAX fleet worldwide following two deadly disasters almost knocked the airline out. But this is not a time to dwell on the past, the fact is that despite difficult odds the airline has managed to raise a



large sum of money from Qualified Institutional Placement (QIP) with institutions such as Morgan Stanley, Goldman Sachs, BNP Paribas, Nomura and Tata Mutual Fund subscribing to the issue. The quality of investment is a very positive indicator of the future prospects of the airline. SpiceJet has a lot to do, first and foremost to regain the confidence of employees,

service providers and most importantly customers. They can do this by becoming more reliable and offering more services. Due to issues with leasing companies, the airline has been forced to wet-lease temporary aircraft from airlines in Cambodia and Turkey. They should now concentrate on operating their own fleet and by repaying dues owed to leasing firms, rebuild their

confidence in SpiceJet as a reliable airline. There is now talk of the airline growing to 100 aircraft by the end of 2026. If this fructifies, it is a welcome move as the Indian aviation sector needs the competition as the domination of IndiGo and Air India/Air India Express leave customers with little choice. This duopoly needs to be challenged, and SpiceJet

was a capable third player in the sector. Now however, they will have to deal with increased competition from the likes of Akasa. That said, the growth prospects for the Indian aviation sector are extremely high. Between January and June 2024, domestic air traffic numbered 79.35 million passengers, which was a growth of 4.28 percent from the same period last year. The growth could have been higher still had it not been for the collapse of Go First last year and persistent engine problems with Pratt&Whitney GTF engines plaguing IndiGo leading to almost a quarter of their fleet grounded. If SpiceJet can get their act together, and there is no reason to doubt that they can't after the fund-raise, the Indian aviation sector could easily grow to 250 million passengers per year by 2028.



# Corporate Communications Directorate

RAJASTHAN PATRIKA

DELHI

27 SEPTEMBER 2024

## राज्य उपभोक्ता आयोग का फैसला

# हवाई यात्रा नहीं करवाई, कंपनी को देना होगा 10 लाख हर्जाना

पत्रिका न्यूज़ नेटवर्क  
patrika.com

जोधपुर. राज्य उपभोक्ता आयोग ने बिना उचित कारण उपभोक्ता को विदेश यात्रा करने से रोकने को सेवा में त्रुटि मानते हुए निजी एयरलाइंस पर 10 लाख रुपए का हर्जाना, ब्याज व टिकट की राशि देने के आदेश दिया। शास्त्रीनगर निवासी डॉ. सुरेंद्र माथुर व अन्य ने कोर्ट में परिवाद दिया कि अमरीका और मैक्सिको जाने के लिए ट्रेवल एजेंसी के जरिए 2.85 लाख रुपए देकर टिकट बुक कराए। निर्धारित तिथि पर मुंबई एयरपोर्ट पर बोर्डिंग पास बन गए। इस बीच जानकारी मिली कि एयरलाइन के कर्मचारियों ने एक यात्री के पासपोर्ट को क्षतिग्रस्त कर दिया।

इसके चलते एयरलाइन ने विमान में बैठने की इजाजत नहीं दी और टिकट को कैंसिल कर दिया। इसके चलते परिवारी अंतरराष्ट्रीय कॉन्फ्रेंस में भाग नहीं ले पाया। लुफ्थांसा एयरलाइन कंपनी की ओर से आपत्ति जताई कि आयोग को परिवाद सुनने का क्षेत्राधिकार नहीं है। पासपोर्ट रूल्स के अनुसार पासपोर्ट क्षतिग्रस्त होने पर प्लेन में यात्रा करने की अनुमति नहीं दी जा सकती। दोनों पक्षों को सुनकर आयोग के सदस्य न्यायिक अतुलकुमार चटर्जी व सदस्य संजय टाक ने टिकट की राशि मय ब्याज व 10 लाख रुपए मानसिक हर्जाने व परिवाद पैसे पचास हजार रुपए दो माह में देने के आदेश दिए।

## SpiceJet clears GST dues of around ₹71 crore after raising ₹3,000 crore



**STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE**  
NEW DELHI, 27 SEPTEMBER

Domestic airline SpiceJet said on Friday that it has cleared all GST dues of around Rs 71 crore, days after raising Rs 3,000 crore through Qualified Institutional Placement (QIP).

"SpiceJet has cleared all its Goods and Services Tax (GST) dues, demonstrating its commitment to maintaining financial discipline and regulatory compliance," said the airline in a statement.

Post the announcement, SpiceJet's shares rose at 11 am on BSE trading 1% higher at Rs 62.42 apiece.

"We are proud to have cleared all GST dues, a significant step towards reinforcing our commitment to financial discipline and regulatory compliance," said Ajay Singh, Chairman & Man-

aging Director of SpiceJet.

"These developments reflect our commitment to providing exceptional service to our passengers while positioning ourselves strategically for the future," he added.

Earlier this month, SpiceJet revealed that it did not pay statutory dues amounting to nearly Rs 427 crore between April 2020 and August 2024 due to its constrained financial position.

The unpaid dues include Rs 219.8 crore in tax deducted at source (TDS), Rs 71.33 crore in goods and services tax (GST), and Rs 135.47 crore towards provident fund (PF) contribution.

It had disclosed that 36 of its 58 aircraft are grounded, primarily due to alleged default in payments to aircraft lessors, financial difficulties affecting aircraft maintenance, and the unavailability of components and spare parts.



# Corporate Communications Directorate

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THE TELEGRAPH

KOLKATA

27 SEPTEMBER 2024

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## clears salaries

■ **NEW DELHI:** Domestic carrier SpiceJet has cleared all pending salary dues of its employees after securing a fresh capital infusion of ₹3,000 crore, a source has said. The salaries for July and August for all employees, as well as the remaining June salaries for those who were partially paid, were deposited into their accounts on Wednesday evening, according to the source.



Scan this QR code to know how Hyderabad is emerging as Global Aircraft Livery Hub

**OTHER CLIENTS**

- Jazeera (from Kuwait), Fly Dubai (UAE), Indigo, Jet Airways, Go Air, SpiceJet, Vistara, Air India Express, Oman Air, Fly Beond (Maldives) etc

- GMR Aero Technic MRO facility has till date completed livery work on 150 aircraft which includes Airbus A320 Family, Boeing 737 NG/MAX, ATR 72

Pics: Suman Reddy D

**SOME ICONIC LIVERY**

- JRD Tata livery on Air Asia Aircraft

- Special livery on AirAsia to commemorate release of Rajinikanth's movie, Kabali



We are pleased our second aircraft is now entering service. Our new and returning customers will be impressed to see this stunning aircraft at their home airports

**—Tero Taskila |**  
CHAIRMAN AND CEO OF BEOND, WORLD'S FIRST PREMIUM LEISURE AIRLINE FROM MALDIVES

It takes at least 8-10 days (on an average) to complete each aircraft. At least 10 people are at work at the same time to complete it because it involves a lot of intricacies

**—Satish Kumar**

The tail of the aircraft requires maximum time and effort. The technique is tough and there is no room for error

**— Sridhar Reddy**

**'Work needs precision, patience'**

Dressed in white overalls, Satish Kumar and his colleagues are busy giving final touches to a 737 Max – parked within the 3,000 square meter space at the MRO. The Air India Express flight is almost ready

for delivery and will soon be seen cruising through air, for its destination up north. "The job is fascinating but needs tremendous concentration," says Kumar who has been doing this work for the last 10 years. He made the shift to aviation from the shipping yard. Incidentally, the majority of this work is done at night as it gives painters a quiet environment to concentrate.

"The tail of the aircraft requires maximum time and effort. The technique is tough and there is no room for error," said Sridhar Reddy, who joined the team about a year ago. Previously, he worked at an oil company in Qatar. An entire wall at the MRO is adorned by the livery work completed by these painters over the years. They explain how every line, dot, pattern that appears like simple brush strokes to regular people, is measured and turned into engineering drawings before being painted onto the aircraft. "Apart from patience, this work also needs tremendous precision because if the paint is not appropriately distributed on the aircraft it can adversely impact the flight's stability. So, every part is weighed post the livery work to ensure there's no excess anywhere," said Ashok Gopinath, adding how the paint for the work is imported from western countries that are also environment friendly.

We have been seeing 20-30% growth in livery work every year. Also, while we started with domestic airlines alone, currently 70% (approx) of our business comes from international aviation players

**—Ashok Gopinath |** PRESIDENT, GMR AERO TECHNIC

**TIMES Special**



**FLYING COLOURS**

# HYD GIVES THE SKIES A DASH OF COLOUR

*After tech & pharma, Hyderabad has now become a sought-after destination for international aviation players, who want to get their aircraft painted & branded*



Sudipta.Sengupta@timesofindia.com

**T**he freshly minted fleet of Air India Express that took to the skies recently, has a strong Hyderabad connection. Most of these Boeing 737 Max planes flaunting Indian art on their tails — from Bandhani to Kalamkari and Phulkari to Jamdani — were hand painted by a dedicated team at the city's GMR Aero Technic MRO facility, based at Rajiv Gandhi International Airport (RGIA).

But the domestic airline isn't the only one making a landing in Hyderabad.

Aero Technic MRO has aircraft flying in from multiple foreign locations — UAE, Kuwait, Maldives, Philippines, Bangladesh to name a few — for a similar glam up, fast turning the local facility into a global hub for aircraft livery (painting and branding done on the exterior of an aircraft). It also has a bunch of private luxury jets, owned by top industrialists across the world, being wheeled in here for a makeover.

**Booked for 2 years**

Such is the demand that the MRO is booked for the next 24 months, with about 35 to 40 projects scheduled per year. And this, despite it serving only narrow-body aircraft (small commercial planes) for now.

"Apart from the luxury of space, our USP also lies in having a dedicated team of skilled painters who have been hand-picked and trained at the facility. This work requires great precision," said Ashok Gopinath, president and accountable manager at GMR Aero Technic, adding, "Given the growing demand for livery work, we are now planning to start a similar painting facility for wide-body aircraft — adjacent to the existing unit — by 2025."

**Eye on future markets**

There are other plans as well. To tap into the markets in Africa and CIS countries, like Azerbaijan. "Though we are getting some work from Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan, the market has tremendous potential which we wish to explore. We are also eyeing Africa and Europe and are even making our de-

but appearance at the MRO Europe trade show in Spain later this year," said Gopinath.

Along with the talent pool, what's also drawing many to the Hyderabad facility is the cost that's significantly lower than in the US and

Europe — two other markets for this job. While livery work in Hyderabad ranges between \$150,000 (Rs 1.3 crore approx) and \$200,000 (Rs 1.7 crore approx), it is at least 40% to 50% higher in the West.

"We have been seeing 20%

to 30% growth in livery work every year. Also, while we started with domestic airlines alone, currently 70% (approx) of our business comes from international aviation players," said the Aero Technic president.

**TIMES**

# Sourcing from India up 20x in 5 yrs: GE

**Saurabh.Sinha**  
@timesofindia.com

**New Delhi:** Aircraft engine major GE Aerospace is betting big on India by increasing its exports from the country “20 times” in just five years from pre-Covid 2018 to 2022.

It is developing the next gen “open fan architecture” engines that promise to make flying 20% more fuel efficient by middle of next decade at its John F Welch Technology Centre (JFWTC) in Bengaluru. Having over 1,300 engines in India with 2,000 more (along with CFM, its JV with French major Safran) on order that will be delivered over next nine years, the company is open to having an engine MRO (maintenance, repair, overhaul)

facility here at the right time.

“India is not just a big market with a huge potential for us to grow, it also has the right talent that makes it an integral part of our supply chain. Exports from our 13 Indian suppliers, including Tata Advanced Systems (TASL), have grown 20 times from 2018 to 2022. These parts go into making of our engines. We have been present in India’s aerospace ecosystem for 40 years now and are growing very rapidly,” GE Aerospace CEO (south Asia) Vikram Rai told **TOI**. He, however, did not disclose value of exports from India.

GE Aerospace had signed a multi-year contract with TASL in Nov 2022. Under this the Tata company will produ-



ce commercial aircraft engine components worth \$1 billion and supply them to GE’s global engine manufacturing factories. “As of now we have over 1,310 engines in India on the Boeing 787 Dreamliners, B777s and Airbus A320neo family planes with airlines like

Air India, IndiGo and Vistara. Indian carriers currently have 1,100-1,200 planes on order. GE Aerospace and CFM will be delivering 2,000 engines over next eight-nine years at the rate of one aircraft with our engines per week in that timeframe,” Rai said.

When the company has a threshold of engine numbers in India, it will have a viable case for establishing a MRO facility in the country. “We continue to evaluate an engine MRO here,” he said.

“A lot of the research on this CFM Rise programme is happening at our Bengaluru facility. These engines being developed initially for narrow body planes are expected to become a reality by the middle of next decade,” Rai added.



# Corporate Communications Directorate

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THE TIMES OF INDIA

CHENNAI

27 SEPTEMBER 2024

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## Two hours of rain holds up 35 flights

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

**Chennai:** At least 35 flights were delayed and diverted to other destinations, and two flights (one from Sri Lanka) were cancelled on Wednesday night due to unfavourable conditions at the airport after a sudden downpour.

Flights from Bhubaneswar, Kozhikode, Varanasi, Trichy, Bangkok, and Kuala Lumpur were delayed by an hour as they were not able to land in Chennai due to poor visibility and a wet runway. Sources said some flights were hovering for up to an hour. Some flights were diverted to Bengaluru and Trichy and one flight was sent to Hyderabad. Similarly, flights to Mumbai and Sharjah could not take off on time due. Passengers had to wait in the lounge till late in the night.

Airport authorities said factors such as poor visibility and wind factors delayed operations. However, there was no waterlogging. Flight operations normalised after midnight when the runway became clear.