

## Revue de presse 1-14 mars 2019

The liquidity crunch, and the subsequent delay in sealing a resolution deal, may have cost Jet Airways its second rank in Indian aviation's pecking order. At least on standalone basis, a metric to evaluate market share that excludes an airline's low-cost arm.

**Monthly data from regulator DGCA for January shows that SpiceJet, with a market share of 13.3 percent is now second to market leader IndiGo, which continues with its dominant position, at 42.5 percent.**

**Jet Airways is not even third now. Air India takes that spot with 12.2 percent**, followed by the Naresh Goyal-airline with 11.9 percent.

Only solace for the distressed airline is the support given by its low cost arm Jet Lite, which has a share of 1.7 percent. Put together, Jet Airways has a total market share of 13.6 percent, taking it to the second place.

The shift, in fact, had taken place in December itself. The market shares were - Air India at 12.4 percent, SpiceJet with 12.3 percent, and Jet Airways at 12.2 percent.

A year ago, in January 2018, Jet Airways was sitting pretty with a market share of 14.3 percent, followed by Air India (13.3 percent) and SpiceJet (12.6 percent). Additionally, Jet Lite had a pie of 2.3 percent.

The fall in its ranking is symbiotic of the troubles at Jet Airways. Even though its board, and later shareholders, gave nod for its resolution plan, the deal hasn't fructified yet.

01/03/19 Prince Mathews Thomas/Moneycontrol.com

Prices of aviation turbine fuel (ATF), or jet fuel, will be hiked by 10% in March. This happens at a time when airlines, led by Jet Airways and IndiGo, are cancelling flights, though for absolutely different reasons. The combined effect, say airline officials, will be lower supply of seats that may enable them to hike fares to absorb increasing costs.

**"ATF prices are up again by 10% effective (March). Not good for already struggling industry!"** tweeted AirAsia India COO Sanjay Kumar, an industry veteran.

A kilo-litre (KL) of ATF in Delhi and Mumbai for domestic flights costs Rs 58,060.97 and Rs 58,017.33, respectively. This ends a short declining trend seen from last November when the price was Rs 76,378.80 and Rs 76,013.2 in Delhi and Mumbai, respectively.

Jet has grounded 13 aircraft in past month due to default to lessors and some more are not flying for other reasons like snags or awaiting spares. IndiGo has cancelled flights till April due to pilot shortage.

The aggressive growth in last few years, amid a severe airport infrastructure crunch, has led to airlines bleeding badly with Jet and Air India struggling to survive. Rating agency ICRA recently said the three listed Indian carriers — Jet Airways, IndiGo and SpiceJet — lost Rs 20 crore per day in April-September, 2018, period. **Collectively, Indian Airlines are likely to lose over Rs 8,800 crore in FY 2019, ICRA had estimated.**

"We need to charge fares that at least cover our costs if we have to avoid meeting the fate of

Kingfisher or Jet. This is already being seen and fares are climbing up in past few months, something that may accelerate after the sharp 10% ATF price hike in March," said an official.

The rising fares have put brakes on the massive air traffic growth the country was seeing in recent years. The 11% growth in domestic air travel of November 2018 over November 2017 was the lowest year-on-year (YoY) increase recorded in India for the last 51 months. While to be sure domestic air travel has seen over 52 months of consecutive growth, the percentage is slowing down.

**Despite the booming domestic air travel, Indian airlines are witnessing profit-less growth with fares being 10-15% below break-even levels.**

"Mumbai-Delhi one-way fare is about \$45-50. Similar distance San Francisco-Seattle route fares is 3-4 times higher. That is why airlines in US and Europe are profitable. **In India, fares are 10-15% lower than break even levels. I asked airlines why don't they shed some growth by hiking fares to recover costs. They showed in real time that hiking fares by even Rs 200 meant losing prospective travellers to other cheaper airlines. Unless airlines as a whole have pricing discipline, it is not possible for a single airline to recover fares that cover costs as India is a very price sensitive market,**" Dinesh Keskar, Boeing's senior VP (Asia Pacific & India Sales), had recently said.

The Economic Times of India 01/03/2019

Ten flights have been diverted from Delhi airport on Monday morning due to fog, an airport official said.

"These ten flights have been diverted from Delhi airport between 7.45 am and 9.10 am," the official said.

"The visibility today has been low.... **Nine domestic flights and one international flight has been diverted from Delhi airport due to low visibility,**" the official added.

At Delhi, the minimum runway visibility required for take off is 125 metres.

Business standards 04/03/2019

**GMR Hyderabad International Airport Limited (GHIAL) said on Monday that it has offloaded all its stake in Asia Pacific Flight Training Academy Limited (APFTAL).**

"Consequent to the above divestment, APFTAL has ceased to be a subsidiary of GHIAL and thereby also of GMR Infrastructure Limited (GIL)," the company informed stock exchanges in regulatory filings.

It did not mention to whom and at what price the divested stake was offloaded.

APFTAL is engaged in the business of providing flight training. In the 9 months ended December 31, 2018, the academy had a turnover of Rs 4.72 crore and loss of Rs 1.47 crore. Its accumulated losses total Rs 11.37 crore.

Business Standards 04/03/2019

**Shortlisted bidders of Pawan Hans have time till March 6 to submit their financial bids for the government and ONGC's stake in the helicopter service provider,** an official said.

Separately, the transaction advisor has worked out a reserve price for Pawan Hans which will be submitted to the Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA).

The MoCA will then send the reserve price to the Evaluation Committee, which comprise financial advisors and Joint Secretaries from the Department of Investment and Public Asset Management (DIPAM) and the administrative ministry, CMD of the CPSE.

**"We have asked for submission of financial bids by March 6. After the Core Group on Disinvestment (CGD) or the Alternative Mechanism decides on the reserve price, the financial bids of shortlisted bidders would be opened,"** an official said.

The official further said that the process of Pawan Hans sale should get over by March.

**A meeting of the Alternative Mechanism on strategic disinvestment headed by Finance Minister Arun Jaitley and comprising Civil Aviation Minister Suresh Prabhu, had cleared the final share purchase agreement (SPA) and financial bids have been called for.**

The government holds 51 per cent stake in Pawan Hans, which has a fleet of 46 choppers. The remaining 49 per cent is with state-run ONGC.

**The draft SPA and Request for Proposal (RFP) was circulated to shortlisted bidders on December 21, 2018, and a four-week time was given to them seeking comments.**

**In April last year, the government had issued the information memorandum for the 51 per cent strategic stake sale in Pawan Hans and had sought expression of interest (Eoi) from interested bidders by June 18.**

**Thereafter, the ONGC board in July decided to combine its 49 per cent stake in the offer for sale by Government of India.**

**Following this, in August the government invited fresh bids from entities, saying that along with its 51 per cent stake, the bidders will also have the option to buy ONGC's stake of 49 per cent in the company. The last date for submission of bids was September 12.**

**However, the total number of bidders have not been made public to maintain confidentiality of the bidding process.**

Business Standards 03/03/2019

**Union Civil Aviation Minister Suresh Prabhu will inaugurate newly-constructed terminal building and associated works of Chipli Airport, Sindhudurg along with Chief Minister Devendra Fadnis on March 5.**

**The new civil airports at Ratnagiri and Sindhudurg in the Konkan region and other airports infrastructure projects in Maharashtra is likely to boost and tourism in the state.**

Prabhu has sanctioned more than Rs 1200 crore for the airport infrastructure projects in Maharashtra.

The routes connecting Sindhudurg to Pune, Mumbai and Nasik have already been approved UDAN 3.1 and bids have been called from the airlines. The flight operations from the airport (under UDAN scheme) will commence very soon.

The Chipli Airport is built at the cost of about Rs. 520 crore. The newly constructed terminal building has a capacity to handle 400 passengers per hour and with an annual passenger capacity of about 10 lakh.

**A MoU will be signed by Airport Authority of India and Maharashtra Industrial Development Corporation (MIDC) in the presence of the Civil Aviation Minister on March 5.**

Ratnagiri airport will be used as a defence airport and is all set to start civil air operations soon.

In addition to these projects, Greenfield Airports in places like Purandar, Navi Mumbai, and Boramani in Maharashtra have also been approved.

The Konkan region is blessed with rich natural beauty, ancient temple and historical forts. With the airport coming up in the region, air connectivity to areas of North Karnataka, western Maharashtra and parts of Goa will improve. It will also boost tourism and economic development of the region.

Business Standards 03/03/2019

NEW DELHI: The government on Saturday issued an "alert" for all airports and airlines in the country, asking them to "enhance the existing security measures", as it has received intelligence inputs in the aftermath of the Pulwama attack and subsequent developments.

The Bureau of Civil Aviation Security (BCAS) issued the alert and marked it to senior police officials of all states, in-charges of security at all airlines and airports, and officers of the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF).

"In view of the intelligence input in the aftermath of the Pulwama attack and subsequent developments, it is imperative to enhance the existing security measures being taken at all the civil aviation installations like **airports, airstrips, airfields, air force stations, helipads, flying schools, aviation training institutes** etc. so that no untoward incident takes place," the alert notification read.

**The BCAS has asked airlines and airports to take 20 specific enhanced security measures which will be "in operation till further orders".**

The security measures include "strict access control to regulate entry into terminal building, airside, all operational area and other aviation facilities".

The BCAS has directed "enhanced screening of passengers, including 100 per cent full pat down search at pre-embarkation security checkpoint", and enhanced random screening of "staff and visitors" at the main gate to the terminal building.

No vehicle should be parked in front of the terminal building and there should be "intensive checking of vehicles entering car parking area", according to the alert notification. Another measure is -- **strict on ground monitoring of regulatory guidelines for operations of non-conventional aerial platform like microlight aircraft, aero models, paragliders, unmanned aerial systems (UAS), drones, power hang gliders and hot air balloons.**

The BCAS has suggested enhanced screening of passengers, staff, and hand baggages and "strengthening of anti-terrorism/anti-sabotage measures and placement of quick response teams" at all airports.

According to the alert notification, "QRT and perimeter patrolling" has to be strengthened too. QRTs are part of the CISF only, which is in-charge of security at various airports across the country.

"Intensive checking of vehicles/persons at the approach to airport terminals/installations" has also been called for.

Enhanced random check at the entry of terminal building, including utilization of bomb detection and disposal squads and dog squads at the entry point has been suggested.

According to the **alert notification, authorities have been asked to "enhance surveillance in and**

**around the aviation installations" and specific monitoring of "flights/helicopters/UAV/ UAS/drones/gliders/hot air balloons from airports/helipads/airfield around Delhi National Capital region".**

Regarding catering, the alert notification said, **"Inspection by the chief security officer of the airline concerned from the presetting stage to vehicle check and entry into airside. Airport Security Unit/Aviation Security Group to ensure thorough check of the vehicle through under view mirror, cabin search etc and checking of the driver and attendant and their ID matching of signatures".**

There would be **"no issuance of visitor entry passes till further notice"**, it said and directed strict monitoring of non-scheduled flight operations including air ambulance.

**The BCAS also called for "thorough search and anti-sabotage check of the aircraft by the airline concerned and its guarding to ensure no unauthorized access to the aircraft... to ensure that no unauthorized person gains access to aero bridge".**

The Economic times of India 02/03/2019

Beleaguered carrier Jet Airways has grounded two more of its aircraft due to non-payment of lease rentals, taking the total number of planes on ground to 23.

**With the grounding of two more planes, almost 20 per cent of aircraft in the airlines fleet are now out of operations**

An additional two aircraft have been grounded due to non-payment of amounts outstanding to lessors under their respective lease agreements," the airline said in a filing to the stock exchanges on Saturday.

It also said that it is actively "engaged" with all its aircraft lessors and regularly provides them with updates on the efforts undertaken to improve its liquidity.

The company said it was making all efforts to minimise disruption to its network due to the grounding of these planes and was pro-actively informing and re-accommodating its affected guests.

The airline also continues to provide the required and periodic updates to the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) in this regard, it added.

**After announcing the grounding of four of its planes on February 7 for non-payment to lessors, the airline took another two aircraft out of operations due to similar reasons on February 23.**

**On February 27 and 28, Jet Airways grounded seven and six aircraft, respectively, due to the non-payment of lease rentals.**

**Later, two aircraft were grounded on Friday and as many on Saturday, taking the total number of planes out of operations to 23.**

The Economic times of India 03/03/2019

Air India will not accommodate passengers from Jet Airways' cancelled flights till further notice, an Air India circular issued on Friday said.

Passengers with tickets on one airline's cancelled flight are generally accommodated on flights of another airline headed to the same destination at the last moment under a mutual agreement. The airline whose flight is cancelled has to pay the one bailing it out within 15 days.

Officials familiar with developments said on condition of anonymity that the agreement between Air India and Jet Airways, which is facing a severe financial crisis, had been terminated.

**"With immediate effect and till further notice, Jet Airways and JetLite Limited documents, including FIMs (flight interruption manifest), are not to be accepted for travel on Air India flights,"** read a circular issued by Air India on Friday

Issuing FIMs is a common practice between airlines, under which if one airline has more passengers than seats, it shifts the extra passengers to another airline at the last moment paying at a pre-agreed rate. The airline also shifts passengers if it cancels a flight. In case of a full-cost carrier, payments have to be made within 15 days; in case passengers are being shifted to a low-cost carrier such as IndiGo or SpiceJet, payments have to be made immediately in cash or RTGS (real time gross settlement).

**Apart from Air India, Vistara has also backed off from accommodating stranded Jet Airways passengers as its flight cancellations were getting to be too frequent,** an aviation industry official aware of developments said on condition of anonymity.

"Vistara has not had any seat-sharing or FIM agreement with Jet Airways. An interline ticketing facility has been terminated for internal reasons," said a Vistara spokesperson not wishing to be named.

**With interline facility, an airline can book tickets on another airline through the Global Distribution System (GDS). Under this system, an airline can shift its passenger to another airline even a day in advance, unlike FIMs which are for last-minute cancellations.** The aviation industry official said Jet Airways was cancelling flights on a routine basis and picking up seats in Vistara at a predetermined fare, when Vistara could have sold those seats at a higher price.

"It was an emergency stopgap arrangement but Jet Airways is using it more frequently," the official said.

Jet Airways did not reply to an email query on the matter sent on Saturday morning.

**At least two dozen aircraft of Jet Airways have been grounded because of non-payment of dues, leading to about 100 flight cancellations every day.** The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has not taken action yet and is reviewing its flight schedule twice in a month to monitor the number of cancellations.

With a debt of about \$1.14 billion, Jet Airways has been cancelling flights from/to Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai, Bengaluru, Pune, Hyderabad and Port Blair. It is in talks with Etihad for additional cash infusion.

The Hindustan 02/03/2019

**The closure of Pakistani airspace for more than 24 hours and Indian airspace for about six hoursthrew the flight plans of several airlines out of gear, leading to changes in routes, increased flying times, additional refueling stops, and deployment of additional crewmembers on Wednesday and Thursday,** according to multiple officials familiar with the matter.

**While all airports in Pakistan were shut for take-offs and landings from Wednesday morning to Friday afternoon (barring a few take-offs on Thursday afternoon), nine airports in north India -- Jammu, Srinagar, Amritsar, Pathankot, Leh, Shimla, Kangra, Pithoragarh and Kullu -- were shut from 8.30am to 2.30pm as tensions escalated between the two sides after the first air raids in 48 years by fighter jets deep across the Line of Control (LoC).**

Many international airlines, such as Air Canada and Emirates, cancelled their flights from Delhi and low-cost Indian carriers, IndiGo and Spicejet, were forced to factor in extra costs to operate longer route.

Air India spent about Rs 15 lakh extra per flight to the US and Europe due to extra flying time, said people familiar with the development.

On **Wednesday**, there were a total of **47 cancellations**. Four other flights destined for other airports that were diverted to Delhi. On **Thursday**, due to the closure of Pakistani airspace, **12 arrivals and 12 departures were cancelled from Delhi airport**, said an airport official.

“Consequent to Wednesday’s airspace and airports closure, Airports Authority of India (AAI) introduced contingency procedures/routes to facilitate transit of overflying flights across the Indian Peninsula. On Wednesday night, air traffic was significantly heavy in Mumbai Flight Information Region (FIR), as all flights were entering/exiting Indian airspace over Arabian Sea to/from Muscat (FIR), due to total closure of Pakistan airspace,” said a spokesperson for AAI.

Flights departing from Delhi and bound for the Gulf or Europe were forced to take a detour to avoid Pakistan airspace.

“Emirates can confirm that due to the airspace closure over Pakistan on 27th and 28th February, flight EK510 on 28th February Dubai to Delhi had to be re-routed, extending the total flight time outside of the crew’s maximum working hours. A replacement crew was arranged to comply with crew working legalities and the aircraft will depart with a delay of 4 hours,” a spokesperson for Emirates said.

A similar statement was issued by Lufthansa. “In addition to our routes to India, connections to Bangkok and Singapore are also affected. We are already preparing adjusted routings and will increase the amount of additional fuel in the event of delays.,” said a spokesperson.

In a statement, Qatar Airways said “due to the ongoing situation on the India-Pakistan border” its flights airports in Pakistan were temporarily suspended and passengers travelling to and from Pakistan or India “are advised to check the status of their flights”

British Airways said it was monitoring the situation closely.

On the domestic travel front, GoAir announced schedule changes and fee adjustments for some flights operating to or from Chandigarh, Srinagar, Jammu and Leh, and Jat Airways said its flight schedules were being moderately affected.

Passengers were stranded in Jammu and Srinagar but airlines said the backlog was cleared on Thursday. Airlines have also announced a waiver in cancellation and date changes charge. “Those who have already booked have not cancelled the booking but if the situation prevails, we might see cancellation from tourists,” said Subhash Goyal, secretary of federation of associations in Indian tourism and hospitality, adding the worst may be over.

China has permitted foreign airlines to use its airspace after Pakistan shut down its skies following military tension with India this week, a state media report said on Friday.

Civilian flights were severely disrupted – before being stopped altogether – after fighter jets from India and Pakistan engaged near the India-Pakistan border on Wednesday. About 800 flights use the India-Pakistan air corridor every day, according to Reuters.

The Civilian Aviation Administration of China (CAAC) stepped in with a contingency plan for both domestic and foreign airlines on Wednesday to use Chinese air space to reroute flights.

“The notice came after Beijing Capital International Airport cancelled all flights to and from Pakistan on Wednesday and Thursday, including connecting flights,” the North China Air Traffic Management Bureau, under the CAAC, was quoted as saying by the state-controlled tabloid Global Times

The report said 22 flights fly in and out of Pakistan every week, including two from Air China and other flights from Pakistan International Airlines.

“Flights to Pakistan have undergone major changes in recent days and the CAAC reminded passengers to check flight information before they make plans,” said the statement.

Flights from the Middle East that usually overfly Pakistan and the Pakistan-India border were being rerouted over India, Myanmar or central Asia to enter China, the Global Times report said

“At the request of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), the CAAC opened part of China’s airspace and air routes for foreign airlines to reroute,” China National Radio reported.

“As of 10pm Thursday, 28 domestic airlines affected by the closure of Pakistani airspace adjusted flight plans and 49 foreign flights used Chinese airspace to reroute,” it said.

Flights from carriers, including Singapore Airlines, Finnair, British Airways, Aeroflot and Air India, had to detour, the report quoted the flight-tracking company Flightradar as saying.

There was hope for de-escalation of tension over the weekend with Pakistan deciding to return the captured Indian Air Force pilot Wing Commander Abhinandan Varthaman to India on Friday.

Chinese defence ministry spokesperson Ren Guoqiang on Thursday called for restraint from both sides, saying that China hoped India and Pakistan would find a solution through dialogue.

The Hindustan 01/03/2019

**Air India has taken disciplinary action against its four employees for allegedly “stealing” unserved food and dry ration from its planes,** senior officials of the national carrier have said.

In August 2017, Air India’s Chairman and Managing Director Ashwani Lohani had issued an internal communication saying that ground staff and officers often take out unserved food and dry ration “for their personal consumption” on arrival of the aircraft.

“Officials found indulging in such practice should be summarily placed under suspension,” the circular read. Speaking on the condition of anonymity, a senior official of the national carrier told PTI, **“Since the August 2017 circular, the airline has taken action against two employees of the catering department and two cabin crew employees, who were found to be stealing surplus food and rations from planes.”**

**The official said that an assistant manager and a senior assistant in the catering department were suspended for 63 days and three days respectively after they were found indulging in the practice.**



Also, in March last year, **two cabin crew members of a New Delhi-Sydney flight were warned and put on domestic flights only**, the officials added.

Asked as to how many inspections were carried out by the national carrier post the August 2017 circular, the official said, "The catering division carries out spot and hygiene checks on flights and at caterer's premises on random basis which pertain only to enforcing quality parameters for the in-flight food."

An Air India spokesperson did not respond to specific queries on the matter.

The Hindustan 03/03/2019

**Very soon Zomato will be delivering food at your doorstep using drones. The Gurugram-based company is building a hub-to-hub delivery network, which will use multi-rotor drones that can pick up a payload of under 5kg.**

"We believe drones are an inevitable part of the future. Food delivery via drones will help reduce the last mile delivery leg and make the process more convenient and cost-effective," said Vikram Singh Meena, associate vice president, technology, Zomato, and founder of TechEagle.

Zomato is just a case in point. **The drone space in India is on the verge of a major turnaround as a result of the green flag by the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) in December 2018, and the yet to be released drone policy 2.0, which is expected to pave the way for wider application of drones in India. The domestic market for commercial drones will have a market value of \$885.7 million, according to market intelligence firm BIS Research. With clarity on regulations, Indian companies are increasingly turning to drone-based solutions.**

According to reports, Tata Steel is working with Skylark Drones, a Bangalore-based data analytics startup, to deploy drones at their Noamundi iron ore mines in Jharkhand, for compliance reporting and monitoring volumetric production. Skylark is also working with a major bauxite company, which is using their drone-based monitoring solution to ensure all equipment and manpower is being deployed at mines, according to plan, and is safe.

According to Skylark, it helped the company identify illegal mining during off season. Chennai-based DeTect Technologies has developed its own positioning system that works like an internal GPS of sorts, allowing its drones to monitor structures like a boiler inside a plant, autonomously. DeTect is working with Hindustan Petroleum, Indian Oil and GAIL.

"The amount of inspection done over several days can be heavily optimized and completed in a few hours with the use of drones and the analysis of that," says Daniel Raj David, CEO and co-founder, DeTect. Under the new policy, drones will need permission via the Digital Sky platform before they can take off. The new regulations, despite being somewhat more stringent than in other countries, have been received well by drone companies in India.

Mughilan Thiru Ramasamy, CEO Skylark Drones feels this is just the beginning of a new era and in the next two to three years more such use cases will come up, where drones will be deployed by enterprises for monitoring far-off sites and infrastructure that are not easily accessible such as a reservoir or a cell tower.

Mint 04/03/2019

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan fully reopened its airspace on Monday, authorities said, days after it closed its skies to all air travel, leaving thousands stranded worldwide as tensions with nuclear arch-rival India soared.

The decision to close the airspace came last Wednesday after a rare aerial dogfight between India and Pakistan over the disputed territory of Kashmir ignited fears of an all-out conflict, with world powers rushing to urge restraint.

Both sides claimed to have shot each other's warplanes down, and one Indian pilot was captured. He was returned to India Friday, crossing the Wagah border on foot.

"All airports across Pakistan are operational and airspace reopened," a spokeswoman for the Civil Aviation Authority told AFP Monday, adding the process had been completed by 1:00 pm (0800 GMT).

The closure disrupted major routes between Europe and South with mounting frustration from passengers stranded at international airports.

It also delayed attempts to search for a British and an Italian climber who went missing on Nanga Parbat, Pakistan's "killer mountain" and the ninth highest peak in the world, as rescue teams were forced to wait for permission to send up a helicopter.

The climbers, Daniele Nardi and Tom Ballard, were last heard from on February 24. Fresh rescue attempts had to be called off over the weekend due to bad weather amid growing fears for their survival.

Pakistan began reopening its airspace "gradually" from Friday, with flights allowed in and out of major cities.

But the backlog means major delays are still expected and authorities have urged passengers to check for more information with their airlines.

The Economic Times of India 04/03/2019

**Mumbai: Air India pilots who operate the 14-16 hour long flights from Delhi to New York, San Francisco and other such routes have been asked to put in extra hours of duty in order to accommodate the longer hours of flying due to Pakistan airspace closure. They also have to sign a consent form before they operate these flights.**

Air India's non-stop flights from Delhi to the US are operated by two sets of pilots. These flights are no longer non-stop as they fly the longer route over the Mumbai airspace to circumvent Pakistani airspace and then land in Sharjah to refuel.

The duty/rest time periods of pilots are strictly monitored in order to prevent fatigue as it directly impacts flight safety. In India, pilots are rostered Flight Duty Time Limitation (FDTL) norms laid down by the DGCA. **They also list the extra duty a pilot can be rostered for during "unforeseen operational circumstances"**. In the past, Air India pilots have done extra duty hours during emergencies like the Kuwait war and the Yemen crisis, but this is the first time that pilots who fly the fatigue-inducing, ultra-long haul routes between India and the US have been asked put in extra hours.

"We are happy to serve the nation and work extra hours. But while the DGCA has allowed AI to extend the pilots' duty hours beyond what its own norms permit for such unforeseen circumstances, have they ensured safety?" asked a senior commander.

**In a note sent to its pilots, Air India said that for these long and ultra-long haul flights, the DGCA has permitted an increase in flight time by three hours and increase in flight duty period (pilot's reporting time at the airport to the moment the aircraft stops, post flight) by four hours. Also, DGCA has allowed Air India to roster pilots for two consecutive nights. Air India has asked its pilots to sign a consent form before they operate these extra duty hour flights. The DGCA and AI are silent on the rest to be given to pilots after these extra hours and two straight nights.**

Said the commander: **"During unforeseen circumstances, DGCA FDTL allows flight time to be increased by a maximum of only 90 minutes. But here they have increased it by 3 hours. Also, flight duty time can be increased by only 3 hours but here it is four hours. The FDTL is usually based on some science on fatigue management, but these extensions aren't."**

Capt M Ranganathan, an air safety expert said: "It's a multiple waiver. It makes a mockery of fatigue risk management." Referring to the dispensations allowed on FDTL, he said that the regulator had allowed an extra landing (pilots will land in Sharjah to refuel), permitted an extension of flight time and duty time, all in violation of the Delhi High Court order. "The airline and the regulator have insulated themselves by making the crew sign a consent letter. So if it comes back for contempt of court, it will go as a violation by the crew and not as something the company or the DGCA wanted," Capt Ranganathan said.

**In April last year, the Delhi High Court directed the DGCA to not allow dispensations to the FDTL in response to a petition about fatigue among Indian pilots filed by Kerala-based lawyer Yeshwant Shenoy. The petition alleged that the DGCA, on several occasions, had granted dispensations to FDTL to allow airline operators to extend the duty hours of pilots beyond the maximum limit laid down under the FDTL.**

03/03/09 Manju V/Times of India

**Tiruchy: The Tiruchirappalli International airport stood second in the customers satisfaction rating (CSR) at the all-India level, and stood first among the South India airports, for the third consecutive year, according to the airport director, Mr. K. Gunasekaran.**

Speaking to DC here, he said that efforts are underway to attain the first place in 'CSR' at the national level.

**The Tiruchy Airport was also ahead in cargo operations and so far handled 6,500 tonnes of cargo to Kuala Lumpur, Singapore and Middle East countries as against the current year's target of 7,000 tonnes, he said and hoped that they would achieve the target before March 31.**

Mr. Gunasekaran said the Rs 951.32 crore development projects including Rs 688.57 crore civil electro mechanics, AP system and IT-related works are underway and the entire project is expected to be completed by September 2021. **The new integrated terminal building in 60,700 sq. metres area was coming up to handle 3.52 million passengers per annum as against the existing handling capacity of 1.5 million passengers per year.**

**He said the proposed new terminal will also facilitate handling of 2,900 passengers during the peak hours as against the existing handling capacity of 500 passengers.**

Mr. Gunasekaran said parking facility for 1,000 cars, 24 escalator-cum-lifts, ten aircraft parking bay, ten aero bridges were also included in the ongoing overall development projects.

03/03/19 R Valayapathy/Deccan Chronicle

**With heliports yet to come up more than a year after chopper routes were announced, the ministry of civil aviation is now looking to connect airports to launch helicopter operations under the regional connectivity scheme (RCS).**

**No heliport has come up so far under the Ude Desh Ka Aam Nagrik (Udan) scheme since 76 helicopter routes, mainly in hilly regions, were awarded in January 2018.**

A senior government official said state-owned **Pawan Hans could be allowed to fly helicopters between existing airports in Himachal Pradesh.** "It is one of the proposals to kick-start helicopter operations under Udan. Himachal has three airports and it is easier to mark a helipad at existing facilities," the official said.

**Airports at Shimla, Bhuntar and Kangra in the state could be connected with scheduled chopper services with proposed helipads at Kasauli, Manali and Mandi yet to come up.**

**A total of 24 heliports are to be developed in Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, Assam and Manipur.**

"The state governments have been slow in constructing heliports. Some have not even identified sites. They are likely to take more time as they have to be licensed by the regulator," the official added.

The ministry was earlier looking to launch helicopter services by the end of this month.

Recently, minister of state of civil aviation Jayant Sinha said there are not many well-capitalised companies in the country. **"The challenge right now with helicopters is that we don't have sufficient**

**well-capitalised companies that can really take a long-term view on helicopters and build out a helicopter business in India,”** Sinha said at the CAPA India Aviation Summit 2019 last week.

03/03/19 Arun Nayal/Financial Express

**Pune: The Airports Authority of India (AAI) has announced revised parking charges for the first 30 minutes for all types of vehicles at the Pune airport.**

**The parking charges for two-wheelers will be Rs10. For cars and buses, the charges have been fixed at Rs30 and Rs40 respectively. The charges will be effective from March 5.**

The AAI has said that to de-congest and streamline the traffic in the pickup area, there will be access fee for all commercial vehicles entering the arrival pick up lanes.

**The parking number 2 will be used as staging area for pre-paid auto rickshaws, pre-paid taxis and aggregators' vehicles. This slot will not be available for parking of vehicles from March 5. The designated parking will be in parking number one only.**

All vehicles exiting the airport will depart from the newly-constructed road by the civic administration behind parking number two. The road connects VIP Road.

**An access fee of Rs50 will be levied on all commercial vehicles entering the arrival area for pick up.**

A dwell time of 3 minutes, the time taken to pick up passengers and load luggage, is the permissible time for pick up for all types of vehicles.

02/03/19 Times of India

**Thiruvananthapuram: Customs officers seized gold worth Rs 18.5 lakh from a passenger at Trivandrum International Airport in the early hours of Saturday. The passenger was identified as Najideen Abdul Rasheed, a native of Oyoor, near Kottarakara. He arrived in Air India Express flight IX 540 that landed at 2.30am from Dubai.**

Air Intelligence Unit officers intercepted the passenger when he arrived at the airport. The gold weighing **555.29g** was found **in the form of thin foil sheets hidden inside a briefcase**. It was covered with carbon paper and concealed in the hardboard bottom layer.

“Though the quantity was less, the method in which the gold was concealed was different. We have a usual procedure of profiling the passengers. We questioned him based on suspicion and the gold was found during x-ray screening. The passenger worked as a truck driver and was visiting his relative in Dubai on visiting visa. He said that his brother-in-law gave the briefcase and other luggage, but, did not inform him about the concealed gold. He claims that his brother -in-law also offered to arrange a job for him during his next visit. **As the value of gold was less than Rs 20 lakh, he was not arrested,”** said an official.

03/03/19 Times of India

New Delhi: **Last summer, the Modi government failed at its maiden attempt to disinvest Air India as potential bidders remained unconvinced about several aspects of the proposed sale, including the airline's financials. Now, as the latest numbers have come in, it becomes a little clearer why potential investors may find this white elephant not worth a look.**

**The airline's latest annual report shows that it had incurred accumulated losses of Rs 53,583.92 crore as of March 31, 2018.** To put this number in context, suffice it to say that Air India's accumulated losses were a tad above India's entire health budget for that year. Further, the airline has never made a net profit since the two erstwhile airlines, Air India and Indian Airlines, merged to form the current entity in 2007.

Thus, the mountain of accumulated losses has been created over the last decade with the net loss for 2017-18 coming in at Rs 5348.7 crore. This means an average daily loss of just under Rs 15 crore was posted by Air India in 2017-18. With such dismal numbers, it is no surprise that Air India became the second biggest loss-making Central Public Sector Enterprise among 339 such companies in FY18. However, the only saving grace is that the net loss figure was lesser in 2017-18 compared to the previous year, when it had posted Rs 6452.9 crore or an average daily net loss of about Rs 18 crore. But here's a fresh shocker: the independent auditors who have audited the airline's financials for 2017-18 have said in their notes in the latest annual report that "loss has been understated by Rs 338.7 crore".

**The auditors have also said that "No impairment has been made in the carrying value of investment in subsidiary company, Hotel Corporation of India Limited (carrying value of investments aggregating to Rs 110.6 crore), though there is uncertainty in implementation of the proposed revival plan. Further, no provision has been made in respect of advances to the above subsidiary company amounting to Rs 228.1 crore, including interest accrued thereon. As a result of the above, loss for the year is understated by Rs 338.7 crore (with the consequential impact on EPS), accumulated losses are understated and total assets are over stated by the same amount."**

[02/03/19 Sindhu Bhattacharya/News18.com](https://www.news18.com/news/02/03/19-Sindhu-Bhattacharya/News18.com)

Mumbai: **Faced with acute pilot shortage, low-cost airline cancelled nearly 50 flights across the country on Wednesday. The country's largest airline for domestic operations has now announced a curtailed schedule for February and March, with about 30 planned per day.** The cancellations, which will hit over 2.3 lakh, began last week and are the worst ever operational disruptions that the 12-year old carrier has ever faced.

On Wednesday, flights to/from Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Chennai and Kolkata accounted for nearly half of all cancellations. Mumbai cancellations included 6E 236 to Bengaluru, 6E 3834 to Chennai and in the arrivals category, 6E 831 from Guwahati, 6E 654 from Chennai and 6E 318 from Kolkata.

Those hit from Delhi were 6E 774 to Nagpur, 6E 2131 to Bengaluru and in the arrivals category, 6E 766 from Hyderabad, 6E 2652 and 6E 2622 from Chennai.

Sources said that **the airline is currently in the process of recruiting foreign pilots on contract to close the gap. "IndiGo has been putting in applications to the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) to bring in foreign pilots under FATA (Foreign Aircrew Temporary Authorisation),"** said a source. Pilots who hold a licence issued by a foreign regulatory authority have to obtain DGCA authorisation under FATA to fly in India. **It's not a speedy process.** "Every Wednesday, a number of foreign pilots chosen by IndiGo have been coming to the DGCA office to give viva exams," he added.

An IndiGo spokesperson said the airline had informed DGCA that it has cancelled 49 flights on

Wednesday. "All these flights were cancelled with one to two days prior notice in order to re-accommodate passengers on flights at a similar time as booked. The cancellations on Wednesday were caused by several factors like anticipated weather conditions on Thursday and NOTAMs (notice to airmen) at various airports. This resulted in extended duty times which then made it necessary to re-roster our crew and optimize our operations », the spokesperson said, adding that the airline has planned to cancel 30 flights per day for the rest of February and will follow a curtailed schedule for March as well.

02/03/19 Lisa Stevens/Dover Daily News

New Delhi: Pakistan on Friday has deferred opening of its airspace to 1:30 pm (India time) next Monday (March 4). This means all west-bound flights to and from north India, which mainly affects Delhi, and air traffic between Southeast Asia on side and west, including Gulf, will need to keep taking the longer route via Mumbai-Muscat-Persian Gulf for three more days.

A notice to airmen (Notam) issued by Pakistan's civil aviation authority earlier had said its airspace, which has been closed since Wednesday, would reopen at 1:30 pm (IST) on Friday. But another Notam issued today deferred the same to Monday.

The prolonged airspace closure will mean continued increased flying time for passengers. Flying between north India, with Delhi its busiest hub, and the west is now taking anywhere from one hour (for Gulf); 1.5 hours (for Europe) and three hours (for US) more. **The closure of Pakistan airspace has meant flights between north India and the west are going close to Mumbai and Ahmedabad; then turning right over the Arabian Sea to head to Muscat and then fly to their destination. This has meant an extra hour and 1.5 hours for Delhi-Dubai and Delhi-Europe, sectors respectively.**

Air India's non-stops between Delhi and east coast of US are, in addition, now taking a fuelling stop that will mean an extra flying time of two hours and about an hour of fuelling stopover — a total addition of over three hours. On their way out, they will have a fuelling stop in Ahmedabad. On way back home, they will stop for refuelling in Dubai and Sharjah.

01/03/19 Saurabh Sinha/Times of India

Bengaluru: The weather has clearly added to the woes of the beleaguered airline industry. Reason: **Over half of the flight cancellations in January across the country were on account of poor weather**, states a report released by the Director General of Civil Aviation.

The cancellation rate of flights for January stood at 1.81%, more than double of that of the previous month (December 2018). It has fared worse when compared to January last year when the cancellation rate was 1.1%. Over half the cancellations took place in Air Heritage flights while Air India topped the list of leading airlines with a cancellation figure of 2.7%.

When it came to passenger complaints, Air India (domestic) topped with 1.7 complaints for every 10,000 passengers compared to 1.4 for Jet Airways (plus Jet Lite). A total of 917 complaints were registered with all airlines. Baggage issues dominated the complaint list with "flight problem" coming a close second, the report states. Flight problems was the top complaint the last two months. When it came to passenger complaints, Air India (domestic) topped with 1.7 complaints for every

10,000 passengers compared to 1.4 for Jet Airways (plus Jet Lite). A total of 917 complaints were registered with all airlines. Baggage issues dominated the complaint list with “flight problem” coming a close second, the report states. Flight problems was the top complaint the last two months. While major airlines mostly maintain a good on-time performance at Bengaluru airport when compared to Mumbai, New Delhi or Hyderabad airports, dense foggy conditions near Kempegowda International Airport has played its part in upsetting this schedule. **All the leading airlines Vistara, IndiGo, GoAir, SpiceJet, Jet Airways (plus Jet Lite) and Air India (domestic) have had the worst punctuality record for January. A total of 3,156 passengers have been denied boarding by all airlines and they totally spent a total of nearly Rs 170 lakh for facilities as well as compensation. Cancellations have upset the travel plans of 37,819 passengers while 2,64,724 passengers stood affected owing to flight delays, the report added.**

02/03/19 S Lalitha/New Indian Express

**Flights between Kabul and New Delhi have to use the airspace of Iran after tensions erupted between India and Pakistan, after the latter blocked it.**

**The Afghan state-run Ariana Afghan Airlines is to launch its first flight via the new route, while the private Kam Air has already done that, Afghanistan Times reported.**

Nader Omar, the head of Ariana Afghan Airlines, said the new route would take more time to reach New Delhi as the passenger planes have to first enter Iran's airspace and then cross the Indian Ocean to enter the Indian territory.

“We are doing our first flight via Iran space, but the time for flight is much more than the previous one. Our flights via Pakistan space took only one hour and half, but via Iran it takes around five hours,” Omar said.

Pakistan blocked its air route for Afghan flights after India's Air Force targeted areas inside Pakistan in retaliation to a suicide attack against an Indian Army convoy, which killed about 44 soldiers two weeks ago.

Tensions between the two nuclear armed neighbors are rising with Pakistan's Air Force downing an Indian fighter jet on Wednesday and arresting its pilot.

Pakistan has reportedly blocked its airspace for any flights to India. On Wednesday, a Kam Air passenger plane flying to New Delhi returned to Kabul after the Pakistani government refused to issue permission to use its airspace.

02/03/19 Financial Times

**Mumbai: The Maharashtra government has sanctioned several works in connection with development of airports in the state,** said a statement from the chief minister's office.

**These include allotting land to Hindustan Petroleum for an aviation fuel station at the Shirdi Airport, and appointing a consultant for Pune's greenfield Chhatrapati Sambhaji Raje International Airport,** the CMO statement said.



Additional land was also allotted at Shirdi Airport to the Indian Oil Corporation, it said.

The decisions were taken at the 66th board meeting of the Maharashtra Airport Development Company Limited which was chaired by chief minister Devendra Fadnavis, the statement informed.

Shirdi International Airport, spread over 400 hectares in Kakadi village in Ahmednagar district, was inaugurated by President Ram Nath Kovind on October 2, 2017.

Work at airports in Shirdi, Amravati, Purandar, Chandrapur, Karad, Solapur, Dhule and Phaltan were reviewed as well as the progress of the Centre's regional air connectivity scheme 'UDAN'.

02/03/19 PTI/Times of India

Mumbai: As Pakistan airspace remained closed for overflying flights, Mumbai airport traffic control continued to handle the overload of flights from the north of India and those from countries in the Far East.

Pakistan closed its airspace on Wednesday 2pm, sending a load of overflying flights that connect east with the west towards Mumbai airspace. Though Pakistan airspace was opened on Friday, movement was restricted to domestic flights in Pakistan and international flights from the West that land in Pakistan.

**Since the Pakistan airspace is still not open for international overflying flights, the re-routing over the Mumbai airspace continued for third day in a row.**

**On an average, the Mumbai airport traffic control handles about 700 overflying flights in 24 hours. Since the Pakistan airspace closure on Wednesday, it has been handling about 1,200 flights in a day. "It's incredibly stressful for pilots and air traffic controllers,"** said a source from the Mumbai ATC.

02/03/19 PTI/Times of India

The divestment of Naresh Goyal-led Jet Airways has met with another stumbling block. **Abu Dhabi-based airline Etihad Airways, which has a 24% stake in the domestic carrier, is reportedly unwilling to infuse any funds in Jet operations until all stakeholders finalise and approve a bank-led resolution plan (BLRP).**

India's largest public sector lender, State Bank of India (SBI), is piloting the BLRP. But getting all stakeholders concerned to approve it will take time. In the meantime, the cash-strapped Jet Airways needs immediate funds to continue operations as well as pay off its vendors and aircraft leasing firms.

According to estimates, Jet Airways, which has a huge debt burden of Rs 8,052 crore, needs close to \$500 million (Rs 50 crore) between now and April to meet repayment obligations and manage operating expenses.

**At a meeting on Wednesday, helmed by SBI chairman Rajneesh Kumar, Etihad's stance was conveyed to the bankers and Jet Airways board. Etihad's CEO Tony Douglas and Jet's chairman Naresh Goyal were also present, but no agreement was reached on procuring funds for the interim.**

This development arrives just after Goyal agreed last month to step down as chairman. With the completion of the BLRP process, Goyal's stake in the airline could see a decrease of about 30% from 51%.

CNBC TV18 reported in January that Goyal and his wife Anita are ready to dilute their stake by as much as 35%; and Goyal has even agreed to voting rights on capping his stake at 10%.

**With Etihad currently holding 24% shares in Jet Airways, the deal will likely raise its ownership to 49% in the expanded equity base, the most that foreign carriers can own in a domestic airline, as per Indian law.**

**The BLRP is a mix of equity infusion, debt restructuring, and asset monetisation aimed at filling the funding gap of around Rs 8,500 crore; that includes proposed repayment of aircraft debt of around Rs 1,700 crore.** To monetise Jet Airways' assets, the BLRP may recommend sale, leaseback or refinancing of aircraft, among other things.

This would enable the consortium of lenders led by SBI to become the largest stakeholders in the airline.

**But first, the consortium of lenders, the overseeing committee of the Indian Bankers' Association, the board of directors of Etihad Airways, the promoter of Jet Airways, the Securities and Exchange Board of India, the Ministry of Civil Aviation, and the Competition Commission of India must approve the BLRP.**

"The final plan will be put in place by the end of January and the lenders are hopeful that the resolution plan will be in force by March 31; that is well before the 180-day period under the Reserve Bank of India's February 12 circular," said the first person cited earlier.

The circular said a resolution professional should be appointed within 180 days for defaulting accounts with aggregate exposure of ₹ 2,000 crore and above.

03/03/19 Prarthana Mitra/Qrius

**New Delhi: Budget passenger carrier SpiceJet plans to aggressively expand its international networks to fly out of the low fare and high fuel price operating environment.**

According to SpiceJet's CMD Ajay Singh, the airline plans to aggressively deploy its new 737Max aircraft on international medium-haul routes. The airline is prospecting destinations in China and CIS countries.

Speaking exclusively to IANS here, Singh said: **"More new destinations will be announced soon. We are looking at destinations in China and the CIS (Commonwealth of Independent States)."**

"We are getting the 737Max aircraft which is 14 per cent more fuel efficient. It can fly 20 per cent more than other planes. This will help us in adding a few more international destinations; we will decide on them after a market study is completed," he said adding that destinations like Singapore and Kuala Lumpur are also under the radar.

03/0319 IANS/New Indian Express

The closure of the Pakistan air space has caused cancellation of six international flights to and from Delhi's Indira Gandhi International (IGI) airport, here on Saturday. **Pakistan has banned Indian aircraft from using its airspace and its Air Traffic Control (ATC) has barred flying of any aircraft below 32,000 feet.**

**The air space restriction by Pakistan impacted traffic at the IGI Airport with 6 international cancellations -- 3 departures and 3 arrivals.** On Friday, the restriction had led to cancellation of 11 international flights -- 5 departures and 6 arrivals.

The commercial airspace in Pakistan was partially opened on Friday. The original NOTAM (notice to airmen) issued on Wednesday said the restriction was applicable until Friday morning. However, a fresh NOTAM for international flights over Pakistan was issued later. It restricted flights until 1.30 p.m. on March 4.

03/03/19 IANS/ZeeBiz

**With every passing day, Jet Airways is grounding more planes over non-payment of lease rentals.** Late on Friday, the debt-laden airline informed that it has grounded two more of its aircraft due to non-payment of amounts outstanding to lessors under their respective lease agreements.

With the latest grounding, the total number of planes Jet has grounded in recent times stands to 23, which is almost 20 per cent of its entire fleet of about 123 planes. If reports are to be believed, Jet may ground one-third of its fleet size in the coming days.

The airline, which is reeling under a debt of over \$1 billion, said that it is actively "engaged" with all its aircraft lessors, and regularly provides them with updates on the efforts undertaken to improve its liquidity. The company said it was making all efforts to minimise disruption to its network due to the grounding of these planes and was pro-actively informing and re-accommodating its affected guests. It also continues to provide the required and periodic updates to the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), it said.

Earlier this week, Jet's promoter Naresh Goyal told his employees that he is willing to make any "sacrifice" for them and to revive the carrier.

Goyal also assured them that **the management, led by CEO Vinay Dube, will give them an update on its resolution plan by March 18, by which time the situation will be gently easing up in the airline's favour.** "While a few steps remain, some critical steps are behind us and the remaining approval processes are well underway," Goyal said in the letter, which came a day after reports emerged that he has agreed to step down from the chairmanship of Jet Airways, in which lenders, led by State Bank of India, have become the largest shareholders.

04/03/19 New Indian Express

The crisis-ridden Jet Airways, which grounded four more aircraft over the weekend due to non-payment of dues to lessors, faces more trouble ahead.

Insiders claim that the number of grounded aircraft is expected to increase this month, apart from the planes grounded for scheduled and non-scheduled maintenance work.

**With the latest spate of groundings, about 23 planes, or around 20% of the Jet Airways fleet is now out of operations.**

The Jet Airways website claims that the airline has 119 aircraft under its fleet at present, including those dry-leased to other airlines. However, fleet tracking websites, including airfleets.net, put the number of active aircraft to be 106. "The numbers would go higher in the coming days unless there is immediate infusion of funds," said an airline insider.

Adding to the trouble, a Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) order restricting open offer exemption may make it difficult for Jet to raise funds.

**Though Jet Airways officials said that the airline is making all efforts to minimise disruption to its network and re-accommodating its affected guests, the experts claim it would get tougher for the airline in coming days.** The reason being that the rival airlines, which as per the industry practice accommodate passengers from cancelled flights, are now showing apprehensions due to poor financial condition of Jet Airways. Madhu Mathen, GM (marketing) at Air India, in letter to the concerned department said, " **With immediate effect and till further notice, Jet Airways (India) Limited and JetLite Limited documents (including FIM and endorsed/ involuntary rerouted/ re-booked/ exchanged/ re-issued documents) are not be accepted for travel on Air India flight.**" flight interruption manifest (FIM), which is an agreement between two airlines, allows shifting of passengers in case of overbooking at a pre-agreed rate. The carriers can also allowed to accommodate the passengers in case of a cancelled flight. **Likewise, though Jet Airways and rival full-service carrier Vistara do not have FIM, an interline ticketing facility between them has been terminated.**

04/03/19 Shahkar Abidi/DNA

New Delhi: **The board of Etihad Airways is expected to meet next week to decide on the future course of action and investments in Jet Airways.** When contacted, a spokesperson of the airline told BusinessLine: "As a minority shareholder, Etihad continues to work constructively with the Jet Airways board, management team, and other stakeholders," declining to get into the specifics.

When contacted to check if the board meeting has been scheduled, the Abu Dhabi Stock Exchange said that airline is not listed on the bourse. Interestingly, the newly-appointed Etihad Airways CEO Tony Douglas was in Mumbai last week to attend an urgent meeting of lenders called by State Bank of India. Etihad has a 24 per cent stake in the Indian carrier.

03/03/19 Ashwini Phadnis/Business Line

**Low-cost carrier AirAsia India has announced the lowest fare of flights and hotel deals on AirAsiaGo via the AirAsia BIG app.** This comes days after the airline had announced an up to 20 per cent discount on its ticket prices for travelling across its flights as well as AirAsia network for a limited period sale offer from February 18 for travel between February 25 and July 31.

"Get the lowest fare of @AirAsia flights + best hotel deals on AirAsiaGo via the AirAsia BIG app. What are you waiting for?," tweeted AirAsia. According to the official website of the airlines, **get up to 90% savings on flights for your next adventure. This applies only for BIG Members.**

According to the airlines, a BIG Member enjoys the following benefits:

- Get instant member discount on flights
- Pay for your flights & add-ons with BIG Points for further savings
- Pre-save your card details for faster one-click payment with BigClick
- 24-hour members-only priority access to sales
- Manage your upcoming flights & pre-book add ons with MyBookings
- Full flight redemption for free flights
- Exclusive access to monthly sales

BIG Fixed Points is a member exclusive that allows to easily redeem flights using fixed points based on the number of hours you fly.

Flyers can redeem a one-way flight from as low as 500 BIG Points! AirAsia's Final Call Sale is 90% off market rates and takes place on the first Monday of every month.

03/03/19 Financial Express

**Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) Director-General Rajesh Ranjan, in an interview to The Hindu, says security at 61 airports across the country was in the hands of the CISF and the Force was ready for any eventuality.** Excerpts from the interview

CISF is celebrating its golden jubilee year. What are the landmarks for the Force?

During its 50 years, the CISF has grown manifold in its credibility and capability. Currently, with a sanctioned strength of more than 1,56,000 personnel, the CISF provides security cover to 345 undertakings under various sectors. The CISF has earned the reputation of being a multi-skilled and tech-savvy force.

What is the take of CISF on security of smaller airports under the Regional Connectivity Scheme? Should the smaller airports be secured by other security agencies?

**Recently, the Ministry of Civil Aviation has identified 45 airports under the Regional Connectivity Scheme (RCS). Out of 45 airports, nine are already under CISF cover. Involvement of other security agencies in airport security could jeopardise the security chain. I suggest all airports should have same level of security and if government wants, the CISF is ready for deployment of its personnel at airports under the RCS. We are experienced in airport security and have been handling it for the last 18 years.**

What type of security upgradation will happen at airports?

**We have successfully tested the installation of body scanners at IGI airport and are testing 'persons tracking technology' to ensure faster security clearance of air passengers. For implementation, we have to get clearance from authorities concerned.**

04/03/19 Saurabh Trivedi/The Hindu

**The Transportation Security Administration Feb. 21 announced the expansion of its TSA Precheck expedited screening program to nine additional domestic and international carriers, among them, Air India.**

The announcement brings the number of airlines participating in TSA Precheck to 65 domestic and international carriers, the administration said.

TSA Precheck is an expedited screening program that enables low-risk travelers to enjoy a smart and efficient screening experience at more than 200 U.S. airports.

For TSA Precheck travelers, there is no need to remove shoes, laptops, 3-1-1 liquids, belts or light jackets. To date in 2019, nearly 94 percent of passengers in TSA Precheck lanes waited less than five minutes, the TSA said.

TSA Precheck is available when departing from a U.S. airport to a foreign country, and for domestic, connecting flights after returning to the U.S. Travelers who are U.S. citizens, U.S. nationals and lawful permanent residents of the U.S. can apply for TSA Precheck for a cost of \$85 for five years, which is \$17 per year, through the TSA Precheck application program.

**Once approved, travelers will receive a “Known Traveler Number” to input when making an airline reservation and will have the opportunity to utilize TSA Precheck lanes at select security checkpoints when traveling on any of the 65 participating airlines.**

04/03/19 India West

Mumbai: Kerala State Industrial Development Corporation Ltd (KSIDC), which has no prior experience in running airports and bid unsuccessfully for leasing the airport at Thiruvananthapuram, has sought court intervention to block Adani Enterprises from winning the right to run the airport located in the state capital, citing among other things, Adani’s lack of experience in airport operations.

KSIDC lost out to Adani Enterprises, which quoted the highest per passenger fee of Rs 168 in the auction to lease the airport for 50 years, while KSIDC came second with a quotation of Rs 135. The difference in the price bids was 19.7 per cent, denying KSIDC the opportunity to match the highest bid of Adani, who walked away with the deal.

Prior to the invitation of price bids, the Kerala government had wrested an assurance from the Central Government that if its quote came within 10 per cent of the highest bid, it would be allowed to match that rate and take the lease to run the airport.

Last week, the Kerala High Court declined to grant a stay on issuing a Letter of Award (LoA) to Adani Enterprises on a petition brought by KSIDC, but said the entire process would be subject to the final order of the court.

**KSIDC has submitted before the court that AAI should desist from awarding the lease rights to Adani, arguing that it was “not comfortable” with the way the whole process was carried out by AAI in such a “hasty manner”, the time was very short (six days) to quote a price and Adani’s lack of experience.**

**“The Central Government had promised (at the time the Kerala government handed over land) that if there is any move to privatise the airport, the state would be consulted and we had demanded that the value given to the land should be converted into equity. It is in writing,”** a Kerala government official claimed.

The court case has somewhat marred Adani’s spectacular show in the auction for leasing six airports, including Thiruvananthapuram, in which it made a clean sweep.

**“I’m surprised by the legal arguments put forth by KSIDC on behalf of the Kerala government that Adani does not have prior experience in running airports. KSIDC also participated in the tender. What prior experience does KSIDC have in running airports; nothing,”** a former director who ran four Airports Authority of India (AAI) airports told BusinessLine.

The stand of the Kerala government does not hold water because KSIDC, which was nominated by the state government to bid and has no prior experience in running airports, is arguing that Adani has no prior experience, he said.

**According to rules framed by the Central Government in 2007, tenders for sector-specific infrastructure projects do not require firms to have prior experience in that sector in order to participate, but their eligibility is measured in terms of their experience score.** The sum total of the experience scores for all eligible infrastructure projects undertaken would be the aggregate experience score of a particular applicant.

04/03/19 P Manoj/Business Line

It’s always great to have good flight connectivity through out the country; and another feather to the cap is the Sindhudurg Airport in Parule-Chipi area of Maharashtra’s Konkan region, that will be inaugurated by Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis and Union Civil Aviation Minister Suresh Prabhu on March 5.

**The new civil airport at Sindhudurg in the Konkan region and other upcoming airports infrastructure projects in Maharashtra such as the one in Ratnagiri is likely to boost and tourism in Maharashtra, Goa and Karnataka.**

Sindhudurg Airport has been built at the cost of Rs. 520 crore, and the newly constructed terminal building is being estimated to handle a capacity of a modest 400 passengers per hour; with a passenger capacity of about 10 lakh on an annual basis. There’s a 2,500m runway at this airport that can handle single-aisle, narrow-body aircrafts such as the Airbus A320 and Boeing 737.

Even though there’s not a lot of flights operating from the airport for the time being, this development will definitely help travellers to access some of Maharashtra’s most popular attractions easily. The airport is located along the Konkan coast between Malvan and Vengurla. Travellers can get to Tarkarli beach known especially for its diving and the Sindhudurg Fort in a matter of minutes from the airport.

04/03/19 Charu Chowdhary/India.com

**Air India crew will now say "Jai Hind" after every inflight announcement. Air India's director operations, Captain Amitabh Singh, has issued a company advisory saying "with immediate effect, all are required to announce "Jai Hind" at the end of every announcement after a slight pause and**

**with much fervour".** The decision is learnt to have been taken at the behest of Air India chairman Ashwani Lohani.

**According to officials, the current advisory is a "reminder" to the staff, in line with the "mood of the nation".**

"The captain of a flight should often connect with passengers during the journey and, at the end of first address, using the words 'Jai Hind' would make a tremendous impact," Lohani said in a communication to his staff in May 2016.

Besides, Lohani in his communication had also asked the staff to be "courteous and polite" to passengers and said wearing a smile would be a "good thing".

Lohani had said, **"The cabin crew should greet the passengers while emplaning and deplaning with a 'namaskaar' as was the tradition.** A smile on the face and conversing sweetly and politely without an iota of irritation would be a good thing."

Lohani (in pic), a known 'turnaround specialist', in his earliest stint at Air India also adopted a policy to give the due regard to soldiers. In August 2017, he had initiated a policy that the airline will give priority boarding to soldiers as a mark of respect for them. In what was a first for Indian carriers **Lohani had started the practice of inviting security forces personnel to board aircraft first. They were requested to board before business class passengers.**

A senior Air India pilot who flies longhaul routes said Indian airports should also emulate the move and open the doors of their VIP lounges for the soldiers. "At many American airports, announcements are made inviting soldiers to the lounges. Indian airport VIP lounges are full of netas. **Indian airport operators should emulate what happens in US and invite our soldiers to the lounges,**" the pilot said, while welcoming Air India's move.

Air India pilots often make inflight announcements welcoming soldiers on board when they know about their presence on board. "Passengers very often clap and salute when soldiers board planes in their uniforms. We also welcome them by making social announcements. **It is an honour to fly the soldiers**", said another Air India pilot.

The Economic Times of India 05/03/2019

**Domestic full-service carrier Vistara on Tuesday announced launch of 16 new daily flights, including to two new destinations Raipur and Dibrugarh, as part of its network expansion plans.**

The new services commence from Tuesday in a phased manner, Delhi-based Vistara said in a release.

**The airline will also introduce its flight services to Jammu from New Delhi, besides mounting additional flight to Chandigarh, Srinagar, Bhubaneswar and Kolkata from Delhi.**

While frequencies on **Delhi-Chandigarh and Delhi Srinagar** routes are being scaled to **two flights per day**, the **Delhi-Bhubaneswar** services will be operated **three times per day**, it said.

The services on **Delhi-Kolkata route will be four times per day**, as part of the latest route network



expansion, the airline said.

Some of the new fights will have seasonal operations, it said

**"Vistara is pleased to announce new destinations, flights, and frequencies in response to high demand from customers and corporates alike.** We continue to carefully evaluate new route and destination possibilities, and will be adding more flights as we add aircraft to the fleet over the next fiscal year," Vistara's chief strategy and commercial officer Sanjiv Kapoor said.

He said in the recent weeks, Vistara has also increased services on Delhi Bengaluru route to six times daily.

The Economic Times of India 05/03/2019

**Airfares are surging as two of India's biggest carriers have been forced to cancel up to 150 flights daily. Jet Airways, struggling to remain afloat, has been cancelling about 100 flights a day to conserve finances and cope with planes being grounded because lease payments haven't been made. The country's largest carrier IndiGo finds itself short of pilots to fly its swelling fleet.**

**Fares have climbed as much as 60%,** especially to destinations such as Chennai and Kolkata and some smaller towns, said three people with knowledge of the matter.

"The overall fare table in the domestic market has increased significantly over the past few weeks with **last-minute fares on key routes being the most impacted,**" said Sharat Dhall, chief operating officer, B2C, at Yatra.com. **"This increase in the yields has been driven by the reduction in capacity for various reasons by some of the large carriers."**

**Jet Airways has grounded more than a third of its 123-plane fleet at the end of December and is cancelling 100 incremental flights every day,** said one of the persons. **IndiGo has said it will cancel 30 daily flights for the next few weeks but industry insiders have pegged the number higher, at more than 40.**

The two airlines normally operate a total 1,700-2,000 flights daily.

"Fares on average have risen by 25% and as high as 60% in some sectors," said an airline executive who didn't want to be named.

**Apart from this, flyers into and out of Mumbai airport have had to cope with disruptions caused by runway repairs until March 30 that have also led to cancellations, raising fares on the Delhi-Mumbai sector, India's busiest.**

With peak season set to begin in a month, Indians should brace themselves for a further rise in fares.

"As of now, Jet and IndiGo have only cancelled flights for March. But if the capacity cuts continue into April and May, we may see some of the highest fare surges in many years," said Balu Ramachandran, head of air business at Cleartrip.com.

A Jet Airways spokesperson refuted the information on grounded planes.

"Jet Airways once again reiterates that your information regarding the airline's number of grounded aircraft is incorrect and completely misleading. The company continues to fly (Boeing 737) NGs and

has a defined plan for growth during FY20, which includes expansion as well as replacement of some aircraft in its fleet with the new fuel-efficient Boeing 737 MAX planes,” he said.

He added the airline “has undertaken certain pro-active adjustments to its flight schedule and has kept its guests informed of these interim changes.”

The Jet spokesperson claimed that “guest inconvenience have been minimal and have been handled in line with regulatory guidelines, including offering alternate choices, such as re-accommodation on alternate flights.”

An IndiGo executive reiterated the airline’s official number of 30 daily cancellations and said they were “preplanned and announced”.

**Ticket prices are programmed to rise when there’s a shortage.**

**“Revenue management systems see how fast seats are selling and how close to travel, and adjust fares accordingly,”** said a senior executive at an Indian carrier. **“So, on routes where there have been cancellations by airlines, fares will typically rise.”**

Financially distressed Jet Airways has defaulted on loan repayments and delayed salaries.

A rescue plan involving founder-chairman Naresh Goyal stepping down from the board along with fund infusions by lenders and 24% stakeholder Etihad Airways is said to be in the works. Goyal told employees last week that he was willing to make “any sacrifice” for them and the airline.

Non-Stop, One-Way Fares				
Delhi	Mumbai	12,130	9,753	4,068
	Bengaluru	8,036	7,662	4,246
	Chennai	7,987	5,000	3,852
	Kolkata	7,621	5,585	5,008
Mumbai	Delhi	11,583	6,990	4,104
	Bengaluru	9,704	5,728	2,527
	Chennai	19,669	6,622	2,773
	Kolkata	13,052	9,699	4,650

He said there would be an **update on the resolution plan by March 18**. Jet, the lenders and Etihad are working on a plan that seeks to meet the carrier’s requirement of Rs 8,500 crore to stay afloat.

Experts said grounding planes will worsen the carrier’s situation.

“Each plane incurs a monthly expense of \$800,000 on the ground,” said an analyst, who didn’t want to be named. “The total expense for Jet will touch \$35 million.”

Two sources pegged the total number of Jet Airways aircraft currently grounded at about 45 across airports including Mumbai, Nagpur, Kochi, Kolkata, Hyderabad and Chennai. Last month, a top executive of MC Aviation Partners, a leasing unit of Mitsubishi Corp., said Jet Airways had defaulted on payments for five leased Boeing planes since October. The defaults are said to be much higher for other lessors.

IndiGo, on an aggressive expansion spree, has suddenly found itself lacking pilots to fly its planes, leading to the cancellations. The airline plans to hire more than 100 expatriate pilots in the next few

months to meet the gap. IndiGo had a fleet of 208 planes as of end December. It has a total of more than 430 on order.

The Economic Times of India 05/03/2019

New Delhi: Reliance Infrastructure (RInfra) on Tuesday said the company has bagged a Rs 648 crore contract from the Airport Authority of India (AAI) to build a new airport at Hirasar, in Rajkot district of Gujarat. The new airport is being constructed near National Highway-8B connecting Ahmedabad and Rajkot, nearly 36 km from the existing Rajkot Airport.

The company emerged winner among nine bidders that included Larsen & Toubro, Dilip Buildcon and Gayatri Projects.

**"Reliance Infrastructure Limited E&C (Engineering & Construction) has received the Letter of Award (LOA) from the Airport Authority of India (AAI) of a contract worth Rs 648 crore for the construction of new greenfield Airport at Hirasar in Rajkot district of Gujarat,"** RInfra said in a statement here.

Reliance Infrastructure participated in the tender for engineering, procurement and construction (EPC) contract independently as a main contractor.

The company said the **scope of the EPC contract includes, construction of runway, turning pads, taxiways, apron, perimeter and other roads, drainage system, fire station, fire pit, cooling pit, supply, installation, testing and commissioning of airfield ground lighting system, visual aids for navigation and bird hazard reduction etc.**

**"Reliance Infrastructure** had scored the highest technical score of 92.2 per cent among nine qualified bidders like Afcons, and L&T. **The airport is to be completed within 30 months from the date of issue of LoA,"** the company said.

Over time, the proposed new airport will also meet the spill over needs of Ahmedabad.

05/03/19 PTI/Times of India

Jet Airways has been forced to ground two more aircraft due to non-payment of lease rental, the airline said in an exchange filing on Monday. **With this, a total of 25 aircraft have been grounded in less than a month for unpaid dues, including the newly introduced Boeing 737 Max, Boeing 737 NG and Airbus A330 planes. The airline has been compelled to cancel nearly 200 domestic flights every day, approximately a third of the daily schedule of 600 flights.**

The beleaguered airline, which is looking for an investor to bail it out, is negotiating with lessors, the management said.

According to a senior Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) official, cancellations by Mumbai-based Jet Airways have nearly doubled to 200 per day from 100-odd flights in December.

Jet did not respond to FE's queries sent till the time of going to press. The full-service carrier had, on March 2, grounded two aircraft due to non-payment of amounts outstanding to lessors.

The official said at least **seven more aircraft, including ATR turboprop jets, have been taken off the**

**fleet for lack of spares.** "There has been no notice for de-registration (of aircraft) so far," the official added.

Last week, civil aviation secretary Pradeep Singh Kharola had said flight cancellations by Jet were very high.

"The DGCA is monitoring the grounding of aircraft and flight cancellation which is very high currently," Kharola told reporters on the sidelines of CII's Aviation Conclave on Wednesday.

**After announcing the grounding of four of its planes on February 7 for non-payment to lessors, the airline took another two aircraft out of operations due to similar reasons on February 23. On February 27 and 28, Jet Airways grounded seven and six aircraft, respectively, due to the non-payment of lease rentals. Later, two aircraft were grounded on March 1 and as many on March 2.**  
05/03/19 Arun Nayar/Financial Express

**Only 70 out of the total 119 aircraft of Jet Airways are currently operational,** a senior DGCA official said Thursday.

The remaining 49 aircraft are grounded and the airline has been told to ensure that passengers do not suffer because of flight cancellations resulting from this situation, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation official told PTI.

The official described the situation as "dynamic", indicating more aircraft of the Airways could be grounded. The Indian aviation watchdog official added that the airline has been told that only "air worthy" aircraft, which are completely fit for flying, should be used in operations.

The Economic times of India 07/03/2019

**A GoAir flight from Patna to the national capital made an emergency landing at Lucknow airport on Thursday due to a technical snag.**

In a statement, **the airline said flight G8-150 from Patna to Delhi which departed at 17:10 hours had to be diverted to Lucknow due to a technical snag.**

"While the technical snag is being investigated, alternate arrangements have been made for all the 128 passengers for their onward journey," it added.

The airline was operating an A320 neo plane.

A source said the flight made an emergency landing at the Lucknow airport.

On Tuesday, a GoAir flight suffered a bird hit at Patna airport. Subsequently, the flight was cancelled.

GoAir aircraft **VT-WGJ** had to be declared Aircraft on Ground (AOG) after it had a bird hit during landing of flight G8-217 at Patna airport. Due to this technical (bird hit) reason, GoAir flight G8-218 from Patna to Delhi had to be cancelled which was scheduled to depart at 20:10 hours on March 5, 2019.

"The passengers were provided light refreshment at the airport and given hotel accommodation," the airline said in a statement on Wednesday.

The Economic times 07/03/2019

Sale of slots will lead to uncertainty in an airline's operations as well as harm established networks and future connectivity, according to global airlines' association IATA.

A senior IATA official also said re-allocation of slots midway through a season would "probably be too late to enable airlines to publish services and for airports to resource according to expected demand".

The International Airport Transport Association (IATA) is a grouping of around 290 carriers across the globe. Air India, Jet Airways and Vistara are also members.

**Recently, Philip Ireland, Manager (World Wide Airport Slots) at IATA said sale of slots would lead to uncertainty in an airline's operations, which negatively impacts the ability of both airports and airlines to invest in future services and infrastructure.**

"It would harm established networks and future connectivity, will compromise competition and create perverse incentives to a process that is fair, neutral and non-discriminatory today.

"Disabling entry for many carriers, who today are able to access congested infrastructure - this only serves to undermine competitiveness of Indian aviation," he told PTI recently.

**The civil aviation ministry is planning to revamp the existing slot allocation mechanism.**

**IATA** has also sought a single and independent coordinator for allocation of slots at airports across India. Besides, the grouping **has stressed on the need for transparency in the process and ensure that slot availability is declared through NAC (Notice on Airport Capacity) charts for all airports.**

Ireland said trying to reallocate slots midway through a season would probably be too late to enable airlines to publish services and for airports to resource according to expected demand.

According to him, slot changes, slot swaps, slot transfers and re-allocations between airlines are already taking place.

"It is an ongoing process slot coordinators, airlines and airports are familiar with," he added.

The Economic times of India 08/03/2019

How is Naresh Goyal any different from Lalu Prasad Yadav? All of us castigated the Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) chief when he anointed his wife, Rabri Devi, before going off to jail in 1997 after being found guilty in the infamous 'fodder scam'. Last week, **Goyal announced that he had reportedly agreed to step down as chairman of Jet Airways— only to make way for his son, Nivaan.**

So, is blood thicker than the bottom line in business as well? As Jet Airways plans yet another take-off — after skidding off the runway cash-strapped and defaulting on interest payment to airport operators, oil marketing companies, lessors and part of its own crew — it's difficult to let go of the

overwhelming sense of foreboding. Only eight years back, banks ran into severe air pockets after their debt-to-equity bailout package for Kingfisher Airlines went south.

Yet again, they are now being forced to make business decisions to cut their losses. And, yet again, expect the same outcome.

Several proposals are being worked out even as partner Etihad plays tough: converting part of the debt to equity, rights issue, preference shares, new investors & monetising the frequent-flyer programme (yawn!). For a sector that remains vulnerable to price wars, oil and currency shocks, Jet's 25th anniversary lifeline is fraught with risks and equity cushion inadequate to stop the haemorrhaging.

**India Ratings calculated the three major airlines, IndiGo, SpiceJet and Jet Airways, cumulatively lost Rs 180 million daily during April-September 2018.** As the fuel bill rose 30-35% in Q3 FY19 vs FY18, the sharp drop in profitability continues even while realisations remain broadly flattish. Having burned bad once, banks too are apparently seeking out National Investment and Infrastructure Fund (NIIF) to buckle up. Bad idea.

Sovereign wealth funds (SWFs) from around the world have taken brave punts on the aviation sector. Some like Khazanah Nasional Berhad have backed national champions like Malaysian Airlines. The Emirates Group is a subsidiary of the Dubai government investment company, Investment Corporation of Dubai.

Abu Dhabi's petro dollars have backed a clutch of airports in Britain, while Canada Pension Plan Investment Board (CPPIB) has scoured the globe for disparate airport assets.

Many SWFs, including Singapore's Temasek, back their national carrier and run nifty, profitable operations like any efficient corporate. Some punt on scale and global dominance, like Emirates. Airports in Europe and US, unlike India, have lesser restrictions and can make money.

**Jet is no Emirates and India no Dubai or Singapore. This stopgap band-aid bankrolling planned for Jet will hardly set the tarmac on fire. In fact, as competition expands rapidly, the price wars will further inflict cuts, unless Jet undergoes transformative changes and is funded to its gills.**

The SWF capital pools are long-term and patient. Their return on investment (RoI) thresholds, too, are lower than traditional private equity (PE). But, they, too, have fiduciary responsibilities towards their investors.

Taxpayers are already footing the ever-bulging balance sheet of Air India, which still has no takers. By propping another private airline up, the NIIF would not only set a bad precedent, but may even fall prey to the even more hare-brained idea of an eventual merger between the two, once Jet becomes quasi-State-owned

NIIF's charter is to plough back our State surplus into bankable Indian infrastructure with best-in-class governance. Despite the brand and baggage, Jet just does not make the cut.

**The airline's Achilles' heel has always been its wonky cost structures and mismanagement of funds. Yet, even after the bailout, the no-frills rivals will be in no mood to accommodate the shrivelled operations of India's oldest surviving private airline. As ET reported, Jet has cancelled more than 500 flights since last week, incurring close to \$800,000 every day as costs on each**

grounded plane. For a month, the bill could be as high as \$35 million.

**IndiGo and SpiceJet, having tasted blood, will be unrelenting. They are on an expansion spree, betting on the long-term sector story of 15% domestic passenger uptick. Parallely, there is also 17% capacity addition taking place to feed the world's fastest-growing airline market. Even a well-run GoAir is negotiating some smart aircraft lease deals to fire its balance sheet. Add AirAsia to the mix, and expect the bloodbath to continue.**

Some years ago, SpiceJet was about to crash-land. It turned around largely because its new owner managed to rework every single contract with its stakeholders. Last November, civil aviation minister Suresh Prabhu said that reviving private carriers like Jet is not his mandate, but that of Jet's management. Raisina's babus and mantris should not have a change of heart.

The Economic Times of India 08/03/2019

**National carrier Air India will be flying 12 international flights as well as 40-plus domestic flights with an all-women crew on International Women's Day**, the airline said on Thursday. "Air India is set to fly 12 all-women crew flights on its medium and long-haul international routes and over 40 return domestic and short-haul flights all over India to celebrate the International Women's Day on March 8 this year," it said in a statement.

Air India will be deploying its B787 Dreamliners and B777s aircraft to operate the aforementioned 12 international flights.

The international sectors that will have the all-women crew on its flights on March 8 are Delhi-Sydney, Mumbai-London, Delhi-Rome, Delhi-London, Mumbai-Delhi-Shanghai, Delhi-Paris, Mumbai-Newark, Mumbai-New York, Delhi-New York, Delhi-Washington, Delhi-Chicago and Delhi-San Francisco.

"Women pilots and cabin crew will be operating Airbus family aircraft as well as dreamliners to over 40 domestic destinations and back to commemorate the occasion," the airline added.

Air India's Chairman and Managing Director Ashwini Lohani said, "I would like to congratulate our women crew for operating so many flights on various international and domestic routes fuelled by their indomitable '**nari shakti**' (**women power**).

The Economic Times of India 07/03/2019

**BENGALURU: The Kempegowda International Airport, Bengaluru (BLR Airport) on Thursday emerged as the first Airport in the world to clinch the Airports Council International's coveted Airport Service Quality Awards for both arrivals and departures.**

What makes it more prestigious is that the **Airport has won the first-ever ASQ Award for Arrivals**, a category open to airports across the world, that was introduced in 2018. **ACI World announced that BLR Airport also won the award for Best Airport by size/ region in the 25-40 MPPA category in the Asia-Pacific zone.** The ACI's renowned ASQ Award recognises airports around the world based on a survey of passenger satisfaction.

The Airport Service Quality Awards celebrate the achievements of airports in delivering the best customer experience and they represent the highest possible accolade for airport operators around the world," said ACI World Director General Angela Gittens.

The Economic Times of India 07/03/2019

A government panel has recommended that the **passenger service fee (PSF) levied on domestic flyers should be increased by Rs 20 in order to generate more revenue for clearing pending security dues worth crores of rupees**, the CISF said Thursday. CISF Director General (DG) Rajesh Ranjan, while interacting with reporters during the annual press conference, said the "PSF issue is at a fairly advanced stage and we hope to see some decision in that regard very soon".

The DG said around **56 airports -- six in the private joint venture domain and the rest operated by the Airports Authority of India (AAI) -- in the country have "outstanding" dues for taking the services of the force to guard their civil airport facilities.**

**The Central Industrial Security Force (CISF), a paramilitary force under the Union Home Ministry, is tasked with guarding 61 airports of the country at present and the government has said in the past that all the about 100 airports of the country will be gradually brought under its anti-terror armed cover soon.**

**The force has deployed about 35,000 personnel to guard these airports as part of its Aviation Security Group (ASG).**

"It is heartening thing that it (dues) is now in the process of being cleared up. There was a point where it was kind of a standstill, but now they have started clearing up.

"The money flow has not stopped, so the dues are being cleared. There are outstanding dues and it will take some time before it clears hundred per cent," Ranjan said.

The Additional DG and chief of airport security operations of the force, M A Ganapathy, said the dues were stuck mainly due to the issue of shortfall in collection of the PSF.

"These are not very static kind of dues...payment keeps happening over a period of time. One argument of the AAI and the private operators is that they collect a cess from all the passengers that is called the PSF.

"There is a shortfall in PSF which they collect from the passengers," Ganapathy said.

The ADG added that the government has formed a committee of senior officers to "have a re-look at the exact amount of PSF which has to be collected from the passengers and there is a recommendation that there has to be a marginal increase of around Rs 20 for domestic passengers".

"Once, it happens, whenever it is implemented, all these dues will get cleared. I don't think there will be any outstanding and it is pending this decision (of enhancement of PSF)," Ganapathy said.

Around Rs 150 is levied as PSF on each air traveller at present.

The two senior CISF officers refrained from giving out the exact amount of security dues pending, but sources indicated that **currently about Rs 600 crore is due to the CISF by about 56 airport operators**



**for providing security to their civil air travel facilities.**

The DG was also asked about the security amount dues at the Indira Gandhi International (IGI) Airport, operated by the DIAL, to which he replied that "it was being cleared up".

Ranjan said the CISF has taken up this issue not only with the airport operators but also with the Ministry of Civil Aviation and the Home Ministry.

The DG said that the **force has "re-oriented" its techniques to intercept cases of drugs, gold and smuggling through the airports under its cover.**

He said that **the force has got the Civil Aviation Ministry's "approval" to take over security of the three airports of Jammu, Srinagar and Leh in Jammu and Kashmir** and the next stage is to get a similar sanction from the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA).

"The approval from the MHA is at a fairly advance stage and we hope it will happen very soon," the DG said.

Out of the 98 functional airports in the country, 61 are under the CISF cover. Among these, 26 airports, including the ones in New Delhi and Mumbai, are in the hyper-sensitive category.

The Economic times of India 07/03/2019

China and India's growth

At number two in the list of fastest-growing airports is Quanzhou Jinjiang International, an airport serving the city of Quanzhou in the south-eastern Chinese province of Fujian. Its year-on-year growth was 31.9 percent to more than 8.1 million passengers, driven by the expansion of Shenzhen Airlines and Xiamen Airlines.

New routes included Shenzhen Airlines' services to Chongqing and Zhuhai, and Xiamen Airlines' flights to Haikou and Kaohsiung.

Jinjiang is the first of ten airports located in China and India to feature in the top 20 list. Other high-ranking Chinese airports are Yantai (6th), Nanchang (12th), Shantou (13th) and Da Nang (19th).

**Meanwhile, from India, Bengaluru is fourth followed by Lucknow (5th), Hyderabad (10th), Ahmedabad (11th) and Jaipur (17th).**

**According to the latest figures from the International Air Transport Association (IATA), China will displace the US as the world's largest aviation market (defined as traffic to, from and within the country) in the mid-2020s, while India will surpass the UK to take third place around 2024.**

Elsewhere in the top 20, two airports in Africa feature - Marrakech (14th) and Addis Ababa (16th) - alongside one in Latin America.

Source: Sabre Market Intelligence

Top 20 fastest-growing airports in the world in 2018:

Rank	Airport	Country	Passengers (2018)	Passengers (2017)	Passenger difference (%)
1	Phnom Penh (PNH)	Cambodia	6252568	4518086	38.4%
2	Jinjiang (JNN)	China	8133369	6168362	31.9%
3	Semarang (SRG)	Indonesia	5669282	4374380	29.6%
4	Bengaluru (BLR)	India	32105723	24956514	28.7%
5	Lucknow (LKO)	India	5704641	4454714	28.1%
6	Yantai (YNT)	China	9301746	7301902	27.4%
7	Sevilla (SVQ)	Spain	6322299	5023078	25.9%
8	Novosibirsk (OVB)	Russia	5849397	4656411	25.6%
9	Da Nang (DAD)	Vietnam	11610950	9335809	24.4%
10	Hyderabad (HYD)	India	22622077	18309627	23.6%
11	Ahmedabad (AMD)	India	10665822	8637657	23.5%
12	Nanchang (KHN)	China	13901623	11308802	22.9%
13	Shantou (SWA)	China	6132046	5022957	22.1%
14	Marrakech (RAK)	Morocco	5281602	4326605	22.1%
15	Kathmandu (KTM)	Nepal	6931403	5686148	21.9%
16	Addis Ababa (ADD)	Ethiopia	12143938	10072828	20.6%
17	Jaipur (JAI)	India	5406612	4487078	20.5%
18	Cartagena (CTG)	Colombia	5184315	4331639	19.7%
19	Da Nang (DAD)	China	11537601	9717907	18.7%
20	Denpasar Bali (DPS)	Indonesia	25382335	21481825	18.2%

Source: Sabre Market Intelligence

## Routes Online 07/03/2019

**NEW DELHI: Saudi Arabia is set to become the biggest and only beneficiary of India's tightly managed foreign flying rights regime with the Centre giving the oil-rich nation a 40% hike in quota from April 1.**

The move, which follows the India visit of Saudi crown prince Mohammed bin Salman last month, will make Saudi Arabia the only country within a 5,000-km flying distance from India to have its quota increased by the Narendra Modi-led government. Requests for an increase in flying rights by others like Dubai, Qatar, China, Singapore and Malaysia, among others, have been rejected.

Saudi Arabia had announced plans to invest \$100 billion in India's infrastructure sector during the crown prince's visit. The kingdom also backed India against Pakistan at the recent Organisation of Islamic Cooperation meet. It is also believed to have played a key role in defusing tensions between the neighbours and ensuring the return of Indian Air Force pilot Abhinandan Varthaman, whose aircraft was shot down in Pakistan.

According to rules, flights between two countries are governed by air services agreements — also called bilateral flying rights.

The Modi government has been cautious in allowing additional flying rights as this has been a cause for controversy in the past and is being probed by various agencies.

**Under the new aviation policy, no country within 5,000 km flying distance from India will be allowed any extra seats unless Indian carriers exhaust 80% of the flying rights quota.**

**In the case of Saudi Arabia, the utilisation by Indian carriers is still about 74% (barring Dammam), but the aviation ministry expects it to cross 80% by April.**

Saudi Arabia has unilaterally allowed Indian carriers to add as many flights as they want to Dammam. If flights to Dammam were to be included, India operates more flights to Saudi Arabia than vice

versa.

"The external affairs ministry insisted on implementing the increase in quota on the back of various incentives provided by Saudi Arabia," said an official in the know, who did not want to be identified.

The official also said the **MEA wanted the aviation ministry to consider the fact that Saudi Arabia allows Air India to fly to Israel using its airspace, and that the national carrier is the only airline that is allowed this facility.**

**The other reason was the oil-rich nation's unilateral decision to allow Indian carriers to add flights to Dammam.**

**The aviation ministry feels traffic to Saudi Arabia from India is point-to-point and does not impact the plans of Indian carriers.**

"Indian carriers have objected to any increase in foreign flying rights because that would hamper their international plans to Europe and the US. The traffic that Saudi airlines would carry would be largely restricted to destinations in that country. Hence, this should not hamper plans of Indian carriers," said source

### Opening Up Skies

India, Saudi Arabia announce increase in flying rights by 40% to **28,000 seats** per week

Long-pending increase announced during Saudi crown prince's India visit

Biggest increase for any country by Modi-led government

Similar requests from Dubai, Qatar, Singapore, China not agreed to by govt

Govt cautious on any fresh bilateral rights due to past controversies

ED/CBI inquiring into bilaterals awarded by UPA regime

The Economic times of India 07/03/2019

National carrier Air India's Delhi-Frankfurt flight returned to national capital's IGI Airport on Wednesday, as the aircraft suffered a snag causing "cabin decompression", the airline said.

**"Air India flight AI121 operating from Delhi to Frankfurt today faced an issue of decompression and returned to Delhi,"** the airline said in a statement. "No passenger suffered any injury."

According to the airline, the flight will now operate with a change of aircraft on March 7 from Delhi.

All pax (passengers) are being extended all assistance at Delhi," said the statement

The Economic times of India 06/03/2019

The national capital's IGI Airport (IGIA) is set to enhance its airside capacity to bring in more flights and reduce delays on account of congestion.

As part of a project with Airports Authority of India (AAI) and UK-based consultancy NATS, the airport will launch a plan from spring 2019 to increase its flight-handling capacity.

The airside enhancement comes as the ever-growing traffic of air passengers touched the 7 crore mark in 2018 and to support such a massive footfall, flight movements have already reached over 1,300 per day.

The total flight movement is the sum of take-offs and landings per day.

A senior official of the GMR Group-led Delhi International Airport Ltd (DIAL), which maintains and operates the IGIA, told IANS that airside capacity will be increased between spring 2019 and the end of winter 2020.

**"We are collaborating with Airports Authority of India and (UK-based consultant) NATS to provide holistic training to the ATCOs (air traffic controllers) and to implement procedural enhancements, which should support some additional capacity in the second half of 2019 and the first half of 2020,"** the DIAL official said.

"Exact numbers will be determined based on the improvements realised over time, in line with the milestones achieved."

**Accordingly, the expansion plan commences from spring 2019, as the airport gradually deploys better-trained ATCOs and operationalises new airside infrastructure such as the new ATC building.**

A NATS spokesperson said: **"Since August DIAL, AAI and NATS have been working collaboratively on a number of activities to grow capacity of Delhi Airport. That work is proceeding well across a range of activities that will improve both the level of capacity and the operational resilience.**

**"The activities cover a range of things from air traffic controller training, to changes of air traffic procedures, through to the design of the airfield and airspace infrastructure."**

As per the plan, sophisticated modelling tools are being used to determine hourly arrival and departure rates while minimising overhead holding delays. This will aid in training the ATCOs.

Besides, more additional parking stands are currently under construction to support further rise in traffic.

**"This is a complex project with many variables - including AAI's transition to the new ATC facility - but the target is to achieve 1,500 daily air traffic movements, which equates to a peak of 85 movements per hour, or a 15 per cent increase in current activity,"** the NATS spokesperson said.

"The gains from this collaborative activity are expected to accrue in an incremental fashion over a period of 18 months."

The Economic Times of India 06/03/2019

Budget carrier Spicejet Tuesday appointed travel technology solutions provider Amadeus as its first global distribution partner, which would help it reach out to new markets and travelers worldwide.

**However, Spicejet's entire ticketing inventory will continue to be available to domestic travellers through existing channels as well as with Amadeus with a different pricing,** the airline said in a statement.

**Airline chairman Ajay Singh said this distribution tie-up with Amadeus enable the airline's customers to connect with its growing international network.**

The Gurugram-based carrier currently operates an average 516 flights daily connecting 59 destinations, including to eight international airports with a with a fleet of 48 Boeing 737s, and 27 regional jets Bombardier Q-400s.

It also has a freighter, a Boeing 737, in the fleet to cater to the cargo flights network.

Amadeus provides its travel technology solutions to over 440 carriers, including over 100 low-cost and full- service carriers globally

The Economic times of India 06/03/2019

**With enhancing regional connectivity underlined as a major goal of the National Civil Aviation Policy 2016, the Modi government brought in a scheme to utilise unserved and underserved airports to provide air connectivity to Tier-II and Tier-III cities at an affordable cost.** Under the UDAN (Ude Desh ka Aam Nagrik) or Regional Connectivity Scheme (RCS), existing and new airline operators were asked to bid for air routes from the list of unserved and underserved airports, and offered subsidy in the form of viability gap funding (VGF) on a maximum of 25 seats (provided that's at least half of the total capacity). PM Narendra Modi flagged off the first UDAN flight in April 2016, from Shimla.

"The majority of the 400-odd unserved and underserved airports are in cities with populations over 5 lakh. Elsewhere in the world, there are viable air services between cities with populations over 2 lakh," says a senior government official requesting anonymity. **However, though four phases of UDAN—1, 2, 3 and 3.1—have been launched, it doesn't seem to be heading in the intended direction. In the first round of bidding in March 2017, five selected airlines won 128 routes connecting 43 airports, while 325 routes were awarded to 15 airlines in the second round in January 2018.**

According to an analysis by Outlook of the first two phases of RCS routes along with air operators, industry experts and AAI traffic reports, the success rate is apparently less than 20 per cent. Of the 440-odd air routes allotted to 14 major and fledgling airlines under the two phases of UDAN, not more than 40 to 60 routes are operating regularly.

Take the case of Hisar airport in Haryana, which has everything an operational airport needs—tight security, good road connectivity, ready infrastructure and a licence from the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA)—but air services are yet to begin. In December 2017, the Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA) had allotted the Delhi-Hisar and Chandigarh-Hisar routes to private airline Pinnacle Air, which was supposed to start the services within six months of signing the MoU. No one knows why there are no flights when both the airport and the operator are ready.

Airport officials and Pinnacle Air refused to comment officially. Off the record, it's a blame game from both sides. Interestingly, the state government has invited bids for the very routes already allotted to Pinnacle Air with a three-year exclusivity clause.

Similar is the ground reality of dozens of other unserved and underserved airports launched under UDAN—Cooch Behar in West Bengal, Tezu in Arunachal Pradesh, Sholapur in Maharashtra and

Jharsuguda in Odisha are all idle despite getting the DGCA licence. Spicejet recently announced that flights from Jharsuguda to Delhi, Hyderabad and Calcutta would begin on March 31.

Regarding Cooch Behar and Sholapur, the AAI maintains that all facilities are in place and the operator—Spicejet, which won the bid to operate flights from Bangalore—is not able to fly due to its own constraints. A Spicejet spokesperson, however, says the infrastructure isn't ready yet, contradicting the AAI's claim.

Industry experts and air operators list several operational, technical, procedural and financial problems in the ambitious Rs 4,500-crore scheme. The two biggest bidders—Air Odisha and Air Deccan—had won 84 routes in nine networks. The government had to cancel seven networks as they failed to fly on them. The two networks are with Air Deccan, one of which it got from Air Odisha, and is operating on neither—though government sources say the services would start soon. Both Air Odisha and Air Deccan didn't respond when contacted.

**Smaller operators such as Zoom Air, Trujet, Pinnacle Airlines, Heritage and AAA Aviation are the worst performers as they succumbed to the operational issues.** "UDAN cannot run without small operators as only small aircraft (10 to 70 seats) can land and take off from the majority of regional airports," says the CEO of an airline operator who doesn't want to be identified. "UDAN enables people to fly at the cost of train tickets, but due to lack of a proper ecosystem for smaller operators, their operational costs go so high that the government subsidy fails to compensate the losses." Moreover, as there is no licensed flight training institute for pilots and engineers of smaller aircraft in India, they have to be hired from abroad. Even the spare parts are imported. The smaller operators allege that the scheme has benefited only the bigger players who don't need subsidy. "Big aircraft carry over 180 fliers in one trip. So per trip, they earn more than they can spend. They can easily afford parking and handling charges at airports like Delhi," complains a smaller operator.

06/03/19 Jeevan Prakash Sharma/Outlook

New Delhi: In a move to further boost regional air connectivity, the **Union Cabinet on Thursday gave its approval to extending the time and scope for the revival and development of unserved and underserved air strips under the jurisdiction of various organisations.** A Civil Aviation Ministry release said that these air strips are being administered by various state governments, the Airports Authority of India (AAI), civil enclaves, central public sector undertakings (CPSUs) and include helipads and water aerodromes.

**"The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs has given its approval for extension of time and scope for revival and development of unserved and underserved air strips of state governments, Airports Authority of India (AAI), civil enclaves, CPSUs, helipads and water aerodromes at the total cost of Rs 4,500 crore with the budgetary support of government of India,"** it said.

The Ministry said it has received overwhelming response from airlines in the two rounds of the Regional Connectivity Scheme (RCS) bidding held so far.

"In the first round of UDAN bidding, 128 routes were assigned to five airline operators for 43 unserved or underserved airports on March 31, 2017," it said.

07/03/19 IANS/ZeeBiz

Hirasar near Rajkot in Gujarat to get a greenfield airport! **The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi recently approved the development of a new greenfield airport in the Hirasar district, about 28 km from Rajkot, in Gujarat at an estimated cost of Rs 1405 crore. The greenfield airport will be developed keeping in mind the renewable sources of energy like solar and wind energy. According to the government release, the estimated cost of Rs 1405 crore involves development and maintenance operations of the greenfield airport to be built at Hirasar.**

The existing airport at Rajkot is severely land constrained with just 236 acres of land. It is situated in

the heart of city. The existing Rajkot airport is also the fourth busiest airport in the state and suffers from considerable capacity restraints due to the presence of residential as well as commercial buildings around it. A railway line and a state highway located around this airport on the eastern side also prohibit the extension of the runway. Hence due to these limitations, there is no feasibility to expand the airport on the city or on airside, so the possibility of operating wide bodied aircrafts or big-sized airplanes at the existing airport location is also eliminated.

**With the issues and constraints of the existing airport, the state government is keen to develop the new greenfield airport in Rajkot. The state government of Gujarat has identified the required land for the construction of the new airport and has requested the Airports Authority of India (AAI) to operate, maintain and develop the new airport.** AAI is the statutory body which is under the Ministry of Civil Aviation and is responsible for the creation, maintenance and management of civil aviation infrastructure of the country. **Reliance Infrastructure has bagged the Rs 648 crore contract from AAI to build the Hirasar airport.**

07/03/19 Financial Express

**The State government on Wednesday filed a writ petition in the Kerala High Court challenging the move by the Airport Authority of India (AAI) to grant right of operation, management and development of the Thiruvananthapuram Airport to Adani Enterprises Limited.**

In its petition, Jyothish, Principal Secretary, Transport Department said that the Centre had assured the State in 2003 that, taking into account the contribution being made by the State for acquisition of additional land for the airport, the government will be consulted at the time when a decision to induct private sector in the management of the airport would be taken.

In total negation of the assurance, the Union government as well as the Airport Authority of India took initial steps for giving concessions for the operation of the airport to private operators.

The Central Government also declined the request of the State to transfer the operation of the airport to the government which could form a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) and tie up with a partner proven in the management of the airport and in the alternative to offer the right of first refusal to the SPV of the Kerala government without any range parameters. However, the Union Ministry stated that parameters for the Right to First Refusal was required to maintain the sanctity of the bidding process and that further enlargement of the range beyond 10 per cent was not advisable for the reason.

07/03/19 KC Gopakumar/Business Line

Bhubaneswar: The Biju Patnaik International Airport (BPIA) in **Bhubaneswar** has won the prestigious Airport Service Quality (ASQ) **award for being the best airport in size and region for the year 2018.**

Chandigarh Airport, Devi Ahilyabai Holkar Airport in Indore, SM Badaruddin II Airport in Indonesia, SS Kasim II Airport in Indonesia and Yichang Sanxia Airport in China were also chosen for the award.

**“The BPIA won the ASQ award for being the best airport in terms of size and region (2-5 million passengers in Asia-Pacific),”** a statement issued by airport director Suresh Hota said.

The airport has been chosen for the award by the Airports Council International.

07/03/19 PTI/Indian Express

**Flight Simulation Technique centre (FSTC) has taken the next big step to service Spice Jet airline and country's requirement to support the training for pilots on Bombardier Q400 simulator. Countries' first Level D Q400 simulator is ready for training to extend simulator services to Q400 operators in India and entire South East Asia operating Dash8 aircraft.**

The new Level DFS1000 simulator is scheduled to offer its services at the FSTC's newly opened training centre at **Rajiv Gandhi International airport, Hyderabad from 01st March 2019.** This is the first training facility of the country located at airport vicinity to extend simulator services in India.

**“We welcome the addition of the Bombardier Q400 to our diversified simulator profile. This**

Simulator & our training programs will further enhance aviation safety in India and help to meet the growing demand for Q400 training in the country and the region. **The new simulator will enable us to provide our existing and future airline partners with an excellent level of fidelity. We look forward to adding more such simulators in the future as demand grows for training in India,”** said Sanjay Mandavia, Managing Director, FSTC.

Also, for the region’s requirement to train pilots on the Airbus A320 Neo Aircraft, FSTC receives countries first state of the art A320 NEO simulator at FSTC’s newly opened Hyderabad centre. **The simulator shall be ready for Training (RFT) from April 01st, 2019.** FSTC had placed the confirmed order with CAE, Canada for two Airbus A320 Neo simulators end of 2018. CAE will deliver second Airbus A320 Neo full-flight simulators (Level D) at FSTC's facilities in their Hyderabad Centre during the second quarter of 2019. As part of this deal, CAE shall also deliver a number of complementary lower-level training devices including an IPT that will be ready-for-training during the second quarter of 2019.

07/03/19 Deccan Chronicle

**The Indian government should adopt a risk-based outcome-focused approach to aviation security to ensure its airports can manage double-digit passenger traffic growth, according to a report by global airlines association IATA.**

IATA said that India’s air travel will triple by 2037 and there is an urgent need to improve airport processes amid a huge shortage of airport infrastructure.

Due to a two-fold surge in air traffic during the last five years, capacity at the airports in Delhi, Mumbai and Bengaluru are completely saturated.

At the same time, the runways at most big airports in India would not be able to manage increased movements of aircraft, the report said.

**The report, titled ‘Aviation Facilitation and Security Priorities for Enhancing the Passenger Journey at Airports in India’, recommends several measures, which include allowing mobile boarding passes, automating border control process, and adoption of self-drop technology for check-in bags.**

IATA said that the government should discontinue stamping procedures at touch points and allow mobile boarding pass (MBP) and adopt off-airport self-tagging options, including printed bag tag (HPBT) and electronic bag tag (EBT), to improve passenger processes.

The adoption of an automated border control (ABC) process is necessary to augment airport capacity, the report said.

Furthermore, the IATA said that the government should follow international standards for advance passenger information (API) and passenger name record (PNR) to protect passenger data and avoid any possibility of errors during the conversion process.

07/03/19 Airport Technology

**New Delhi: Fugitive liquor baron Vijay Mallya's private jet, Airbus A319, is being dismantled by Air India at its hangar in Mumbai.**

The jet was auctioned to Florida-based Aviation Management Sales (AMS), which won the bid for the aircraft for Rs 34 crore in June last year. However, it was unable to take possession of the aircraft due to bureaucratic hurdles.

**Parts of the dismantled aircraft will be sent to Aviation Management Sales.** The aircraft was towed on February 13 from the Lima apron along Maharashtra's Kalina Kurla road to the Air India hangar.



The service tax authorities had put the luxury A319 jet, which Mallya used to criss-cross the world to solicit business deals, under the hammer to recover their dues to the tune of Rs 800 crore accumulated on account of non-payment of service tax before his erstwhile Kingfisher Airlines went belly up in October 2012.

In the first auction in March 2016 as part of their attempt to recover money from the beleaguered businessman Mallya, who is facing extradition from London now, a lone bidder turned up and quoted a meagre Rs 1.09 crore, against the reserve price of Rs 152 crore. The department rejected the bid and then lowered the reserve price by 10 per cent.

The plane was attached by the service tax department in December 2013, claiming tax dues of over Rs 800 crore from Kingfisher Airlines. The service tax department was forced to sell the aircraft after the Mumbai airport operator MIAL moved the Bombay High Court seeking a direction to the department citing heavy losses on account of the non-productive use of its space.

07/03/19 News18

New Delhi: Civil Aviation Minister Suresh Prabhu on Thursday released a Coffee Table Book- "Cruising New Heights- Flying For All" which will serve as a reference material on challenges, reforms agenda, performance and highlights and future roadmap.

The Publication throws light on the outstanding achievements made in the civil aviation sector during the last year. Mr Prabhu observed that Civil Aviation Sector has seen exponential growth in India and the growth trajectory has continued during 2018-19. He mentioned that the growth itself has posed many challenges and opened up new avenues.

The Coffee Table Book is an attempt to capture achievements and the roadmap for sustaining and stimulating further growth and development in the aviation sector. The book will serve as a reference material which brings out challenges, reforms agenda, performance and highlights and future roadmap clearly setting short term and long term goals.

**The book brings out various innovative policy initiatives like drone ecosystem roadmap, green aviation policy, Rupee Raftar for financing and leasing of aircraft and national air cargo policy which have been announced by the Ministry of Civil Aviation in the current financial year. Government's UDAN scheme has worked well in creating air connectivity to unserved and underserved locations at an affordable cost. The third round of bidding has covered tourist destinations and water dromes.**

07/03/19 UNI

**Guwahati:** A jawan of Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) had allegedly committed suicide at Lokapriya Gopinath Bordoloi International Airport (LGBI), Borjhar in Guwahati on Thursday.

**According to the reports, CISF head constable Surender Singh, who was deployed at watch tower no two after completion of shifting duty from 5 am to 1 pm at the tower, shot himself on his chest with his service INSAS rifle inside the driver room near cargo, vehicle gate of the airport.**

A top official of CISF said that, as per practice, duty personnel of watch tower area were assembled at cargo, vehicle gate to board the shift bus for deposit of weapons and debriefing at Unit Kote which is two-km away.

"The CISF jawan was immediately taken to Composite Hospital, BSF and declared brought death," the CISF official said.

07/03/19 India Blooms

New Delhi: India has sought information from Boeing after a second B737 Max crashed on Sunday. While on Sunday an Ethiopian Airlines B737 crashed in Africa, just over four months back on October 29, 2018, Indonesian carrier Lion Air's B737 Max had crashed into the Java Sea killing all 189 people on board.

In India, SpiceJet and Jet Airways have ordered Boeing 737 Max. While several of Jet's planes, including its B737 Max, are grounded, SpiceJet is currently operating 13 B737 Max.

Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) chief B S Bhullar told TOI: "A Boeing 737 Max aircraft flown by Ethiopian Airlines has crashed. Our two airlines (Jet Airways and SpiceJet having these aircraft) and DGCA officials are in touch with Boeing for information. Further safety measures if required shall follow that."

**After the Lion Air crash, the DGCA had asked SpiceJet and Jet to take corrective action after the US Federal Aviation Administration and Boeing issued their own circulars.**

**The DGCA had a day after the Lion Air crash reviewed the performance of the six B737 Max with Indian carriers, Jet Airways and SpiceJet. It had then said that "there are no significant technical issues encountered on these aircraft."**

10/03/19 Saurabh Sinha/Times of India

Addis Ababa: **A Nairobi-bound Boeing 737 crashed six minutes after an early-morning takeoff from Addis Ababa Sunday, killing all 149 passengers and eight crew on board,** Ethiopian Airlines said as world leaders offered condolences to distraught next-of-kin. Of the 149 passengers, four were Indian.

People holding passports from 32 countries and the UN were on board the plane which ploughed into a field just 60 kilometres (37 miles) southeast of Addis Ababa, the carrier's CEO Tewolde GebreMariam told journalists in the capital, lamenting this "very sad and tragic day."

The crash came on the eve of a major, annual assembly in Nairobi of the UN Environment Programme, which learnt of the crash with "deep regret" but did not say whether any delegates were on the plane.

"We can only hope that she is not on that flight," Peter Kimani, who had come to fetch his sister at Nairobi's Jomo Kenyatta International Airport (JKIA), told AFP shortly after news of the crash reached those waiting in the arrivals hall.

**State-owned Ethiopian Airlines, Africa's largest carrier, said the ill-fated Boeing 737-800MAX had taken off at 8:38 am (0538 GMT) from Bole International Airport and "lost contact" six minutes later.**

Scheduled to land in Nairobi at 10:25 am (0725 GMT), it came down instead near the village of Tulu Fara outside Bishoftu.

An AFP reporter said there was a massive crater at the crash site, with belongings and airplane parts scattered widely.

Rescue crews were retrieving human remains from the wreckage.

Ethiopian Airlines confirmed "there are no survivors."

**Police and troops were on the scene, as well as a crash investigation team from Ethiopia's civil aviation agency.**

In the Kenyan capital, family members, friends, and colleagues of passengers were frantically waiting for news at the airport.

"I am waiting for my colleague, I just hope for the best," added Hannah, a Chinese national.

Ethiopian Airlines said Kenya had the largest number of casualties with 32, followed by Canada with 18, Ethiopia with nine, then Italy, China, and the United States with eight each. Britain and France each had seven people on board, Egypt six, the Netherlands five and India four. Four were UN passport-holders.

Eleven countries in Africa, and 13 in Europe had citizens among the victims.

African Union commission chief Moussa Faki Mahamat said he had learnt of the crash "with utter shock and immense sadness", while Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed's office tweeted it "would like to express its deepest condolences to the families of those that have lost their loved ones."

Kenya's President Uhuru Kenyatta said he was "saddened" by the news, and Mahboub Maalim, executive secretary of the IGAD East African bloc, said the region and the world were in mourning.

"I cannot seem to find words comforting enough to the families and friends of those who might have lost their lives in this tragedy," Maalim said in a statement.

For its part, the plane's maker, US giant **Boeing, said it was "deeply saddened to learn of the passing of the passengers and crew on Ethiopian Airlines Flight 302, a 737 MAX 8 airplane.**

"We extend our heartfelt sympathies to the families and loved ones of the passengers and crew on board and stand ready to support the Ethiopian Airlines team."

*10/03/19 AFP/NDTV*

**The pilot of an Ethiopian Airlines jet that has crashed shortly after takeoff from Addis Ababa on Sunday, killing 157 people on board, had alerted controllers "he had difficulties" and wanted to turn back the plane carrying 157 people, the CEO of Ethiopian Airlines said. The pilot "was given clearance" to return to Addis,** Tewolde GebreMariam told journalists in Addis Ababa, after visiting the crash site.

**The four-month-old Boeing plane, en route to Nairobi, lost contact at 8:44 local time, six minutes after taking off from Bole International Airport,** the Ethiopian Airlines said. The aircraft went down near Bishoftu, southeast of Addis Ababa.

It said thirty-two Kenyans, eighteen Canadians, nine Ethiopians, eight Chinese, eight Italians, eight Americans, seven British and seven French nationals were among the passengers. There were also six Egyptians, five from the Netherlands, four with UN passports, four from both India and Slovakia, three from Russia, three Austrian and three Swedish; two Moroccan, Spanish, Polish, Israeli and one each from Belgium, Indonesia, Uganda, Yemen, Sudan, Togo, Serbia, Mozambique, Norwegian, Rwanda, Ireland, Somalia, Saudi Arabia and South Africa.

The plane had arrived from Johannesburg earlier today, before departing again for Kenya and the pilot, Captain Yared Getache, had more than 8,000 hours flying experience, according to the press conference.

**The flight had unstable vertical speed after takeoff, said flight-tracking website Flightradar24 on its Twitter feed.**

In a statement posted on its Twitter page, the Ethiopian airlines wrote: **"It is too early to speculate the cause of the accident and further investigation will be carried out to find out the cause of the accident in collaboration with all stakeholders including the aircraft manufacturer Boeing, Ethiopian Civil Aviation Authority and other International entities to maintain the international standard and Information will be provided once the cause is identified.** Ethiopian Airlines will provide all the necessary support to the families of the victims."

10/03/19 Ethiopia Observer

**None of the 157 people on board an Ethiopian Airlines plane that crashed on Sunday morning en route to Nairobi from Addis Ababa has survived, the airline said.**

**The aircraft, a Boeing 737 MAX 8 carrying 149 passengers and eight crew members, took off at 08.38am (05:38 GMT) and lost contact with air traffic controllers six minutes later.**

It crashed near Bishoftu, southeast of the Ethiopian capital, Ethiopian Airlines said in a statement. It was not immediately clear what caused the crash of the plane, which was new and had been delivered to the airline in November. The pilot, who had been working for the carrier since 2010, sent out a distress call shortly after take-off and was given clearance to return.

Tewolde Gebremariam, the airline's CEO, visited the scene of the crash and confirmed no one had survived.

Ethiopian Airlines later published a photo on Twitter showing him standing in the wreckage, lifting what appeared to be a piece of the plane debris at the bottom of a large crater in an empty field. Little of the aircraft could be seen in the freshly-churned soil.

The CEO "expresses his profound sympathy and condolences to the families and loved ones of passengers and crew who lost their lives in this tragic accident," the post said.

Ethiopian state media said more than 30 nationalities were on board flight ET 302. Tewolde said those included 32 Kenyans and nine Ethiopians.

Authorities said other victims include 18 Canadians; eight each from China, the United States and Italy; seven each from France and Britain; six from Egypt; five from the Netherlands and four each from India and Slovakia. Spain's foreign ministry said two Spanish nationals were on the passenger list.

Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed's office tweeted it "would like to express its deepest condolences to the families of those that have lost their loved ones on Ethiopian Airlines Boeing 737 on regular scheduled flight to Nairobi, Kenya this morning."

The Office of the PM, on behalf of the Government and people of Ethiopia, would like to express its deepest condolences to the families of those that have lost their loved ones on Ethiopian Airlines Boeing 737 on regular scheduled flight to Nairobi, Kenya this morning.

Kenya's President Uhuru Kenyatta offered prayers for the family members and loved ones of those on the flight.

"We are saddened by the news of an Ethiopian Airlines passenger aircraft that is reported to have crashed 6 minutes after takeoff en route to Kenya. My prayers go to all the families and associates of those on board," Kenyatta said on Twitter.

Al Jazeera's Catherine Soi, reporting from Nairobi airport, said an "information and service desk has been set up for the relatives looking for information".

**The Boeing 737-8 MAX is the same type of plane as the Indonesian Lion Air jet that crashed last October, 13 minutes after the takeoff from Jakarta, killing all 189 people on board.**

[10/03/19 Al Jazeera.com](https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/10/03/19-al-jazeera-com)

New Delhi: **"Government is closely" monitoring the situation at Jet Airways even as negotiations to save the financially beleaguered airline continue, Union Minister Suresh Prabhu said in an interview.**

The government's stand assumes significance as lenders negotiate with key stakeholders of the airline to take forward the proposal to convert a part of the company's loans into shares and iron out differences over the plan.

Commerce and Industry and Civil Aviation Minister Prabhu told IANS: "The Government is closely watching the situation".

When asked about any requisite approvals that the proposed deal between bankers, management and shareholders including Etihad Airways might require from the ministry, he said that appropriate action will be taken, if required.

Mandate wise, **the ministry is responsible for the safe operations of the airline and to monitor, if**

**the substantial ownership and effective control norms are being met.**

10/03/19 IANS/Economic Times

**Kolkata: A flyer from Kolkata who was not allowed to board a Chennai-bound flight six years ago despite holding a valid ticket has been awarded a compensation of Rs 50,000 along with Rs 10,000 as litigation cost and refund of fare by the National Consumer Dispute Redressal Commission.**

Pratyush Chakraborty, who was manager of Allahabad Bank (he has retired since), was set to travel on pilgrimage to Tirupati via Chennai when he was left stranded at Kolkata airport despite purchasing confirmed return tickets on IndiGo airlines flight 6E 271 and 6E 277 on November 24, 2012, nearly three weeks prior to the travel date. The payment of Rs 9,140 for the tickets was made with a State Bank of India international debit and shopping card.

However, Chakraborty, who lives in a condominium complex off EM Bypass, was not able to travel. A ground staff at the check-in counter refused him boarding pass because Chakraborty could not furnish a credit card. Though the bank executive tried to reason with her that he had purchased the tickets using a debit card, the airline staff refused to accept it and insisted that only a credit card would be valid.

"How could I produce a credit card when I had none? The cost of tickets had already been debited from my account on the very day tickets were bought. I requested the airline staff to allow me to undertake the trip. But the requests fell on deaf ear as she insisted I produce a non-existent credit card," Chakraborty recounted.

Not only was he unable to travel, the airline also penalised him by deducting Rs 5,620 and withholding the remaining Rs 3,520 to be adjusted against travel within 12 months.

Incensed by what had happened, **Chakraborty moved the District Consumer Dispute Redressal Forum in Kolkata on March 18, 2013, after failing to convince IndiGo officials that he wasn't at fault, and hence, could not be penalised by the airline.**

10/03/19 Subhro Niyogi/Times of India

**Mumbai: A Go Air flight to Delhi declared an emergency after it developed a problem with its landing gear after take off from Mumbai on Saturday night.**

**Go Air flight no 341, with 174 passengers and with crew members on board departed Mumbai at 9 pm.** However after the aircraft climbed to about 9,000 feet the pilots detected a problem with the aircraft undercarriage, said a source adding it's likely that the wheels couldn't be retracted. It was decided to divert the aircraft and land back in Mumbai.

A full emergency was declared around 9.25 pm and fire brigade and ambulances were positioned in preparation for the landing. The aircraft circled over north western Maharashtra dumping fuel for close to an hour, before it landed safely at 10.30 pm on the main runway.

10/03/19 Manju V/Times of India

Pune: SpiceJet recently announced the launch of 12 new direct flights encompassing international, UDAN as well as regular domestic routes. All flights on the domestic sectors are effective from March 31 while the international flight will commence operations on April 15.

The airline is all set to expand its international footprint with the introduction of direct flights on the Hyderabad-Colombo-Hyderabad route. SpiceJet is the first Indian budget carrier to service the route and will operate on all days except Tuesdays and Wednesdays.

The airline also announced six new flights on the Kishangarh-Ahmedabad-Kishangarh, Lakhimpur-Guwahati-Lakhimpur and Jaipur-Amritsar-Jaipur sectors which were awarded to the airline under the third round of the Regional Connectivity Scheme.

With an aim to further reinforce its network in South India, **SpiceJet announced four new daily direct flights connecting Chennai with Patna and Surat. The airline will be the first carrier to operate**

**flights on the Chennai-Patna-Chennai sector.**

10/03/19 Joy Sengupta/Times of India

**Bengaluru: A consumer court has directed SpiceJet Ltd to pay Rs 47,800 to a passenger who lost his baggage while travelling from Bengaluru to Delhi recently.**

The passenger, Sanjeev Kumar Mishra, stated in the complaint that his luggage was found missing on arrival in Delhi as he flew on January 21, 2019. While receiving his complaint, the authorities said they would find and return his luggage in 48 hours.

But Mishra got a call 15 days later stating that his luggage was untraceable. He was offered Rs 2,800 as compensation –which was Rs 200 per kilo and his baggage weight being calculated as 14 kilos. Mishra refused the compensation saying the cost of the baggage alone was Rs 3,500.

With the baggage, Mishra claimed to have lost clothes, slippers, screw tightening tools, medicines, shaving set, medical documents, Aadhar card, Voter's ID card, educational and professional documents, mobile charge of Rs 47,500, cash of Rs 27,500. He also said he could not pay his children's school fees due to the loss of the baggage and was unable to make bank transactions (as his PAN card was missing). Mishra sought compensation of Rs 78,450.

Defending against the complaint, SpiceJet pointed to the safety and security conditions which stipulate that passengers are not supposed to keep valuables like cameras, jewelry, money, electronic, perishable items and medication in the check-in baggage and do so at their own risk and the airline cannot be held responsible for pilferage and damage to such valuables.

10/03/19 Deccan Herald

**Dublin-based Fly Leasing Ltd, which has grounded three aircraft leased to India's Jet Airways, will take them back and redeploy elsewhere if a planned restructuring plan is not approved later this month,** according to CEO Colm Barrington.

Last week, Jet Airways announced that **another three aircraft had been grounded over a failure to make payments, bringing its total to 28.** The lessor was not specified.

"We have grounded our aircraft. We have control over our aircraft, but we have not terminated the leases and we are waiting for the airline to approve all its restructuring with the State Bank of India," Barrington was quoted as saying by Reuters.

Barrington added "if that [the restructuring] goes through at the end of the month, obviously, we will stay with Jet. If they can't get that done, then we'll take our aircraft back and redeploy."

The leasing company had three Boeing 737-800 aircraft on lease to Jet, accounting for 3 percent of its total revenue.

**The grounding of a large portion of Jet's aircraft has led to hundreds of cancelled flights,** prompting waves of comments from angry passengers on social media and phone calls which have inundated its call centre.

10/03/19 Bernd Debusmann Jr/Arabian Business

**Amritsar: The District Consumer Disputes Redressal Forum has directed Air India to refund Rs 6,000, price of an air ticket, along with a compensation worth Rs 5,000 and litigation expenses amounting to Rs 3,000 to a local man.**

Robin Tuli, a resident of Basant Nagar, had filed a complaint against Air India stating that he booked an air ticket for travelling from New Delhi to Amritsar for November 3, 2017. He reached the airport well in time as the said flight was to take off at 5 am but he was not issued boarding pass. Later, the complainant was issued the boarding pass for travel at 8.20 am. Later, he was made to board the aircraft only to be refused minutes later and again wait till noon. No aircraft was made available for

flight for the boarding pass issued.

He stated that he had another flight booked from Amritsar to Delhi to Gauhati at 15.25 pm on the same day for further appointments regarding his work.

The opposite party, in its reply, stated that since weather in Amritsar was not good on the said date, and messages regarding the scheduled time of the flight were sent to passengers. It was denied that the complainant was not put on any flight by the opposite party till noon without any cogent reason. In this respect, it was submitted that the said flight on the scheduled time was ready for take off from Delhi to Amritsar, but a technical glitch surfaced in the aircraft. Later, the passengers, including the complainant, who boarded it were informed about the fault and they were requested to wait for some time. It stated that that the technical fault in the said flight was fixed and, accordingly, it was sent to Amritsar at 1.15 pm.

10/03/19 Tribune

Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) standing committee member **Gayeshwar Chandra** and vice chairman **Abdul Awal Mintoo** were allegedly **prevented from going to India by immigration authorities at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport on Saturday**, reports UNB.

He was scheduled to go to India with another BNP leader and businessman Abdul Awal Mintoo on a flight of Jet Airways at 5:00pm, but the immigration authorities did not allow them to fly, said Gayeshwar.

According to Abdul Awal Mintoo, they were not given clearance by the immigration officials.

He was scheduled to go to Hyderabad for business purposes while Gayeshwar to Kolkata on a personal tour, he added.

Mintoo said, he later booked ticket for another flight of Air India which was scheduled to leave the airport at 9:30pm, but he was obstructed further and was forced to leave airport.

10/03/19 Prothom Alo

**With two major carriers — IndiGo and Jet Airways — cancelling around 200 flights daily, spot fares (those booked 7-15 days before the date of travel) are increasing compared with the prices in January when the flight schedules were more or less normal. On key metro routes like the Delhi-Mumbai, spot fares have risen by up to 20% since January this year.**

Fliers booking tickets within seven days of travel have to shell out over Rs 20,000 for a to-and-fro journey between Delhi and Mumbai, which is higher by around 20% compared with spot fares in January, according to data provided by Yatra.com.

Similarly, a Delhi-Bengaluru ticket will cost Rs 18,430 for travelling after seven days from the booking date — around 21% compared with January.

Analysts said spot fares have risen as IndiGo started cancelling around 30 flights daily since February due to shortage of pilots, which will carry on this month and the Jet fleet got depleted with several groundings due to non-payment to lessors.

**According to government sources, around 200 daily flights are being cancelled by Jet. Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) said last week that Jet is flying with just 70 planes out of its 123 aircraft fleet size due to non-payment of dues by the airline to its lessors and lack of spares.**

10/03/19 Arun Nayal/Financial Express

Pune: SpiceJet has announced the launch of eight new daily direct flights to Gwalior in Madhya Pradesh. The city, which was bagged by SpiceJet under UDAN III, will be the airline's 11th destination under the regional connectivity scheme, airline officials said.

In addition to the eight new flights to Gwalior, SpiceJet has also announced four new daily flights connecting Bhopal including the Bhopal-Udaipur UDAN flight.

"Gwalior will be SpiceJet's 52nd domestic destination. SpiceJet will be the first airline to offer daily direct flights on the **Gwalior-Hyderabad-Gwalior, Gwalior-Jammu-Gwalior, Gwalior-Bengaluru-Gwalior and Gwalior-Kolkata-Gwalior** sectors," an official said.

Ajay Singh - CMD, SpiceJet said, **"In the last three days, SpiceJet has announced the launch of 16 new UDAN flights reiterating our commitment to providing air connectivity to the smaller towns and cities of India and our steadfast support to the government's regional connectivity scheme."**

SpiceJet's new flight connecting Bhopal include a **daily direct flight on the Bhopal-Udaipur-Bhopal sector**. Besides, the airline has also introduced a **daily direct flight on the non-RCS sector Chennai-Bhopal-Chennai**.

10/03/19 Joy Sengupta/Times of India

New Delhi: **A Delhi-based pilot was allegedly harassed at Kerala's Thiruvananthapuram airport by a taxi driver on Friday.**

The incident took place when the pilot, who flies for Air India, arrived at Thiruvananthapuram and waited for her cab at a pre-paid taxi kiosk with CCTV cameras installed.

"I'm waiting for the transport, after work and this illiterate hooligan stops his car a few feet away from me and decides to catcall and harass me, 'Hey baby, come with me' and speeds away in his car," the pilot said in a social media post.

She reached out to authorities, including the local lawmaker Shashi Tharoor, but says that she failed to get a response. The pilot lodged a complaint with the airport manager and said that the car was a Kerala-registered grey Esteem.

Police accessed the CCTV footage and found the car's registration number. The taxi driver, who is yet to be identified, has been arrested on charges of sexual harassment.

10/03/19 PTI/NDTV

Mumbai: **State Bank of India (SBI) Chairman** Rajnish Kumar said on Saturday that the comprehensive resolution plan to bail out Jet Airways will be implemented if all conditions by all stakeholders are met. "Whatever is the resolution plan, it will be implemented if all the conditions by all the stakeholders--be it Naresh Goyal, Etihad or the lenders--are met," he said while talking to media persons here.

**Kumar said it is not a simple resolution plan and necessary approvals by the government will be required to put the ailing airline back on the track. The cash-strapped airline has reportedly pledged its fixed deposits worth Rs 1,500 crore with the SBI to borrow Rs 225 crore.**

09/03/19 TimesNowNews.com

In order to fast-track the hiring of director-level executives at Air India, the company is likely to conduct the appointment process and not involve the (PESB), according to a senior government.



"Currently, many director-level positions — such as (Commercial), (Personnel) and (Operations) — are open in The government plans to fill them up as soon as possible using its search-and-selection committee," the said.

Other executives in the company have been handling additional charge of these posts till date.

**"We would like people from private sector to apply. However, we will have to see how many people would be interested in these positions.** We don't have time to go through PESB route as it will be a long-winded process," the told

The PESB is a committee of retired bureaucrats.

08/03/19 Milbank

New Delhi: **Putting to rest speculations over the future of Boeing 737 MAX planes being operated by domestic airlines, Aviation regulator DGCA Monday decided against grounding the planes and issued additional directions for its operation.** The new guidelines come in the wake of Sunday's deadly Ethiopian flight crash in which 157 passengers, including four Indians, were killed. The airline was operating the ill-fated Boeing 737 MAX aircraft.

The pilot commanding the aircraft should have at least 1,000 hours of flying experience and co-pilot should have 5,00 hours of flying experience, according to the DGCA directions.

It is to be noted that Jet Airways and SpiceJet operate the Boeing 737 MAX aircraft in its fleet and had provided all information to the DGCA about the same.

Jet Airways has recently placed orders for 225 737 MAX planes with Boeing and some have already been delivered. Meanwhile, SpiceJet, which has embarked on ambitious expansion plans, has a deal with Boeing for up to 205 aircraft, including at least 155 737 MAX 8 planes. As of now, SpiceJet operates 12 737 MAX 8 planes and Jet Airways has 5 such aircraft in their fleets, DGCA said in a statement.

**Last December, the DGCA asked Jet Airways and SpiceJet to immediately report any "abnormal" issues related to the MAX plane's Manoeuvring Characteristics Augmentation System (MCAS), following the Lion Air crash.**

11/03/19 Indian Express

New Delhi: **India will issue additional safety measures for operating the Boeing 737 Max which two of its airlines - SpiceJet and Jet Airways - have latest by Tuesday.** Ethiopian Airlines and Chinese and Indonesian aviation regulators on Monday ordered grounding of the B737 Max following two crashes of this plane within five months in which 346 people have lost their lives.

Aviation minister Suresh Prabhu Tweeted: "Directed officials of DGCA to undertake safety assessment of Boeing 737-MAX (being flown by domestic carriers). Safety of the passengers is our utmost concern. Directed secretary and DGCA to take appropriate action immediately."

"DGCA is reviewing the matter regarding safety issues post accident of Boeing Ethiopian Airline B737-800MAX on Sunday. We shall issue additional safety instructions by Monday night or Tuesday morning in this regard for Indian operators," said a senior Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) official on Monday.

While the five B737 Max that Jet has are all grounded due to non payment of lease, SpiceJet is currently operating 13 of these planes. Its longest flight, Delhi-Hong Kong, is operated using the Max.

**DGCA chief B S Bhullar had after the Ethiopian crash on Sunday said India has sought information from Boeing on this aircraft and that "further safety measures, if required, shall follow that".**

The doomed Ethiopian and Lion Air B737 Max had four Indian passengers and an Indian pilot,

respectively, among those on board.

While SpiceJet has up to 205 B737 Max on order, Jet Airways — which is facing a battle for survival — has 225 of them on order.

Following the Lion Air crash, the DGCA had issued a slew of directives for the B737 Max to both SpiceJet and Jet (which was then flying the Max). **It had asked these two airlines to land their Boeing 737 Max at the nearest suitable airport in case this new plane shows any problem with its onboard maneuvering characteristics augmentation system (MCAS) — a software on the B737 Max to prevent it from stalling.**

**"In case of any snag or feared snag with the MCAS, pilots will revert to manual trimming (not depend on or use MCAS) and then land at nearest suitable airport. If any repairs are carried out on MCAS of a B737 Max, that aircraft should first do a verification flight (without passengers) and after that begin commercial flights with passengers," the DGCA instructions had said.**

11/03/19 Saurabh Sinha/Times of India

New Delhi: Aviation regulator DGCA will seek information from Boeing as well as Jet Airways and SpiceJet operating Boeing 737 MAX aircraft in the wake of plane crash in Ethiopia, according to senior official.

As many as 149 passengers, including Indians, were killed when a Boeing 737 MAX plane operated by Ethiopian Airlines crashed soon after taking off from Addis Ababa.

The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) would seek information from plane maker Boeing and Indian carriers operating Boeing 737 MAX planes in India, according to the official.

Jet Airways and SpiceJet fly Boeing 737 MAX planes.

11/03/19 PTI/New Indian Express

**Cash-strapped Jet Airways said Monday it is not operating any of the five Boeing 737 MAX in its fleet.** The statement of the airline, which has grounded a significant number of planes, comes amid aviation regulator being asked to undertake a safety assessment of 737 MAX aircraft following the crash of such a plane in Ethiopia on Sunday.

Jet Airways and SpiceJet are the only two domestic carriers that have 737 MAX planes in their fleet. In a statement, Jet Airways said it has five Boeing 737 MAX planes in its fleet "but is currently not flying any of these aircraft".

11/03/19 PTI/moneycontrol.com

**New Delhi: A day after an Ethiopian Boeing 737-8 MAX plane crashed, killing all 157 people on board the flight, demand is growing in India to ban the airplane.**

The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) is yet to announce the fate of the aircraft but will issue safety guidelines for domestic carriers soon.

This is the second time that the newly-inducted Boeing 737-800MAX plane encountered a fatal crash. Another Boeing 737-8 MAX flight had crashed fatally in Indonesia before yesterday's incident.

In India, there are two airlines that operate a Boeing 737-8 MAX: SpiceJet uses around 15 aircraft while Jet Airways operates 5.

**China was the first country to ground all Max aircraft in their country** to make sure no untoward incidents occur till a time when air is cleared around the troubles around Max.

DGCA, in a statement, said, "**DGCA is reviewing the matter regarding safety issues post accident of Boeing Ethiopian Airline B737-800MAX on 10/03/2019.**

**DGCA shall issue additional safety instructions tonight or tomorrow morning in this regard for Indian operators."**

Minsiter of civil aviation, Suresh prabhu said, "Directed officials of DGCA to undertake safety assessment of Boeing 737-MAX (being flown by domestic carriers). Safety of the passengers is our utmost concern. Directed Secretary and DGCA to take appropriate action immediately."

11/03/19 Nagarjun Dwarakanath/India Today

Much of the criticism and carping about where Naresh Goyal got his seed money to start an airline is credited to envy and the hope that he would fail in the 1993 take-off of Jet Airways. But with no competition from either Air India or Indian Airlines, Jet, with its radically different offering from the government-owned airlines, especially in the post-JRD Tata era, roared up the graph.

Unknown entity Goyal made a personal fortune of \$1.6 billion and entered the Forbes list of top 20 richest men in India.

Goyal was seen as the man with the Midas touch, and recognition sidled up to him—as did awards aplenty. He could do no wrong.

So, the cloud over who had coughed up the initial capital became increasingly moot; and it seemed sufficient to say that it had been legally channelled through the Tailwinds company, incorporated in the Isle of Man. It remained drawing room gossip for a while, but the little Mom-and-Pop airlines, replete with the bells and whistles of modern airlines, caught public fancy and its growth graph was perpendicular.

Flights were on time, the food was good, the experience far more 20th century. Run by a martinet of a chairman, the carrier had the first-mover advantage in the government's new open-skies policy.

For the first ten years, things went swimmingly. Goyal helmed the airline as its sole sculptor, and brooked no argument. He did bring in great talent at top dollar, but would not give them a freehand, witness the fact that seven CEOs came and went in 10 years, unable to consolidate their grand plans: the Mom and Pop mindset refused to go away.

On a whim and against all advice, Goyal invested heavily in JetLite, a no-frills, low-cost airline fashioned out of the buy-over of Air Sahara. The fleet was amalgamated with JetKonnnect, Jet's own low-cost fleet, and the airline got a collective 32 per cent of the national commercial aviation pie.

What should have been a bonanza became a brick around the neck of Jet. The decision to enter the low-cost market was sensible in itself—India was upping its traffic by as much 20 per cent annually—but Goyal wanted in on everything, and knew little of the intricacies of an enterprise that had fare structure changes by the hour in response to real-time market conditions.

Low-cost airlines function not so much on lower fares but on lower operating costs. If one is out of kilter, you lose. City pairings and timings are also crucial.

Jet had that great asset—the maximum slots for Mumbai airport—which if properly exploited, could have given the airline a great advantage. Alas, it was not to be.

When the low-cost exercise ran into the red, Goyal turned his attention back to the full-service fleet and chose Boeing 777s and Airbus A330s on not-so-profitable routes. By now, he had begun to fancy himself as a Richard Branson. He could have succeeded, but his draconian style resulted in true talents slipping away, leaving Goyal surrounded by sycophants and yes-men. Wrong decisions multiplied. Improperly advised by his inner circle and based, the legend goes, on a dinner conversation in Long Island, he added JFK to Jet's American destinations in addition to Newark. The JFK experiment started going down the tube within 45 days and cost the airline a bundle.

Goyal placed new-generation aircraft on routes from Kochi, Mangalore and Thiruvananthapuram to the Gulf in the hope of grabbing traffic. But then, before this could come to fruition, Jet pulled back and cancelled these routes as they were not making money.

By then, overextended on these aircraft—including the 777-ER—he placed them on the London and New York routes, but could not pull in the slack. Nor, at that, pay back the banks: the debt just kept mounting.

In all fairness, Goyal's initial idea was splendid, almost patriotic: he wanted to create an international Indian airline that flew all nationalities around the world, a literal ambassador in the sky. In recent times, he fell off that concept finally settling for a middle-class Indian menu that failed to reflect the globalisation of the discerning traveller. His own top management called it the 'chicken curry and rice' fare.

All these factors came together to mount pressure on him. The cash-strapped carrier has reportedly grounded 47 of its 123-strong fleet. **If the airline wants to succeed, it will have to bring in professionals, give them targets and leave them to produce results.**

11/03/19 Bikram Vohra/First Post

New Delhi: Gulf carrier Etihad Airways is likely to infuse around Rs 1,600-1,900 crore into cash-strapped Jet Airways under a proposed deal wherein Naresh Goyal would step down as chairman of the domestic carrier, according to sources.

Jet Airways, a full-service airline, has been grappling with acute financial crunch that has also forced it to ground many planes as well as delay payment of salaries and loan repayments.

**Under the proposed deal, Goyal would step down as chairman and director of Jet Airways but can nominate two persons to the airline's board. Goyal would be designated as chairman emeritus while his son Nivaan Goyal would be offered an appropriate executive position subject to certain conditions, the sources said.**

**By infusing Rs 1,600-1,900 crore, Etihad's stake in Jet Airways would rise to 24.9 per cent, the sources said citing a memorandum of understanding between the two airlines.**

Currently, Etihad has 24 per cent stake in the domestic airline.

11/03/19 PTI/Times of India

Mumbai: **Punjab National Bank, the second largest lender to troubled Jet Airways along with other overseas lenders are awaiting a resolution plan being worked out under the aegis of the State Bank of India, the largest lender to the country's second largest private sector aviation company.**

The state-owned lender has not granted any new credit to the airline.

**"SBI is the lead bank, which is (in the process of) finalising the resolution plan. PNB will take the final call after going through the resolution plan,"** Rajeev Puri, general manager (zonal manager – Mumbai), Punjab National Bank told ET.

"PNB has not committed anything new to Jet Airways. For now, we have not extended any interim credit," he said.

"No fresh document has been signed between the lender and borrower."

Earlier, markets were rife with speculation that the bank has extended more than Rs 2,000 crore fresh loans to the aviation company.

11/03/19 Saikat Das/Economic Times

New Delhi: **The Directorate-General of Civil Aviation has issued revised standard operating procedures for export of aircraft which will make it easier for companies which have leased aircraft to airlines in India to take them back in case the airline company defaults on payment of lease.**

**The notification called 'Effective implementation of Cape Town Convention- Issuance of revised Standard Operating Procedure for Export of Aircraft' was issued on Monday.**

**The Cape Town Convention is a global registry of aircraft.** The notification will make it easier for global leasing companies to re-export their aircraft which will allow them to redeploy these assets with other airlines. **The comfort provided by the implementation of the new notification will also help bring down the leasing rates that airlines in India have to pay.**

**"World over the trend is to lease and not own aircraft.** Leasing companies decide on how much to charge for leasing an aircraft considering various risk factors, including whether the country is signatory to all global aviation conventions and also the perception about the airline to which the aircraft is being leased. With the latest notification the risk factor comes down as now it will be easier to take out the aircraft," a former government official, involved with airlines whose aircraft were sought to be taken out of the country, said.

11/03/19 Ashwini Phadnis/Business Line

Amritsar: **The District Consumer Disputes Redressal Forum has directed Air India to refund Rs 6,000, price of an air ticket, along with a compensation worth Rs 5,000 and litigation expenses amounting to Rs 3,000 to a local man.**

Robin Tuli, a resident of Basant Nagar, had filed a complaint against Air India stating that he booked an air ticket for travelling from New Delhi to Amritsar for November 3, 2017. He reached the airport well in time as the said flight was to take off at 5 am but he was not issued boarding pass. Later, the complainant was issued the boarding pass for travel at 8.20 am. Later, he was made to board the aircraft only to be refused minutes later and again wait till noon. No aircraft was made available for flight for the boarding pass issued.

He stated that he had another flight booked from Amritsar to Delhi to Gauhati at 15.25 pm on the same day for further appointments regarding his work.

The opposite party, in its reply, stated that since weather in Amritsar was not good on the said date,

and messages regarding the scheduled time of the flight were sent to passengers. It was denied that the complainant was not put on any flight by the opposite party till noon without any cogent reason.

In this respect, it was submitted that the said flight on the scheduled time was ready for take off from Delhi to Amritsar, but a technical glitch surfaced in the aircraft. Later, the passengers, including the complainant, who boarded it were informed about the fault and they were requested to wait for some time. It stated that the technical fault in the said flight was fixed and, accordingly, it was sent to Amritsar at 1.15 pm.

The forum observed that the opposite party had taken two different stand, firstly by stating that due to bad weather in Amritsar the flight was rescheduled and the passengers, including the complainant, were duly informed on their registered mobile numbers. But no such evidence has been placed on record that the complainant along with other passengers were informed regarding it. 11/03/19 Tribune

**New Delhi: The Supreme Court has sought a response from the central government and Air India within eight weeks over a petition seeking direction to frame appropriate policies to ensure people specially-abled individuals are able to use air transport facilities with dignity.**

A petition in this regard was filed by Kaushik Kumar Majumdar with 85 per cent orthopaedic disability, who alleged that in December 2017, he was retracted from boarding an Air India flight and received flak from the staff when he denied to remove batteries from his wheelchair.

A bench headed by Chief Justice of India Ranjan Gogoi had on Friday asked the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities, Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), Ministry of Civil Aviation, Air India and all the state governments and Union Territories to respond to the petition within the stipulated time.

Advocate Avneesh Arputham, who appeared on behalf of Majumdar, brought to the attention of the court that till date, no inquiry against the erring employees has been initiated by Air India or the Ministry of Civil Aviation.

The petitioner sought directions to DGCA to make guidelines regarding sensitization and training programmes for the authorities, the staff of the airlines and airports with respect to the needs of the Persons with Disabilities.

The petitioner also sought direction to the government to dedicate a separate nodal body which would be responsible for hearing grievances related to persons with disabilities to ensure that they are not subjected to insults, violence, intimidation and humiliation.

10/03/19 Syed Qayam Ali/Siasat Daily

**New Delhi: A plethora of projects were unveiled by Prime Minister Narendra Modi till the election announcement came on Sunday but a group of 200-odd farmers sitting on a protest for the last 170 days near Delhi derailed one such big announcement. PM could not lay the foundation stone of Jewar International Airport in Greater Noida.**

PM was in Greater Noida on Friday and though he unveiled a host of other projects and also mentioned the advantages of the proposed airport, the foundation stone of this project could not be laid. This was despite central government ministers, local MP Mahesh Sharma and the UP government earlier claiming that the project will be their showpiece for the 2019 polls and its construction would begin before the elections. But **a determined group of farmers unwilling to part**

**with their land on government-determined rates have taken the fight to Allahabad High Court, delaying the land acquisition.** The project's fate will now be determined under the new government. "Our ongoing protest at Kishorpur village in Jewar has entered its 170th day today. Many farmers gave consent to give up their land and later withdrew it. Nearly 250 farmers have joined in petitions before the Allahabad High Court and a decision is expected soon from the court. The PM came to Greater Noida but could not lay the foundation stone of the project due to our genuine fight for our due," farmer Yogesh Sharma of Jewar Airport Sangharsh Samiti told ET.  
11/03/19 Aman Sharma/Economic Times

**Chennai: Bengaluru International Airport (BIAL) is set to invest around \$2 billion for creating infrastructure to cater to 65 million passengers against 20 million now.**

India-born Canadian billionaire Prem Watsa, who is chairman of Fairfax, which owns majority stake in BIAL, wrote in a letter to shareholders that the airport's second runway would be completed in 2019 and construction of the second terminal is likely to be over in 2021.

BIAL's total equity value is estimated to be around \$1.2 billion.

A syndicate of Indian banks has approved the debt-to-equity ratio of 80:20 at attractive interest rates, he said.

BIAL has had an outstanding year, said Watsa. While the revenue grew six per cent to \$234 million in 2018, profit declined one per cent to \$99 million. The second-fastest growing airport in the world handled 32 million passengers, up by 29.1 per cent, and cargo grew 12.9 per cent.

BIAL's aero revenue went up at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 21 per cent from 2009 to 2018. Revenue has also been generated through landing, parking and other services charged as user development fees (UDF) to airlines and passengers. The non-aero revenue has grown at a CAGR of 17 per cent from 2009 to 2018 and is expected to go up substantially due to an increase in passenger growth rate.

Watsa said the Airport Economic Regulatory Authority (AERA) has finalised the tariff order for the second control period (from April 2016 to March 2021) in August 2018. The tariffs that the airport can charge have a very significant impact on the cash flow generated and on the financing for the planned expansion of the airport. In the tariff order, AERA also approves the projected capital expenditure for the planned expansion of the airport.

11/03/19 TE Narasimhan/Business Standard

The aviation industry in India follows a pattern best illustrated by the titles of Salman Khan starrers. When the going is good, the airlines are Dabangg, when fuel prices rise, when traffic and revenues dip, they seek a Bodyguard, and when it all fails, they end up Wanted.

**The sordid saga of Jet Airways fits the script and is a sequel to Kingfisher Airlines, starring Vijay Mallya. Exuberance leads to myopic mergers and acquisitions on dubious rationale, and post facto justifications trigger a parade of blunders. In good times, revenues grow in arithmetic proportion, and in bad times, losses grow in geometric proportion. Maintaining altitude demands a balance of costs and pricing. Lack of a cogent approach results in a frantic race for survival.**

**The curious facet about the Jet Airways story is that despite its beleaguered state, there is no urgency on resolving the issue.** Rather, the case is in a sort of suspended animation. Indeed, Jet Airways is afflicted by an ailment that has no name. The Naresh Goyal enterprise owes Rs 9,610 crore in debt, has declared a negative net worth of Rs 10,370 crore, and for the nine-month period ending December 2018, has reported a loss of Rs 3,208 crore—a dip of 1,295.4 per cent compared to the previous year, a company presentation helpfully points out. Those it owes money include banks,

sundry operational creditors, aircraft lessors, fuel suppliers and the Airports Authority of India—airlines owe AAI over Rs 2,400 crore in dues.

The situation for those running the operations is desperate. In February, the shareholders of Jet Airways passed a resolution offering SBI and others conversion of debt into equity at Rs 1 per share—which translates into 50.1 per cent shareholding. What happens if a lenders' consortium led by State Bank of India ends up owning a major chunk of Jet Airways equity? Would that be virtual nationalisation? Definitions aside, there is no escaping the fact that banks are now left holding Air India II.

**The airline's troubles are not recent—it has been struggling in the red for over five years and its net worth has been persistently negative. The entry of Etihad in 2013 via the sale of equity by Goyal was backed by expectations of funnelling traffic from India on the Etihad stream. However, curiously, Jet Airways entered into code-sharing and traffic sharing deals with European carriers like Air France et al. That bet left Etihad fuming. Worse it didn't quite pay off.**

**Proposals from other airlines for co-management were rejected as Goyal would not step down.** A plea to Tatas to take over didn't fructify either. A top financial adviser pointed out to the Tatas that a stable of three different airlines—Air Asia, Vistara and Jet—would be akin to a cart being drawn by a donkey, a horse and a white elephant. In 2019, the lenders are desperate but cannot run the airline. So the hope is back on Etihad. The once bitten Abu Dhabi-based airline has imposed conditions and sought concessions. There is a mystifying fog over the fate of the airline, which turns 25 years this year. The silver jubilee stands tarred.

There are consequences to leaving an enterprise of this size stalled in a fog. Jet and Jet Lite flew over 30 million passengers to domestic and international destinations. There is the cost to the lenders, the cost of systemic disruption and the political cost of threat to employment. In the past few weeks, over 50 aircraft of its 119-strong fleet have been grounded. In recent days, the airline has announced cancellation of nearly 500 flights till March 30, 2019. Passengers travelling on work and holiday are left stranded every day thanks to the uncertainty. Those stuck with Jet bookings are left in suspense on the status of their planned and paid for journey. The holiday plans of families, to travel for a marriage in the family or for that long-awaited holiday, are in tatters. While the future is yet uncertain, the airline offers tickets on its sites to destinations from April onwards, setting into motion another parade of angst and anger.

10/03/19 Shankkar Aiyar/New Indian Express

Greater Noida: **Prime Minister Narendra Modi said, here on Saturday, Noida would get an international airport at Jewar, which would be the biggest airport in the country.** "Jewar is going to have the country's biggest airport and all the formalities for it are being completed," Modi said at a function after laying the foundation stones for a number of projects, including a power plant at Khurja and an archaeological institute. "Noida will get air connectivity and there will be no need to go to Delhi for air travel," he said.

10/03/19 IANS/Sify



Le conseil de l'Organisation internationale de l'aviation civile (**OACI**) a fixé, le 6 mars, les **critères** qui seront utilisés pour évaluer les unités des émissions et les projets présentés dans le cadre du programme de Compensation et de réduction de carbone pour l'aviation internationale (**Corsia**).

Un accord a été conclu pour la mise en place du TAB (Organe consultatif technique), un groupe d'experts nommés par les États ayant le mandat de faire des recommandations au conseil concernant "les unités des émissions admissibles" destinées à être utilisées par les compagnies aériennes membres de la Corsia.

Le conseil a également approuvé les critères relatifs aux unités des émissions, qui seront utilisés par le TAB pour procéder à l'évaluation des programmes de compensation et formuler des recommandations sur les unités éligibles.

L'Environmental Defense Fund (**EDF**) salue l'adoption de ces critères qui garantissent – au moins en théorie – que seules des unités de réduction des émissions "crédibles" pourront être utilisées par les compagnies aériennes pour compenser leurs émissions.

L'ONG **met cependant en garde contre un manque de transparence** qui pourrait affecter directement la mise en application de ces critères et l'efficacité du programme Corsia dans la lutte contre le changement climatique.

Actu Environnement 11/03/2019

**The Boeing 737 MAX being operated by SpiceJet will finally be grounded by early evening today**, said senior officials in the aviation regulator.

"While the groundings were ordered, there is a time given for last-minute exigencies. An aircraft has to return to base, if it was at some international station. Aircraft are to be brought back to maintenance hangers because an aircraft requires maintenance even when it's grounded," said a senior DGCA official, who did not want to be identified.

He added that the European regulators might have informed airlines much before announcing the grounding of aircraft. "That is the reason why airlines in Europe were able to ground the aircraft immediately," said the official.

**Late night on Tuesday, India banned operations of Boeing 737 MAX plane** after this week's crash of this aircraft type in the African skies, increasing the likelihood of a further surge in domestic fares that remain high due to unrelated flight cancellations by some carriers.

**The ban came a day after the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) had allowed the Boeing 737 MAX aircraft to fly under stricter conditions. The ban would impact SpiceJet the most.** SpiceJet and troubled Jet Airways are the only two airlines operating the Boeing 737 MAX in the country

Grounding of 12 such aircraft operated by the local carriers could disrupt the operations and increase domestic fares that are already high due to flight cancellations by Jet Airways and IndiGo.

Five aircraft of Jet Airways were grounded due to non-payment of dues to lessors.

**DGCA will issue a formal clarification soon.**

The Economic times of India 13/03/2019

The Indian aviation sector had been fastest growing over the past four years, making it the world's envy. But this blistering pace of growth in passenger numbers has brought along its own share of challenges; the latest being the problems associated with Boeing 737 MAX, which are operated by Jet Airways and SpiceJet. **ET takes stock of the major pain points for the burgeoning industry — technical problems with new aircraft, financial stress and cascading impact on capacity, and the shortage of air traffic controllers.**

Max & Neo: are they safe?

**Airbus 320 (Neo), fitted with Pratt & Whitney engines, are yet to sort out its technical glitches, triggering safety concerns due to several incidents of mid-air engine shutdowns. Indian carriers most affected are IndiGo and GoAir, as several aircraft are grounded due to the lack of spare engines.**

Airbus 320 (Neo)'s rival **Boeing 737 MAX** faces a similar predicament, with a plane each from two carriers — Lion Air of Indonesia and Ethiopian Airlines — crashing, killing all on board. In October 2018, a Lion Air flight crashed into the sea after take-off due to instrument failure causing an abrupt skydive. The March 10 crash of the Ethiopian Boeing 737 MAX has resulted in a ban by several aviation regulators.



**India's DGCA has joined 15 countries — United Kingdom, Germany, The Netherlands, France, Turkey, Austria, China, Australia, Singapore, Ethiopia, Mexico, Cayman Islands, Brazil, Malaysia and Indonesia — in grounding the Boeing 737 MAX.** Earlier, the Indian regulator had allowed the aircraft's operation albeit with stricter norms, mandating that only pilots with 1,000 hours of experience can fly it.



**India joined late Tuesday a global ban on flying the Boeing 737 MAX plane** after this week's crash of this aircraft type in the African skies, increasing the likelihood of a further rise in domestic fares that remain high due to unrelated flight cancellations by some carriers.

"(Industry regulator) DGCA has taken the decision to ground the Boeing 737-MAX planes immediately. These planes will be grounded (until) appropriate modifications and safety measures are undertaken to ensure their safe operations. As always, passenger safety remains our top priority. We continue to consult closely with regulators around the world, airlines, and aircraft manufacturers to ensure passenger safety," the aviation ministry tweeted late evening.

**The ban comes a day after the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) had allowed the Boeing 737 MAX aircraft to fly under stricter conditions.**

The ban would impact SpiceJet the most. SpiceJet and troubled Jet Airways are the only two airlines operating the Boeing 737 MAX in the country.

Grounding of 12 such aircraft operated by the local carriers could disrupt the operations and increase domestic fares that are already high due to flight cancellations by Jet Airways and IndiGo.



"EASA has decided to suspend all flight operations of the two affected models," the Reuters report said, citing the agency.

Jet's aircraft are grounded due to financial problems. SpiceJet, earlier on Tuesday, had said that it would continue to fly the MAX with precautionary measures in place.

The UK, Germany and France on Tuesday joined the international ban on flying the Boeing 737 MAX, one of which operated by Ethiopian Airlines crashed Sunday killing all 157 people on board. China, Indonesia, Ethiopia, Australia and Brazil had announced bans on Monday, a day after the crash, taking the total number of countries restricting flights by this aircraft type to 16.

**The market believes that curbs on Boeing 737 MAX operations in India would bring problems for SpiceJet, which plans to expand in West Asia through this aircraft type.**

"If India also imposes curbs on the use of Boeing 737 MAX aircraft, SpiceJet may face a bigger problem. Right now, SpiceJet is in a sweet spot because Jet Airways is facing problems," said Sanjiv Bhasin, executive VP-markets and corporate affairs at IIFL. He spoke to ET before the DGCA announced the late evening ban.

**SpiceJet shares fell on Tuesday on concerns that grounding of these aircraft would hurt the airline's revenue and profitability. Shares closed at Rs 78.80, down 5.29%, on a day the Sensex rose 481.56 points. Shares of SpiceJet have fallen 41.6% in the past year. On the NYSE, Boeing shed 5.28% to \$378.71 a share.**

"The aircraft (type) has flown hundreds of thousands of hours globally and some of the world's largest airlines are flying this. We are actively engaged with both Boeing and DGCA and will continue to put safety first, as always. We have already implemented all additional precautionary measures, as directed by the DGCA on Monday," SpiceJet had said earlier in a statement Tuesday.

**On Monday, the DGCA had said that only pilots with 1,000 hours of experience on the MAX were allowed to fly these planes.**

The Ethiopian Air tragedy is the second disaster involving the new model in less than five months and has raised questions on its safety.

The Economic Times of India 13/03/2019

New Delhi/Mumbai: **Late on Tuesday, India joined the list of countries that have grounded the Boeing 737 MAX.**

"DGCA has taken the decision to ground the Boeing 737-MAX planes immediately. These planes will be grounded till appropriate modifications and safety measures are undertaken to ensure their safe operations. As always, passenger safety remains our top priority. We continue to consult closely with regulators around the world, airlines, and aircraft manufacturers to ensure passenger safety," the aviation ministry tweeted.

SpiceJet will have to immediately ground the 12-13 B737 MAX planes in its fleet. Five MAX planes of Jet Airways have been grounded for some time now, due to non-payment of lease rentals.

"We will see if overflying by the Boeing 737 MAX also needs to be stopped after studying whether airlines of nearby regions use this plane to overfly India on their international routes. We need to study that before taking a call on overflying by MAX," said highly paced sources.

A large number of countries and standalone airlines have grounded the B737 MAX, with places like Singapore and Australia banning overflying over their airspace.

**'No B737 MAX simulator in India for pilots to train on'**

SilkAir, a subsidiary of Singapore Airlines (SIA), used to operate its Max to Hyderabad and Bangalore.

"SilkAir will be flying the Boeing 737 NG (new generation) to Hyderabad and Bangalore instead of the Boeing 737 MAX," said an SIA spokesperson. Singapore's aviation authority has suspended "all variants of the Boeing 737 Max aircraft into and out of Singapore.

Australia's Civil Aviation Safety Authority temporarily suspended airlines from flying B737 MAX jets to or from Australia. China and Indonesia had done so soon after Sunday's crash of an Ethiopian B737 MAX that killed all 157 on board. Aerolíneas Argentinas is grounding its five Boeing 737 MAX 8 planes and so are Ethiopian Airlines, Aeromexico, Cayman Airways and South Africa's Comair and South Korea's Eastar Jet.

**The DGCA had on Monday night issued instructions, asking captains and co-pilots with over 1,000 and 500 hours, of flying experience on this aircraft respectively, to operate this aircraft. This**

instruction was severely criticised by experts as they pointed out pilots operating both the ill-fated Lion Air and Ethiopian B737 MAX had huge flying experience.

**"It is about a snag in the aircraft, its operating system. It is not something that can be taken care of by simply asking for experienced pilots to fly the plane. That decision of DGCA made no sense," said a senior pilot of the B737 MAX who said a new operating system almost gives the MAX "a mind of its own after which the pilots can do nothing."**

According to aviation safety experts, "the problem was that **these great flying professionals aren't being trained on B737 MAX simulators and so they won't be able to take split-second decisions and take control of the plane in time when needed**".

13/03/19 Manju V/Saurabh Sinha/Times of India

**In one of the last decisions taken by the government before the election code of conduct kicked in, it has approved the Tata-Singapore Airlines joint venture Vistara to fly on international routes. The approval will make Vistara the fifth carrier from India to fly on international routes.**

**"Vistara has been granted permission to operate on international routes, following suggestions from the Group of Ministers formed to look into the issue. The Ministry of Civil Aviation (MCA) has conveyed the same to Vistara on March 8,"** a senior official aware of the development told Business Standard.

Following the approval, Vistara has sought permission to operate flights between Delhi and Colombo seven days a week. **"Vistara has sought bilateral rights to Sri Lanka and slots from Delhi Airport for the same. They will operate the flight with Airbus A320 aircraft,"** said an industry source.

Currently, Air India and Sri Lankan Airlines connect Delhi and Colombo via a non-stop flight, while other Indian carriers like IndiGo, SpiceJet, and Jet Airways connect the city from south Indian cities like Chennai, Bengaluru, and Hyderabad.

The approval comes after much delay. It was delayed due to an ongoing probe into AirAsia India for alleged lobbying and bribing government officials for international flight permits. Both AirAsia India and Vistara are owned by the Tata group.

The government had formed an international committee of five Cabinet-ranked ministers headed by Arun Jaitley to decide if an international flying permit should be given to Vistara. This was the first time such a panel had been formed for granting an international flying permit to an airline. Normally, aviation regulator Directorate General of Civil Aviation has the final authority to grant a permit for international operations.

The delay in approval had affected its business plan, as flying rights to Thailand, where it had initially planned to fly, are on the verge of getting exhausted amid low-cost airlines such as IndiGo and GoAir deploying new flights.

The airline has recorded losses in three consecutive years. It has struggled to command higher fare on domestic routes because of competition from low-cost airlines. Its business plan is dependent on creating an identity on international routes, where it can command higher fares.

12/03/19 Arindam Majumder/Business Standard

The Ethiopian Airlines plane that crashed killing 157 people was making a strange rattling noise and trailed smoke and debris as it swerved above a field of panicked cows before hitting earth, according to witnesses.

Flight 302 took off from the Ethiopian capital on Sunday morning bound for Nairobi with passengers from more than 30 countries. All on board the Boeing 737 Max 8 died.

The pilot had requested permission to return to Addis Ababa, saying he was having problems - but it was too late.

Half-a-dozen witnesses interviewed by Reuters in the farmland where the plane came down reported smoke billowing out behind, while four of them also described a loud sound.

"It was a loud rattling sound. Like straining and shaking metal," said Turn Buzuna, a 26-year-old housewife and farmer who lives about 300 metres from the crash site.

"Everyone says they have never heard that kind of sound from a plane and they are under a flight path," she added.

Malka Galato (47), a barley and wheat farmer in whose field the plane crashed, also described smoke and sparks from the back.

"The plane was very close to the ground and it made a turn... Cows that were grazing in the fields ran in panic," he said.

Tamirat Abera (25) was walking past the field at the time. He said the plane turned sharply, trailing white smoke and items like clothes and papers, then crashed about 300 metres away.

"It tried to climb but it failed and went down nose first," he said. "There was fire and white smoke which then turned black."

As the plane had only just taken off, it was loaded with fuel.

The aircraft was broken into small pieces, the largest among them a wheel and a dented engine. The debris was spread over land roughly the size of two football fields.

Investigators found two black box recorders yesterday, which will help piece together the plane's final minutes.

"When it was hovering, fire was following its tail, then it tried to lift its nose," said another witness, Gadisa Benti.

"When it passed over our house, the nose pointed down and the tail raised up. It went straight to the ground with its nose, it then exploded."

12/03/19 Duncan Miriri/Irish Independent

737 MAX 8 from stalling in mid-flight is coming under scrutiny following Sunday's Ethiopian Airlines crash, which killed 157 people.

The aircraft's state-of-the-art Maneuvering Characteristics Augmentation System (MCAS) was also implicated in the downing last year of Lion Air Boeing 737 MAX 8 in Indonesia, when all passengers and crew members also died.

In both cases, the aircraft were just a few months old and crashed minutes after take-off. Both planes are reported to have flown erratically, climbing and descending steeply before finally crashing.

"We are hearing that the problem was similar to the Lion Air accident; 'unreliable airspeed' and/or difficulty in controlling the aircraft, and both had asked to return to the airport," Gerry Soejatman, an aviation analyst based in Indonesia's capital, Jakarta, told Al Jazeera.

An initial investigation in the Lion Air accident suggested a faulty sensor had triggered the plane's automated MCAS system possibly resulting in the nose of the aircraft being pushed down.

"New planes do have issues," said Soejatman. "But they are usually solved before delivery."

"These two accidents, potentially with similar causes, are definitely raising eyebrows within the industry."

The similarity of the two accidents has also put the aviation industry into a tailspin, with a number of countries grounding their Boeing 737 MAX 8 fleets, even before the results of an investigation are known.

China, a major buyer of the aircraft, was one of the first to ground its 737 MAX 8 aircraft until further notice.

"Given that two accidents both involved newly delivered Boeing 737-8 planes and happened during take-off phase, they have some degree of similarity," China's Civil Aviation Administration said in a statement.

Henry Harteveltdt, a travel industry analyst at the Atmosphere Research Group, said Beijing's move "will carry enormous impact across the global airline community".

"China's decision may be premature, [but] it's one that cannot be ignored," he added. "China is an extremely important market for Boeing."

Cayman Airways and Ethiopian Airlines have also grounded their 737 MAX 8 fleet.

Boeing has delivered about 350 of the approximately \$120m each aircraft to date, with more than 4,500 in total ordered since 2017, making it one of Boeing's most important and profitable aircraft.

The MCAS, introduced with the launch the 737 MAX 8 in May 2017, was the result of an effort to equip the new model with larger and more fuel-efficient engines.

These were placed further forward and higher on the wing, altering the aircraft's balance. This resulted in the plane's nose pitching upwards in certain circumstances.

To solve the problem, Boeing added the **MCAS flight-control system, which automatically pushed the aircraft's nose down when a sensor indicated the plane was at risk of stalling.**

**The MCAS is designed to only activate when the wing flaps are retracted after take-off and the aircraft has gained altitude.**

**However, it is speculated this system may have played a part in both accidents, with the climbing and diving behaviour of the flight the result of the pilot's struggle to overcome the automated system.**

Following the Lion Air crash in October 2018, which killed 189 people, it was reported that the addition of the MCAS flight-control system had not been adequately explained to pilots, possibly making them ill-prepared if it were to activate during flight.

At the time, Boeing denied the company had "intentionally withheld" information about the new system. According to digital aviation publication Air Current, citing an internal Boeing memo, company CEO Dennis Muilenburg told staff the **"relevant function [of MCAS] is described in the Flight Crew Operations Manual".**

"We routinely engage with customers about how to operate our airplanes safely," Muilenburg said in the memo, according to an Air Current report.

But pilots flying the aircraft for Southwest Airlines were reported to have been told that it was likely they would never see the system at work as "it operates in situations where the aircraft is under relatively high g load and near stall ... designed to assist the pilot during recover, and likely going unnoticed by the pilot."

Air Current, citing a Q&A document provided to pilots at SouthWest Airlines, said staff were told this was why "Boeing did not include an MCAS description in its Flight Crew Operations Manual".

In the wake of the Lion Air crash, Boeing stepped up its efforts to make pilots familiar with the new system, but the relations between the two companies soured, with Lion Air threatening to cancel billions of dollars of orders.

"Normally, manufacturers would be supportive of their customer in times of accidents," said Soejatman.

"This crash has raised questions on the real reason behind the breakdown in relations between Lion Air and Boeing."

The **US aerospace giant is also understood to be working on updated software for the MCAS system** but it is unclear if the Ethiopian Airlines accident will delay this.

11/03/19 Tarek Bazley/Al Jazeera

Singapore: International Air Transport Association (**IATA**) Director General Alexandre de **Juniac said on Tuesday the results of an investigation into a deadly Ethiopian Airlines crash were needed before any conclusions were drawn on the incident.**

"The most serious and vigorous attitude is to check and verify and establish facts," he told reporters on the sidelines of a conference in Singapore. "On this issue our permanent position is to wait for the results of the investigation to draw any conclusion."

He said IATA acknowledged the decisions by authorities in China, Indonesia and Singapore to ground Boeing Co 737 MAX jets after the crash.

IATA represents around 260 airlines globally.

Panama's Copa Airlines said on Monday it is awaiting the results of a probe into the crash of an Ethiopian Airlines Boeing 737 MAX 8 plane on Sunday, and will follow recommendations issued by the manufacturer and the relevant authorities.

**"We are currently evaluating the next steps to take, in close contact with the aviation authorities,"**

Copa said in a statement.  
12/03/19 Reuters/IOL

**Indian carriers SpiceJet and Jet Airways can continue to use their Boeing 737 Max 8 aircraft despite the Sunday, 10 March, Ethiopian Airlines crash involving the same aircraft, a Quartz report said.**

SpiceJet, in its official statement, said that it has already implemented all additional precautionary measures, as directed by the DGCA on Monday, 11 March.

**The Quartz report said that the decision to not ground the Boeing 737 Max 8 could be related to the airlines adding a slew of the 737 MAX 8s to its fleet.**

SpiceJet, in its official statement, said:

“Boeing 737 MAX is a highly sophisticated aircraft. It has flown hundreds of thousands of hours globally & some of the world’s largest airlines are flying this aircraft. We are actively engaged with both Boeing and the DGCA & will continue to put safety first, as always.”

The company had added 12 of these aircraft’s in the October - December 2018 quarter.

Jet Airways, on the other hand, boasts of five 737 MAX 8s, but says its currently “not flying anything.”

Quartz reports that given how both the airlines had banked on their growth plans on the aircraft, the critical examination of the aircraft is something both can do without.

The DGCA, on Monday, instructed that only senior pilots, with at least 1,000 hours of flying experience, should fly a 737 Max 8. The DGCA has also advised stringent checks of the aircraft’s autopilot and stall management systems during long-transit stays.

**The regulator said it is seeking suggestions from Boeing and the US Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) on additional safety checks.**

12/03/19 Quint

Is the Boeing 737 Max 8 safe? Passengers and aviation experts are raising the question following the tragic crash of Ethiopian Airlines Flight 302. This is the second fatal crash involving a Max 8 in 5 months, following the Lion Air crash from October 2018. There are no confirmed leads yet about what may have caused Sunday’s accident: whether it was an issue with the aircraft, or specifically, its manoeuvring system, like with Lion Air. Investigations may well prove otherwise. However, till then, the fact that two brand-new aircraft of the same type—built to fly for decades—crashed from the skies after less than 6 months in operation, is a cause for worry.

Understandably then, several countries and airlines have preferred to be extra cautious. India and SpiceJet are not among them, neither are the US or SouthWest (which has the largest number of Max8s in its fleet):

**India’s aviation regulator Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has chosen not to ground the Boeing 737 Max 8 for now. Instead, it has issued an advisory to the two airlines (Jet Airways and SpiceJet) about additional safety checks to be made for their Max 8 fleet. It has also mandated that the pilot and co-pilot must have 1,000 hours and 500 hours of flying experience on the Boeing 737 Next Generation series of aircraft.**

**Jet Airways has 5 of these, but neither is in service (over a default in payments). SpiceJet has 13 in operation at the moment. SpiceJet is yet to issue an update.**

Countries that have grounded the 737 Max 8:

Singapore: Has taken the strongest safety measure yet. It has temporarily suspended operations of all Boeing 737 Max 8 aircraft in and out of the country. This includes those owned by airlines not registered in the country. Singapore Airlines-owned Silk Air has confirmed that all 8 of its 737 Max 8s have been grounded. These were being used on flights to Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Kathmandu, Kuala Lumpur, Phuket and other destinations. Other airlines that will be affected include Garuda Indonesia, Lion Air, China Southern Airlines.

China: The country has grounded all 96 aircraft operated by its airlines



Indonesia: Has grounded all 11 Max 8s operated by its airlines, which includes Lion Air.

South Korea: It has only two of these in service. Both have been grounded for now.

Mongolia: Has one 737 Max 8, operated by MIAT Mongolian Airlines. The aircraft has been taken off service for now.

Airlines that have grounded the 737 Max 8

Some airlines have chosen not to wait for their aviation regulator and proactively grounded their Max 8s. These include:

Ethiopian Airlines, Ethiopia

AeroMexico, Mexico

Comair, South Africa

GOL, Brazil

Flight tracking service FlightRadar24 reports that the actual number of airlines that have grounded their fleet may be as high as 23 (which potentially includes many from China).

12/03/19 Conde Nast Traveller

**Budget carrier IndiGo is offering jobs to pilots of Jet Airways along with compensation for overdue salaries from the cash-strapped full service airline.**

IndiGo, the country's largest airline in terms of market share, Tuesday also said that all job offers are in line with its current terms and conditions.

Crisis-hit Jet Airways has not paid salaries to its pilots, engineers and other senior management for more than three months now.

"IndiGo is offering Jet Airways' pilots job opportunities," an IndiGo spokesperson told PTI.

The no-frills airline's response came to queries on whether it was looking to hire pilots from Jet Airways and also offering them significant amount as joining bonuses. The queries were sent to IndiGo's Chief Operating Officer Wolfgang Prock-Schauer. "We are not offering a signing bonus. We are offering a compensation for overdue salaries," the spokesperson said.

On whether IndiGo is offering a bonus after third year of contract for pilots who would join from Jet Airways, the spokesperson replied in the negative.

Regarding shortage of pilots, IndiGo said it has an internal upgrade programme in place and is able to upgrade pilots in sufficient manner.

**"Our pilot hiring programme always includes hiring from the market and Jet Airways is part of the external hiring programme,"** the spokesperson said. IndiGo is facing acute shortage of commanders amid aggressive expansion of its fleet.

12/03/19 PTI/moneycontrol.com

Mercredi 13 mars, Bertrand Dumont a signé avec le GIFAS (Groupement des industries françaises aéronautiques et spatiales), les groupements interprofessionnels et une douzaine d'entreprises exportatrices françaises une charte permettant à ces dernières de recourir au réseau international de la DG Trésor afin de les aider à réaliser leurs obligations d'offsets.

Les offsets, ou contreparties économiques, sont de plus en plus fréquemment demandées aux exportateurs du secteur de la défense lorsqu'ils souhaitent remporter un contrat à l'export. Par ces offsets, l'exportateur doit réaliser des investissements, des transferts de technologie ou encore de savoir-faire dont la valeur totale atteint une certaine fraction (parfois importante) du contrat d'acquisition de matériels passé par le pays client. Pour l'État acheteur, les offsets permettent de compenser pour son économie et l'emploi local le recours à un fournisseur étranger et de faire monter l'industrie locale en compétence.



**En échange d’actions de formation sur les offsets et leurs enjeux, les services économiques de 12 pays sélectionnés (Suisse, Danemark, Turquie, EAU, Koweït, Inde, Malaisie, Corée du Sud, Indonésie, Australie, Canada et Brésil) auront pour mission d’aider ces exportateurs à identifier des opportunités locales leur permettant la réalisation des exigences d’offsets qui leur incombent. La bonne réalisation de ces obligations d’offsets permettra de renforcer la satisfaction des clients étrangers, et donc leur relation de long terme avec les exportateurs français, mais également de dévoiler les meilleures opportunités d’investissements et de partenariats pour les entreprises françaises dont les PME-ETI dans ces différents pays, renforçant ainsi l’implantation française localement.**

**A travers cette charte, c’est également un réseau qui sera constitué entre les industriels, les services économiques et la direction générale de l’armement (DGA) et qui sera animé par le bureau FININTER3.**

Lors de cette rencontre avec le bureau international du GIFAS, Bertrand Dumont a également pu échanger avec les industriels sur plusieurs grandes problématiques actuelles, telles que les enjeux de la réglementation américaine et son extraterritorialité, les embargos et sanctions frappant l’Iran et la Russie ou encore la réforme en cours de l’OMC, mais également recueillir l’appréciation des industriels quant au soutien à l’internationalisation des entreprises porté par le Trésor, notamment à travers son opérateur Bpifrance Assurance Export.

DG Trésor 13/03/2019

L’Ethiopie ne possède pas l’équipement nécessaire à la lecture des boîtes noires du Boeing 737 MAX 8 qui s’est écrasé dimanche à l’est d’Addis Abeba.

**Le pays va donc les envoyer en France. Elles seront transférées ce jeudi au Bureau d’enquêtes et d’analyses (BEA) français pour y être analysées.**

**"Les autorités éthiopiennes ont demandé au BEA son assistance pour l’analyse des FDR et CVR", les deux boîtes noires contenant les paramètres de vol et les conversations dans le cockpit, a indiqué le BEA.**

Mercredi en fin d’après-midi, les autorités allemandes avaient annoncé que l’Allemagne n’analysera pas les boîtes noires du Boeing. "Nous n’allons pas analyser les boîtes noires. Car nous n’en sommes pas capables. Elles ont un nouveau software que nous ne pouvons pas lire", a déclaré un porte-parole.

Les deux boîtes noires, celle enregistrant les données techniques du vol et celle enregistrant les discussions dans le cockpit, avaient été retrouvées lundi. Leur analyse pourrait éclaircir les causes de l’accident.

La catastrophe a fait 157 morts.

Les pays et compagnies aériennes qui ont décidé de clouer au sol les Boeing 737 MAX 8 sont de plus en plus nombreux. L'ensemble du ciel européen est désormais interdit à ce type d'appareil. Et ce mercredi, l'Egypte, la Nouvelle-Zélande, le Vietnam et Hong Kong s'ajoutent à la longue liste.

De leur côté, malgré leur isolement et la pression internationale, les Etats-Unis, eux, résistent toujours. **"Jusqu'à présent notre examen du dossier ne montre aucun problème de performance et ne fournit aucune raison pour ordonner l'immobilisation de cet avion", justifie l'agence fédérale de l'aviation américaine, FAA.**

Le Dauphiné 13/03/2019

**MUMBAI: Airlines that have been forced to ground the Boeing 737 Max 8 aircraft will not have any recourse to claims from insurance companies to make up for their losses.**

SpiceJet on Wednesday announced that it was grounding its Max fleet of about a dozen aircraft, which would result in the cancellation of 14 flights.

This has resulted in its fleet size shrinking to about 64 from 76. Jet Airways has five Max aircraft in its fleet. However, these are already believed to be grounded by lessors due to non-payment of dues.

"The aircraft have been grounded by the regulator as a precautionary measure. There has not been any damage to the aircraft and no other insured event has occurred, so we are not expecting any claim," said an official with an insurance broking firm that specialises in aviation cover.

Sources in New India Assurance, which has provided cover for most of the Boeing 737 Max aircraft, said that they have not received any claims because of the grounding. "Unlike any manufacturing business, the assets of airlines are mobile, which is why airlines do not take business interruption cover," said the official.

**Insurers, however, say that airlines would receive some compensation from the manufacturer — Boeing.** "In the past, Air India had received some compensation from the aircraft manufacturer after its 'Dreamliner' aircraft had to be grounded for technical reasons. Given that both Jet Airways and SpiceJet are big customers with large outstanding orders, it is expected that Boeing would provide compensation.

**As a manufacturer, Boeing would have a liability insurance programme.** Given that aircraft have been grounded across the world, it is likely that this cover would have been triggered," said an industry official.

The Economic times of India 14/03/2019

**Air passengers face the grim prospects of high air fares and fewer flight choices as several airlines cancel operations due to a number of reasons including the grounding of 737-MAX aircraft.**

**According to industry insiders, some sectors have shown a rise of more than 100 per cent in last minute bookings.**

**"With an unprecedented number of planes now grounded due to various factors, reduction in seat capacity has led to an increase in fares overnight.** Last minute airfares on Wednesday increased to

more than 100 per cent on some key routes like Delhi-Mumbai, Mumbai-Chennai, Mumbai-Kolkata and Mumbai-Bengaluru as compared to same time last year," said Alope Bajapi, CEO and Co-founder, ixigo.

"Spot fares for Mumbai-Chennai are touching Rs 26,073 as opposed to Rs 5,369 the same time last year. High airfare patterns are expected to continue in the short term with Holi and summer school holidays round the corner, resulting in an increased demand."

Operations of airlines like SpiceJet and Jet Airways have been hit due to the government's Wednesday decision to join a global grounding of 737-MAX aircraft following a crash in Ethiopia. In India, SpiceJet and Jet Airways operate 17 Boeing 737-800 MAX aircraft - Spice (12) and Jet (5). A part of Jet fleet has already been grounded due to other reasons.

**The grounding led SpiceJet to cancel 14 flights on Wednesday. This number is expected to touch 32 on Thursday.**

Apart from SpiceJet, Jet Airways, which faces financial challenges, has already grounded four more aircraft over non-repayment of dues to lessors, taking the total to 32.

**The company in BSE filings has said that its 19 aircraft were grounded in February over non-repayment of dues to lessors, while 13 aircraft were grounded this month, taking the total to 32.**

**The Jet Airways Group operates a fleet of 123 aircraft.**

**However, around 50 planes are said to be non-operational due to a host of reasons, including lack of spare parts.**

**IndiGo faces massive turbulence of pilot shortage, leading to truncated flight schedule**

Earlier, the airline said that 30 of its flights which have been affected represent only 2 per cent of its network. It has decided to curtail its schedule till March 31, by about 30 flights a day.

"As a proactive measure, IndiGo has decided to continue its curtailment until the end of March. This measure has already been implemented and passengers informed," the airline said in a statement. "These medium term cancellations have been made to minimise the impact on passengers as alternative travel options have been offered well in advance. The operations will be normalised by the start of the summer schedule."

**For sometime now, Air India has grounded 17 aircraft due to technical reasons.**

On Wednesday, the government had advised domestic airlines not to go in for predatory air fare pricing as several 737-MAX aircraft were grounded due to safety reasons.

Civil Aviation Secretary Pradeep Singh Kharola said: "We have advised the airlines... that they should not use it (grounding) as a reason to jack up their fares."

"They have promised they will go as per normal routine. DGCA has just said that it will be monitoring all the sectors very closely."

The Economic times of India 14/03/2019

**MUMBAI Bank of India (BoI) is ready to provide emergency funding into Jet Airways but only if other lenders also are willing to put more funds in line with their exposure.**

"Our stand is very clear that we are going to support (the resolution plan) unless we support there will be value destruction. We have to protect the value...we have also made it clear that **all stake holders have to pitch in**...we have made our mind clear," said D Mohapatra, CEO of Bank of India.

He did not give a direct reply when asked how much funding the debt laden airline is looking from banks. But was clear that **Bol will only participate if others commit to put more money.**

"In every game everybody should be there, isn't it?" he said while speaking to reporters on the sidelines of a conference.

The bank is still hopeful of "big" recoveries this quarter led by Rs 1,800 crore from ArcelorMittal's purchase of Essar Steel.

We are expecting big recoveries. **Our provision coverage ratio is 76.70% among the highest in the industry and some of the cases we have made 100% provisions and we are hopeful to write back directly to our profit** "Mohapatra said.

The bank recently raised Rs 650 crore by selling shares to its employees. Mohapatra said Bol will tap all avenues to raise capital.

"Our focus is quality growth. Even in the most challenging times we grew at 10% to 12%. We have already received Rs 4000 crore in the second round and have mobilised Rs 650 crore from employees. **We are mobilising resources from all avenues,**" Mohapatra said. Last month the RBI freed the bank from its so called prompt corrective action norms allowing it to lend and open branches more freely.

**The bank aims to raise Rs 400 to Rs 500 crore through sale of non core assets in the quarter ended March.**

The Economic Times of India 14/03/2019

**A total of 50 countries, including the US, has either grounded or banned the Boeing 737 Max 8 planes following the crash of an Ethiopian Airlines plane of the same model that killed all 157 people on board earlier this week.**

US President Donald Trump spoke to the media before the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) on Wednesday grounded all Boeing 737 Max jets in the country, CNN reported.

"I didn't want to take any chances. We didn't have to make this decision today," Trump said.

"We could have delayed it. We maybe didn't have to make it at all. But I felt it was important both psychologically and in a lot of other ways."

Trump said his decision was fact-based, even as he admitted it was made partly with regard for the mental well-being of American travellers.

"The safety of the American people, of all people, is our paramount concern," he added.

**Of the more than 370 Boeing 737 Max jets in global fleets, 74 are flown by US airlines, according to the FAA. Those include United Airlines, Southwest Airlines and American Airlines.**

**Mexico** also took action against Boeing 737 Max 8 planes on Wednesday evening, just hours after the US' decision to suspend the planes' operation inside the country.

The General Directorate of Civil Aviation said they were banned until further notice to "guarantee the safety and confidence" of aircraft flying in Mexican airspace.

On Thursday, **South Korea** and **Thailand** joined the list of countries that have suspended operations of the planes

South Korea's largest airline, Korean Air, announced it would be putting on hold plans to introduce Boeing 737 Max 8s into their fleet.

Thailand's Civil Aviation Authority announced all operations of Max 8 and Max 9 planes would be temporarily suspended until midnight on March 20.

Some of the other countries that have moved to ground the Boeing 737 MAX aircraft include **India, China, the European Union, the UK, Canada and Australia.**

Meanwhile, the **black boxes from the Ethiopian Airlines flight 302 will arrive in Paris for analysis on Thursday morning**, a vital clue into what caused the Nairobi-bound aircraft to crash six minutes after take-off from Addis Ababa.

The French Bureau of Enquiry and Analysis for Civil Aviation Safety (**BEA**) **will conduct the investigation into the recorders** but a spokesman for the bureau said they wouldn't be announcing the results.

"Only the Ethiopian authorities will report on the progress of the investigation. There will be no press conference," a BEA spokesman told CNN.

Sunday's crash came less than five months after a Lion Air Boeing 737 Max 8 - the same type of plane - plunged into the Java Sea minutes into the flight from Jakarta, Indonesia, killing all 189 people on board.

Both planes were new, delivered from Boeing just months before their doomed flights

The Economic Times of India 14/03/2019