

NEW DELHI : Domestic air passenger traffic in India rebounded in the festival month of October after four straight months of decline, raising hopes in an economy that is in the midst of a slowdown and facing subdued consumer demand.

Domestic scheduled carriers carried 12.3 million passengers last month, an increase of about 4% from the year earlier, data issued by the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) on Monday showed.

The airlines carried 11.5 million passengers in September, 11.7 million passengers in August, 11.9 million passengers in July and 12 million passengers during June.

"The passenger traffic growth is a bit muted. But, with more aircraft in our fleet than ever before, we expect the growth to pick up in the coming months," said a senior DGCA official, requesting anonymity.

InterGlobe Aviation Ltd's IndiGo continued its market dominance as it carried nearly one in every two passengers. Its market share, however, fell to 47.4% in October, from 48.2% in September. The airline carried 5.84 million passengers last month, up from nearly 5.56 million passengers in September.

No-frill carrier SpiceJet Ltd flew two million passengers, achieving a 16.3% market share.

The Ajay Singh-led airline's market share rose from 14.7% last month. Air India Ltd had a 12.6% market share as it flew 1.54 million passengers.

Despite the fall in domestic passenger traffic in the past four months, passengers carried by domestic airlines during January to October 2019 grew 3.1% to 118.2 million as against 114.6 million in the corresponding period of the previous year, according to DGCA.

Passengers carried by domestic airlines during January October 2018 had grown 20.1% year-on-year to 114.6 million passengers).

"We expect an all-time high fleet of more than 616 aircraft in the air soon. And with some more aircraft joining our fleet by 31 December, we expect a return to double-digit growth in the early part of next year," said the DGCA official mentioned above.

Live Mint Aviation 18/11/2019

New Delhi, Nov 20 (PTI) IndiGo and GoAir will have to replace 111 and 54 Pratt and Whitney (PW) engines respectively within the next 72 days in their A320neo planes, the government told Parliament on Wednesday.

Replying to a written question in the Rajya Sabha, Civil Aviation Minister Hardeep Singh Puri said IndiGo and GoAir were asked by aviation regulator DGCA earlier this month to replace

196 and 76 PW engines respectively with modified engines.

On November 1, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) had told the airlines to replace the PW engines under both wings of 97 A320neo aircraft "at all costs" by January 31 or they would be grounded.

The aviation regulator had also said "desperate measures" were required to "put things in order".

The PW engine-powered A320 neo planes in the fleets of IndiGo and GoAir have been facing glitches both mid-air and on-ground since their induction way back in 2016, which has also led to grounding of some planes.

According to the data presented by Puri on Wednesday, 85 and 22 PW engines were replaced by IndiGo and GoAir respectively as yet.

Le NTSB a demandé à Boeing et CFM International de modifier la nacelle de certains moteurs de 737NG, suite à l'explosion en vol sur un avion de la compagnie aérienne low cost Southwest Airlines qui avait entraîné la mort d'une passagère.

La conception des moteurs de type CFM56-7B, similaires à celui impliqué dans l'accident du 17 avril 2018, lors d'un vol de la spécialiste américaine du vol pas cher en Boeing 737-700 entre les aéroports de New York-LaGuardia et Dallas-Love Field, qui avait fait un mort, va devoir être revue. **Le patron du NTSB (National Transportation Safety Board) Robert Sumwalt l'a confirmé le 19 novembre 2019 : « nous recommandons aux constructeurs de moteurs et d'aéronefs de développer des conceptions plus robustes de la structure de la nacelle et de ses composants, qui prennent en compte les emplacements d'impact critiques des FBO » (Fan blade separation, séparation des aubes de soufflantes). Il est « important d'aller au-delà de l'examen de routine des aubes ; l'intégrité structurelle des composants de la nacelle du moteur doit être assurée pour diverses combinaisons cellule / moteur », a ajouté le dirigeant.**

Boeing s'est déclaré dans un communiqué prêt à mettre en œuvre « les améliorations nécessaires » pour se conformer aux recommandations du NTSB, affirmant avoir déjà amélioré la conception des aubes de soufflantes « pour accroître la résistance générale de ces structures ». « Notre objectif commun est d'empêcher que des événements similaires ne se reproduisent à l'avenir », a ajouté l'avionneur selon qui la sécurité et la qualité « sont les toutes premières priorités » du groupe déjà empêtré dans le problème des fissures sur les 737NG les plus anciens – et dans la crise du 737 MAX.

L'explosion non contenue du moteur gauche de Southwest, survenue à une altitude de 32.000 pieds, avait vu une pale percer le fuselage et un hublot, entraînant une décompression. Le 737-700 immatriculé N772SW transportait 143 passagers et cinq membres d'équipage, et s'était posé en urgence à Philadelphie. Jennifer Riordan, assise

rangée 17, avait été déclarée morte à l'hôpital ; des passagers ont raconté comment ils l'avaient agrippée pour éviter que son corps ne soit aspiré à l'extérieur de l'avion, avant que les PNC essaient de la ranimer avec un défibrillateur. Sept autres personnes avaient subi des blessures mineures.

Le CFM56 est fabriqué par CFM International, une coentreprise entre GE Aviation et Safran Aircraft Engines.

Air Journal 20/11/2019

Le NTSB, le régulateur américain des transports, a recommandé mardi 19 novembre aux industriels du secteur aéronautique d'améliorer la conception des nacelles des moteurs équipant les Boeing 737 NG, la version qui précède le 737 MAX.

«Aujourd'hui, nous recommandons aux constructeurs de moteurs et d'aéronefs de développer des conceptions plus robustes de la structure de la nacelle et de ses composants, qui prennent en compte les emplacements d'impact critiques des FBO», c'est à dire les aubes de soufflantes («Fan Blade Separation» en anglais), a indiqué Robert Sumwalt, le patron du NTSB.

La nacelle est l'enveloppe de protection d'un moteur d'avion et permet de freiner lors d'un atterrissage. Dans le cadre du 737 NG, Boeing était en charge de sa conception, même si le moteur est fabriqué par le groupe CFM (co-entreprise du français Safran et de l'américain General Electric). Tous deux sont concernés par l'enquête sur l'accident mortel survenu en avril 2018 dernier dans l'un des appareils de la compagnie Southwest Airlines.

Le Journal de l'aviation 21/11/2019

D'un côté, le terminal privé Astonsky, dernier né de l'aviation d'affaires à l'aéroport du Bourget : le luxe à la française, avec un service voiturier assuré sous un auvent en forme d'aile d'avion, une cave à vin semi-enterrée de 3 000 bouteilles, un aquarium de 6 tonnes d'eau de mer... Et de l'autre, l'agacement de l'Autorité de contrôle des nuisances aéroportuaires (Acnusa) contre Le Bourget.

La structure administrative indépendante a récemment profité du coup de projecteur porté sur la plate-forme lors de l'inauguration du terminal pour pointer la pollution au sol que génèrent les jets du Bourget.

Lorsqu'il n'y a ni équipements fixes adaptés sur leur zone de stationnement, ni générateurs, les avions font marcher leur moteur auxiliaire de puissance (APU) afin d'être

alimenté en électricité et de maintenir la climatisation. Mais les APU sont « très polluants », alerte l'Acnusa.

162 contrôles dont 65 poursuites en quatre ans.

« C'est l'image, mais en bien pire, de ces autocars qui sont stationnés avec le moteur allumé, pour faire fonctionner leur clim, en attendant le retour de leurs passagers », résume d'une formule Gilles Leblanc, président de l'Acnusa.

L'autorité cite à la fois le niveau de bruit élevé et les rejets dont l'oxyde d'azote et les composés organiques volatils. « Ces équipements participent à la pollution à l'ozone, en particulier lors d'épisodes de pic de pollution », détaille l'Acnusa.

« En quatre ans, sur 162 contrôles, 65 ont donné lieu à des poursuites pour utilisation abusive des APU, précise Gilles Leblanc. Le montant moyen des amendes tourne autour de 8 à 10 000 euros. » Selon l'arrêté ministériel de 2012, les APU ne peuvent pas être mis en marche plus de 30 minutes, dans le cadre d'une arrivée et pas plus de 60 minutes, pour un départ.

Les amendes ne sont « pas suffisantes pour modifier les comportements », regrette encore l'autorité administrative qui trouve « particulièrement choquant que le premier aéroport d'affaires européen ne soit toujours pas équipé, huit ans après l'arrêté ministériel réglementant l'usage des moteurs auxiliaires de puissance des aéronefs ».

Incompréhension dans le milieu aérien

Le patron de la plate-forme, Aéroports de Paris botte en touche, indiquant que la « gestion des points de stationnement au Bourget est assurée par les opérateurs eux-mêmes, à qui les aires sont louées à l'année ». La sortie de l'Acnusa a d'ailleurs jeté un froid dans le petit milieu de l'aérien au Bourget. Et suscité de l'incompréhension. « Il y a des GPU (NDLR : Ground power unit), autrement dit des générateurs sur l'aéroport », assure-t-on.

Quant à l'installation fixe d'une alimentation de 400 Hertz (ce qu'utilisent les avions, le réseau européen fonctionnant sur 50 Hz), elle serait très compliquée, du fait de « la diversité des types d'avions accueillis au Bourget, et de la logique de placement avions mise en œuvre par les opérateurs », selon Aéroports de Paris. Le gestionnaire ajoute : « D'un jour sur l'autre, le même type avion peut être placé à des endroits sensiblement différents, ce qui ne facilite pas la mise en œuvre d'installation fixe. »

«Un problème de santé au travail»

« Ça concerne directement la santé des personnes qui travaillent sur la plate-forme. Ce sont les petites mains qui sont directement exposées aux pollutions », s'alarme Françoise Brochot, présidente de l'Advocnar, l'association qui lutte contre les nuisances aériennes en Ile-de-France. « Pour nous, c'est un problème de santé au travail. »

Au-delà des APU, l'Advocnar s'interroge sur les efforts menés par le secteur aérien et notamment les opérateurs et le gestionnaire de Roissy, pour réduire les émissions de gaz à effet de serre et les oxydes d'azote.

Le Bourget reste le premier aéroport d'affaires en Europe avec 60 325 mouvements en 2018, soit une augmentation de 3,6 % par rapport à l'année précédente. Une quinzaine de compagnies d'aviation y sont installées.

Le Parisien 21/11/2019

GoAir has placed a second order for 144 geared turbofan (GTF) jet engines from Pratt & Whitney. With this, GoAir has ordered a total of 288 GTF jet engines for its current firm order of 144 Airbus A320neos, the company said.

“The GTF Pratt & Whitney engines will permit GoAir to continue its aggressive growth strategy and at the same time maintain our cost advantage,” said Jeh Wadia, managing director, GoAir.

GoAir will be adding one aircraft a month on average for the next foreseeable future, the company said. The second tranche of 72 Airbus A320 aircraft are expected to begin delivery in 2021. The airline, which runs entirely on an airbus fleet, had ordered a total of 144 A320neos in 2016. Currently, it has a fleet of 53 Airbus A320neo aircraft.

Last month, following four instances of in-flight engine troubles with IndiGo's A320neos, GoAir had received a directive from DGCA to replace at least one engine of A320neos fitted with old P&W low-pressure turbine engines that have flown over 2,900 hours by November 24.

21/11/19 Financial Express

Chennai: A Coimbatore-Chennai IndiGo Airlines flight with around 160 people made an emergency landing on Wednesday morning after a smoke alarm went off in the cargo hold as it was nearing the city. The A320 landed safely at the scheduled 10.40am and the alarm was found to be false.

The second incident in the last 20 days involving an IndiGo flight at Chennai has raised concerns of safety. In both incidents, a false smoke alarm forced a emergency to meet which the airport mobilised equipment and personnel.

IndiGo flight 6E-892 had “a momentary smoke caution for the aft cargo compartment. Post arrival in Chennai, the smoke caution was noted to be spurious. Aircraft (VT-IKI) is currently in Chennai to rectify the cause of the spurious caution,” said a statement from the airline which didn’t respond to the question on steps being taken to prevent repeat of such incidents.

An airport official said “a full emergency was declared soon after the pilot informed about the smoke alarm, and crash tenders were on standby by the side of runway when the plane touched down. They followed the plane till it reached the parking bay.” The airline was attending to the false alarm.

There was a mild delay in the landing of the next two IndiGo flights from Hyderabad and Mangalore scheduled for 11.15am and 11.20am.

21/11/19 Times of India

New Delhi: National carrier Air India was given least preference in allocating slots vacated by Jet Airways at busiest airports of Delhi and Mumbai.

While SpiceJet got maximum 100 slots at these two airports, cash-strapped Air India got just 12.

Private airlines including SpiceJet and Indigo got a maximum chunk of the slots vacated by Jet Airways which had suspended all domestic and international flights after failing to secure emergency funds from its lenders in April this year.

Jet’s exit left various national and international slots vacant and sources said that various airlines approached the Ministry of civil aviation to get Jet Airways’ slots and gave their choices.

If sources are to be believed, Mumbai and Delhi, the two busiest airports, were the top choices opted by leading airlines in the country. According to an estimate, Delhi and Mumbai together comprise of nearly 60% of the air traffic in the country.

21/11/19 Kumar Vikram/New Indian Express

SpiceJet will be setting up an airline at Ras Al Khaimah with a local partner and will have a 49 percent shareholding in the joint-venture, Chairman and Managing Director Ajay Singh said.

The airline will initially have a fleet of 4-5 Boeing MAX. However, SpiceJet is yet to finalise the local partner and apply to the local regulatory body for an air operator permit.

As per the current bilateral arrangement with Ras Al Khaimah, SpiceJet has the availability to operate two flights per week as the remaining two flights are operated by Air India Express. Air India Express operates flights between Kozhikode and Ras Al Khaimah on Wednesday and Friday.

While SpiceJet is yet to decide the departure point of Ras Al Khaimah flights from India, it is certain that the Middle East is an important market for the airline.

"We are looking at East Europe, Africa... we are getting some incentives from the airport... they want us to start operations with as many aircraft as we want... the more the better," a senior official said.

21/11/19 Anu Sharma/CNBC TV18

Chennai: A Bangkok-bound Thai Airlines flight with 268 passengers and nine crew members was towed back to the bay after the pilot stopped it on the runway due to a technical snag at the airport here on Wednesday.

Airport sources said when the flight came to the run way for the takeoff, the pilot noticed a technical snag.

The pilot immediately stopped the aircraft on the runway and it was later towed back to the bay.

Since the snag could not be rectified, the flight was cancelled and all the passengers were accommodated in various hotels. The aircraft would leave for Bangkok tomorrow morning.

Since the alert pilot noticed the snag in time, a major mishap was averted and the 277 passengers, including the crew had a providential escape, the sources said.

20/11/19 DT Next

Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur on Wednesday said the Airport Authority of India (AAI) will prepare a detailed project report within a week on the construction of an airport in Mandi, his home district.

After meeting Union Minister for Civil Aviation Hardeep Singh Puri in New Delhi, Thakur confirmed that the Centre has given a green signal for construction of the airport, an official spokesperson said.

The state government and the AAI will form a joint-venture to develop the upcoming airport, he said.

While the AAI will prepare the project report, the state government would expedite the land acquisition process, the spokesperson said.

21/11/19 PTI/Moneycontrol.com

Pune: Low visibility has affected operations at the Shirdi airport since November 14, resulting in cancellation of 196 flights of various airlines.

"We understand that many passengers are inconvenienced. But under such circumstances, it is difficult to pinpoint a date when the services will start. Not just the scheduled flights, the operation of unscheduled chartered flights has been affected too," a source said.

Shirdi airport director Deepak Shastri told TOI that the Shirdi airport currently has visual flight rules (VFR) facility at present. "This means that the airport currently requires a minimum visibility of up to 5,000 metres to operate an aircraft. However, the visibility factor is less than 3,000 metres for over a week now," he said.

21/11/19 Joy Sengupta/Times of India

In the second major seizure of gold in a month at Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel International (SVPI) airport, the air intelligence unit (AIU) nabbed a passenger in the wee hours of Wednesday. The passenger was travelling with 1.8kg gold smuggled in from Abu Dhabi, the UAE.

A well-placed source said that the passenger was travelling on Etihad Airways flight EY-288, which landed at the city airport at around 3am on Wednesday. "The passenger was carrying gold in the form of various miscellaneous items, all of which were concealed in his baggage," said the source.

Pure gold price settled at Rs 39,500 per 10 gram, including 3% goods and services tax (GST), in **Ahmedabad** on Wednesday. Accordingly, the price of the smuggled gold is estimated to be Rs 71.1 lakh.

The source said that the passenger has been arrested and further investigation is under way.

21/11/19 Niyati Parikh/Times of India

New Delhi: SpiceJet and Bahrain's national carrier Gulf Air on Wednesday signed a Memorandum of Understanding to explore possibilities regarding interline and codeshare agreement, coordinated cargo services, engineering services and pilot training.

The MoU was signed by Ajay Singh, chairman and managing director, SpiceJet, and Krešimir Kucko, chief executive officer, Gulf Air, in New Delhi.

"SpiceJet and Gulf Air will look at collaborating in the field of pilot training to nurture talent in order to deliver the finest resources for both the airlines. The airlines will also engage and collaborate to enhance their respective cargo and engineering services," the Indian budget carrier said in a statement.

20/11/19 PTI/Economic Times

New Delhi: Four domestic airlines, including Jet Airways and JetLite, have shut their operations over the last three years for want of funds and unavailability of aircraft, Parliament was informed on Wednesday. Among the four carriers, the LEPL Projects Ltd-run Air Costa and Air Carnival suspended their services in 2017 due to non-availability of aircraft. As per a written reply by Civil Aviation Minister Hardeep Singh Puri in the Rajya Sabha, Jet Airways and its subsidiary JetLite suspended their services in April this year on account of a funds crunch. The government has said that it is conscious of the financial difficulties being faced by the airlines and is responding to the industry situation. The Minister said the government was coordinating with all the stakeholders to resolve their issues. As a result, the central excise duty on aviation turbine fuel (ATF) has been reduced

from 14 per cent to 11 per cent effective October 11, 2018. The Minister said that 100 per cent FDI has been allowed under the automatic route.

20/11/19 millenniumpost

New Delhi: **This is possibly the worst kept oldest secret of Indian aviation — officials of the regulatory agency conducting checks or deciding on airlines, airports and other agencies where their close relatives are employed.** Whether it was/is senior Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) officials whose children were/are pilots or in other positions, it used to be a cosy club of those checking and those being checked.

However, for the first time a formal attempt has been made to check this issue by the **DGCA chief Arun Kumar who on Wednesday issued a written order asking officials to avoid “conflict of interest” situations. Kumar has warned of strict action against employees who indulge in such practices.**

“Avoidance of ‘conflict of interest’ is a sine qua non of good governance. Instances of DGCA officers participating in meetings/spot checks have come to notice in which this golden rule has been given a go-bye. Therefore, this intervention is made to reiterate that under no circumstances, any of DGCA officials shall partake in deliberations/spot checks or any other official engagement, where he or she has a ‘conflict of interest’,” reads the office memorandum issued by DGCA’s director (administration) Chandra Shekhar at the behest of Arun Kumar.

20/11/19 Saurabh Sinha/Times of India

New Delhi: Passengers taking early morning flights out of **IGI airport's T3** these days face a race against time to board their planes on time. A sudden rush in the number of flyers after IndiGo and SpiceJet moved some of their domestic flights here and other airlines that operate from T3 increased their connections has led to serpentine queues at security checks. **Sources say the CISF is now screening 16,000 domestic passengers in morning peak hours of 6-10 am at T3 - up from 12,000 a year ago.**

In fact, the mad scramble to avoid missing flights begins right from the base of the ramp leading to T3 departure with a bumper-to-bumper line of vehicles slowly moving to dropping passengers. The aviation ministry tweeted last Friday: "SpiceJet and IndiGo have taken over the slots vacated by Jet Airways at IGIA's T3. However, the number of flights they have shifted to T3 is far less than the number Jet earlier operated from T3. Issue of traffic jam on the ramp is due to heightened security alert." But security sources say while the number of flights may not have gone beyond Jet (whose planes had a business class) days, aircraft used by low cost carriers (LCCs) seat more passengers in all-economy configuration.

And they blame “bunching” of newly added flights in morning and evening peak hours for the sudden rush. The combined result: more passengers now than in Jet days. “The correct comparison is the number of passengers flying out of T3 and not the number of flights being operated,” said a source.

The Delhi airport claims “95% of the passengers clear security in less than 10 minutes”. A claim not agreed by peak-hour domestic passengers. Amit Singh, a Delhi-based exporter, last week nearly missed his flight to Bengaluru. “I reached the base of T3 ramp at 6 am for the 8

am flight. Due to traffic congestion, got dropped at the ramp at 6.10 am and entered the terminal at 6.20 am. After checking in, I joined the serpentine security queue at 6.40 am. It took almost 40 minutes to get past security and I got frantic calls from the airline. I ran to the boarding gate, the very last one on domestic side," he said.

20/11/19 Saurabh Sinha/Times of India

Their American dream shattered and huge savings wasted, nearly 150 Indians returned home broke on Wednesday after being deported for either violating visa norms or illegally entering the United States.

As they stepped outside the airport, one after the other, they appeared sad. Some said they felt dejected that they could not realise their American dream even after several attempts.

"This was the fourth time I have been deported," said Singh Jabarjung, 24, from Punjab's Bhatinda. "I boarded a flight on May 15 and reached Mexico via Moscow and Paris. From there, I tried to enter California on May 16 but was caught by police and deported from Arizona," he said.

He said he has spent Rs 24 lakh in the four attempts and Rs 40 lakh on advocacy.

Lakshiwnder Singh, another deportee, said he had given Rs 25 lakh to an Amritsar-based agent to help him enter the US. "He sent me to Mexico on May 2 via Moscow and Paris. They caught me while I was trying to cross the border and deported here from Arizona in US," he said.

The special aircraft carrying the deportees landed at the T3 terminal of the Delhi airport at 6am, an airport official said. The aircraft reached India via Bangladesh.

20/11/19 PTI/Economic Times

New Delhi: The Centre is ready to strengthen existing aviation infrastructure in Odisha but the state government should ensure land for the proposed new international airport near Bhubaneswar, Civil Aviation Minister Hardeep Singh Puri said on Wednesday.

Responding to queries during Question Hour in Rajya Sabha, the minister said the Jharsuguda airport in western Odisha is a "full-fledged" airport and the Centre is willing to cooperate with the state government to address infrastructure gaps.

Highlighting land issues for setting up of a new international airport near Bhubaneswar, Puri said: "Three sites have been identified by authorities concerned. But the Airport Authority of India found them to be inadequate. The fourth site is under discussion."

The aviation infrastructure needs to be strengthened in Odisha as there has been a 25 per cent growth in the number of air passengers at Bhubaneswar airport, while 24 per cent growth in cargo and 30 per cent growth in number of flights, he added.

Noting that the Centre otherwise does not construct greenfield airports within 150 km in a state, the minister said, "Since the existing airport does not have the capacity, we are willing to do it. The Centre is willing to cooperate and provide infrastructure but the state government has to provide the land."

20/11/19 PTI/Business Standard

New Delhi: **Ministry of Civil Aviation on Wednesday (November 20) informed that it will offer routes connectivity to Bilaspur and Ambikapur Airports in Chhattisgarh through its Udan 4.0 scheme.**

Minister of State (I/C) for Civil Aviation Hardeep S Puri, discussed this matter in a review meeting of Udan and informed that the ministry is committed to connecting these airports at the earliest which is the aim of Udan 4.0.

According to information shared by PIB, Udan scheme focuses on states having unconnected regions. Chhattisgarh is one of the focus states for the Ministry of Civil Aviation.

The Ministry also informed that priority routes in Chhattisgarh would be soon offered for bidding under UDAN 4.0. However, Bilaspur has already been included in the ensuing round of bidding under UDAN.

20/11/19 ZeeNews

Bhubaneswar: The airport police station here on Tuesday arrested **a senior employee of a private aviation logistics firm for allegedly misappropriating company funds amounting to nearly Rs 6 lakh.** The accused was identified as Papu Kumar Singh, the operations head of the company.

The company's director, Debasis Mohanty, had last week lodged a police complaint against Singh's alleged cheating and misappropriation of money. Singh, who belongs to Uttar Pradesh, had joined the company in July 2016.

20/11/19 Times of India

Mangaluru: **One person was arrested and gold worth Rs 18 lakh seized from him at Mangaluru International Airport,** custom officials said on Wednesday.

According to them, the passenger arrived with **483.57 grams** of gold on an Air India flight from Dubai. He was held during security check on Tuesday.

The gold was wrapped around the waist of the passenger in three packets.

20/11/19 UNI

The bankruptcy court has ordered corporate insolvency resolution process for the grounded South Indian low-cost air carrier, Air Costa, owned by the Vijayawada-based Lingamaneni family's LEPL Projects.

Air Costa is the second Indian airline, after Jet Airways, to undergo court-monitored debt resolution process under the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code. Aviation regulator Director General of Civil Aviation had in June 2017 suspended the flying licence of the airline, making it officially wind up operations.

The Amaravati bench of the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) appointed MS Mano Ranjani as the interim resolution professional for the airline, responding to a petition by German aircraft maintenance firm MTU Maintenance Berlin-Brandenburg GmbH (MTUBerlin) as an operational creditor.

The German firm said the low-cost air carrier didn't make the required payments for the lease of aircraft engines and also defaulted on payments under maintenance agreements. On Monday evening, Air Costa promoter Ramesh Lingamaneni said in a statement that LEPL was solvent with strong fundamentals.

The airline has also accused the German company in the NCLT of supplying defective engines, that too with a delay, causing it losses. It also challenged other claims of the operational creditor. MTU-Berlin said Air Costa had in November 2014 entered into an aircraft engine lease agreement with its associate MTU Maintenance Lease Services, Netherlands. It had entered also into a separate agreement with MTU-Berlin for engine maintenance, repair and overhaul (MRO) services and another MRO pact with MTU Maintenance Canada.

19/11/19 CR Sukumar/Economic Times

New Delhi: The rush by airlines to add planes and launch flights on slots vacated by Jet Airways has led to overcapacity in the Indian market, slashed fares and losses piling up for carriers, senior airline executives told ET.

According to the winter schedule, airlines have announced a high double-digit increase in capacity, filling the space created on key routes after Jet's demise.

"Jet's exit was a much-needed capacity correction," said a senior airline executive who did not want to be identified. "But the government forced capacity to come back by tying slots and rights allocation to incremental aircraft addition. This, coupled with a slowing economy, has resulted in the market not being able to go through the natural correction after Jet's exit. It has put airlines back into a doom loop, with excess capacity, not enough places to fly aircraft profitably and deep losses. Exit of another airline is quite possible."

Overcapacity has kept fares under stress even during the festive season that sees an uptick in travel. While the number of passengers flying during October increased 4%, fares stayed lower than last year. Data from travel aggregator ixigo showed that average fares between routes such as Delhi-Mumbai and Delhi-Kulu were down by 9% and 54%, respectively, against last year. Some routes saw growth but not enough to offset overall losses.

19/11/19 Mihir Mishra/Economic Times

Guwahati: The Centre's ambitious Udaan scheme, meant to let common people fly at subsidised fares, has failed to deliver in the northeast, which needed it the most to enhance air connectivity, given the difficult terrain in the region.

Of the 13 flights started in 2018 to connect some of the interior parts of northeast with key destinations like Kolkata and Guwahati, only two remain operational. The first flight under the international version of Udaan that was launched between Guwahati and Dhaka under the International Air Connectivity Scheme (IACS) on July 1 is also on hold because of lack of adequate number of passengers.

Pulling out of private airlines from Udaan in the northeast has hit air connectivity between Tezpur (Assam) and Kolkata, Pakyong (Sikkim) and Kolkata, Pakyong and Guwahati, Lilabari (Assam) and Kolkata, and Lilabari and Guwahati.

The only two routes that have sustained in the northeast under Udaan to date are between Shillong and Kolkata and Jorhat and Kolkata.

The Airports Authority of India (AAI), which has been entrusted with the task of building necessary infrastructure for the successful operation of Udaan, has been caught off guard

following the withdrawal of the “ambitious” airlines companies from most of the routes that got through the bidding process held under the Union ministry of civil aviation to give the commoners wings to fly.

AAI's regional executive director Sanjeev Jindal said, “The routes in which the airlines have stopped operation under Udaan need to be handed over to established airlines companies, which can sustain operations in the northeast. They must not see aviation solely from the commercial aspect, but as a social sector where connectivity has to be improved for the overall development of a region that has immense potential for growth. The governments there have to financially assist them to recover losses under Udaan.”

Jindal said while popular domestic routes in the country have about 98% seat occupancy, this has not been the case in the northeast, where some of the least happening airports have got air connectivity boost under Udaan.

19/11/19 Kangkan Kalita/Times of India

Making headway into Air India disinvestment, the government is meeting potential investors to sell off almost its entire equity stake in the national carrier.

"Currently, the investor outreach programme is on. Air India CMD, Aviation Secretary and other concerned officials are meeting potential bidders," Civil Aviation Minister Hardeep Singh Puri told IANS.

The minister said the first meeting of the Group of Ministers (GoM) has met earlier and taken some decisions.

He hinted that disinvestment exercise was very much on course and can happen soon.

Asked if there were still hurdles such as FDI rules in the way of Air India disinvestment, the Minister said he was not aware of any.

The government has decided to almost completely exit the airline saying the financial support being provided to the airline could be put to better use such as building social infrastructure.

19/11/19 IANS/Outlook

New Delhi: **The Supreme Court has asked the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) to consider afresh a plea by a serving Air India (AI) pilot who has sought to initiate insolvency proceedings against the airline for failing to pay his past dues.**

A New Delhi bench of the NCLT, the adjudicating authority for insolvency resolution, had adjourned hearings in the matter sine die in February, after AI submitted to the tribunal that a similar matter was pending before the Supreme Court.

“It is open for Air India to take this up as a defence in the application that is filed by the petitioner before the NCLT. The NCLT order [adjourning proceedings sine die], therefore, is set aside and the NCLT will now go into the Section 9 application filed by the petitioner afresh, after considering objections by the respondent [AI],” a two-judge Supreme Court Bench of Justices Rohinton Nariman and V Ramasubramanian said in its order last month. The pending dispute referred to by AI concerns a challenge to a judgment of the Bombay High Court, which had ruled that the airline could not have altered the terms of service of

employees who had joined when the erstwhile domestic carrier Indian Airlines was merged with it in 2007.

The Supreme Court said that it was aware of the pending dispute, but the same could not come in the way of the NCLT hearing the insolvency petition filed by the pilot under Section 9 of The Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC).

Under Section 9, salaried employees can, acting as operational creditors, initiate insolvency proceedings against a corporate debtor.

The pilot had approached the NCLT towards the end of last year. After the tribunal's order, he approached the top court in August this year.

A separate but similar plea by another pilot who is now retired, also seeking the initiation of insolvency proceedings against AI for failing to pay his dues, has been pending before the NCLT since the beginning of 2018.

The dues claimed by the serving and former pilots amount to nearly Rs 1 crore and Rs 70 lakh respectively, a person aware of the developments said. These dues are for the period between July 2012 and January 2016.

19/11/19 Aashish Aryan/Indian Express

New Delhi: **AirAsia India Pvt Ltd (AAIPL) will from Tuesday give pollution masks to passengers boarding flights to Delhi from other metros like Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Mumbai and Kolkata, till the month-end, "to combat the deteriorating air quality in the capital". Delhi and NCR (National Capital Region) has among the most toxic air quality on earth in past few days.**

AAIPL COO Sanjay Kumar said: "Our primary objective is to serve guests travelling with AirAsia India with best the in-flight experience. With this initiative, we take a step forward to upkeep the health of our guests' post their flying experience with us. This is for them to have adequate support to avoid health related issues due to the air pollution in the city. We are passionate to work with our guests, employees and other key stakeholders who have come together to bring meaningful stance to our operations."

In a statement, the airline said: "The overall Delhi air quality index (AQI) in the city currently is 494. According to the monitoring agency SAFAR this index measures the levels of airborne PM 2.5 - particles that can reach deep into the lungs. In winters, there's a dip in the minimum temperature that makes the air cold and heavy, making it easier for accumulation of pollutants close to the ground. This is intended to help the guests cope with the changing environmental conditions in the city and stay healthy."

19/11/19 Saurabh Sinha/Times of India

Kannur: **The clarification made by the civil aviation minister Hardeep Singh Puri that there is no plan to grant 'point of call' status to Kannur international airport (KIAL) now has come as a shock, because it has dampened the possibility of foreign carriers getting permission to operate from Kannur.**

In reply to a question by MP K Sudhakaran, last day, the minister made it clear that there is no plan for a 'point of call' status to the airport or railway line to Mattannur, citing that the

facility is in an interior area.

Only those airports which have this status can get the permission to have the operations of foreign carriers. The reply comes at a time when the lobbying to get a nod for international carriers to operate from here is getting stronger and there is concern that the decision might affect the future of the airport.

The MP said that it is not right to consider Kannur, which has the greatest number of Indians working abroad, as an interior place and this approach should be corrected. He also said that a railway line is important for the development of the facility.

23/11/19 Times of India

Panaji: A bird hit which resulted in the crash of an Indian Navy MiG-29K fighter jet after taking off at Goa's Dabolim International Airport on November 16, could also bring down a passenger aircraft in the future, Goa Congress spokesperson Trajano D'Mello said.

He also said the state government was reluctant to crack down on illegal constructions and a fish market in close proximity of the airport -- despite requests from the Indian Navy -- due to political considerations.

"The MiG-29K fighter jet that crashed was due to a bird hit. The government has remained a mute spectator and insensitive to this grave incident. Such a disaster could happen to a passenger aircraft. God Forbid! Is the government waiting for such a disaster?" D'Mello told a press conference at the state Congress headquarters in Panaji.

He also said that several of the new constructions in question near the airport belong to a real estate developer who is an aide of a sitting BJP minister.

On November 16, a MiG-29K trainer flight crashed after a bird hit, just after it took off the airport, which functions out of the Indian Navy base INS Hansa. Both pilots had managed to safely eject themselves to safety after both the engines of their jet failed.

23/11/19 IANS/Outlook

Greater Noida: Environmental activists have recorded fresh sightings of blackbucks at the land demarcated for Jewar airport and have demanded that a plan be chalked out urgently for the conservation of the animals.

A group of local residents who visited the area in the second week of November spotted two adult male and two female blackbucks in Rohi, one of the six villages from which land has been acquired for the airport.

"We saw blackbucks in the vacant land that has been acquired by the administration. We also saw a considerable number of birds in the area and there is no doubt that the area is rich in biodiversity. The airport project is important for the local economy. But the authorities should also survey the area intensively and identify the key species that need to be protected on a priority basis," said Vikrant Tongad, an environmental activist.

According to the latest census conducted in May this year, 248 blackbucks have been spotted in the district.

Tongad added that it is important to speed up the conservation efforts, as coming up with a plan and protecting the species would take a long time and the plans have to be

implemented before the construction work for the airport starts.

Birds like Asian openbill stork, Sarus crane, white-breasted waterhen, Purple heron, black-winged stilt, purple moorhen and red-wattled lapwing have been spotted recently.

Officials said that the Wildlife Institute of India (WII) is conducting a study on the locality to assess the likely impact of the proposed airport on birds and animals in the area and will submit an interim conservation report by the end of the month.

23/11/19 Times of India

Ahmedabad: Passengers travelling from Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel International airport in the city to Mumbai by Air India flight AI-030 early on Friday were forced to wait in the aircraft for two hours, as a technical fault was detected in the aircraft, just ahead of its scheduled departure.

The flight was to depart SVPI at 4.00am and reach Mumbai at 5.15am. It ended up departing at 6am and reached Mumbai at 7am. "Engineers did not clear the aircraft for take-off as a technical fault was detected. Boarding had already taken place and the aircraft left after the fault was repaired," a well-placed source said.

Another Air India flight to Mumbai was also delayed by three hours. Sources said this flight was delayed **due to operational issues** and passengers were informed of the delay well in advance.

23/11/19 Times of India

Bengaluru: Inclement weather conditions in Puducherry resulted in sudden cancellation of a SpiceJet flight from Kempegowda International Airport on Friday, leading to irate passengers venting their fury.

According to an airport source, nearly 45 passengers of flight SG 3419 were at the boarding gate waiting for the shuttle bus when the staff announced that their trip has been called off due to poor weather at the destination airport.

"Passengers got into aggressive mode and started shouting near the boarding gate," a source said. "The flight, which was to depart at 12.35pm, was already said to have been delayed for an hour. After the wait, the trip was finally cancelled," he added.

23/11/19 New Indian Express

New Delhi: Flights connecting Kolkata with Europe and in-flight announcements in regional language were the two key suggestions related to civil aviation made in the Rajya Sabha on Friday.

Ahmed Hassan of All India Trinamool Congress (AITC) urged the government to ensure direct flights between Kolkata and European countries as it will benefit many states in the region such as Jharkhand, Odisha, West Bengal and other northeastern states.

He said that direct flights would help boost trade and tourism in the region.

Marumalarchi Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (MDMK) founder Vaiko wanted the flight announcements to be made in regional language, at least flights within a state. He sought

the support of fellow members for executing the idea.

"Flight announcements in India should be made in regional language, at least, in the flights operating within a state," he said.

Vaiko said that air travel was no longer a luxury and people fly from various parts of the country to the Gulf region. Further, salaried and middle class people are also flying. The lawmaker from Tamil Nadu said that announcements for precautionary measures and other guidelines are made only in Hindi and English.

22/11/19 Social News.xyz

Chennai: It was sheer shock and tragedy for a young couple, when they realised that their six-month-old baby had died, at Chennai Airport, after their flight from Victoria in Australia to Chennai on Wednesday night.

Sakthi Murugan and his wife Geetha, both techies, were returning from Australia to Chennai with their six-month-old son, Hrithik.

It was Hrithik's maiden trip to Chennai.

Police said after their flight landed at Kuala Lumpur, the baby was fed and the couple boarded the flight.

However, it was in Chennai airport after clearing immigration that the parents noticed no movement from the baby and his feet had turned blue, police said.

He was rushed to Apollo Hospital where he was pronounced dead. A case has been registered.

22/11/19 New Indian Express

The Airport Authority of India (AAI) is likely to lease out six more airports under the public private partnership (PPP) model in the coming months.

"AAI Board in its meeting has recommended for leasing out 6 airports namely **Varanasi, Amritsar, Bhubaneswar, Trichy, Indore and Raipur for operation, management and development under PPP,**" the ministry of civil aviation told Parliament on Wednesday.

These facilities are managed by state-owned AAI and witnessed traffic between 1.57-4.15 million passengers in FY19.

The ministry had bid out profit-making airports at Ahmedabad, Jaipur, Lucknow, Trivandrum, Guwahati and Mangalore in February 2019 on the basis of highest per-passenger fee (PPF) offered to the AAI.

21/11/19 Financial Express

Airports and international travel have mostly been synonymous with long hours of waiting and even longer queues. Well, all your travel woes will be put to rest with the new biometric technology that most airports will be adopting, hopefully in the near future. **The BIAL (Bangalore International Airport Pvt. Ltd.) has proposed to install biometric technology for immigration clearance at the Bengaluru airport.**

Indian citizens may not have to wait in queues anymore to get their passports stamped for

immigration. Biometric technology will be installed for immigration for Indian citizens flying back to the country. Under a unified immigration database, the passport will get stamped digitally and will contain all the information that a physical stamp does. An iris scan or a finger scan may be used to register arrival in the country.

Pre-exiting biometric technology at the Kempegowda International Airport for paperless self-boarding has been largely successful. With its Digi Yatra project, the airport introduced the biometric system for boarding in order to avoid long queues, enable seamless boarding and for conservation of time. For the same, passengers have to log on to the Digi Yatra website, put in their government approved identification documents and record their biometrics, which will enable them to travel without any documents. Various countries including Britain, China, Japan, Singapore and America have adopted the biometric technology for the convenience of the passengers.

22/11/19 Outlook Traveller

New Delhi: Four domestic departures scheduled to operate between 6am and 8am from Indira Gandhi International Airport's terminal 3 (T3) will be shifted to other terminals to ease peak hour security queues.

The move will mean 600 fewer passengers during morning peak hours at T3. Some other steps are also being taken to speed up the process for domestic outbound flyers at T3, as Christmas travel season is less than a month away.

While these are the immediate steps, India's busiest airport has also decided to take some medium term measures to handle air traffic — which is now again showing green shoots of growth after a decline following Jet's demise earlier this year — at T1, T2 and T3 till the expanded T1 is ready by June 2022 and fourth runway by June 2021.

"Fifty-eight airlines operate from T3. We are going to add another check-in island at T3 and have seven check-in islands in all. We will have all automatic tray retrieval system (ATRS) handbag X-ray counters (where bags with suspicious contents automatically go for physical checks and not for collection by passenger) at T2 and T3 to speed up hand bag clearance process," DIAL CEO Videh Kumar Jaipuria told TOI.

22/11/19 Saurabh Sinha/Times of India

DGCA tells IndiGo to ground one old A320neo plane with unmodified PW engine for every new A320neo aircraft added to existing fleet. IndiGo's efforts to replace all unmodified PW engines on A320neo aircraft by Jan 31, 2020, don't instill enough confidence, says the aviation regulator

LiveMint Aviation 25/11/2019

The September quarter is traditionally a lean period for Indian aviation companies. Expectations from last quarter's financial results of InterGlobe Aviation Ltd and smaller peer SpiceJet Ltd were therefore not running high. The airlines, however, failed to meet even these lowered expectations.

InterGlobe runs IndiGo, India's largest airline by domestic market share.

For the September quarter, IndiGo and SpiceJet reported a net loss of ₹1,062 crore and ₹463 crore, respectively. Both airlines faced cost pressures. One reason why IndiGo's performance was adversely hit was because the airline made a provision worth ₹320 crore towards maintenance on its older A320ceo aircraft, which led to a massive spike in maintenance costs. For SpiceJet, unabsorbed costs from the grounding of Boeing Co. 737 Max hurt in the September quarter. Moreover, older aircraft that SpiceJet had received from Jet Airways (India) Ltd, which shut operations in April, also added to the cost pressures. On the yield front, IndiGo fared better. "IndiGo's yield expansion was higher than estimated—8.5% year-on-year versus 5% estimate; SpiceJet's 1.9% year-on-year yield belied our 3.5% year-on-year growth estimate due to rising competitive intensity-induced pricing pressure," said analysts from Edelweiss Securities Ltd.

According to Paarth Gala, analyst at Prabhudas Lilladher Pvt. Ltd, **"IndiGo's yields were likely helped by higher fares in the international market where the airline is expanding rapidly. In any case, domestic yields are under pressure."**

Going ahead, for IndiGo the journey may not be particularly smooth. **"With IndiGo's domestic demand moderating, competitive pressures have started to emerge, leading to softer yields. We expect its capacity growth to moderate to 24% in FY20 as demand slackens,"** said Edelweiss analysts in a report on 19 November.

At the time of announcing its September quarter results, IndiGo had cut its FY20 capacity addition guidance to 25% from 30%.

"On the other hand, we expect SpiceJet to be a larger beneficiary in FY21 as the efficient B737 is being inducted," added Edelweiss. SpiceJet has said that the Max service will likely return in January 2020.

Needless to say, investors should watch progress on this front closely.

In general, the fact that the December quarter is seasonally stronger may offer some comfort. It also helps that oil prices have remained relatively softer. Positive surprises in yields (a measure of pricing), if any, will make it easier for investors to shower some brownie points, as far as the stock performance is concerned.

Live Mint Aviation 21/11/2019

Two important cities of Chattisgarh will be connected under Centre's UDAN scheme. The UDAN scheme which focuses on states having unconnected regions through affordable air connectivity.

The Ministry of Civil Aviation will soon start the bidding process for UDAN 4.0 under which prescribed priority routes in Chhattisgarh would be offered for bidding

Hardeep Singh Puri, Minister of state for Civil Aviation, in a review meeting of UDAN discussed demands received for connectivity of Bilaspur and Ambikapur in Chhattisgarh and said that the Ministry is committed to connect these airports at the earliest.

UDAN 4.0 would focus on routes connecting these airports, he added.

Bilaspur is identified as a priority airport and prescriptive routes involving Bilaspur have already been included in the ensuing round of bidding under UDAN. There has been immense interest expressed from the airline operators to connect the city and extend benefit of air transport to the people of the region.

Bilaspur is significant on the country's map both culturally and commercially. The region is also recognized for its distinct characteristics; be it the unique rice quality, Doobraj or the contribution of the Kosa silk industry to the handloom sector. Connecting Bilaspur is expected to meet desired aspirations of the people of the region.

Also, Alliance Air, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Air India, on Monday launched its first direct flight between Ahmedabad and the port town of Kandla in Gujarat.

The five days a week Ahmedabad-Kandla service is the 228th route covered under the UDAN-RCS scheme, a central government initiative that seeks to enhance regional connectivity and make air travel affordable to the masses. The Ahmedabad-Kandla flight will operate from Monday to Friday under the Regional Connectivity Scheme (RCS).

Live Mint Aviation 20/11/2019

Ramprakash Srikumar moved to New Zealand to train as a commercial pilot, but was killed in a light plane crash in Canterbury.

The 23-year-old student pilot, from Srivilliputhur in India, was flying a Cessna 172 aircraft when it crashed into the dry lake bed of Te Waihora/Lake Ellesmere near Motukarara, south of Christchurch, late on Thursday.

The Canterbury Aero Club owned the plane Srikumar was flying.

Club chief executive Jeremy Ford said the "tragic" incident had deeply affected everyone in the Canterbury aviation community.

He said Srikumar joined the club about a year ago and was training towards a commercial pilot licence with the goal of flying for commercial airlines in India.

"He was a well respected young man by his friends and colleagues at work and they all speak highly of him as an engaged individual and really our thoughts are with the family."

Ford said Srikumar's parents, who were still in India, were "absolutely devastated and in shock".

The Canterbury Aero Club was offering them support, he said.

Ford confirmed Srikumar was training at the time of the crash.

24/11/19 Jonathan Guildford/Stuff

Intense competition has ensued among Indian carriers, especially between IndiGo (InterGlobe Aviation) and SpiceJet, in the Middle East market as all of them look to corner the space vacated by Jet Airways.

In the process, the biggest beneficiaries could be the fliers who were otherwise facing the brunt of high fares after the Naresh Goyal-founded airline suspended operations in April. Now, with other airlines aggressively adding flights to Dubai, Abu Dhabi and other destinations in the region, fares have climbed down.

Among the most aggressive have been IndiGo and SpiceJet. The former recently signed a code share agreement with Qatar Airways, which will allow the Indian airline add more passengers on its flights between Indian cities and Doha. The Indian cities connected under the agreement are Delhi, Mumbai and Hyderabad. Just before signing the partnership, it had increased frequency to Doha from Chennai and Delhi.

Apart from these, the year has seen the airline adding flights to Dubai, Abu Dhabi and Jeddah in Saudi Arabia. IndiGo, which also flies to Riyadh in Saudi Arabia, has indicated that it will further expand services in the country next year.

25/11/19 Prince Mathews Thomas/Moneycontrol

SpiceJet is looking to raise Rs 750 crore in order to tackle the current liquidity crunch, reported Business Standard. Sources told the newspaper the airline is planning to raise the amount by selling new shares.

SpiceJet, the report said, is expected to raise the money via qualified institutional placement (QIP). **The QIP is a fundraising method in which, listed companies sell shares, convertible debentures, or any securities other than warrants to a qualified institutional buyer.**

SpiceJet, in a statement to the stock exchanged, said, "We wish to clarify that the Company does not have any plan to come with any qualified institutional placement (QIP) at this time."

Sources told the paper the management is already in talks with various domestic funds such as Birla Sun Life Insurance and Axis Asset Management. Further, the report added approval from the board and selecting a banker is still pending.

25/11/19 CNBC TV18

As the void left by the demise of Jet Airways in April is now filled and positive forecast about more passengers taking the aerial route, domestic carriers in the country continue to increase their fleet size.

IndiGo, which had a fleet 245 aircraft including 129 A320neos and 89 A320neos, recently placed an order for 300 Airbus A320neo family planes worth at least USD 33 billion at recent list prices, handing the plane-maker one of its largest orders ever. The order is a mix of A320 neo, A321 neo, and the new long range aircraft A321 XLR that will also help the country's largest carrier to widen its international footprint.

For the full fiscal 2020 Y-o-Y, IndiGo's capacity increase in available seat kilometers is expected to be 25 per cent. In the turbulent second quarter, when it reported record loss of `1,062 crore, it managed to add 10 planes.

SpiceJet, country's second largest private carrier that inducted only three Boeing 737 NG aircraft and one Q400 during the quarter ended 30 September, also plans to enhance passenger capacity in near future by inducting aircraft on short term leases in the ongoing winter schedule when demand and fare generally remain high.

The low-cost carrier that also has aggressive international ambitions and is all set to launch an airline outside India in Ras Al Khaimah in the United Arab Emirates, is in talks with Boeing Co. to buy more 737 Max aircraft, which at present remains grounded.

Earlier, Vistara, Tata Sons and Singapore Airlines' joint venture, said it would almost double its fleet size to 42 planes by this fiscal end as compared to 22 aircraft in March 2019. Last year, Vistara had ordered 50 planes from the Airbus A320neo family, including the A321neo, to be delivered till 2023.

25/11/19 New Indian Express

Bengaluru: **The Hindustan Aeronautics Limited and Rajiv Gandhi National Aviation University (RGNAU) joined hands to promote cooperation between them to grow the pool of human resources in the aviation and aerospace industry of the country.** As part of the golden jubilee celebrations of HAL Management Academy (HMA), HAL signed an MoU in this regard with RGNAU, a Central University under Ministry of Civil Aviation.

The MoU will identify the type of academic and training programmes that could be offered jointly, Bengaluru- headquartered HAL said in a statement.

HAL CMD R Madhavan said over the years, HMA has assumed a whole new role which is more pragmatic and relevant to the industry needs.

"HMA plays a pivotal role in developing competencies in professionals at different levels to strengthen the aviation eco system," he added.

25/11/19 PTI/India TV News

Airports Authority of India (AAI) has recently launched a first of its kind Airport Kitchen equipped with state-of-the-art-facilities at the Chennai International Airport. This unique and mammoth kitchen is fully equipped with the latest applications, high-end equipment, and cutting-edge technology. Spread across approximately 15000 sq. ft, it will be operated and managed by Travel Food Services (TFS).

The kitchen brings international standards to India, whilst completely adhering to FSSAI norms. It also boasts of VRV for air-conditioning, hydro pneumatic systems for domestic water supply, and fire suppression systems. The modern and expansive kitchen houses thirteen cold storage facilities, with the total capacity of over 20,000 liters, food automation machines for frying, grilling, roasting and so on; high capacity ventilation equipment, and elevators to name a few. Furthermore, it is equipped with appliances that include — cooking centers to conduct various cooking jobs such as stewing, braising, deep-frying and boiling, along with blast-chillers to get the temperature of hot food from over 75 degrees to below 5 degrees (danger zone) within 2 hours. In order to significantly improve the efficiency and output, it also has automated LPG-operated cook-woks with a capacity of 80kgs, vegetable cutters, rice washers, coconut scrappers, high-pressure jet washers, and refrigerated vehicles for dispatch.

AAI and TFS are extremely particular about consistently maintaining high quality and hygiene standards, thus, the kitchen also includes key processes like — segregation of dairy, fruits and vegetables, and butchery post receiving them, vegetable washing and sanitisation of fruits and vegetables (especially perishable ones), and all quality checks, stringently conducted by various departments at various stages of food production.

25/11/19 Everything Experiential/Business World

New Delhi: **With Jet Airways shutting down in April, the Lufthansa group is planning to “strengthen” its partnership with Indian airlines like Vistara and Air India in 2020, the top Indian official of the largest European carrier said.**

Currently, **Lufthansa has an interline agreement with Vistara,** which allows a passenger to check-in luggage at the first airport itself for entire journey consisting of flights of both airlines.

“With Vistara... we are strengthening our relationship. Jet Airways was one of our partners in India and with them having left the scene, we are looking for Indian airlines to partner up with,” Ettiyil said.

Asked if Lufthansa was planning to convert its interline pact with Vistara to a codeshare

agreement, he said, "We are trying to strengthen it." The airline has a codeshare agreement with Air India, which allows one airline's passenger to book a ticket on the other airline, using the first one's ticketing system.

24/11/19 PTI/Tribune

Panaji: The Congress in Goa on Saturday alleged that hidden agenda of Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) government in the state was close down the Dabolim Airport in South Goa. Addressing a press conference at party state headquarters in the city, Goa Pradesh Congress Committee (GPCC) Spokesperson Trajano D'Mello said the hidden agenda of the government closing the Dabolim airport was becoming clear.

"God forbid a disaster to a passenger aircraft can happen. One day we will find the Director General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) in all probabilities will step in and declare that the airport with such onstructions which are hazardous for flying aircrafts and it will be a risk to operate passenger aircrafts and since there exists an airport in very close vicinity may direct to close down passenger aircraft from Dabolim and Mopa could be activated," he said.

He alleged that according to Navy sources, MiG-29K Fighter Jet of Indian Navy that crashed recently was due to a bird hit and the government has remained a mute spectator and insensitive to this grave incident.

23/11/19 UNI

Tirupati: **A major mishap averted for the passengers of Spice jet at Tirupati airport. The plane, which reached Tirupati from Mumbai via Hyderabad, while landing on the runway, the flight tyre got burst.** The pilot who noticed the tyre explosion has controlled the flight and saved the lives of the passengers. The Spice jet flight was immediately repaired at Renigunta airport. The worried passengers breathed easy after the safe landing. This Spice jet flight was supposed to arrive at 5:10 pm in Tirupati but got delayed due to technical problems while taking off in Mumbai. With this delay, nearly 170 passengers were remained to wait till 10 pm in Tirupati.

23/11/19 Yadedya Talari/Hans India

The Indian Navy wants the public sector kept out of \$3 Billion Make in India programme to build 111 Naval Utility Helicopters (NUH) under the Strategic Partnership Model.

Public Sector giant Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) and its joint venture with Russian Helicopters, **India-Russia Helicopters Limited (IRHL) have been dropped from the final shortlist of Indian Strategic Partnership hopefuls.**

From the private sector, Reliance and Laxmi Machine Works have been omitted from the shortlist, according to informed sources.

The shortlist of both Indian and foreign companies is likely to come up for final approval before India's Defence Acquisition Council (DAC) at its meeting scheduled for November 28, it is reliably learnt.

The Indian companies on the shortlist are Tata Advanced Systems Limited (TASL), Mahindra Defence, Adani Aerospace & Defence and Bharat Forge.

22/11/19 SP's Naval Forces

New Delhi: **An Afghan passenger has been arrested by CISF personnel at the Delhi airport today for allegedly carrying US dollars worth around Rs. 10 lakh in "unauthorised" manner,**

officials said.

They said the traveller, Bakhtyari Waheedullah, was intercepted around 5:30 am at the Indira Gandhi International Airport when he was about to board a SpiceJet flight to Kabul. A total of **USD 14,000**, in various denominations, was recovered from the man who held a passport of Afghanistan.

23/11/19 PTI/NDTV

Two passengers who had flown in to India from Nepal for an international environment summit have sent a legal notice to Air India, accusing the national carrier of lacunae in service and causing mental agony to them.

The duo has demanded a compensation of Rs 90,600 from the airline for the poor service.

Chhabi Guadel and Lekh Bahadur Tamang had travelled from Kathmandu, Nepal, to Delhi on November 17 and were expected to touch down at 4.15 pm; however, their flight got delayed and they reached the national capital only around 6 pm.

This, in turn, created disruptions in their next Air India flight for Pune, scheduled at 7 pm, which they missed due to the delay in previous flight. The duo had, however, used all their might to convince the ground staff and allow them to board the flight headed for Pune or arrange an alternative flight, the two men insisted. They were turned down by the authorities, they further alleged.

The next flight that they booked was a midnight one and took off from Delhi at 1am. The two had to make it to Pune on November 18 to attend the Global Sanitation Economy Summit in Pune.

The notice sent to Air India read, "By this legal notice you are hereby called upon to express your apology for delaying the flight, which resulted in huge economic losses.

You are liable to pay your client, sum of Rs 30,600 for unnecessary booking another flight by IndiGo and for spending Rs 10,000 at a hotel in Delhi." Speaking to Mirror, Guadel said, "We were in a distressed situation after we landed at the Delhi international airport as we were late by one-and-a-half hour.

To be on a safer side, we booked a connecting flight from Delhi to Pune, which was almost two-and-a-half hours later around 7 pm. Our previous flight from Kathmandu, Nepal, was supposed to reach Delhi at 4.15 pm, which landed at 6 pm due to some technical issues."

"Though the immigration officials were very co-operative and helped us to get done with the procedure swiftly, we couldn't make it to the flight within 45 minutes before the boarding procedure was completed," Guadel added.

23/11/19 Supriya Dedganonkar/Pune Mirror

India's aviation regulator on Monday warned IndiGo that the airline's efforts to modify the glitch-prone older Pratt & Whitney (PW) engines installed on Airbus A320Neo aircraft were not satisfactory. This means a significant portion of IndiGo's fleet could be grounded if the carrier fails to meet 31 January, 2020, deadline.

"We may find ourselves in a situation in which we remain saddled with a large number of aircraft with unmodified engines and operating on a schedule approved by us," the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) said.

However, DGCA said that the grounding of aircraft would be a sub-optimal solution.

IndiGo has 98 A320Neo family aircraft, comprising 91 A320Neos and seven A321Neos, which are all powered by P&W engines. Of these, one of the two engines fitted in 23 aircraft have been modified. The airline recently took delivery of an A320Neo family plane days after the DGCA issued a directive.

The regulator said that for every new A320Neo aircraft that IndiGo adds to its fleet henceforth, it would have to ground a similar aircraft with unmodified engines.

"The grounded aircraft can be allowed a fresh schedule once its engines are replaced," DGCA said. "This process may remain in force till all the engines in the fleet have been replaced."

InterGlobe Aviation Ltd, which operates IndiGo, said it is trying to fix the issue. "IndiGo is working with P&W and Airbus to adjust inflow of LPT (low pressure turbine) 3 modified engines to meet the DGCA guidelines," an IndiGo spokesperson said.

On 1 November, DGCA had directed IndiGo to replace P&W engines with modified LPTs on 97 Airbus A320Neo aircraft by 31 January, following a series of engine incidents.

Only IndiGo and GoAir operate P&W-powered A320Neo family aircraft in India. GoAir has 38 Airbus A320Neo aircraft on its fleet, which are also powered by P&W engines.

About a fortnight ago, DGCA extended the deadline to replace at least one engine each on 36 Airbus A320Neo planes operated by IndiGo and GoAir by 24 November. Out of these 23 planes belonged to IndiGo and 13 to GoAir.

Live Mint Aviation 25/11/2019

The DGCA on Monday instructed IndiGo to ground an old A320neo family aircraft with an unmodified Pratt and Whitney (PW) engine for every new A320neo plane added to its fleet to prevent large-scale cancellation of flights from January 31 onwards.

The aviation regulator issued the directions in view of the January 31 deadline given by it to IndiGo to replace all unmodified PW engines on its 97 A320neo family aircraft or face grounding of planes.

The PW engine-powered A320 neo planes in the fleets of IndiGo and GoAir have been facing glitches both mid-air and on-ground since their induction way back in 2016.

Efforts undertaken by IndiGo to replace all unmodified PW engines on its 97 A320neo family aircraft by January 31 next year -- as per the previous instructions of the DGCA -- do not "instill enough confidence with regard to the timely completion of the said task", said a senior official of DGCA.

The regulator was afraid that from January 31 onwards, it would have to ground many IndiGo planes as they would be left with unmodified PW engines, leading to multiple flight cancellations across the country, the official said.

The regulator's Monday directive was likely to affect the low-cost carrier's expansion plans as it would have to deploy each new A320neo plane, which was joining its fleet from here onwards, on the routes that would be vacated due to grounding of an unmodified A320neo plane.

"Now onwards, every aircraft that is added to the existing fleet, shall lead to one of those with unmodified engines to be grounded... the new aircraft may be operated on the same schedule as was being operated by the aircraft, which will be grounded," the official said.

"Simply put, the new aircraft will slip into the role of one existing aircraft with unmodified engines...The grounded aircraft can be allowed a fresh schedule once its PW engines are replaced," a senior Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) official said.

On November 1, the DGCA had told IndiGo to replace PW engines under both wings of 97 A320neo family aircraft "at all costs" by January 31 or they would be grounded.

The November 1 directive had come after the airline faced four mid-air engine malfunctions in A320neo planes in the last week of October, which "caused a serious concern and resultant disruption", according to the regulator.

The DGCA official said on Monday, "If left unaddressed, we may find ourselves in a situation in which we remain saddled with large number of aircraft with unmodified engines and operating on a schedule approved by us. We are left with the only option i.e. to ground them on January 31, 2020."

If the DGCA exercises this option, "large scale disruptions with its attendant consequences" shall follow, the official said.

IndiGo said in a statement said, "The current schedule remains intact."

"IndiGo is working with PW and Airbus to adjust inflow of LPT (low pressure turbine) 3rd stage modified engines to meet the DGCA guidelines," the airline said.

With a fleet of around 247 planes and a share of around 47 per cent of the domestic air passenger market, IndiGo is India's largest airline.

The budget carrier was asked to present a "complete action plan" on November 25 on how it would procure and replace PW engines on all 97 aircraft by January 31, said the DGCA official on Monday.

On October 29, IndiGo had announced that it would buy 300 "Airbus 320neo family" planes, which comprised A320neo, A321neo and A321XLR aircraft.

However, the budget carrier made it clear that the choice of engine manufacturer for this order would be made at a later date.

New Delhi, Nov 25 (PTI)

Shares of InterGlobe Aviation Ltd, promoters of budget carrier IndiGo, bucked the broader market trend to trade lower on Tuesday. At 2.50 pm, the stock was down 2.1% at ₹1,419.50, having touched an intra-day low of ₹1,389.

The Sensex was at 40,784.84 points, down from its intra-day high of 41,120.28, but up nearly 0.3% from previous close.

On Monday, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) warned IndiGo that the airline's efforts to modify older Pratt & Whitney (P&W) engines installed on Airbus A320Neo aircraft were not satisfactory, which means a significant portion of its fleet could be grounded if the carrier failed to meet a 31 January deadline.

"We may find ourselves in a situation in which we remain saddled with a large number of aircraft with unmodified engines and operating on a schedule approved by us," the DGCA said, while adding that the grounding of aircraft would be a sub-optimal solution.

IndiGo has 98 aircraft of the A320Neo family, comprising 91 of A320Neos and seven planes A321Neos, which are all powered by P&W engines. Of these, one of the two engines fitted in 23 aircraft have been modified.

The airline recently took delivery of an A320Neo family plane days after the DGCA issued a directive. The regulator said that for every new A320Neo aircraft that IndiGo adds to its fleet hereon, it would have to ground a similar aircraft with unmodified engines.

On 1 November, DGCA had directed IndiGo to replace P&W engines with modified low pressure turbines (LPTs) on 97 Airbus A320Neo aircraft by 31 January, following a series of engine incidents.

Live Mint Aviation 26/11/2019

SpiceJet Ltd has denied a news report that it plans to raise ₹750 crore through a qualified institutional placement. The report in the Business Standard newspaper had said that the budget airline is talking to investors to cope with the liquidity crunch it is facing.

Whether or not the company has actually been talking to potential investors, the fact is that SpiceJet has extremely low amounts of cash on its books, and needs to bolster its balance sheet with a fundraise sooner than later.

As on 30 September, the airline had cash and cash equivalents worth ₹93 crore. What's more it had a negative net worth of about ₹850 crore. For comparison, market leader InterGlobe Aviation Ltd had cash and cash equivalents worth about ₹18,736 crore and a net worth of about ₹6,200 crore at end of September.

InterGlobe runs IndiGo, India's largest airline by market share.

For the six months ended 30 September, SpiceJet reported a loss of ₹200 crore, as the September quarter turned out to be weaker than expected.

Bhavin Shah, fund manager at Sameeksha Capital Pvt. Ltd, said SpiceJet's free cash flow stood at ₹115 crore compared to IndiGo's ₹3,111 crore for the first half of FY20.

An analyst at a domestic brokerage firm requesting anonymity said, "It is almost a hand-to-mouth situation for SpiceJet, and can make things tricky if the operating environment remains bad."

Shah said, "With a fundraise, SpiceJet can be in a better position to ride through rough weather. Also, it will help it get better deals from suppliers, including aircraft makers, when you are seen as financially strong."

With low cash on its books, the company is heavily dependent on variables outside its control, such as fuel prices and competitive pressures, to sustain. IndiGo, with its much higher cash holdings, can weather losses longer if things remain bad for the sector.

In general, the outlook on yields is not very robust. When Jet Airways (India) Ltd shut operations earlier this year, the aviation sector was expected to benefit greatly, especially in terms of better yield environment. However, that hasn't panned out as per expectations. In fact, even in the current quarter, which is the stronger festival season, yields have not shown a marked improvement. One reason for that is weak demand, which is capping increases in ticket prices.

In SpiceJet's case, the grounding of Boeing 737 MAX planes also hurt. "Restarting operations of MAX, which offers 12-15% lower fuel burn and 10% lower maintenance costs, is the key to profitability," said analysts at SBICAP Securities Ltd. SpiceJet has said the Max will likely return to service from early next year. Investors will watch that closely.

Meanwhile, the silver lining on the dark clouds is that fuel prices haven't shot up too high.

Live Mint Aviation 26/11/2019

Vistara will add a dozen planes next year to supplement a fleet of 42 by March-end, with which it aims to create a unique "hub-and-spoke" arrangement linking its domestic and international operations, chief executive Leslie Thng said.

The fleet expansion will see the induction of Boeing 787-9 (Dreamliner), and Airbus A320 and A321 aircraft into the airline's fleet, which will be utilized across its domestic and international operations.

In aviation terminology, a hub refers to a central airport that flights are routed through, and spokes are the routes that planes take out of the hub airport.

Vistara, a full-service airline that is jointly owned by the Tata Group and Singapore Airlines Ltd, will start medium- and long-haul international services from next summer after it takes delivery of two Boeing Dreamliner planes by March 2020.

The airline plans to add destinations to Europe, including London, as well as Japan to its network. It also aims to add several neighbouring countries in the region, wherein travellers often look for direct connections to various Indian cities.

"Domestic operations play two roles for us. One is catering to the full-service demand and second is catering to the international operations, especially on the wide body," Vistara's Thng said.

"Other airlines will not be able to replicate this in India as they focus on a mix (of) nationalities. But, our product is primarily for Indians," Thng said in an interview on Tuesday.

He said Vistara's business model will allow passengers within India to travel abroad through Delhi or Mumbai as well as from overseas to within the country.

To strengthen the linkage between domestic and international network, Vistara has entered into discussions with a number of foreign airlines.

It already has a code sharing arrangement with United Airlines, Singapore Airlines and an inter-line arrangement with the Lufthansa group.

"We are not going to fly to a dozen destinations in Europe overnight. So we would need partners that will be able to give us connectivity," Thng said.

The airline currently has 26 Airbus A320 and nine Boeing 737-800NG aircraft in its fleet. It will add another six aircraft, taking its fleet size to 42 at the end of 2019.

An industry analyst said Vistara's strategy appeared to be driven largely by Singapore Airlines.

Most Indian airlines have hit a wall in expanding profitably in the domestic market, which is why expanding international operations made economic sense. However, a hub-and-spoke arrangement between domestic and international routes also involved higher costs, and was an arrangement that Air India had tried in the past without much success, said Mark D. Martin, founder and chief executive of Martin Consulting LLC.

Last July, Vistara ordered 19 planes worth \$3.1 billion from Airbus and Boeing.

While it will use Boeing Dreamliner planes on long-haul international routes, it will use Airbus A321 planes on medium-haul routes and Airbus A320 planes on short-haul international routes. The planes will be added through a mix of direct orders, leases and options.

The airline plans to induct all six new Dreamliners by 2021, while it would take the delivery of narrow-body planes like Airbus A320 family planes by 2023, Thng said.

He added that the airline is continuously reviewing its fleet expansion plans—including taking planes on lease—depending on market opportunities.

The Gurugram-based airline currently flies to over 30 domestic destinations, apart from offering international services to Singapore, Dubai, Bangkok and Colombo.

Vistara is looking to fly to Europe and Japan by next summer, Thng said.

Live Mint Aviation 26/11/2019

La police indienne a arrêté, mardi, à l'aéroport international de Delhi un homme qui s'était déguisé en commandant de bord de la compagnie allemande Lufthansa pour pouvoir passer les contrôles et voyager sans billet.

Selon la police de l'aéroport de Delhi, Rajan Mahbubani, 48 ans, s'était procuré, à l'occasion d'un séjour en Thaïlande, un faux badge de pilote de Lufthansa mais aussi une réplique de l'uniforme que portent les pilotes de ligne de la la compagnie allemande. Déguisé en pilote et rempli d'assurance, l'homme avait déjà réussi à plusieurs reprises à passer les contrôles de sécurité et à obtenir gratuitement un siège en classe Affaires.

Mais le petit manège de Rajan Mahbubani a fini par attirer l'attention. Mardi dernier, il était à l'aéroport de Delhi. Il était prêt à embarquer sur un vol à destination de Calcutta lorsqu'il a été arrêté par la police. Trouvant son comportement suspect, un employé de Lufthansa a alerté la sécurité de l'aéroport. **Placé en détention, il sera jugé pour escroquerie et usurpation d'identité. Selon la loi indienne, le faux pilote risque jusqu'à un an de prison.**

Air Journal 23/11/2019

The Centre has decided to divest its entire stake in Air India Ltd and its no-frill subsidiary Air India Express, a year after it failed to attract bids for a partial stake sale in the cash-strapped national carrier.

"Air India Specific Alternative Mechanism (AISAM) has approved the 100 percent sale of Government of India's stake in Air India, along with Air India Express, and government's stake in AISATS for the re-initiated strategic divestment of Air India," civil aviation minister Hardeep Singh Puri informed the Rajya Sabha on Wednesday.

The government owns 100% stake in Air India, and its subsidiary Air India Express. **AISATS is a joint venture partnership between Air India and Singapore Airport Terminal Services (SATS) Limited, which provides ground and cargo handling services.**

Puri said the government's failure to find bidders for the national carrier in its previous attempts at divestment was partially due to its decision to retain a 24% stake in the airline.

Air India's operating expenses rose about 24% year-on-year to ₹30,194.06 crore during fiscal 2019, Puri said, adding that there are no plans to provide another rescue package to the national carrier.

The airline has been surviving on a rescue package, which was approved as a part of its Turn Around Plan (TAP) in 2012. Under the plan, the government has infused over ₹29,000 crore into Air India since then.

The company's net debt swelled to ₹58,351.93 crore at the end of March 2019 from ₹55,000 crore at the end of March 2018, which includes working capital and aircraft-related debt.

Selling Air India, which has about 128 planes, will help the government exit a loss-making business.

On Wednesday, Puri told news agency Asian News International (ANI) that it may be difficult for the government to run the national airline without selling it. "If it (Air India) is not privatized then from where the money would come to for it to function."

Live Mint Aviation 27/11/2019

India's national carrier will have to shut down if a renewed attempt to sell the debt-laden airline fails to find a buyer, the country's aviation minister said, a year and half after an attempt to sell the high-profile asset flopped.

"The airline will have to close down if it's not privatized," Hardeep Singh Puri told the Indian parliament on Wednesday. "Once we invite bids, then we'll see how many bids will come in."

A successful sale of Air India is crucial for Prime Minister Narendra Modi to help bridge a widening fiscal deficit exacerbated by dismal tax collections and a \$20 billion corporate tax cut. Air India, which started as Tata Airlines in 1932 and later became state-owned, hasn't made money since its 2007 merger with state-owned domestic operator Indian Airlines Ltd. The international carrier is saddled with \$11 billion in debt.

Modi mulls excluding \$7 billion of Air India debt to lure buyers

A group of ministers overseeing the sale of Air India has already approved selling the entire government stake in the carrier and its low-cost, overseas unit, Puri said in a separate written reply to parliament. Pumping in more taxpayer funds into the airline in a competitive market "would not be the best use of scarce financial resources of the government," Puri said.

Modi's administration is considering a plan to exclude \$7 billion of the airline's debt in a bid to lure buyers, people with knowledge of the matter said earlier on Wednesday. The government may call for the so-called expression of interest as early as Dec. 15, they said.

Separately, India's National Company Law Tribunal issued a notice to Air India on Wednesday, asking why bankruptcy proceedings shouldn't be initiated against the state-owned carrier, in response to a pilot's petition seeking outstanding salary dues, according to people with knowledge of the order.

Air India and its Maharaja mascot have become synonymous with Indian pride over the years. Founded by Jehangir Ratanji Dadabhoy Tata, Air India took off flying mail between Karachi and Bombay in then-undivided British India. Once it turned commercial, the airline quickly became popular with its advertisements featuring Bollywood actresses, high-end champagne and Salvador Dali-designed porcelain ashtrays.

Live Mint Aviation 27/11/2019

Losses are mounting at the airline firms of the Tata Group – AirAsia India and Vistara. While Vistara’s losses in financial year 2018-19 nearly doubled to Rs 830 crore compared to the previous year, AirAsia’s losses quadrupled to over `670 crore in the same period. Tata Sons holds 51% stake in both airlines. Both have incurred losses through the past four financial years.

In FY19, AirAsia’s other expenses saw a 70% y-o-y increase to Rs 2,830.62 crore. The airline’s liabilities went up 84% y-o-y to Rs 1,537.07 crore during the year, on account of its trade payable more than doubling to `827.8 crore. The airline saw a net decrease in cash and cash equivalents of Rs 103.67 crore in FY19 against a net increase of Rs 93.47 crore in FY18. The Tata Group infused over Rs 307 crore capital into AirAsia in FY19, according to data sourced from the ministry of corporate affairs (MCA). Tata Sons also bought 2% stake from two other shareholders, taking the company’s total holding in the airline to 51% in FY19. The company’s auditors last year had also expressed “material uncertainty about the company’s ability to continue as a going concern,” according to financials filed by the company with the MCA.

Vistara’s losses in FY19 were primarily on account of 48.3% y-o-y increase in other expenses to Rs 3,436.31 crore. The airline’s finance costs more than doubled y-o-y to Rs 19.01 crore. The full-service carrier’s liabilities rose 41.5% y-o-y to Rs 1,123.96 crore, of which trade payables consisted of `302.73 crore, up 50% y-o-y.

The net increase in cash and cash equivalents during FY19 stood at `204.63 crore, down 23.4% y-o-y. Total capital infusion into Vistara during FY19 stood at Rs 2,200 crore, of which Tata Sons, along with nominees, infused `1,122 crore.

One of the challenges for Vistara, a joint venture between the Tata Group and Singapore Airlines, is that the full-service model has been a challenge, said analysts.

28/11/19 Financial Express

Mumbai: The committee of creditors (CoC) of the beleaguered Jet Airways has decided to file an application before the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) for extending the corporate insolvency resolution process (CIRP) of the company by 90 days.

Under the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC), the CIRP period can be extended by 90 days from the stipulated 180 days if there is a chance of resolution of the firm. The 180-day timeline of Jet ends on December 16.

In a filing to the stock exchanges, the company said lenders in the fifth CoC meeting passed resolutions to extend the last day for submission of a resolution plan by the South America-based Synergy Group to December 16 and filed an application in the NCLT to extend the CIRP period. Synergy Group was earlier given time till November 15 to file a resolution plan but it asked for more time to submit bid for the company, as it sought more clarity on airport slots in India and London.

Synergy Group is the only interested entity shortlisted by the Resolution Professional's team to file a plan for the defunct airlines.

28/11/19 Subrata Panda/Business Standard

A city-bound AirAsia India flight carrying 114 passengers from Delhi made a priority landing here on Thursday due to a hydraulic issue, an airport source said. The flight landed safely nine minutes ahead of its scheduled arrival, he said.

A statement on the incident from AirAsia India was awaited.

"Local stand-by was declared for AirAsia India flight operating on Delhi-Chennai route on Thursday morning. The pilot in command sought priority landing from Chennai ATC due to some issue in the aircraft's hydraulic system. The flight landed safely at 8.01 am," the source said. In local stand-by, all aerodrome emergency services are brought to a state of readiness and local emergency services are notified but remain at their respective bases on stand-by.

28/11/19 PTI/Deccan Herald

New Delhi: **Bengaluru's Kempegowda International Airport (KIA), whose second runway will be operational from December 5, is set to handle more flights per day than Mumbai by next winter, pushing Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport to the third position.**

Delhi's IGI Airport, which overtook Mumbai in 2009 to become India's busiest, will retain the top slot for several years — possibly, decades — to come.

With its two cross runways, Mumbai is handling its peak capacity of 960 flights a day — a figure that has touched the 1,000-mark on a few occasions.

In winter, Bengaluru to handle 731 flights daily

But it has no capacity to handle more flights with its air traffic controllers putting in efforts to make it the world's busiest single-runway airport.

In the current winter schedule, Bengaluru will be handling 731 flights per day. "Once the second runway becomes operational on December 5, KIA will see its flight handling capacity rise significantly. While Mumbai can't go beyond the 970-mark, KIA will overtake this figure by next winter," said a senior ATC official.

Bengaluru airport did not give projections on how it expects daily aircraft movement to rise once the second runway gets operational.

Delhi airport, on the other hand, is going to get its fourth runway by summer of 2021. Next summer, it will be handling 1,515 daily flights with three runways.

28/11/19 Saurabh Sinha/Times of India

New Delhi: **An Air India pilot was asked to remove his turban at the Madrid airport in Spain recently, said Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) party, adding that it has written a letter in this regard to External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar urging him to take up the matter at the international level.**

SAD leader Manjinder Singh Sirsa said he was informed of the incident through a phone call by the pilot, Captain Simranjeet Singh Gujral, on Tuesday. **He said Me Gujral was asked to remove his headgear by airport officials, despite crossing the metal detector, which is a case of bias and racism towards Sikhs.**

"I wish to share with you the harassment faced by an Air India official, Captain Simranjeet Singh Gujral, at Madrid airport. He was subjected to racial discrimination because of his turban. The Madrid airport officials demanded him to remove his turban and asked for a manual check-up of his turban which is an offence in the eyes of a Sikh," Mr Sirsa said in the letter.

"All this happened despite Captain Gujral clearing the metal detectors. Truly, this is a case of bias and racial attitude towards Sikhs at the Madrid airport," he added.

The SAD leader told S Jaishankar that such incidents have happened at Madrid airport earlier too, where Sikh people were asked to remove their turban or the officials disrespected the turban by manhandling the people from the community.

"I request @DrSJaisankar Ji to address the issue at the global level and ensure that Sikhs don't get mistreated globally because of their turban," Mr Sirsa added.

28/11/19 ANI/NDTV

The International Airline Transport Association pegs the maximum net post-tax profit margin for any region in the year 2019 at a meagre 5.5 % at best. The aviation business is cutthroat with very little margin and heavy competition. Airlines unwilling to change are closing shop. India is quite familiar with this phenomenon and has witnessed the closure of several airlines, starting with Modiluft, Eastwest, Kingfisher and recently, Jet Airways. The data revolution seems like the most obvious answer to the industry's woes. Data science has made headway into the airline industry but only in spaces such as ticketing and revenues. Airline direct operating costs are at 50% of total revenue and not much has been done in the area due to a lack of bandwidth and connectivity. But, we are in very interesting times, as SpaceX and other organizations are ready to give the airline industry a boost with low latency gigabit internet connectivity. SpaceX is currently working with the US Department of Defense and has already demonstrated throughput of 610 megabits per second to the cockpit of a U.S. Military C-12 twin-engine turboprop aircraft. In comparison, the fastest internet connection available worldwide on aircrafts is approximately 12 megabit per second and considered a premium service for business jets and a few airliners. Airline operating cost can be loosely categorized into Ownership, Maintenance, Fuel and Crew. The life or airworthiness of an aircraft is measured in pressure cycles endured, meaning a flight from Srinagar to Chennai will cost almost the same as a flight from Mumbai to Pune from an ownership point of view. Dynamically optimizing city pairs, rotation of

aircraft, and reducing downtime gives maximum utility and also makes it a challenging data problem that will now have an element of live data streams, making decisions more realistic and long term. Operators with multiple fleets can take advantage of planning based on sales forecasting by interchanging aircraft type depending on the requirement. If an airline has both a Boeing 777 and a Boeing 737, they carry approximately 400 and 200 passengers respectively. The airline could deploy the Boeing 777 if there is an increase in demand for a sector, which is normally operated with a Boeing 737 or vice versa. Time is indeed money for an airline operator and a single aircraft that's not being utilized optimally can deliver quite a hefty punch on their bottom lines.

28/11/19 Vinod Joe/Analytics India Mag

New Delhi: Nelco Ltd on Thursday said it expects to roll out in-flight data connectivity services by January.

The company had earlier this year obtained a licence from the Department of Telecommunications for providing in-flight and maritime connectivity (IFMC) services.

The Tata Group firm said it hopes to roll out in-flight services in one-and-a-half months but refused to comment on tariffs saying the modalities are being fine-tuned.

"We are hoping to start in-flight connectivity services around January timeframe. We will start with data services," Nelco Managing Director and CEO PJ Nath said on the sidelines of India SatCom 2019 organised by Broadband India Forum here.

28/11/19 PTI/Economic Times

Chennai: Customs officials at the city airport detected seven cases of gold smuggling since Tuesday and seized 2.5kg of gold, worth more than 88 lakh, from seven passengers.

In the first case, Abdul Rahman, 40, of Chennai, who arrived from Kuala Lumpur was found to be carrying three gold biscuits weighing 245 grams, worth 8.27 lakh, concealed in the handle of his suitcase. Samsul Kutha, 40, Mohammad Rahamathullah, 28, Mohammad Naleem, 40, Abdul Hak, 30, and Sadam Husain, 29, who arrived from different locations on different flights were carrying a total 1.75kg of gold worth 59.75 lakh. Fazal Kunhali of Kerala, who arrived from Dubai, smuggled 574g gold worth 19.4 lakh in a pasta maker, officials said.

28/11/19 Times of India

The co-pilot and first officer on Air India flight AI 669, which was involved in a runway incursion at Mumbai airport on September 16, has complained to the Prime Minister against the Directorate General of Civil Aviation for serving her a show-cause notice, while allowing the pilot-in-command (PIC) to go scotfree.

Accusing the aviation regulator of not following the principles of natural justice, the pilot expressed shock at its decision to not only allow the more experienced pilot to fly but also exercise his privileges as an examiner without waiting for her explanation. On September 16, Air India's AI 669 was scheduled to fly Mumbai Bhubaneswar sector when the A320 aircraft

went on the wrong taxiway on way to the main runway for takeoff. The PIC and the first officer were de-rostered, pending investigation by the DGCA.

On November 15, DGCA deputy director of air safety served a notice only to the co-pilot and first officer to explain why further action should not be taken against her. The notice said the investigation had revealed that she was not conversant with the topography of the aerodrome and did not take the correct turn at the junction where three taxiway M, taxiway N1, and taxiway E meet.

The notice also said she did not follow the aircraft's progress on the aerodrome chart to ensure that the PIC taxiing the aircraft follows the instructions given from the air traffic control (ATC). The notice also states that the first officer was involved in "head down activities" during the critical phase of taxiing, and hence did not ensure that the PIC followed the ATC instructions.

The woman pilot was asked to submit a written reply within 15 days.

The PIC involved in the incident is an examiner at Air India and also the deputy general manager at the central training establishment of Air India. While two enquiries into the incident were held on September 26 and September 30 at the Mumbai office of DGCA, the PIC was reportedly cleared to fly while the woman pilot was served the show-cause notice.

"The captain has been flying as an airline pilot for more than 30 years, and is more familiar with the layout of Mumbai airport than me who has less than 2 years of flying experience. Yet the entire blame has been laid on me," she said seeking intervention from the PMO.

27/11/19 Satish Nandgaonkar/Mumbai Mirror

Mumbai: IndiGo Wednesday announced it has become a member of the global lobbying body the International Air Transport Association (IATA), a step which will help India's biggest airline forge commercial partnerships with member airlines across the world.

The airline became the second low fare carrier in India after **SpiceJet** to get an IATA membership. IATA is a group of more than 290 member airlines. National carrier **Air India and Vistara**, a joint venture between Tata Sons and Singapore Airlines, are also members. IndiGo, which has an aggressive fleet expansion and overseas growth strategy, has till now signed codeshare partnerships with Qatar Airways Turkish Airlines.

It entered into new markets including Turkey, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, China, Myanmar and Vietnam in 2019.

27/11/19 Anirban Chowdhury/Economic Times

Indigo, which recently announced induction of 300 Airbus A320neos, could see some slowdown in capacity addition in the near term as a result of the directive from the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA).

The DGCA mandated that IndiGo must replace its A320neos with older engines with new planes which are delivered.

India's largest airline by market share, could also continue to face cost pressures due to maintenance of older aircraft and the weakening rupee, according to industry analysts.

The DGCA on Monday directed that for every new aircraft added to IndiGo's fleet, one of those with unmodified engines should be grounded and the new aircraft be operated on the

older one's schedule. "For the next three to six months, you would want IndiGo to add capacity of 20-25% over the existing base, that may not happen. That will have its impact in terms of how much capacity will be brought in during the January-March quarter," said an analyst from SBICAP Securities, adding that over the medium to long term horizon, their capacity addition programme should normalise by 2021.

27/11/19 Anwesha Ganguly/Financial Express

A full emergency was declared on Tuesday evening for a GoAir flight from **Mumbai to Lucknow** due to a technical failure.

The incident took place at 7:57 pm. GoAir flight **G8-2610** returned and landed safely and the emergency was withdrawn later.

In a statement, GoAir spokesperson stated that the flight from Mumbai to Lucknow did a "precautionary" air turn back shortly after takeoff owing to a technical glitch with one of its CFM engines. After turn back, the flight landed safely with 178 passengers and 4 crew onboard the Airbus A320 CEO aircraft at Mumbai.

"The aircraft will be put back into service following an inspection and rectification by the GoAir engineering team. At GoAir, the safety of our passengers and crew is of paramount importance and the airline sincerely regrets any inconvenience caused to its passengers," the spokesperson stated.

26/11/19 ANI/Business Standard

Switzerland's Zurich Airport International AG on Friday emerged as the highest bidder for the proposed international airport at Jewar, Uttar Pradesh, on the outskirts of Delhi, sparking hopes for the long-delayed project and the development of the area around it.

The first phase of the project is due to be operational by 2023, when it will handle 12 million passengers per year, said an official of Noida International Airport Ltd (NIAL).

Zurich Airport pipped the other three bidders—the GMR Group-led consortium comprising Delhi International Airport Ltd (DIAL), besides Adani Enterprises Ltd and Anchorage Infrastructure Investments Holdings Ltd by offering the highest bid, according to a NIAL official.

While Zurich Airport offered revenue share of ₹400.97 per passenger, GMR Group-led DIAL, which had the right of first refusal, offered ₹351. Adani Group and Anchorage's bids stood at ₹360 and ₹205 per passenger, respectively.

The final tender still needs to be awarded by the airport's project monitoring and implementation committee on 2 December, but this is likely to be a mere formality, said a NIAL official, requesting anonymity.

Zurich Airport said it will design, develop and operate the new greenfield airport in Jewar under a 40-year concession.

It will invest 650 million Swiss francs (₹4,663.731 crore) for the first phase, which will take four years to be completed.

The Jewar airport will be the National Capital Region's third, after the Indira Gandhi International Airport (IGIA) and Ghaziabad's Hindon. **The new airport will be 100km from the GMR Group-operated Delhi airport, the capital's only international airport so far.**

The second phase of the Jewar airport is due to be completed by FY31 and will increase its capacity to 30 million passengers per year, while the third and fourth phases are due to be finished by FY36 and FY40, respectively, further enhancing its capacity to 50 million and 70 million passengers, respectively.

"After the successful sale of its remaining shares in the airport in Bengaluru in 2017, Flughafen Zurich AG is excited to be again present in India, a focus market for the company," the company said, using its Swiss name.

While the development is a positive for the aviation sector, Jagannarayan Padmanabhan, a director with Crisil Infrastructure Advisory, said: "It will be important that external connectivity is addressed on a war footing and an unencumbered site for development is also given to the concessionaire at the earliest."

A real estate consultant was, however, cautious about the move. "Until there are visible signs of construction activity at Jewar, the potential for other real estate developments, such as residential, commercial or retail, will remain on hold," said Santhosh Kumar, vice-chairman, Anarock Property consultants.

Developers bought large tracts of land in the vicinity several years ago, hoping to cash in on the airport project when it was announced in 2001. But even after today's development, they may refrain from launching commercial and residential projects due to oversupply, Kumar added.

Another analyst said he was optimistic about the area's potential, despite the chequered history.

"We have seen in the case of Gurgaon, how proximity to the airport benefited the real estate sector in the city," said Mudassir Zaidi, executive director-north, Knight Frank India, a real estate consultancy.

"There is certainly a need for another airport in the NCR, given its geographic spread of NCR. Property prices tend to increase once an infrastructure project is announced. In case of Jewar airport, we will witness real growth and appreciation now."

These could lead to the Noida-Greater Noida area emerging on a par with Gurgaon in the future, he added.

Live Mint Aviation 30/11/2019

Zurich Airport has won the right to build and manage Jewar airport in Uttar Pradesh, the second facility that is to come up on the outskirts of Delhi.

Zurich Airport agreed to pay Noida International Airport Limited (NIAL) ₹400.97 per passenger using the new greenfield airport. This was the highest by any of the four bidders in the fray. The bids were opened on Friday. Adani Enterprises Limited quoted ₹360 per passenger and Delhi International Airport Limited ₹351. NIAL officials, however, said it will be wrong to say that every passenger flying through this airport will have to pay ₹400.97 apart from the cost of the air ticket.

“Zurich Airport has to pay NIAL ₹400.97 per passenger. The operator will have to decide how much of this will be borne by the passenger,” a senior NIAL official told BusinessLine. Zurich Airport will have to pay NIAL the fee from the sixth anniversary of the commissioning of the new airport. Globally, airport operators apportion costs among all the users, including airlines and concessionaries for parking, as also shops and eateries allowed to open up in the airport.

In a statement, Zurich Airport said that under a 40-year concession, “Flughafen Zurich AG will build and manage the new greenfield airport in Jewar.” The statement added that the capital investment in the first phase is expected to be ₹4,666.35 crore or CHF (Swiss franc) 650 million during the construction period which is expected to last four years. It could take up to March 2020 for Zurich Airport to finally start work on the greenfield airport.

Jewar marks Zurich Airports re-entry into India’s airport infrastructure segment after it exited the Bengaluru airport project in 2017.

Explaining the future course of action, a senior NIAL official said, “The financial bid will be put up before the Project Monitoring and Implementation Committee on December 2. Once it gives the nod, the final clearance will come from the UP Cabinet,” adding that the entire process should be over by the mid-December.

Post the State Cabinet nod, Zurich Airport and NIAL will sign the agreement after which Zurich Airport will get six months for financial closure. The first operational phase will extend from fiscal year 2023 to FY 2027 when it will have a capacity to handle 12 million passengers annually.

Business Line 29/11/2019

ENTER THE COCKPIT BIDDING WAR

Entity	Bid amount (₹ per passenger)
Fairfax*	205
GMR**	351
Adani Enterprises	360
Zurich Airport	401

* Anchorage Infrastructure Investment;
** Delhi International Airport

INDIA'S LARGEST AIRPORT IN THE MAKING

	Proposed capacity*	Project cost
FY 23-27 PHASE-I	12mn	₹4,588cr
FY 31-32 PHASE-II	30mn	₹5,983cr
FY 36-37 PHASE-III	50mn	₹8,415cr
FY 40-50 PHASE-IV	Over 70mn	₹10,575cr

* Passengers per annum; Source: Yamuna Expressway Industrial Development Authority

