

Analysis: A decade of incredible LCC growth in India: RoutesOnline

As SpiceJet and IndiGo move to fill the capacity void left by Jet Airways, we look at India's dramatic shift to LCCs over the past ten years.

The news that Jet Airways would be suspending all flights after failing to attract additional funding was no surprise, following a series of suspensions and service changes in April and March.

In the subsequent rush to fill the void SpiceJet and IndiGo have proven to be the most active in the early stages. And though the government has pledged to support the embattled carrier, amid the backdrop of a dramatic power shift to LCCs in India's domestic market it's unlikely that it will ever recover to its previous levels of service.

To better understand the market in which India's carriers have been operating over the last decade, Routesonline had a close look at the data behind the incredible LCC growth story.

Incredible growth of LCCs

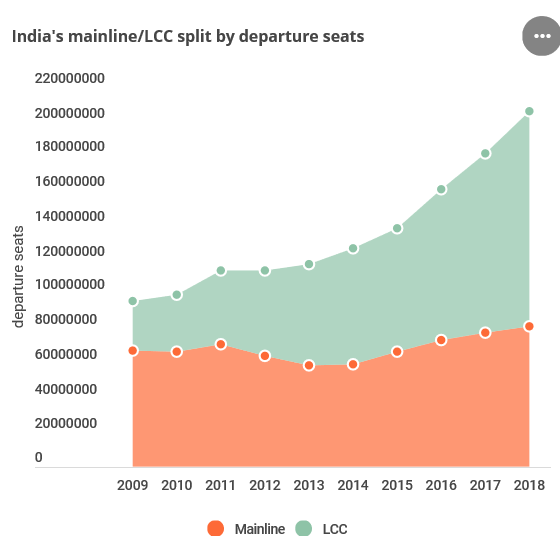
Since 2009 the expansion in Indian flight capacity has made it consistently one of the world's fastest-growing markets.

In total the number of available departure seats has more than doubled, swelling by 114.5 percent to 206 million in 2018.

However the growth in mainline carriers has been much more modest, rising just 20.7 percent from 67.1 million to 80 million over the decade.

While ten years ago the mainline carrier market dwarfed that of LCCs, with 2.3 times more seats available, LCC capacity has grown by an incredible 331.9 percent during the period to reach 125million. That's 60.7 percent of the total Indian aviation market, up from just 30.1 percent a decade earlier.

India's mainline/LCC split by departure seats

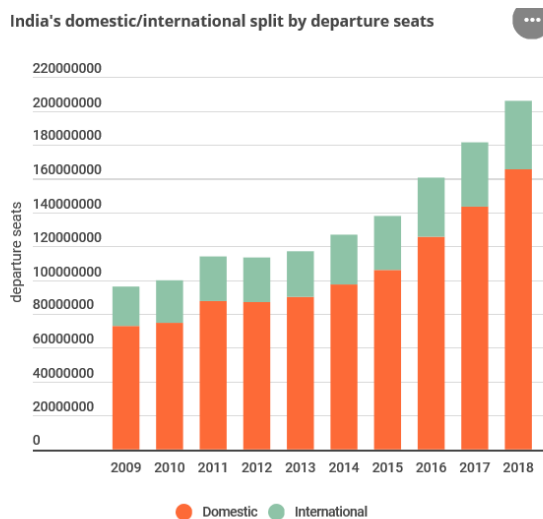


Domestic vs international

The growth of LCCs in India is unsurprising given the dominance of domestic traffic in the market.

International growth has been strong from India, rising by 75.9 percent in the last ten years, but the 126.6 percent growth of domestic departure seats has ensured that the market share for domestic flights continues to grow.

Last year domestic capacity accounted for 80.4 percent of the country's market, which is up from 76.1 percent in 2019.



The tipping point came in 2012, when low-cost domestic departures overtook those of mainline carriers. This is despite having nearly half of their market share just three years earlier.

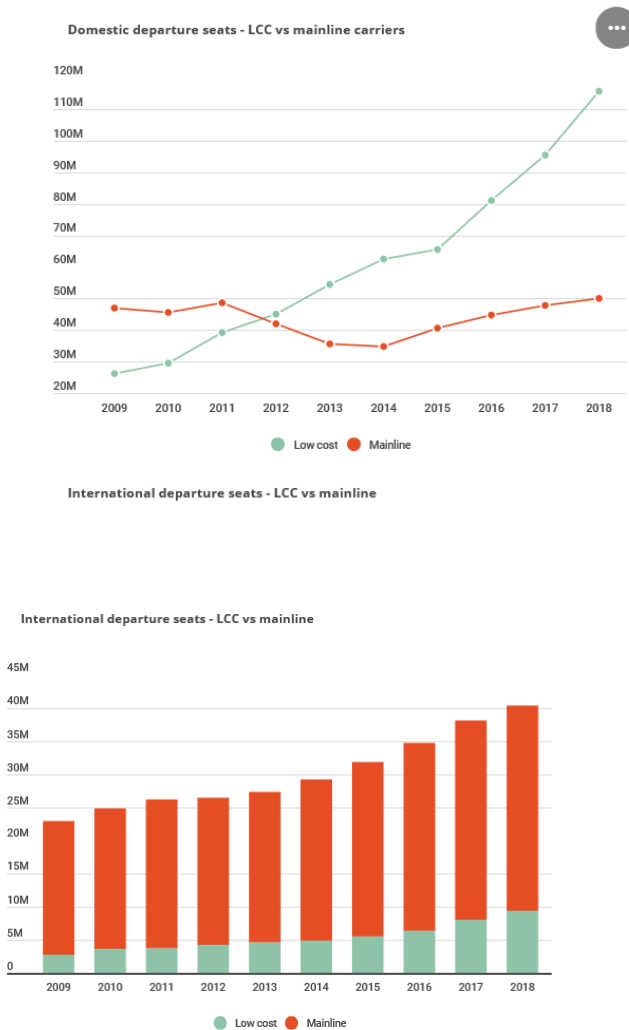
In 2009 total low-cost departure seats within India were 26.2 million compared to 46.9 million for mainline carriers.

Following the power shift in 2012, the continued growth of LCCs has been extraordinary, while mainline carriers have remained broadly flat. Then marked acceleration began in 2016 as IndiGo, the world's fastest-growing airline, began to put huge amounts of capacity into the market.

In 2018 the total domestic departure seats offered by Indian LCCs has reached 165.8 million, an amazing 341.5 percent higher than 2009. Conversely, mainline domestic capacity has grown by just 6.6 percent, only recently recovering to the levels seen prior to the aviation industry's great depression following 9/11.

Internationally, the growth of low-cost flights has also far outstripped mainline carriers, although the total capacity available remains far lower. In an international aviation market which has grown by a total 75.9 percent over the decade, LCCs have grown total seats by 239.9 percent compared to 53.6 percent for mainline carriers.

Although legacy airlines still have the lion's share of the market with 76.8 percent of total international capacity, this share has eroded from 88 percent in 2009.



Top carriers – mainline and LCC

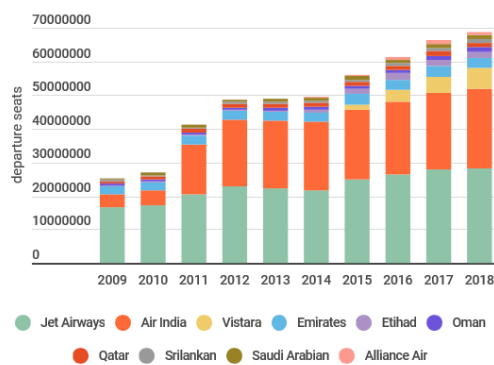
Until its difficulties, Jet Airways offered the largest number of departure seats from India on mainline carriers, and had continued to grow over the last few years.

The 28.2 million seats available on the carrier in 2018 was 68.5 percent higher than 2009 and kept it ahead of the 2.36 million offered by Air India.

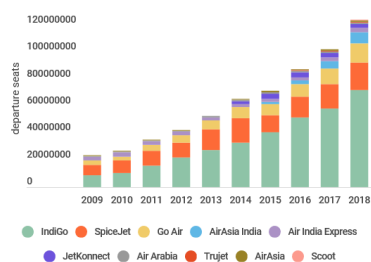
Elsewhere Vistara has grown aggressively since its first service in 2015 to take the third spot among mainline carriers operating in the country, and Etihad's 422.2 percent increase in capacity over the past decade had it in fifth place, although some way short of Emirates despite the latter's more cautious expansion (32 percent since 2019).

Among LCCs IndiGo has grown to become the largest carrier in India by capacity. In 2018 it offered three-and-a-half times the seats of its nearest rival SpiceJet, despite the latter's not-inconsiderable 155 percent growth in the last decade.

Top 10 mainline carriers by departures seats from India



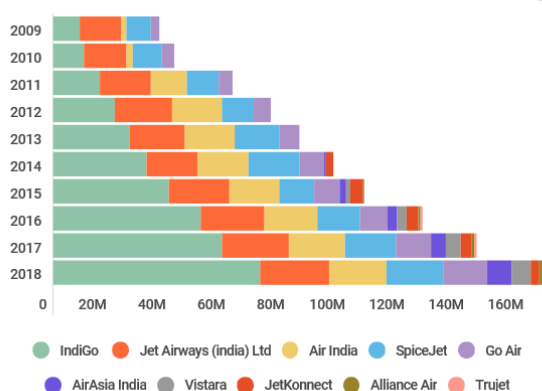
Top 10 low-cost carriers by departures seats from India



The growth at IndiGo means the carrier dominated the domestic market in 2018, offering significantly more capacity than its closest rival Jet Airways.

SpiceJet's domestic growth – 139.5 percent over the past decade – could well have seen it leapfrog Air India to become the country's third-largest domestic carrier by capacity in 2019; Jet's problems now mean that both the second- and third-place spots are up for grabs, although they will remain some way behind market leader IndiGo.

Domestic Indian carriers by departures seats



Codeshares:

Japan Airlines / Vistara

SpiceJet/Emirates

Indigo/Turkish Airlines

Jet Airways/AF KLM Delta airlines

After ceasing operations earlier this month, Jet Airways technically isn't gone forever. There are still some who want to see the airline gain additional financing in order to resume operations. **While there are some indicators Jet Airways could fly again, it seems unlikely given the current situation. Jet Airways had a lot of debt and very little cash. India's all-out price war, with fares as low as a few cents, meant that there was an incredibly slim margin for profit. Unfortunately, the market just didn't work for Jet Airways. They invested in new aircraft, including the 737 MAX, and broadened their international partnerships. With a robust route network, Jet Airways thought they could be India's top carrier.**

Also burdening Jet Airways were **high fuel costs and high taxes**. Jet Airways simply could not make a profit. They teetered and tottered for months before finally seeing their fleet depleted. In the days prior to their official suspension, only a handful of aircraft were operating and zero international routes were scheduled.

There has been a movement to resurrect Jet Airways. NDTV reports that former Jet Airways staff engaged in protests to get the airline up and running again. Jet Airways had a sizeable staff who are now faced with major uncertainty. While some crew members went off to rival carriers, like SpiceJet, others are still looking for opportunities.

Jet Airways relied heavily on Etihad Airways for investment. Etihad itself faces significant financial concerns, yet somehow found Jet Airways worth sustaining. Over the years, they have put millions of dollars into the airline.

However, after the collapse of the airline and Etihad's ongoing losses, it doesn't seem like Etihad would want to resurrect the carrier before they get on solid financial footing themselves. Etihad could always partner with an Indian conglomerate as Singapore Airlines did with their investment in Vistara. This could give Etihad some additional security since they wouldn't necessarily be the ones pumping in funding for Jet Airways.

Bloomberg reports that *Jet Airways seems to be running out of luck and time for a new investor*. With rival carriers descending on Jet's valuable assets such as planes and the valuable slots at crowded airports, Jet Airways would face significant headwinds if they restarted operations. This would definitely worry investors, especially as Indian airlines continue to miss out on record profits that other carriers see.

02/04/19 Jay Singh/Simple Flying

Prepaid forex cards held by staff members of the grounded Jet Airways were "frozen" Wednesday. The cards were given to the Jet staff operating international flights for taking care of the expenses incurred overseas.

"Over 1,300 staffers, including 1,000 cabin crew and 300 pilots, have been affected. The money in the cards was saved over multiple trips and they have lost money in this difficult situation," one of the staffers said, requesting not be identified.

Some of the employees had savings of up to \$2,000 in the forex cards, the staffer claimed to illustrate the extent of the problem at hand. Private sector Axis Bank, whose cards were used by the staff, said they have "no role to play" in the happenings.

Jet Airways could not be contacted immediately for comments on the issue. A senior official at Weizmann Forex, which is a card distributor for Axis Bank and counts on Jet Airways as a client, confirmed some cards have indeed been "frozen".

"Jet owes us Rs 1.62 crore and has not paid us for one month. In the absence of the payment, we had to securitise against our receivables," the official said. The money frozen is only to the extent of the outstanding amount from the private carrier and has been put into an escrow account, he said.

02/05/19 PTI/Business Today

New Delhi: **The Airports Authority of India (AAI) has started taking inventory of the space occupied by Jet Airways at airports across the country.** AAI chairman Guruprasad Mohapatra told TOI, stock-taking of Jet's equipment both on airside and in terminals is being done. **Once this exercise is complete, the airline will be asked to vacate the space and the same will be given back to it if it revives or to other carriers.** AAI feels when the airline is not operational, why should it occupy space. "We are taking details of space occupied by Jet inside terminal building and on airside. And what all equipment they have there. We are taking an inventory of what all they are occupying in airside and terminal side. Then we will decide about their vacating the place. We will try to close the account," said Mohapatra.

Jet had reportedly been paying AAI dues in time over the almost 26 years it operated. **Given that long relationship, the authority feels it is better to close Jet account and not charge them as they are not operating as of now.**

Jet Airways suspended operations on April 17. As of now there is no clarity if the airline will revive. The move may actually help Jet if it revives. **AAI will stop billing Jet once the exercise is complete and the grounded carrier will not keep getting dues mounted on it for continued occupation of valuable airport space, both inside terminals and at airside.**

02/05/19 Sauabh Sinha/Times of India

New Delhi: **For the first time, two Indian carriers, Air India and IndiGo, operated trial flights between Delhi and Hyderabad on 29 April without carrying the excess fuel that they would need if the flight was diverted away from its destination due to an emergency.**

The step has been taken under a fuel conservation and emission reduction initiative jointly taken up by the Ministry of Civil Aviation, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation, Air Traffic Control, the Indian Meteorological Department, and four airlines — Air India, IndiGo, Spicejet and AirAsia.

Among the reasons is the rising price of Aviation Turbine Fuel — as of 1 May, the price per kilolitre (1,000 litres) in New Delhi is Rs 65,067.85, a 12 per cent increase over the mark of Rs 58,060.97 on 1 February. The prices are revised every month, according to the Indian Oil Corporation website. There are also environmental considerations behind this initiative.

02/05/19 Ofrah Mufti/Print

The financial crisis at Jet Airways, and SpiceJet's troubles due to the grounding of Boeing 737 MAX aircraft, have benefited IndiGo Airlines the most.

IndiGo further consolidated its leadership position in the domestic market in terms of passengers carried, as its **market share expanded to 47 per cent in March**, against 44 per cent a month ago. While India's domestic passenger traffic grew a marginal 0.1 per cent to 11.6 million, IndiGo reported a 19 per cent growth in passengers to 5.4 million, according to data released by the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA).

"With the grounding of Boeing 737 MAX in the middle of March, SpiceJet saw a marginal blip in its market share. **Go Air, Vistara and AirAsia India gained market share at Jet's expense and reported a share of 10 per cent, 4 per cent and 6 per cent respectively,**" said a report by analysts at Prabhudas Lilladher.

IndiGo has been taking multiple steps to ensure it emerges stronger in the ongoing crisis in the sector. It temporarily **added approximately 20 new departures each from Mumbai and Delhi in a phased manner from April 15. It also launched three new international flights.**

This comes even as domestic available seat kilometers (ASK), a measure of passenger carrying capacity, slowed down to 5 per cent in March 2019 compared to March 2018. This is the lowest in the past 16 months as the industry continued to witness capacity pull-out.

IndiGo, however, continues to aggressively add capacity, reporting a 26 per cent YoY increase in ASK last month. SpiceJet reported a 13 per cent YoY growth in ASK. However, Jet, with only a handful of aircraft operating due to the ongoing financial crisis, saw its ASK decline 66 per cent

YoY.

23/04/19 Forum Gandhi/Business Line

The Directorate-General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) will conduct a special safety audit of the low-cost carrier IndiGo following concerns about the snag-ridden Pratt and Whitney (P&W) engines, which power the airline's A320 Neo aircraft.

While an annual audit of IndiGo was due in April, a special review will also be done of the airline's operations and engineering departments, it is reliably learnt.

"We confirm that there is currently a DGCA audit of IndiGo, which is combined with the annual main base audit. IndiGo has received a limited number of show-cause notices. IndiGo has responded accordingly and we can only comment on this matter after we have a discussion with the DGCA," the airline said in a statement.

An airline source, however, dismissed reports that show-cause notices had been served on two senior officials of the airline.

Indian carriers IndiGo and GoAir have been inducting the P&W engine-powered A320 Neo aircraft since 2016. The former has 72 of these planes and the latter has 30.

17/04/19 The Hindu

NEW DELHI: The Delhi High Court on Wednesday issued a notice to Jet Airways following a plea by activist Bejon Kumar seeking a full refund of airfare to passengers affected by the suspension of the airline's services.

The division bench of chief justice Rajendra Menon and Justice A.J. Bhambhani also asked the directorate general of civil aviation (DGCA) and the ministry of civil aviation to file affidavits by the next date of hearing on 16 July.

Kumar's plea contended that the sudden suspension of services by Jet Airways has resulted in a major crisis for passengers.

"It is submitted that as per the report available in the public domain, approximately more than ₹360 crore of the passengers/consumers hard earned money is under threat due to non-refund of the ticket value. Additionally, the passengers/consumers have to not only purchase alternative tickets at highly exorbitant cost but also undergo a lot of anxiety and mental agony," said the plea filed through advocates Shashank Deo Sudhi and Shashi Bhushan

"It is common knowledge that more than 1,000 scheduled flights had been cancelled by Jet Airways and the respondents are sitting idle, leaving the common passengers to their own fate," it said.

The plea sought a direction to the Director General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) and the civil aviation ministry to establish a prompt redressal mechanism for all affected passengers and to help them

get full refund of the air tickets with reasonable compensation or for arrangements to be made for alternative mode of travel for passengers as an emergency exercise.

Jet Airways, which is saddled with huge debt, has defaulted on payments to banks and aircraft lessors. This led the airline's founder, Naresh Goyal, to cede control of the airline in March. A consortium of 26 lenders led by the State Bank of India has invited bids from potential buyers for the cash-strapped airline. Those who qualify will have to submit their binding bids by 10 May.

LiveMint 01/05/2019

NEW DELHI: India's government sees little hope of a bidder emerging for debt-laden Jet Airways Ltd, two senior finance ministry officials said, even as thousands of employees plead with the government for a rescue.

Parties that had initially expressed interest in **Jet**, which is saddled with roughly **\$1.2 billion of debt**, have so far failed to make firm bids to bail it out, increasing the odds that it could soon face bankruptcy proceedings.

"There is little scope in the revival of Jet," said one official, adding that if a bidder emerged, the government was still willing to return slots to the private airline which have temporarily been given to rivals.

A second senior finance ministry official said it was only a matter of time before someone dragged Jet to the National Company Law Tribunal - India's bankruptcy court - for recovery of dues from Jet.

It will most likely be one of Jet's creditors and not its lenders that do so, said both the officials who spoke on condition of anonymity.

Unions have been pleading with the government to ensure the airline is rescued. Last week, in a letter to the prime minister seen by Reuters, its pilots union urged the government to intervene and speed up the bid process for the airline and stop the deregistration of its aircraft by its lessors.

Jet had a fleet of more than 120 aircraft but more than half have been deregistered and repossessed by lessors.

India's aviation authorities have also been temporarily farming out Jet's slots to rival carriers as airfares have soared in the wake of Jet's shutdown.

Rival low-cost carriers have also been scooping up aircraft that were formerly operated by Jet from its lessors, and poaching hundreds of its pilots, cabin crew and other staffers.

The airline halted operations on April 17 after its lenders refused to provide further funds to keep it afloat.

Once India's largest private carrier, it had more than 16,000 employees and flights to dozens of international destinations.

State Bank of India (SBI) said last month that it expected bidders to submit binding bids by April 30, and to complete the sale process this month. However, bankers involved in the process told Reuters last week that no binding bids had emerged.

"The banks have been advised to wait for the formation of the next government ... before taking any decision on Jet's fate," the official told Reuters.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi is currently seeking re-election. His government has come under fire from critics and opposition parties for rising unemployment.

Despite this, senior government officials have opposed any bailout package for the airline arguing it would increase pressure to support other failed private companies.

The government is satisfied with the handling of the Jet crisis by banks and other institutions as it has thus far not become a major election issue, the second ministry official said.

Jet's borrowings are small compared to those of other big defaulters such as Videocon and some steel companies, so lenders likely can wait for some more time before commencing bankruptcy proceedings, the official said.

An official at ICICI Bank, which has to recover over 5.4 billion rupees (\$78.17 million) from Jet, said the bank sees little chance of any recovery without the government coming up with a rescue plan.

"We largely think our money in Jet is gone," he said.

LiveMint 05/05/2019

Amid faint possibility of grounded Jet Airway's revival anytime soon, the Civil Aviation Ministry is now considering re-allocating the airline's foreign traffic rights to rival carriers such as Air India, SpiceJet and IndiGo.

A meeting was held on Friday to discuss the issue. Civil aviation secretary Pradeep Singh Kharola chaired the meeting which was attended by officials of Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) and senior airline executives.

The move suggests **government wants local carriers to deploy capacity on international routes from where Jet Airways has withdrawn operations due to severe fund crunch.**

While reallocation of traffic rights would ensure additional capacity on various popular foreign routes thus reducing fare level, it will significantly affect the valuation of Jet Airways.

Official sources told IANS that local carriers have set sight on lucrative routes such as Mumbai-London, Delhi-Dubai and Mumbai-Paris and want the government to distribute slots for these sectors.

"Both Air India and SpiceJet want rights for operating flights to Dubai. Air India is very keen to mount capacity on Mumbai-London. Delhi-Singapore is another route for which carriers want the slots," said executive of a private airline.

"The traffic rights would be given on temporary basis to other airlines," he added.

The ministry has asked airlines to give their fleet induction plan so that a fair decision on giving traffic rights could be taken.

"Ministry is expected to take a decision on temporary allocation of rights in two-three days," the executive said.

So far, Ajay Singh-led SpiceJet has got lion's share of Jet Airways' slots to operate domestic flights.

It has considerably scaled up operations from Mumbai and Delhi, the erstwhile strongholds of

grounded Jet Airways. The airline has announced 77 flights since 1 April which includes 48 flights connecting Mumbai, 16 flights connecting Delhi and 8 flights between Mumbai and Delhi.

IANS had first reported on 15 April that SpiceJet and Air India had shown keen interest to operate flights on lucrative India-Dubai sector. Later, Air India proposed to operate flights on Mumbai-London, Delhi-Singapore and Delhi-London among few others.

The Ministry of Civil Aviation last month formed a committee comprising aviation regulator DGCA, Airports Authority of India (AAI) and private airlines to reallocate Jet Airways' unused slots.

The ministry has reiterated that slot allocation is temporary and for three months maintaining that historic rights of Jet Airways will be protected. The preference would be given to those carriers which bring additional aircraft.

"These slots would be made available to Jet Airways, as and when they revive their operations, as per the extant guidelines," a ministry statement had said on 23 April.

Prospective investors and employees of Jet Airways have expressed concern over government's move to re-allocate slots and foreign traffic rights of the airline arguing it will dampen the interest level in the company.

Facing severe financial crisis, Jet Airways had on 17 April announced temporary suspension of its flight operations. The airline continues to be grounded and its revival depends on fresh fund infusion by investors.

[LiveMint 03/05/2019](#)

New Delhi: High-flying netas have reversed the trend in general aviation sector with more and more politicians taking charter flights for election campaigns. The negative growth has turned positive in March with the total charter flight movement rising 11.2 per cent from a year-ago period this election season.

As per the latest data by Airports Authority of India (AAI), the total aircraft movement in the general aviation sector in March, 2019 was 26,964 compared to 24,229 in the same month last

financial year. Besides reversing negative trends, the March growth was highest in the last six months.

Most key non-scheduled operators have seen their fleet utilization soaring to 100 per cent and profit margins touching all time high in the last two months.

"All our aircraft have been flying through March and April. In fact, the last two months have been the best months in the last several years. It was expected because election requirement is so much this time that almost all the operators had their aircraft busy," said Rajan Mehra, a veteran aviation professional and Chief Executive Officer of **Club One Air**.

"In both March and April our fleet utilization has been 100 per cent whereas normal utilization is about 80 per cent," Mehra added.

A luxury business jet operator providing a range of specialized flights, **Club One claims to be the largest non-scheduled operators in the country. The Delhi-based firm currently has 10 aircraft that includes CRJ-100, Falcon 2000 and Cessna Citation Excel.**

As per aviation regulator DGCA data, the number of operators with the non-scheduled operator's permit (NSOP) reached a peak of 147 in FY 2012 which reduced to 111 in FY 2018. The present ownership pattern indicates a fragmented sector with most of the operators owning 1-3 aircraft.

The NSOP fleet in India comprises around 356 aircraft, including helicopters. This is down from a peak of 412 aircraft in FY 2012. In addition to the NSOP fleet, there were 134 fixed wing and 48 helicopters registered with the aviation regulator as of July, 2018.

Capt. R.K. Bali, Managing Director, Business Aircraft Operator's Association (BAOA), said that when elections come aircraft utilization goes up 100 per cent or beyond as many operators bring in additional aircraft to cater to the demand.

"Margins are comfortable during elections. During normal times, margins are not sustainable at all," Bali said.

Capt Pankaj Chopra, Director (aviation), EIH Aviation, part of Oberoi Hotels & Resorts group, said that before the campaign season starts, all the parties sign agreement and book aircraft in advance.

"After that aircraft is very busy. Flying on an average goes up 40-50 per cent. Sometimes parties do not even get aircraft for their campaigning because there is sudden shortage of aircraft," he added.

The election season has given major push to the demand for helicopters to cover far-flung areas, hilly regions and smaller towns.

"Largely driven by the needs to reach out to maximum number of voters in the minimum possible time - even though the season is still ongoing, statistics already point out to higher distances (and voters) being covered this time than ever before," said Anshuman Sinha, Principal, A.T. Kearney.

LiveMint 05/05/2019

All flights to and from Bhubaneswar have been cancelled for 24 hours starting midnight of 3 May in view of the impending severe cyclonic storm 'Fani' threat over the Bay of Bengal, Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) said on Thursday.

The regulatory body for civil aviation issued an advance order to cancel all flights to and from Kolkata between 9.30 pm on 3 May and 6 pm on 4 May to ensure safety of operations during the cyclone.

"All airlines and operators are informed that due to approaching severe cyclonic storm Fani, flights to and from Biju Patnaik International Airport in Bhubaneswar will be cancelled between 12 am on 3 May to 11.59 pm on 4 May. Flights from Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose International Airport in Kolkata will be cancelled between 9.30 pm on 3 May to 6 pm on 4 May," the DGCA said in a tweet.

"Resumption of the flight will be with positive clearance from respective air traffic control," it added.

Airlines such as Air India and GoAir waived-off cancellations and change charges for flights to and from Bhubaneswar.

"In view of cyclone 'Fani', passengers travelling to and from Bhubaneswar, Kolkata and Ranchi might be inconvenienced. GoAir is waiving cancellation and change fees for Bhubaneswar, Kolkata and Ranchi flights for travel between May 2, 2019 to May 5, 2019," GoAir said in a statement.

"Passengers are allowed to re-book their flights within 7 days of scheduled departure."

Similarly, Air India tweeted: "#FlyAI : Due to #CycloneFani all #AirIndia flights to/from #Bhubaneswar havebeen #cancelled for tomorrow (3 May 2019). Applicable penalties of re-issuance, datechange, no-show, cancellation and refund charges waived off on all tickets fortravel to/from #Bhubaneswar from 3rd-5th May 19'."

LiveMint 02/05/2019

The grounding of Boeing 737 Max jets likely means that fare increases this summer will be larger than already expected and airlines will struggle to handle disruptions such as storms that shut down hub airports.

With Max jets grounded after two deadly accidents, the US airlines will operate about 200 fewer daily flights than planned through the heart of the peak summer season. That's around 35,000 seats lost every day.

Travel-data firm Hopper said this week that it expects the average domestic round trip in May will cost \$236, 7% more than a year ago, and keep rising in June. Most of that increase is due to the price of jet fuel and other economic causes, but some of it is due to the Max, according to Hayley Berg, the firm's economist.

The grounding of Max jets will leave other planes more crowded.

"We expect a certain level of chaos," said Henrik Zillmer, CEO of AirHelp, which helps travelers get compensation for travel disruptions. "With so many passengers being rebooked, flights may get more overbooked than usual, especially when weather or other factors cause cancellations."

For some passengers, the grounding of the Max will mean a change in travel plans.

Southwest, American and United are the three US airlines that used the Max before regulators grounded the jet in mid-March. They are taking passengers whose original itinerary included a Max and rebooking them on flights using other planes.

That could mean a nonstop flight turns into a connecting flight. Or it might arrive several hours later than the traveller expected.

Travelers who don't like their new itinerary have limited options. Zillmer said **under most international laws the grounding of the Max by governments is considered an extraordinary circumstance, and passengers aren't eligible for compensation for resulting disruptions.**

Travelers can seek a full refund, however, even if they bought a nonrefundable ticket.

"If the new flight doesn't work for you, you might consider getting your money back and finding a flight that suits you on your own," said Tracy Stewart, content editor for travel site airfarewatchdog.com. But he warned that you might end up paying more that way, especially because prices tend to rise closer to summer.

Southwest Airlines has more Max jets than anyone else — 34 — and was scheduled to receive another 41 later this year, although that schedule is now in doubt.

Still, the Max accounts for only about 5% of the Southwest fleet and less than 1% of the passenger-carrying capacity of the US airlines overall.

Berg, the Hopper economist, said heavily traveled routes will probably see little disruption, but routes with lower demand might see some cancellations or suspensions for a short time.

One example is Pittsburgh, where Southwest plans to suspend service to Los Angeles and Cancun, Mexico, next month because of the Max situation.

Until the Federal Aviation Administration grounded the Max in March, Southwest was using them on many trans-continental flights. American Airlines, with 24 Max planes, flew them heavily in and out of Miami.

Southwest and American both say have redistributed their fleets so that no routes suffer a disproportionate seat shortage due to the grounding of the Max.

"The Max impact is not isolated to any region or route," said Southwest spokesman Chris Mainz. "On any given day, with 34 Max, we could have 146 flights on 115 routes touching 44 airports with a Max. And we don't schedule them the same every day. The impact truly is across our network."

United hopes to have its Max jets flying again in July, while Southwest and American have dropped them from their schedules into August. Boeing is working on a software fix that it hopes will convince regulators to let the planes return to service.

It remains to be seen how many travelers will be reluctant to board the plane after crashes that killed 346 people in Indonesia and Ethiopia. Preliminary reports found that software on the plane forced the noses down, and pilots were unable to regain control.

If the planes are cleared to fly, passengers who cancel a reservation or refuse to board the plane because they are afraid won't be eligible for compensation, according to AirHelp's Zillmer. They can ask the airline for a refund, but that might not work either.

"By the time fall rolls around and the software updates have been applied and Maxes are back in operation, it's pretty unlikely airlines would be as flexible with refunds and ticket changes," said airfarewatchdog's Stewart.

It will be up to consumers, he said, to check what kind of plane the airline plans to use before they click "buy" on the ticket.

LiveMint 02/05/2019

LONDON (Reuters) - Indigo Partners and Lufthansa are among the likely bidders for Thomas Cook's airline business, with a deadline of May 7 set for expressions of interest, sources said.

The heavily indebted British travel group put its profitable airline business up for sale in February after profit warnings in 2018 left it needing to raise cash.

Thomas Cook's airlines business consists of Germany's Condor, as well as British, Scandinavian and Spanish operations.

A sale, in whole or in part, would enable the world's oldest tour operator to pay down debt and invest more in its own hotels and improve its online sales in a bid to differentiate its offering from rivals.

A source familiar with the discussions said that Indigo and Germany's Lufthansa were most interested in the business.

British Airways owner IAG should not be ruled out and easyJet has engaged in talks but is seen as less interested, the source added.

It is not clear whether Ireland's Ryanair would bid.

Another source said that **private equity groups KKR and Apollo might also look at taking over the whole of Thomas Cook.**

Thomas Cook, Indigo, IAG, EasyJet and Ryanair declined to comment. Lufthansa had no immediate comment.

The airlines business provides access to valuable European slots linking Britain and Germany to key holiday destinations. However analysts at RBC Capital Markets said the airline fleet was ageing and some of the slots had limited value.

Shares in Thomas Cook fell 4.3 percent to 24.82 pence per share by 1048 GMT, underperforming a flat European transport & leisure index.

Lufthansa executives have said repeatedly that the German airline wants to “play an active role” in consolidation.

Indigo, the private equity firm managed by veteran U.S. low-cost airline investor Bill Franke, has previously made investments in several airlines including Hungary’s Wizz.

Analysts at Goodbody said the most likely initial outcome was the sale of the Condor long-haul business to Lufthansa, but that they were concerned about what would happen to the competitive short-haul unit.

“Depending on how this sale process plays out, this adds to our concern on penetration of German-EU flows from potential low-cost carrier competition,” they said.

Thomas Cook has been revamping various parts of its business this year, closing high street stores and reviewing its money division as it focuses on holidays.

The company was hit badly in 2018 when a hot European summer deterred customers from booking holidays through the year.

One banking source said the airline would fetch less than 1 billion euros (\$1.12 billion), including debt. Thomas Cook has a current market value of around 400 million pounds (\$523 million).

Sources said that competition issues could influence which parts of the business different suitors go for.

Sky News has said China’s Fosun International, a Thomas Cook shareholder, was interested in its tour business.

Reuters, 02/05/2019

BHUBANESHWAR, India/NEW DELHI (Reuters) - **India has accelerated efforts to evacuate more than a million people along its northeast coastline as a cyclone intensifies ahead of landfall on Friday,** with thousands of villagers piling household possessions on to trucks before fleeing their homes.

Severe cyclonic storm Fani was churning up the Bay of Bengal about 275 km (171 miles) south-southwest of the Hindu temple town of Puri where special trains were put on to evacuate tourists and the beaches were empty.

In total, about 1.2 million people are expected to be evacuated from low-lying areas of 15 districts in the eastern state of Odisha to cyclone shelters, schools and other buildings, authorities said. More than 800,000 have left so far.

“We are maximising efforts at all levels for evacuation,” Odisha’s Special Relief Commissioner Bishnupada Sethi told Reuters.

Fani was generating maximum sustained winds of 170-180 km (105-111 miles) per hour, the state-run India Meteorological Department (IMD) said. Cyclone tracker Tropical Storm Risk rated Fani category 4 storm, a notch below the worst level.

The cyclone will make landfall before Friday afternoon, the IMD said.

The navy has deployed seven warships and has six planes and seven helicopters on standby along with divers, rubber boats, medical teams and relief materials.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi tweeted that the central government will provide all possible assistance.

Authorities have also shut down operations at Paradip, Dhamra and Visakhapatnam ports.

In Paradip, television footage showed residents piling bicycles, sewing machines and gas cylinders on to small trucks and leaving for any of nearly 900 shelters supplied with food, water and medicines.

Odisha state government has deployed hundreds of disaster management personnel, closed schools and colleges and asked doctors and other health officials not to go on leave until May 15.

India’s cyclone season can last from April to December, when severe storms batter coastal cities and cause widespread deaths and damage to crops and property in both India and neighbouring Bangladesh.

Technological advancements have helped meteorologists to predict weather patterns well in advance, giving authorities more time to prepare.

In 1999, a super-cyclone battered the coast of Odisha for 30 hours, killing 10,000 people. A mass evacuation of nearly a million people saved thousands of lives in 2013.

In a Tweet, Indian airline Vistara, a joint venture of India’s Tata Sons and Singapore Airlines Ltd, said it would waive cancellation charges for flights to Odisha’s capital, Bhubaneswar, and Kolkata, the capital of West Bengal, until Sunday.

Kolkata airport will be shut from 2130 hrs local time on Friday till 1800 hrs on Saturday while Bhubaneswar airport will be shut on Friday.

IndiGo Airlines, the country’s largest domestic carrier, said it had cancelled flights to and from Bhubaneswar on Friday. GoAir in a Tweet said it would waive cancellation charges for flights to Bhubaneswar, Kolkata and Ranchi for travel till May 5.

Indian Oil Corp, the country's top refiner, said its 300,000 barrels per day (bpd) Paradip refinery in Odisha state did not need to shut down for now.

An executive at Reliance Industries Ltd, which operates an oil and gas block off the east coast, said its operations had not been affected. India's National Aluminium Co Ltd said there was no need to halt operations.

State-run power company NTPC Ltd has no plans to shut the 3000-megawatt Talcher power plant in Odisha, its head of operations Prakash Tiwari said. "The power plant will be running as usual, should something happen we are prepared for any eventuality."

Reuters 02/05/2019

Airbus introduced successor of the A330 program in 2014: the A330neo, which comes in two models, the A330-800 and the A330-900. The A330neo program had quite a dry spell in terms of orders, until recently, when Emirates announced an order for 40 A330-900 aircraft. Airbus has around 250 A330neo on the order book. Out of this, there are only eight aircraft on order for the A330-800 which are placed by Kuwait Airways; the rest are for A330-900.

The A330-900, on the other hand, can seat 300-310 passengers in a standard 2 class layout with a maximum of 440 passengers. This is more likely a suitable candidate. IndiGo or SpiceJet may go for 360-370 seats in a 2 class layout. This would give them the passenger count and the range that they want.

According to Airbus, A330neo offers the same cost advantage on a 2-hour flight as on a long haul flight. This may do wonders for Indian LCCs on domestic trunk routes like Delhi – Mumbai, Delhi – Bengaluru and so – on. Already Air India and sometimes Jet Airways fly their widebody aircraft on these routes.

Imagine the impact on fares and yield with an increase from the current 180-189 seats to ~350 seats on these routes. **IndiGo has already outlined that they will use the A321neo on domestic trunk routes also.**

Apart from these routes, there are **quite a few International routes that can support a widebody LCC aircraft.**

- **Mumbai/Delhi – Singapore/Hong Kong**
- **Mumbai/Delhi – Middle East**
- **South India – Middle East**
- **Destinations such as London, Birmingham which are 10-hours away**
- **Australia (think) Delhi – Melbourne/Sydney**
- **Seasonal destinations like Paris and Amsterdam**
- **Hajj routes**

This would call for a small sub-fleet of say ~20 A330neo aircraft, not a big order like IndiGo and SpiceJet are known for. There aren't that many no-frill long-haul routes from India which will give enough volume to sustain a daily or even a 3x weekly flight.

Remember, no-frill carriers won't be able to attract

1. Business travellers
2. Frequent travellers

Their primary target may end up being tourists who are seasonal.

A small fleet can do wonders for them if they are creative. We have already seen SpiceJet operate seasonal flights with both Q400 and 737s. If they do the same thing with widebody aircraft, it will result in optimum utilisation of resources as well as give them good returns.

We have seen SpiceJet differentiate from others. IndiGo is also considering giving a free basic meal onboard their ~7-hour flight to Istanbul. If they eventually add a widebody fleet, they may go for a premium cabin. They may be a no-frills carrier, but they know the value of the cabin in front of the aircraft and the revenues it can get if done in the right way.

AirAsia X has an angled-flat business class in the front cabin of their A330s. Scoot and Norwegian Air Shuttle have recliner seats and so-on. If they differentiate and go for a hybrid carrier model, they may be able to serve more routes and target the premium passengers segment as well.

Why A330neo and not Boeing 787?

The Boeing 787-9 does have a better fuel economy than the A330-900 and is slightly cheaper than the A330-900 also. **But IndiGo has a long-standing partnership with Airbus, and Airbus wanting to sell more A330-900s might result in a huge discount**, something that Boeing won't be able to give.

SpiceJet, on the other hand, may be lured by Airbus which is seeking to increase its presence in India. Airbus just has 8 widebody aircraft in India as opposed to 59 Boeing widebody aircraft with 16 more on order.

Then there are many second-hand relatively young A330s (Etihad and WOW Air A330s) on the market ready for new owners. SpiceJet is perhaps looking at those if one has to go by what they filed for slots at London airports. Why not? Second-hand aircraft are way cheaper than brand new. Delivery is faster. Fuel burn and maintaining them can be costly but the overall cost of operation should be taken into account.

Bottomline

There is a nice business case for Airbus A330neo in India. **The A330neo would definitely compliment the existing fleet and would be a nice fit. The timing of order and induction into the fleet will be crucial along with the order size.** There are quite a few routes which can support LCC widebody aircraft and Indian carriers are known to differentiate.

[Livefromalounge 05/03/2019](#)

Mumbai- SpiceJet has announced introduction of 12 new flights from New Delhi and Mumbai to other destinations.

Of the 12 new services, which commence from **May 11**, six are to and from Mumbai while the rest connects the national Capital, Spicejet said in a statement.

The airline will deploy Boeing 737 NG aircraft on these routes, it said, adding the new services from Mumbai will be operated from Terminal 2. The airline has introduced new flights on the Delhi-Vishakhapatnam and Delhi-Kochi sectors besides adding a fifth daily service on the Mumbai-Bengaluru route, and a second frequency on the Mumbai-Gorakhpur route.

Frequencies on the Mumbai-Chennai and Delhi-Srinagar routes have gone up to five and three services, respectively, it added.

Since April, it has introduced 77 new flights including 48 flights connecting Mumbai, 16 connecting Delhi and eight between Mumbai and Delhi as it seeks to fill the capacity deficit due to the shuttering of Jet Airways mid last month.

In addition to these 77 flights, SpiceJet has also announced more international connectivity. Some of the new international routes include Hong Kong, Jeddah, Dubai, Colombo, Dhaka, Riyadh, and Kathmandu from Mumbai.

The Economic times of India 03/05/2019

In addition to the burden of Pakistan losing its airspace after the February 26 Balakot airstrike, oil companies have now raised the price of fuel. The longer routes required to avoid flying over Pakistan are forcing airlines to burn more fuel and money. Now 2.5% more expensive, fuel for international flights will cost \$700 per kilo litre in May, up from \$668 last month. Pakistan's airspace restrictions are expected to stay in place till at least May 15.

As many as 400 flights per day are affected due to the closure of Pakistani airspace. The bulk of these, reports said, have rerouted further south to Oman airspace while already busy corridors in Iran have seen more than 100 flights added. An extra 451 kilometres is added to a flight from London to Singapore after taking the Oman route.

As the only Indian carrier that flies to Europe and the US, AI is the worst affected airline. It could lose another 100 crore this month until the ban is lifted. AI has already suffered a 372-crore hit in extra expenses and revenue lost on cancelled or curtailed flights. That's about **6 crore daily**.

Air India's (AI) nonstop flights between Delhi and the US are now taking a fuelling stop that adds about three hours to the flight length. AI is routing flights over Mumbai and Ahmedabad, and then turning over the Arabian Sea to head to Muscat and then fly to their destination. The detour adds 1.5 hours to flights to Europe and an hour to flights to Dubai.

The airline launched its longest route Delhi-Istanbul on March 20. But instead of being a direct flight as planned, the closure of Pakistan airspace has forced it to operate with a fuelling stop, which forces IndiGo to burn an extra 2,500-3,000 kg of fuel each way, a source familiar with the matter said.

The airline's flights between Delhi and the Gulf have been affected. Its Delhi-Kabul flight has been cancelled since the closure of the airspace.

The Economic times of India 03/05/2019

MUMBAI: To meet high demand and raise its market, national carrier Air India has earmarked Rs 500 crore to get 19 of its grounded passenger jets back into operations.

Currently, the national passenger carrier has 19 aircraft grounded due to various reasons most prominent amongst them being **expensive spare parts and engine overhauls**.

However, an increase in demand due to the peak travel season along with industry's capacity constraint has led the airline to earmark at least Rs 500 crore for the grounded fleet.

"This is an opportune time to raise our market share and meet the healthy demand. All our assets (aircraft) have been deployed strategically. But we still have more aircraft which are grounded," a senior Air India official told IANS from Mumbai.

"We expect at least two aircraft to join the fleet within days. Addition of other aircraft will aide us to augment our market share."

Notwithstanding the fresh funds, the official said that **all grounded aircraft are unlikely to become operational before August**.

Over 10 Airbus A320s and the rest Boeing 787-800s Dreamliner and a few Boeing 777s have been grounded.

Air India's fleet augmentation is also in line with the government's request to airlines to advance their aircraft induction plans.

As of 2019, Air India Group -- Air India, Air India Express, Alliance Air -- have a combined fleet of over 160 aircraft which fly to 122 destinations, including 78 domestic and 44 international destinations.

Additionally, the airline plans to hire more cabin crew and pilots. The plan envisages the airline to hire over 200 cabin crew from the now grounded Jet Airways.

"We have already finalised 150 crew from Jet Airways," the official added.

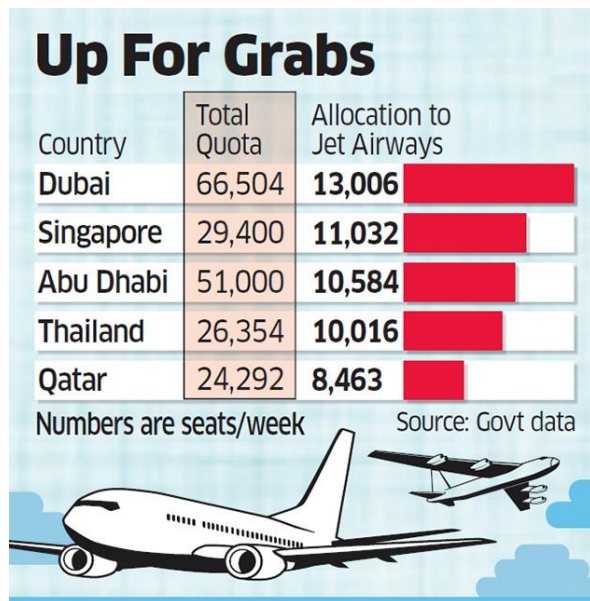
The Economic times of India 05/05/2019

NEW DELHI: The government is likely to start distributing foreign flying rights of Jet Airways among other carriers towards the end of next week if the airline does not find new owners quickly.

"We plan to award the rights to airlines which have put in requests," said an aviation ministry official who did not wish to be identified. "The demands are primarily for destinations such as Singapore, Thailand and the Middle East," he added

The move is likely to worry prospective bidders for Jet who are banking on the stricken airline's ability to retain lucrative flying rights and slots at airports.

The official added that they had a meeting with airlines on the issue and have been assured that the carriers will return the routes allocated to them when demanded by the government and Jet Airways.



Demand-Supply Mismatch

“We would have liked to award these routes to other carriers as early as possible but we have decided to wait till Jet Airways finds a buyer, as we got requests from various quarters to not award these rights right now,” said the official.

Employees and banks have written to the government to protect the interests of Jet Airways till the time a winner is chosen. Jet received initial interests from Etihad, TPG and NIIF but none of them have initiated the process further to bid for the airline, ET had reported on Thursday.

Foreign flying quota between India and countries such as Dubai, Qatar and Singapore have got exhausted and the governments of these countries have been seeking an increase from the Indian government, which has refused to raise the quota. Foreign flying quota is measured in terms of seats per week airlines can operate.

With Jet’s grounding, a large number of seats will come back to the system and can be reallocated to other Indian carriers which can add flights on these routes.

A senior Directorate General of Civil Aviation official added that **the government and the regulator’s initial focus was to stabilise domestic operations.** “With new flight launches and plans, the domestic sector is stabilising but problem in the international routes is severe and these rights will need to be awarded to stabilise the situation,” the official said on condition of anonymity.

Among Indian carriers flying international, Jet Airways was the second-largest after Air India and its grounding has created a huge gap in demand and supply of seats on international routes. Due to the mismatch, fares on international routes to and from India are already about 35% higher and is set to go up further with the peak travel season approaching.

The Economic times of India 05/05/2019

NEW DELHI: As Jet Airways turned 26 on Sunday, hundreds of employees of the now shuttered airline gathered at the airport here continuing with their pleas for saving the carrier. After running out of cash, the full service carrier temporarily shut down operations on April 17 and a bidding process is underway with final bidders expected to be known on May 10.

A representative of a staff union said hundreds of employees came together at the departure terminal of IGI Airport. Employees in their uniforms displayed placards, with messages such as 'Save Jet Airways Save our future'.

Since temporary suspension of operations, airline employees have been organising gatherings at various places across the country.

The Economic Times of India 05/05/2019

New Delhi: Aside from the proposed Jewar airport, Greater Noida is also set to get an aviation hub. According to the Yamuna Expressway Industrial Development Authority (YEIDA), the project report for this hub has reportedly been submitted already by Ernst and Young. The work on the Jewar airport will start after the Lok Sabha elections.

It may be noted that eight farmers had filed a petition in Allahabad High court seeking to cancel the notification for land acquisition for the airport. In their petition, the farmers wanted the notification to be quashed on the grounds of the administration violating norms. However, the petition was dismissed by the court earlier this year in April. The aviation hub is proposed to be built in the area near the airport.

A ToI report quoted YEIDA CEO Arunveer Singh saying, "The government is developing the Jewar International Airport, So, we have decided to develop a city with proper eco-system in the airport's neighbourhood. This will be a kind of aviation hub that will sync with the international airport. This will be based on clean and green energy. We are currently studying the report's findings."

Jewar airport will be the largest airport in India by surface area and the cost of this airport project is estimated to be up to USD 3.1 billion. The airport project will be implemented as a public-private partnership. This proposed aviation hub will be significant since the airport is expected to handle 60 lakh passengers annually when it opens in 2023, the report stated citing officials.

06/05/19 ETNowNews.com

Air India's New York office transferred \$300,000 to a bank account in Nigeria instead of remitting the sum to a US-based firm Pratt & Whitney for supplying spare parts.

The incident is learnt to have taken place in June, 2017 but the airline has failed to get the amount retrieved from the Nigerian bank account.

"The officers involved in the lapse were never punished. They have in fact been allowed to rise in their career," said an executive.

In response to an email query, Air India said the matter is currently under investigation.

"It was a case of cyber fraud. The matter is being investigated," an airline spokesperson said.

A large number of cyber frauds worldwide have been traced to Nigeria and Air India could have also fallen victim to it.

06/05/19 IANS/Business Standard

There has been a lot of talk about the capacity crisis and subsequent increase in fares in the Indian skies. **Airlines are trying very hard to get over the crisis by inducting new aircraft – either by speeding up the deliveries or in some cases taking up aircraft from lessors who are terminating lease with Jet Airways; there has been a lot of talk about the capacity crisis and subsequent**

increase in fares in the Indian skies. Airlines are trying very hard to get over the crisis by inducting new aircraft – either by speeding up the deliveries or in some cases taking up aircraft from lessors who are terminating lease with Jet Airways.

What is not talked about is the **impact of this on international passengers and what this crisis means for foreigners travelling to India as well as outbound tourist and business travel from India.** The airline had five main hubs which comprised of Amsterdam, Paris, London, Singapore and Hong Kong. At each of these places, the airline had strong code-share partnerships with which it helped feed to umpteen destinations beyond these five hubs.

The North American market was effectively served from London, Amsterdam and Paris – with its own metal flying to Toronto from Amsterdam and a robust code-share in place with Delta, KLM, Air France and Virgin Atlantic for transfer of passengers to multiple destinations in the USA and Canada.

The South East Asian market had robust code share beyond Singapore with Garuda Indonesia – to service the Indonesian market along with Jetstar while Qantas and Hong Kong Airlines served the Australian market with feed from Jet Airways flights in Hong Kong, Bangkok and Singapore. The Chinese and Japanese market were effectively served with a code share with Cathay Pacific and Cathay Dragon, along with China Eastern and ANA.

Not to be left behind were a spate of code shares which did not see the volume as high as those to the US but certainly had the higher margins due to the capacity constraints and limited options. These included tie-ups with AeroMexico, Air Serbia, Fiji and Vietnam Airlines to take passengers to Mexico, parts of Europe, Fiji and Vietnam.

Add to that the code share with equity partner Etihad from Abu Dhabi and you have a network which was unmatched by any other Indian carrier – including Air India which is a Star Alliance member but does not co-operate with many of the alliance partners and where it does, it is to limited routes. London saw four flights a day – three from Mumbai and one from Delhi, comprising 1,384 seats each way, each day. Amsterdam saw one daily frequency from Mumbai and Delhi on the B77W and the Bengaluru service was operated by the A330s, which saw close to 1000 seats from India. Paris saw an average of 500 seats daily from Mumbai and Chennai, while Singapore – which saw a mix of wide body and narrow body aircraft to match seasonality had three frequencies from Mumbai and Delhi, while two from Bengaluru and one from Pune – a total of nine flights a day.

International flights do not see capacity dumping in quick succession, unlike domestic. The reasons are many but the primary ones are that the international flights come under the Air Services Agreement (ASA) between the two countries, which for most countries have a cap on seats or frequencies.

While countries which had capacity in their ASA to add flights flew in additional flights or different aircraft type with higher capacity to cater to the immediate bookings and stranded passengers, a medium-term solution is not in sight. The issue was compounded by the fact that **closure of Pakistani airspace led to cancellation of flights by a few airlines like United which has suspended its flights to New Delhi and Air Astana which suspended flights to New Delhi from Almaty and Nur-Sultan.** These former catered to traffic to North America while the later offered popular and affordable connections to Europe. **Airlines like Air Italy and WOW air which promised to offer affordable and better connections have withdrawn after a short stint in India, which has not helped the capacity crisis.**

While domestic routes and slots are being grabbed quickly, the same is not happening on international routes. **The IndiGo-Turkish Airlines code share is yet to be fully operational and will be restricted to only 20 destinations beyond Istanbul, a fraction of what Jet Airways was offering. While Spicejet has signed an MoU with Emirates, it will take time for the code-share operations to be operationalised. Till then, the long-haul international seats are on short supply.**

Airlines are seeing higher occupancy numbers and fares to popular international destinations have shot up, which are already putting a spanner in travel plans of Indians this summer. Will the Indian

government give an additional quota of seats to foreign carriers? **Carriers from Dubai (Emirates, Fly Dubai), Singapore (Singapore Airlines, Scoot, Silk Air) and Malaysia (Malaysian Airlines, AirAsia group and Malindo) have been pushing for additional seats to India and more points of call.** On the other hand are carriers which enjoy possibility of adding flights to India but haven't. These include **Air France where 35 services are allowed between India and France and the Netherlands (KLM) which has an open sky agreement with India to six metro cities.**

What needs to be seen is how big is the impact on business and travel for those coming to India. That will have a larger economic impact on the country. **If the government decides to ease rules and offer additional seats to foreign carriers, will it be for three months or a limited time like the government has been allocating slots in India or will it be permanent? While for domestic routes, airlines have quickly tried grabbing whatever is available, if the seats on offer are for limited period, not all International airlines will clamor for those additional seats or frequencies temporarily, instead they may just enjoy the higher fares on tighter capacity.**

06/05/2019

It's been close to three weeks since Jet Airways temporarily shut its operations.

The jury is still out on how and why, what was India's largest private airline, once upon a time, reached a stagewhere it had to shut down the operations. The general perception seems to be that the airline borrowed more than it was in a position to repay. Eventually, it didn't have enough money to pay interest on its debt and that led to the temporary grounding. But that, as we shall see, was not the major reason for India's oldest private airline shutting its operations.

06/05/2019

India is one of the largest aviation markets in the world. The market has some unique features that make it difficult for airlines to expand without breaking the bank. **As major Indian airlines struggle, the passenger count to and from India continues to grow each year.**

Looking ahead, what will Indian aviation look like in 30 years time?

Like many aviation markets, there are a few main types of airlines. **Some airlines are low-cost carriers that offer low fares with few inclusive amenities. Others may identify as full-service carriers that offer a more premium experience compared to low-cost carriers.**

Still, some airlines operate as "boutique" airlines that serve a specific niche in a specific market. India, though missing out on a major boutique airline, still has a robust aviation market.

Low-cost carriers are some of the largest and fastest growing in India. Fare wars are common and passengers benefit with low ticket prices to various destinations. For foreign and domestic tourists, this is a huge win for their budget.

Business travellers, however, may prefer full-service carriers with expanded offerings- like lie-flat seats and lounge access. Currently, India's main full-service carrier is Air India. Rival **Vistara could gain ground and become a major competitor to Air India.**

India is seeing growth in passenger numbers on a yearly basis. In 2018, **India's full-year domestic growth rate was 18.6%— an impressive increase that solidified India's status as the fastest growing domestic market.**

In fact, the IATA estimates that **by 2037, India will see a total of 572 million passengers per year.** For airlines, this represents a major opportunity for growth. **For passengers, this means India's airports and skies are about to get crowded** – but could it push fares even lower?

India has already seen a significant chunk of the market overcome by fare wars. Between high-demand cities and leisure markets, India's low-cost carriers are continuing their expansion. Even now, **long-haul markets are next as low-cost carriers seek connecting passengers in addition to origin and destination passengers.**

With intense competition comes intense pressure on airlines to increase their loads by offering either the best product or the best fare. Most passengers in India are going to search for lower fares- as emphasized with Jet Airways' recent collapse and the impressive growth of low-cost carriers.

For full-service carriers, this erodes an important share of their profitability: long-haul flying.

Airlines can make a profit by offering a significant number of connections and destinations. Though full-service carriers make a larger profit in premium cabins, the number of premium passengers is not large enough to compensate for the erosion of economy seats sold at a reasonable price where an airline can expect to make a profit.

Delhi and Mumbai airports are the busiest airports in India. Since they both are running out of room to expand on, **new airports must be constructed to add capacity to the cities in heavy demand,** even as these airports continue to expand. **India will still have to do some long-term planning when it comes to mapping out airports and expansion.** Some examples include New York City with three major airports and London with five major airports.

Mumbai is expected to open a new airport- **Mumbai Navi-** after 2020. Meanwhile, Delhi could see a new airport open up in the mid-2020s. Of course, new airport delays are common and some may take a long time to open. In the meantime, airlines will have to battle heavily for slots at these airports. For passengers, this could lead to longer wait times at security, immigration, and check-in.

India is undergoing a boom with new airport construction that will definitely help push passenger numbers up. However, most flights to these new airports are focused on connecting passengers through a larger airport or hub. One way India could plan out their airports is to reserve airports farther from the city center and central business district for connections where passengers don't necessarily care about the location of the airport in reference to the city.

India's aviation market is going to continue to grow. Soon enough, India will be one of the top three largest aviation markets in the world. Airlines and airport developers will have to reckon with this new expansion by focusing on expanding and maintaining infrastructure. In addition, airlines will have to seek ways to remain profitable while still remaining competitive for all kinds of passengers.

Jay Singh 06/05/2019

The Afghan government raised the issue of Pakistan air space ban on Monday as its airline continued to face problems in reaching India.

The Afghan government raised the matter through its officials and will raise it again. On being asked whether Kabul is hopeful on Pakistan opening its airspace, sources told WION that they are "negotiating".

The Pakistan government closed its air space on February 27 after launching strikes on Indian military installations in Jammu and Kashmir. The airstrikes were in response to India's counter-terror strikes

on Jaish-e-Mohammed's terror camps in Balakot, Pakistan on February 26.

So far, the Pakistan government has partially opened its airspace in the west side of the country, but along the Indian border, it continues to be closed. No flights going from India to westwards or coming from Afghanistan or beyond to India are allowed to use Pakistan air space.

The partial Pakistan airspace ban has particularly impacted Afghan airlines, who have to take a longer route over Iran, but also spend more on fuel which increases the cost of the ticket.

06/05/19 Sidhant Sibal/WION

Paris - France - AFP - La compagnie indienne à bas coûts IndiGo a l'intention d'acheter de nouveaux appareils "en quantité" à l'avionneur européen Airbus, a indiqué mardi son patron Ronojoy Rutta.

La compagnie entend acheter des avions A321neo LR et le futur A321 XLR, a précisé M. Rutta à l'agence Bloomberg.

"Lorsque nous commandons, nous commandons en quantité, clairement", a-t-il dit. "Je ne peux pas vous donner d'estimation, mais ça va être beaucoup".

Le contrat devrait atteindre plusieurs milliards de dollars, selon Bloomberg, le plus petit achat de la compagnie indienne --cent appareils A320-- étant revenu à 6 milliards de dollars (au prix catalogue) en 2005.

IndiGo négocie également "avec tout le monde" l'achat de moteurs, a également indiqué Ronojoy Rutta, qui est devenu directeur général d'IndiGo en janvier.

"Nous voulons être une des plus grosses compagnies aériennes rentables du monde", a-t-il souligné. Son entreprise a commandé au total 530 appareils de la famille A320, dont 430 A320neo.

AFP 07/05/2019

IndiGo is in talks with Airbus SE for another large plane order in a sign Asia's biggest budget carrier has no intention of letting up on a blistering pace of expansion.

The Indian airline, which adds an aircraft to its fleet every week, is in discussions to buy a monger range version of the European planemaker's newest narrow body jet, according to the CEO Ronojoy Dutta.

Existing orders will see IndiGo through the next 2 years, Dutta said in an interview with Bloomberg News Editor in Chief John Micklethwait. After that, the carrier is considering adding new lanes including Airbus' long distance A321neoLR and the yet to be released A321 XLR, he said.

« When we order, we'll order in bulk for sure », Dutta said in New Delhi in his first interview since becoming CEO of the airline in January. « **I can't give you a tentative number, but it will be large. We need longer range.** »

Though Dutta didn't specify the size of IndiGo's next purchase, it's likely to be a multi billion dollar order based on the company history. Its smallest order so far was for 100 A320 jets in 2005 worthing \$6 billion at list prices at the time. Given that the most basic variant of the A320neo family today carry sticker prices of more than \$100 million each, a large order could exceed \$10 billion.

Operated by InterGlobe Aviation Ltd, IndiGo is one of the few Indian carriers with enough cash to aggressively expand, and it's been mapping out a way to build a long-haul, low cost business to take passengers from places like Delhi to London. The carrier has managed consistently make money even as domestic rivals struggle under a fierce fares war and the world's priciest jet fuel – partly because it commits to large plane orders to cap costs.

Founded in 2005 by former US Airways CEO Rakesh Gangwal and former travel agent Rahul Bhatia, IndiGo has quickly outpaced all its rivals to grab almost half of the local market, making both founders, billionaires. At more than \$8.6 billion, the market value of IndiGo's parent is almost double Air France KLM's and ahead of Singapore Airlines Ltd., Dutta is not satisfied.

'There are a lot of airlines ahead of us » he said. « We would like to be one of the biggest, largest, profitable airlines in the world ».

Dutta was previously president of United Airlines, where he worked for nearly 20 years. A Harvard graduate, Dutta was also president of the Indian budget carrier Air Sahara for 2 years before it was sold to Jet Airways.

IndiGo shares rose as much as 1.7% before paring all gains to trade 0.2% down at Rs.1 558 at 10:48 on Tuesday in Mumbai. They have gained about 33 percent in the past 12 months.

IndiGo has specialised in buying in bulk, ordering 430 jets in the A320neo family on top of its initial contract for 100 older A320 models. That's made IndiGo one of the biggest buyers of Airbus' best selling plane. Such large scale orders help airlines negotiate discounts and better maintenance terms.

« One of the things that's key to our success is keeping the fleet cost down, and fleet cost is down when you order in bulk », Dutta said.

While IndiGo has so far confined past orders to Airbus, it has not ruled out buying Boeing Co jets in the future, according to Dutta. And the order being discussed with Airbus has not been finalised.

IndiGo is also playing rivals off each other when it comes to engines. It's in talks with CFM international, a JV between General Electric Co and Safran, in addition to current supplier Pratt & Whitney for a new turbine order, according to the CEO.

IndiGo opted for P1W powered engines for the first 150 of its A320neo jets, and like other carriers has faced issues including a faulty seal that triggered a 3-month halt. The problems are easing, and P & W has stepped up spare engine supplies to keep planes flying, he said.

« We are negotiating right now for an engine order », Dutta said. « **We are negotiating with everybody.** We don't have a fixed agenda. We'll go this way or that way, whatever makes sense. »

Times of India 07/05/2019

National Aviators Guild (NAG), the union of Jet Airways pilots, has approached the Supreme Court asking it to intervene and effectively rescue the airline, just days before the deadline for its bidding expires.

May 10 is the last day to submit bids, and four bidders - Etihad Airways, TPG Capital, Indigo Partners and the NIIF have been identified.

But there is an increasing concern that **none of the bidders may bid, and that may have prompted the NAG to approach the Court.**

Blaming the banks for circumstances that forced the airline to suspend operations on April 17, the **petition asked the Court to direct the lenders to release money and restart operations.** The union said banks had failed to fulfil their promise to inject Rs 1,500 crore into the airline.

The petition lists eight respondents, including the Indian government, State Bank of India - the lead lender, industry regulator DGCA and Jet Airways itself.

The Union has also asked the Court to prevent the government and the DGCA from allotting Jet Airways' slots in airports to its competitors, "on a permanent basis."

The government last month said it will allot 440 Jet Airways slots in Mumbai and Delhi airports to other airlines for three months.

Through the petition, they also asked the Apex Court to intervene and prevent the government from allotting seats under bilateral agreements on international sectors to other airlines.

They also highlighted the **worry that Jet Airways aircraft are being de-registered and given to competition.**

07/05/19 Prince Mathews Thomas/Moneycontrol.com

Chennai: **The trouble in the skies after Jet Airways suspended operations is now beginning to give heartaches to transplant surgeons. At least five hearts and lungs went waste in the last one week as transplant teams could not find accommodation on flights for harvesting organs from hospitals outside the city and state.**

Surgeons say transporting the heart by commercial airlines is feasible, safe and cost incurred is around 10% compared to private jets or ambulances. Commercial airlines were successful as a reasonable alternative particularly for heart and lung transplants where the shelf life is less than six to seven hours.

In the last week, doctors in Tamil Nadu have been receiving calls from national and regional transplant authorities on availability of organs. However, at least **two city-based hospitals that had suitable recipients said they couldn't pick up the organs as they didn't get air tickets.** "We could not get tickets because flights in some cases where we got tickets, were cancelled," said Fortis Malar's senior heart transplant surgeon Dr KR Balakrishnan.

For instance, on April 22, his hospital received a call on availability of organs in two hospitals --KIMS hospital in Thiruvananthapuram and Pune-based Aditya Birla Memorial Hospital. But **doctors could not get there as there were no flights.** A similar incident happened on April 29 as well, when the hospital received a call from a Bengaluru-based hospital. "We felt worse was when it happened in our own state," he said. On April 24, Transtan informed doctors about availability of an organ at Coimbatore-based Rama Krishna Hospital. "There were no flight tickets but since we have patients who desperately needed hearts, we drove down. But by the time we reached, the family had withdrawn consent as they were getting delayed. While the family's feelings are understandable, two healthy organs that could have saved patients had to be wasted," he said.

07/05/19 Pushpa Narayan/Times of India

BridgeLabz, a startup focused on solving the tech employability challenge is planning to hire Jet Airways employees. The startup will be strengthening its HR and sales team with the new hires in Mumbai and Delhi.

The grounding of Jet has come as an opportunity for the market to hire a readily-available skilled workforce with experience and knowledge. As part of its expansion plans, the startup will be hiring HR managers for its Mumbai branch and a sales head for its North India operations in Delhi. They will be directly hired basis industry benchmark, experience, skills, knowledge, etc. and deployed for the

roles.

Narayan Mahadevan, Co-Founder at BridgeLabz said, “This crisis moment for the Jet Airways employees and staff, who have been a part of the airline’s journey for a long time is a tragic story in itself. With other startups and companies offering their hand to help the staff, we were also encouraged to do the same. At BridgeLabz, we believe that with the right skills and guidance, they will be able to strengthen our firm and take it to new heights.”

07/05/19 People Matters

Delhi International Airport Ltd, a GMR group company, plans to raise USD 350 million through 10 year senior secured bonds for the airport expansion programme and Moody’s has assigned a Ba2 rating for the proposed bonds. Proceeds from the proposed bond would be used to help fund a major expansion to increase the passenger handling capacity of Indira Gandhi International Airport to up to 100 million passengers per annum, which the company expects would cost up to Rs 98 billion (Rs 9800 crore) over a three-year development phase, Moodys said.

“Moody’s Investors Service has assigned a Ba2 senior secured rating to Delhi International Airport Limited’s (DIAL, Ba2 stable) proposed 10 year senior secured bond of up to USD350 million,” the rating agency said. The proposed bond’s Ba2 senior secured rating reflects the airport’s strong market position and robust passenger traffic, which would likely grow at a high single-digit percentage per annum over the next 18 months under Moody’s base case scenario, it said.

The rating agency however, said Delhi Airport’s ratings are constrained by its planned capacity expansion, which would exert downward pressure on its financial metrics, the evolving regulatory environment in India and its obligation to pay 45.99 per cent of its revenue to the Airports Authority of India as a concession fee. After accounting for the proposed USD notes, Moody’s expects that DIAL’s funds from operations/debt would remain weak over the next 2-3 years, with a very limited buffer above the minimum tolerance level of 3-4 per cent Moody’s said.

Moody’s base case financial projections assume that aeronautical tariffs would stay at the current level during the third regulatory period between April 2019 and March 2024 and there was no material uplift to the airport’s financial position arising from its arbitration proceedings with the Airports Authority of India on the calculation of the 45.99 per cent concession fee.

07/05/19 PTI/Financial Express

Ahmedabad: The departure of five flights to various destinations was delayed from Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel International (SVPI) Airport on Monday. Two flights operated by Indigo Airlines — 6E-351 to Pune and 6E-15 to Delhi — were delayed by about an hour. Three more flights operated by SpiceJet — SG-15 to Dubai, SG-8912 to Delhi, and SG-928 to Bengaluru — were also delayed.

Well-placed sources confirmed that the **Indigo-operated aircraft which was to fly to Pune developed a minor technical glitch ahead of the departure and had to be inspected for safety.** That caused the delay.

Sources also said that **6E-15 originated from Istanbul and was scheduled to fly to Delhi. However, owing to the Pakistan airspace’s closure, the flight had to land in Ahmedabad for refuelling.**

07/05/19 Times of India

Air India is looking to roll out streaming in-flight entertainment across its core fleet of Boeing 787s, 777s and Airbus A320 family aircraft.

The Star Alliance carrier has issued a tender seeking a provider to supply, install and commission streaming systems on its aircraft under a revenue-sharing arrangement that would run for five years.

Although the systems sought will be primarily used for streaming content from the on board server, tender documents show that it should be upgradable to include connectivity “to meet future plans.”

The airline did not specify a timeframe for the installation but adds that it would like to have it operating “in the shortest possible time” across its fleet.

07/05/19 FlightGlobal

Chennai: Customs officials at Chennai international airport detected four cases of gold smuggling, three on Tuesday and one on Monday night. They seized a total of 1.27 kg of gold worth Rs 41.66 lakh from four women.

On Tuesday morning, the officials intercepted Syed Ali Fathima, 45, of Ramanathapuram, who arrived here from Colombo in a SriLankan Airlines flight. Gold in rubbery form was seized from her handbag. The seized gold weighed 74 gram and was worth Rs 2.42 lakh.

Mulakayala Rajani, 45 and Saraswathi, 38, (both natives of Andhra Pradesh), who arrived from Bahrain in a Gulf Air flight, were searched. The officials recovered gold cut bars and one semi-finished gold chain, totally weighing 997 gram and valued at Rs 32.52 lakh, from the duo.

On Monday night, the officials intercepted Lakshmi, 53, of Dindigul, who arrived here from Colombo in an IndiGo Airlines flight. They recovered gold in rubbery form from her rectum. The gold weighed 206 gram and was worth Rs.6.72 lakh.

07/05/19 Siddharth Prabhakar/Times of India

The operator of the Mactan Cebu International Airport (MCIA) may submit a bid to challenge the group of tycoons seeking to upgrade and operate Manila’s Ninoy Aquino International Airport (Naia), considered the crown jewel of Philippine airports.

This comes as the P102-billion proposal of Naia Consortium will soon be evaluated by the National Economic and Development Authority after Transportation Secretary Arthur Tugade decided last week the terms of the unsolicited offer were acceptable.

“We will look at it, but it depends on the terms,” Edgar Saavedra, chair and CEO of Megawide Construction Corp., told the Inquirer.

Megawide, together with India’s GMR Infrastructure, formed a consortium that won in 2014 the privatization of MCIA under a 25-year public-private partnership contract. Megawide-GMR has long had an eye on establishing an airport foothold in Luzon.

Last year, it revealed a \$3-billion (P155 billion) offer to also develop and operate Naia, which was

luring private sector interest given worsening congestion and no near-term alternatives. That offer was set aside as Naia Consortium was the first to submit a proposal. Naia Consortium's members include Ayala Corp., Alliance Global Group Inc., Aboitiz Equity Ventures, Asia Emerging Dragon, Filinvest Development Corp, JG Summit Holdings Inc. and Metro Pacific Investments Corp. Its technical partner is Singapore's Changi Airports International.

The Filipino-Indian tandem, which is building the new terminal in Clark International Airport, also sought to participate in the operations and maintenance challenge for the Pampanga gateway but GMR was disqualified.

06/05/19 Miguel R Camus/Inquirer.net

Air France Flight AF218 conducted an emergency diversion to Isfahan, Iran, due to smoke and smelling fume in the cockpit. There were no injuries. Crew used oxygen mask and safe landed.

Aviation Safety Network 08/05/2019

IndiGo is in the process of securing necessary approvals for entering China as part of its international route network expansion plans.

The Gurugram-based airline had earlier this year said it was looking to enter markets like China, Vietnam, Myanmar, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, and the CIS region among others.

"With our existing fleet and the arrival of new A321 Neos, we will have the capability to serve China, Middle East and Southeast Asia," the airline told PTI Wednesday.

At this stage, the airline is in the process of securing the necessary approvals to enter China, it said, adding it is evaluating opportunities for expanding the international network.

However, according to some social media reports, the Civil Aviation Administration of China has already given the approval to IndiGo for flying into two cities.

IndiGo has been allowed to operate seven flights a week to Chengdu and Guangzhou from New Delhi and Kolkata, respectively, as per these reports.

IndiGo currently has a fleet of 225 planes comprising 207 Airbus A320s and A320 Neos, two A321 Neos and 16 regional jets comprising ATRs.

The Economic times of India 08/05/2019

A Singapore Airlines plane, carrying 228 people, Wednesday made an emergency landing at the airport in the national capital after suffering a glitch with its nose wheel, an official said.

The aircraft -- A380-800 -- from Singapore suffered some problem with its nose wheel and was towed away to the terminal, according to a passenger onboard.

The official said full emergency was declared for SQ 406 Singapore-Delhi flight having 228 people on board and the plane landed safely.

According to the passenger, there was apparently "loss of steering capacity" for the plane, which also aborted landing once. The plane made a hard landing and stopped on the runway, he added.

The Economic times of India 08/05/2019

Civil Aviation Minister Suresh Prabhu has sought a report on the allocation of airport slots vacated by Jet Airways to other airlines, an official source said on Wednesday.

In the wake of crisis-hit Jet Airways suspending operations, the ministry decided to allocate the vacant slots at the airports in the national capital and Mumbai to other carriers. The move is part of larger efforts to increase capacity amid recent surge in airfares.

According to the source, **the minister has asked Civil Aviation Secretary Pradeep Singh Kharola for a report on the Jet Airways' slots that have been allocated to other airlines so far. The report is to be submitted by May 11.**

The development also comes against the backdrop of concerns raised in certain quarters about the process being followed in temporary allocation of Jet Airways' slots.

The slots are being given to other airlines on an interim basis and decisions are taken by a committee set up by the ministry.

Jet Airways has more than 440 slots at Mumbai and Delhi airports, a ministry official said last month.

As per the source, **the minister has asked the secretary to ensure that all slot allocations have been made on an interim basis by following all applicable guidelines in a transparent manner.**

The source also said the minister has directed that **a final decision on allocation of Jet Airways slots should not be taken till conclusion of the resolution plan that is being worked out by the airline's lenders.**

The State Bank of India-led consortium of domestic lenders to Jet Airways has already sought bids for the ailing airline, which shuttered operations on April 17 after it ran out of cash.

The list of final bidders is likely to be finalised this week.

On Wednesday, Jet Airways gave a clarification to the stock exchanges regarding reports that Atmosphere Airlines has submitted an expression of interest along with Naresh Goyal and four other companies.

"The bidding process is initiated by and managed by SBI Capital Markets Ltd under a resolution plan undertaken by a consortium of domestic lenders led by State Bank of India.

"The company is not involved in the bidding process and has no information with regard to same and is accordingly not in a position to comment," the airline said in a filing.

Naresh Goyal is the founder of Jet Airways.

Earlier on Wednesday, Goyal's daughter Namrata Goyal said that her father is not part of any consortium.

"I'm Naresh Goyal's daughter and this is to clarify that he's not part of any consortium and this information is completely misleading and mischievous (sic)," she said in a tweet

The Economic Times of India 08/05/2019

For passengers embarking from the Kempegowda International Airport (KIA) in the next few months, their faces will be their boarding passes.

The face recognition technology, which is part of the Ministry of Civil Aviation's **Digi Yatra programme, will be rolled out at KIA in the third quarter (Q3) of this year making it the first airport in the country to have this technology.**

Officials involved in the programme have recently completed a crucial trial to roll out the project soon.

"The Digi Yatra biometric boarding system at the KIA is currently work in progress. Field Acceptance Trials have been conducted at the end of March and production of the hardware has begun," a BIAL spokesperson told Bangalore Mirror.

With the Field Acceptance Trials done with, officials are confident that a phased rollout of the Digi Yatra would begin in Q3 2019.

"Based on current timelines, we expect that trials and phased rollout of the Digi Yatra central identity management platform to begin at the BLR Airport in Q3 2019.

Once the central platform is set up, BIAL will integrate the biometric boarding system of the Airport with the platform," the spokesperson added.

The Digi Yatra, which is expected to offer seamless journey to the passengers, will provide them access to walk through security scanners swiftly owing to advanced biometric security solutions.

Under the Digi Yatra programme, the Ministry apart from KIA will also be implementing this technology in other airports in Delhi, Mumbai and Hyderabad.

However, KIA is hopeful that it would be the first in the country to roll out the Digi Yatra programme and in this regard Bangalore International Airport Limited (BIAL) the operators of the airport have signed an agreement with Portugal-based Vision-Box to launch paperless biometric self-boarding technology.

Vision-Box was chosen after BIAL issued a Request For Proposal (RFP) to vendors to implement the paperless biometric self-boarding technology at KIA.

While announcing the signing of the agreement, BIAL has said that the Jet Airways, Air Asia and SpiceJet passengers would be the first users at KIA.

However, now it has to be seen which airline will replace Jet Airways that has stopped its flight operations earlier this month.

The Economic times of India 09/05/2019

Nepal Airlines in the last few days filed operational schedule for its planned service resumption to Japan, where it plans to operate **Kathmandu – Osaka Kansai** route. The airline intends to operate this route with Airbus A330 aircraft from 04JUL19. Reservation expected to open in the next few days.

RA411 KTM0230 – 1155KIX 330 246
RA412 KIX1355 – 1800KTM 330 246

The airline previously served Osaka as Kathmandu – Shanghai – Osaka routing with Boeing 757 (2 weekly), until May 2007.
Routes Online 08/05/2019

Indian low-cost carrier IndiGo in the last few days opened reservation for expanded service to Kathmandu, where the airline schedules 2nd daily **Delhi – Kathmandu** flight. From 20JUN19, the new flight will operate in the afternoon hours, with Airbus A320.

6E031 DEL1145 – 1345KTM 320 D
6E033 DEL1325 – 1530KTM 320 D

6E032 KTM1445 – 1620DEL 320 D
6E034 KTM1655 – 1820DEL 320 D
RoutesOnline 08/05/2019

IndiGo from June 2019 is launching new service to The United Arab Emirates, where it'll operate service to **Abu Dhabi**, from both Delhi and Mumbai.

Delhi – Abu Dhabi *eff 05JUN19* 1 daily A320
6E1833 DEL1955 – 2230AUH 320 D
6E1834 AUH0920 – 1440DEL 320 D

Mumbai – Abu Dhabi *eff 05JUN19* 1 daily A320 (Mumbai departure from 06JUN19)
6E1835 BOM0620 – 0805AUH 320 D
6E1834 AUH2330 – 0420+1BOM 320 D

IndiGo from June 2019 is introducing new route to Saudi Arabia, where it plans to offer **Mumbai – Jeddah** nonstop service. First flight is scheduled on 05JUN19, with Airbus A320 aircraft.

6E1831 BOM1235 – 1520JED 320 D
6E1832 JED1620 – 0020+1BOM 320 D

MUMBAI: Low-cost carrier SpiceJet is entering the full-service segment offering business class tickets on select domestic routes from May 11, becoming the second budget carrier to do so after GoAir.

The Wadia group-owned GoAir was the first domestic no-frills carrier to introduce business class way back in October 2008

To begin with, SpiceJet will offer business class on some of its Boeing 737s to be operated from destinations like New Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata, Chennai, Hyderabad, Bengaluru, Varanasi, Bagdogra, and Srinagar, a statement said.

The move comes after the airline leased some of the Boeing 737s from the grounded Jet AirwaysNSE 4.58 % and entered into a code-share pact with Gulf carrier Emirates which is a full- service operator.

Jet' entire Boeing fleet, including the narrow-body B737s, and some of which are being leased by other domestic airlines, has business and economy class configurations.

At present, SpiceJet is operating nine of the Jet Airways B737s on lease, according to an airline official, and a few more are expected to join its fleet soon.

As part of the business class offering, SpiceJet will also provide complimentary lounge access, higher baggage allowance, meals & beverages, priority services to passengers, the release said.

The airline will have lounges at Delhi, Mumbai Ahmedabad, Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Chennai, Kolkata, Varanasi, Jaipur, Guwahati, and Kochi airports, besides dedicated check-in counters. It is planning to have lounges at other airports as well.

Business class passengers will be get 30 kg free baggage besides 10 kg of cabin baggage, the airline said.

"There is huge demand for business class and we believe that our business class product business-SpiceBiz-- with right pricing will be in demand," SpiceJet chairman Ajay Singh was quoted as saying.

The Economic times of India 09/05/2019

Grounded Jet Airways Thursday said its whole-time director Gaurang Shetty has resigned from the board and the company due to personal reasons.

The airline informed the exchanges that Shetty's resignation was effective from April 23 and was due to personal reasons. **He served the airline in various capacities for last many years.**

But the board approved his resignation only Thursday with retrospective effect from April 23, the filing added.

With his resignation, which is the third in the past one month, the Jet Airways board is now reduced only to three directors--Robin Kamark, Ashok Chawla and Sharad Sharma.

Earlier independent director Rajshree Pathy and former aviation secretary and chief election commissioner Nasim Zaidi, who was a non-executive director, also quit last month.

After wobbling for nearly a year due cash crunch, Jet had on April 17 announced suspension of all its services.

The filing further said Shetty submitted resignation from the board and with the airline with immediate effect, with a request to waive off the notice period.

Though the board requested him to continue as a whole-time director at least till the end of his appointment, which is May 23, accepted his request with retrospective effective from April 23.

The Economic Times of India 10/05/2019

Concluding that the transactions of Jet Airways are of 'suspicious' in nature and require a thorough probe, the Mumbai regional office of the Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MCA) last week submitted its report recommending a detailed investigation into the affairs of the company, source in the know told ET.

“A lot of discrepancies have been found in the book of accounts which were recently inspected by Registrar of Companies (RoC), Mumbai. They were found to be in violation of certain provisions of the Companies Act. Many of the transactions relating to the fund movements are of suspicious nature which are unexplained. All this requires a thorough probe and therefore a recommendation has been made to the ministry to order an investigation into the affairs of the company,” said the above cited individual.

According to procedure, the recommendation has been placed before the five-member oversight committee which after deliberations will place its observations and views before the Secretary. “Based on the recommendation made by the committee, the Secretary will take a final call as to whom to entrust the probe with. It could be carried either by the Serious Fraud Investigation Office (SFIO) or a senior official from the regional office,” added the official.

In February the Registrar of Companies (RoC), Mumbai had initiated inspecting the books of Jet Airways, almost eight months after the MCA directed it to probe allegations that the nowgrounded airline siphoned off money. MCA had called for RoC probe at the time when Jet Airways was delaying its announcement of its June quarter result, said the second official in known.

“While allegations of money laundering isn’t probed by the agency, the investigation will surely look at...if fraud was committed, if there are instances of deliberate acts of omission, concealment of facts, and submission of financial statements, certificate and other reports which were false or omitted certain material fact,” added the above cited official.

RoC, Mumbai is not the first agency probing the cash strapped airline. In September last year, income-tax officials had carried out a survey at the business premises of the airline based on specific information.

I-T investigation wing completed the probe recently, department insiders told ET. They suspect there were some irregularities in transactions between Jet Airways and its Dubai-based group companies that helped it evade taxes worth around Rs 650 crore.

The report is with the assessment division, which will seek a reply from Jet Airways and decide whether or not to raise a tax demand, the sources said.

Jet had responded to an ET report on February 26 that said the income-tax authorities had discovered irregularities in the airline’s transactions with Dubai-based group companies, and that the authorities might ask the airline to explain these related-party deals.

“Jet Airways reiterates that it has always complied with all regulatory and corporate governance requirements, as required by law, with respect to the transactions entered into with related parties,” Jet had said in a statement then.

The Regional Provident Fund Commissioner's office has issued a notice to the Jet Airways for not depositing provident fund (PF) of employees since March 2019 and directed the airline management to pay up immediately. The notice, a copy of which is in possession of Mirror, was issued by assistant provident fund commissioner (compliance) Dilip Rathod, who said he had sent his inspector to the Jet Airways office but no payment was done. "As per our records, Jet Airways has 13,839 employees," said Rathod, adding, "We will give money to employees as claims come. If anyone needs advance, we can give that as well."

Meanwhile, the PF commissioner has also warned Jet Airways that they will start inquiries under Section 7 of the Provident Fund and Misc Act, 1952, and also register an FIR with the police under sections 406 and 409 of the IPC. NCP leader Kiran Pawaskar who heads trade unions of the Jet Airways said, "I had met Police Commissioner Sanjay Barve expressing a lot of apprehensions and it was forwarded to the Economic Offences Wing. On Thursday, some staffers were called for registering the statement. Naresh Goyal and the SBI representative must also come to the conciliation hearing to the Labour and PF Commissioner's office. They must take a quick decision about giving PF share immediately."

A day after the protest by Shiv Sena-backed Bharatiya Kamgar Sena at Mumbai airport, the Deputy Chief Labour Commissioner had issued **the conciliation notice on Thursday to Jet Airways Chief Executive Officer Vinay Dube and Suryakant Mahadik, President of BKS, summoning them for a hearing on May 13 at the Central Labour Institute.**

A Jet Airways pilot said, "The worst condition is of couples working for Jet where PFs of both husband and wife are affected." Activist Anjali Damania, however, doesn't find it surprising that Jet has not deposited the PF money. "This has now become a routine with a lot of corporates," she said.

The activist, who has been fighting for the rights of employees of various airline companies, said, "What amazes me is the delay by the Provident Fund office. If the PF money was not deposited from the month of March, the show-cause notice should have been sent within 15 days. The news of Jet Airways default was floating for quite some time and there should have been an immediate action from the PF office against the management and Naresh Goyal and their passports should have been impounded."

The Economic Times of India 10/05/2019

New Delhi: The stake sale process initiated by State Bank of India-led lenders for the grounded Jet Airways is unlikely to get any "serious bid" from investors and public sector banks may be looking at massive write-off of loans, aviation industry sources said.

"There is **not much value left in Jet Airways**. Most of its slots have gone, pilots have left and planes are being de-registered. I don't expect any serious bid. Banks are going to lose most of their money in Jet," an industry insider told IANS.

The deadline for submitting bids for Jet Airways is May 10.

Out of cash, Jet Airways suspended operations on April 17. Hundreds of employees have quit the carrier to join rival companies. Its aircraft are also being gradually de-registered. These events have added to growing uncertainty about the airline's revival.

Lenders of Jet Airways led by SBI are currently in the process of selling the airline to recover their dues of over Rs 8,400 crore.

Private equity firm TPG Capital, Indigo Partners, National Investment and Infrastructure Fund (NIIF) and Etihad Airways had been shortlisted to submit their bids after they gave their expression of interest (EOIs).

With the deadline for bidding for the grounded airline coming to an end on Friday, all eyes are on prospective investors especially the Abu Dhabi-based Etihad which holds 24 per cent stake in the carrier.

While some of the aviation experts have raised concerns on the government's decision to allot Jet's domestic slots and international traffic rights to rival airlines, suggesting it will impact investor sentiment, a few industry insiders do expect surprise bidding in the final few hours.

"Anything can happen. Wait till the final hours of the bidding deadline," said a top industry executive.

After the government decided to re-allocate Jet Airways' slots and traffic rights to local carriers, state-run Airports Authority of India (AAI) ordered to stop billing the carrier and directed concerned officials to take over the space rented out to the grounded airline.

"Besides taking over the office space given to Jet Airways, we are also in the process of encashing bank guarantee," said an airport director of AAI.

The Economic Times of India 10/05/2019

State Bank of India said on Friday it has received 2 unsolicited bids for ailing Jet Airways nearly a month after the airline was forced to ground all operations due to funding troubles.

Jet, once India's largest private airline, stopped all flights on April 17 after its lenders, led by SBI, declined to extend more funds to keep the carrier going.

"(We have) made disproportionate efforts to keep Jet flying," the bank's chairman Rajnish Kumar told reporters in Mumbai.

The Economic Times of India 10/05/2019

The crisis gripping Jet is unlikely to affect the airport sector for now, given the latter's PPP model.

With airlines in the midst of a crisis — stemming from Jet shutting down operations and technical glitches in 737 affecting the frequency of flights at major airports, the travellers encounter a piquant situation (scramble to book tickets at high prices). At the same time, there is a question lurking in the minds of many — is the ebullient airport sector likely to see a melt-down?

The current airport model offers adequate cushion given the return-driven regulatory model therefore, there is a possibility of cash-flow mismatches but not a material or immediate threat to the credit quality of these assets.

However, the nervousness gripping the sector will impact the passenger (pax) volumes and thus decelerate pax growth in FY20. The growth in Q1 CY20 has remained almost flattish at about 5 per cent and March 2019 pax was just a mirror image of March 2018.

That being said, **there are areas that could inflict pain for airports such as decelerating pax leading to subdued non-aero revenues — revenues from reduced sales at the shops in airport.**

Although a major source of income (ranging between 35 and 55 per cent in airports) the impact assessment on this would be premature given the possibility of quick ramp-up by other airlines.

Undoubtedly, this could be either a mediocre or muted growth phase for airports for the current decade. However, this could aid airports in managing loads as there are ongoing expansions, capacity constraints (Mumbai) and lack of new slots. At the same time, the pax growth could dampen during the season of travel (April and May).

Also, the grounding of 737 Max owned by SpiceJet adds the pressure on air traffic. However, the impact could be moderate as the number of flights is only 18. If airlines decide to scale back fleet expansion plans, pax volumes could be further negatively impacted.

Globally, an individual airline's bankruptcy has limited impact on traffic performance. In the US, nearly every major domestic carrier has filed for bankruptcy at some point in the past. These events could lead to only short-term disruptions, given that large airports have large catchment areas and other operating airlines can absorb traffic to an extent. A similar episode of Kingfisher Airlines highlights the ability of other airlines to adopt to the difficult times and grow their market share.

PPP model

Indian public-private partnership-based airports are insulated from the vagaries of airlines because the payments are usually upfront and airlines submit a bank guarantee entailing a reasonable sum of payments.

The airports could also exercise the 'cash and carry' option to address the weakened financial profile risks of airlines, as part of their receivable management strategy.

The market share lost by Jet has to an extent been a gain for other airlines such as Interglobe Aviation Limited (IndiGo), GoAir and Vistara Airlines. SpiceJet could not gain market share in March 2019 due to grounding of the Boeing 737 Max. Given the vacation season, troubles in the airlines space are likely to keep the ticket prices high and thereby dent the propensity to fly.

Oil impact

To an extent, uptick in oil prices may be offset by the high airfares and allow the airlines to retain their margins.

With increased airport pairing, underpinned by the regional connectivity scheme, traffic volumes soared in FY18 and FY19. Although air traffic also increased in 11MFY19 by 12.94 per cent yoy, we can expect a decline in 1HFY20.

Leisure travel propelled air traffic in December and May during FY09-FY18. About 19 per cent of the pax volumes originate in May and December averagely during a year.

Both domestic and international pax growth for January-February 2019 combined dipped to 6.7 per cent and 5.7 per cent, respectively, from 20.6 per cent and 10 per cent for January-February 2018.

In the event of a prolonged delay in the resolution of airlines issues, the impact would be more pronounced on pax volumes in FY20. According to India Ratings & Research, if the issue resolves within 1H19, pax growth would be about 13 per cent while the growth deceleration would be higher in the event of troubles spilling over to 3Q19.

How has the Indian airport sector fared post such downfall in an airline? Historically, the all India airport traffic from FY 2007 to FY 2019 has grown at a CAGR of 11.2 per cent; however, the sector has seen its best growth phase in the last five years when the traffic grew by 15.3 per cent.

Part of the growth may also be attributed to schemes launched by the government such as UDAN. Also the growth in the sector is inevitable given the low penetration of air travel in the country which would ensure the traffic at the airports grow after a temporary glitch.

Privatisation thrust

We believe privatisation of airports leads to efficiency, improvement in service quality (standard mentioned in their concessions), better consumer experience in addition to easing of financial obligation of the government for building additional capacities.

Better service quality and experiences can be reflected in the fact that these airports are ranked at the top globally in their respective categories.

The four metro airports being operated on a PPP model are recognised for their world class infrastructure. The four major metro airports are undergoing a cumulative capex of more than INR 400 billion (including Navi Mumbai Airport) for increasing the capacity which otherwise would have to be funded by the government.

In essence, two factors would drive the strength of airport credits — how quick the existing airlines scale up their route frequency resulting in slots getting filled up for large airports like Mumbai and Delhi and the continued aspiration of the Indian middle class to fly.

Until then, the airports can reasonably sail given the backdrop of liquidity available at hand but the game has just only begun for airlines.

The Hindu Business Line 08/05/2019

Investors and employees of Jet airways will have to wait a few more days, maybe even weeks, to know the fate of the beleaguered airline after Etihad Airways emerged the sole bidder on Friday with a conditional offer.

The Abu Dhabi-based carrier said it is interested in reinvesting in Jet, but warned that it cannot be expected to be the sole investor, and that the bulk of the recapitalisation requirements will have to depend on other investors.

“Etihad has made it clear that it’s not up to it to find a partner. It’s the responsibility of the banks that are running the process,” said a person close to the development. Lenders, who had called for bids last month, were relieved as the 6 pm deadline on Friday ended with Etihad’s offer.

Their task is cut out over the next few days, given Etihad’s conditions & the fact that no other serious bidder has so far stepped forward. The bankers had last month shortlisted four investors, including Etihad, and were hoping the National Investment and Infrastructure Fund (NIIF) would join the process. But in the end, they were left with one serious bid and two unsolicited bids.

Single-Engine Flight Looks Tough

Etihad makes conditional offer...

Insists that it will be a minority shareholder

Says onus on lenders to find majority shareholder

No clarity yet on debt-to-equity swap or rights issue

...As stalled airline...

Jet needs ₹15,000 cr to revive

Etihad had earlier asked banks to take **80% haircut on ₹8,500-cr debt**

Enforcement

Directorate probing Etihad's stake purchase in Jet Privilege

Jet's planes,

flight slots in Mumbai and Delhi being allocated to peers

...Slips further

AAI has sealed Jet's offices in Amritsar, Udaipur, Indore and Ahmedabad

Bureau of Civil Aviation Security has cancelled entry passes for Jet's staff at 15 airports

“This is our last hope,” a banker close to the developments said late Friday evening. Officials of State Bank of India will meet on Monday to consider Etihad’s offer, and it appears the search for another investor (or investors) may resume given that Etihad only wants to make a limited investment to retain its stake at 24%.

“The next step is to see their conditions. There is still a long way (to Jet’s revival),” said a person in the know. **Jet requires at least Rs 15,000 crore to revive — taking into account its debt, dues and additional capital needed to get operations going.**

Etihad had, during talks with Jet’s lenders last month, demanded that they take an 80% haircut on the Rs 8,500-crore loans. SBI has an exposure of Rs 1,600 crore, of which Rs 1,200 crore has been provisioned as unrecoverable, said a banker on Friday. A spokesperson for Etihad said the airline “cannot be expected to be the sole investor, and that, amongst other requirements, additional suitable investors would need to provide the majority of Jet Airways’ required recapitalisation”.

Etihad has said earlier that it wants to stick to its shareholding of 24%. Lenders and Jet management, including founder Naresh Goyal, have held talks with several prospective investors, including the Tatas, in the past six months but interest has been lukewarm. There were rumours of the lenders approaching the Hinduja Group. But a person close to the development said the conglomerate has neither done any due diligence nor expressed any interest in Jet. Goyal’s resignation from the board in March also did not revive interest though TPG Capital, Indigo Partners and NIIF submitted expressions of interest in early April and were shortlisted.

Friday’s development has left several questions unanswered. Jet is now 51% owned by Goyal, 24% by Etihad and the rest by the public. Goyal has pledged more than 31% with lenders, but retains the rest. Selling the pledged shares would bring money to lenders. A fresh issue of shares would be required to recapitalise Jet.

One of Etihad’s key conditions is Goyal’s complete exit. Also, the lenders are still awaiting Reserve Bank of India’s approval on a debt-to-equity swap, through which they would be issued 114 million shares in the airline which would then be sold to an investor.

Meanwhile, the **Airports Authority of India has sealed four of Jet’s offices at Indore, Amritsar, Ahmedabad and Udaipur**, said a person close to the development. It has also taken off Jet’s hoardings at the Chennai airport and asked the airline’s staff to empty lockers at the Kolkata airport.

Separately, the Bureau of Civil Aviation Security has refused to give airport entry passes to Jet’s staff at 15 airports, including Ahmedabad, Indore, Bhavnagar, Bhuj, Bhopal and Gwalior. An email sent to Jet remained unanswered till the time of going to press

The Economic times of India 11/05/2019

Etihad Airways has said it can only invest up to Rs 1,700 crore in Jet Airways, a fraction of what the grounded airline needs for survival. The Abu Dhabi carrier is also noncommittal on Jet’s dues and has demanded a one-time settlement in a highly conditional bid it submitted on Friday.

The conditions leave little scope for Jet Airways, its employees and investors to pin their hopes on the Gulf carrier as its saviour. It also means the grounded airline's lenders have to scramble for a new majority investor if they want Jet to fly again.

"Etihad did not put in a binding bid. In a way, the bidding process didn't take off the way it should have," a person familiar with the development told ET.

"We are serious but not at any cost," said an Etihad spokesperson. "The conditions are key to our participation."

"As a minority shareholder, Etihad can only bring in cash required to retain its stake of 24%. The rest is up to the people managing the process," said a person with knowledge of the matter.

"As a minority shareholder, it is not for Etihad to take on the debt and liabilities. Etihad is only interested in the company being run well by a professional management with proper governance and the right professional board," said the person

Etihad was the only entity to put in a bid on Friday, minutes before the deadline for submissions ended. Of the four expressions of interest (EoIs) from investors that had been selected, apart from Etihad, the other three had been from National Investment and Infrastructure Fund (NIIF), TPG Capital and Indigo Partners. Jet needs at least Rs 15,000 crore to revive.

Jet is being probed by the Enforcement Directorate, the finance ministry's economic law enforcement agency, on its deal to sell 50.1% of its loyalty rewards programme Jet Privilege Pvt Ltd (JPPL) to Etihad. The Serious Fraud Investigation Office (SFIO) of the corporate affairs ministry is looking into alleged irregular transactions by Jet's founder Naresh Goyal.

An official with one of the creditors said the probes, if converted into full-fledged investigations, may delay, even derail, any one-time settlement of debt. Jet has a total Rs 8,500 crore of debt on its books. Etihad had demanded last month that the banks take a haircut of over 70% on their loans. In the bid document, it has given indications about a debt recast without clearly spelling out the extent of haircut it wants banks to take.

Jet Pack

₹15,000CR

**NEEDED TO REVIVE
JET AIRWAYS**

Etihad has | **Jet lenders will**
given a condi- | need to rope in a
tional offer | majority investor

RISK FACTORS

**Jet facing ED probe on deal to sell
50.1% of Jet Privilege to Etihad**

SFIO looking into alleged
irregular transactions by Jet
founder Naresh Goyal

These may
delay, even
derail, any one-
time settlement
of debt



One of its key conditions has been that it won't raise its stake above 24%. Etihad isn't ready to implement an open offer that, according to Indian capital market norms, is triggered as soon as the shareholding of an entity in a company crosses 25%. Goyal owns 51% of Jet and has pledged just over 31% of his stake. The public owns 25%.

A senior Etihad executive said it had helped Jet cope with financial challenges several times in the past.

"Over the past five years Etihad has invested significantly and on multiple occasions in Jet Airways, enabling the airline to overcome prior liquidity crises. But as a minority shareholder Etihad has not been responsible for the business strategy," said the person. Etihad purchased its 24% stake in Jet in 2013 for \$379 million. It bought half of JPPL for \$150 million and guaranteed additional soft loans that Jet raised from overseas lenders. "Etihad has over the past two years proposed multiple solutions to recapitalise the airline, but no action has been taken."

Jet's resolution plan, implemented by its bankers, entailed a debt to-equity conversion, through which 114 million shares would be issued to banks. There would be a subsequent rights issue to new investors. The initially proposed conversion at Rs 1 is now stalled because of a recent Supreme Court order that quashed the Reserve Bank of India's rules for debt restructuring that were announced on February 12, 2018.

The Economic times of India 13/05/2019

The chief commercial officer at Emirates, the Middle East's largest airline, has resigned after profits dipped to their lowest level in years.

Emirates on Sunday confirmed **Thierry Antinori's** resignation. It says Adnan Kazim, who currently oversees a division tasked with revenue optimization and strategic planning, was named acting CCO in addition to his current responsibilities

The changes come days after the Dubai-based airline said its profits fell nearly 70% in the past fiscal year, reaching lows of \$237 million largely due to higher fuel costs, a strengthened U.S. dollar and stagnant passenger growth.

The Emirates website says Antinori joined Emirates in 2011 as executive vice president for passenger sales worldwide. He held the post of CCO at Emirates for **six years**.

The Economic Times of India 12/05/2019

NEW DELHI: The National Company Law Appellate Tribunal (NCLAT) has dismissed a plea for initiation of insolvency proceedings against Spicejet by Ramco Systems Ltd, an operational creditor of the low-cost carrier.

A two-member bench headed by Chairman Justice S J Mukhopadhyaya upheld the orders passed by the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) in this matter saying that it **has rightly rejected Ramco's plea by observing that such petition requires strict proof of debt and default, which was absent in this case.**

The appellate tribunal said there was nothing on record to suggest that the demand notice relating to invoices issued by Ramco System was forwarded or received by Spicejet.

"For the reasons aforesaid, no relief can be granted," said NCLAT.

Ramco Systems had entered into agreement with Spicejet to provide 'Aviation Software Solutions' in May, 2013.

Later in July 2014, 'Change Order Demand' was executed between the parties.

The earlier 'Software Licence Agreement' for 180 number of authorised users were amended to 55 aircraft tails and unlimited users with other amendment and modification which also followed various modification and alteration.

Ramco Systems counsel claimed before the NCLAT that a huge amount is payable by Spicejet and invoice for ₹62.89 lakh was intimated to them and sent by email on January 2016.

Rejecting it, Spicejet claimed before the NCLAT that all claims depended on invoices for the financial year 2013-14, including the invoice dated July 23, 2014. This was due and payable by 22 August, 2014 and said that it was barred by limitation.

Moreover, the demand notice was issued by Ramco Systems on 24 April, 2017, without attaching the invoices relating to debt which are payable. It further contended that two demand notices dated 23 July, 2014 for amount ₹59.83 lakh and ₹33.70 was never issued by Ramco Systems.

Consenting to it, the NCLAT said: "There is nothing on the record to suggest that the invoices dated 23 July, 2014 were forwarded or received by Spicejet."

"In absence of specific evidence relating to invoices actually forwarded by the Appellant and there being a doubt, we hold that the Adjudicating Authority (NCLT) has rightly refused to entertain application under Section 9 which requires strict proof of debt and default," said the NCLT.

Ramco Systems has moved the NCLAT after the National Company Law Tribunal has dismissed its insolvency plea on 14 December, 2017.

The NCLT had dismissed Ramco System's application on the ground of inconsistency in the overall payments and the non-compliance with the provisions by the operational creditor, in the absence of a certificate from the financial institution maintaining its accounts.

Live Mint Aviation 12/05/2019

Mumbai: Two of the SpiceJet's Boeing passenger planes—one from Mumbai and other from Bengaluru—suffered mid-air technical glitches, forcing their pilots to terminate journeys with one flight landing back in Mumbai and second diverted to Nagpur Saturday.

SpiceJet flight SG-611, which departed from Mumbai's Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport for Chennai around 7.30 am, returned to the city airport due to a mid-air technical glitch after being airborne for about 16 minutes, a source said.

A SpiceJet spokesperson confirmed the return of its Chennai flight to Mumbai due to a "technical" issue.

"The aircraft has already departed back for its destination around 10 am after the engineers rectified the glitch," the spokesperson said.

In a similar incident, the airline's New Delhi-bound flight SG 8720 from Bengaluru was diverted to Nagpur after the pilot reported some issue to the ATC and sought a diversion.

"SpiceJet flight SG 8720 operating on Bangalore-Delhi route was diverted to Nagpur due to a technical issue.

11/05/19 Tribune

Guwahati: Commencing the Concrete roof work for a local community centre at Garal near Guwahati Airport on Friday, Sanjeev Jindal, Regional Executive Director, AAI {North East Region} said that we are committed for the development of people living around the airport, especially who were affected by our projects.

Inspecting the construction works, Jindal said, 'I am much satisfied with the quality of work and project progress of this community centre. Materials used and their implementation is at par with Metro cities.' I am hopeful that it will be completed in record time and will help the local community, he added.

12/05/19 Sentinel Assam

I have not waited for Godot. But I have had to wait for an Air India flight — AI-676 — that landed in Mumbai only six hours after its scheduled time of arrival on April 27, the day when the Maharaja was bitten by a bug.

The delay was reportedly caused by a glitch in SITA, the server that operates the passenger service system, which, according to Air India sources, adversely affected 155 flights for an average duration of two hours on that fateful day. Strangely, it was reported that the glitch, which was discovered during routine maintenance of the system, had affected flights operated by Air India only.

Air India's master, the central government, has sworn to take Bharat back to Ram rajya. SITA, evidently, can put a spanner in the works.

On Saturday morning — wise men believe that morning shows the day — the Maharaja had thrown hints the size of royal inscriptions that something was amiss. On reaching the Dum Dum airport, I noticed that the queue for the boarding pass in front of the Air India kiosks had snaked up to one of the exit doors of the airport, or so it appeared.

Given SITA's rage, it was taking the harried counter staff an inordinate amount of time to issue a boarding pass — the details were being written in hand on each pass while being simultaneously entered into a log book. When I enquired whether other flight operators had been bug-bitten as well, the young chap manning the counter answered, almost triumphantly, "Spice Jet has been hit too." Then, in a modern rendition of the Ashwathama hata (iti gaja) moment, he added, lowering his voice by a few notches, "or so we are told."

Passengers, used to sarkari sloth, decided to make use of the time mocking the Maharaja and his minions. A middle-aged man, a dapper executive, said aloud that Air India had no buyers given its "efficiency". A Bengali, ever competitive in the department of black humour, muttered, "Having introduced vegetarian meals, Air India has jettisoned jet fuel to run on gobar gas." A Sikh, having traded his Vistara ticket for flight 676, appeared to have been shocked into silence. He scratched his turban occasionally while looking at the display board on which there was one incandescent word

written next to AI-676: "Delayed".

12/05/19 Uddalak Mukherjee/Telegraph

Chennai: The new integrated terminal being built between the domestic and international terminals in the city airport might be ready well ahead of the 2021 deadline.

Airports Authority of India (AAI) has decided to advance by three to four months the deadline for phase 2 expansion of the airport, which includes building the new terminal, straightening of a taxiway, building rapid exit taxiways. This indicates the facilities will be ready by the end of 2020 or early 2021.

The possibility to advance the deadline was discussed at a project review meeting held by AAI chairman Guruprasad Mohapatra on Friday.

Sources said, "The deadline was set at 2021 to ensure adequate buffer for delays during construction. There was a delay in completing the existing domestic and international terminal, opened in 2013. But the progress in phase 2 expansion is so efficient that there is a feeling it can be completed before deadline."

12/05/19 Times of India

VINAY DUBE a démissionné de son poste de directeur exécutif (CEO) de JET AIRWAYS. Sa démission, « pour raisons personnelles », prend effet immédiatement.

14/05/2019