

टर्मिनल-1 पर पहले दिन दो उड़ान से 350 यात्रियों का हुआ आवागमन

जयपुर में प्रदेश का पहला एयरपोर्ट जहां 2 टर्मिनल से होगा फ्लाइट ऑपरेशन

एविएशन रिपोर्टर | जयपुर

शनिवार को मुख्यमंत्री जयपुर इंटरनेशनल एयरपोर्ट के टर्मिनल-1 के उद्घाटन के बाद पहली फ्लाइट आईएक्स-196 देर रात 12:45 बजे दुबई से जयपुर पहुंची। इससे करीब 175 यात्री जयपुर आए। वहीं जयपुर से पहली फ्लाइट रविवार अल सुबह 4:45 बजे शारजाह के लिए रवाना हुई। दोनों फ्लाइट्स के करीब 350 यात्रियों का नए टर्मिनल पर स्वागत किया गया। एयरपोर्ट के एक वरिष्ठ अधिकारी ने बताया कि 75 करोड़ रुपए की लागत से बना टर्मिनल-1 करीब 11500 वर्ग मीटर क्षेत्रफल में बनाया है। यहां से 6 अंतरराष्ट्रीय शहरों के लिए 7 फ्लाइट्स संचालित होंगी। अब जयपुर एयरपोर्ट देश के उन चुनिंदा और प्रदेश का पहला एयरपोर्ट बन चुका है, जहां दो टर्मिनल



से फ्लाइट ऑपरेशन किया जाएगा। टर्मिनल-1 में सालाना 15 लाख यात्रियों का आवागमन होगा। टर्मिनल की सुरक्षा के लिए सीआईएसएफ के 100 सुरक्षाकर्मी तैनात रहेंगे। डिपार्चर क्षेत्र में 10 इमीग्रेशन काउंटर, अराइवल एरिया में विभिन्न एयरलाइंस के 14 काउंटर, 10 चेक-इन काउंटर बनाए गए हैं। वहीं ड्यूटी-फ्री आउटलेट्स के अलावा, एफएंडबी आउटलेट, मेडिकल रूम, एम्बुलेंस, वेंटिंग लाउन्ज बनाया गया है।



Corporate Communications Directorate

DESHBANDHU

DELHI

29 OCTOBER 2024

प्राधिकरण ने एयरपोर्ट के लिए रिलीज किए 486 करोड़ रुपए

नोएडा, 28 अक्टूबर (देशबन्धु)। नोएडा एयरपोर्ट पर 17 अप्रैल 2025 को पहली कामर्शियल फ्लाइट उड़ान भरेगी। एयरपोर्ट के स्टेज-2 के फेज-1 के निर्माण में अर्जित भूमि से प्रभावित ग्रामीणों के पुर्नवास के लिए नोएडा प्राधिकरण ने 486 करोड़ 30 लाख 96 हजार रुपए रिलीज कर दिया है। दरअसल नोएडा प्राधिकरण नोएडा इंटरनेशनल एयरपोर्ट कंपनी की ज्वांट वेंचर कंपनी है। साथ ही इस कंपनी में सबसे बड़ा 37.5 प्रतिशत की शेयर होल्डिंग भी रखती है। ऐसे में निर्माण से लेकर विस्थापित लोगों के पुर्नवास की जिम्मेदारी भी प्राधिकरण की है। जिसके लिए शेयर होल्डिंग के अनुसार डिमांड पर प्राधिकरण पैसा रिलीज करता है। स्टेज-2 के फेज-1 अधगृहण से सैकड़ों की सख्या में किसान और ग्रामीण प्रभावित होंगे। उनके पुर्नवास के लिए 1296 करोड़ रुपए खर्च किए जाने हैं। इसमें प्राधिकरण ने अपनी हिस्सेदारी के तहत 486 करोड़ 30 लाख 96 हजार रुपए रिलीज कर दिया है। वहीं एग्रीमेंट से लेकर 30 जून तक 2024 तक प्राधिकरण 3644 करोड़ 90 लाख रुपए से ज्यादा की रकम रिलीज कर चुका है। बता दे नोएडा इंटरनेशनल एयरपोर्ट पर 25 नवंबर के ट्रायल रन शुरू होगा। इसके बाद एयरोड्रम से अनुमति ली जाएगी। वहां से अनुमति मिलते ही 17 अप्रैल को पहले कामर्शियल फ्लाइट उड़ान भरेगी।



Corporate Communications Directorate

GREATER KASHMIR

SRINAGAR

28 OCTOBER 2024

2 cartridges recovered from MLA Veeri's baggage at Srinagar Airport

Javaid Malik
Srinagar, Oct 27

Senior National Conference (NC) leader and Member of Legislative Assembly (MLA) Bijbehera, Bashir Ahmad Shah (Veeri) was detained at Srinagar Airport following the recovery of two bullets from his luggage on Sunday.

A senior Police officer said, "He has been asked to present the license authorisation. Based on the same matter, the case will proceed accordingly."

According to the details, MLA Veeri was on his way to Jammu and during the normal scanning of his baggage at the airport, two rounds of ammunition were

- Have asked him to present license authorisation: Police
- Cartridges found in my bag were of my licensed revolver: Veeri

found inside his bag.

He was detained for questioning and taken to Humhama Police Post.

When contacted, MLA Veeri said, "Cartridges found in my bag were of my licensed revolver and these had come into my language inadvertently. The matter has been resolved."

Corporate Communications Directorate

THE MORNING STANDARD

DELHI

29 OCTOBER 2024

NIA steps up security to check threats, ropes in cyber wing at airports

MUKESH RANJAN @NewData

IN the wake of numerous threat calls to airlines, anti-terror probe agency National Investigation Agency (NIA) has deployed Bomb Threat Assessment Committee (BTAC) team with sleuths drawn from its cyber wing at each of the major aviation infrastructure facilities, officials said on Monday.

Airline operators have received more than 400 hoax calls in the past two weeks, prompting widespread concern regarding the potential implications for passenger safety and national security.

The officials said that to effectively deal with emerging situations out of such threats, the NIA cyber wing has launched a comprehensive analysis of the calls coming from overseas. Its investigation is focused on determining the motives behind threat calls and assessing their authenticity.

As part of the exercise, the NIA has deployed a BTAC team at each of the major airports and they have been tasked to step up security protocols and effectively identify and eliminate real threats before they can escalate, ensuring the safety of air travel.

A senior official said that the NIA is not acting alone as it is collaborating with various other security agencies, cooperation among them "is crucial for conducting thorough investigations into threat calls and implementing enhanced security measures at airports". He added, "By clubbing resources and



'Logistical challenge'

Hoax bomb threat calls in big numbers are not only a "logistical challenge" for security agencies, but also pose "a serious risk of diverting resources away from genuine threats", NIA officials said. Steps are being taken to scrutinise authenticity of calls.

gathering information, the agencies aim to create a robust response system capable of managing any potential threats in real time."

The official said that the BTAC team "is trained and capable of responding quickly to any reported threats or emergencies, bolstering the safety of civil aviation infrastructure across the country".

The hoax threat calls in big numbers are not only a "logistical challenge" for security agencies, but they also pose "a serious risk of diverting resources away from genuine threats". So, the steps are being taken to scrutinise the authenticity of each call rigorously, the officials said.



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE TIMES OF INDIA

AHMEDABAD

28 OCTOBER 2024

Bomb threats to 3 more flights; one grounded at city airport

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Ahmedabad: Bomb hoaxes targeting airlines continued as three more flights were mentioned in a threat mail received by authorities. While one flight from Pune to Jodhpur made an emergency landing at the city airport, the other two were mid-air and were checked after their arrival. According to airport authorities, threats were received for the Pune-Jodhpur, Amritsar-Ahmedabad and Goa-Ahmedabad flights.

"The flight was diverted to Ahmedabad airport, and the airport's Bomb Threat Assessment Committee was convened to assess the threat. The threat was declared 'non-specific', and security measures were implemented at the airport as per aviation protocols," said authorities. "Once the aircraft landed and passengers deboarded, CISF personnel conducted a security check, after which passengers were allowed to proceed to the terminal. Once cleared by all stakeholders, the flight departed to Jodhpur," they said.



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE TIMES OF INDIA

MUMBAI

28 OCTOBER 2024

MLA detained at Srinagar airport for bullets in bag

Srinagar: CISF and J&K police detained and questioned NC's Srigufwara-Bijbehara MLA, Bashir Ahmad Veeri, at Srinagar airport after security staff recovered two live pistol bullets from his baggage during an X-ray scan on Sunday.

Veeri, travelling to Jammu, was released after he told security the bullets were of his licensed pistol, for which he produced documents. TNN



Corporate Communications Directorate

AMAR UJALA

DELHI

29 OCTOBER 2024

विमान के इंटीरियर बदलने के लिए एअर इंडिया को मिली मंजूरी

नई दिल्ली। एअर इंडिया को विमान के आंतरिक सज्जा में बदलाव करने के लिए विमानन नियामक डीजीसीए की मंजूरी मिल गई है। एअर इंडिया ने अपने बड़े में विमान के अंदरूनी सजावट को बढ़ाने के लिए टाटा टेक्नोलॉजीज से करार किया है। एअर इंडिया के मुताबिक, नागरिक उड्डयन महानिदेशालय (डीजीसीए) की तरफ से उसे अपने विमानों के अंदरूनी हिस्सों में इन-हाउस जरूरी बदलाव करने के लिए आवश्यक डिजाइन संगठन अनुमोदन (डीओए) मिल गया है। व्यूरो



Corporate Communications Directorate

AMAR UJALA

DELHI

29 OCTOBER 2024

फिर 60 से अधिक विमानों को बम से उड़ाने की धमकी

नई दिल्ली। भारतीय विमानन कंपनियों को सोमवार को 60 से अधिक उड़ानों को बम से उड़ाने की धमकी मिली। भारतीय एयरलाइंस को पिछले 15 दिनों में 410 घरेलू और अंतरराष्ट्रीय उड़ानों में बम विस्फोट कराने की धमकियां मिल चुकी हैं। ज्यादातर धमकियां सोशल मीडिया के जरिये ही दी गई हैं।

सूत्रों ने बताया कि सोमवार को एअर इंडिया और इंडिगो प्रत्येक की 21 उड़ानों और विस्तारा की 20 उड़ानों में बम रखे होने की धमकी मिली। एअर इंडिया के प्रवक्ता की तरफ से बयान जारी कर कहा गया कि उसकी ज्यादातर उड़ानों को बम की धमकी सोशल मीडिया पर मिली। धमकी मिलने पर निर्धारित प्रोटोकॉल के तहत संबंधित अधिकारियों और विभागों को अलर्ट किया गया। नियामक प्राधिकरण के दिशानिर्देशों के अनुसार, सुरक्षा संबंधी जांच पड़ताल भी की गई। फर्जी धमकियों के चलते कई विमानों की आपात लैंडिंग करानी पड़ी है, कई के मार्ग बदलने पड़े और जांच पड़ताल में भी समय लगा। इससे उड़ानें प्रभावित हुईं और यात्रियों को परेशानियों का सामना करना पड़ा, साथ ही एयरलाइंस को भी नुकसान उठाना पड़ा। ब्यूरो



Corporate Communications Directorate

BUSINESS LINE

DELHI

29 OCTOBER 2024

AI suspends cabin crew as room sharing rule triggers row

Aneesh Phadnis
Mumbai

Air India has suspended 10 cabin crew who instigated protests against a new rule that mandates them to share hotel rooms during layovers.

The All India Cabin Crew Association has written to airline CEO Campbell Wilson and the chief labour commissioner objecting to the policy. "The crew have been placed under suspension pending inquiry. Disciplinary action is being taken as per law. There is no violation of DGCA norms," said a source.

The airline management had stated that the new policy harmonises practices between Vistara and Air India. Crew operating ultra-long-haul flights to the US will not be required to share rooms. Also, cabin supervisors and managers will be

entitled to a single room during layovers. But this has failed to pacify staff.

The union argued that the airline's action amounts to a violation of the Industrial Disputes Act. "We urge you not to violate the existing status quo," AICCA wrote in a letter to Wilson last Friday.

Air India did not respond to an email query on the topic.



Corporate Communications Directorate

BUSINESS STANDARD

DELHI

29 OCTOBER 2024

A-I suspends 10 cabin crew members over revised policy

Air India on Monday suspended 10 cabin crew members for allegedly instigating other members to protest against the airline's revised policy that also requires a section of them to share rooms during layovers, a source said. Meanwhile, Air India has received aviation regulator Directorate General of Civil Aviation's (DGCA's) approval to carry out modifications in aircraft interiors in-house as the Tata Group-owned airline works on revamping its fleet and expanding operations. The full-service carrier has a collaboration with Tata Technologies to enhance aircraft interiors in its fleet.

PTI



Corporate Communications Directorate

DAINIK BHASKAR

DELHI

29 OCTOBER 2024

भोपाल-पुणे फ्लाइट को मिला रहा अच्छा रिस्पॉन्स इंडिगो की पुणे फ्लाइट का किराया 15 हजार तक पहुंचा

ट्रांसपोर्ट रिपोर्टर | भोपाल

राजाभोज एयरपोर्ट पर रविवार तड़के शुरू हुई इंडिगो की भोपाल-पुणे फ्लाइट को शुरुआत से ही खासा रिस्पॉन्स मिल रहा है। फिलहाल पुणे से भोपाल आने का किराया 15 हजार रुपए तक पहुंच गया है। यह किराया सामान्य बुकिंग के किराए 3753 से करीब 5 गुना है। हालांकि भोपाल से जिन लोगों को पुणे जाना है, अधिकतर बुकिंग 2 नवंबर या उसके बाद की तारीखों की हैं। इंडिगो के अधिकारियों का कहना है कि हमने दीपावली पर होने वाली यात्रियों की बुकिंग को देखते हुए 186 सीटर एयर बस से इस फ्लाइट का संचालन शुरू किया है।

विंटर सीजन की शुरुआत इस बार इंडिगो की पुणे फ्लाइट के जरिए राजा भोज एयरपोर्ट पर हुई। उसी रात यह पहली ऐसी फ्लाइट भी रही, जिसके माध्यम से एयरपोर्ट पर 24 घंटे व सातों दिन के ऑपरेशन की शुरुआत नाइट फ्लाइट के माध्यम से भी हुई। हालांकि अभी किसी अन्य स्थान या डेस्टिनेशन के लिए फ्लाइट शुरू होने में कुछ समय लग सकता है। अधिकारियों का कहना है कि नवंबर के महीने में इंडिगो की एक-दो वे फ्लाइट्स शुरू हो सकती हैं, जिनके स्लॉट कंपनी ने लिए हैं और एयरक्राफ्ट की कमी के चलते उनकी शुरुआत अक्टूबर अंत में नहीं हो पा रही है।



Corporate Communications Directorate

DECCAN HERALD

BANGALORE

28 OCTOBER 2024

50 flights get fresh bomb threats; 375 such cases in two weeks

Considering amending two civil aviation laws, says Union minister

NEW DELHI, DHNS & PTI

At least 50 flights operated by Indian airlines received bomb threats on Sunday, even as Civil Aviation Minister K Rammohan Naidu said the government is also taking the support of international agencies to prevent it.

With this, flights operated by Indian carriers getting threats have risen to over 350 in the past 14 days. On Saturday, at least 13 flights received threats but were declared hoax messages.

On Sunday, Akasa Air said 15 of its flights received threats. Officials said 18 flights of IndiGo and 17 flights of Vistara received threats.

According to an IndiGo statement, the flights that received security-related alerts include 6E 11 (Delhi-Istanbul),

6E 92 (Jeddah-Mumbai), 6E 112 (Goa-Ahmedabad), 6E 125 (Bengaluru-Jharsuguda), 6E 127 (Amritsar-Ahmedabad) and 6E 135 (Kolkata-Pune).

Among others are 6E 149 (Hyderabad to Bagdogra), 6E 173 (Delhi to Bengaluru), 6E 175 (Bengaluru to Delhi), 6E 197 (Raipur to Hyderabad), 6E 248 (Mumbai to Kolkata), 6E 277 (Ahmedabad-Lucknow), 6E 312 (Bengaluru to Kolkata), 6E 235 (Kolkata-Bengaluru) and 6E 74 (Riyadh-Mumbai).

After formally inaugurating two flights between Visakhapatnam and Vijayawada, Naidu said that besides taking support from international agencies, law enforcement wings, and the Intelligence Bureau to prevent these fake threats, the Union government is also considering amending two

Civil Aviation Laws.

"We are also taking the support of international agencies, law enforcement agencies, and the Intelligence Bureau to prevent these. We are planning to bring changes to two civil aviation laws. Those who resort to these kinds of activities will be punished severely and imposed a penalty. We are also taking steps to ban such persons from flying. We will announce them in the coming days," he told reporters in Visakhapatnam.

Naidu also said an investigation into these fake threats is going on seriously, and the cooperation of social media platform 'X' is being sought.

Against the backdrop of a spate of hoax bomb threats to airlines, the Ministry of Information and Technology has asked social media platforms to report such threats to law enforcement agencies besides observing due diligence obligations and promptly remove or disable access to misinformation within the strict timelines prescribed under IT rules.



Corporate Communications Directorate

DAINIK JAGRAN

DELHI

29 OCTOBER 2024

लखनऊ में एअर इंडिया के विमान की इमरजेंसी लैंडिंग

जासं, लखनऊ: दिल्ली से लखनऊ आए एअर इंडिया के विमान की सोमवार को लखनऊ के चौधरी चरण सिंह हवाई अड्डे पर इमरजेंसी लैंडिंग कराई गई। दो बार लैंडिंग का प्रयास असफल रहने पर वाराणसी के लिए डायवर्जन मांगा गया, लेकिन ईंधन कम होने की वजह से अनुमति नहीं मिल सकी। इसके बाद विमान को लखनऊ में ही उतारा गया। विमान में 202 यात्री सवार थे।

एअर इंडिया के विमान एआइ 431 ने सोमवार को दिल्ली से 12:37 बजे उड़ान भरी थी। यह विमान लखनऊ एयरपोर्ट पर करीब 26 मिनट के विलंब से दोपहर 1:56 बजे ब्रमुशिकल उतरा। लखनऊ एयरपोर्ट पर दोपहर का समय काफी व्यस्त होता है। सूत्र बताते हैं कि विमान ने चक्कर लगाकर एयरपोर्ट पर लैंडिंग का प्रयास किया, लेकिन उस वक्त कई विमान पहले से लैंडिंग के लिए कतार में थे। इसके बाद यह जानकारी एटीसी को दी गई और लो फ्यूल इमरजेंसी की वजह से विमान को लखनऊ एयरपोर्ट पर आपात लैंडिंग कराई गई।

62 और विमानों को बम से उड़ाने की मिली धमकी, आइबी भी जांच में जुटी

15 दिनों में 410 से अधिक उड़ानों को मिल चुकी हैं ऐसी धमकियां

जेएनएन, नई दिल्ली : विमानों को बम से उड़ाने की धमकी देने का सिलसिला थम नहीं रहा। सोमवार को भी 60 से ज्यादा विमानों को बम से उड़ाने की धमकी मिली। पिछले 15 दिनों में भारतीय विमान कंपनियों की 410 से अधिक राष्ट्रीय-अंतरराष्ट्रीय उड़ानों को ऐसी धमकियां मिल चुकी हैं। अधिकांश धमकियां इंटरनेट मीडिया से मिली हैं।

सूत्रों ने बताया कि सोमवार को एअर इंडिया व इंडिगो की 21-21 और विस्तारा की 20 फ्लाइटों को बम से उड़ाने की धमकी मिली। जांच एजेंसियों और एयरपोर्ट टीमों की छानबीन के बाद ये धमकियां फर्जी पाई गईं। हालांकि जांच के चलते कई फ्लाइटें देरी रवाना हुईं।

उधर, मुंबई पुलिस ने उस व्यक्ति के खिलाफ मामला दर्ज किया है, जिसने दिल्ली एयरपोर्ट कंट्रोल रूम को काल करके यह झूठा दावा किया था कि मुंबई-दिल्ली उड़ान में महिला यात्री गौरी भरवानी के पास बम है।



काल करने वाले ने महिला यात्री को मानव बम बताया था और कहा था कि वह अपने प्रेमी से मिलने के लिए 90 लाख रुपये लेकर जा रही है। उसने दावा किया कि महिला दिल्ली से उज्बेकिस्तान जाएगी। अधिकारियों ने बताया कि इस संदेश पर तत्काल अलर्ट जारी किया गया था।

हवाई अड्डा प्रशासन और जांच एजेंसियों ने सघन अभियान चलाया। विमान में ऐसी कोई महिला नहीं मिली। मुंबई की सहार पुलिस जब कालर के बताए पते पर पहुंची तो पता चला कि भरवानी काफी पहले अंधेरी छोड़कर जा चुकी है। एक अधिकारी ने बताया कि महिला से जब संपर्क किया गया तो उसने बताया कि उसने कभी विमान की कोई टिकट बुक नहीं की।

इस बीच, विमानों को लगातार बम की धमकियां मिलने के मामले की जांच में इंटेलिजेंस ब्यूरो (आइबी) की टीम भी जुटी है। आइबी के एक अधिकारी ने कहा कि हमारे सामने जो सबसे बड़ी और एकमात्र समस्या आ रही है, वह है अपराधियों द्वारा वर्चुअल प्राइवेट नेटवर्क यानी वीपीएन और डार्क वेब का इस्तेमाल। इससे अपराधियों का पता लगाना बड़ा मुश्किल हो जाता है। हालांकि जिन इंटरनेट मीडिया प्लेटफॉर्मों से ये धमकियां मिल रही हैं, वे कानून प्रवर्तन एजेंसियों को इन धमकियों को देने वालों के खातों के मूल विवरण प्रदान कर रहे हैं लेकिन वीपीएन के इस्तेमाल की वजह से हम उनके मूल आइपी एड्रेस तक नहीं पहुंच पा रहे हैं।

उधर, इस मामले में केंद्रीय नागरिक उड्डयन मंत्री राम मोहन नायडू ने कहा कि अंतरराष्ट्रीय एजेंसियों, ला इंफोसमेंट विंग और आइबी का सहयोग लिया जा रहा है।



Corporate Communications Directorate

DAINIK JAGRAN

DELHI

29 OCTOBER 2024

हम छोटे शहरों तक पहुंचा रहे एयर-कनेक्टिविटी : पीएम मोदी

प्रथम पृष्ठ से आगे

प्रधानमंत्री नरेन्द्र मोदी ने कहा कि हम देश के सैकड़ों छोटे शहरों तक एयर-कनेक्टिविटी पहुंचा रहे हैं। भारत को उड़डयन और विमानों के रखरखाव व मरम्मत का हब बनाने का भी काम हो रहा है। यह ईकोसिस्टम भविष्य में मेड इन इंडिया नागरिक विमानों का रास्ता भी बनाएगा। भारतीय विमानन कंपनियों की तरफ से पिछले दिनों 1,200 विमानों का आर्डर दिए जाने के संदर्भ में पीएम ने कहा कि अब ये कंपनियां दूसरे देशों को आर्डर नहीं दे पाएंगी।

पीएम ने कहा, सी-295 विमान का यह संयंत्र नए भारत की नई कार्य संस्कृति को प्रदर्शित करता है, जिसमें किसी परियोजना के विचार से लेकर उसे क्रियान्वित करने की गति को देखा जा सकता है। पीएम ने इस मौके पर दिवंगत रतन टाटा को भी याद किया।

मोदी ने कहा कि एयरबस और टाटा के इस संयंत्र से हजारों रोजगार सृजित होंगे। बाद में विदेश मंत्रालय ने बताया कि इस संयंत्र में तीन हजार लोगों को सीधे और इससे जुड़ी कंपनियों के जरिये 10 हजार लोगों को रोजगार मिलेगा। पीएम ने कहा, यह रक्षा निर्यात में भारत की स्थिति और मजबूत करेगा। 10 वर्ष पहले कोई कल्पना भी नहीं कर पाता कि भारत में बड़े पैमाने पर रक्षा उत्पादन हो सकता है। देश ने अनेक फैसले लिए, जिससे भारत में एक वाइब्रेंट डिफेंस इंडस्ट्री का विकास हुआ।

वहीं, टाटा संस के चेयरमैन एन. चंद्रशेखरन ने कहा, ठीक दो वर्ष बाद कंपनी पहले स्वदेश निर्मित सी-295 विमान की आपूर्ति कर देगी। उन्होंने कहा कि यह भारत के रक्षा क्षेत्र के लिए बेहद अहम दिन है। उन्होंने एक दशक पहले 2012 में इस परियोजना की परिकल्पना के लिए रतन टाटा के दूरदर्शी नेतृत्व को श्रेय दिया।

Hit by Mid-War Turbulence...

Moscow Issues a Mayday Call to Indian Airlines

Wants carriers to operate flights in Russia; not viable, airlines tell Delhi

Arindam Majumder

New Delhi: Russia has made a proposal to allow Indian airlines to operate local flights within its territory, as its own carriers are unable to meet demand because of Western sanctions cutting off their access to US and European aircraft manufacturers and component supplies.

Russia approached India as well as China and a few Central Asian nations a month back, with a 'cabotage' proposal to allow their airlines to operate flights on its domestic routes, people aware of the development said. The matter was again raised during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Russia last week for the BRICS summit, they said.

However, Indian airlines have expressed reservations over the proposal and told the government that it would not be viable for them to operate within Russia, the people said.

'Aircraft Shortage' >> 21

Sanctions Bite

Before Ukraine war, Boeing and Airbus planes accounted for major share of Russian airline fleet



Due to sanctions, all deliveries halted, routed to airlines of other countries

Air India got early delivery of six Airbus A350s meant for Russian carrier Aeroflot

Western cos have stopped supply of components and software to Russia



771 aircraft in service in Russia, compared with 874 in 2019

India among a few nations that allow Russian carriers to operate flights

Air India continues to operate flights through Russian airspace

'Aircraft Shortage'

>> From Page 1

Companies that leased aircraft to them and insurers would not be amenable to such arrangements due to the Western sanctions on Russia over the Ukraine war, and they are also facing a shortage of airliners to operate locally, the carriers have told the government.

Cabotage is the right for an airline to carry domestic passengers within the territory of a foreign country. Only Australia and New Zealand currently allow cabotage facilities to each other.

India's ministry of civil aviation and the Russian Embassy in New Delhi didn't respond to queries on the topic.

"Most of the fleet of Indian carriers are leased and lessors will not give permission for their planes to go to Russia. Along with that we risk losing insurance covers," a senior airline executive said. "There is a tremendous aircraft shortage and we are not being able to cater to our planned expansion. In such a situation, it looks unlikely that such a project will be undertaken."

Before the Ukraine war, Boeing and Airbus planes accounted for a major share of the fleet of Russian airlines.

However, due to the sanctions, all planned deliveries have been halted and delivered to airlines of other countries. Tata Group-owned Air India got early delivery of six Airbus A350s which were originally intended for Russian carrier Aeroflot.

Also, Western companies have stopped supply of components and software



to Russia.

Aircraft require continuous component replacements and regular software upgrades, as well as a regimen of checks and in the absence of that, Russian planes are facing long grounding.

This has severely hit expansion. According to data from aviation consultancy CAPA, the domestic seats offered by Russian carriers currently are at or just above the 2019 levels. The number of aircraft in service is 771 against 874 in 2019.

"The Russian government's forecast of passenger traffic for the country's airlines in 2027 is a sign of a muted future for a once dynamic market. Looking ahead to 2027, it forecasts that Russian airlines will carry 98.8 million passengers — barely changed from 2024's figure," CAPA said.

Trade relations between India and Russia have surged despite US and European sanctions, with India among a few nations allowing Russian carriers to operate flights. Air India remains one of the few airlines that continue to operate flights through Russian airspace, gaining an advantage over European and US rivals due to the shorter flight time.

MODI, SPANISH PM INAUGURATE TATA-AIRBUS FACILITY FOR C295 AIRCRAFT

New Complex Will Pave Way for Making Civil Aircraft: PM

Says it reflects work culture of a New India and is in line with the 'Make in India, Make for the World' slogan

Our Political Bureau

New Delhi | Vadodara: The new Tata-Airbus aircraft complex, that will produce the C295 military transport aircraft, can pave the way for developing and manufacturing civil aircraft to meet the needs of India and the world in the future, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Monday.

Speaking after inaugurating the complex with his Spanish counterpart Pedro Sanchez, the Prime Minister stressed that the facility reflects the work culture of a new India and is in line with the 'Make in India, Make for the World' slogan.

The complex in Vadodara will produce at least 52 of the military transport aircraft, with the first expected to be ready by 2026. Noting the growing demand of civil aircraft in India, the PM said that domestic airlines have ordered 1,200 planes in the recent past as air connectivity is being increased to hundreds of small cities as well.

The newly-inaugurated factory will play a major role in designing and manufacturing civil aircraft in the future, he said, adding that



PM Narendra Modi and his Spanish counterpart Pedro Sanchez at the Tata Aircraft Complex after its inauguration in Vadodara

work is ongoing to make India a hub for aviation, including Maintenance Repair and Overhaul. Modi also expressed confidence that the Tata-Airbus complex will also export aircraft in the future.

Taking a shot at the Opposition, he said that a decade ago, the priority and identity of the Indian defence sector was about imports. "We expanded private sector participation in defence manufacturing, made public sector units more efficient, restructured ordnance factories into seven major companies, and empowered DRDO and HAL," he said.

The new facility has come up as part of a ₹21,935 crore deal signed by the defence ministry in September 2021 to procure 56 of the military transport aircraft.

A further order of 15 aircraft for the Navy and Coast Guard is also being processed. While the first Indian made C295 is expected to roll out in September 2026, six aircraft have already been supplied from an Airbus production line in Spain.

'CENTRE, MAHA GOVT CONSPIRED'

'Surrender' of Maha interests: Cong



New Delhi: The Congress on Monday claimed that the Tata-Airbus C-295 aircraft facility inaugurated in Vadodara was earlier supposed to be set up in Nagpur and alleged that under PM Narendra Modi's instructions, the Centre and Mahayuti dispensation have conspired to ensure the "wholesale surrender" of Maharashtra's interests. – PTI



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE ECONOMIC TIMES

DELHI

29 OCTOBER 2024

Taxman Stumps Irish Firms, Upturns Aircraft Deals

India and Ireland's tax treaty benefits under lens post global pact to plug loopholes; I-T dept has served notices to offshore airline leasing firms

Sugata Ghosh & Forum Gandhi

Mumbai: For decades, Ireland has been the hub for companies leasing out aircraft to airlines in India. But now, a question mark looms over such deals. In a turn of events that could change the way local airlines acquire planes, at least three Irish companies have been denied tax benefits (provided under the treaty between the two countries) by the Indian Income Tax (I-T department).

In the notices served to these offshore firms, the taxman has built its case on the grounds that the prime reason for these lessors to operate from Ireland is to escape tax on the operating lease rental they earned from airlines in India.

By virtue of a tax-friendly treaty between India and Ireland, such earnings are neither taxed in Ireland nor are the airlines required to withhold any tax before paying out the rental to foreign lessors.

However, this arithmetic is under

scrutiny as India as well as Ireland (besides with many countries) are signatories to BEPS Multilateral Instrument (MLI) which is an internationally co-ordinated measure to plug loopholes in tax treaties.

The matters, pertaining to 2020-21 lease rentals, are lying before the dispute resolution panel (DRP), an alternative mechanism steered by 3 I-T commissioners. According to the 'principal purpose test' (PPT) under MLI, a benefit under a tax treaty would be denied if it is

concluded that obtaining tax benefit was one of the principal purposes of an arrangement or transaction. Pitted against this doctrine, foreign leasing companies would try to convince the DRP that it wasn't the tax advantage that took them to Ireland, but there are genuine commercial reasons in setting up shop there.

Like real estate projects, every air-

Under Scrutiny

~1,700 aircraft
Indian aviation industry's total order book

Registrations from **30 aircraft leasing cos** have happened at IFSC Gift City

Indian carriers to have a combined fleet of **806-811 aircraft** by March 2025 (CAPA India)



Over **60%** of leased aircraft worldwide are managed by Irish-based leasing cos (PWC)



BHAVIN G

craft lease is done through separate special purpose vehicles (SPVs) to manage cash flows and make them bankruptcy remote. However, these SPVs have drawn the attention of the tax office as these entities come across as pass-through structures which do not hire separately but are serviced by employees of the parent lessor.

ADVANTAGE GIFT?

Interestingly, the story is playing out at a point when GIFT City is marketing the advantages of setting up an aircraft leasing business in the International Financial Services Centre in Gujarat. Besides a 10-year tax holiday (on lease rentals), the rent paid out by a GIFT company to a lessor in another ju-

risdiction is also spared of any withholding tax rule.

Under the circumstances, a foreign lessor currently operating from Ireland can set up a company in GIFT to lease in aircraft and then lease them out to airlines in India. Here, the GIFT entity will not have to deduct tax before paying out the rental to the original lessor in Ireland. It may also earn a margin from the two legs of the transactions.

"Some of the foreign lessors may not be averse to the idea of setting up outfits in GIFT. In fact, there are reports of airlines in India entering into lease deals with some GIFT firms for engines, supporting equipment and even aircraft acquisition. But these companies have another concern: what if the I-T department invokes GAAR on the grounds that a GIFT entity does not have adequate 'substance' and was formed simply to save tax?," said an industry person familiar with the developments.

GAAR or general anti-avoidance rule, under the tax law, aims to strip tax benefits in a transaction or business arrangement that lacks commercial substance (like paper companies with no office or staff).

According to tax circles, the outcome of DRP proceedings could vary from case to case. "For instance, an old established company may have a better chance before the DRP than a lessor who started operations in Ireland only a few years ago," said a senior tax practitioner. In buttressing its point that most lessors were lured by the tax exemption in Ireland, the I-T department has referred to a representation by the lessor industry body that Ireland should sign similar tax treaties with other countries.

"Will the tax disputes indirectly benefit GIFT? We don't know. These are early days and it's the first time aircraft lease deals are being tested by the principles of MLI," said an industry person.



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE FINANCIAL EXPRESS

DELHI

29 OCTOBER 2024

AIR INDIA FIRST TO MODIFY AIRCRAFT INTERIORS IN-HOUSE



TATA GROUP-OWNED

Air India has become
the first Indian airline
to be allowed to

modify the interiors of its
aircraft, in-house. The company
on Monday said it has received
"design organisation approval"
approval from the Directorate
General of Civil Aviation (DGCA).
It is working with Pune-based
Tata Technologies to execute
restoration tasks for the fleet.
This comes at a time when flight
delays and ageing fleet are
making it difficult for Air India to
compete with rivals like Dubai's
Emirates and Qatar Airways.

FINANCIAL EXPRESS
READ TO LEAD



Boeing to raise \$22 bn to shore up finances

Offer includes 90-mn common stock, \$5-bn convertible stock

UTKARSH SHETTI
October 28

BOEING ON MONDAY launched a stock offering that could raise up to \$2.2 billion as the planemaker looks to strengthen its finances squeezed by an over-month-long strike by its workers and preserve its investment-grade credit rating.

The move will boost Boeing's battered finances, which have worsened since roughly 33,000 of its workers represented by the machinists union walked off their jobs in September, halting production of models including its cash-cow 737 MAX aircraft.

The company is offering 90 million in common stock and \$5 billion in mandatory convertible securities.

"The offering is certainly favourable for credit quality. We'll factor it into our assessment of the rating in the context of continued negative free cash flow," said Ben Tsocanos, aerospace director at S&P Global Ratings.

Boeing has never fallen below the investment-grade rating.

If the primary offering is oversubscribed, the company has an option to issue 13.5 million shares more and can increase the mandatory con-



THWARTING DOWNGRADE

■ If the primary offering is oversubscribed, the firm has an option to issue 13.5 million shares more and can increase the mandatory convertible offering by \$750 million

■ Rating agencies have warned that a prolonged strike may lead to a downgrade in the planemaker's credit rating, likely pushing up the cost of capital

vertible offering by another \$750 million, according to a termsheet seen by Reuters.

Based on Friday's closing price, Boeing can raise \$13.95 billion from the common stock offering and an additional \$2.1 billion if the issue is oversubscribed, though such issues are typically priced at a discount to ensure enough demand. It can also raise up to \$5.75 billion from the mandatory convertible offering, the termsheet said.

The offerings are expected to be priced after markets close on Monday. Shares were last down 1.8% in morning trading.

The mandatory convertible securities are being marketed to investors with a dividend range of 6.0% to 6.5%, and a premium of 17.5% to 22.5% to the stock's last closing price of

\$155.01, for when they convert into shares at or before the maturity date of October 15, 2027. A capital raise is essential for Boeing to preserve its investment-grade credit rating. Rating agencies have warned that a prolonged strike may lead to a downgrade in the planemaker's credit rating, likely pushing up the cost of capital.

The planemaker was already reeling under a regulator-imposed cap on production of its MAX jets after a January mid-air panel blowout.

The combination of labour woes and its production problems have caused it to burn cash in the last three quarters. Last week, the company reported a \$6 billion third-quarter loss and said it would burn cash next year.

—REUTERS

मोदी बोले : जल्द विमानों के निर्यातक बनेंगे, स्पेन से संबंध मजबूत होंगे

भारत विमान निर्माण क्षेत्र में ऊंची उड़ान को तैयार

वडोदरा, विशेष संवाददाता। प्रधानमंत्री नरेंद्र मोदी और स्पेन के राष्ट्रपति पेद्रो सांचेज ने सोमवार को वडोदरा में सी-295 सैन्य विमान बनाने के लिए टाटा एडवांस्ड सिस्टम लिमिटेड (टीएसएल)-एयरबस फैक्ट्री का उद्घाटन किया।

इस अवसर पर प्रधानमंत्री ने कहा कि इस सुविधा के स्थापित होने से सैन्य विमान ही नहीं, नागरिक विमान बनाने का रास्ता भी खुलेगा। मोदी ने कहा कि यह कारखाना न केवल भारत-स्पेन संबंधों को मजबूत करेगी, बल्कि मेक इन इंडिया, मेक फॉर द वर्ल्ड के हमारे मिशन को भी बढ़ावा देगी। उन्होंने कहा कि इस सुविधा में निर्मित विमान भविष्य में निर्यात भी किए जाएंगे।

पीएम ने कहा, देश में लड़ाकू विमान तैयार करने का निर्माण किया जाता है। पहली बार निजी क्षेत्र के कारखाने में सैन्य परिवहन विमान सी-295 का निर्माण अब शुरू हो चुका है। दो साल बाद वायुसेना को पहला विमान मिलेगा। उन्होंने कहा, देश में हेलीकॉप्टर और ट्रेनर विमान बनाए जाते हैं, लेकिन नागरिक विमान का सपना पूरा नहीं हुआ है। क्षेत्रीय कनेक्टिविटी के लिए हमें हजारों विमानों की जरूरत है।

वडोदरा में सी-295 विमान निर्माण इकाई शुरू



वडोदरा में सोमवार को स्पेन के राष्ट्रपति पेद्रो सांचेज के साथ प्रधानमंत्री नरेंद्र मोदी।

परिवहन विमान निर्माण से आगे देख रहे: प्रधानमंत्री ने कहा कि वे इस कार्यक्रम को परिवहन विमान के निर्माण से आगे बढ़कर देख रहे हैं। पिछले एक दशक में भारत के उड्डयन क्षेत्र में अभूतपूर्व वृद्धि हुई है। छोटे शहरों को वायु सेवाओं से जोड़ा जा रहा है। देश को विमानन और रखरखाव, मरम्मत तथा संचालन (एमआरओ) हब बनाने

के प्रयास हो रहे हैं। जो परिवेशी तंत्र तैयार हुआ है, वह भारत में नागरिक विमान के निर्माण का रास्ता बनाएगा। स्पेन के राष्ट्रपति पेद्रो सांचेज की मौजूदगी में पीएम ने कहा कि भारतीय विमान कंपनियों ने 1200 विमान का खरीदने का ऑर्डर दिया है। यह इतना बड़ा है कि कंपनी अब किसी और देश का ऑर्डर नहीं ले पाएगी। एयरबस

40 विमानों का उत्पादन वडोदरा इकाई में किया जाएगा

02 वर्षों में वायुसेना को पहला विमान मिल जाएगा

भारत-स्पेन में कई समझौते

भारत और स्पेन के बीच सोमवार को वडोदरा में बुनियादी ढांचे, रेल परिवहन, पर्यटन, संस्कृति सहित कई क्षेत्रों में अहम समझौते हुए। प्रधानमंत्री नरेंद्र मोदी और स्पेन के राष्ट्रपति पेद्रो सांचेज ने द्विपक्षीय बैठक के दौरान सहमति पत्रों पर हस्ताक्षर किए। प्रधानमंत्री ने कहा कि स्पेन के राष्ट्रपति पेद्रो सांचेज की भारत यात्रा ने दोनों देशों के संबंधों में नई ऊर्जा और उत्साह का संचार किया है। > **व्योरा POS**

और टाटा को फैक्ट्री से हजारों रोजगार सृजित होंगे। इस प्रोजेक्ट से एयरक्राफ्ट के 18 हजार पार्ट्स का घरेलू निर्माण होने जा रहा है। देश के किसी हिस्से से एक पुर्जा बनेगा तो दूसरे हिस्से में दूसरा। सूक्ष्म एवं लघु उद्योग इस कार्य में नेतृत्व प्रदान करेंगे। स्पेन से हुए समझौते के तहत वडोदरा संयंत्र में 40 विमान बनाए जाएंगे।

त्योहारी सीजन के दौरान बड़ी संख्या में समय पर नहीं उड़ पा रहे विमान

धमकियों के बीच विमान से सफर करना मुश्किल

चिंता

नई दिल्ली, विशेष संवाददाता। नागरिक विमानों को लगातार बम से उड़ाने की धमकियां मिल रही हैं। बीते करीब दो सप्ताह के अंदर 350 से अधिक विमानों में बम रखने होने की झूठी सूचना मिली।

ऐसे में प्रोटोकॉल के तहत विमान की पुनः जांच करने से लेकर सुरक्षा क्लियरेंस मिलने में प्रति विमान को औसतन छह से आठ घंटे का अतिरिक्त समय लगा। कुछ विमानों का रूट परिवर्तित कर उन्हें जांच के लिए सुरक्षित स्थानों पर उतारा गया। रूट परिवर्तित होने वाले विमानों के गंतव्य स्थल पर पहुंचने में कई बार एक दिन से ज्यादा का भी समय लग जा रहा है। ऐसी स्थिति में विमान से सफर करने वाले लोगों के लिए मुश्किलें बढ़ गई हैं।

त्योहारी मौसम में बड़ी संख्या में विमानों को उड़ान समय पर शुरू नहीं हो पा रही है। धमकियों के बीच हर विमान की अतिरिक्त जांच की जा रही है, जिससे अतिरिक्त समय लग रहा है।

सोमवार को इंडिगो का 6ई 208 विमान हैदराबाद से विशाखापट्टनम के लिए 2:10 मिनट की देरी से भी उड़ान नहीं भर पाया, जिसको लेकर विमान से सफर करने वाले एक यात्री ने इंडिगो को टैग करते हुए देरी का कारण पूछा, जिसके जवाब में इंडिगो ने कहा कि ऑपरेशनल कारण के चलते देरी हो रही है, इसलिए इस असुविधा के लिए खेद है। इसी तरह से अंकित जैन ने

08 घंटे की होती है देरी
विमानों की जांच, सुरक्षा
क्लीयरेंस मिलने में

350 से अधिक विमानों में
बम की धमकी मिली
अक्टूबर में अब तक

धमकी मिलने से छह से आठ घंटे की देरी

धमकी के बीच विमानों की अंतरराष्ट्रीय मानकों के हिसाब से सुरक्षा जांच की जाती है। इसमें अगर किसी विमान ने उड़ान नहीं भरी है तो उसकी उड़ान को रोककर हवाई अड्डे पर सुरक्षित स्थान पर ले जाया जाता है, जिसके बाद यात्रियों को उतारकर उनकी गहनता से जांच की जाती है। सुरक्षा एजेंसी जब तक यह सुनिश्चित नहीं कर लेती है कि विमान में कोई ऐसी चीज नहीं है, जिससे खतरा हो सकता है। तब तक यात्रियों को दोबारा बैठने की इजाजत नहीं दी जाती। उधर, अगर कोई विमान उड़ान भर चुका है तो उसे सबसे पहले सुरक्षित एयरपोर्ट पर



उतारा जाता है। अगर विमान उसी एयरपोर्ट पर उतरा है, जिसके लिए उसने उड़ान भरी थी, तब भी यात्रियों को सुरक्षा जांच पूरी होने के बाद ही बाहर जाने की इजाजत दी जाती है। ऐसी स्थिति में यात्रियों को जांच के बाद अपना सामान लेने में आठ से 10 घंटे तक का समय लग रहा है।

यात्रियों को एयरपोर्ट पर देरी से मिल रहा सामान

इंशिता राजकुमारी ने रविवार को लिखा कि मेरी फ्लाइट को गुवाहटी में उतरना था लेकिन मुंबई में 10 घंटे से ज्यादा की देरी से उतरी है। अब एक घंटे से ज्यादा का समय हो गया है लेकिन अभी तक हमें सामान नहीं मिला है। इसलिए मुझे हुई क्षतिपूर्ति की भरपाई की जाए। उधर, शुभ राठी ने एयर इंडिया को टैग करते हुए लिखा कि 40 घंटे से अधिक हो गए हैं लेकिन मुझे मेरे बैग के बारे में कोई जानकारी नहीं मिली है। मेरी तरफ से सारी जानकारी शेयर की जा चुकी है। जबकि बैग में मेरी कीमती सामान और शादी में पहनने के कपड़े भी हैं।

सोमवार शाम चार बजे सोशल मीडिया एक्स पर पोस्ट किया कि मेरी मुंबई से बैंगलूर जाने वाली फ्लाइट 2:15 पर रवाना होनी थी लेकिन लंबी देरी के बाद अभी तक विमान में बैठकर मुंबई रनवे पर इंतजार कर रहा हूँ। यह किसी एक मार्ग की कहानी नहीं है, अन्य

हवाई मार्गों पर भी उड़ान सेवा देरी से शुरू हो रही है, जिसके पीछे एक मुख्य कारण सुरक्षा के मद्देनजर अतिरिक्त जांच और जिन विमानों में बम की धमकी मिल रही है, उनके लिए विशेष जांच और अतिरिक्त सावधानी बरते जाने से सेवाएं बाधित हो रही हैं।

Govt yet to name civil aviation security chief

Prawesh Lama

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NEW DELHI: The government is yet to appoint the new chief of the Bureau of Civil Aviation and Security (BCAS), even as the current director general (DG) is set to retire on October 31.

Officials in the agency, which oversees aviation security said the appointment is important because BCAS is front-and-centre of the response to bomb threats that the country's airlines have been besieged by over the past month. A senior Indian Police Service officer of director general/police commissioner rank is usually appointed DG (BCAS). The current chief, Zulfiqar Hasan is an IPS officer of the 1988 batch.

Appointing a chief for BCAS before Hasan's superannuation is also important because the post of joint director general (JDG) of BCAS has also been vacant for over 10 months. The joint director general (JDG) too is a senior IPS officer, who functions as the chief's deputy and works from BCAS headquarters in New Delhi.

A mid-level officer in BCAS, who asked not to be named, said: "The last joint director general, Jaideep Prasad was repatriated to his parent cadre, Madhya Pradesh (MP) police as the additional director general (ADG) MP police last year. He is an officer of the 1995 batch Indian Police Service. No officer has joined as the joint director general here. After the DG, the other IPS officers in BCAS are from junior batches."

In October alone, airports, flight operators, police, and CISF units across different states received over 300 bomb threats. All were hoaxes, but they still disrupted flight operations and resulted in losses to the airlines; and in each case, the airline and security agen-

Over 60 Indian carriers get bomb threats; 410 in 15 days

NEW DELHI: More than 60 flights of Indian carriers received bomb threats on Monday, sources said.

In 15 days, over 410 domestic and international flights operated by the Indian carriers have received hoax bomb threats. Most of the threats were issued through social media.

The sources in the know said around 21 flights each of Air India and IndiGo, and about 20 flights of Vistara received the threats on Monday. An Air India spokesperson said a number of its flights were subject to security threats received on social media on Monday.

"Following the laid down

protocols, relevant authorities were immediately alerted, and all security procedures strictly adhered to, as per guidance from the regulatory authorities," the spokesperson said.

Meanwhile, against the backdrop of a spate of hoax bomb threats to airlines, the IT Ministry has asked social media platforms to observe due diligence obligations and promptly remove or disable access to misinformation within the strict timelines prescribed under IT rules.

Also, the civil aviation ministry is looking to take legislative actions to tackle the menace of the hoax bomb threats to airlines. **PTI**

cies had to follow the prescribed protocol. The BCAS chief has been part of all important meetings with the civil aviation minister, home secretary and chiefs of other agencies handling such threats. Airports such as Delhi, Mumbai and Lucknow have been on high alert for several hours on different days due to the threats.

A senior IPS officer, who asked not to be named, said that if the government doesn't appoint a new chief by Wednesday, it is likely that a serving DG from a paramilitary force could be given charge of BCAS. The officer said that BCAS along with the civil aviation ministry is also in the process of making changes to the security protocol when such threats are received. "The order was expected last week. On Saturday the govern-

ment repatriated DOPT Vivek Joshi to the Haryana cadre. The current Haryana chief secretary is retiring on October 31. Joshi, being the seniormost in the cadre, is likely the next chief secretary. As his order was issued on Saturday, many senior IPS officers too were expecting a similar order related to BCAS. Most probably, the new officer will be from 1991, 1992 or 1993 batch," this person added.

BCAS is primarily responsible for prescribing security measures by laying Aviation Security Standards in accordance with Annexure 17 to Chicago Convention of ICAO for airport operators, airlines operators, and their security agencies. CISF implements the rules prescribed by BCAS. It is also involved in planning and coordination of aviation security matters.

{ HOAX BOMB THREATS }

Govt issues advisory to social media firms

Aditi Agrawal

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NEW DELHI: Social media companies must remove hoax bomb threats from their platform within the prescribed legal time frame, report them to the government agencies concerned, and share information about such posts and users with the authorised agencies within 72 hours, or they could be treated as abettors and be held liable for consequential actions under Indian laws, the ministry of electronics and information technology said in an advisory issued on Friday, following a spate of hoax bomb threats that hit the aviation sector earlier this month.

It also said that they must provide all information under their control to authorised government agencies within 72 hours so that the agencies can identify the perpetrators and begin proceedings against them.

"[T]here is an additional liability on concerned intermediaries under the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023 ["BNSS"] to mandatorily report certain offences perceived to be committed by any user of their platform that includes, among others, any act with the intent to threaten or likely to threaten the unity, integrity, sovereignty, security, or economic security of India. In addition to the above, the IT Rules, 2021 obligates the intermediaries to provide information under its control or possession, or assistance to the Government agency which is lawfully authorised for investigative or protective or cyber security

What the advisory says

The advisory comes in the wake of nearly 300 flights receiving hoax bomb threats since October 14, via posts on social media

KEY TAKEAWAYS FROM ADVISORY

- Take down all hoax bomb threats
- Report posts to authorities
- Provide information within 72 hrs to help identify hoaxers
- 'Safe harbour' provisions won't apply if due diligence not followed

WHAT X HAS SAID

'We prohibit violent threats on X and take any such reports seriously. That includes threats to harm civilian infrastructure... Our teams, systems are at work around the clock to keep X safer...'



activities, for the purposes of verification of identity, or for the prevention, detection, investigation, or prosecution, of offences under any law for the time being in force, or for cyber security incidents, well within the stipulated time frames (as soon as possible but not later than 72 hours)," the advisory said.

The advisory told the social media intermediaries that safe harbour provisions would not apply if they do not promptly remove misinformation that affects public order and security of the state such as hoax bomb threats, and they could stand to be charged under the relevant sections of applicable laws, including the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita 2023 and the Information Technology Act.

This advisory comes days after a senior MeitY official convened a meeting with X/Twitter, Meta, Google and Telegram, telling them to promptly share data with law enforcement agencies about the accounts that are issu-

ing hoax bomb threats. At that meeting on October 22, joint secretary Sanket Bhondve warned X in particular that failing to act could make it an abettor in this situation. HT reported on October 23 that after the aviation sector was hit by this slew of hoax bomb threats, Indian airlines asked the government whether there was a mechanism through which social media platforms do not allow bomb and terror threats, hoax or otherwise, to be uploaded publicly. Instead, the airlines want social media companies to proactively detect them before they are uploaded and report them to the relevant authorities.

"Such hoax bomb threats are mostly misinformation that is massively disrupting the public order, operations of airlines and security of the airline travellers. In this regard, it should be noted that intermediaries, including social media intermediaries have a due diligence obligation under the Information Technol-

ogy Act, 2000 ("IT Act") and the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code Rules, 2021 ("IT Rules, 2021") to promptly remove such misinformation that affects public order and security of the state," the advisory said. The advisory says that social media intermediaries can stand to lose their safe harbour protection, that is, protection from liability for third party content, if they do not follow their due diligence obligations under the IT Rules "or abet or aid, in the commission of the unlawful act". If they fail to remove these bomb threats, "they shall be liable for consequential actions as provided under any law", the advisory said.

According to the 2022 amendments made to the IT Rules, 2021, all intermediaries must make "reasonable efforts by itself, and to cause the users of its computer resource to not host, display, upload, modify, publish, transmit, store, update or share any information that" is a threat to public order, security of the state, or causes incitement to commit any cognisable offence, amongst other things. When consultations on these amendments were held in 2022, the intermediaries and industry bodies that this provision would mean scanning content for illegality before it was even uploaded. MeitY told social media companies at the meeting and law enforcement agencies information related to bomb threats. This includes, but is not limited to, details of the person

who posted it. Social media companies said they would be prompt but the requests for information must come from authorised officers, HT has learnt. After the meeting, in response to HT's questions, an X spokesperson said, "We prohibit violent threats on X and take any such reports seriously. That includes and is not limited to threats to harm civilian infrastructure essential to daily, civic or business activities. Our teams, systems and reporting channels are at work around the clock to keep X safer for all our users in India." The platform did not reply to HT's question about how it was proactively monitoring these hoax bomb threats as they now appear to be following a particular pattern.

Between October 14 and now, more than 300 flights have received these hoax bomb threats, causing them to be diverted and in some cases escorted by military jets in other countries as per aviation security protocols. Each such disruption costs the airline in question about ₹3 crore, according an airline executive. On Monday, Union civil aviation minister Ram Mohan Naidu said the government planned to classify bomb hoaxes as a "cognisable offence" with longer potential sentences and place perpetrators on a no-fly list as the chaos triggered by the false threats continued unabated. Law enforcement agencies are looking at whether these threats are a larger part of a conspiracy given that they have now been sent to schools and universities as well.



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE HINDU

CHENNAI

28 OCTOBER 2024

At least 50 flights receive bomb threats, two diverted

Press Trust of India

NEW DELHI

At least 50 flights operated by Indian airlines received bomb threats and two of them were diverted on Sunday, according to sources.

In 14 days, more than 350 flights operated by Indian carriers have received hoax bomb threats, most of them through social media. Akasa Air on Sunday said 15 of its flights got security alerts and after thorough inspections, all aircraft were released for operations. The sources in the know said IndiGo received threats for 18 flights and Vistara for 17 flights.

Measures under way

Union Civil Aviation Minister K. Rammohan Naidu on Sunday said the Centre was mulling steps to ban those who issued hoax bomb threats from flying. The IT Ministry asked social media platforms to observe due diligence obligations and promptly remove or disable access to misinformation within strict timelines under IT rules.

COLLABORATES WITH TATA TECHNOLOGIES

Air India gets DGCA nod for in-house modification of aircraft interiors

SUKALP SHARMA
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 28

AIR INDIA has received the regulatory approval that will allow the airline to independently make aircraft interior design changes and modifications in-house and not fully depend on third party service providers. The Design Organisation Approval (DOA) from the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) comes at a time when the airline has initiated a multi-million dollar retrofit programme to spruce up the interiors of its legacy aircraft.

With the DOA in place, the Tata group airline is also collaborating with another group company—Tata Technologies—to enhance the cabin interiors of its fleet.

"Air India is the first airline in India to attain this level of authorisation, accelerating its ability to execute restoration tasks for continuous improvement of its fleet. The DOA is a transformative step towards enhancing Air India's in-house capabilities, which has been bolstered by decisions to set up its own engineering, maintenance



File

and training facilities. This will enhance operational efficiency and make the airline more self-reliant," the airline said in a release.

While Air India's focus currently would be on improving and maintaining interiors of its fleet and that of its no-frills airline Air India Express, the DOA certifies the company as a design organisation, which enables it to offer these services to other airlines. On its part, the airline did not comment on whether it was looking at offering services to other airlines.

"Air India has chosen Tata Technologies as its strategic partner to revolutionise its aircraft in-

teriors. Tata Technologies will provide end-to-end solutions, from design and validation to weight optimisation and ergonomic considerations. These innovations are set to redefine the passenger experience by ensuring that aircraft interiors are not only functional and safe but also futureproof, providing passengers with modern comfort and state-of-the-art technology," Tata Technologies said in a separate release.

Tata Technologies said that its deep experience working with leading aerospace original equipment manufacturers will be crucial in the process. Tata Technologies has expertise in

lightweight materials, advanced design, and validation techniques, which it believes will help Air India optimize the fleet's performance, safety, and efficiency.

"This collaboration also positions Tata Technologies as a key player in streamlining Air India's operations by integrating innovative digital thread solutions and smart Maintenance, Repair, and Overhaul (MRO) services. These solutions will improve operational efficiency, reduce downtime, and ensure that Air India's fleet remains in top condition, further enhancing passenger safety and operational reliability," Tata Technologies said.

Air India was acquired by the Tatas in January 2022 from the government. Under government control, Air India was under financial stress, and this reflected in its product and service quality, which was seen as below the standards expected from a full-service carrier. While the now-privatised airline has ordered hundreds of new aircraft and recently initiated a mammoth fleet modernisation and expansion plan, it still has a large number of legacy aircraft that are in a rundown state.

एअर इंडिया ने चालक दल के 10 सदस्यों को निलंबित किया

मुंबई, 28 अक्टूबर (भाषा)।

एअर इंडिया ने अपनी संशोधित नीति का विरोध करने के लिए अन्य सदस्यों को उकसाने के आरोप में सोमवार को चालक दल के 10 सदस्यों को निलंबित कर दिया। एक सूत्र ने यह जानकारी दी।

अगले महीने विस्तारा का विलय किए जाने के पहले एअर इंडिया चालक दल के सदस्यों के लिए संशोधित नीति लेकर आई है। एक दिसंबर से प्रभावी होने वाली इस नीति में उड़ानों के बीच के खाली समय के दौरान कमरे साझा करने का प्रावधान किया गया है। आल इंडिया केबिन क्रू एसोसिएशन ने कमरे साझा करने की जरूरत का विरोध करते हुए इसे 'अवैध, कानूनन गलत और कई मोर्चों पर शुरू से ही अमान्य' करार दिया है। इसने इस मामले में श्रम मंत्रालय के हस्तक्षेप की भी मांग की है।



आल इंडिया केबिन क्रू एसोसिएशन ने कमरे साझा करने की जरूरत का विरोध करते हुए इसे 'अवैध, कानूनन गलत और कई मोर्चों पर शुरू से ही अमान्य' करार दिया है। इसने इस मामले में श्रम मंत्रालय के हस्तक्षेप की भी मांग की है।

एअर इंडिया के अधिकारियों ने कहा कि कई तरह की शिकायतें मिलने के बाद यह कदम उठाया गया है। इस विरोध पर टाटा समूह के स्वामित्व वाली एअर इंडिया ने चालक दल के कुछ सदस्यों के खिलाफ कार्रवाई की है। घटनाक्रम से परिचित एक सूत्र ने बताया कि नीति का विरोध करने के लिए दूसरों को उकसाने के आरोप में चालक दल के 10 सदस्यों को निलंबित कर दिया गया है। हालांकि, इस मुद्दे पर एअर इंडिया ने कोई आधिकारिक टिप्पणी नहीं की है।

साठ से ज्यादा विमानों को बम से उड़ाने की धमकी

जनसत्ता ब्यूरो
नई दिल्ली, 28 अक्टूबर।

भारतीय विमानन कंपनियों की 60 से अधिक उड़ानों में सोमवार को बम रखे होने की धमकी मिली। सूत्रों ने यह जानकारी दी।

पंद्रह दिन में विमानन कंपनियों द्वारा संचालित 410 से अधिक घरेलू और अंतरराष्ट्रीय उड़ानों में बम रखे होने की झूठी धमकियां मिली हैं। इनमें से ज्यादातर धमकियां सोशल मीडिया के जरिए दी गईं। मामले से जुड़े सूत्रों ने बताया कि एअर इंडिया और इंडिगो की करीब 21-21 उड़ानों और विस्तारा की करीब 20 उड़ानों को सोमवार को धमकियां मिलीं।

एअर इंडिया के एक प्रवक्ता ने कहा कि सोशल मीडिया के जरिए सोमवार को एअरलाइन की कई उड़ानों में बम रखे होने की धमकी मिली। प्रवक्ता ने कहा, 'निर्धारित प्रोटोकाल का पालन करते हुए संबंधित अधिकारियों को सतर्क कर दिया गया और नियामक अधिकारियों के मार्गदर्शन के अनुसार सभी सुरक्षा प्रक्रियाओं का सख्ती से पालन किया गया।' इस बीच, विमानन कंपनियों को बम रखे होने की झूठी धमकियां मिलने की पृष्ठभूमि में सूचना व प्रौद्योगिकी मंत्रालय ने सोशल मीडिया मंचों से दायित्वों का पालन करने व सूचना प्रौद्योगिकी नियमों के तहत निर्धारित समयसीमा के भीतर गलत सूचना तक पहुंच को अवरुद्ध करने को कहा है। नागरिक उड्डयन मंत्रालय इस तरह की झूठी धमकियों के खतरे से निपटने के लिए विधायी कार्रवाई करने पर विचार कर रहा है।



Corporate Communications Directorate

MINT

DELHI

29 OCTOBER 2024

IndiGo set for smoother takeoff after a turbulent quarter

Pallavi Pengonda

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InterGlobe Aviation Ltd's shares lost 8% on Monday after higher costs marred the airline company's September quarter (Q2FY25) results, leading to a worse-than-estimated net loss of ₹990 crore. Naturally, the poor show has triggered a cut in earnings estimates for FY25 and FY26. InterGlobe runs IndiGo, India's largest airline.

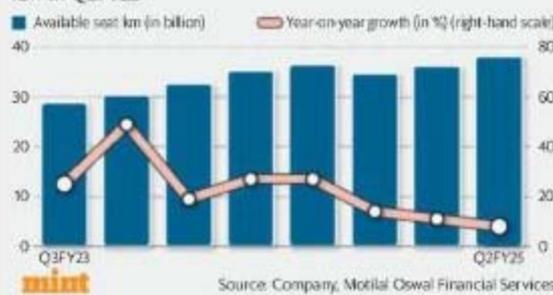
Jefferies India has cut its FY25 earnings per share estimates by 12% on Q2 miss, and FY26-FY27 by 2% each. While the September quarter is sea-

sonally weak, there were other headwinds too that hurt IndiGo. The peak number of aircraft on the ground (AOG) in Q2FY25 meant costlier mitigation measures. Also, fuel cost per ASK (available seat kilometre) rose 4% on increased consumption due to changes in the fleet mix, rise in VAT on aviation fuel in some states and airport congestion.

The good news is that IndiGo's current grounded aircraft have reduced to the high-60s from the mid-70s seen in H1FY25. It anticipates that the groundings will continue to moderate to sub-60 level by 2024-end and to 40s

Moving slowly

IndiGo's capacity growth dropped to a multi-quarter low in Q2FY25



PRANAY BHARDWAJ/MINT

by the start of FY26. "The impact on profitability related to the costlier mitigation measures will also start to

moderate as we start returning the short-term damp-leases sometime in first half of next year," said the manage-

ment in the earnings call.

In Q2FY25, IndiGo's capacity in terms of ASK rose 8% y-o-y. It expects a rebound in passenger traffic in the seasonally strong Q3. It sees y-o-y capacity growth in early double-digits for FY25.

IndiGo's tailor-made business class offering will start in three weeks on the Delhi-Mumbai route. Further, the capacity share of the international segment is expected to reach the targeted levels of 30% by FY25-end.

Despite Monday's drop in the share price, IndiGo's investors are sitting on 35% gains so far in 2024. Nuvama

Institutional Equities has downgraded IndiGo's rating to 'hold', citing valuation premium to major global peers, slowing domestic demand and overcapacity concerns.

"Sep-Nov'24 flight schedules imply a domestic share loss as well. Relentless promoter selling while IndiGo shifts from low-cost carrier to a hybrid model raises risk," said the Nuvama report dated 27 October.

Sure, a muted outlook on fuel prices helps. However, the extent to which this factor can aid earnings needs closer tracking, along with how pricing pans out in the industry.

MINT

DELHI

29 OCTOBER 2024

Bomb hoaxes: Social media advisory raises concerns

Shouvik Das
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NEW DELHI

Even as hoax bomb threats to airlines continue, the government's advisory to social media platforms to voluntarily remove "misinformation" related to nation security will test free speech and the legal immunity that intermediaries have in such situations.

The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY)'s advisory on 25 October urged intermediaries "to promptly remove misinformation that affects public order and security of the state." A copy of the note was reviewed by *Mint*. At the heart of the concerns is a "judgement call" that the advisory urged social media intermediaries to make to remove such content. Social media platforms have never had to define what constituted national security on their own.

Safe harbour protection, which provides legal immunity to social media intermediaries, such as Meta Platforms' Instagram and Google's YouTube, may also come under the threat. MeitY's advisory underlined that the protection, under Section 79 of Information Technology Act, 2000 "shall not apply, if such intermediaries do not follow the due diligence obligations as prescribed under the Act...or abetted or aided in the commission of unlawful acts."

Social media platforms, the advisory said, will "be liable for consequential action as provided under law". The advi-



The advisory was issued amid a series of hoax bomb threats to airlines—around 300 such posts in three weeks.

sory was issued amid a series of hoax bomb threats to airlines—around 300 posts in three weeks. Queries to Meta Platforms and Google's YouTube on the matter didn't elicit any immediate response.

Isha Suri, research lead for public policy at policy think-tank, Centre for Internet and Society, said the government's intent with this advisory and the role it can play is unclear.

"Such an order can have a harmful impact on free speech because private entities will over-comply to err on the side of caution. More importantly, the greater ambiguity is around what the Centre is trying to achieve here—private entities cannot have sovereign power of deciding whether a particular post made on a platform could lead to a potential threat to public order and the state—which is very wide in its scope," Suri said. "There is also no clarity about how private entities are meant to ascertain veracity of a particular post."

An executive of a big intermediary platform, requesting anonymity said the advisory and the issue are both under scrutiny. "We have an established enforcement mechanism where we take down content under national security interest as per government interest. But a reverse mechanism does not exist right now as a coordinated effort—even as our content moderation team undertakes multiple checks in sub-classes such as hate speech, violence, misinformation and more. While the bombing threats cover a bit of all, we're yet to understand the correct effective mechanism to enforce checks on such an issue."

This advisory fundamentally differs from earlier circulars on use of AI by not enforcing penalties for non-compliance. This could now lay the ground work for tackling issues such as bomb threats.

For an extended version of this story go to [livemint.com](https://www.livemint.com)



Corporate Communications Directorate

MINT

DELHI

29 OCTOBER 2024

Air India gets DGCA nod to carry out interior modifications

Air India has received aviation regulator DGCA's (Directorate General of Civil Aviation) approval to carry out modifications in aircraft interiors in-house as the Tata group-owned airline works on revamping its fleet and expanding operations. The full-service carrier has a collaboration with Tata Technologies to enhance aircraft interiors in its fleet.

In a release on Monday, Air India said the design organization approval (DOA) from the DGCA will enable the airline to independently make design changes in-house and implement modifications to its aircraft interiors more efficiently. "DOA is a transformative step towards enhancing Air India's in-house capabilities, which has been bolstered by decisions to set up its own engineering, maintenance and training facilities. This will enhance operational efficiency and make the airline more self-reliant," the release added.

Air India is the first Indian airline to attain this level of authorization, accelerating its ability to execute restoration tasks for continuous improvement of its fleet, the release said.



Air India has a collaboration with Tata Technologies to enhance the interiors of aircraft in its fleet.

PTI

PTI

At least 50 flights receive bomb threats; 2 diverted on Sunday



Passengers outside Jodhpur airport after an Indigo's Pune-Jodhpur flight was diverted to Ahmedabad airport following a bomb threat PTI

MPOST BUREAU

NEW DELHI: According to sources, at least 50 flights operated by Indian airlines received bomb threats and two of them were diverted on Sunday.

In 14 days, more than 350 flights operated by the Indian carriers have received hoax bomb threats. Most of the threats were issued through social media.

Akasa Air on Sunday said 15 of its flights got security alerts and after thorough inspections, all aircraft were released for operations.

The sources in the know said IndiGo received threats for 18 flights and Vistara for 17 flights.

At least two IndiGo flights were diverted following threats. Its flight 6E 133 (Pune to Jodhpur) was

In 14 days, more than 350 flights operated by the Indian carriers have received hoax bomb threats

diverted to Ahmedabad and 6E 87 (Kozhikode to Damam) was diverted to Mumbai, an official said.

According to an IndiGo statement, the flights that received security-related alerts include 6E 11 (Delhi-Istanbul), 6E 92 (Jeddah-Mumbai), 6E 112 (Goa-Ahmedabad), 6E 125 (Bengaluru-Jharsuguda), 6E 127 (Amritsar-Ahmedabad) and 6E 135 (Kolkata-Pune).

Continued on P6

At least 50 flights receive bomb threats...

Among others are 6E 149 (Hyderabad to Bagdogra), 6E 173 (Delhi to Bengaluru), 6E 175 (Bengaluru to

Delhi), 6E 197 (Raipur to Hyderabad), 6E 248 (Mumbai to Kolkata), 6E 277 (Ahmedabad-Lucknow), 6E 312 (Bengaluru to Kolkata), 6E 235 (Kolkata-Bengaluru) and 6E 74 (Riyadh-Mumbai).

Union Civil Aviation Minister K Rammohan Naidu on Sunday said the Centre is mulling steps to ban perpetrators, who resort to hoax bomb threats, from flying.

The minister also said besides taking support from international agencies, law enforcement wings and the Intelligence Bureau to prevent these fake threats, the union government is also mulling to amend two Civil Aviation Laws.

Against the backdrop of a spate of hoax bomb threats to airlines, the IT Ministry has asked social media platforms to observe due diligence obligations and promptly remove or disable access to misinformation within the strict timelines prescribed under IT rules.



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE MORNING STANDARD

DELHI

29 OCTOBER 2024

SpiceJet to start 32 new flights this week

New Delhi: SpiceJet on Monday said it has launched 32 new flights for winter schedule that commenced this week. Of these, 30 are operating in domestic sector and two are connecting the national capital with Phuket. The winter schedule includes four new flights from Mumbai to Patna, Gorakhpur, Varanasi and Goa. Winter schedule is from October 27, 2024 till March 29, 2025. ENS

Air India gets DGCA nod to carry out in-house modifications of aircraft interiors

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) approved a proposal from Air India to carry out modifications in aircraft interiors in-house as the Tata Group-owned airline works on revamping its fleet and expanding operations.

The full-service carrier has a collaboration with Tata Technologies to enhance aircraft interiors in its fleet.

In a release on Monday, Air India said the Design Organisation Approval (DOA) from the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) will enable the airline to independently make design changes in-house and implement modifications to its aircraft interiors more efficiently.

"DOA is a transformative step towards enhancing Air India's in-house capabilities, which has been bolstered by decisions to set up its own engineering, maintenance and training facilities. This will enhance operational efficiency and make the airline more self-reliant," it added.

An official said the approval will also allow Air India to offer the services to other



Indian airlines in the future. Air India is the first Indian airline to attain this level of authorisation, accelerating its ability to execute restoration tasks for continuous improvement of its fleet, the release said.

Air India Chief Executive Officer and Managing Director Campbell Wilson said the approval reaffirms its capabilities to maintain the fleet and commitment to enhancing the customer experience of its aircraft interiors.

"By leveraging our global aerospace expertise, we are committed to delivering next-generation aircraft interiors that not only meet the highest standards of functionality and safety but also enhance customer satisfaction," Tata Technologies Chief Executive Officer and Managing Director Warren Harris said. The approval also comes at a time when Air India is retrofitting its legacy planes

and has also placed significant orders for new aircraft.

According to the release on Monday, the partnership with Tata Technologies will help Air India streamline its operations by integrating innovative digital thread solutions and smart maintenance, repair, and overhaul (MRO) services.

"This will improve operational efficiency, reduce downtime, and ensure that Air India's fleet remains fit to fly, further enhancing passenger safety, comfort and operational reliability," the release said.

Tata Air India Group has three airlines -- Air India, Air India Express and Vistara, which is a joint venture between Tatas and Singapore Airlines. Air India and Air India Express together have more than 230 planes. Vistara, which has a fleet of 70 planes, is set to be merged with Air India on November 11.



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE PIONEER

DELHI

29 OCTOBER 2024



Hoax bomb threat calls led to ₹1400 Crore loss

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

As the number of hoax bomb threat messages to domestic and international flights crossed over 400, leading to financial loss up to Rs 1200 to 1400 crore to Indian carriers so far. As many as 410 domestic and international flights operated by the Indian carriers have received hoax bomb threats in the last 15 days. More than 60 flights of Indian carriers received bomb threats on Monday. Once a flight is canceled or delayed due to a bomb hoax, a ripple effect of delays and cancellations of other flights occurs adding to financial losses for not the airline but the flying public. The event is not just a safety concern but also means a costly affair for

an airline.

"The overall financial damage of the hoax, including costs for unscheduled landing, passenger accommodations, aircraft grounding, and crew replacements, is projected from Rs 25 lakh to Rs 4 crore per incident," said an airline executive, who spoke on condition of anonymity. The overall costs escalate when additional expenses such as unexpected landing charges, hotel accommodations for over 200 passengers and crew, compensation for missed connections, grounding the aircraft for thorough checks, and arranging a fresh crew are factored in. Meanwhile, the airline also faced financial losses from the disruption of its return flight schedule.

Continued on page 2

Hoax bomb threat calls led to ₹1400 Crore loss

From page 1

Reports suggest that the daily rental cost of a Boeing 777 ranges between \$17,000 and \$20,000, and a diversion of cancellation means huge financial losses for the airlines. Sources said around 21 flights each of Air India and IndiGo, and about 20 flights of Vistara received the threats on Monday. An Air India spokesperson said a number of

its flights were subject to security threats received on social media on Monday. "Following the laid down protocols, relevant authorities were immediately alerted, and all security procedures strictly adhered to, as per guidance from the regulatory authorities," the spokesperson said in a statement. Currently, actions against hoax bomb threats are handled by the police under existing criminal

laws. However, the government is exploring stricter measures to deter such incidents and prevent the mounting financial and operational strain on the aviation industry. Meanwhile, against the backdrop of a spate of hoax bomb threats to airlines, the IT Ministry has asked social media platforms to observe due diligence obligations and promptly remove or disable

access to misinformation within the strict timelines prescribed under IT rules. Also, the Civil Aviation ministry is looking to take legislative actions to tackle the menace of the hoax bomb threats to airlines. On Sunday, Civil Aviation Minister K Ram Mohan Naidu said the Centre is mulling steps to ban perpetrators, who resort to hoax bomb threats, from flying.



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE PIONEER

LUCKNOW

28 OCTOBER 2024

Over 350 hoax bomb threat calls, only two arrests?

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
NEW DELHI

Hoax bomb callers have continued to target commercial flights and premium hotels across the country, causing significant financial losses and delays. At least 50 flights belonging to Akasa Air, IndiGo, and Vistara received bomb threats on Sunday. So far, more than 350 flights have received hoax bomb threats in the last 14 days.

In some cases, the threats were issued to flights that had already been operated for the day or were not scheduled to operate. Besides, dozens of premium hotels in four states—West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat, and Andhra Pradesh have also received threat messages in the past three days, prompting the security agencies to launch search operations. Most of the threats were issued through social media.

In the backdrop of worrying trends of hoax threat messages to airlines, the government is taking support from international agencies, law enforcement wings and the Intelligence



FILE PHOTO/PTI

Bureau to prevent these fake threats. Intelligence sources said there is an attempt to hit the economy via the aviation sector and the hospitality sector during the festive season. Meanwhile, airlines and passengers remain in a state of uncertainty due to these hoax call messages. According to sources, IndiGo received threats for 18 flights and Vistara for 17 flights. Akasa Air received threats for 15 flights.

At least two IndiGo flights were diverted

following threats. Its flight 6E 133 (Pune to Jodhpur) was diverted to Ahmedabad and 6E 87 (Kozhikode to Dammam) was diverted to Mumbai. According to an IndiGo statement, the flights that received security-related alerts include 6E 11 (Delhi-Istanbul), 6E 92 (Jeddah-Mumbai), 6E 112 (Goa-Ahmedabad), 6E 125 (Bengaluru-Jharsuguda), 6E 127 (Amritsar-Ahmedabad) and 6E 135 (Kolkata-Pune). Among others flights targeted were 6E 149 (Hyderabad to

Bagdogra), 6E 173 (Delhi to Bengaluru), 6E 175 (Bengaluru to Delhi), 6E 197 (Raipur to Hyderabad), 6E 248 (Mumbai to Kolkata), 6E 277 (Ahmedabad-Lucknow), 6E 312 (Bengaluru to Kolkata), 6E 235 (Kolkata-Bengaluru) and 6E 74 (Riyadh-Mumbai). Akasa Air issued a statement, confirming in a brief that its Emergency Response Team is actively monitoring the situation and is in contact with security and regulatory authorities. "We are following all safety and security

procedures in coordination with local authorities, and the Akasa Air teams on ground are prepared to assist passengers to ensure their safety and comfort," read Akasa Air's statement posted on X. This has created a panic among air passengers amid the ongoing festive season.

According to Akasa Air, on Sunday, a bomb threat was reported on a flight enroute from Bengaluru to Delhi via Gorakhpur, which was found to be a hoax after inspection. During a thorough inspection at the Gorakhpur airport, no suspicious item was found. Gorakhpur Airport director RK Parasher said. The flight landed in Gorakhpur at 1.33 pm and the door opened at 1.50 pm. The aircraft was carrying 174 passengers and three infants. The inspection of the aircraft and the passengers continued till 2.42 pm and the flight took off at 3.43 pm for Delhi, Parasher said.

Ahead of the plane's arrival, the airport saw a high-security response, with police, Indian Air Force, Bomb Detection and Disposal Squad, fire brigade, and medical teams arriving on the site.

Continued on page 8

Over 350 hoax bomb threat calls, only two arrests?

From page 1

Senior officials also rushed to the scene to manage the situation, he said. Passengers were safely evacuated, and a thorough inspection of the aircraft was conducted, revealing no suspicious items. Following the all-clear, the flight continued its journey to Delhi.

Responding to a query after formally inaugurating two flights Visakhapatnam-Vijayawada, Union Civil Aviation Minister K Rammoan Naidu on

Sunday said the government is taking support from international agencies, law enforcement wings and the Intelligence Bureau to prevent these fake threats. "The investigation is going on," he added. Meanwhile, a total 35 hotels and a temple also received bomb threat messages, these include 10 premium hotels in Lucknow, 10 hotels in Rajkot, 10 in Kolkata and several hotels and a temple in Tirupati. These hoax threats were made in the past three days.

An email sent to a hotel

threatened that explosions would take place if a ransom demand of USD 55,000 (Rs 4,624,288) was not met. "Bombs are hidden in black bags on the grounds of your hotel. I want USD 55,000, or I will detonate the explosives and blood will spill everywhere. Any attempt at defusing the bombs will detonate them," read the threat email.

Against the backdrop of a spate of hoax bomb threats to airlines, the IT Ministry has asked social media platforms to observe due diligence obligations and

promptly remove or disable access to misinformation within the strict timelines prescribed under IT rules. Meanwhile, the civil aviation ministry is looking to take legislative actions to tackle the menace of the hoax bomb threats to airlines.

On Saturday, Delhi police had arrested a 25-year-old unemployed man for making hoax bomb threats, marking only the second arrest since a spate of such threats began being issued to airlines last week. According to police, the

man admitted to making the threats to draw attention to himself after seeing reports of similar calls on television.

A case was registered and investigations revealed that the account belonged to Shubham Upadhyay from Rajapuri in west Delhi's Uttam Nagar area. Upadhyay was arrested and, on being questioned, revealed that he had made the threats to garner attention after seeing reports of similar calls on TV.

On October 16, the Mumbai

Police had taken a 17-year-old school dropout from Rajnandgaon in Chhattisgarh into custody for threats made to four flights on October 14. After a dispute with a friend over money, the teenager had allegedly created an X handle in his name and made threats to frame him. Of the four flights to which the boy had issued the threats, two were delayed - including Air India flight AI 119 from Mumbai to New York, which was diverted to New Delhi - and one had to be cancelled.

#airtravel अहमदाबाद, पुणे, मुंबई समेत कई शहरों से जयपुर का हवाई किराया 14 हजार रुपए तक पहुंचा

जरा बचिए इन दिनों हवाबाजों की नीयत से भेजेंगे सहूलियत से, बुलाएंगे वसूलीयत से

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जयपुर. यदि आप भी दिवाली पर जयपुर से मुंबई, हैदराबाद, बेंगलूर, अहमदाबाद जैसे शहरों की सस्ते हवाई किराए में यात्रा करना चाहते हैं, तो आपको अपनी जेब पर ध्यान देना होगा। जैसे-जैसे दिवाली का त्योहार नजदीक आ रहा है, हवाई किराए आसमान छूने लगे हैं। स्थिति यह है कि मुंबई, बेंगलूर, पुणे समेत कई शहरों से जयपुर आने वाले यात्रियों को यहां से जाने वाले यात्रियों की तुलना में दो से तीन गुना अधिक महंगे हवाई टिकट खरीदने पड़ रहे हैं।

चौकाने वाली बात यह है कि यह किराया सामान्य दिनों की तुलना में भी अधिक है। गत दिनों एयरलाइन कंपनियों ने किराए में राहत के दावे कर वाहवाही लुटी थी, लेकिन अब फिर वही हालात नजर आ रहे हैं। इतना ही नहीं, दिवाली मनाकर यहां से लौटने वालों को भी अधिक किराया चुकाना पड़ेगा। हालांकि, जयपुर से कोलकाता, दिल्ली समेत कुछ शहरों के हवाई किराए में ज्यादा अंतर नहीं है।



दिसंबर-जनवरी में भी यही हालात

एयरपोर्ट प्रशासन के अनुसार, दिवाली के बाद शादी और पर्यटन का सीजन शुरू हो जाएगा, 25 दिसंबर से एक जनवरी तक क्रिसमस और न्यू ईयर सेलिब्रेशन के दौरान बड़ी संख्या में देसी-विदेशी पर्यटकों की आवजाही होती है। ऐसे में

हवाई किराए में फिर वृद्धि हो जाती है। वर्तमान के अलावा दिसंबर के अंत से जनवरी के पहले सप्ताह के लिए हवाई किराया आसमान छूने लगा है। सीधे तौर पर अब एयरलाइन कंपनियां जमकर चांदी कूटेंगी।

पहली फ्लाइट से आए 185 यात्री, हुआ स्वागत

इधर, जयपुर इंटरनेशनल एयरपोर्ट के टर्मिनल एक से इंटरनेशनल फ्लाइट का मूवमेंट शनिवार देर से शुरू हो गया है। एयरपोर्ट प्रशासन के अनुसार इसमें सबसे पहले दुबई से एयर इंडिया एक्सप्रेस की फ्लाइट उतरी। इसमें 185 यात्री आए। इनका एयरपोर्ट पर स्वागत हुआ। रविवार को सुबह पांच बजे

एयर अरेबिया एयरलाइन की शारजाह के लिए फ्लाइट रवाना हुई। इसमें 180 यात्री जयपुर से रवाना हुए। दूसरी ओर, एयरपोर्ट पर रविवार से विंटर शिड्यूल लागू हो गया है। जिसमें फ्लाइट्स की संख्या बढ़कर 65 से 70 हो गई है। इसमें पुणे, इंदौर और कुल्लू के लिए नई फ्लाइट्स शुरू की गई हैं।

जयपुर से हवाई किराए का गणित

शहर	किराया (रुपए)
जयपुर से मुंबई	4723 से 4851
मुंबई से जयपुर	6285 से 14254
जयपुर से हैदराबाद	7276 से 9426
हैदराबाद से जयपुर	4948
जयपुर से बेंगलूर	4999
बेंगलूर से जयपुर	7058 से 9365
जयपुर से पुणे	4888 से 5045
पुणे से जयपुर	8915 से 14486
जयपुर से अहमदाबाद	5007 से 6243
अहमदाबाद से जयपुर	9147 से 14851

(एयरलाइन कंपनी के प्रतिनिधि के अनुसार, न्यूनतम से अधिकतम हवाई किराया बिना किसी अतिरिक्त शुल्क या टैक्स के 27 अक्टूबर से एक नवंबर के बीच है।)

इसलिए भी होगी दिवकत

दिवाली पर जयपुर में बड़ी संख्या में लोग आते हैं। ज्यादातर ट्रेनों में लंबी वेटिंग रहती है। ऐसे में अचानक आने का प्रोग्राम बनाने वाले लोगों को मजबूरन हवाई यात्रा का विकल्प चुनना पड़ता है, जिससे उनका खर्चा बढ़ जाता है।

एयर इंडिया का केबिन क्रू रूम शेयर नीति पर नाराज

■ आल इंडिया केबिन क्रू एसोसिएशन ने श्रम मंत्रालय से मामले में हस्तक्षेप की मांग की

मुंबई (भाषा)।

'ऑल इंडिया केबिन क्रू एसोसिएशन' (एआईसीसीए) ने टाटा समूह के स्वामित्व वाली एयर इंडिया की, चालक दल के सदस्यों के एक वर्ग के लिए कमरे साझा करने की नीति को 'अवैध व गैर-कानूनी' करार दिया है। एआईसीसीए ने श्रम मंत्रालय से मामले में हस्तक्षेप का अनुरोध करते हुए इस कदम को रोकने का आग्रह किया है।

एसोसिएशन होटल में ठहराने तथा आवास की ऐसी शर्तों की मांग कर रही है, जो पिछले समझौतों तथा न्यायाधिकरण के निर्णयों के अनुसार पायलट के लिए आवास नीति के अनुरूप हो। एसोसिएशन ने एयर इंडिया के प्रमुख कैम्पबेल विल्सन

को भी पत्र लिखकर उनसे आग्रह किया है कि वे मौजूदा यथास्थिति का उल्लंघन न करें तथा औद्योगिक न्यायाधिकरण की पवित्रता तथा इस मुद्दे पर लंबित औद्योगिक विवाद को ध्यान में रखें।

गौरतलब है कि एक दिसंबर से प्रभावी नई नीति के तहत विस्तार के साथ 11 नवंबर को होने वाले विलय से पहले चालक दल के अधिकारियों और अल्ट्रा-लॉंग-हॉल उड़ानों का संचालन करने वालों को छोड़कर,

सदस्यों को ठहरने के लिए कमरे साझा करने होंगे। 'ऑल इंडिया केबिन क्रू एसोसिएशन 50 वर्ष पुराना पंजीकृत व्यापार संघ है, जिससे समूचे भारत की भारतीय तथा विदेशी एयरलाइन के चालक दल के सदस्य जुड़े हैं। एसोसिएशन ने मुख्य श्रम आयुक्त (सीएलसी) नई दिल्ली को भेजे नोटिस में कहा, 'हमारा ध्यान एयर इंडिया द्वारा अपने बुलेटिन बोर्ड पर जारी किए गए नोटिस की ओर आकर्षित किया गया है, जिसमें अन्य बातों के साथ-साथ राष्ट्रीय औद्योगिक न्यायाधिकरण के लंबित रहने तथा इसी मामले में एक औद्योगिक विवाद के दौरान



चालक दल के सदस्यों की सेवा शर्तों में एकतरफा बदलाव करने का प्रस्ताव है। इसके तहत उन्हें एक दिसंबर से रात भर

ठहरने के दौरान कमरे साझा करने के लिए बाध्य किया जाएगा।'

इसमें कहा गया, 'बिना किसी पूर्वग्रह के हमें सबसे पहले इसका विरोध करना चाहिए और इस क्रूर कदम के प्रति अपना विरोध दर्ज कराना चाहिए। यह कहना चाहिए कि यह एक अवैध कदम है तथा आईईएसओ (औद्योगिक कर्मचारी स्थायी आदेश अधिनियम) के तहत सेवा की शर्तों में बदलाव है।'



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE TIMES OF INDIA

AHMEDABAD

28 OCTOBER 2024

Hoax threats hit another 50 flights, govt seeks help of int'l agencies, IB

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi/Panaji: The deluge of anonymous online hoax threats causing turbulence in airline operations since mid-Oct continued Sunday, affecting over 50 flights operated by various carriers amid futile attempts by the govt to get social media platforms to filter such messages.

IndiGo alone received “security-related alerts” for 18 flights through the day, of which two — Pune-Jodhpur (6E 133) and Kozhikode-Dammam (6E 87)— had to be diverted to Ahmedabad and Mumbai, respectively. Vistara and Akasa were among the other airlines whose schedule was disrupted by the mandatory requirement of putting their air-



TURBULENT TIMES: 350 planes caught in mayhem in last 14 days

craft through protocol checks. In the past 14 days, 350-odd flights have been caught in the mayhem of hoax messages, resulting in thousands of passengers being delayed and the airlines suffering financial losses running into hundreds of crores of rupees.

A Goa-Vadodara flight was diverted to Surat late Sunday evening after a bomb threat

minutes before it was to land at its destination. The alert came hours before PM Narendra Modi's scheduled visit to Vadodara on Monday. As of 9.30pm Sunday, the flight was grounded at Surat as checks continued.

Govt has asked social media intermediaries like X and Meta to curb the misinformation and warned them of strict action if they failed to do so. “We are also taking the support of international agencies, law enforcement agencies, the Intelligence Bureau to prevent these. We are planning to bring changes to two civil aviation laws. Those who resort to these kinds of activities will be punished severely and imposed a penalty,” aviation minister Rammohan Naidu said.



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE TIMES OF INDIA

AHMEDABAD

28 OCTOBER 2024

Bomb threat: Goa-Vadodara flight diverted to Surat

Passengers De-boarded, Security Check Done

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Surat: A Goa-Vadodara flight was diverted to Surat airport on Sunday evening following a bomb threat minutes before it was scheduled to land at Vadodara airport. The security alert came hours before Prime Minister Narendra Modi's scheduled visit to Vadodara on Monday morning.

According to Surat airport sources, the Indigo flight was diverted minutes before its expected landing at Vadodara. The security alert prompted emergency teams, including fire, health, CISF and ATC, to be put on high alert at Vadoda-



The security alert came hours before Prime Minister Narendra Modi's scheduled visit to Vadodara

ra and Surat airports. Upon landing at Surat, the flight was directed to an isolation bay for a thorough inspection after passenger evacuation.

According to airport sources, the Indigo 6E-104 flight, which took off from Goa Airport at 4.32 pm, was diverted to Surat airport around 5.30 pm. The flight was scheduled to land at Vadodara airport around 6 pm.

Soon after landing at Surat, the 180-odd passengers onboard the flight were escorted to the airport terminal. As a safety procedure, the runway was thoroughly inspected, causing delays in landing and take-off of scheduled flights from Surat. Normal operations resumed only after the airport security and safety teams cleared the runway.

Given the PM's scheduled

visit to Vadodara on Monday, the Surat police, airport authorities, CISF and bomb disposal squad of Surat police conducted extensive checks in the flight and its luggage area as an extra precautionary measure.

A senior airport official at Surat said, "The flight was checked thoroughly. We also checked the luggage of all passengers again. The passengers will be frisked again with their hand baggage, and their identity will also be verified once again. We don't want to take any chances. The passengers will be allowed on the flight only after the entire process is completed."

As of 9.30 pm on Sunday, the flight was grounded at Surat airport, as security checks continued.

Meanwhile, 10 hotels in Surat, including Le Meridien, received bomb threats on Sunday. However, police found nothing suspicious during the search.



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE TIMES OF INDIA

MUMBAI

28 OCTOBER 2024

Hoax threats hit 50 more flights, govt seeks help of int'l agencies

350-Odd Flights Affected Over Past Two Weeks

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi/Panaji: Deluge of anonymous online hoax threats causing turbulence in airline operations since mid-Oct continued on Sunday, affecting over 50 flights amid futile attempts by govt to get social media platforms to filter such messages.

IndiGo received "security-related alerts" for 18 flights, of which two—Pune-Jodhpur (6E 133) and Kozhikode-Dammam (6E 87)—had to be diverted to Ahmedabad and Mumbai, respectively. Vistara and Akasa flights were also disrupted by threats.

A Goa-Vadodara flight was diverted to Surat late Sunday evening following a bomb threat minutes before it was to land at its destination. The alert came hours before PM Narendra Modi's scheduled visit to Vadodara



Passengers outside Jodhpur airport after IndiGo's Pune-Jodhpur flight was diverted to Ahmedabad owing to a bomb threat on Sunday

on Monday. Ten hotels in Surat, including Le Meridien, also received bomb threats Sunday but police found nothing suspicious.

In Kolkata, five flights were targeted by such threats. The threat was sent through an X handle a little before 1pm and it turned out to be a hoax.

In the past 14 days, 350-odd flights have been caught in the mayhem of hoax messages, resulting in thousands of passengers being delayed and the airlines suffering financial losses running into hundreds of crores of rupees. Three of the affected weekend flights in the middle of

the busy festive season were to and from Goa.

According to security protocol, a bomb threat assessment committee was constituted to assess the seriousness of the threat at Mopa and Dabolim airports. IndiGo received intimation after the aircraft took off from Goa International Airport. A decision was taken to let the aircraft continue to its destination for screening.

For Akasa Air, the additional screening caused a delay of over an hour: "This is an unnecessary problem for the passengers and the airlines," said an official. "Our

Tirupati temple, 9 UP hotels also targeted

A fresh wave of hoax bomb threats rattled authorities on Sunday, with Tirupati and nine hotels in upscale localities of Lucknow being the latest targets. No explosives were found, but security has been stepped up as a precautionary measure, officials said. TNN

flight QP 1371 was delayed by two hours. Passengers were stranded at Manohar International Airport. First, we were told 12.10pm, then 12.50pm, 1.10pm, and then 2.10pm," said Neel, an Akasa Air passenger.

"We are also taking support of international agencies, law enforcement agencies, Intelligence Bureau to prevent these. We are planning to bring changes to two civil aviation laws," aviation minister Rammohan Naidu said on Sunday.



Corporate Communications Directorate

THE TRIBUNE

DELHI

28 OCTOBER 2024

Hoax bomb threats reveal gaps in aviation security



SHARAD S CHAUHAN
DGP AND MD, PUNJAB POLICE
HOUSING CORPORATION

A SURGE in bomb threats has targeted hospitals, malls, colleges and other institutions across the country, but with over 100 hoax calls in a few days and their multi-dimensional effects, the aviation sector is the most vulnerable to disruption.

These hoaxes impose enormous indirect costs on society, disrupting operations, inciting fear and diverting crucial resources. They have created mayhem in the aviation sector, with estimates indicating that the economic cost of a single hoax ranges from lakhs of rupees in the domestic sector to as much as Rs 15-20 crore on international routes.

These threats create a ripple effect of consequences, including stress and anxiety for passengers, unexpected delays and disruptions in tourism and business activities. Additionally, Indian carriers face a competitive disadvantage. Security and intelligence resources are strained and diverted from genuine terrorist threats, which can have disastrous con-

sequences. The consistency of the hoaxes and the sophistication and planning involved suggest the involvement of a non-state actor or a deep state influence in the attacks.

Hoaxers and terrorist groups employ anonymising tools and networks to evade detection, such as the Tor network and VPNs, which mask their IP addresses and encrypt communications. They use end-to-end encrypted services and operate on the dark web to ensure that their messages are unreadable to outsiders. Caller ID and email spoofing complicates traceability. They route communications through multiple proxy servers and relay chains, use public wi-fi and compromised devices to avoid detection and rely on burner phones and disposable email accounts, botnets for distributed and automated attacks, making it challenging to pinpoint the source of threats.

Investigations into recent hoaxes conducted by security agencies reveal a pattern in which threats are communicated via social media or phone calls, often followed by a surge of similar threats occurring in a short time frame. The investigations have traced the originating IP addresses to locations in London and Germany, where users are employing VPNs to conceal their online identities and send tweets from remote servers.

Dealing with such acts is a challenging proposition. Along with strict adherence to the



DISRUPTIVE: The aviation sector is reeling under a spate of hoax bomb threats. (PI)

standard operating procedures, comprehensive response plans and modernisation of rapid response teams through regular simulation drills are essential. Public awareness campaigns should be encouraged to educate citizens about the seriousness of threats and the legal consequences of such acts. Technological advancements should be fine-tuned, including the development of AI and machine-learning algorithms that analyse threat communications to identify patterns indicating hoaxes versus credible threats. These algorithms can analyse communication patterns, detect anomalies and identify potential bomb threats in real time, enabling prioritisation for immediate response. Additionally, integrating data from various sources, such as social media, past incidents and intelligence reports, allows for a rapid assessment of threat

credibility. Communication interception and analysis tools are also crucial as they trace the origins of emails and phone calls — even those using anonymisation techniques — and help identify perpetrators swiftly. Furthermore, sentiment analysis can detect the tone and urgency of threats, assisting in distinguishing serious threats from likely hoaxes.

With stringent SOPs in place, the only viable solution and decisive action is the rapid arrest, prosecution and punishment of those indulging in hoaxes.

FIRs have been registered under various sections of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) and Section 3(1)(d) of the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against Safety of Civil Aviation Act, 1982, in connection with the recent hoax bomb threats. The BNS enforces strict penalties to discourage hoax calls. Section 353 addresses public mischief, penalising those who intentionally spread false information that incites fear or disorder, with false bomb threats punishable with up to

three years of imprisonment. Section 351 pertains to criminal intimidation through anonymous communication. Additionally, Section 113 of the BNS covers terrorism, targeting anyone who threatens economic security with the intent to instil terror. This section should be revised to encompass hoaxes that qualify as terror acts in a broader context. The authorities should not hesitate from applying stringent provisions of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, whenever necessary.

Besides putting hoaxers on the no-fly list, the Centre should collaborate with the Union Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of Law and the ministries responsible for civil aviation, information and broadcasting, and information technology to enact deterrent legal amendments. It should also examine the anti-hoax provisions of other countries to establish stricter regulations that specifically address hoaxes, thereby creating a robust deterrent against such acts.

International cooperation is essential in addressing bomb hoaxes and it should focus on creating joint global task forces that unite law enforcement, military, intelligence agencies and cybersecurity experts. This collaboration enables effective identification, tracking and neutralisation of hoaxes through shared resources and expertise. Additionally, fostering public-private partnerships with entities like telecommunications companies can enhance efforts to trace the origins of bomb threats. Legal measures must include harmonised legislation across countries for consistent prosecution of hoaxers and stronger extradition treaties to ensure that offenders are held accountable, regardless of their location.

Meanwhile, no information should be taken lightly. In 1988, Pan Am Flight 103 was destroyed by a bomb over Lockerbie, resulting in over 250 deaths. The US government received a specific threat regarding a planned attack on the flight. Despite heightened security measures, including a passenger surcharge and public warnings, the bombing occurred. The warning, along with a pile of papers, was found in the airport after the attack.

The risk of a genuine attack, however minuscule, remains too significant for any government or security agency to politically ignore. With stringent SOPs in place, the only viable solution and decisive action is the rapid arrest, prosecution and punishment of those indulging in hoaxes.

If malicious, these hoaxes lend credence to the age-old claim that terrorists simply want "a lot of people watching, not a lot of people dead". In this context, the stakes are too high and the cost of inaction is unthinkable. And, India is watching impatiently.