

Revue de presse 15-31 octobre 2019

Les délégués de l'Organisation de l'Aviation Civile Internationale (OACI) se sont engagés à accentuer leurs efforts pour limiter les émissions de carbone dans le cadre du dispositif CORSIA (acronyme de l'anglais Carbon Offsetting and Reduction Scheme for International Aviation).

À l'issue de son assemblée triennale qui s'est tenue à Montréal du 24 septembre au 4 octobre, les **193 pays membres de l'OACI ont conclu leurs travaux par un vote sur deux résolutions en faveur d'une part de la poursuite de la mise en œuvre du dispositif mondial de compensation des émissions de l'aviation civile internationale CORSIA, et d'autre part de la recherche d'un objectif de long terme pour limiter celles-ci.**

La Chine et la Russie, soutenues par l'Inde, estiment que le système CORSIA pénalise les aviations des pays en développement. Malgré leur opposition, le mécanisme mondial a été défendu par 92 voix pour, 25 contre et 10 abstentions. « Dans ces deux domaines, le volontarisme européen, et notamment celui de la France, s'est heurté à une coalition menée par la Chine et la Russie, qui a conduit à limiter les avancées espérées. Les travaux vont cependant se poursuivre sur ces sujets, l'Europe continuant pour sa part à mettre en œuvre son mécanisme de quotas d'émissions... » a déclaré dans un communiqué le secrétaire d'État français aux Transports, Jean-Baptiste Djebbari.

Selon le dispositif CORSIA, les compagnies aériennes devront stabiliser leurs émissions à partir de 2020. À partir de 2021, les émissions de CO2 dépassant le niveau de celles atteintes en 2020 seront compensées par l'acquisition de « crédits de réduction » sur un marché alimenté par des secteurs d'activité qui réduisent leurs émissions. Jusqu'à la fin de 2026, l'adhésion au mécanisme est basée sur le volontariat, ensuite elle sera progressivement obligatoire. Les délégués de l'OACI se sont « engagés à travailler » sur un objectif à long terme (2050) qui sera discuté lors de la prochaine assemblée triennale en 2022.

Air Journal 13/10/2019

NEW DELHI : In mounting trouble for Praful Patel, the Enforcement Directorate (ED) has summoned the former civil aviation minister for recording his statement in its Mumbai office on 18 October, connection with a money laundering case involving drug dealer Iqbal Mirchi.

While Iqbal died in London in 2013, Patel has come under the probe agency's scanner. **The ED has alleged that in 2006, Millennium Developers Pvt Ltd developed Ceejay House in Mumbai, of which two floors were transferred to Mirchi's wife Hazra Iqbal in 2007.**

At the same time, **the probe agency has alleged that the sale of the land to Millennium Developers – of which Praful and his wife are stakeholders -- was done through alleged dubious means, with the proceeds being laundered by Mirchi.**

In June, the Enforcement Directorate quizzed Patel for his role in an alleged aviation scam during the United Progressive Alliance (UPA) government. Patel, a leader of the Nationalist Congress Party, was in charge of the civil aviation ministry between 2004 and 2011.

The ED had also summoned Patel in May for questioning in the case probing alleged roles of some government officials and ministers in the UPA government in awarding favourable air traffic rights to foreign airlines that caused losses to Air India. **Patel was named in a recent chargesheet filed by the agency as a person known to corporate lobbyist Deepak Talwar.**

Talwar was extradited from Dubai in January this year. The ED has alleged that Talwar was in regular touch with Patel.

Live Mint Aviation 15/10/2019

Bengaluru: An indefinite strike by about 20,000 employees of the Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd (HAL) for wage revision on Monday grounded the operations of the state-run defence PSU across the country, a labour union official said.

"The response to our strike call has been overwhelming with all the employees abstaining from work in the nine production locations across the country," HAL trade union General Secretary S.

Chandrasekhar told IANS here.

The unions have sought a wage revision given to the executives, a gross salary hike of 35 per cent, and a 110-140 per cent hike in perks.

The wage revision is due since January 1, 2017, as the previous two revisions were in 2012 and 2007 for 5 years, respectively.

But the aircraft manufacturer offered only to enhance allowances under cafeteria system at 22 per cent for workmen in scale 1 to 10-20 per cent for workmen in special scale as against the uniform rate of 19 per cent offered earlier.

It also offered to revise rate of fitment benefit at 11 per cent.

But the unions turned it down.

"This is wage deduction but no wage revision. We need to go on par with the executives, wage revision means increase," said Chandrasekhar, regretting that some junior employees will be paid lesser than what they draw with the new wage hike offer.

15/10/19 IANS/News18.com

Mumbai: The committee of creditors of Jet Airways on Monday decided to give the Synergy Group, the only entity interested in buying the beleaguered airline, time till November 15 to finalise a resolution plan. The Colombian group is understood to have held discussions with the Bird Group for investment into the ailing airline, sources told FE. Bird provides aviation management and other services in India and abroad.

With the additional time given to Synergy, the resolution will likely be pushed to December, sources close to the proceedings said.

Ravi Deol, the UK-based entrepreneur who was the first CEO of the coffee chain Barista Lavassa, is also understood to have held discussions with German Efromovich, owner of the Synergy Group, sources told FE.

According to the earlier timeline set out by Jet's resolution professional (RP), Ashish Chhawchharia, interested parties were expected to submit a resolution plan latest by October 14. The final resolution plan was expected to be put before the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) for its approval on October 28.

"The Synergy Group is still doing due diligence. They had a video conference call with Jet's management on Monday to understand which all routes they can begin operations from once the airline is revived. Lenders are hopeful, so some more time has been given," the person told FE. **The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has given time till mid-January for Jet Airways to file**

slot request for the summer season, the source added.

15/10/19 Financial Express

Air India Assets Holding Ltd (AIAHL), a special purpose vehicle created by the Indian government to hive off a part of Air India's massive debt, raised another INR70 billion rupees (USD986 million) through bonds.

The Economic Times has reported that the bonds issue was oversubscribed with bids totalling more than INR210 billion (USD2.96 billion). **It was already the second tranche of INR70 billion worth of bonds.**

In total, the government decided to transfer INR295 billion (USD4.2 billion) debt from Air India to AIAHL, together with the carrier's non-core assets, mostly real estate. The amount is less than half of the airline's total debt.

14/10/19 ch-aviation

The Centre is likely to issue the expression of interest (Eoi) for divestment of its stake in national passenger carrier Air India by November.

According to airline employees, the proposed Eoi is slated for early next month in place of October-end, when it was initially planned to be issued.

A meeting was called by the airline's management to brief several employees' unions over the proposed divestment process and its ramifications.

An airline employee, who attended the meet, told IANS here that **the management has informed the unions that under the new arrangements for divestment, the government will not guarantee job safety in the new private entity beyond a year.**

"The management has informed us that job security will be there for only one year from the time of privatisation. After this period, jobs will depend upon the new owners. However, the management said that they are trying to get job security of at least 3 years," the union member said.

"We were also informed that **in the private entity, employees will not be able to encash their leaves.**"

However, gratuity will be covered for employees.

Other provisions like medical facilities will not be available post-retirement and travel passes on Air India flights will be based on market standards.

The unions expressed "concerns" over the lack of information on the divestment process and the future of the airline.

On the other hand, a senior Air India official told IANS, that the management has assured the unions that their interests will be protected.

15/10/19 IANS/CNBC TV18

The state-run Indian Oil Corporation (IOC) on Tuesday said that it will discontinue fuel supplies to Air India as it failed to clear pending dues, CNBC TV-18 reported citing IOC. It comes after public sector oil marketing companies (OMCs) including IOC, BPCL and HPCL on October 10, 2019 threatened to stop fuel supplies to the fiscally strapped national carrier at six major airports in the country. **The supply will stop from October 18 as Air India failed to comply with Rs 100 crore per month payment agreed earlier**, the latest report added. Air India's total dues including interest amounting to Rs 450 crore currently stand at Rs 2,700 crore. On October 5, 2019 too, the oil companies had sent a notice to the airline asking to clear payments.

On October 13, 2019, Air India said the aviation jet fuel payment issues are being sorted out and will be resolved soon with the oil PSUs, news agency PTI reported. The airline also 'assured' its customers of smooth operations, saying it has taken all the measures in the eventuality of the two sides failing to reach an understanding on the issue.

15/10/19 Financial Express

Air India on Tuesday became the first airline in the world to use a Taxibot on a A320 aircraft with passengers onboard.

Taxibot is a robot-used aircraft tractor for taxiing an aircraft from parking bay to runway and vice versa.

On Tuesday morning, the national carrier's Chairman and Managing Director Ashwani Lohani flagged off flight AI665 - which was carried to runway using Taxibot at terminal 3 of the Delhi airport - to Mumbai.

With Taxibot it is possible to tow an aircraft from the parking bay to the runway with its engines switched off. It is a pilot controlled semi-robotic towbarless aircraft tractor used as an alternate taxiing equipment.

"The use of Taxibot on the Air India aircraft at Indira Gandhi International Airport today morning is the first such usage on any Airbus aircraft worldwide. Really an achievement to be proud of. A giant step forward towards a cleaner environment," Lohani said. An Air India spokesperson said, "Taxibot saves precious fuel and reduces engine wear and tear. The ignition will be turned only when the aircraft reaches the runway."

15/10/19 PTI/Economic Times

Mumbai: The GVK Group, which is locked in a legal battle with the Adani Group on stake sale in its flagship Mumbai International Airport (MIAL), on Tuesday said it has received a notice from the corporate affairs ministry (MCA), seeking some details about the airport operator.

The group is resisting the Adanis' bid to buy out the 13.5 percent stake being held by its South African JV partner Bidvest in MIAL. The issue is with the Bombay High Court.

The Hyderabad-based infrastructure major, which has interest in power, coal mines and aviation among others, however, denied that other group companies have also received notices from the ministry.

"We confirm only MIAL has received a communication asking for certain details/information, which are being furnished," GVK said in a statement.

MIAL is a JV between GVK-led consortium of Bidvest and Airports Company of South Africa, and the state-run Airports Authority, in which GVK holds majority 50.5 percent and AAI 26 percent and the remaining 23.5 percent are with the two foreign partners.

While Bid Services Division Mauritius or Bidvest owns 13.5 percent, ACSA Global (Airports Company of South Africa) holds 10 percent in the nation's second busiest airport.

The statement came after a section of the media reported that the GVK group was on the ministry radar following a whistle-blower alleging siphoning of funds, issuance of fake bills to inflate cost to get undue Customs and Excise duty benefits among others.

"We are not aware of any whistleblower complaint or any allegations that have appeared in a section of the media, which are baseless," the company said.

GVK also claimed that none of the group companies, barring MIAL, have received any notice from the ministry.

The tussle with the Adanis has its origins in GVK not letting Bidvest sell its stake in MIAL to Adanis instead it wants to buy out both South African partners.

In the meanwhile, the Adanis had entered into a share purchase agreement with Bidvest and following GVK's bid to stall it, the Adanis dragged the matter to an arbitration tribunal which asked GVK to make the payments by September 30 first and then it was extended to October 31.

In the meanwhile, the Adanis dragged the matter to the Bombay High Court early October where the matter is being heard now.

The Adanis are betting big on the airports space, having bagged mandate to run six domestic airports from AAI earlier this year and are keen to have a foothold in the nation's second busiest airport by purchasing the 13.5 percent stake with the South African firms.

Bidvest had agreed to sell its entire stake in MIAL to Adanis for Rs 1,248 crore or Rs 77 a share and the Adanis moved the Bombay HC last month seeking execution of its agreement with Bidvest.

The Economic Times of India 16/10/2019

NEW DELHI : Vistara, a joint venture of Tata Sons and Singapore Airlines, on Thursday said that it has finalized an order worth \$2.4 billion for 26 engines to power 13 new Airbus A320neo and a long term engine maintenance contract for its Airbus fleet.

"Alongside this engine order, Vistara signed a long-term Rate Per Flight Hour (RPFH) agreement for the maintenance of the 120 (CFM) LEAP-1A engines that power 60 such Airbus A320neo and A321neo aircraft in service or in order," Vistara said in a statement.

"The combination of the RPFH agreement and the engine order is valued at more than \$2.4 billion U.S. at list price," it added.

CFM International is a joint venture between GE Aviation, a division of General Electric of the US, and Safran Aircraft Engines, a division of Safran of France

Under the terms of the RPFH agreement, engine maker CFM guarantees maintenance costs for the Vistara's LEAP-1A engines on a dollar per engine flight hour basis.

"The combination of the LEAP-1A engine and A320neo continue to deliver exceptional performance and helps Vistara maintain the highest standards of operational efficiency," said Leslie Thng, CEO of Vistara.

The airline also finalized a deal to lease 37 aircraft from the A320neo family, ordered in July 2018 and 10 similar leased aircraft already in service, Vistara said in the statement.

During July 2018, Vistara placed an order 19 planes, which included wide body planes, worth \$3.1 billion from Airbus SE and Boeing Co.

Vistara currently has 23 Airbus A320 and nine Boeing 737-800NG aircraft fleet, according to its website.

The airline, which will get delivery of wide body planes early next year, is looking to start long-haul international flights to destinations in Europe and Australia

Live Mint Aviation 17/10/2019

NEW DELHI : The domestic air passenger traffic fell for the fourth consecutive month during September amidst market uncertainties in a slowing economy and a lean travel season, the monthly decline worsening to 2.20% as compared to 0.94% during the previous month.

Domestic scheduled carriers carried 11.53 million passengers in September, compared with 11.79 million passengers in August, showed data issued by the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) on Thursday. They had carried 11.90 million passengers in July.

"The numbers are disappointing. They have pulled down our projection and now, we peg (the yearly growth for 2019 at 4 to 6%). The good news is that we have managed to withstand the sad exit of Jet Airways and maintained a positive growth despite three months of negative or almost flat growth," said a DGCA official, requesting anonymity.

InterGlobe Aviation Ltd's IndiGo continued its market dominance of the Indian skies, carrying nearly one in every two passengers, more than recovering the ground it had lost in August. Its market share rose to 48.2% from 47% in August. It was 47.8% in July.

On the back of reasonable growth in the first five months of the calendar year, passenger traffic carried by domestic airlines during Jan-Sept was still higher by 3%, rising to 105.89 million as against 102.79 million in the corresponding period of the previous year, according to DGCA.

"The loss in the fleet on account of Jet Airways, has largely been recovered and we expect an all time high fleet of more than 616 aircraft in the Air in a month's time from now. With some more aircraft joining our fleet by 31 December, we expect a return to double digit growth in the early part of next year," the official added.

The Delhi-based airline carried 5.56 million passengers in September, while SpiceJet flew nearly 1.7 million passengers, notching up a 14.7% market share. The Ajay Singh-owned airline's market share fell from 15.5% during last month. Air India improved its share by 20 basis points to 13%, flying nearly 1.495 million passengers during the period.

Live Mint Aviation 17/10/2019

New Delhi: In a push to domestic drone manufacturing, India's civil aviation regulator DGCA has given nod the for companies to manufacture Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS).

In an interview to IANS, Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) Director General Arun Kumar said the regulator has given its approval to 5 companies for drone manufacturing based on the presentations made to it earlier.

Market watchers told IANS that firms such as Skylark Drones and ideaForge among others, have received the nod to start manufacturing operations.

"Domestic drone manufacturers have approached us with their products. These are tested by our engineering department," Kumar told *IANS*.

"We are concerned with the safety aspect of these products."

According to Kumar, the move is expected to reduce import dependence and give the necessary push to the nascent domestic industry.

"Most of these companies are start-ups. Till now there was a massive import of drones, especially from China," he said.

"Drones are highly effective in reaching remote areas in hilly terrain and have vast usage in other sectors like agriculture, where these can be used to spray pesticides."

Last year, minimum manufacturing standards and training requirements of drone pilots were set out in the the "Drone Regulations 1.0"

According to industry estimates, India's drone market is worth around \$900 million.

As per estimates, apart from those approved, more than 10 other major manufacturers are ready with their products to be inspected by the DGCA.

Besides, defence and law enforcement agencies, these systems are also being used by state-run companies in sectors such as power, highways and railways.

Another major application of the UAS is in entertainment and production, where live events are being filmed using drones.

Recently, the DGCA gave its nod to the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) to live telecast feed from inside stadiums obtained via drones.

With the advent of drones, a great need for anti-drone technology is also being felt, given the recent terrorist attacks overseas orchestrated via UAS, while a few domestic companies are said to be ready to provide a solution for this future threat as well.

Live Mint Aviation 17/10/2019

The battle between the promoters of InterGlobe Aviation Ltd, which operates India's largest airline, has reached US shores with Rahul Bhatia-led InterGlobe Enterprises (IGE) filing a lawsuit in Florida and Maryland courts to seek information from co-founder Rakesh Gangwal and independent director Anupam Khanna, according to two people aware of the matter.

The latest development comes a fortnight after IndiGo told its shareholders that Bhatia had submitted an arbitration request against Rakesh Gangwal Group (RG Group), which comprises Gangwal, the Chinkerpoo Family Trust and Shobha Gangwal, before the London Court of International Arbitration (LCIA).

"The cases in the US courts are related to IGE Group seeking production of documents (from Gangwal) pertaining to the period prior to the shareholders' agreement (SHA), among other things," said one of the two people, requesting anonymity.

The documents could be used during the arbitration to bolster Bhatia's case with respect to the alleged breach of the SHA, the person added.

The shareholders' agreement signed in April 2015 expires in November.

While Bhatia and IGE did not respond to emails and messages seeking information, Gangwal declined to comment.

Law news website, law360.com, on Wednesday reported that Gangwal is believed to possess discoverable information relevant to the claims that form the subject matter of the LCIA arbitration, citing Bhatia's Florida suit that was filed on that day.

"Specifically, the requested documents and information relate to events, time periods and relationships which members of the RG Group exploited to mount their campaign to dilute the critical controlling rights of InterGlobe Enterprises and the Bhatias," the report added quoting the suit.

In July, Gangwal had first complained to the Securities and Exchange Board of India that Bhatia's IGE group's outsized rights have helped it push through transactions and policy changes that violate corporate governance rules.

Bhatia has denied the allegations.

Live Mint Aviation 17/10/2019

New Delhi: Two SpiceJet pilots were suspended for three months Thursday by the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) for a runway incursion incident in August.

The pilots, who were commanding SpiceJet flight SEJ 8723 from Delhi to Mumbai on 27 August, were issued showcause notices last month.

The DGCA, in an order released Thursday, said the pilots — Captain Bhushan Nanda and Captain Trishla Chandola — had admitted their lapses in a reply to the showcause notice.

A DGCA investigation had revealed that the tower controller had given taxi instructions to SEJ 8723 to hold at holding point RWY 10 and the crew of the SpiceJet flight had confirmed compliance. However, the flight crossed the holding point, which had led to a runway incursion at Delhi's IGI airport.

On 18 September the DGCA ordered showcause notices asking Nanda and Chandola to explain in writing why action should not be taken against them for endangering the safety of the aircraft and the passengers on board.

17/10/19 Ifrah Mufti/Print

Dubai: Who can even think of launching a new airline in the current economic climate? Well, Abu Dhabi's Etihad and Sharjah's Air Arabia just proved that they did.

In a move rated as audacious by many in the industry, the two carriers confirmed they will launch a low-cost carrier, with the hub being in Abu Dhabi and using the established branding of 'Air Arabia' to reach for the skies. And they can do so without much of the time consuming processes new carriers have to go through.

"The launch of "Air Arabia Abu Dhabi" falls well short of a full-scale merger, but there are so many cost and time efficiencies that can be generated," said a consultant with an M&A advisory firm in London. "Etihad could assign even more focus on those routes that serve its status as a premium

airline from the Middle East.

“It also has landing rights to several destinations where a budget/low-cost service could have served it better in the past. Now, it has the right sort vehicle to make it happen. Premium and low-cost services require two different mindsets.”

It is in this context that the word “re-purpose” is being thrown about, with Etihad in a position to place some of its existing fleet or new jet orders at the service of the new airline. “Put simply, there’s no need to reinvent the wheel - what they already have can be deployed at Air Arabia Abu Dhabi and at much less cost than is the case for most new airlines,” the source added.

With the announcement of Air Arabia Abu Dhabi, Etihad could also have come up with the best alternative to pursue possibilities into India. And not have to be perpetually distracted by whatever is happening at Jet Airways, the grounded Indian carrier in which the Abu Dhabi entity has a 24 per cent stake. (Jet’s future is still clouded, with only one bidder - Synergy Group - taking formal steps to acquire it, base don media reports last month.) Jet had been operating services into the UAE, and “The loss of capacity following its folding up led to a significant increase in prices of international flight tickets from India,” said Ranvir Nayar, Managing Editor at Paris-based Media India Group. “The Gulf accounted for more than half of all the international flights operated by Jet.

“As ticket prices had already begun to harden in the Gulf-India sector, any further consolidation would have led to a sharp increase in the prices, hurting consumers, especially those Indians who earn their livelihood in the Gulf.

“The arrival of a new low-cost airline to focus on the Gulf-India sector is a development that would be welcomed by practically all consumers... as well as gain support of the Indian government.”
17/10/19 Manoj Nair/Gulf News

Chennai: After failing to attract buyers in the first attempt, the Union government will issue the second Expression of Interest (EoI) in November for divestment of its stake in national carrier Air India.

Highly placed sources said the EoI is being prepared by the Group of Ministers led by Home Minister Amit Shah and the document will be out by November, which would kick start the divestment process once again.

“Something will happen shortly. The process (of divestment) should start very soon with the release of EoI. Once the EoI is issued, we hope there will be buyers this time as we have made lot of changes that could attract other airlines in theyet-to-be released document,” a senior official in the know-how of the developments told DH.

The EoI which was supposed to have been released in October has now been pushed to November.
17/10/19 ETB Sivapriyan/Deccan Herald

The government recently concluded the second private placement bond offering for the special purpose vehicle (SPV) created to address Air India’s balance sheet woes. This is the second series of the offering. Or more accurately for the redeemable, unsecured, taxable, non-convertible debentures backed by a government guarantee and being referred to as bonds. The offering signals strong intent of the government towards privatising Air India, yet the success of the offering cannot be confused in any manner with any success at Air India.

The SPV is essential to the balance-sheet cleanup at Air India

The bond offering was done on behalf of the SPV named Air India Asset Holdings Limited (AIAHL).

This was set up to transfer Rs 29,464 crore of debt from Air India’s balance sheet. Effectively this leads to the national carrier’s debt burden being slashed by 50 percent. This amount in turn will be refinanced and subsequently serviced by the sale of non-core assets.

The SPV in turn will service the bonds by sale of assets. These include shares held in various subsidiaries, paintings, artifacts and other non-operational assets, non-core assets, immovable properties and moveable properties, intangible properties trademarks, brand names, goodwill, copyright, intellectual property rights, accumulated working capital loans not backed by any asset and other assets that may be decided by Air India and/or the Government of India.

Interestingly, the SPV may also hold claim to slots at airports, landing rights and operating rights. But again this has to be jointly decided by Air India and the Government of India. It can be assumed that any assets that the potential buyer is not willing to pay for may be transferred to the SPV.

Details of the bond offerings

The first bond offering in September this year, was priced at 6.99 percent and had a three-year and three month tenure of Rs 1,000 crore. Put simply, this means that the bond pays the buyer at a rate of 6.99 percent semi-annually (twice a year). The 6.99 percent is also of importance as it is higher than the three-year government bond yield and even higher than the 10-year treasury yield at the time of 6.73 percent while being backed by the full faith and credit of the Government of India. It was rated AAA by ICRA ratings. The second offering was priced at 7.39 percent and had a ten year tenor of Rs 1,000 crore. Yet again this was higher than the 10-year treasury yield of 6.685 percent while being backed by the full faith and credit of the Government of India. It was also rated AAA by ICRA ratings. Both bond offerings had a greenshoe option of Rs 6,000 crore. Cumulatively the offerings have enabled the SPV to raise Rs 14,000 crore. Additional bond issues are planned, including a Rs 15,064 crore issue that will have a maturity period of ten years. **The bond offerings being oversubscribed is being presented as a runaway success. While it was a success, it is also worth repeating that this bond offering is government backed. Which translates to zero risk of default and a high trust factor and high safety for investors. This also allows for the debt in the SPV to be refinanced at a lower rate.**

17/10/19 Satyendra Pandey/CNBC TV18

Today marks the completion of six months since the fall of Jet Airways – once the largest airline in Indian skies. The last six months have seen quite a few debates about capacity, fares, market share, slots and a lot more. While each airline has its version of the story and strategy, the fact has been that the fall of growth in passenger numbers has coincided with the fall of Jet Airways. The air traffic growth in the country has been lackluster since the fall of the airline.

While every airline scrambled to launch flights with the slots freed up due to the collapse of Jet Airways, the airlines concentrated on metros – primarily Mumbai and Delhi, leaving out the AAI-operated airports. In this melee, there was a whole bunch of routes which Jet Airways operated at its peak that have been left out. Jet Airways had been on a downward spiral for over six months before it shut down, starting with dismantling its mini-scissors hub of Guwahati for the North East and followed by reducing its ATR network, shutting down links and stations in the Gulf and concentrating the GCC operations via Mumbai and Delhi. But leading up to this fall, the airline had planned rapid expansion of its domestic network to take on the might of IndiGo and fend off the competition of Vistara. Jet Airways operated its full planned schedule in the early months of last winter schedule. Aviation industry is divided into two scheduling seasons, the summer schedule which runs from last Sunday of March until the last Saturday of October, with the rest being winter schedule. It is wise to consider the Winter Schedule of 2018 to understand what Jet Airways operated or intended to operate and where those routes stand now.

17/10/19 Ameya Joshi/CNBC TV18

The board of InterGlobe Aviation will meet on October 24 to consider financial results for the three months ended September.

The meeting also comes against the backdrop of differences between promoters -- Rahul Bhatia and Rakesh Gangwal -- wherein Bhatia has also initiated arbitration proceedings in London.

InterGlobe Aviation is the parent of the country's largest airline IndiGo.

In a filing to the stock exchanges on Thursday, the company said board meeting would be held on October 24.

The board would meet to "consider and approve the unaudited standalone and consolidated financial results of the company for the quarter and half-year ended on September 30, 2019, subject to a limited review by the statutory auditors," the filing said.

Shares of InterGlobe Aviation rose nearly 1 per cent to close at ₹1,736 on the BSE.

On October 1, InterGlobe Enterprises and Bhatia sought arbitration proceedings under the shareholders' agreement, dated April 23, 2015. The pact was amended on September 17, 2015.

The agreement was executed between Bhatia's InterGlobe Enterprises Group (IGE Group), Gangwal, the Chinkerpoo Family Trust, Shobha Gangwal -- the RG Group -- and InterGlobe Aviation.

The differences between the promoters came to the fore in July when Gangwal sought market regulator Securities and Exchange Board of India's intervention in alleged corporate governance lapses at the company.

The allegations were rejected by Bhatia group.

At the end of June, InterGlobe Enterprises along with Bhatia and related individuals held 38.23 per cent stake in the company while Gangwal and related entities owned 36.65 per cent shareholding, as per data available with the stock exchanges.

Live Mint Aviation 17/10/2019

Asteria Aerospace's A200 micro drone was issued the very first Unique Identification Number (UIN) in India, U0000001, by the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA). The UIN was issued after a digital registration of the drone on India's Digital Sky platform. This brings certified and compliant drone operations in the country one step closer to reality under DGCA's Civil Aviation Regulations for the use of drones in the civilian airspace.

Under these regulations, the DGCA formulated an all-digital process for the registration and operation of drones in India, supporting the No Permission, No Take-off (NPNT) policy to prevent unauthorized drone flights. As part of the regulations, every drone operator must obtain a UIN before being granted permission to fly the drone.

A drone UIN is essentially like a license plate number issued for motor vehicles and is necessary for ensuring traceability and accountability. The UIN is issued on the Digital Sky platform after forming an end-to-end digital link between the drone, manufacturer and operator

Neel Mehta, Director & Co-founder of Asteria Aerospace, said about the achievement: "After certifying one of the first NPNT compliant drones in the country and now obtaining the first UIN on it, Asteria continues to lead the way forward for the drone industry in India and build towards the vision of scalable, compliant drone operations in the civil airspace."

"Quidich is proud to have the first UIN registered in India and that it is an indigenous drone from Asteria Aerospace with whom we have a strong longstanding partnership. We are thankful to DGCA for their cooperation through this process and hope to continue working with all stakeholders to ensure legal and safe use of drones in India.", says Gaurav Mehta, Co-founder of Quidich Innovation Labs.

Asteria Aerospace thanks its partners, Quidich Innovation Labs, who purchased, applied for and obtained the UIN on the A200 drone for their use, and Algopixel Technologies, who supported the drone registration process.

About Asteria Aerospace:

Based out of Bangalore, India, Asteria Aerospace Pvt. Ltd. develops drones and drone-based solutions to provide actionable intelligence from aerial data. Asteria is one of the leading providers of specialized drone platforms for military and industrial applications with best-in-class performance and proven reliability in demanding environments.

Suas News 18/10/2019

New Delhi: **A helicopter carrying former Congress President Rahul Gandhi was forced to make an emergency landing in Rewari in Haryana after it failed to touch ground in New Delhi due to bad weather conditions.** According to reports, Rahul Gandhi was returning to the national capital from Mahendragarh in Haryana after addressing a public rally in place of her mother Sonia Gandhi, who could not attend the event to a viral infection. It has also being learnt that the Congress leader later left for Delhi by road.

When contacted, Rewari Deputy Commissioner Yashendra Singh told PTI that Gandhi spent about 20 minutes at the college ground before proceeding to Delhi. "There was an emergency landing.... The helicopter landed safely at Rewari," Singh said. In response to speculations, sources close to Gandhi said his helicopter was forced to abort its landing in Delhi due to bad weather and not due to a technical snag. During his small halt at Rewari's KLP College ground, Rahul Gandhi played cricket with children at the ground. This was Rahul Gandhi's second poll rally in the state that goes to polls on October 21. Earlier he had addressed a public meeting in Nuh in Mewat region of the state.

According to official reports, as many as 60 flights at Indira Gandhi International (IGI) Airport in New Delhi were delayed due to bad weather in the city. Several flights were diverted from the Delhi airport because of the bad weather conditions as several airlines issued advisories and updates about their flights.

"#TravelUpdate Due to bad weather in Delhi, flights to and from Delhi may be impacted. Please visit <http://airvistara.com> or SMS UK<flight no> to 9289228888 for updated flight status. Thank you" tweeted Vistara Airlines

ABP Live 18/10/2019

MUMBAI: Former Jet Airways chief executive Vinay Dube has joined budget carrier GoAir in an advisory role, a source said on Saturday. Dube had quit defunct Jet Airways on May 14, nearly a month after the airline ceased operations due to severe liquidity crisis.

According to the source, GoAir wanted to hire him for the position of the CEO which is vacant since March this year.

« However, since there is a lookout notice against him from the Ministry of Corporate Affairs in Jet Airways case, it would have got in legal tangle. Therefore, he has joined in an advisory role », the source told PIT.

Dube boarded the Wadai group carrier last week, the source added.

Lookout circulars were issued against former Jet Airways chairman and then promoter Naresh Goyal and Debe, among others, in late May for alleged financial irregularities at the airline.

The corcual is issued against a person directing the immigration auhtorities to ensure that he or she does not leave India through an airport or seaport.

Times of India 19/10/2019

Hyderabad: Air India is eyeing to secure the European Union Air Safety Agency's (EASA) certificate for its Maintenance Repair and Overhaul (MRO) facility at the Rajiv Gandhi International Airport (RGIA) in Shamshabad here.

EASA carries out certification, regulation, and standardisation, and also performs investigation and monitoring.

Air India Engineering Services Limited (AIESL) General Manager (Engineering) Y Srinivasa Rao said here on Saturday that efforts were on to apply for the certification after getting approval from the Central government. The certification is essential as most foreign airlines look for it in order to send their aircraft to the MRO facility.

This will not only enable foreign airlines to know the standards of the MRO complex, but also help the AIESL, a wholly owned subsidiary company of Air India, to do business with foreign airlines. According to Rao, the AIESL will have to make some investments in the MRO facility as per the norms prescribed by the Director General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) to make it EASA compliant.

The MRO complex that was inaugurated on May 29, 2015 can accommodate two A320 family aircraft simultaneously or one wide body aircraft B747 and C777.

The state-of-the-art hangar has all facilities like proposed docking system, cranes, plug and play IT network, associated back shops to support aircraft maintenance and airframe accessory and wheel servicing shops.

The MRO complex was currently offering services to the captive fleet and planning to increase shifts to two from the present one. It is undertaking pre-flight or weekly checks of A321, 320, 319 or ATR aircraft and provide technical assistance to other international carriers as part of comprehensive ground handling service.

The MRO facility has acquired DGCA approval for additional capability to carry out full scope maintenance checks on the ATR 72-600 aircraft. It is also ready to take up third party work.

Setting up of service facilities of ATR 72-600 components is also under process. As part of Skill India initiative, the MRO is imparting training to students from various aviation schools, Rao said.

Telangana today 19/10/2019

MUMBAI: BJP president and Union home minister Amit Shah's helicopter made an emergency landing at Ozar airport in Nashik due to heavy rains on Saturday, the last day of campaigning for the October 21 Maharashtra assembly polls, an official said.

Time of India 19/10/2019

Ahmedabad airport Director Manoj Gangal is all set to shoulder new responsibilities at corporate headquarters in New Delhi after being promoted as executive director. As per sources in AAI, Gangal's promotion was cleared a couple of days ago and he will be given pan Indian responsibility at AAI headquarters.

Ahmedabad mirror 19/10/2019

The AAI is planning to monetise 759 acres of land near eight major airports so that private companies are able to establish warehouses, hotels or restaurants, and the money generated is utilised to develop airport infrastructure, a senior official said.

"The AAI has identified the following land parcels of airports for city side development: 145 acres near Kolkata airport, 45 acres near Amritsar airport, Bhubaneswar airport, 35 acres near Jaipur airport, 60 acres near Varanasi airport, 217 acres near Lucknow airport, 80 acres near Raipur airport and 117 acres near Tirpuati airport," a senior AAI official told PTI.

All the above land parcels are located at respective airport sites only...The non-traffic revenue thus generated (from land monetisation) shall be utilised for the airport infrastructure development in unconnected and under-served areas" the official clarified.

The Airports Authority of India (AAI), which works under the Ministry of Civil Aviation, owns and manages 129 airports across the country, out of which 94 were running in loss in the financial year 2017-18.

The (aforementioned) land is likely to be leased to any company or organisation for a period of 25-30 years for a fixed annual rental income," the official said.

The revenue generated from such land monetisation is classified as non-aeronautical revenues or non-traffic revenues.

The AAI is in the process of monetisation of its city side land as per the AAI Act for "planning, development, construction and maintenance of institutions/training centres, workshops, hotels, restaurants and rest-rooms, warehouses, cargo complex catering to the needs of passengers and air traffic services", the official noted.

The study of demand assessment and financial viability of some of the aforementioned land parcels is complete and the tenders for each one of them would be issued soon, the official said.

On June 27 this year, Civil Aviation Minister Hardeep Singh Puri had talked about this plan to monetise land of the AAI in Lok Sabha.

In a reply to a question, he had said in his written answer, "In order to enhance the non-aeronautical revenue potential of its land assets and to further improve passenger facilities and convenience at its airports, AAI is in the process of monetisation of its city side land by developing training centres, workshops, hotels, restaurants and restrooms, warehouses, cargo complex to the extent permitted under the provisions of AAI Act."

Last year, the government had decided to privatise airports in Lucknow, Ahmedabad, Jaipur, Mangaluru, Thiruvananthapuram, and Guwahati for operation, management and development through the public-private partnership (PPP) model. In February this year, the Adani Group won the contract for all the six airports.

The government plans to use the revenues earned from privatising airports into developing airport infrastructure in unconnected and under-served areas.

The Economic times of India 20/10/2019

The crackdown on airlines following a spate of incidents and accidents this monsoon – like aircraft overshooting runways and suffering tail strikes on landing – led the DGCA discovering ‘alarming practices’ (in some airlines) that merited tough action.

The rising trend of incidents started from April and peaked in July with that month alone seeing as many as 11 scares like aircraft overshooting runways while landing.

DGCA then launched a crackdown that included auditing airlines, issuing show cause notices that led to heads of those in charge of operations and pilot training at some carriers being rolled and acting against crew if found to be at fault for the accidents.

This action has now started bearing result with the unchecked accident rate showing a declining trend. August and September, according to DGCA data, have seen six and two incidents, respectively, that required DGCA to take enforcement action.

DGCA data shows the month-wise number of incidents needing such action this year is : Jan :3, Feb :8, March :5, April :3, May :4, June :7 ; July :11, August : 6 and September :2.

Of these 49 incidents/accidents/serious accidents, Spice Jet accounted for 20, AI group (Air India, Air India Express and Alliance air) and IndiGo for 11 each, Vistara, GoAir and Air Asia India for 2 each and one for Heritage Aviation. « The spate of accidents and incidents in June and July made us introspect and conduct various safety audits. Some of the practices discovered during these audits were alarming and merited tough action that was duly taken. We also started fixing responsibility based on credible and indisputable evidence based on flight data after preliminary inquiry », Arun Kumar said.

« The message we have given through our action in past few months of zero tolerance to safety issue. We have acted against over 60 pilots by suspending their licences for varying periods of time. The idea is not to be harsh but we needed a deterrence in place. That is why in some cases we reduced the quantum of punishment later on », said another official.

The Times of India 20/10/2019

Federal Minister for Civil Aviation, Ghulam Sarwar Khan, said on Sunday that the federal cabinet could consider restrictions of air routes to India during its forthcoming meeting, ARY News reported.

The statement came forth after the latest incident of ceasefire violations by the Indian troops in multiple sectors of the Line of Control (LoC), which resulted in the martyrdom of one soldier and five civilians.

Earlier in the day, at least nine Indian soldiers were killed and two bunkers destroyed by Pakistan Army in retaliation to unprovoked firing that targeted civilians near the Line of Control (LoC), Director-General Inter-Services Public Relations (DG-ISPR) said in a statement.

Indian troops resorted to unprovoked firing in violation of ceasefire line to deliberately targeting civilians in Jura, Shahkot and Nousehri Sectors, DG-ISPR said in a tweet.

In response to the provocation, Pakistan military troops effectively responded, leaving nine Indian soldiers killed and several injured, whereas, two bunkers were also destroyed.

During the exchange of fire, one Pakistani soldier and three civilians were martyred, whereas, two soldiers and five civilians wounded, said DG-ISPR. The martyred soldier is identified as Lance Naik Zahid. The injured civilians were shifted to district hospitals.

Later, the death toll from the Indian firing rises to six as two more civilians succumbed to wounded.

Major General Asif Ghafoor said in a Twitter message, "Two more civilian casualties succumbed to injuries. Total 5 civilians Shaheed. Indian guns silent as of now to undertake evacuation of their dead and injured after effective and befitting response from Pakistan Army."

The Spokesperson of Foreign Office, Dr. Mohammad Faisal, summoned the Indian Deputy Envoy Gaurav Ahluwalia on Sunday and condemned the unprovoked ceasefire violations by New Dehli which claimed lives of civilians along the Line of Control (LoC).

Arynews 20/10/2019

HYDERABAD: In a bid to increase working shifts and revenue, the Air India is all set to provide training at its Maintenance, Repair and Overhaul (MRO) facility in Shamshabad as part of the centre's Skill India programme, organised in collaboration with three '147 training schools' (aviation schools abiding the EASA guidelines), apart from the existing three.

Air India has also planned to upgrade the existing Hyderabad-base to the International EASA-145 standards, apart from the setting up of service facilities of ATR 72-600 components. The Hyderabad-base has also acquired DGCA approval for the additional capability to carry out full scope MPD base maintenance checks on ATR 72-600 and is ready to take up third party works.

European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) is an organisation that ensures safety procedures for aircraft. It is the EASA specialists who establish what to look out for and what measures to take for flying safe. Y Srinivas Rao, the station head of Air India Engineering Services (AIES) said: "We currently have 700 employees at all the MROs in South India, with close to 350 employees in Hyderabad alone. We are planning to start an afternoon shift with 100 more recruits whom we will train on the site."

"We will also be able to increase revenue with extra manpower by taking in third party work," he added. AEIS was able to accrue a revenue of `1,970 lakh in 2018-19 and it also acquired a revenue of `578 lakh from January to August 2019. Students will have access to the Air India Training Institute in Balanagar, which is complete with state of the art flight simulators, door access training, emergency and security training.

When asked why the spare parts of aircraft are still largely imported from foreign countries, despite the PM's call for 'Make in India', Rao said: "Almost 99% of our spare parts are imported, however, manufacturing of spares in India will require permissions and guidelines from DGCA. We have forwarded representations and the idea to start manufacturing spares in-house is in the pipeline."

News Indian Express 20/10/2019

SpiceJet plans to induct wide-body planes early next year and is looking at various options as the budget airline steers ahead with its ambitious expansion plans, according to a senior official.

The low-cost carrier is looking at options from Boeing and Airbus.

An industry source said that Spice Jet might bid for air india's wide body operations in case the government puts up domestic and international operations for sale separately.

Currently, Spice Jet operates Boeing and bombardier.

The airline official said that a final decision on wide body aircraft is yet to be taken and various options are being considered. The idea is to operate long haul non stop flights next year.

Acquiring Air India international operations would give the airline a ready market with both wide body fleet as well as destinations, the source said.

The airline, which operates 550 flights on an average every day, has a fleet of 77 Boeing 737, 32 Q400 and 3 737 freighters.

In recent times, Spice Jet has been rapidly expanding its operations and has also taken planes of the now defunct Jet Airways.

Spice Jet has grounded 13 737 Max.

In 2016-17, the airline placed an order for up to 205 Max, including firm order for 155 such planes.

Times of India 20/10/2019

An air hostess with a private carrier was arrested by the customs at Mumbai airport for trying to smuggle 4kg of gold dust worth 1 crore from Dubai. She had been promised Rs. 60 000 for the job. A court has remanded her in judicial custody.

Times of India 20/10/2019

Washington: As India has emerged as the one of the fastest growing civil aviation markets of the world, it is time that the government take steps to make the aviation sector globally competitive beginning with reduction on its tax structure, the head of a low-cost airline has said.

Ajay Singh, Chairman and Managing Director, SpiceJet, in an interview to PTI rued that the **civil aviation sector in India is highly taxed and identified it as one of the major stumbling blocks in making it globally competitive.**

"I think lowering of taxes and looking at aviation in a holistic sense as a job creator, as something that connects India to itself and to the world. It's important that we take a more holistic approach to aviation," he said

Singh was in Washington DC last week as part of a business delegation that accompanied Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman who was here to attend the annual meeting of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank.

"What we have been asking for a very long time now is that the government should make Indian aviation competitive with its peers around the world. We should make sure that our costs are in line with our peers around the world," he said.

India, Singh said, is the only country which taxes aviation fuel at an average of about 35% while no other significant aviation country in the world taxes fuel at all.

As such Indian carriers are paying a much higher cost of operation and, therefore, they are not competitive with others. That is one big issue, he said.

"The second big issue is on the maintenance and repair operations. In maintenance and repair operations as well, we pay a GST of 18 per cent," he added.

MROs (Maintenance, Repair, Overhaul) is one space where India can be doing exceedingly well, Singh said.

"We can be repairing our own aircraft. We have the engineering skills. We have the people in India to do this. We have the infrastructure to do it. We have the skills. And despite that a lot of repair and overall active activity actually happens overseas because of the high tax in India," he said.

"As such, it is important to understand that if one imposes such high taxes, then nobody gets any work done and therefore there is no revenue. And when there is no revenue, there's no tax either, he observed.

"So you have to moderate taxes. India can be a huge global base for repair and overall not only for the airlines within India, but for for airlines outside India. So that's a space that we certainly need to look at," Singh said.

He asserted that it is also important that India should build its own international hubs like Dubai, Abu Dhabi, Doha, Singapore and Bangkok and stop exporting traffic into these hubs and allowing them to distribute traffic around the world.

"It's important for a large country like India to have people go directly from Delhi, Bombay, Bangalore and Hyderabad to Europe and the US and the far east. So, **we need to ensure that a policy action is taken on that front,**" Singh said.

He said **India has to start looking at the aviation sector in a holistic sense and try and make sure that the system does not make it burdensome to operate the businesses.**

"We have to ensure that aviation, the airlines themselves succeed," he said.

Of the BRICS countries, Singh said **India remains the only one where there is no major assembly facility of either Boeing or Airbus.**

That's a space that the government definitely needs to work on, he said.

Observing that India is a very large market, he said there is need to encourage people to come and start build something within India.

"I think the on engine repair for example, again, we need to ensure that a larger engine makers like CFM or Pratt and or Rolls Royce, start by setting up at least the maintenance and repair facilities within India," Singh said.

In the aviation sector, a lot is possible and a lot can be done especially if it is small planes, helicopters, aircraft components, etc, he said.

"But I think we have to work as one team India. The corporate sector as well as the government have to work aggressively with foreign companies that own the technology to encourage them to build in India," Singh said.

Live Mint Aviation 21/10/2019

NEW DELHI : There is terrific potential for the country's aviation sector and eventually a lot of consumer-facing traditional businesses, including airlines, will become large data companies, according to SpiceJet CMD Ajay Singh.

The domestic civil aviation sector had been recording good growth, which has slowed down in recent months. The domestic air passenger traffic rose just 1.18% in September compared to the year-ago period.

"I think there is terrific potential and there can't be a better country for aviation eventually. Out of 1.3 billion people, only three per cent fly. Imagine if 10 per cent flew, you will be the second largest aviation market or probably even largest aviation market in the world," Singh said at an event here on Monday.

He noted that the airline's order of 200 aircraft placed with Boeing valued at \$25 billion creates 1,35,000 high paid jobs in the US.

Singh, who has turned around the fortunes of the low-cost carrier, also said that industries like the airlines would become technology industries.

"Industries like ours will ultimately become tech industries. We will eventually be a data company running an airline... How do we collect data and how do we use it. I think that is where the key is going to be.

"I think airlines and a lot of traditional industries which are consumer facing will eventually become large data companies just leveraging their data and actually using services like airlines to collect data about their consumers," he said.

While noting that the government should reduce regulations as there are rules for everything, Singh mentioned about a recent DGCA move to have alcohol test for ground staff at airports.

In a phased manner, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has rolled out breath analyser examination of personnel engaged in aircraft maintenance, air traffic control services, airport operation and ground handling services.

"I will tell you about a rule that our regulator (DGCA) came up with... and the rule says that now you need to test every single person who is ten per cent of all our population at airports for alcohol in their breath... the guys working on the ground.

"Ten per cent of the entire population every single day every single shift, which now means that we need to hire hundreds of people to start... and this happens nowhere around the world," he said.

Live Mint Aviation, 21/10/2019

After agreeing to expand flying rights with Saudia Arabia, the Civil Aviation Ministry would hold talks with the United Arab Emirates (UAE) on Wednesday to consider their demand to raise bilateral seat quota for designated carriers of the two sides.

The higher seat quota will allow the airlines from the two sides to operate more flights.

With alleged role of middleman in negotiations for higher seat quota with the Gulf countries during the UPA-II government, the new government had almost put on hold the demand for further raising the seat entitlements.

Official sources indicated that the Indian side may not immediately agree for raising quota with the UAE that would benefit foreign carriers like Emirates and FlyDubai.

Among key demands, the UAE may press for designating Air Arabia as carrier from Ras Al Khaimah, one of the Emirates, and use the bilateral seat entitlements. RAK Airways, the official airline of Ras Al Khaimah, shut down in 2014 and Air Arabia is eyeing the unutilised quota. The designated airlines from India and Ras Al Khaimah are entitled to operate 1,428 seats per week.

The Ministry is, however, unlikely to agree to this given that in response to a Parliament question it had earlier said that the proposal is beyond the scope of existing bilateral air service agreement (ASA).

Article 3 of the ASA between India and UAE gives rights to both the parties to designate airlines.

"...the entitlement of each Emirate is specifically meant for designated airlines of that Emirate only and therefore Air Arabia which is designated airline of Sharjah can not utilise the entitlements of UAE (Ras Al Khaimah) at the same time," the then Civil Aviation Minister Jayant Sinha had said in Parliament.

In what suggests the government has now decided to remove virtual freeze on negotiations for more seat quota with the Gulf and Middle East countries, India last week agreed to enhance bilateral quota with Saudi Arabia by about 10,000 weekly seats.

Sources said that the move would help Saudi Arabia diversify its economy and boost tourism sector. Given that Saudi Arabia now wants to reduce its dependence on oil and focus on tourism as a major growth driver, the higher seat quota will help its airline get passenger feed from India.

The designated airlines of India and Saudi Arabia are currently entitled to operate 28,000 seats weekly from each side.

It has been reliably learnt that sale-bound national carrier opposed the government move but its suggestion was rejected.

With disinvestment process of Air India progressing fast, an industry insider said that the deal will help Air India's rivals and hence it would impact the valuation of the national carrier as and when it goes under the hammer.

The decision to raise seat quota with Saudi Arabia has not been made public so far and is likely to be announced during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to the oil-rich country.

As the routes between India and Gulf & Middle East countries are considered lucrative, the increase in bilateral seat quota has always been under spotlight.

In the previous UPA-II government, India had in 2013 agreed to enhance bilateral entitlements to Abu Dhabi by nearly four times from 13,330 seats to 50,000 seats per week from each side. With the allegations that the move was aimed at helping Jet Airways-Etihad deal, it came under scrutiny. The matter remains sub-judice in the court.

BJP MP Subramanian Swamy had challenged that the decision claiming that it will help Etihad and Indian carriers stood to lose.

Dubai has also been lobbying for quite some time to raise the bilateral seat quota but could not convince India and the issue remained on hold.

As per the National Civil Aviation Policy (NCAP), India goes for 'Open Sky' with foreign countries in case they are located beyond 5,000 km from Delhi. For countries within 5,000 kms, it has decided to agree for raising the entitlements only after designated Indian carriers have utilized 80 per cent of the seat quota.

Taking advantage of cheaper fuel, UAE carriers Emirates, Etihad and Fly Dubai have grown in size and scale over the years. Higher seat entitlements allow them to take passengers from India to their hubs and then feed their long-haul flights to North America and Europe.

Indian carriers have largely struggled given their poor financial health and have failed to match the seat utilisation of the UAE biggies.

Live Mint Aviation 21/10/2019

Boeing a transmis à l'agence fédérale de l'aviation civile (FAA) aux États-Unis des messages échangés en 2016 entre deux de ses employés. Ces communications semblent indiquer que le gendarme aérien américain a été induit en erreur concernant le système anti-décrochage du 737 MAX, ont dit à Reuters des sources informées de cette initiative vendredi 18 octobre. Le 737 MAX reste interdit de vol à travers le monde à la suite de deux catastrophes aériennes.

La substance des messages est "inquiétante" selon la FAA

La FAA a confirmé le 18 octobre avoir été informée par Boeing de l'existence de ces messages que le constructeur dit avoir découverts "il y a quelques mois". Ces échanges concernent "certaines communications avec la FAA durant la procédure initiale d'homologation du 737 MAX en **2016**", a précisé l'agence fédérale, qui juge la substance de ces messages "inquiétante".

Le régulateur aérien reproche à Boeing d'avoir attendu si longtemps avant de transmettre ces messages. "La FAA est [...] déçue que Boeing ne nous ait pas informé de ce document immédiatement après l'avoir découvert", écrit l'agence. La FAA "examine ces informations pour déterminer quelles actions sont appropriées".

Le MCAS "déraille dans le simulateur"

Ces messages internes entre pilotes de Boeing soulèvent des questions sur le système anti-décrochage MCAS du 737 MAX. Ce logiciel a été mis en cause dans les deux catastrophes aériennes survenues en l'espace de cinq mois, en octobre 2018 en Indonésie et en mars en Ethiopie, qui ont fait au total 346 morts.

Selon ces échanges datés de novembre 2016 et révélés par le Seattle Times, le système MCAS rendait l'avion difficile à piloter dans un simulateur de vol. Le MCAS "déraille dans le [simulateur]", écrit dans ces messages Mark Forkner, chef des pilotes techniques du 737 MAX. "Je te l'accorde, je suis nul en pilotage, mais cela était odieux", poursuit-il. "Donc j'ai tout simplement menti aux régulateurs (sans le savoir)", ajoute Mark Forkner, anciennement impliqué dans la certification du 737 MAX. Son collègue, le pilote technique Patrik Gustavsson, répond : "Ce n'était pas un mensonge, personne ne nous avait dit que c'était comme ça."

Boeing répond aux inquiétudes

Dans un communiqué publié le 20 octobre, Boeing indique enquêter sur les circonstances de cet échange et s'engage à transmettre les faits aux autorités de régulation adéquates. "Le logiciel de simulateur utilisé lors de la session du 15 novembre était toujours en phase de test et de qualification et il n'avait pas été finalisé", se défend le constructeur aéronautique.

L'entreprise rappelle aussi le processus "complexe" et "l'effort de plusieurs années qui a impliqué un grand nombre d'individus" derrière la certification du 737 MAX et la définition des instructions pour les pilotes. "Nous allons continuer à suivre les instructions de la FAA et d'autres régulateurs dans le monde, pendant que nous travaillons à faire revoler le 737 MAX en toute sécurité", a ajouté Boeing.

L'Usine nouvelle 21/10/2019

NEW DELHI : Vistara, a joint venture between Tata Sons and Singapore Airlines, on Tuesday said that it has entered into a code-share agreement with Singapore Airlines and its regional subsidiary SilkAir, which will allow the airline's passengers to access to about 35 destinations in Asia Pacific, Australia and New Zealand, through its partner flights.

Code-sharing allows an airline to book its passengers on partner carriers and provide seamless travel to destinations where it has no presence.

Vistara will now add its 'UK' designated code to Singapore Airlines and SilkAir-operated flights beyond Singapore to various cities in Australia, New Zealand, Indonesia, Thailand, Malaysia and

Cambodia, Vistara said in a statement adding that code sharing on flights to the United States (USA) and Japan will follow soon.

"Our code share agreement with SIA (Singapore Airlines) and SilkAir helps us to do this consistently to over 40 destinations around the world, given the high standards of product, service and operations that we share with them in common," Vistara's chief strategy officer Vinod Kannan said in a statement.

Apart from the code-share with Singapore airline and SilkAir, Vistara had earlier in June entered into a code share agreement with United Airlines, which will allow passengers of both carriers to earn and redeem frequent flyer miles.

It must however be noted that Vistara signed the code-share agreement with Singapore Airlines and SilkAir in 2017, the scope of which was expanded in August 2019 to international flights once Vistara started international operations.

The Gurgaon-headquartered airline started its international flights from August starting with Singapore. The airline is also looking to start long-haul international flights to destinations in Europe and Australia next year.

However, during 2019, Vistara will focus on growth in South-East Asia and West Asia and look at long-haul flights only after receiving its wide body planes next year, Vistara's chief executive Leslie Thng had told Mint in August.

During July 2018, Vistara ordered 19 planes worth \$3.1 billion from Airbus SE and Boeing Co. While it will use Boeing 787 (Dreamliner) planes on long-haul international routes, it will use Airbus A321 planes on medium-haul routes and Airbus A320 planes on short-haul international routes.

Vistara currently has 23 Airbus A320 and nine Boeing 737-800NG aircraft fleet, according to its website.

Live Mint Aviation 22/10/2019

Washington: Boeing Co is making progress toward getting its 737 MAX aircraft in the air again but the U.S. Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) will need at least several more weeks for review, FAA Administrator Steve Dickson said on Tuesday.

Dickson said at a conference of air traffic controllers in Washington that the agency had received the "final software load" and "complete system description" of revisions to the plane, which was grounded in March after two fatal crashes.

The disasters, which killed a total of 346 people, and grounding of Boeing's top-selling plane sparked a plunge in the company's share price and disrupted operations at some of the world's biggest airlines, prompting a huge effort by the planemaker to try to get the 737 MAX back into the skies.

But hopes of a quick return to service have slipped to become a more than seven month grounding.

The FAA is currently using "aircraft production software" in the engineering simulator. The next step is to complete pilot workload management testing and have U.S. and international pilots conduct scenarios to determine training requirements before a key certification test flight.

"It is going to be several more weeks before we go through all of that part of the process," Dickson said. "We've got considerable work to do."

Separately, Boeing said that last week it successfully conducted a dry-run of a certification flight test. Dickson told Reuters last month that the FAA would need about 30 days from the time of the certification test flight before the plane could resume flights.

The system description is a "500-ish page document that has the architecture of the flight control system and the changes that they have made," Dickson told Reuters last month.

Boeing shares rose on Tuesday after two sharp days of declines following the release of instant messages on Friday from a former Boeing pilot that the company had withheld from the FAA and which raised questions about what Boeing may have known about a key safety system.

That prompted an immediate demand for an explanation from the FAA about why the messages were not turned over sooner.

Boeing said on Tuesday it had "made significant progress over the past several months" in its work to return the MAX to service.

Dickson said once the steps were completed ahead of the certification test flight "it is a fairly straightforward process to unground the airplane." He reiterated he would not let the 737 MAX fly again "until I am satisfied it is safest thing out there." (Reporting by David Shepardson; Editing by Jason Neely and Mark Potter)

Live Mint Aviation 22/10/2019

NEW DELHI : Budget carrier AirAsia India will increase its fleet size to 29 aircraft by December-end, as it aims to increase frequencies to metro cities and prune unprofitable routes in the upcoming winter schedule, said Sanjay Kumar, chief operating officer of the airline.

AirAsia, a joint venture between Tata Sons Pvt. Ltd and Malaysia-based AirAsia Berhad, has 23 aircraft and will induct two aircraft in the next fortnight, he added.

Tata Sons holds a 51% stake in the airline, while AirAsia Berhad holds a 49% stake.

AirAsia India operates 175 daily flights to over 20 destinations across the country, including New Delhi, Mumbai, Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Kolkata and Ahmedabad.

The airline operates an Airbus A320 fleet that's powered by CFM engines. CFM International is a joint venture between US-based GE Aviation and French aerospace engine manufacturer Safran Aircraft Engines.

"We don't want to spread too thin and operate at stations with only one flight or so. Our aim is to strengthen our network, especially in metros, and have multiple frequencies between two cities," said Kumar.

The directorate general of civil aviation (DGCA) has approved the operation of 1,345 departures every week by AirAsia India in the upcoming winter schedule between 27 October 2019 and 28 March 2020. This is an increase of 326 departures every week compared to the corresponding period of the previous year.

This will lead to the airline increasing the frequencies of flights on busy metro routes, including Mumbai-Pune, New Delhi-Chennai, Delhi-Bengaluru, New Delhi-Hyderabad, Guwahati-New Delhi, Guwahati-Kolkata, Guwahati-Bengaluru, and New Delhi-Srinagar.

AirAsia India recently started a daily flight on the Delhi-Jaipur route and flights from Agartala to destinations such as Guwahati, Imphal, Kolkata and New Delhi from 20 October.

"Agartala is now connected to four destinations in the country on the very first day of the operations. This is the kind of philosophy we are going to follow, especially when we open a (new) station and network," Kumar said.

All the airline's upcoming new stations will be connected to other destinations across its network.

During the winter schedule, Indian airlines are set to operate 23,403 departures per week covering 103 airports, as compared to 23,117 departures a week during the winter schedule of the previous year.

About 3,600 weekly departures were reduced because of the sudden suspension of operations by Jet Airways (India) Ltd from the scheduled domestic aviation, DGCA had recently said. "Prompt steps by the government has filled the void created by Jet Airways and has helped to achieve growth of 1.2% compared to winter schedule 2018," it had added.

Jet Airways had grounded its operations in April 2019 following an acute cash crunch.

AirAsia India has temporarily been allocated some of the slots at major airports that earlier belonged to Jet Airways, Kumar said. "This has helped us increase frequencies between key metro cities."

AirAsia India carried 725,000 domestic passengers during September to register 6.3% market share. The airline had carried 498,000 passengers during September 2018 with a market share of 4.4%.

Live Mint Aviation 22/10/2019

If the Modi government's second attempt to privatise Air India in as many years fails, it will not be for a lack of trying. **Last year's attempt to sell up to a 76% stake in the Star Alliance carrier failed spectacularly with no expressions of interest lodged**, despite strong interest initially for certain parts of the company.

This time, however, is different.

After the humiliation of last year, it seems that the Modi administration is working to reduce some of the major stumbling blocks, with the biggest one being the airline's huge debt load that it has amassed after years of sustained losses. Such has been the fiscal drag from that debt that it has prevented it from posting a net profit, with interest payments wiping out the few periods when it has been able to post an operating profit.

To tackle that, New Delhi established Air India Assets (AIAHL) as a vehicle that will absorb around Rs294 billion (\$4.15 billion) of the airline's debt, while also taking over its ground handling, engineering, hotels and regional subsidiary Alliance Air. For good measure, it will also take over other assets, including art works, real estate and other intangibles.

AIAHL has released two tranches of bonds totalling Rs220 billion that will help to service and repay some of that debt, while asset sales are expected to make up the shortfall. One tranche of the bonds is being government-serviced while the other has a sovereign guarantee, meaning the interest on them should be sufficiently lower than the rates on the debt it is inheriting.

That will not only leave Air India's balance sheet sufficiently cleansed, but also allow it to be sold almost solely as an airline, rather than an airline with many other non-core – and often politically linked – operations. With budget unit Air India Express not being transferred to AIAHL, that appears likely to be part of the sale.

It appears that the slimming of Air India should make it clearer to potential bidders what they are in for. Prior to last year's privatisation attempt, various companies had expressed interest in taking parts of Air India but nobody was brave enough to take it as a whole. **Perhaps with the core airline operations now the focus, that could change.**

The other major change appears to be the desire of the government to sell all the equity in the airline, compared to only a 76% stake. In theory, that should leave little to no room for government interference, but that theory is likely to be tested in practice later on.

New Delhi has indicated that it intends to move forward with the expression of interest phase before the year is out, and so any deal would be likely to close in 2020.

PERFECT TIMING?

It is impossible to understate the importance to New Delhi of getting a deal done in the next few months as the carrier faces the best conditions it ever has.

That has been largely due to the demise of its major competitor on international routes in Jet Airways. Despite some signs that Jet could be revived, with Colombian group Synergy Aerospace appearing to be the front-runner, it has a long runway ahead of it to get back to the international airlines that it once was.

That has given Air India a fillip and impetus to grow within the constraints of its current fleet to capture some of that demand. Recently, executives at the airline told attendees at the World Routes conference that more aircraft were coming out of maintenance and utilisation being increased to meet the demand, especially on long-haul routes where it is, for now, the only Indian carrier that can play in that market.

But that will soon change as Vistara takes delivery of its first Boeing 787-9 later this month, which will be the vehicle to start the launch of its long-held ambition to become a significant player in India's long-haul market. While the carrier has mentioned Europe and London as likely markets, it has yet to announce any firm plans. That could indicate that it is still waiting to be allocated route authorities and slots – something that will likely only come once the DGCA approves adding the 787 to its air operator's certificate.

To its credit, Air India has not stood still. Senior executives have said that there are plans to grow the carrier's network and fleet, with it having completed a plan that could see its fleet grow up to 250 aircraft by 2025. That would be a doubling of its 127 aircraft fleet, opening up major growth opportunities.

Understandably though, those growth plans are on ice until a new owner is found.

RISKY BET?

Air India may have the most lucrative part of the Indian aviation market largely to itself, and has shed a lot of debt, but any potential purchaser will be wary of how fickle the market can be, and also how exposed it is to the shaky-looking Indian economy.

Unions have also dug in their heels, launching protests against the planned sale of the company, with some even arguing that it should be turned around while still under government ownership. It is possible that a potential bidder may see some risk from the airline's labour movement, especially if it takes moves to downsize what has been labelled as a bloated workforce.

Even with all the actions that New Delhi is taking to prepare the airline for sale, there are no guarantees that any bidders will be interested in taking over the carrier. The slow sale of Jet Airways is in very different circumstances but may indicate that investor interest in the Indian aviation sector is lukewarm at best, especially with some concerns that the domestic economy is slowing down. Add

to that the often-repeated boom-bust nature of the market, and wary investors may decide it is more prudent to keep their wallets in their pockets.

Those risks mean that, try as it may to make Air India as attractive as possible, New Delhi could still be the owner of the carrier this time next year.

FlightGlobal 22/10/2019

Chandigarh: **The district consumer disputes redressal forum has slapped a penalty of Rs 30,000 for deficiency in services.** The forum has directed the airlines to pay the amount to a Sector 35 resident. In his complaint, Ashok Kumar Gautam stated that he booked a flight ticket to and fro Chandigarh to Pune in February this year through an agency, Fly 2 Globe which has its office in Sector 17. He paid Rs 23,600 inclusive of facilitation service booking charges to the agency. The complainant was to commence his journey on February 14 and the scheduled departure from Chandigarh airport to New Delhi was 12.50pm but the flight took off at 3.30pm. The journey was undertaken under a lot of stress in view of the fact, that the connecting flight from New Delhi to Pune was scheduled for 4.10pm. When he landed at the airport in New Delhi at 4.35pm, the connecting flight had already taken off. He was then adjusted in another flight which was scheduled for 7pm and it had to reach Pune at 9pm. However, again the said flight was delayed by 1 hour 50 minutes. The flight took off at 8.50pm and reached Pune at 11pm. The complainant had made the arrangements according to his arrival at 7pm, but, since the flight landed at 11pm, he was left in lurch.

Thereafter, on February 20, when he had to board a flight from Pune to New Delhi, the airlines delayed the flight without any prior intimation. The flight landed at Delhi airport at 10.15am instead of the scheduled time 9.45am. Ashok had to rush to the counter, but, his return flight from New Delhi to Chandigarh scheduled for 11.15am had been cancelled. The complainant had to hire a taxi to reach Chandigarh. He applied for refund of the fare from New Delhi to Chandigarh but despite various letters sent, the amount was not refunded.

In its reply, Air India stated that the complainant was duly compensated for the cancellation of the flight and the amount was transferred by them from where it was received by Make My Trip and which was ultimately to be refunded by them or Fly 2 Globe. It was claimed that there was no deficiency in service on its part.

Make My Trip stated claimed that it was simply a facilitator. The amount was received through. It was further claimed that the amount was refunded to the complainant on May 20. No one appeared on behalf of Fly 2 Globe.

22/10/19 Kamini Mehta/Times of India

New Delhi: **Aviation security regulator BCAS will issue regulations within a week to counter any rogue drones in the country,** a senior official said on Tuesday.

Bureau of Civil Aviation Security (BCAS) Deputy Director General Maheshwar Dayal said the "anti-drone" specifications will be released in "less than a week's time". "It is in the final stages. I think it will be a quantum leap towards secure skies in a very literal sense," he said at an event "Smart Safe Secure Skies".

The event was organised by FICCI and French electronics conglomerate Thales.

On August 1, BCAS Director General Rakesh Asthana had said the Civil Aviation Ministry constituted a committee to find out the best available counter-drone solutions to safeguard civil aviation against

possible drone attacks in India.

The number of illegal drones in India is likely to be between 50,000 and 60,000, co-chair of a FICCI committee on drones Ankit Mehta said. He is also the co-founder and CEO of IdeaForge Technology Private Limited.

"The OEM (Original Equipment Manufacturer) which manufactures those drones right now has no interest in complying with a countryspecific law. So, that is not going to change," he said in an apparent reference to Chinese drone company DJI.

The Indian government has approached them to make themselves compliant with Indian standards but the company isn't willing to do so, Mehta said. As per the rules in India, companies have to obtain a Unique Identification Number (UIN) from aviation regulator DGCA to operate drones.

22/10/19 PTI/Economic Times

Mumbai: According to the latest data released by the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), GoAir registered 85.4 per cent on-time-performance (OTP), followed by Indigo at 83.7 per cent OTP, which is the highest among scheduled domestic airlines, in September 2019.

As per the DGCA data, Indian carriers during January and September 2019 carried 1058.91 lakh passengers as against 1027.93 lakh during the corresponding period of previous year thereby registering annual growth of 3.01 per cent and monthly growth of 1.18 per cent.

In the said month, another LCC, Indigo was noted as the second most punctual airline with OTP of 83.7 per cent followed by AirAsia at 79.8 per cent OTP and Vistara at 78.5 per cent and Spicejet with 74.6 per cent of OTP.

In comparison to September 2018, GoAir's OTP was five per cent lower yet, for the 13th month in a row, low-cost carrier GoAir topped the list of On Time Performance (OTP). Jeh Wadia, Managing Director, GoAir, said: "We are glad that GoAir continues to shine when it comes to OTP. GoAir operates its business on three basic principles: punctuality, affordability and convenience. We thank our customers for voting us as the most trusted and greatest brand this year."

State-run Air India's OTP has been deteriorating for the past several months. In comparison to September 2018 where Air India had OTP of 74.3 per cent, in September 2019 Air India's OTP dropped by approximately 20 per cent and stood at 53.1 per cent.

22/10/19 Business Line

New Delhi: The Airports Authority of India (AAI) requested airlines on Tuesday to inform it if there was any change in their aircraft acquisition plans so that it can correspondingly alter its airport infrastructure development projects, according to a senior official.

According to an industry estimate, airlines in India have speeded up their aircraft acquisition plans. They will add at least 30 planes till December, of which 20 will be added by the first week of November itself.

"I would like to address IndiGo and other airlines that as and when you change these acquisition plans, please let us know, so that we can also have a course correction where it matters," said Vineet Gulati, Member (Air Navigation Services), AAI, in New Delhi.

He was responding to a question on whether adequate airport infrastructure is being developed to absorb the aircraft capacity being added by the airlines.

"As far as airport infrastructure is concerned, for the last three years, we have been in active consultation with all the airlines on their acquisition plans," Gulati said at an event, "Smart Safe Secure Skies", organised by FICCI and French electronics conglomerate Thales.

He added that AAI is aware of long-term acquisition plans of airlines but if there is any immediate

change in those plans, the authority should be informed.

22/10/19 PTI/Times of India

Mumbai: The losses of Tata Group's aviation firms increased in the financial year 2019, with AirAsia India's net loss widening four times and that of Tata SIA (operating as Vistara) nearly doubling from the year-ago period.

AirAsia India, in which Tata Sons holds a 51 per cent stake, posted a net loss of ₹670.93 crore for the fiscal ended March 31st, compared with ₹124.11 crore recorded during the year-ago period.

The company's total income rose 39.57 per cent to ₹2,539.06 crore from ₹1,819.15 crore during the previous financial year, according to data filed with the Registrar of Companies (RoC).

The low-cost carrier's employee benefit expenses rose by ₹82.84 crore while operating expenses rose by ₹1,126 crore. The firm's book also showed borrowings of ₹100 crore in FY19, while total liabilities rose 84 per cent to ₹703 crore.

The total capital infusion into the company during the reporting year was at ₹607 crore, of which Tata Sons had infused ₹307 crore, the RoC data showed.

Tata Sons bought a total of 2 per cent stake from R Venkataramanan (managing trustee of Tata Trusts, who quit in February this year) and S Ramadorai (former CEO and MD of Tata Consultancy Services) in December 2018. Post the buy, Tata Sons holds 51 per cent stake in AirAsia India, while AirAsia Investment holds the remaining 49 per cent stake. In April, shareholders infused ₹500 crore in the company and also promised additional capital to meet financial liabilities for up to 12 months.

Tata SIA Airlines (operating as Vistara) posted a net loss of ₹830.80 crore for the year ended March 31, nearly double that of ₹419.63 crore recorded during the year-ago period. The company's employee benefit expenses rose by ₹119 crore and fuel and power costs by ₹478 crore, according to RoC data.

The full-service carrier, in which Tatas hold a 51 per cent stake and the remaining 49 per cent is held by Singapore Airlines, posted a total income of ₹3,045.54 crore. This is a 38.34 per cent rise from ₹2,201.41 crore posted during the same period a year ago.

22/10/19 Rajesh Kurup/Business Line

Mumbai: Full-service carrier Vistara said on Tuesday it will soon commence codeshare flights to the US and Japan with partner carriers SIA and SilkAir as part of an extended pact with the two South-east Asian airlines.

The Delhi-based airline had in August this year extended its codeshare pact with Singapore Airlines (SIA) and its regional arm SilkAir to international routes as well besides for domestic flights, which is in place since 2017. **Under the extended pact, Vistara will codeshare flights to more than 40 destinations in the SIA and SilkAir network.**

The pact is already in place for 35 destinations operated by SIA and SilkAir across AC region, Australia and New Zealand, Vistara said in a release. "Codesharing on flights to the United States and Japan will follow soon," it said.

Implementation of Vistar's codeshare with SIA and SilkAir will soon include flights to New York (Newark), Los Angeles, Seattle, San Francisco in the US and Tokyo, Osaka, Hiroshima, Nagoya and Fukuoka in Japan, Vistara said in the release.

Codesharing allows an airline to book its passengers on its partner carriers and provide seamless travel to destinations where it has no presence.

22/10/19 PTI/Economic Times

New Delhi: **The government has made up its mind to hand over government-owned airline Air India under the burden of debt. For this, the central government is going to change the rules made earlier. Under this, whichever group will buy Air India, can change its name.** In March 2018, the government made a rule that after the sale, the buying company would not be able to change the name of Air India for three years. But now in the second phase this rule will be removed completely.

Due to this rule, many companies had expressed their desire to buy Air India earlier, but later withdrew from buying it. According to a report published in an English newspaper, **the government is also considering removing the proposal for merger. Now whichever group will buy Air India, it will be able to merge it with the already running company. While the government was earlier selling 76 per cent stake, now it is preparing to sell 100 per cent stake.** This will completely end the government's interference with this airline.

22/10/19 Vinod Rathore/News Track

New Delhi: **Boeing Company has named Stan Deal as president and chief executive of its commercial aeroplanes division, replacing Kevin McAllister who spearheaded the unit for the past three years.**

The shakeup in the top leadership of the company's commercial aeroplanes division comes as the carrier battles a growing crisis with its bestselling but grounded aircraft, 737 Max jetliner.

The Boeing 737 MAX aircraft, considered a more fuel-efficient plane than its predecessors, was grounded by regulator Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) on 13 March after aviation regulators worldwide did the same following the crash of an Ethiopian Airlines 737 MAX near Addis Ababa on 10 March that killed 157 people, including four Indians.

Boeing on Wednesday said Ted Colbert will succeed Stan Deal as president and chief executive of Boeing Global Services, while Vishwa Uddanwadiker will take on Colbert's role as interim chief information officer and senior vice president of Information Technology & Data Analytics section of the company.

All these appointments will be effective immediately, Boeing said.

"Our entire Boeing team is focused on operational excellence, aligned with our values of safety, quality and integrity, and we're committed to delivering on our commitments and regaining trust with our regulators, customers and other stakeholders," Boeing Company's president and chief executive officer Dennis Muilenburg said in a statement.

Incidentally, Dennis Muilenburg was earlier this month relieved of his role as chairman, highlighting the company's focus on getting top selling jetliner 737 Max back in the air.

"The Boeing board fully supports these leadership moves," said Boeing chairman David Calhoun in a statement. "Boeing will emerge stronger than ever from its current challenges and the changes we're making throughout Boeing will benefit the flying public well into the future."

Live Mint Aviation 23/10/2019

Ras al-Khaimah, UAE: **India's low-cost airline SpiceJet announced plans Wednesday to build its first international hub in the United Arab Emirates, offering support to embattled Boeing Co. by saying**

it would use now-grounded 737 Max aircraft in the operation, once regulators approve the planes for flight.

The hub would be in Ras al-Khaimah, the UAE's northern-most sheikhdom, with SpiceJet chairman and managing director Ajay Singh saying India's second-largest airline would use it to extend its range as far as Western Europe. SpiceJet flights between New Delhi and Ras al-Khaimah should begin in December, Singh said.

For Ras al-Khaimah, whose small airport pales in comparison to the massive Dubai International Airport, the world's busiest for international travel, it is an opportunity to try and bring more tourists to its burnt-orange sand dunes. However, previous attempts to reinvigorate the airport have failed to take off and the UAE already is home to several low-cost carriers.

"We are not competing with any of the airports," Sanjay Khanna, the CEO of Ras al-Khaimah International Airport, told *AP*. "We are complementing. We step back and say we are growing."

SpiceJet, which Singh retook control of in 2015 after financial trouble nearly crashed the company, has since embarked on an expansion. It operates a fleet of 111 Boeing and Bombardier aircraft and flies to over 50 Indian destinations and a handful of international routes, including Dubai.

Under the plan, SpiceJet would begin flights in Ras al-Khaimah, then work over the coming months to create the hub there, either under the SpiceJet name or another. It will maintain its flights to Dubai.

Singh said he could see some five Boeing 737 Max aircraft permanently based out of the airport, flying routes to both Eastern and Western Europe. Already, SpiceJet has taken ownership of seven Max aircraft out of an overall order of 136 of the planes, a deal once valued at billions of dollars.

"Ras al-Khaimah is kind of a hidden jewel," Singh said.

Officials declined to discuss terms of the business deal.

Singh offered praise for Boeing as it struggles to get the 737 Max back in the air after a worldwide grounding of the planes following deadly crashes in Ethiopia and Indonesia that killed all 346 people aboard the two planes. The aircraft have been grounded since March.

Already, Chicago-based Boeing has taken a \$5.6 billion pretax charge this summer to cover its estimate for compensating airlines that have canceled thousands of flights because of grounded planes. It has disclosed nearly \$3 billion in other additional costs related to the grounding.

Boeing has replaced one top executive after the release of internal communications that showed a senior test pilot experienced serious problems while testing flight-control software for the 737 Max on a simulator.

Singh said he expected some form of compensation from Boeing but added that SpiceJet's own pilots had practiced on a simulator recently and came away happy with the changes made to the Max's flight control system, known by the acronym MCAS.

"Boeing is of course an old and very well-known company," Singh said. "Some mistakes were made but I think they have their act in order now and we are very hopeful the aircraft can fly at the end of this year or the beginning of this year."

The expansion by SpiceJet comes as India's growing middle class has helped to make it one of the world's fastest-growing air travel market. India had the world's third-largest growth in passenger journeys in 2018, adding 18 million to a total of 116 million journeys, according to the International Air Transportation Association.

SpiceJet's expansion to Ras al-Khaimah comes as the UAE already is home to three major discount airlines — Sharjah-based Air Arabia, FlyDubai and a just-announced partnership with Abu Dhabi's struggling Etihad Airways and Air Arabia. Meanwhile, the Ras al-Khaimah International Airport itself remains a quiet airfield, with just three flights listed on its boards Wednesday as its duty free shop offered customers a free shot of tequila or vodka.

Despite the local competition, authorities remain optimistic about the venture.

"Where you see it's a saturated market, we see huge growth in the market, especially for Ras al-Khaimah," said Sheikh Khalid bin Saud Al Qasimi, a son of Ras al-Khaimah's ruler. "We see huge potential for it to grow."

Live Mint Aviation 23/10/2019

New Delhi: The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has finally cracked the whip on Pratt & Whitney's (PW) snag-ridden engines for the Airbus A320 new engine option (Neo) family of planes. IndiGo was on Friday asked to ensure that all the 98 Neos it currently has must get modified PW engines under both their wings latest by January 31, 2020. The Neos that do not meet this will not be allowed to fly beyond that date.

Since IndiGo is the world's largest customer for this aircraft and is yet to receive over 630 of them, the regulator has advised it to defer future deliveries so that the 98 Neos with it can get replacement engines - instead of new yet-to-be-delivered planes - and continue flying them beyond next February.

"Last one week has witnessed four inflight shutdowns (of PW engines) and air turn back... has caused serious concern and resultant disruption. This situation cannot be allowed to go on indefinitely... four successive events have not happened ever before and therefore, call for an urgent and effective action. We regret the inconvenience but we need desperate measures to put things in order," the DGCA did an unprecedented plain speaking to IndiGo.

The airline has also been asked to change one engine each on 23 planes — instead of 16 as directed earlier — by November 19. These 23 planes have a more snag-prone type of engine under both their wings and the regulator will allow them to fly after November 19 only if they get at least one modified and less snag-prone PW engine each.

02/11/19 Saurabh Sinha/Times of India

The government has decided to ease terms of sale for Air India but it is still facing tough choice on almost half a dozen issues that could be crucial for the airline's successful disinvestment. Among the key issues holding Expression of Interest (Eoi), first stage of bidding, is whether FDI norms have to be relaxed to allow foreign airlines to take full control of the airline and extending national carrier status after change in ownership.

While raising FDI limit in domestic airlines beyond 49 per cent for foreign carriers would enthruse carriers like Qatar Airways and Singapore Airlines to participate in the bidding, national carrier status would give right of first refusal to the new owner in seat allocation on international routes.

The other issues include transfer of additional debt to the special purpose vehicle (SPV) and use of brand name Air India in future. As much as Rs 10,000 crore of additional debt, over and above Rs 29,464 crore decided earlier, is proposed to be moved to Air India Assets Holdings Ltd (AIAHL), the special purpose vehicle of Air India for transferring part of its debt and assets.

"Even after transfer of Rs 29,464 crore of debt to SPV, the same amount of debt would still be there. It has to be decided by the group of secretaries and then the ministerial panel as to how much more debt has to be taken out to ensure sale process happens," an official said.

01/11/19 IANS/India TV

Vasco: A ground handling staffer was grievously injured when a catering vehicle and a ground handling vehicle collided at Dabolim airport on Thursday evening.

The incident took place soon after the landing of a Dubai-bound Bangalore Goa Air India (IC 993) aircraft that arrived at Dabolim airport at around 5.45 pm.

The airport sources disclosed that the Dubai-bound Bangalore Goa Air India aircraft did not face any issue due to collision of the above vehicles.

The passengers travelling to Dubai from Goa were stranded for nearly two hours. The aircraft left from Goa at around 7.45 pm.

"A catering vehicle and a ground handling vehicle, which were approaching towards the aircraft, had a minor collision resulting in a ground handling staffer getting injured," disclosed airport sources.

02/11/19 NavhindTimes

In July 2016, Dr Rajlakshmi, a wheelchair user and her mother Dr Sobha booked a conducted tour while travelling from Bengaluru to London in an Air India flight. Upon landing at the airport in London, the airline staffs denied them wheelchair assistance and other support due to which the mother and daughter had to cancel their travel plans. Last week, the Karnataka High Court ordered Air India to pay them both ₹ 20 lakh as compensation for lapses.

In July 2016, Dr Rajlakshmi and her elderly mother Dr Sobha booked for a conducted tour, and their flight was from Bengaluru to London. Dr Rajlakshmi, a wheelchair user, had clearly stated her demands with the travel agency and even insisted on getting special assistance and a wheelchair. Upon their entry at London's Heathrow Airport, Air India delayed offering them wheelchair assistance leading to the mother and daughter missing their flight to Scotland.

Air India also failed to provide them with any assistance due to which they underwent mental, physical and emotional trauma. Last week, the Karnataka High Court directed Air India to pay ₹ 10 lakh each to both Dr Rajlakshmi and Dr Sobha for the lapses. This latest verdict has been cheered by members from the disability community.

Instances of people with disabilities being harassed by airline and airport staff continue to be widely reported despite sensitisation drills. There was the recent case of disability rights activist and wheelchair user Virali Modi being asked to get up from her wheelchair and walk at the Delhi Airport. Even more recent was the harassment faced by disability rights activists Jeeja Ghosh and Kuhu Das at the Kolkata airport a couple of weeks back.

02/11/19 Newz Hook

Ahmedabad: **An aircraft that suffered a bird-hit on Thursday morning, caused a delay in the departure of a Mumbai-bound flight from Ahmedabad airport on Friday morning.** Sources at Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel International (SVPI) Airport confirmed that passengers aboard the Mumbai-bound flight, SG-636, operated by lowcost carrier, SpiceJet, were made to wait in the aircraft early on Friday. The cause of the delay was an aircraft that was under repair for the past day.

Early on Thursday morning, Air India flight AI-018, scheduled to depart from Ahmedabad for Delhi at 7.10am, returned to the city airport 10-minutes after take-off.

"It had suffered a bird-hit while airborne and was forced to return to Ahmedabad airport soon after take-off.

The engine blades of the aircraft – an Airbus A321 – were damaged. Alternative travel and accommodation arrangements were made for passengers depending on their preference," a source in the airline said.

The said aircraft, Air India's A321, was not cleared for take-off till the next morning.

"Around 5.30am on Friday, after certain engine tests, the aircraft was being towed via the taxiway to a parking bay.

The tow-bar bolt connecting the towing vehicle to the aircraft broke, leaving the aircraft in the middle of the taxiway. At this time, SpiceJet's Boeing 738 aircraft (SG-636) was scheduled to take-off and had been following the A321 on the taxiway.

02/11/19 Niyati Parikh/Times of India

New Delhi: **SpiceJet promoter and chief Ajay Singh has pledged around 2.78 per cent shares towards securing a credit facility for the airline.**

A total of 1.67 crore shares were pledged in favour of IDFC First Bank Ltd on October 24, according to a filing submitted by the carrier to the BSE on Saturday.

These shares, which account for 2.78 per cent shareholding, have been pledged to "secure a credit facility obtained by SpiceJet", it added.

With the latest pledge of shares, a total of 26.32 per cent shareholding of Singh is now encumbered.

02/11/19 PTI/Outlook

Indian full-service carrier and a joint venture of Tata Sons and Singapore Airlines, Vistara has received three new Airbus A320neos with enhanced cabin features.

All Business Class seats now offer in-seat AC power, an USB charging port, height-adjustable armrests, a cocktail table extension to the meal tray and an additional literature pocket. In Premium Economy and Economy Class cabins, all seats get USB charging ports, PED holders and an additional literature pocket. The new seats also offer more space and comfort with better ergonomics in all three cabins.

According to Leslie Thng, chief executive officer, Vistara: "The cabins of our new A320neo aircraft have been designed with even greater thought to passenger comfort and convenience. The charging ports and PED holders are simple, yet very useful conveniences that we are happy to provide to our customers on all our new A320neo aircraft that will be deployed on domestic as well as international routes. This will also help our customers to use our wireless in-flight entertainment streaming service, 'Vistara World', to access their favourite movies, TV shows, music, etc. conveniently without having to worry about their phone battery strengths. The new seats will further complement the comfort and joy of flying India's only five-star airline for our customers."

02/11/19 HMG Aerospace

Kolkata: **A 39-year-old IndiGo Airlines trainee captain, who was rushed to hospital with excruciating pain in the belly shortly after he flew down to Kolkata on October 15, died of cardiac arrest following 11 days of hospitalization.** The pilot, Kevin Keegan Otieno Chibole, a Kenyan

national who hails from Nairobi, had joined IndiGo barely six months ago.

According to sources in the airline, Chibole who was doing his ground training in Delhi, was to be based out of Kolkata and had been put up at a hotel in New Town. On October 15, a little after he had flown down to Kolkata from Delhi, he frantically called airline officials and complained of acute pain in the belly. "He was vomiting intermittently. Initial investigation did not reveal anything. He was admitted to a hospital in New Town. Thereafter, his condition worsened and had was shifted to another hospital on EM Bypass, following a request from the Kenyan embassy," the source said.

Physicians, who attended to him at the two hospitals said Chibole had suffered a brain haemorrhage that led to a clot formation in the brain. According to doctors at Apollo Gleneagles Hospital where he expired, he had been brought on ventilation with no reflex or response and had remained so in intensive care unit (ICU) till he died of cardiac arrest on October 26.

02/11/19 Times of India

An unattended bag triggered panic on Friday at the Delhi airport on the suspicion of containing RDX, but officials later said it has been claimed by a passenger who had forgotten it outside the Terminal-3.

It is almost certain that the bag does not have the explosive and it will be opened in the presence of the claimant, they said.

Shahid Hussain contacted airport authorities after over 16 hours of allegedly losing his bag. He said he had forgotten it outside the Indira Gandhi International airport's Terminal-3 after he arrived from Mumbai, Maharashtra on a SpiceJet plane, sources said.

The man, the sources said, told a joint investigation team of security officials that the bag contained a laptop, among other items.

The bag also contained chocolate, clothes, earrings, charger, toys, etc.

He has been taken to the isolated area where the black coloured trolley bag has been kept inside a total containment vessel (TCV) or a thick metal sheeted bomb defusing container.

The entire security paraphernalia at the sensitive airport went into a tizzy after initial inputs suggested that the bag could be holding RDX.

What added to the suspicion was that the place where the bag was spotted was in a "dark zone" outside the arrival terminal, where there is little CCTV coverage.

The bag was detected around 1 am by a Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) staffer and has been since kept in an isolated zone with a joint of CISF, the bomb experts of the National Security Guard and forensics keeping it under observation.

01/11/19 India Today

Agra: The Zoom Air flight between Delhi and Agra, which started this week, has given back hopes to the local tourism industry which was facing disappointment after the cancellation of Agra-Khajuraho flight.

Although the flight has been started for only four days a week, running on Tuesdays, Thursdays, Saturdays and Sundays, the airline will soon be adding another flight between Agra and Jaisalmer.

With a flight between Agra and Jaipur already flying under the regional connectivity scheme, this will be the second flight connecting Agra to a city in Rajasthan.

However, the tourism industry has expressed dissatisfaction at the way the larger airlines have been treating Agra.

Rakesh Chauhan, president of the Agra Hotel and Restaurants Association said that apart from Delhi, Agra also needs regular connectivity to other larger cities of the country like Mumbai and Kolkata as there is a lot of traffic from Agra to these places which has to be routed through Delhi.

01/11/19 Siraj Qureshi/India Today

Thiruvananthapuram: The Kerala Rail Development Corporation Ltd (KRDCL) has received clearance from the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) for conduct of aerial survey of the proposed Thiruvananthapuram-Kasaragod Semi High-Speed Rail (SHSR) line. The Ministry of Defence had already given its go-ahead for the survey by deploying helicopters, based on strict standard stipulations such as skipping photography of specified strategically significant sites and installations.

The survey marks the prelude to deciding the alignment of the ambitious project 'Silver Line', to be executed by KRDCL, a joint venture of the Kerala government and the Ministry of Railways, an official release said here. The exact alignment of the 'Silver Line' would be finalised based on the aerial survey and the boundaries for the line on both sides would be determined only with the approval of the state government.

The process of land acquisition for the green field project would start only after that, it said. The Defence Ministry's clearance is mandatory for the survey as certain strategically significant sites fall within the ambit of the area to be covered. KRDCL has chosen the Hyderabad-based GeoKno India Private Ltd to carry out the survey through bidding process.

01/11/19 PTI/India TV

Regular flights launch between Georgia and India, the Civil Aviation Agency reports, saying that the low-cost airline IndiGo (InterGlobe Aviation Limited) is entering the Georgian aviation market.

The first flight Delhi-Tbilisi-Delhi (India's capital territory) will be implemented on March 5, 2020.

"Starting from March, the airline will operate daily, seven times a week. Direct flights will be implemented by A320 and A321 aircrafts," the Agency said.

The Civil Aviation Agency granted the airline permission to conduct regular flights on October 30, 2019. It is also noteworthy that there has been no regular flights between Georgia and the Republic of India so far.

Georgia Today 01/11/2019

Ahmedabad: Taking a much-needed measure to prevent bird hits, authorities of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel International (SVPI) airport in Ahmedabad, have now begun to caution pilots about bird movements along the route. Airport authorities confirmed that they have begun issuing NOTAM (Notice to Air Men) warnings to pilots informing them about movement of birds in and around the airport vicinity.

"The practice has begun since a month at SVPI airport, where the air traffic controller (ATC) notifies the pilot about bird movement in and along the route and in the vicinity," said Manoj Gangal, director, SVPI airport.

"Of late, we have observed an increase in the bird movements and this is primarily because of the dismantling of the Pirana garbage dump which draws predatory birds. The dump site falls along the funnel area i.e. take-off and landing route of the aircraft. Dismantling of the dump has disturbed the

ecological balance in the region,” he added.

“The decision to notify pilots is a proactive measure taken by Airports Authority of India (AAI) to prevent bird hits,” Gangal said.

03/11/19 Niyati Parikh/Times of India

New Delhi: In view of the poor air quality in the Delhi-NCR region, Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) on Sunday issued masks to its personnel deployed at IGI Airport, Delhi Metro, Government Building Security, Special Service Group (SSG) and other Units.

"Rajesh Ranjan, Director General, CISF directed to issue masks immediately to the personnel deployed at Delhi Metro Rail Corporation, Government Building Security, IGI Airport, SSG (Special Security Group performing VIP security duties) and other units of Delhi/NCR," read an official statement.

The N-95 anti-pollution masks had been procured and issued to the personnel. The personnel will wear the mask till air quality improves.

03/11/19 India Today

New Delhi: Mahindra Group Chairman Anand Mahindra in a tweet on Saturday wondered if many Indian travellers fake the need of wheelchairs at airports, sparking a heated debate.

“Only flights to and from India at most airports have so many wheelchairs pre-ordered. Trying to figure out why?

1) Do elderly Indians travel more than others? 2) Do we have more infirm/unfit people? 3) Are we just jugaadus who order wheelchairs to get faster access through queues?” Mahindra tweeted.

In response, some users termed the use by wheelchairs by many Indians a “scam”, others pointed out that the wheelchair assistance is a boon to the parents of children who are settled outside the country. “Most of these are parents of folks settled in the West and many times are not well versed with navigating airports, their children hence ask for wheelchair assistance...” said one user.

03/11/19 Tribune

Ahmedabad: Ahmedabad-based businessman, Jignesh Juthani, who was returning from a holiday with his wife and daughters, almost missed his flight to Ahmedabad, due to a delayed flight, SG-6372, from Amritsar to Mumbai.

“When I contacted my travel agent, he said that there has been no notification from the airline,” said Juthani.

When contacted, well-placed sources from the airline confirmed that due to the delay in arrival of an incoming flight to Amritsar, the consequent flight to Mumbai was delayed. “As the flight was delayed due to bad weather, the airline could not notify passengers of a specified time.”

Travel agents have also expressed displeasure at repeated delays and irregular notifications from airlines.

03/11/19 Times of India

To boost load factor at its recently launched international flights, low-cost carrier IndiGo on Sunday launched a brand campaign called ' IndiGo Abroad: Happy to be your first.'

Earlier this year, the airline launched flights to Turkey, China, Vietnam, Myanmar and Saudi Arabia.

"The campaign aims to introduce Indian travellers new and unexplored 6E destinations to encourage first-time international travellers and experiential travellers to look beyond the regular international destinations, for their next trip abroad with IndiGo," the airline said in a statement.

As part of this campaign, the airline said it has used quirky creatives that tug (passengers) emotions

when passengers travel, with the backdrop of the most scenic locations in its international network. The passengers in the creatives showcase the experiences and emotions during their first international trip and how IndiGo has been their partner, by making international travel accessible and affordable.

03/11/19 PTI/Economic Times

Varanasi: A man was detained after he was found smoking a cigarette on board a Mumbai-Varanasi SpiceJet flight on Sunday.

The man, identified as Shaqil Ahmed of Azamgarh, was taken under custody by CISF after the plane landed at LBS International Airport. He was later handed over to the police.

CISF commandant Subrat Jha told TOI, "SpiceJet flight's crew had alerted Air Traffic Control (ATC) Varanasi regarding the incident. When the flight landed here, CISF personnel took Shaqil into custody. During the initial interrogation, Shaqil said that he had boarded a flight for the first time in his life and he had no idea that smoking is prohibited on board."

03/11/19 Rajeev Dikshit/Times of India

A petition has been filed in the Karnataka High Court by a 69-year-old Bengaluru resident, Vinod Kumar Vyas, who questioned three specific clauses of the 2019 Civil Aviation Requirements (CAR) of the DGCA concerning rest, duty time and sleep of pilots. These, he claimed, had diluted the earlier 2011 CAR. Following the petition, Karnataka Chief Justice Abhay Shreeniwas Oka and Justice SR Krishna Kumar issued a notice to the ministry of civil aviation and DGCA, which they have to reply to by November 19, 2019.

In a scathing indictment of airlines, the petition alleged: "The CAR 2011 extensively laid down flight time and flight duty period restrictions and guidelines for the operators to follow. As per Rule 44A of the Aircraft Rules, every Airline Operator is required to formulate a 'Scheme' on the Flight Duty Time Limitations as per the CAR. Thereafter, the operator is required to get the Scheme approved by the DGCA....With a view to widen the pool of availability of pilots, it appears that the operators prevailed upon the DGCA to modify the CAR, by diluting the regulations relating to flight duty, rest and night operations. It further appears that, without consulting all the stakeholders and without conducting any scientific study, the DGCA has now issued a new Civil Aviation Requirement dated 24/04/2019, which is hereinafter referred to as the CAR 2019." The new CAR, he said, was in violation of International Civil Aviation Organisation guidelines and the Dr Nasim Zaidi Committee.

Vyas specifically mentioned Clause 13 and 16 in the 2019 CAR. Clause 13, which deals with Consecutive Night Operation, says: "Flight crew shall neither be detailed nor undertake any flight duty between periods embracing 0000 to 0500 hrs local time for more than two consecutive nights except once within a period of 168 hours." Between 12 midnight and 5 am is the period of circadian low when the alertness of an individual is at its lowest. But this new Clause allows airlines to put pilots on two consecutive nights of flight operations. However, the 2011 CAR had barred airlines from doing so.

Clause 16 deals with Unforeseen Operational Circumstances and this, too, was changed. From the existing maximum flight time of three hours and flight duty period of six hours over 30 days, CAR 2019 has increased it to a maximum flight time of 4.5 hours and flight duty period to 9 hours over 28 days. "This," Vyas said, was "bound to add to the fatigue, exponentially, of the crew members and contribute to various hazards."

He also asked the Court to direct DGCA to implement the recommendations of the Nasim Zaidi Committee. This panel had given an allowance of 30 minutes to pilots for post-flight duties such as parking, doing checklists, interacting with engineers, customs and immigration checks. It said this time should be included in "flight duty time". However, CAR 2019 (Clause 4.1.2) has left this to the

discretion of the operator/airline. Vyas said: "Any reduction in the standard allowance towards the post flight duty would eat into the 'rest' period of the pilots." He urged the Court to quash these Clauses as they were "arbitrary and unreasonable".

03/11/19 Shobha John/India Legal

The Civil Aviation Ministry seems inclined to consider SpiceJet's proposal to promote induction of wide-body aircraft such as the Boeing 777 by Indian carriers. A possible way to incentivize induction of bigger aircraft for operating long-haul flights to Europe and the US is by launching a scheme on the lines of UDAN that provides subsidy to operators for connecting smaller towns in the country. Recently, the Ajay Singh-led SpiceJet had written to the government think-tank Niti Aayog pointing out that foreign airlines were taking away 60 per cent of India's international traffic to various destinations globally by using their transit hubs.

It suggested that **a large part of this traffic could have been captured by Indian carriers in case they had a fleet of wide-body aircraft.** "This is primarily due to scarcity of wide body aircraft with Indian carriers," the airline argued. Niti Aayog took note of it immediately and wrote to the Aviation Ministry to give suggestions for reversing the trend.

Marked as urgent, the Niti Aayog's Infrastructure Connectivity Vertical sought the nodal Ministry's response on the issue at the earliest. The issues raised by SpiceJet were termed as industry-wide concerns and on the recommendation of Indian carriers. **SpiceJet promoter Singh is considered close to the ruling Bhartiya Janta Party (BJP).**

03/11/19 IANS/ZeeBiz

New Delhi: **Air quality index (AQI) in Delhi touched the 'hazardous' level of 999, an air quality monitor said, pushing the city back into the "severe" plus category after a brief respite on Saturday evening.**

Smog continued to smother the national capital, affecting flight operations at the Delhi Airport.

The thick smog pushed up the minimum temperature in the city to 18.7 degrees Celsius, four notches above the season's average.

Air India said 12 of its flights had to be diverted from Delhi airport since 9 am on Sunday. Delhi Airport said 32 flights had been cancelled so far. A glance at the Delhi Airport's live flight status shows that most flights, both domestic and international, are running behind schedule.

03/11/19 Tribune

New Delhi: **About 150 flights from Delhi airport were impacted, as heavy smog at Delhi airport closure led to about 40 flights diversions, hundreds delayed and about 15 flights cancelled.**

Flights to Delhi were diverted to Jaipur, Lucknow and Amritsar between 9Am and 1 PM due to low visibility at Delhi airport. The visibility at Delhi airport fell to below the minimum visibility required due to smog, primarily created by crop burning in Punjab and Haryana, and has engulfed the city for the past one week.

Sources said that the visibility dropped below the permissible level between 9 AM and 1 PM leading to diversions.

"Due to low visibility at Delhi Airport 37 flights have been diverted between 9 am and 1 pm to places including Jaipur, Amritsar and Lucknow among others," said a spokesperson for Delhi airport. The visibility, however, improved post 1 PM leading to normal movements at the airport. "However, there were delays in departure due to delay in arrival of the aircraft that were diverted," said an

airport source, who did not want to be identified.

03/11/19 Economic Times

In what is being termed as “growing fissure within the saffron family” over the leasing of the Airport Authority of India-run airports to private players, the RSS affiliate Bhartiya Mazdoor Sangh (BMS) has said that they are seriously upset with the government.

Days after the Central government decided to lease out six more AAI-run airports to private companies, the BMS said that the government is bent upon selling the profit-making airports but the workers’ union of the RSS was opposed to the move.

“We have written letters to Prime Minister Modi and the Minister of Aviation also, opposing the leasing out of the airports,” told a senior leader of the BMS to NH on the condition of anonymity.

“BMS firmly believes that the government should not lease out profit-making airports...Since the government wants to bring airports under PPP model, they should lease out only those airports that were suffering financial losses”.

“There are nearly 90 such airports in this country run by the AAI which can be handed over to the private players,” he added.

02/11/19 National Herald

The will restructure its proposed investment in to comply with a policy clause which prevents airline groups from exceeding 10 per cent stake in Delhi International Airport Limited (DIAL). Tatas, which hold majority in two airlines Vistara and Air Asia India, have now decided to reduce their holding in to 15 per cent from 20 per cent planned earlier to steer clear of any regulatory violation.

Singapore-based sovereign wealth fund GIC, which is part of the consortium investing 8,000 crore in GMR Airports, will pick up the stake being shed by the The other two entities in the consortium are Hong Kong-based SSG Capital Management and Valkyrie Investments—an affiliate of GIC.

“The partners making the investment in have agreed to a revised holding amongst them to bring the percentage stake of in line with the contract signed by GMR with AAI (Airports Authority of India) during the privatisation process of DIAL,” said a person aware of the development.

The previous deal structure would have given Tatas 20 per cent stake in GMR Airports Limited (GAL) and in turn 12.8 per cent holding in DIAL. GMR holds 64 per cent stake in DIAL, while AAI and German company Fraport own 26 and 10 per cent each.

Sources aware of the development said the restructuring was necessitated as Solicitor General of India Tushar Mehta took an adverse view on the investment model. The AAI had sought SG’s opinion on whether the legality of the transaction violated the DIAL contract.

“Aggregate shareholding of Scheduled Airlines and their respective Group Entities should not exceed ten (10) per cent of the total issued and paid up capital of DIAL,” states the Operation, Management and Development Agreement of April, 2006 between AAI and GMR.

03/11/19 DFS Caller

Mumbai: Celebrated Indian classical musician Shubhendra Rao on Friday night took to social media and accused Air India of breaking his sitar.

Rao accused the airline of mishandling his sitar and said the staff should be sensitised on how to handle the music instruments.

In a lengthy Facebook post he said, "There it happens again! My Sitar has been vandalised once again, this time by our own #AirIndia!! Just arrived in New York to perform at the #VedicHeritageInc and this is how my Sitar has arrived. How can anyone be so ruthless and insensitive?"

"For sure, this has been slit open because there is no way the sitar would break in this fashion. I know many people will come out in support and suggest many things but the simple truth is that airlines and their staff need to be sensitised towards how to handle music instruments."

Last November, Rao had a similar experience while he was travelling to Sydney from Delhi for a concert when his sitar was damaged by another airline.

Rao said he had started a petition online to raise the issue of safety of musical instruments but nothing concrete seemed to have happened.

"When does this stop? How can any artist survive if airlines keep breaking their instruments whenever they travel? These days, no one asks me how I am after a journey. They always ask me how my instrument is.

"I had started a petition on www.change.org about two years ago, fighting for the right of artists like me who continue to suffer at the hands of these stupid airlines. Even got a lot of support but eventually, nothing happened since the powers-to-be continue to remain insensitive towards arts and artists."

Tagging Minister for Civil Aviation Hardeep Singh Puri, Civil Aviation Secretary Pradeep Singh Karola, CMD of Air India Ashwani Lohani,

Rao further wrote on Facebook, "Please note that #injustice has happened on our own national carrier and someone needs to take responsibility for this callousness and something drastic needs to be done so that we artists do not continue to suffer, be it at the hands of #AirIndia or any other airlines."

02/11/19 PTI/News18.com

New Delhi: SpiceJet promoter and chief Ajay Singh has pledged around 2.78 per cent shares towards securing a credit facility for the airline.

A total of 1.67 crore shares were pledged in favour of IDFC First Bank Ltd on October 24, according to a filing submitted by the carrier to the BSE on Saturday.

These shares, which account for 2.78 per cent shareholding, have been pledged to "secure a credit facility obtained by SpiceJet", it added.

With the latest pledge of shares, a total of 26.32 per cent shareholding of Singh is now encumbered.

02/11/19 PTI/Outlook

Ahmedabad: When asked to show the bills of gold jewellery they were wearing, two women returning from a Dubai visit with their husbands, slapped Air Intelligence Unit's assistant commissioner, Miguel Miranda at SVPI airport on Friday early morning.

The incident shocked the staff at the Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel International (SVPI) Airport.

The husbands of the two women, who came running and created a ruckus were arrested. Police said **the women** have been asked to produce the bills of the jewellery, and even if not arrested, they **will definitely be prosecuted for slapping the AIU official who was on duty**. The accused were passengers in SpiceJet flight SG-16 from Dubai.

When the flight had arrived, Jyotimon Dechin, superintendent of air intelligence unit (customs) was supervising the green channel through which passengers who have nothing to declare enter and exit. Inspector K C Rathwa of airport police station said that seeing a woman decked from head to foot in

gold jewellery, Dechin stopped her and asked for the bills of the jewellery she was carrying on her person.

"The woman, Nafisa Altaf Chauhan of Juhapura, said she wasn't carrying the bills for the jewellery. She was taken to assistant commissioner Miguel Miranda at the red channel of customs, which is used by passengers who have to declare duty payable goods,' Rathwa added.

According to the FIR, the other woman, Heena Kausar Pathan, while depositing her jewellery started shouting. Superintendent Dechin asked her keep quiet. However, to calm down things Miranda asked Dechin to go to the green channel.

It is mentioned in the FIR that both the women also followed him and the one wearing a burqa started abusing and slapped Miranda on his face. The other woman also started abusing him.

Meanwhile, the husbands of the women, Altaf Chauhan of Juhapura and Firoze Yousuf Pathan of Jamalpur also rushed in and threatened the officials of dire consequences when they step out of the airport.

"We then asked them to deposit their passports at the counter," said a source from the air intelligence unit (AIU).

Inspector K C Rathwa said based on the FIR lodged by the officials they have arrested both the youths accompanying the women.

02/11/19 Times of India

Pilots flying the IndiGo's Chennai-Kuwait flight declared emergency in the early hours of Friday and landed back at the Chennai airport soon after the departure due to a fire alarm, which later turned out to be false, said a source.

The A320neo plane had taken off around 1.20 am with more than 160 passengers.

Just 15 minutes after the departure, the pilots observed a fire alarm and immediately relayed the emergency code 7700 to all Air Traffic Controls, said a source privy to the development.

The fire alarm was later found to be because of faulty smoke detectors in cargo compartment, the source said.

01/11/19 PTI/India Today

New Delhi: A bag with suspected RDX was found at Delhi airport in the early hours of Friday, leading to restrictions on passenger movement for a couple of hours, officials said.

The black bag, first detected around 1 am by a CISF guard in the arrival area of Terminal-3, has now been kept in a cooling pit.

Preliminary inputs suggest the bag contained RDX. It was checked by an explosive detector and a dog. However, the exact nature of the explosive is being ascertained, sources said.

It could be an explosive or an improvised explosive device (IED), but it is not clear at present, the sources said.

Delhi Police said it received a call around 1 am, following which the bag was found at arrival gate two of the terminal.

"The bag was removed with the help of the CISF. It has not been opened yet. It seems like there are some electric wire inside it. We have increased the security on the airport premises," said Sanjay Bhatia, deputy commissioner of police (airport).

01/11/19 PTI/Telegraph

Just like in the passenger segment, IndiGo is building up a huge lead over its competitors in the domestic air cargo business. At the same time, SpiceJet is also on the fast lane, and has grown faster than most of its peers this year.

In fact, the Ajay Singh-led airline overtook Blue Dart in August to become the second largest in the air cargo segment.

Numbers from industry regulator DGCA show that IndiGo had a market share of nearly 34 percent in the domestic cargo market in August this year, compared to 23 percent in the same period last year.

On the other hand, SpiceJet's market share stood at almost 16.9 percent in August, up from 11.2 percent, a year ago.

Overall, for the eight months of the calendar year, IndiGo's share stood at a little over 31 percent. SpiceJet's was at 14.5 percent. The airline carried 11,256 tons of freight in August, compared to Blue Dart's 10,921 tons, and in the process becoming the second largest air cargo mover in the month. To be sure, overall for the eight months of the year, **Blue Dart continues to have a slight edge over SpiceJet. But given SpiceJet's faster growth rate, it may end the year at a spot higher than Blue Dart.**

01/10/19 Prince Mathews Thomas/moneycontrol.com

New Delhi: Aviation regulator DGCA asked IndiGo on Friday to replace Pratt and Whitney (PW) engines of 23 A320neo planes by November 19 or else they would be grounded.

The regulator also asked IndiGo that all 97 such aircraft in its fleet must have modified PW engines by January 31 next year "at all costs".

The DGCA directive came after the airline faced four engine malfunctions in A320neo planes in the last one week, which "has caused serious concern and resultant disruption".

The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) on Monday had asked IndiGo to replace 16 A320neo planes' PW engines, which have been used for more than 2900 hours, by November 12 but it found later that seven more aircraft are flying with such engines.

"Kindly note that after that none of these 23 aircraft, which does not have at least one LPT (low pressure turbine) modified engine on its wings, shall be allowed for commercial operation and their schedule will suitably be curtailed till this is accomplished," the DGCA said in a press note.

01/11/19 PTI/Business Standard

Panaji: A ground support staff member at Goa International Airport was injured in a minor accident involving a catering van which was loading meals onto Air India flight AI 993 on Thursday. While the aircraft suffered no damage, the flight was delayed by 50 minutes as emergency vehicles attended to the injured individual.

The Bengaluru-Goa-Dubai flight had arrived at Goa and was docked at the terminal to embark passengers, their luggage and set meals. After loading the food, the hydraulic lift of the van was being lowered even as a tractor with the checked-in luggage was approaching on the apron. "The aircraft was docked, and the two vehicles were aligning themselves when the incident occurred. A probe has been initiated," a source said.

Passengers aboard flight AI 993 witnessed the commotion outside the aircraft and were subsequently informed that an accident had occurred during boarding operations. "The crew kept telling us to be patient as saving someone's life is more important," said a flier who was bound for Dubai.

Air India sources said that the incident did not involve any Air India assets and that the accident did not affect the aircraft. The flight finally took off at 7:48pm.

01/11/19 Times of India

Aviation watchdog DGCA has directed budget carrier IndiGo to fix all of its A320neo engines following multiple incidents of mid-air stallings. The DGCA has also threatened grounding of an entire fleet of A320neo consisting 97 planes if they are not fixed before 31 January 2020, according to news channels. In an earlier communication, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation had asked the airline to replace engines of 16 A320neos. Further to this, **the aviation regulator has given a deadline of November 19 to fix total 23 A320neos on an immediate basis.**

Earlier this week, DGCA had taken cognizance of the long-standing issue of engine failures of Pratt & Whitney company and along with IndiGo, it had asked GoAir to fix them. Both of these airlines were given a 15-day period to replace the engines failing which the A320neos are bound to be grounded. In previous week itself, three of IndiGo's planes, which are fitted with Pratt and Whitney engines, stalled on October 24, 25 and 26 after which they were brought back to their departure ports. However, IndiGo's woes with Pratt & Whitney-powered A320neo aircraft is not new and has actually been present for many years now. The airline has grounded several planes in the past as well due to this. IndiGo now runs about half of the 97 Neo fleet with modified engines; the rest still run on troubled P&Ws.

Meanwhile, India's aviation sector already faces a flight crunch following Boeing 737 MAX crash of a plane of Ethiopian Airline and then shutting down of Jet Airways. The sector has also been a victim of slow passenger growth as there was no capacity addition to cater to demand.

01/11/19 Financial Express

Colombo: Sri Lanka Customs officials at the Bandaranaike International Airport in Katunayake have arrested 14 Sri Lankan passengers who were attempting to smuggle in gold jewellery worth nearly Rs 32 million.

Customs media spokesman and Additional Customs Director General Sunil Jayaratne said the male passengers were arrested at the arrival terminal on suspicion upon arrival on a flight from Chennai, India this morning.

They are between the ages of 30-50 years and are residents of Colombo and the suburbs.

The Customs spokesman said the jewelry weighing 4.7 kilograms were hidden in the clothes on them and in the luggage. The jewelry was valued at Rs. 31.97 million.

01/11/19 Colombo Page

Hyderabad: In line with the directive of the Bureau of Civil Aviation Security (BCAS), the Hyderabad international airport has commenced a three-month trial of the body scanner for passengers.

The scanner was placed at the domestic departure terminal, a press release from GMR group, which operates the airport, said on Thursday.

As part of the trials which began on October 12, the scanner has been installed, the release said.

Upon successful completion of the trials and subsequent regulatory approvals, the scanners would be placed across the terminals for security check, the release said.

31/10/19 PTI/Times of India

India will become the third largest aviation passenger market by 2040 behind China, and US, according to 2019 World Traffic Forecasts released by the Airport Council International (ACI) World, a non-profit organization representing the world's airports, on Wednesday.

China, expected to overtake the US as the largest passenger market in 2031, is likely to have 3.5 billion passengers and an 18 per cent share of the global passenger market by 2040. India is expected to overtake Japan by 2020 as the third largest market in the world.

US and India are projected to have 2.9 and 1.3 billion air passengers by 2040. Together, these three countries will handle almost 40 per cent of the global passenger traffic, the report said.

Compiled from passenger traffic, cargo traffic, aircraft movement from 110 markets, the World Airport Traffic Forecasts report showed that passenger traffic worldwide is expected to double from 8.8 billion in 2018 to 17 billion passengers by 2037 and is expected to touch 19.7 billion at the rate of 3.7 per cent annual growth rate by 2040. According to the research, around 150 million people are currently living on land that will be below the high-tide line by mid-century.

[31/10/19 Satish Nandagaonkar/Bangalore Mirror](#)

In the wake of major rehabilitation and re-carpeting work at the Mumbai airport (Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport), Mumbai, GVK Mumbai International Airport Limited (MIAL) has issued a statement revealing that it will close a runway (RWY 09/27) starting from 4th November 2019 up to 28th March 2020.

According to the statement, "Due to prolonged monsoon in Mumbai, the runway re-carpeting work at CSMIA has been postponed. As per the revised date, RWY 09/27 will not be available for aircraft operations from 4th November 2019 up to 28th March 2020, 06 days of the week, from Mondays to Saturdays between 09:30 Hrs. IST to 17:30 Hrs. IST, due to major rehabilitation and re-carpeting work. However, **during the closure of RWY 09/27, RWY 14/32 will be available for aircraft operations.**"

It further added that **RWY 09/27 will be available for operations on all Sundays, and on the following dates due to public holidays and festivals.** Check full list of dates below on which Mumbai airport runway will be closed:

[31/10/19 ZeeBiz](#)

Mumbai: A number of Jet Airways employees have been receiving notices from the income-tax department since the past one week for unpaid tax and penalty that range from 10,000 to over 4 lakh.

For employees, like engineers, pilots and general managers, the notices pertain to unpaid income tax on account of December 2018 salary, while for the rest of the staffers, it is for salaries earned between December 2018 and February 2019.

Though Jet Airways shut down in mid-April, it has not paid its pilots and engineers salaries from January onwards and other employees haven't been paid for March and April.

"Most of us have been jobless for the past six months. Our families have been facing financial hardships. The last salary I received was for December, almost a year ago. Though I received a tax-deducted salary, the government wants me to pay tax again on that salary, along with a penalty. This has to be done within 30 days of receipt of the I-T notice. It's stressful," said a Jet Airways employee, requesting anonymity.

The 12-page notices, issued under Section 143 (1) of the I-T Act, lists details of preliminary assessment carried out by the I-T department for income earned, tax paid and returns filed by the assesses.

[31/10/19 Manju V/Times of India](#)

New Delhi: The snag-prone Pratt & Whitney (PW) engine of yet another IndiGo Airbus A320 Neo stalled with a "big bang" and high vibration during take off from Kolkata to Pune on Wednesday

(Oct 30). Since twin-engine aircraft can land safely on one engine, this Neo (VT-ITM) returned to do so at Kolkata and is now grounded there. This is the fourth case of PW engine on an IndiGo Neo stalling during take off within a week.

Hours after this fourth engine stall, Director General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) Arun Kumar on Thursday afternoon met PW's top brass, who had flown in from the US following the spate of incidents.

Kumar "told PW in no uncertain terms to comply with the orders (for replacing an engine each on 29 A320 Neos of IndiGo and GoAir that have more snag-prone engines under both wings within 15 days or else be grounded) by providing sufficient modified engines. After this meeting, the PW team and Kumar met aviation secretary P S Kharola who also reiterated the same to the PW," said a person who attended the meetings.

"PW was told India is a very important market for them (IndiGo is the world's largest A320 Neo customer) and that they should somehow expedite modified engine deliveries to the country and help avoid grounding of some or any of the 29 planes of IndiGo and GoAir. PW team will return to the US and inform Indian authorities of their replacement engine delivery schedule early next week," said sources.

31/10/19 Saurabh Sinha/Times of India

An altercation was witnessed between GoAir staff and irate passengers at The Chaudhary Charan Singh airport at Lucknow over flight delays. GoAir staff had a tough time trying to pacify customers who were left stranded. Passengers were upset that they were not informed in advance about the flight delay as the flight that was supposed to depart at 10.45 am is now scheduled to leave at 1 pm. GoAir had recently been in the news for registering the best on-time performance for the month of September as per Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) data. GoAir had 85.4% on-time-performance (OTP), followed by Indigo at 83.7% OTP.

31/10/19 Times of India

Four companies are understood to have submitted bids to develop and operate the Rs 16,000-crore greenfield Jewar airport project in Greater Noida till the last date on Wednesday. GMR Infrastructure and Adani Enterprises are believed to have submitted bids for the airport. However, this could not be confirmed independently till the time of going to the press.

While the technical bids for the Jewar airport will be opened on November 6, the financial bid will be announced on November 30. The Jewar project will be the second airport in the National Capital Region. It will be developed by the Uttar Pradesh government under the public-private partnership (PPP) model.

According to the Noida International Airport (NIAL) officials, around 20 national and international firms had participated in the pre-bid conference and sent queries related to the project. The companies include Reliance Infra, L&T, Fairfax India, NIIF, Zurich Airport and state-owned Airports Authority of India.

NIAL, which is implementing the project, has set per passenger fee as the criterion for bidding for the project. It is offering a concession period of 90 years to the winning bidder, which will be responsible for development, operation and maintenance of the air side, terminal and land side infrastructure like car parking and retail area.

31/10/19 Arun Nayal/Financial Express

The Chief Executive of **IndiGo** Airlines, the country's largest airline in terms of market share, has addressed all employees on the company's performance in the last quarter July-September 2019. His communication was more in terms of reassuring the employees that everyone stands committed to the airline's future and seeking their support in dealing with what the airline calls a weakening revenue environment.

The company reported a loss of Rs 1,062 crors, something no one would have expected. This figure is almost double that posted in the same quarter in the previous financial year.

CEO Ronojoy Dutta has explained in detail how the reported losses have increased including the one put out earlier that the operating lease liabilities, particularly the exchange rate changes resulted in higher payouts. The essence of this communication from the CEO to the employees can be summed up in his following sentences:

"We will be dealing with the weakening revenue environment with a sharper focus on cost for which we seek your support. Operationally, we should continue our focus on safety, our on-time performance and on delivering a courteous, hassle free service".

There may be internal communications on how the costs can be cut down without compromising on the safety and comfort of the passengers.

The CEO has pointed out that the unit revenue stood steady at 5.7% increase while only the unit costs had gone from 1.5% to 2.8% resulting in the unexpected loss.

31/10/19 S Mahadevan/News Minute

Six months after Jet Airways grounded its services, the shares of the airline have surged more than 50 per cent in the last eight sessions. The stock hit the five per cent upper circuit for eight consecutive trading sessions, gaining 50.5 per cent during the period, reported Livemint.

However, the report could not explain the reason behind the surge in stock. At 11.24 am, the stock traded at ₹22.60 on the BSE, up five per cent from its previous close. The scrip has declined a massive 92 per cent so far this year.

The National Stock Exchange and the BSE said that the stock would be removed from daily trading of futures and options and moved to trade for trade segment from June 28. Jet Airways, the country's second-largest carrier last year, had to halt operations in April as losses were mounting and the airline failed to get emergency funding that would have helped it run day-to-day operations.

31/10/19 The Week

New Delhi: Indian Oil Corporation Ltd (IOC) Chairman Sanjiv Singh on Thursday confirmed that the company has resumed fuel supply to Air India at six airports. The company said it has done so keeping in mind that outstanding should not be mounted.

"Air India's outstanding on Indian Oil Corporation Ltd (IOC) is Rs 2,640 crores. The IOC has resumed fuel supply to Air India at six airports. We had started fuel supply keeping in mind that outstanding should not be mounted," IOC Chairman Sanjiv Singh said.

The development comes days after the IOC issued a warning to Air India, asking it to clear the payments by October 18 or they will stop the fuel supply at six major domestic airports of the country.

In a letter to Air India on October 11, the three oil PSUs – Indian Oil Corporation Ltd (IOCL), Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd (BPCL) and Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd (HPCL) – stated that the outstanding has not come down considerably in the absence of the committed monthly lump sum payment".

Prior to this, these three fuel suppliers in August this year had stated that the Air India owed Rs 5,000 crore fuel bills and alleged that the payment has been delayed by almost eight months.

31/10/19 India.com

Hyderabad: Telangana government on Wednesday requested the Centre to hand over the infrastructure belonging to AAI (Airports Authority of India) at Begumpet in the city to state government to run training academies.

In a letter addressing to Union Minister for Civil Aviation Hardeep Singh Puri, Telangana Minister for Municipal Administration and IT, K T Rama Rao said the Telangana state had earlier MoU with Aero campus Bordeaux and Greenfield University, UK.

AAI has agreed for utilization of infrastructure (hangars and office buildings), but has put huge rental amount, the Minister said.

30/10/19 UNI

India is planning to open 100 additional airports by 2024, as part of a plan to revive economic growth in Asia's third-largest economy, according to people with knowledge of the matter. **The proposal, which includes starting 1,000 new routes connecting smaller towns and villages, was discussed at a meeting last week to review infrastructure needed by 2025**, the people said, asking not to be identified as the discussion is private. **Steps to start a plane-lease financing business in the country was also discussed**, they said.

With economic activity at a six-year low and prospects of further slowdown looming, Prime Minister Narendra Modi is keen to double down on infrastructure projects in a bid to revive growth and achieve a target of making India a \$5 trillion economy by 2025. Last month, the government cut corporate tax rates, putting India on par with some of the lowest in Asia, to help compete with the likes of Vietnam and Indonesia for investments amid global trade tensions.

India's plans to expedite airport development still trails that of China's, which has set a goal of having 450 commercial airports by 2035, almost double the number at the end of 2018. A spokesman at India's civil aviation ministry was not immediately available for a comment.

The proposal by India's state think tank also includes boosting the number of locally trained pilots to 600 a year and double the domestic aircraft fleet to 1,200 during the period, the people said.

30/10/19 Abhijit Roy Chowdhury and Anurag Kotoky/Bloomberg/Economic Times

Mumbai: An off-duty pilot and a flight attendant working with SpiceJet have been fired from their jobs after a passenger filed a complaint with the airline about them indulging in public display of affection during a Delhi-Kolkata flight last month.

While the first officer boarded the flight as an additional crew member and was not operating the flight, the flight attendant was on duty and in uniform. The two were reportedly seated in adjacent seats.

"The complaint said the flight attendant and a passenger behaved inappropriately and indecently on board the flight. An internal inquiry showed the passenger engaged in indecent conduct was a first officer pilot. Both crew members were questioned and thereafter terminated from service," a source was quoted as saying by Times of India.

SpiceJet also put out a flight safety case study, titled '**Unprofessional behaviour at workplace**', in order to send across a stern message to the crew. "**Uncultured practice at workplace driven by individual attitude may adversely affect the reputation of the company (airline), demoralise the co-workers and there could also be serious safety lapses and consequences**," the statement said, adding, "Employees shall always maintain the decorum and professionalism at workplace".

"The involved cabin crew and first officer failed to maintain decorum and professionalism at workplace. They failed to set their personal life apart from professional, which is unacceptable on the work premises," it said.

30/10/19 News18.com

New Delhi: Civil aviation regulator DGCA today asked GoAir to replace 13 A320Neo aircraft's PW engines, which have been used for over 3,000 hours, within the next 15 days or face grounding of the airplanes, an official said.

The 13 aircraft have to be fitted with at least one modified Pratt and Whitney (PW) low-pressure turbine engine within the next 15 days, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) official said.

The official said there are 13 aircraft in the airline's fleet in which both the PW engines have been used for more than 3,000 hours.

The airline's spokesperson said, "GoAir has not received any communication/directive from DGCA in this respect. Whenever we receive any communication, at that point in time, we will evaluate and respond accordingly. We will continue to work on all directives/policies as stipulated by the DGCA."

The PW engine-powered A320 neo planes in the fleets of the two airlines - IndiGo and GoAir - have

been facing glitches both mid-air and on-ground since their induction way back in 2016, which has also led to grounding of some planes.

On Monday, the regulator asked IndiGo to replace 16 A320Neo aircraft's PW engines, which have been used for more than 3,000 hours.

A PW spokesperson said in a statement on Tuesday, "Pratt & Whitney is working in coordination with our airline customers to incorporate upgrades improving the durability of the low-pressure turbine in the PW1100G-JM fleet to address a known issue."

29/10/19 PTI/NDTV

India has deferred a decision on increasing air seat capacity with UAE under the bilateral air services pact, as it prepares to hold further discussions with all stakeholders involved.

Federal civil aviation ministry sources told Arabian Business that the ministry will schedule another meeting with the UAE civil aviation authorities early next month for further discussions.

The respective Indian and UAE authorities held a meeting last Wednesday to discuss possible expansion of the air seat capacity and flying rights between the two countries under the bilateral treaty.

"There was no decision [on expanding bilateral rights on seat capacity or flying rights] at the meeting. There will be another meeting with UAE on this shortly," Pradeep Singh Kharola, Secretary, federal ministry of civil aviation, told Arabian Business.

While Kharola did not specify the date for the next meeting with UAE aviation authorities, ministry sources indicated that it is likely to be held within the first two weeks of November.

Under the existing bilateral rights, carriers from India and the UAE can fly a total of 134,441 aircraft seats a week, each way.

The UAE has been pressing for an expansion of bilateral capacities for flights and weekly airline seats for a long time now.

Indian airlines, however, have so far not been so keen, mainly due to fears that UAE-based carriers will gain most from more capacity as they could manage to get prime slots in Dubai, Abu Dhabi and other airports in the UAE.

30/10/19 James Mathew/Arabian Business

Budget carrier IndiGo has received approvals to operate 572 international flights per week during the winter schedule which is valid from October 27 till March 30, as per data from the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA).

All Indian carriers have received approvals to operate a total of 1,847 international departures per week during the ongoing winter schedule.

Air India, which is the largest international operator for outbound traffic, remained the leader in this race with 616 departures per week while its low-cost subsidiary Air India Express has received permission to operate 311 departures per week during the next six months.

IndiGo and SpiceJet were the biggest gainers of domestic slots and international traffic rights after the temporary but indefinite shutdown of Jet Airways in April 2019. Jet Airways was the largest international operator in India with a market share of around 13.8 percent. Air India had the second spot.

As per the international departure data for Indian carriers, SpiceJet can operate 229 international flights per week. GoAir has the approval to fly a small share of 5 percent or 91 departures per week. Vistara, a joint venture of Tata Sons and Singapore Airlines, has received approvals for 28 departures per week.

As far as airports are concerned, Delhi will be the largest operator for Indian carriers' international traffic with approvals for 490 departures per week or 27 percent of the national traffic.

30/10/19 CNBC TV18

GVK Power & Infrastructure Limited (GVKPIL) has raised Rs 7614 crore from three global investors to buy 23.5 percent more stake in the Mumbai International Airport Limited (MIAL).

In a statement released by the group on Sunday announced that it has signed binding agreements with 'Abu Dhabi Investment Authority' (ADIA), the Canadian 'Public Sector Pension (PSP) Investment Board' and the Indian 'National Investment & Infrastructure Fund' (NIIF) to repay the debt and buy more stake in MIAL.

GVK Reddy, Chairman of GVK Group informed that they will now accelerate the efforts for developing the Navi Mumbai International Airport, monetizing MIAL's real estate assets and building an even stronger airports business.

He welcomed ADIA, PSP Investments and NIIF as shareholders in GVK Airport Holdings Limited (GVKAHL). He emphasized the continuing efforts to create world-class infrastructure and a strong aviation hub that will provide the impetus for growth and development of Mumbai and India.

30/10/19 ITLN

New Delhi: **Budget carrier IndiGo on Wednesday announced that it has become a member of International Air Transport Association (IATA) which represents around 290 airlines across the world, comprising 82 per cent of global air traffic.**

The announcement came after IndiGo's expansion of international flight operations this year wherein it connected India with countries such as Turkey, Vietnam, Myanmar and China.

"With over 60 offices worldwide, IATA maintains relationships with governments and other industry stakeholders around the world, advocating on behalf of its members on key industry issues," said a press statement by IndiGo.

In March, SpiceJet became the first Indian low-cost carrier to take membership of the IATA. Less than three months later, its chairman and managing director Ajay Singh was elected to the board of global airlines body.

Indian full-service carriers Vistara and Air India are members of IATA too.

With 48.2 per cent share in domestic air passenger market, IndiGo is the largest airline in India, according to the latest data of Indian aviation regulator DGCA.

IndiGo currently operates around 1,500 flights every day to 60 domestic and 23 international destinations with a fleet of 247 aircraft.

30/10/19 PTI/India TV

New Delhi: **The Tata Group has agreed to reduce the stake it had proposed to acquire in GMR Airports (GAL) to about 15% from the previously announced 20%, which will likely allow the GMR Group-Tata deal to sail through, people with knowledge of the plan said.**

The move is to comply with a rule that bars groups that own airlines to also hold more than 10% in an airport operator. A 15% holding for the Tata Group would keep its effective stake in Delhi International Airport Ltd (DIAL), the GAL unit that runs the airport in the national capital, below 10%.

The Tata Group, which holds a 51% stake in two airlines — AirAsia India and Vistara — is part of a consortium comprising also an affiliate of Singapore sovereign wealth fund GIC and Hong Kong-based SSG Capital Management that had agreed to invest Rs 8,500 crore in GAL.

Under the new formula, GIC will acquire an additional 5% stake in GMR Airports to the previously planned 15%, while SSG will hold about 10%, the people said. **GMR Infrastructure's stake in GAL, which also operates the Hyderabad airport, will come down to about 54% from almost 100%, while an employee welfare trust will hold about 2%.**

30/10/19 Mihir Mishra/Economic Times

SpiceJet has been forced to extend the suspension of its services from Kolkata Int'l to Gangtok, the capital of the mountainous northern Indian state of Sikkim. The airline had originally intended to resume the service from October 1.

Up until the end of May, the low-cost carrier was operating the 274-nautical mile (507 kilometre) sector with a daily Dash 8-400 rotation. The ch-aviation schedules module confirms that this was SpiceJet's only service in Sikkim state.

In August 2018, SpiceJet was awarded two routes to Pakyong, one from Kolkata and one from Delhi Int'l under the regional connectivity scheme (Ude Desh ka aam Nagrik - UDAN). To date, the Delhi-Pakyong service has yet to be launched.

30/10/19 ch-aviation

Chennai: The Air Navigation System (ANS) of Chennai is set to improve as US aircraft manufacturer Boeing is preparing a master plan on the latest technologies in the field and the forecast of the future requirements.

It is learnt that Boeing will recommend ways and means of harmonisation of ANS with the ANS systems of other countries or regions. This comes as passenger traffic, both, international and domestic, grew at Chennai airport at a phenomenal rate. It is further expected that air traffic across India, will continue to grow at a rate which is faster than the world. At present, airports are able to accommodate only constrained movements of aircraft due to infrastructure and procedural constraints, leading to overcrowding and flight delays.

Airport director S Sreekumar told Express that officials of Boeing held discussions with Chennai Airport authorities last week. "They are visualising the ground equipment present now and how much will be required."

At present, India does not have a futuristic, systematic, integrated master plan of Air Navigation Services (ANS,) based on the international Civil Aviation Organisation requirements as specified in Regional air navigational plans. **The country needs a futuristic Master Plan of Air Navigation Services, which operates automatically and is periodically self-triggered by traffic requirements. In the absence of such a plan, a mismatch between the air traffic requirements and air navigation system is likely to occur, leading to congestion and cost inefficiencies.**

30/10/19 C Shivakumar/New Indian Express

Mumbai: Flag carrier Air India's pilot bodies—IPG and ICPA—on Tuesday sought an appointment with civil aviation minister Hardeep Singh Puri for clarity on the proposed disinvestment amid the government preparing to exit from the airline business.

The government for long has been trying to sell debt-ridden airline but could not attract bidders. It has now again decided to call bids for sale next month.

The pilot bodies, in communication to Puri, said that the airline management appraised it of the status of disinvestment during a recent meeting but it did not provide any clarity on pending issues or provide any roadmap with regards to the future of employees as a result of this disinvestment process.

Earlier this month, as many as 13 Air India unions including its pilots unions, Indian Pilots Guild (IPG) and Indian Commercial Pilots Association (ICPA), had discussions with the airline top management on the issue of privatisation.

"We, the Air India employees have a big stake in the success and prosperity of our airline. We request you to kindly grant us an urgent appointment for a meeting at your convenience so that we can have clarity on the mechanics of the disinvestment process and communicate employees issues/concerns as well as the ground reality to you directly," the pilot bodies said in a joint letter to the aviation minister.

30/10/19 PTI/First Post

Mumbai: The fire extinguishing system of an Air India A321 aircraft parked at Sharjah airport went off when it was being readied for departure to Calicut last week. The commander in his report said that the co-pilot hit his head on the cockpit's overhead panel where the cargo fire switch is located. But aviation sources said that it was unlikely that a headbutt could activate the system. Air India has initiated an inquiry into the incident involving its flight AI998. "If there were loaders in the cargo hold, they would have been sprayed with the halon gas, in which case, they could have needed medical attention," the source said. Inhalation of halon is known to cause lightheadedness, headache, coughing and elevated heartbeat in affected workers.

An Air India spokesperson said that the pilots took the aircraft on minimum equipment list without any cargo as cargo fire discharge indication came on in the cockpit when the aircraft was parked in Sharjah. He denied that the extinguisher system deployed in the cargo or that workers were affected. However the report made by the commander (TOI has a copy) states a different story. According to the report, minutes after the co-pilot hit his head on the overhead panel, the aircraft maintenance engineer informed the captain that the cargo fire extinguishers had been discharged. It was then decided to fly the aircraft with an empty cargo hold. But an hour later, the extinguisher system deployed again and this time the engineers removed the cockpit voice recorder. The aircraft was subsequently grounded.

30/10/19 Times of India

Just last week, as we entered the Diwali weekend, **IndiGo announced their results, announcing a loss of Rs 1062 crores for the quarter ended 30 September 2019.** What stood out in the results was the ballooning costs of maintenance of aircraft, which spiked about 88 percent from the corresponding quarter last year. This cost was attributed to the older aircraft in the fleet, those called the ceo by Airbus. Each aircraft requires a detailed inspection at pre-defined milestones, and in the case of these older aircraft, the engines are heading back to the workshops for maintenance. This cost will be significant until the airline retires these older aircraft and has a fleet largely composed of the newer and more efficient neo engines, i.e., till 2022.

An airline business has a lot of moving parts, but to break it down simply: You buy aircraft, pay for fuel and all other monthly costs such as employees, airports, systems and so on, and the money left after is profit. However, in the case of IndiGo, which always makes big orders, there is one other factor at play, which is the income they generate from sale and leaseback.

An airline is supposed to pay a small token deposit when they order an aircraft. The bulk of the payment is made on delivery. **By placing massive orders, IndiGo manages to get large discounts on**

the list price of the aircraft. For instance, the 2018 list price of an Airbus A320neo was \$110.6 million, but IndiGo might even get it at **50 percent less.** **At the time of delivery of the aircraft, IndiGo sells the aircraft to a leasing company, making a profit of a few million dollars on the aircraft right at the time it is inducted in the fleet. It then pays a monthly amount to the aircraft lessor it just sold the plane to, for the use of the aircraft. IndiGo has built a massive cash chest of Rs 18,736 crores, with ticket sales supported by sale and leaseback of aircraft.**

On Tuesday [29 October], **Airbus and IndiGo announced the airline's order of 300 A320neo family aircraft. The A320neo family includes the A320neo, the 180-186 seater aircraft which is the workhorse of IndiGo, as well as the A321neo, the 222 seater aircraft which can fly further than the A320neo as well, enabling the Delhi-Istanbul flights of IndiGo at the moment.**

30/10/19 Ajay Awtaney/First Post

A US-bound passenger was apprehended by CISF personnel at the Delhi airport on Wednesday for allegedly carrying eight live bullets in his baggage, an official said.

A Central Industrial Security Force official, deputed at terminal-3 of the Indira Gandhi International Airport (IGIA) to scan baggages, detected bullet-like objects while checking the bag of Indian national Tejinder Singh, he said.

"Eight live bullet rounds of .32mm calibre were recovered from the passenger who was supposed to take a flight to San Francisco," the official said.

The traveller was not allowed to board the flight and was handed over to the Delhi Police as he could not produce any document for carrying the ammunition, he added.

30/10/19 PTI/India TV

New Delhi: Eighty-six foreign airlines are operating to and from India during winter schedule 2019 offering 5.8 lakh seats compared to 85 foreign airlines that operated in the winter schedule last year offering 5.6 lakh seats. This represents an increase of 3.05 per cent.

According to the latest data released by the Directorate-General of Civil Aviation, while Air Tanzania, Arkia Israeli Airlines, Azerbaijan Airlines, Lot Polish, Nok Air, Nok Scoot Air and Vietjet Airlines started services to and from India, six airlines, including Air Manas, Asiana Airlines and P T Garuda Indonesia, have stopped flights to and from India.

Air Arabia cut its services to and from India to 110 weekly flights offering 17,830 seats during winter 2019 against 112 weekly services offered previously with 18,144 seats a week. Similarly, AirAsia Berhad will operate 11 weekly departures against 12 previously.

Druk Air of Bhutan will operate 25 weekly services to and from India, down from 43 weekly services previously while Bhutan Airlines will operate 18 flights a week on the same route, up one weekly frequency previously.

30/10/19 Business Line

New Delhi: One of the Pratt and Whitney engines of an IndiGo A320neo plane that was heading from Kolkata to Pune on Wednesday evening stalled mid-air, forcing the pilot to return to the Kolkata airport, making it the fourth such incident involving PW engines at the low-cost carrier in a week, a source said.

On three consecutive days from October 24 to 26, IndiGo had three in-flight PW engine shutdowns, compelling the aviation regulator DGCA to visit the airline's premises on Monday to review the

maintenance and safety data.

"The Kolkata-Pune flight 6E-862 on Wednesday evening was gaining altitude and at around 9,000 feet, when one of its engines stalled. The pilot immediately turned back and brought the aircraft to the Kolkata airport. The plane is currently grounded," the source privy to the development told news agency Press Trust of India.

The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) directed the low-cost carrier on Monday to replace the PW engines of 16 A320neo aircraft, which were used for over 3,000 hours, within the next 15 days or face grounding of these planes.

It issued similar instructions to GoAir on Tuesday, asking it to replace the PW engines of 13 A320neo aircraft, which were used for over 3,000 hours, within the next 15 days.

30/10/19 PTI/NDTV

New Delhi: **After growing at a very slow rate in its first five years of operations, AirAsia India plans to expand its fleet more than fourfold to 100 aircraft in the next five years.** "We have firmed up plans to add 14-15 planes every year starting next year for the next five years. We have remained a small player in the Indian market till now with just 23 planes, which will increase to 29 planes by the end of December," said a senior executive, who did not wish to be identified.

The executive said the lowcost carrier, a 51:49 joint venture between Tata Sons and Malaysia's AirAsia Berhad, will become an impactful player in the market once its fleet grows to 50 aircraft. The market is dominated by IndiGo, which operates a fleet of about 250 aircraft. "While we will continue to add aircraft under the current model by getting aircraft from AirAsia Berhad, we will also look at leasing planes directly from lessors," said the executive.

The airline's expansion plans focus on strengthening the network on existing routes rather than adding new routes. "The philosophy is simple: **There is no point staying a marginal airline on various routes. The focus will rather be on strengthening our position on routes that we are in,**" said the executive, adding that both the promoters would put in funds for expansion. AirAsia India, which started operations in 2014, is the smallest scheduled commercial airline in the country. In the ongoing winter schedule, which began at October-end, the airline has increased its flights by 326 departures to 1,345 departures per week.

30/10/19 Mihir Mishra/Economic Times

New Delhi: **A man has been arrested for smuggling gold by concealing it inside the wheels of three trolley bags carried by him at the Delhi international airport,** the customs department said today. The accused was intercepted after his arrival from Bangkok on Friday.

A search of his baggage resulted in the recovery of **12 pieces of gold**, concealed inside the wheels of the trolley bags, weighing 420 grams, the department said in a statement.

The gold valued at **Rs. 14.57 lakh** was seized and the passenger was arrested, it said.

29/10/19 NDTV

Hyderabad: **GMR-led Delhi International Airport Limited (DIAL) announced Tuesday that UPS, a global leader in logistics, will route its latest freighter aircraft to India from Delhi Airport.**

This is a significant development as with this routing, businesses in North India will gain faster access to markets in the Western countries.

UPS commenced its six weekly flights from Delhi with its Boeing 747-8F aircraft, the company's largest freighter aircraft, which came from Bangkok.

The company will operate its services with Boeing's B747-400, B747-8 and B767 aircraft. Earlier, UPS was operating from Mumbai.

UPS will operate B747 aircraft on Delhi (IATA-DEL) and Cologne (IATA-CGN) route, which is UPS's largest international hub, and Boeing 767 on Delhi (DEL)-Dubai (DXB)-Cologne (CGN) route. Videh Kumar Jaipuriar, CEO-DIAL, said: "Delhi has emerged as a cargo hub for the businesses in North India and neighboring countries. The service offered by UPS will give a boost to the cargo and logistics sector in the region. It will support importing businesses from Asia and enhance growth opportunities to markets in the West."

Delhi Airport recently launched a Transshipment Excellence Centre, the first-of-its-kind facility created at any Indian airport for faster movement of transshipment cargo.

29/10/19 Business Line

Moscow: An Indian man is facing up to seven years in prison after hashish was found in his bag at a Moscow airport, his lawyer said Tuesday, in the latest in a series of similar arrests.

The case of Aashish Bhadourya, 21, echoes that of an Israeli-American woman, Naama Issachar, who was jailed this month for seven-and-a-half years over a larger amount of marijuana found in her luggage at the same airport as she changed flights en route from Delhi in April.

Police found the drugs in Bhadourya's checked luggage while he was in the transit zone at Moscow's Sheremetyevo airport en route from Delhi to Prague.

He was detained in July and is facing drug smuggling charges, his lawyer Nikita Taranishchenko told AFP. A Moscow court on Tuesday threw out an appeal of his pre-trial detention.

Bhadourya was working for the Czech Embassy in Delhi after studying the language and was travelling to do a course, according to Russia's Mediazona website, which covers court cases.

The drugs found in his checked rucksack "do not belong to him," but he initially made a confession "considered to be proof" by investigators, Taranishchenko said.

His lawyer said "there was no crime committed" as Bhadourya was in the transit zone, which "is not in Russian territory".

29/10/19 AFP/Gulf News

Mangaluru: The union government has given six airports in the country on lease to Adani Group headed by Gautham Adani. The lease for maintenance of the airport will be for 50 years, and the company feels that the entire process of takeover may take about a year.

The operation of the airport, maintenance, terminal and other development works will be undertaken by Adani Group during the period of lease. Runway expansion is on its priority list. The company has currently undertaken scrutiny of airport assets, staff functioning, source of income, security system, airlines operating from here and other things. Experts deputed by the company are busy with this task.

Some employees are worried about the prospects of losing their jobs, but Adani Group has said that it will give preference to existing employees and interests of the locals would be protected.

30/10/19 daijiworld

New Delhi/Paris: Indian budget airline IndiGo is close to placing a near-record order for more than 300 Airbus A320neo-family jets worth at least US\$33 billion at recent catalog prices to cement its position as India's largest carrier by market share.

People familiar with the matter told Reuters that IndiGo, part of InterGlobe Aviation, was putting the finishing touches on an order that would include Airbus's newest jet, a long-range version of the single-aisle A320 type called the A321XLR.

IndiGo did not immediately respond to a request for comment on Tuesday (Oct 29).

On Monday, a spokeswoman said there were no plans on the order front "as of now". Airbus declined to comment.

The expected deal caps a contest between Airbus and Boeing, which seeks a new endorsement for its

grounded 737 MAX after British Airways owner IAG tentatively agreed in June to drop Airbus as its medium-haul supplier and commit to 200 MAX.

It comes days after IndiGo's biggest quarterly loss hurt by engine issues on its earlier A320neo jets. A new deal for 300 A320neo-family aircraft would be worth US\$33 billion at the most recent list prices, published in 2018, but a deal of this scale would come in well below half that after discounts, according to aircraft valuation experts.

IndiGo was among the first carriers to buy the re-engined A320neo in early 2011.

29/10/19 Channel News Asia

New Delhi: The Central government, which is expected to invite Expressions of Interest for Air India next month, is considering relaxing of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) norms in the aviation sector to attract global bidders. The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) and civil aviation ministry are expected to discuss relaxation of FDI limit from the current 49 per cent to majority stake-holding by foreign stakeholders.

In the Budget speech, Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman had proposed relaxation in FDI norms for certain sectors including aviation. The announcements were then seen as a bid to attract prospective buyers for Air India, since the 49 per cent limit on FDI has been a big block for foreign portfolio investors (FPI) investing in the debt-laden airline.

The government is also looking to do away with other terms and conditions that evoked a lukewarm response when AI was first put on sale last year.

According to officials, there were several proposals including one for giving majority stake to FDI as well as others where FPIs can invest a further percentage beyond 49 per cent, to give foreign shareholders a majority stake. **In the aviation sector, 100 per cent FDI is allowed under automatic route for MRO (Maintenance, Repair, Overhaul), ground handling and aircraft purchase, but not for control of airlines.**

29/10/19 New Indian Express

Spicejet, IndiGo, Air India, Go Air et Vistara : voici les principaux bénéficiaires de la fin des activités de Jet Airways, survenues il y a désormais 6 mois.

Si le processus de redistribution des quelque 700 créneaux horaires qu'exploitait l'ex-première compagnie aérienne privée en Inde est toujours en cours, près des deux tiers ont déjà trouvé preneur.

235 slots nationaux et internationaux restent toutefois encore vacants, le tout sur 35 aéroports du pays, dont certains de premier plan : Calcutta, Chennai, Locknow, Indore.

« Le ministère poursuit ce processus d'attribution de créneaux horaires et a hâte de pourvoir tous les aéroports vacants au cours des prochains mois », cite une source du ministère de l'aviation civile au site indien The Print, laissant entendre que dans moins de trois mois, tous les créneaux de Jet Airways seront distribués

Plus globalement, six mois après la faillite de Jet, le secteur de l'aviation civile en Inde semble se remettre sur pied.

D'après la direction de l'aviation civile du pays, le nombre d'appareils en service dans le pays a repassé la barre des 600. « Le secteur de l'aviation s'est rapidement redressé après la fermeture de Jet Airways en avril, une énorme catastrophe. A la fin de Jet, il ne nous restait plus que 530 avions civiles en activité », explique Arun Kumar, à la tête de la direction de l'aviation civile.

« Nous avons réussi à sortir de la catastrophe de Jet Airways en moins de quatre mois. Il y a actuellement 608 avions dans le ciel et nous en espérons 640 en décembre », précise-t-il. En plus des anciens slots de Jet, ses principaux concurrents ont déjà récupéré certains de ses appareils : **SpiceJet a repris 31 avions, Vistara 9**. Les autres anciens appareils de Jet volent maintenant, pêle-mêle, pour GOL (Brésil), SmartAvia (Russie), LOT (Pologne), Comair (Afrique du Sud), Turkish Airlines, Etihad, FlyBondi (Argentine), Ethiopian ou encore le britannique Jet2. Une soixantaine d'avions de Jet lui appartiennent encore.

Sur la saison d'hiver qui débute, les transporteurs volant en Inde continue de combler les vides. British Airways et Air France ont d'ores et déjà augmenté certaines fréquences. Air India, qui devrait par ailleurs être de nouveau mise en vente dans les semaines à venir, s'envolera pour la première fois vers Londres Stansted. Virgin Atlantic ouvrira de son côté une ligne entre Londres Heathrow et Mumbai. **KLM ouvrira une nouvelle ligne vers Bangalore et augmente ses fréquences vers Mumbai.**

Jet : une reprise bien improbable

De quoi faire espérer une baisse des tarifs des billets d'avions entre Europe et Inde, les grands opérateurs, Air France et Air India en tête, ayant naturellement profité de la fin des activités de Jet pour revoir leurs tarifs à la hausse.

Depuis le 17 avril 2019, Jet Airways a suspendu tous ses vols. Le transporteur, qui faisait voler 110 appareils, est actuellement toujours en procédure d'insolvabilité. Techniquement, une reprise est encore possible, deux sociétés étant encore sur les rangs, mais paraît, au fil des semaines, de plus en plus improbable.

« **Les banques et investisseurs potentiels se retirent, il y a de plus en plus d'éléments troublants dans la gestion de la compagnie par le passé.** Le problème c'est qu'on se rend compte que lorsqu'on ouvre un placard, ce n'est pas un mais deux ou trois cadavres qui tombent », nous glisse un ex-cadre dirigeant de la compagnie en Europe.

Entre autre, une enquête est en cours contre le fondateur de Jet, Naresh Goyal, à cause d'accords illégaux avec des entités offshore signés à des taux bien supérieurs aux prix du marché.

TourMag 28/10/2019

PARIS/NEW DELHI (Reuters) - **Le groupe indien InterGlobe Aviation a annoncé mardi avoir signé une commande de 300 appareils appartenant à la famille A320neo auprès de l'avionneur européen Airbus pour le compte d'IndiGo, sa compagnie aérienne à bas coût.**

Cette commande ferme porte sur des A320neo, des A321neo et A321XLR et porte à 730 le nombre d'appareils commandés par InterGlobe à Airbus, précise le communiqué.

Au prix catalogue 2018, purement indicatif, cela représente un montant de 33 milliards de dollars (29,9 milliards d'euros).

L'annonce intervient quelques jours après la publication par IndiGo de sa perte trimestrielle la plus élevée de son histoire (135 millions d'euros), les difficultés rencontrées par les moteurs de son ancien fournisseur qui ont abouti à l'envolée des coûts de maintenance de sa flotte.

IndiGo, qui détient près de la moitié du marché indien du transport aérien, n'a pas précisé de quels moteurs il entend équiper les appareils commandés à Airbus.

La compagnie aérienne a cessé en juin de collaborer avec son fournisseur habituel, l'américain Pratt & Whitney, filiale d'United Technologies, pour se tourner vers CFM, filiale du français Safran et de l'américain General Electric.

Vers 14h30 GMT, le titre Airbus avançait de 1,3% à 126,28 euros à la Bourse de Paris tandis que le CAC était quasiment inchangé

La Tribune 29/10/2019