

# **Airports Authority of India**

## **Corporate Communications Directorate**

### **AAI plays a pivotal role in relief operations in Gujarat, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Kerala and Tamil Nadu**

**New Delhi, 14<sup>th</sup> August, 2019:** Various states of India have been ravaged by severe floods caused due to torrential monsoon rains. Managing non-stop aircraft movements and round-the-clock airport operations become difficult but even in these testing times the Airports Authority of India has held its ground strongly and has been successfully assisting state machineries, defence forces, disaster relief authorities and civic bodies in relief operations and in ensuring normal airport operations.

Operations at AAI's airports in Vadodara in Gujarat, Kolhapur in Maharashtra, Belagavi and Hubballi in Karnataka, Calicut and Trivandrum in Kerala and Coimbatore in Tamil Nadu had been inundated briefly due to incessant rainfall and adverse weather conditions.

Anticipating the extraordinary situation, stakeholder meetings consisting of CISF, airline operators, customs, immigration, ground-handlers, food and beverages agents, taxi operators etc. were held at the airports and all the agencies were requested to rise to the occasion and provide all possible assistance to reduce inconvenience caused to the travelling public, not compromising on the safety and security of aircraft operations and passengers' life and property.

Owing to heavy rainfall and adverse weather conditions, flight operations at Vadodara Airport were suspended from July 31<sup>st</sup>, 2019. Normal airport operations were restored at AAI's Vadodara Airport in less than 24 hours after heavy rainfall across the city and nearby areas. Meticulous planning and coordinated work by various teams of Vadodara Airport ensured that the airport was up and running within a day. Airport has also been advised to give priority to relief flights, as and when required.

Rescue and relief operations commenced from AAI's Belagavi Airport on 8th August, 2019 and are still continuing. A total of 23 tonnes of food, 26 tonnes of water and four

tonnes of other relief material has been distributed from Belagavi Airport to the affected areas. The relief materials were carried by the Indian Air Force (IAF) trucks, IAF AN32s and choppers and 525 people stranded in the worst affected areas of Karnataka and Maharashtra were successfully rescued.

Rescue and relief operations at Kolhapur Airport are still going on. The airport that normally handles around eight flights in a day, handled 174 flight movements (including 134 rescue flights) between 7<sup>th</sup> August to 13<sup>th</sup> August, 2019 and rescued around 650 passengers. All the installations of Kolhapur Airport are functional and are working normally.

On 8<sup>th</sup> August, 2019 Cochin International Airport NOTAM for closure of airfield till the next day. During the closure of Cochin International Airport, a total of 144 additional flights were handled by AAI's Trivandrum Airport without putting any additional burden on the scheduled flights which were already operating from the airport. The preparedness of the airport in handling the contingent situation arising out of closure of Cochin International Airport for the second successive year was lauded by airlines, stakeholders and the travelling public.

AAI's Calicut International Airport has been effectively handling flight delays, flight diversions and additional flights due to closure of Cochin International Airport. The airport handled 36 additional flights and 10 rescue flights between 9<sup>th</sup> August and 13<sup>th</sup> August, 2019. Since the state power supply remained unavailable for two days due to damaged power lines, the Engineering (Electrical) department ensured uninterrupted power supply using Diesel Generator (DG) sets. The relief aircrafts and helicopters were also facilitated and coordinated for smooth and hassle-free loading and unloading of the materials to the various relief camps. Extra manpower was deployed in Operations Department by deploying officials from other sections for ensuring smooth operation and crisis management.

AAI's Coimbatore International Airport remained operational throughout the monsoon period handling scheduled, non-scheduled and rescue operations safely and effectively. Due to closure of Cochin International Airport, Coimbatore Airport handled 10 diversion flights, five additional flights and landing of two rescue helicopters between

5<sup>th</sup> August and 11<sup>th</sup> August, 2019. AAI employees managing Air Navigation Services (ANS), Operations, Engineering, Security, various vendors and the airlines wholeheartedly put in extra efforts to ensure smooth handling of diversional, additional or rescue flights.

The efficient handling of increased air traffic in inclement weather conditions was accomplished due to the hard work of various airport departments and effective coordination between them. ATCOs worked overtime to complete the extra watch hours and were extra vigilant during times of poor visibility.

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For details please contact:

GM (CC) 011-24622787

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