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**New Delhi: Indian aviation regulator DGCA on Saturday said the suspension of scheduled international commercial passenger flights will continue till midnight on June 30, hours after the Home Ministry announced fresh guidelines pertaining to the countrywide lockdown to contain the coronavirus pandemic.**

"It is once again reiterated that foreign airlines shall be suitably informed about the opening of their operations to or from India in due course," the circular issued by the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) said.

Domestic passenger flight services resumed in the country from Monday after a hiatus of two months since the lockdown was announced on March 25, when all scheduled commercial passenger flights were suspended in India. International flights continue to remain suspended even now.

The Home Ministry on Saturday said 'Unlock-1' will be initiated in the country from June 8 under which the nationwide lockdown effectuated on March 25 will be relaxed to a great extent, including opening of shopping malls, restaurants and religious places, even as strict restrictions will remain in place till June 30 in the country's worst pandemic-hit areas.

[31/05/20 PTI/New Indian Express](#)

New Delhi: An Air India aircraft winging its way from Delhi to Moscow with no passengers on board on Saturday morning had to be called back to Delhi from over Uzbekistan after the airline realised that one of the pilots onboard had tested corona positive. An oversight by the team checking pre-flight test reports of crew members had mistakenly read this captain's positive report as negative and released him for the ferry flight (meaning with no passengers and only crew) that was going to fly back Indians from Moscow.

The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) is investigating this case. "Prima facie it appears to be a lapse," said a senior DGCA official.

In a statement, AI said: "Air India Saturday morning recalled its aircraft operating Delhi Moscow without passengers immediately when it was noticed that one of the cockpit crew had tested positive in the pre flight covid test. On return, immediately after landing all cockpit and cabin crew have been tested and all laid down medical precautions are being taken to ensure their health and safety. Another aircraft has taken off today to operate the Vande Bharat flight Moscow to Delhi." The Airbus A-320 Neo returned to Delhi at about 12.30 pm and now the crew will be quarantined as per norms. This plane will be fumigated and the airline is sending another A320 Neo to Moscow later on Saturday afternoon to fly back Indians from there.

Airline sources say: "This was a genuine oversight due to the massive amount of test results that need to be gone through. Delhi base alone sees testing of 300 crew members daily due to which more labs had to be roped in. The volume of tests has meant results come in an excel sheet now. The person checking the test result status of crew who have tested negative and hence are available for rostering cleared an A320 crew for the Delhi-Moscow flight."

[31/05/20 Sauabh Sinha/Times of India](#)

New Delhi: When the Union civil aviation ministry gave a go-ahead to domestic flight operations from May 25 — after a gap of two months — the condition that was imposed on airlines was that they would have to stick to the one-third of the original summer schedule. As from June 1, the country is entering its first phase of unlock 1, the rule will not be applicable anymore, a TOI report said.

In general, the summer schedule includes 24,643 weekly domestic flights run by all airlines. For operations from May 25, only 8,214 weekly flight schedules were cleared.

Does this mean there will be more flights in the coming days?

Yes. There is no cap on the airlines to fly more routes. But most busy airports, including Mumbai, Chennai, Bengaluru, Kolkata, have a strict upper limit on daily arrivals and departures, which will restrict the airlines to run on more routes. But the airlines can run more flights on comparatively lesser busy routes which have considerable demand.

**Lockdown 4.0 comes to an end on May 31. In the guidelines released by the MHA, there is no change as regards to domestic flights. International flights, however, have been barred from operations at least until June 30.**

[31/05/20 India.com](https://www.india.com)

Thiruvananthapuram: Kerala on Saturday reported 58 new Covid-19 cases, which included seven Air India employees who were on duty last week and three persons in Palakkad who contracted the virus through contact. As many as 10 persons undergoing treatment tested negative and were discharged. Health minister K K Shailaja said 31 of the new patients had travelled from other states and 17 from abroad.

[31/05/20 Times of India](https://www.timesofindia.com)

**Bengaluru: Indians stuck overseas due to coronavirus pandemic are being airlifted everyday and brought back to the country. Due to this thousands of passengers are arriving at the airport. This has caused an uphill task to the state government, especially as many of the returnees have ended up testing positive for coronavirus.**

In Karnataka, the number of coronavirus positive cases have risen drastically due to people arriving here from other states of the country. To take better control of the situation, the state government has decided to do swab testing for passengers at the airport itself.

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[31/05/20 daijiworld](https://www.daijiworld.com)

**Days before it resumes service, low-cost carrier GoAir has revised the salary structure of its senior pilots, many of whom will see a cut of over 50 percent in their pay.**

For a few, depending on their flying hours, the cut could be as much as 65 percent. For instance, a senior captain could see his monthly gross salary plummet to Rs 2.5 lakh from over Rs 7 lakh.

This is probably among the steepest salary cut seen in the industry till now.

**Along with the cut, the airline has also done away with some benefits, including variable allowance for flying more than 70 hours a month, deadhead allowance and incentive given during a layover.**

Deadhead is when a crew or pilot travels to a destination to assume duty. He or she doesn't work on that flight.

In early May, GoAir promoters Nusli and Jeh Wadia had written to employees, stating that the airline has paid salaries to 40 percent of its employees, and the rest will be paid on a graded and deferred basis.

Moneycontrol has reached out to the company for a response, and the story will be updated once the carrier replies.

**The steps come just a few days before GoAir resumes operations, on June 1. It was the only airline not to restart services on May 25.**

While the airline said it was ready to resume operations, it had said: "GoAir awaits clarity on the readiness of the respective states and their airports with regard to acceptance of flights, or the conditions applicable to passengers entering the respective states."

30/05/20 Prince Mathews Thomas/Moneycontrol.com

**New Delhi: As most aircraft stand parked amid the outbreak of coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic, March quarter of financial year 2019-20 (Q4FY20) could be first among the many loss-making quarters for the aviation sector, fear analysts.**

Almost all airlines, including IndiGo and SpiceJet, had drastically cut operations by mid-March, and had begun grounding fleet as net bookings fell into negative — meaning there are more cancellations than fresh bookings on domestic routes. It all came to a complete halt when the government on March 25 imposed a ban on domestic air travel to stem the spread of the virus. This was on top of a ban on international flights which had been in place since March 22.

According to Gagan Dixit, research analyst at Elara Capital, **IndiGo and SpiceJet could report a cumulative net loss of Rs 3,350 crore in Q4FY20, as against a profit of Rs 570 crore in Q3FY20 and Rs 650 crore in Q4FY19.**

**"We expect a YoY yield decrease of IndiGo by 8 per cent and SpiceJet by 10 per cent on lower airfare amid fear of Covid-19 keeping airfares in check, nil fleet addition by SpiceJet and subdued 1 per cent QoQ fleet addition by IndiGo,"** he wrote in a sector preview note.

The benefit of crash in crude oil prices in March is likely to be off-set by the depreciation of rupee and slim air traffic movement in the recently concluded quarter.

**"While crude prices have slumped 50 per cent in March, the impact of the same would be realised only once operations resume. The interim cut of 11-12 per cent in aviation turbine fuel (ATF) prices effective March 23 will have little impact as operations got suspended from March 25. Further, the rupee has depreciated by 5.8 per cent in Q4FY20E which will increase outgo for US dollar-based costs and also result in steep fx mark-to-market (MTM) losses on operating lease liabilities,"** wrote analysts at Centrum Broking in a results preview note.

According to the brokerage, Interglobe Aviation-run IndiGo could report a net loss of Rs 1,750 crore in the quarter under review primarily due to MTM losses worth Rs 1,010 crore. It had reported a net profit of Rs 496 crore in the December quarter of FY20 and Rs 589 crore in Q4FY19.

**"We expect IndiGo's passenger traffic to grow 0.6 per cent YoY to 17.6 million in Q4FY20 due to impacted traffic in March. Load factor, too, will likely decline to 82.5 per cent, down sharply by 350 basis points,"** they said.

The analysts, however, expect the airline to end the fiscal year with a 48 per cent domestic market share, having carried 68 million passengers.

29/05/20 Nikita Vashisht/Business Standard

The new directives are based on recommendations by an expert committee formed by the civil aviation ministry on 26 May to review and strengthen safety protocols related to air travel. **A DGCA order dated 29 May and made public on Monday has also asked airlines to provide safety kits to passengers comprising three-layered surgical masks, face shields and sanitizers. It has also told airlines not to offer meals or drinking water to travellers on board, except for health reasons.**

A copy of the DGCA order has been reviewed by Mint.

An airline official said the new directives are unlikely to make a major dent to airline earnings as middle seats are to be kept vacant only on flights that are comparatively empty.

"Airlines expect a decline in passenger demand after an initial surge seen post resumption of domestic air services. The middle seats can then be kept vacant, as much as possible," the official said, requesting anonymity. The official said also the DGCA order is not expected to affect airfares, which have already been capped by the government.

Airlines are seeing high passenger load factors between metro and non-metro cities, while flights between metro cities are relatively empty, said the airline official cited above.

Indian carriers resumed domestic flights from 25 May, following a staggered lifting of a ban on air travel, including at coronavirus hotspots of Delhi and Mumbai that host the country's busiest airports.

Soon after, cases emerged of several asymptomatic passengers who travelled on flights, mostly of IndiGo, later testing positive for covid-19. This has increased challenges for airlines and authorities struggling to return to normalcy.

**DGCA has also directed airlines to follow strict sequential embarkation and disembarkation processes for passengers for boarding and de-boarding.**

**In cases where the middle seat is occupied, airlines have been asked to make provisions to provide additional protective gear like wrap-around gowns to passengers occupying the intervening seats.**

A senior official at a budget airline said the government decision to either keep middle seats empty or make passengers wear a protective gown is impractical. "Nowhere around the world are they taking such measures. We also don't expect these measures to help much to prevent spread of covid-19," the official said, asking not to be named.

International flights continue to remain grounded, except for repatriation flights operated by national carrier Air India to bring back stranded citizens from abroad and by other nations flying back their citizens from India.

[Live Mint Aviation 01/06/2020](#)

**NEW DELHI: Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has directed airlines to allot seats to passengers in such a manner so that the middle seat is kept vacant, provided load factor and seat capacity permit the arrangement,** a senior official with the watchdog said.

"However, members of the same family will be allowed to sit together," the official said requesting anonymity.

**These directions will come into compliance from 3 June,** the official added.

**The new directives will likely complicate the airlines' return to normalcy after a two-month closure to prevent covid-19 from spreading.** They kick in after India's airlines resumed domestic operations on 25 May, including at coronavirus hotspots of Delhi and Mumbai, host to the country's busiest airports.

International operations still remain grounded in India, except for repatriation flights carried out by national carrier Air India Ltd to bring back stranded Indian citizens from abroad.

[Live Mint Aviation 01/06/2020](#)

**News reports say that India's civil aviation regulator asked airlines on Monday to keep middle seats vacant on single-aisle jets to the extent possible. Else, they could provide wrap-around gowns. The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) wants air operators to follow this directive, with the passenger load factor and seat capacity of their planes taken into account, as a measure to keep flyers safely apart and coronavirus at bay.** The DGCA order is in line with advice of the International Air Transport Association, but appears to have been nudged by the Supreme Court, which observed a few days ago that the government ought to be more concerned about the health of citizens and that social distancing aboard aircraft was essential to fight the pandemic. Empty seats should have been the norm all along, but, as they say, better late than never.

Given how cramped economy-class seating on most planes is, aviation experts have argued that entire configurations need revision just to revive the confidence of passengers in flying. Earlier, the government had reasoned that spacing people out would turn airline operations unviable, since their seats need a certain minimum occupancy to make ends meet. This logic no longer holds, it seems, going by today's DGCA order.

It is true that Indian air carriers are in deep financial trouble and operate on wafer-thin margins. Yet, they may discover that apart from must-fly cases, they won't attract too many customers without assuring them that they won't suffer accidental elbow and knee bumps from strangers. This would mean fewer people in a cabin, and thus a higher cost of every flight per head. Ticket prices are capped at the moment. These would have to be lifted, in accordance with realities of the day, lest the aviation sector sees its hopes of a recovery sink over the horizon.

Live Mint Aviation 01/06/2020

**NEW DELHI: Directorate General of Civil aviation (DGCA) has extended to 31 August the deadline for replacement of Pratt & Whitney (PW) engines that power Airbus A320neo planes operated by airlines like IndiGo and GoAir as the airlines were unable to carry out the necessary process during the covid-19 induced lockdown,** a senior official at the aviation regulator told Mint.

"We took a call a couple of days back and instructed both the airlines (accordingly) to extend the deadline," said a senior DGCA official, requesting anonymity.

At present, IndiGo has 106 PW-powered A320neo planes in its fleet, while GoAir has 43.

While most of the engines have been replaced with modified ones, about 60 engines are yet to be replaced due to covid-19 induced lockdown, the official said.

IndiGo and GoAir were in March directed by the DGCA to complete this process by the end of May, following a series of snags with the engines.

The airlines started replacing the engines, but the lockdown imposed since 25 March to contain covid-19 has stalled the efforts.

"Supply chains and production lines got impacted due to the lockdown and in turn impacted the process. Keeping this in view, the DGCA has extended the deadline by three months," the official said.

"We have instructed the airlines that they should operate only those aircraft that have modified engines. This is not difficult since flight operations are presently curtailed," the official added.

Spokespersons of IndiGo and GoAir were not immediately available for comments.

Live Mint Aviation 01/06/2020

**India's civil aviation sector may continue to languish in the near to medium term as demand is expected to stay muted with cost-conscious corporates restraining employees from travelling while coronavirus fears and the impact on household incomes affect the demand for leisure travel.**

The tepid demand over the next six months to a year will prove to be the biggest challenge for cash-strapped airlines in continuing their services, according to industry experts. India on 25 May lifted a two-month ban on domestic flights with strict restrictions and safety measures. Also, airlines have been allowed to use only a third of their summer schedule for 2020.

**Experts said the present demand is mostly from people who were stuck in various parts of India because of the lockdown imposed to check the spread of coronavirus. This demand, the experts said, may taper off in the coming months.**

Global passenger demand is likely to drop 47% and airline revenues could fall by \$11 billion in 2020 because of covid-19, according to a forecast by industry body International Air Transport Association. The change in lockdown rules and the resumption of economic activity was inevitable and is a step in the right direction, said Peeyush Naidu, partner, aviation practice, at Deloitte. **“The demand for air travel that we are witnessing is potentially more of pent-up demand on account of people needing to get back to their homes or needing to attend to urgent matters. The next phase of demand would depend on the increase in economic activity, cost pressures on corporates impacting business travel, and the confidence of travellers on the systems and processes put in place for their health and hygiene,”** Naidu said.

The Centre on Saturday announced measures to open up the economy and lift lockdown curbs in a phased manner from 8 June.

Big corporates, especially IT companies, have asked employees to work from home for 6-9 months and, as a result, executive travel will be limited, said Jyoti Mayal, president, Travel Agents Association of India (TAAI).

**“Generating demand will be a challenge in the coming months because only essential travel is taking place and it will again reduce.** Maybe, we will see some demand during Diwali. Also, leisure travel is not expected to revive soon as people will use their cars more and avoid taking flights. With the easing of the lockdown, the passenger sentiment might revive in some months,” Mayal said. **The airlines have urged the government for relief through steps such as lower taxes on fuel and airport charges.**

“Apart from the economic downturn, safety related issues will also impede people’s decision to travel by air. Maintaining social distancing is not possible in an aircraft and recently some passengers tested positive and others close to them were quarantined. This will further impact the sentiment,” said an industry executive.

[Live Mint Aviation 31/05/2020](#)

New Delhi: **National carrier Air India Ltd will initiate refunds without levying cancellation charges to passengers who missed their flights during the lockdown period post 25 May, the airline said in a communication to its travel agents on Monday.**

This is a first of its kind in Indian aviation industry, as most airlines have only given the option of rescheduling tickets at no extra costs to their passengers for their flight tickets during the lockdown period starting 25 March.

"Any passenger holding Air India confirmed tickets with travel dates during the lockdown period ie. 23 March 2020 to 31 May 2020 and have had their flight cancelled will be allowed to book in available flights for the period 25 May 2020 till 24 August 2020 at no extra charge," the airline said. Online travel agents, however, told Mint that Air India is yet to open up its bookings for travel after June.

"It is surprising to see Air India making such a statement and yet not open up its booking schedule for July, even though they are willing to reissue tickets for travel till 24 August. All other airlines are selling beyond 24 August," said an online travel agent, who requested anonymity.

An Air India spokesperson was not available for comments.

The Indian government grounded flights from 25 March to contain the spread of covid-19. Domestic flights services were resumed from 25 May, albeit in a calibrated manner. However, several people who had already booked tickets for travel during the lockdown period had to cancel their plans due to lockdown.

The Ministry of Civil Aviation had in April said that airlines will have to refund full fares, without imposing cancellation charges, to those who booked tickets during the first lockdown from 25 March to 14 April for travel between 25 March and 3 May.

While most airlines have waived off rescheduling fees for tickets booked during the lockdown period, they haven't initiated refunds but asked passengers to reschedule their travel plans to a later date at no extra cost.

[Live Mint Aviation 01/06/2020](#)

**India has operated a total of 501 domestic flights in one week, the civil aviation minister Hardeep Singh Puri said today. At least 44,593 passengers took flights till May 31, the civil aviation minister added.**

The domestic flight services in India resumed on May 25 after a gap of nearly two months. India suspended the flight operations in the last week of March in the wake of coronavirus pandemic in the country.

India has also evacuated over 50,000 stranded citizens from across the world. The country will increase the number of flights operated under the "Vande Bharat Mission", Puri added.

The country is gearing up to exit the nationwide lockdown in a phased manner. The new guidelines will also help "gradual and calibrated reopening of aviation sector," Puri wrote on Twitter.

India will soon restart the international flight services. "As we move towards critical mass of 50-60% operation of domestic flights, our ability to resume international operations will also improve," Puri mentioned.



**"We have taken several reform measures under the 'Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan' for the aviation sector such as opening air spaces for airlines & opening other airports for private sector participation",** said Puri.

"We will continue to proactively engage & support our aviation sector," the civil aviation minister added.

Meanwhile, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) on Monday asked airlines to allot seats in flights in such a manner that middle seats between two passengers are kept vacant to the extent possible. **The airline regulator asked the airlines to provide a three-layered face mask, face shield and a "wrap-around gown" (Ministry of Textile approved standards) to those occupying the intervening seat in an airplane.**

[Live Mint Aviation 01/06/2020](#)

Covid-19 became a pandemic because airplane passengers carried the new coronavirus with them around the world. As that became clear, airlines grounded nearly all of their fleets, governments issued travel restrictions and mandatory quarantines, and tourist attractions and conferences closed down. With no reason to fly, a quick recovery for air travel seemed unlikely. Warren Buffett dumped his airline stocks, claiming that the "world has changed."

Passengers also wouldn't feel safe packed inside a metal tube for hours, would they?

Happily for the industry, if not for the climate, the seemingly insurmountable barriers to air travel have begun to look less daunting. "We believe the worst is behind us, and we're on the uptick," American Airlines Group Inc.'s boss, Doug Parker, said after a surge in travel over the US Memorial Day holiday weekend.

Investors have taken notice. **The Bloomberg Americas Airlines stocks index has rebounded by almost one-third from the mid-May low, and European carriers have made similar gains.** Shares in German tour operator Tui AG have risen too.

Such optimism feels jarring when airlines, American Airlines included, are poised to cut thousands of jobs. Most are still burning huge amounts of cash. Deutsche Lufthansa AG needs a 9 billion-euro (\$10 billion) bailout, and Latam Airlines Group SA joined Latin American peer Avianca Holdings SA in filing for bankruptcy last week.

**But Parker is probably right to expect a continued recovery, at least on domestic and short-haul routes. This won't be enough to put debt-laden airlines on a secure footing, and a full demand recovery probably won't happen for a couple more years. But, right now, a desperate industry will take any good news it can get. The rigorous hygiene measures airlines have announced should go a long way toward restoring passenger confidence.**

European budget carrier Ryanair Holdings Plc expects to operate at 40% of normal capacity from July, and the way bookings are shaping up suggests those planes will probably be at least half full. EasyJet Plc sees “encouraging” trends and notes that winter bookings are higher than usual for this time of year, although part of that may be because people have refund vouchers to use and are rebooking cancelled trips.

Ryanair’s extensive summer flight schedule had seemed premature a couple of weeks ago, but the travel restrictions that kept Europeans from moving around the continent are being relaxed. Starting in July, Spain is set to drop its requirement for international arrivals to quarantine for 14 days. Britain imposed a similar rule but is under immense pressure to abandon it. Travel between Europe and the U.S. will take longer to open up, but even on this there are encouraging signs of political will to get people flying again.

A month ago, United Airlines Holdings Inc.’s chief executive officer, Scott Kirby, lamented that there wouldn’t be a recovery in flying until attractions like Disney World and the Paris museums were open again.

Well, they will be soon. It’s already possible to visit the Acropolis in Athens and St Peter’s Basilica in Rome. Paris’s parks and museums are set to reopen from June. The French capital is usually swamped with tourists at this time of year, so there’s an incentive for travelers to get there first. Walt Disney World expects to reopen its Florida park from July, albeit with compulsory face masks and a ban on hugging your favorite Disney character.

I’ve written before about how things like wearing masks and having to ask permission to use the toilet will make flying even less enjoyable. But these measures may make passengers feel safer. For example, while the gowns and other personal protective equipment issued to Emirates’ cabin crew are a little intimidating, they’re likely to put some nervous flyers at ease.

As with SARS almost two decades ago, there are understandable concerns about catching coronavirus within the aircraft cabin, most likely from someone seated close by. The evidence isn’t comprehensive or conclusive, but so far there are surprisingly few documented cases of this happening with Covid-19. Airline industry body IATA says it knows of only one case where a person transmitted the virus to more than one person on board. Not surprisingly, plane manufacturers Airbus SE and Boeing Co. are studying the subject intensively.

There are other plausible reasons why flying might be safer than you’d think: The air is filtered and frequently replenished from outside, seats act as somewhat of a barrier and passengers don’t move around the cabin much. Singing, yelling and talking loudly — contributors to so-called super-spreader infection events — are a big faux pas when you fly. Many passengers would still prefer the middle

seat to be empty, but as I've written before, unless ticket prices rise, that would severely hamper airlines' ability to break even.

Of course, **the longer someone's on board, the greater the chance they're exposed to infection. Hence people may feel comfortable flying domestic and short-haul before they're willing to fly halfway around the globe.**

Companies will probably take longer to get comfortable with the risk (and potential liability) of their employees flying for business. About half the corporate clients American Airlines surveyed still have a travel ban, although that's down from two-thirds at the peak of the crisis. Millions of potential passengers have also lost their jobs and won't feel able to splash out on holidays.

And then there are the psychological scars from the prolonged lockdown. Being outside now feels a lot safer than being in any kind of confined space. A staycation in a local Airbnb might feel preferable to getting on a plane.

For those willing to take the risk, and who can find adequate travel insurance, a rare opportunity awaits. Want to see Venice without the crowds? Now's your chance.

[Live Mint Aviation 01/06/2020](#)

The Indian markets are likely to open on a flat note today, as signaled by the SGX Nifty. **Investors are likely to remain cautious at higher levels amid Moody's decision to downgrade India and rising cases of Covid-19 in the country. Moody's slashed India's long-term sovereign rating yesterday from 'Baa2' to 'Baa3' — a notch above junk.** The global rating agency maintained its negative outlook, citing structural weaknesses, weak policy effectiveness, and slow reforms momentum even before the Covid-19 pandemic. **Moody's feels India is heading for a sustained period of low growth, which its policymakers won't be able to mitigate.**

Meanwhile, India continues to witness a dramatic rise in the number of Covid-19 cases. According to Worldometer, India has recorded over 8,000 new cases and 221 deaths in the past 24 hours. The latest figures take the country's tally to 1.98 lakh, making India the 7th-most-infected country.

Besides these, corporate results will continue to pour in. A total of 18 companies, including the likes of Britannia, Indigo, and Motherson Sumi, are scheduled to announce their results today which will induce individual stock reactions.

According to analysts, Britannia may see up to 7 per cent volume decline in domestic business while revenue is likely to dip up to 4 per cent on a year-on-year basis. As for **InterGlobe Aviation, seasonal slowdown and pricing pressure amid Covid-19-led disruption is likely to push the airline towards Rs 2,600 crore loss.**

Amid this, Prime Minister Narendra Modi is scheduled to address the business community on his vision of "Getting Growth Back" at industry body CII's annual session later today.

Now, let's look at the global cues for the day. US stocks posted gains overnight. The Dow Jones and the S&P 500 both rose a little over 0.3 per cent and the Nasdaq Composite added 0.66 per cent.

Asian stocks followed Wall Street's lead. Japan's Nikkei shot up over 1 per cent and Australian ASX 200 rose 0.15 per cent in early trading. In commodities, oil futures steadied and Brent was last up 0.3 per cent at \$38.44 a barrel.

Now, let's look at some other top news of the day.

**The India Meteorological Department has upgraded its forecast for the 2020 rains to 102 per cent of the long period average. The forecasts showed that barring the Northeast and eastern India, the rainfall will be towards the higher side of the 'normal'.**

After reporting near-zero sales in April, auto companies resumed dispatches in May. But the volumes were disappointing with sales of passenger vehicles declining 86 per cent year-on-year for leading players. More automakers will come out with their monthly sales data which might pressure the respective stocks.

And, in the end, Reliance Industries' rights issue worth Rs 53,125-crore has garnered full subscription. The rights issue closes on June 3. The rights issue price is fixed at Rs 1,257, a discount of 17.3 per cent to the last closing price.

Business Standard 02/06/2020

**DGCA was forced to relook at the middle seat policy after an Air India pilot had challenged the regulator's protocol, in Bombay high court, which allowed airlines to book all seats.**

**Indian civil aviation regulator Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) on Monday desisted from forcing airlines to keep middle seat empty. Instead, it left it to the airlines' prerogative to do so. "Airlines to allot seats in flights in such a manner that middle seats between two passengers are kept vacant to the extent possible.**

**If it can't due to high demand, then it must arrange for a gown for the passengers seating in middle seats," the aviation regulator said in a fresh directive.**

Business Standard 02/06/2020

**Oil marketing companies on Monday hiked the prices of non-subsidised cooking gas and Aviation Turbine Fuel (ATF).**

The price of ATF in the national capital has been raised by Rs 11,030.62 to Rs 33,575.37 per kilolitre (KL), according to data on the Indian Oil Corp's website.

Similarly, in Kolkata, Mumbai, and Chennai the prices have been raised to Rs 38,543.48, Rs 38,070.56, and Rs 34,569.30 per kilolitre.

Meanwhile, the price of the 14.2-kilogram cylinder of non-subsidised LPG gas in Delhi has been raised by Rs 11.50 from May to Rs 593 per cylinder.

In Kolkata, Mumbai, and Chennai, the price of LPG has been raised at Rs 616, Rs 590.50, and Rs 606.50, against Rs 584.50, Rs 579 and Rs 569.50 per cylinder respectively. The highest increase was witnessed in Chennai with a hike of Rs 37 from the price in May.

The government currently subsidises 12 cylinders of 14.2 kilograms each per household in a year. Additional purchases have to be made at the market price.

In a statement on Sunday, Indian Oil Corp said that the retail selling price of LPG in the Delhi market for the month of May 2020 was reduced from Rs 744 to Rs 581.50 per cylinder for all consumers in line with the drop in international prices.

"For the month of June, there has been an increase in the international prices of LPG. Due to this increase in the prices in the international market, the RSP of LPG in the Delhi market will be increased by Rs 11.50 per cylinder," it said.

It however said that this increase will not impact the Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala (PMUY) beneficiaries, as they are covered by the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana, and entitled to a free cylinder till June 30.

Business Standard 01/06/2020

**Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) is stepping up its safety checks after an inspection revealed deficiencies in health and maintenance measures implemented by airports and airlines.**

Spot checks were carried out at eleven airports earlier in the week to test the implementation of Covid-19 guidelines. The inspections coincided with the resumption of domestic flights on Monday. In all, 72 planes belonging to airlines, non scheduled operators and flying clubs were inspected.

At Chennai, the DGCA team found that the disposal of masks and gloves was not carried out in line with the prescribed guidelines.

Instructions have been issued to the airport and two airlines for proper segregation of bio medical waste.

Also, cleaners working inside an aircraft belonging to a low cost airline at Chennai were found without gloves and face shields and were advised to wear personal protective equipment.

A Chennai airport spokesperson said sufficient number of bins had been provided for the disposal of masks, both inside the terminal and on the airside.

The DGCA inspection also revealed shortcomings in maintenance of planes kept in hangars. While cargo and relief operations were underway, a majority of aircraft had to be kept in preservation mode until May 25 according to the prescribed norms.

Maintenance manuals require airlines to cover engines, inlets and openings on an aircraft to prevent accumulation of dust or entry of insects.

Inspectors found that on 7 planes in Hyderabad and Kochi these coverings were either torn or tapes were used instead of the prescribed material.

**"We are carrying out inspections to ensure that all the safety guidelines are being followed. The observations have been shared with all the operators for suitable action. More checks will follow," said Director General of Civil Aviation Arun Kumar.**

He added that the regulator would also check whether airlines were disinfecting planes before each departure and whether deep cleaning was being carried out as laid down in the guidelines.

On May 22, the regulator had issued guidelines to airlines and asked them to ensure there is no compromise on engineering and operational requirements. The airlines were instructed to ensure serviceability of planes and also carry out fumigation of planes.

- **Spot checks carried out at eleven airports**
- **72 planes belonging to airlines, non scheduled operators and a flying club were inspected**
- **Checks revealed deficiencies in health and maintenance measures**
- **Airlines asked to take suitable corrective action**

Business Standard 01/06/2020

**Indian carriers like many other airlines across the globe are in a "survival mode" due to the coronavirus pandemic and there is a need for sustainable revival of the domestic aviation industry, International Air Transport Association (IATA) DG and CEO Alexandre de Juniac said on Friday.**

Speaking at a webinar hosted by the aviation consultancy Centre for Asia Pacific Aviation (CAPA), de Juniac also forecast the **air travel demand in India to drop by 47 per cent and revenue by \$11 billion this year over 2019 owing to the coronavirus pandemic.**

"Much has happened in the last four months. We are experiencing an unprecedented crisis in the history of our industry and recovery from this crisis will be long and slow. India's aviation industry has not been spared by the COVID-19 crisis," he said.

IATA expects passenger demand for 2020 to fall by 47 per cent, with revenue falling by \$11 billion compared to last year, the chief of the global airlines grouping said, adding, "about 3-million jobs, including those that depend on aviation, such as travel and tourism, are also at risk."

"The Indian carriers, like many airlines around the world, are in survival mode," de Juniac said.

**"I urge the Indian government to support the airlines with a financial aid package that provides a bridge over this challenging period. Specifically, help the airlines with measures that raise equity financing rather than to increase debt. This needs to be done urgently before it is too late, he said.**

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman earlier this month while as part of the fourth tranche of the Rs 20 lakh crore economic package to revive the economy announced **measures such as easing of restrictions on the utilisation of Indian air space, privatisation of six more airports**, among others.

de Juniac also said that aviation should be started with measures that are globally agreed and mutually recognized by states as this will give confidence to travellers.

"The restart of domestic aviation in India this week is a step forward. But more can be done, including the need to harmonise measures across Indian states," he said.

India opened its domestic air travel routes for flying from May 25 after a two months halt. The international operations by airlines, however, remain suspended.

IATA is a member of ICAO's COVID-19 Aviation Recovery Task Force (CART), which is developing the global standards needed for the safe restart of aviation, de Juniac said.

"We are also engaging a number of governments directly, including India. We have proposed a roadmap for restarting aviation that outlines a temporary layered approach to biosafety until a vaccine, immunity passports or nearly instant COVID-19 testing is available at scale," he said.

Business Standard 29/05/2020

**Several factors like the lockdown in metro cities and the ban imposed by various countries on the entry of foreigners need to be addressed before resuming international passenger flights in India, Civil Aviation Minister Hardeep Singh Puri said on Monday.** Domestic services were suspended in India due to the coronavirus-induced lockdown and resumed after a gap of two months on May 25. Scheduled international passenger flights continue to remain suspended in the country.

"Numerous citizens have been approaching us to restart international flights. Several factors need to be addressed. Many international destinations are not allowing incoming passenger traffic, except for their own citizens or diplomats," Puri said on Twitter.

Within India, most international flights operate from the metro cities where travellers arrive from the neighbouring cities and states, he said.

"Our metro cities were under various degrees of lockdown which are beginning to be lifted. Some of them are still allowing only limited flights to operate," the minister noted.

Airports in West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Telangana and Tamil Nadu have been allowed to handle a restricted number of daily flights as these states do not want a huge influx of flyers amid the rising number of COVID-19 cases.

The minister said: "MHA (Ministry of Home Affairs) guidelines for lockdown 5.0 have further opened up inter & intra-state travel, and will facilitate calibrated reopening of the sector. **As we move towards the critical mass of 50-60% operation of domestic flights, our ability to resume international operations will also improve.**"

Indian carriers operated a total of 3,370 domestic passenger flights till May 31 -- 428 on May 25, 445 on May 26, 460 on May 27, 494 on May 28, 513 on May 29 and 529 on May 30.

During the pre-lockdown period, Indian airports handled around 3,000 daily domestic flights, aviation industry sources said.

In February, around 4.12 lakh passengers travelled daily through domestic flights in India, according to the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) data.

The ETI 01/06/2020

**MUMBAI: No-frills airline AirAsia India on Monday said it is offering 50,000 seats without charging base fare to the doctor community who, along with other frontline workers, are working to save lives amid the coronavirus pandemic.**

"As a mark of respect to our doctors and in recognition of the admirable values they have displayed through the last few months, we at AirAsia India wanted to express our gratitude for their tireless efforts in keeping the nation safe and healthy," Air Asia . India Chief Commercial Officer Ankur Garg said.

**Under the RedPass initiative, AirAsia India will give away 50,000 seats without any base fare on flights across its domestic sectors to doctors as a gesture of gratitude for their commendable efforts in support of the nation, the airline said in release.**

**However, airport fees, charges and statutory taxes will be borne by the traveller, it said.**

**To avail the offer, doctors can submit their contact details and desired sector and date of travel between July 1 and September 30 with their registration number or ID as proof on its website, the airline said adding that the applications can be submitted by June 12.**

**Besides these base free passes, they would also be given special privileges like priority boarding at the airport. The RedPass would be valid for a one way flight for the successful applicant doctors on the AirAsia India domestic network, the airline said in the release.**

The ETI 01/06/2020

NEW DELHI: Welcome aboard on Flight XYZ of ABC Air... those on window and aisle seats please proceed, those on middle seats please wait for the in-flight crew to check your wraparound gowns. Strange? Yes. But may soon be true.

**The muddle over the middle seat got more complicated as the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) ordered airlines to either try and keep middle seats vacant or, insist that middle seat passengers wear 'wraparound gowns' apart from other protective gear. Making the exercise even more muddled is the requirement that those gowns meet textile ministry standards.**

"If middle seat/seat between two passengers is occupied due to passenger load, then additional protective equipment like 'wraparound gown' (ministry of textiles-approved standards) shall be



provided to the individual... in addition to... three-layer face mask and face shield,” the order read.



Airlines are not pleased, to say the least. Speaking off record, executives said these orders are designed more to make the DGCA look good than passengers safer. “It is a completely illogical diktat for optics. Nowhere else in the world do they require such a thing. Do they have any data that suggests middle seat passengers are more exposed or getting infected?” said an airline insider, who did not want to be identified.

“It is pretty sloppy thinking,” said another executive of an airline on the condition of anonymity. These orders came in the wake of a Supreme Court ruling that ordered airlines to keep middle seats vacant on the next lot of flights that are bringing back Indians stranded abroad, starting June 6. The aviation regulator, which had asked airlines in March to keep middle seats vacant in flights, allowed middle seat occupancy when flights resumed in May.

#### Social Distancing on Plane Difficult

Airlines were allowed to allot middle seats after authorities concluded that it is difficult to maintain social distancing (of at least six feet) between passengers inside the aircraft. Another argument was that in-flight air-conditioning cleans interior air every two to three minutes, making the spread of virus difficult. However, there may be hope down the line. Senior officials said the court order on keeping middle seats empty was on the basis of facts presented by the petitioner. **“The government will contest the order and present before court accurate facts in the next hearing,” said an official, off record. Till that happens, get ready to don the gown.**

The ETI 02/06/2020

**Mumbai: India's airlines are sharply curtailing their fleet expansion plans as the Covid-19 pandemic saps demand for travel and pushes prospects of a recovery to next year.**

Carriers are likely to take delivery of not more than 25 planes for the year ending December, less than a third of what they were collectively scheduled to get, said several people aware of the matter. This includes 10-15 planes already inducted, they said.

Market leader IndiGo will take the majority of the planes, although at a slower pace than its rate of one plane every week last year/ A handful of aircraft, including one Boeing 787 Dreamliner, will likely go to Vistara. AirAsia India, GoAir and SpiceJet may not take any fresh aircraft deliveries in 2020.

India's passenger airlines operate a combined fleet of 650 planes. Last year, Airbus and Boeing delivered about 70 planes to airlines and several more were leased by carriers.

AirAsia India CEO Sunil Bhaskaran said the airline has frozen its expansion plans for this year. Vistara chief commercial officer Vinod Kannan told ET the airline is in talks with Airbus and Boeing to defer deliveries.

Vistara has inducted a Boeing Dreamliner 787 plane and two leased Airbus A320 aircraft into its fleet between January and March 2020. It couldn't take delivery of its second Dreamliner in March as the country went into a lockdown.

SpiceJet is awaiting deliveries of Boeing 737 Max planes, which is back in production after a year of being grounded after two crashes.

IndiGo, SpiceJet and GoAir didn't respond to ET's queries.

Discussions are ongoing and will change entirely if demand increases later this year, a senior IndiGo executive said. "There are a lot of moving parts," the executive said.

**"Also please remember, it brings a lot of much-needed cash to Indian airlines if they can sell and leaseback planes. Also, all airlines would want to get the new upgraded versions of planes such as the Airbus A320 Neo and Boeing 737 Max for more cost-effective operations in these times,"** said a senior executive at a leasing company.

**Airlines across the world, especially low-cost carriers, finance aircraft by selling it to a lessor at a premium immediately after it's delivered. They then lease it back and pay monthly rentals. The premium from such aircraft sales shores up their finances and at times, even profits.**

Indian carriers had to ground 650 planes on March 24 when all operations were suspended as part of the nationwide lockdown to prevent the spread of the Covid-19 virus. They grappled with a no-revenue situation for two months before being allowed to resume operations in a calibrated manner. There has been a small spurt in demand from flyers wanting to get to their home towns from distant cities, helping airlines to fill less than half of their flights. **Demand may fall in the next few weeks once everyone gets back home as people avoid non-essential travel.**

The ETI 01/06/2020

**Aviation regulator DGCA on Friday issued guidelines for stakeholders like pilots and engineers on how to deal with locust swarms, saying they pose a threat to aircraft in the critical landing and takeoff phase of a flight.**

**India is battling the worst desert locust invasion in more than 21 years.** The crop-destroying swarms first attacked Rajasthan and have now spread to Punjab, Gujarat, Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh.

"Generally, locusts are found at lower levels and therefore pose a threat to aircraft in the critical landing and takeoff phase of the flight. Almost all air intake ports of the aircraft will be prone to ingestion in large numbers, if the aircraft flies through a swarm (areas like engine inlet, air-conditioning pack inlet etc.)," the regulator said in its circular.

Pitot and static sources can also get partially or fully blocked while flying through locust swarms, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation said.

"Blocked pitot and static sources lead to erroneous instrument indications, especially unreliable air speed and altimeter indications," it said.

A pitot tube in airplanes is used to measure the flow speed of the wind.

Business Standards 29/05/2020

New Delhi: Indian airlines **Air India Ltd will operate 70 flights to evacuate Indians stranded in the US and Canada under the third phase of Mission Vande Bharat, between June 11 to June 30**, said civil aviation minister Hardeep Singh Puri in a tweet late on Monday.

Puri wrote, "More flights being added to Mission Vande Bharat to enable stranded & distressed Indians to return home. @airindiain will operate 70 flights to destinations in USA & Canada under **Phase 3 of the Mission** from 11-30 June 2020."

This move comes as the Indian aviation ministry was getting numerous requests to restart international flights. In another tweet, Puri said, "Numerous citizens have been approaching us to restart international flights. Several factors need to be addressed. Many international destinations are not allowing incoming passenger traffic, except for their own citizens or diplomats."

**The Vande Bharat Mission was started by the Indian government on May 7 to bring stranded Indians home amid the COVID-19 pandemic from foreign land on a payment basis. It also permitted foreign nationals and valid visa holders to book seats on these outbound flights.**

02/06/20 ZeeNews

On Monday, **Civil Aviation Minister Hardeep Singh Puri said that before deciding to resume international flights in India, the circumstances of the lockdown in the metro cities of the country and the restrictions imposed on the entry of foreigners into different countries should also be considered.** Domestic flights have been restored in the country from May 25 after two months due to the lockdown. While international flights are still pending in the country.

Puri tweeted about this matter and said that a large number of people are again appealing to him to restore international flights. **Many countries are still not allowing citizens of any country other than their citizens or diplomats to enter their country. That's why resumption of international flights is not possible at the moment. He said that under the Vande Bharat Mission, more than 50 thousand Indians trapped in other countries have been brought home safely so far.** He said that the civil aviation sector will be opened gradually during Lockdown-5.

02/06/20 Harshita Jain/News Track

Mumbai: **India's airlines are sharply curtailing their fleet expansion plans as the Covid-19 pandemic saps demand for travel and pushes prospects of a recovery to next year.**

**Carriers are likely to take delivery of not more than 25 planes for the year ending December, less than a third of what they were collectively scheduled to get**, said several people aware of the matter. **This includes 10-15 planes already inducted**, they said.

**Market leader IndiGo will take the majority of the planes, although at a slower pace than its rate of one plane every week last year/ A handful of aircraft, including one Boeing 787 Dreamliner, will likely go to Vistara. AirAsia India, GoAir and SpiceJet may not take any fresh aircraft deliveries in 2020.**

India's passenger airlines operate a combined fleet of 650 planes. Last year, Airbus and Boeing delivered about 70 planes to airlines and several more were leased by carriers.

**AirAsia India** CEO Sunil Bhaskaran said the airline **has frozen its expansion plans for this year.**

**Vistara** chief commercial officer Vinod Kannan told ET the airline is **in talks with Airbus and Boeing to defer deliveries.**

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**SpiceJet is awaiting deliveries of Boeing 737 Max planes, which is back in production after a year of being grounded after two crashes.**

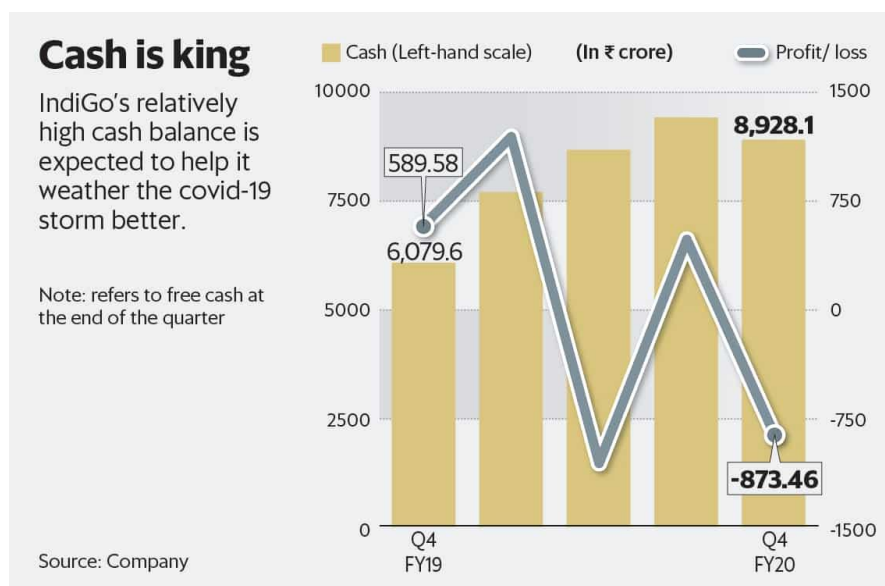
IndiGo, SpiceJet and GoAir didn't respond to ET's queries.

Discussions are ongoing and will change entirely if demand increases later this year, a senior IndiGo executive said. "There are a lot of moving parts," the executive said.

01/06/20 Anirban Chowdhury/Economic Times

Until last year, there was a lot of excitement for shares of InterGlobe Aviation Ltd, which runs IndiGo airlines. **InterGlobe shares had touched a 52-week high of ₹1899 a piece in September on NSE, on the back of strong capacity growth. However, things are now moving in the opposite direction following the coronavirus outbreak, as capacity is expected to be trimmed.**

The company did not give a clear guidance on capacity, but said it will return 120 A320neos over the next two years, and replace them with A320neos, though the pace of replacement will depend on the trend in revenue.



The March quarter results show the impact of the lockdown put in place to battle the covid-19 pandemic, which began on 25 March. Available seat kilometre (ASK) for the quarter declined by 11%

compared to the December quarter. On a per-unit basis, InterGlobe's profit spread has been negative for the quarter. **Cost per available seat kilometre exceeded revenues per available seat kilometre. Overall, the company reported a loss of about ₹870 crore**, though this is better than the street's forecast. **The loss was largely because of forex fluctuation.**

**Amid this uncertain environment, InterGlobe is shifting focus to costs and liquidity and aims to save costs of ₹3,000-4,000 crore in the coming months. To achieve this, the airline will look at curtailing employee costs and has chosen not to pay dividends for FY20, among other steps.**

This should help in a rough year, especially when one cannot be sure of how demand would pan out. In its March quarter earnings call, InterGlobe said it is operating at 20% capacity right now, and is looking to ramp up to 30% soon.

Domestic aviation operations have recently resumed in a phased manner, but the seasonally strong June quarter is expected to take a hit, as the lockdown was in force for most of the period.

The September quarter tends to be leaner than the June quarter for the aviation sector. The first half of this financial year will be immensely challenging. The silver lining is that recent bookings show there is a high level of pent-up demand. However, investors will do well to wait and see if this persists and watch for demand recovery in the second half of the year.

**"Headwinds for airlines in the form of limited demand and yield pressure may linger for the remainder of FY2020,"** said Kotak Institutional Equities analysts.

After touching a low of ₹771.30 apiece in March, InterGlobe shares have recovered by about 23%. Still, as mentioned earlier, the stock has halved from its highs.

**IndiGo has a fairly high cash balance compared to its peers and given, the new focus on cash and liquidity, it is best placed in the sector to ride out the covid-19 storm**  
[Live Mint Aviation 02/06/2020](#)

**India's aviation regulator has told airlines to keep the middle seats in an aircraft vacant or offer protective gowns to passengers as it intensifies safety measures amid incidents of coronavirus infections soon after the country lifted a two-month ban on domestic air travel.**

A senior official in the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) said airlines have been directed to allot seats to passengers in such a manner that the middle seat is unoccupied. This provided passenger load factor and seat capacity in an aircraft permits the arrangement, the official said.

"However, members of the same family will be allowed to sit together," the official said, requesting anonymity. The directives, which were issued on 29 May, will come into force from Wednesday, the official added.

**The new directives are based on recommendations by an expert committee formed by the civil aviation ministry on 26 May to review and strengthen safety protocols related to air travel. A DGCA order dated 29 May and made public on Monday has also asked airlines to provide safety kits to passengers comprising three-layered surgical masks, face shields and sanitizers. It has also told airlines not to offer meals or drinking water to travellers on board, except for health reasons.**

A copy of the DGCA order has been reviewed by Mint.

An airline official said the new directives are unlikely to make a major dent to airline earnings as middle seats are to be kept vacant only on flights that are comparatively empty.

"Airlines expect a decline in passenger demand after an initial surge seen post resumption of domestic air services. The middle seats can then be kept vacant, as much as possible," the official said, requesting anonymity. The official said also the DGCA order is not expected to affect airfares, which have already been capped by the government.

Airlines are seeing high passenger load factors between metro and non-metro cities, while flights between metro cities are relatively empty, said the airline official cited above.

**Indian carriers resumed domestic flights from 25 May, following a staggered lifting of a ban on air travel, including at coronavirus hotspots of Delhi and Mumbai that host the country's busiest airports.**

**Soon after, cases emerged of several asymptomatic passengers who travelled on flights, mostly of IndiGo, later testing positive for covid-19. This has increased challenges for airlines and authorities struggling to return to normalcy.**

DGCA has also directed airlines to follow strict sequential embarkation and disembarkation processes for passengers for boarding and de-boarding.

**In cases where the middle seat is occupied, airlines have been asked to make provisions to provide additional protective gear like wrap-around gowns to passengers occupying the intervening seats.**

**A senior official at a budget airline said the government decision to either keep middle seats empty or make passengers wear a protective gown is impractical. "Nowhere around the world are they taking such measures. We also don't expect these measures to help much to prevent spread of covid-19," the official said, asking not to be named.**

International flights continue to remain grounded, except for repatriation flights operated by national carrier Air India to bring back stranded citizens from abroad and by other nations flying back their citizens from India.

[Live Mint Aviation 01/06/2020](#)

New Delhi: **An Air India pilots' union on Monday suggested to aviation regulator DGCA that COVID-positive pilots grounded for over 14 days should be allowed to fly after being declared negative by an approved medical examiner as the current protocol makes them unavailable for duty for six months.**

"This (proposed solution) will ensure that precious human resources are not wasted," The Indian Commercial Pilots' Association (ICPA) said in a letter.

**It said that if a pilot is tested positive for COVID-19, he goes on a mandatory 14-day "sick" leave and then he has to go for a special medical examination in New Delhi or Bengaluru.**

**This process takes at least three months, and then he heads for a medical assessment by the DGCA and that takes at least three more months,** it said.

**"To sum up, a pilot who tests positive will not be available for flying duties for at least 6 months.**

**We may soon have a situation where hundreds of pilots are not available for flying duties due to the aforementioned problems,"** said T Praveen Keerthi, General Secretary, ICPA.

The ICPA consists of pilots who fly narrow-body aircraft for Air India.

"At this juncture, we wish to propose a pragmatic solution to the problems mentioned above: **First, allow pilots who have been grounded for more than 14 days due to COVID-19 infection to appear for the medical examination at any of the DGCA empanelled Class I medical examiners. Who may issue a medical certificate in CA Form 35,"** Keerthi said.

This means the pilot should be allowed to resume flying duties if his CA 35 mentions COVID-negative.

"Allow the pilot to resume flying duties based on CA 35 without having to wait for the medical assessment," Keerthi added.

**A number of pilots and cabin crew members have tested positive for the novel coronavirus during the last few weeks.**

However, the airline has not issued any statement on this matter yet.

02/05/20 PTI/New Indian Express

IndiGo, India's biggest airline, said it will keep adding new aircraft to its fleet even as it can't give any firm guidance on future capacity growth because of the coronavirus pandemic, which destroyed demand for air travel in one of the world's fastest-growing aviation market

**The airline, the world's biggest customer for Airbus SE's best-selling A320neo jets, plans to return its entire fleet of 120 older, fuel-guzzling planes to lessors in the next two years,** Chief Executive Officer Ronojoy Dutta said in a conference call with analysts and investors after the carrier reported fourth-quarter earnings Tuesday. **"Almost all or close to all" of those aircraft will be replaced by new jets, Dutta said, without giving a time frame for that to happen.**

"We are in active discussions with Airbus -- we will take a large number," Dutta, who runs the airline operated by InterGlobe Aviation Ltd., said on the call. **"It will all depend on the revenue picture and the pricing we get and so forth, but we will take a large number."**

Shares of the company jumped as much as 8.7% Wednesday in Mumbai, their biggest intraday surge in almost two weeks. **IndiGo was the best performer on the 28-member Bloomberg World Airlines Index that tracks the biggest global carriers.**

**IndiGo joins a small number of low-cost airlines around the world that are keeping growth plans**

**intact.** Last week, Ryanair Holdings Plc. Chief Executive Officer Michael O’Leary said that the carrier was planning to rekindle growth by negotiating incentives with traffic-starved airports and betting on the return of Boeing Co.’s beleaguered 737 Max model, which was grounded worldwide following two deadly crashes. Last month, Wizz Air CEO Jozsef Varadi said the carrier plans to take delivery of the hundreds of jetliners it has on order from Airbus.

Others such as Emirates Airline, the world’s biggest long-haul carrier, and Qatar Airways Ltd. have said they will discuss deferring deliveries as it may be several years before demand reaches pre-pandemic levels.

No Guidance

**While IndiGo’s pace of inducting new jets may not match the speed at which older planes are retired due to the uncertain demand environment, it is still better placed than peers to withstand the current crisis,** analysts at Prabhudas Liladhar said in a research note. **A strong balance sheet, industry-leading cost structure and a strong management team will help IndiGo emerge stronger,** said the analysts, who maintained their “accumulate” rating on the stock.

**IndiGo, which had earlier expected capacity to increase 20% in the year ending March 2021, refrained from giving any guidance as it declared quarterly financial results.** It posted a loss of 8.7 billion rupees (\$115 million) for the fourth quarter ended March 31, compared with a profit of 5.9 billion rupees in the same period a year earlier.

A nationwide lockdown for about two months “significantly impacted” the company’s profitability, and it has put on hold discretionary expenses and certain capital expenditures, the company said in a statement to stock exchanges.

**The carrier will take delivery of 30 A320neos, Chief Operating Officer Wolfgang Prock-Schauer said without giving a schedule.** IndiGo added 42 A320neo-family aircraft during the year ended March 31.

Like airlines around the globe, IndiGo saw demand plunge this year as countries imposed border restrictions, holiday makers canceled trips and companies cut back on non-essential business travel. India has allowed a limited number of domestic flights to resume after a two-month nationwide grounding, giving airlines like IndiGo and rival SpiceJet Ltd. a chance to earn some much-needed revenue.

Welcome News

**IndiGo’s statement on plane inductions is welcome news for Airbus, the world’s largest commercial aircraft manufacturer, which has slashed its target for production by more than a third and warned of further reductions and job cuts. While a strong domestic market gives Indian carriers a cushion, international travel -- a market where IndiGo planned to expand -- isn’t showing much in the way of a revival.**

**The airline is also in talks with an engine manufacturer to settle a dispute,** it said without identifying the supplier. IndiGo’s fleet of A320neo jets are powered by **Pratt & Whitney**, and the engines have suffered repeated glitches in the past few years.

The ETI 03/06/2020



**A commercial flight veered off the runway in Mumbai owing to the heavy winds caused by the cyclone Nisarga. The flight was controlled soon after and no casualties were reported.** No casualties were reported due to the excursion. Chhatrapati Shivaji airport saw the excursion of the commercial flight. However after the incident, the airport returned back to normalcy. No harm to life or property was reported.

The ETI 04/06/2020

DGCA nod clears runway for the Dawn of Drone age

**India's civil aviation regulator has given the go-ahead a little over a year after the country announced plans to allow experimental long-range drone flights before framing a policy for the sector. The tests, which will see the unmanned vehicles either carry payloads or survey vast swathes of land, are likely to begin in the first week of July.**

Bengaluru: Delivery startups Dunzo, Swiggy and Zomato, budget airline SpiceJetNSE 1.23 % and Reliance-backed drone startup Asteria Aerospace are among 13 consortia that have received **approvals to test fly beyond visual line of sight (BVLOS) drones.**

India's civil aviation regulator has given the go-ahead a little over a year after the country announced plans to allow experimental long-range drone flights before framing a policy for the sector. **The tests, which will see the unmanned vehicles either carry payloads or survey vast swathes of land, are likely to begin in the first week of July. This will mark the first steps in India's plan to develop local drone-based services capabilities,** even as it plays catch up with China and the US.

**"We will start flying from the first week of July and plan to clock around 120 hours of flights in two and a half months,"** said Nagendran Kandasamy, founder and director of Throttle Aerospace, which received approval from the Directorate-General of Civil Aviation in March along with Dunzo.

While the firm initially planned to begin tests much sooner, the virus outbreak induced lockdown pushed back its plans, Kandasamy said. **The disruption caused by the pandemic also delayed the DGCA's approval to end-May for 11 of the 13 consortia that were shortlisted.**

**The private industry consortia will need to clock at least 100 hours of flight time in airspace designated by the Airports Authority of India, by September 30. The logs will need to be submitted to the DGCA, which is hoping to use data from the experiments to frame a policy for BVLOS drones before year-end.**

"Once they (the consortia) complete their flights and submit their logs, then we can really understand what will need to be the specifications required for BVLOS," said a senior government official who did not want to be named. **"Our plan was to have the draft policy out by August, but that got pushed because of the Covid-19 pandemic."**

**India is looking at these experiments as a way of fast tracking its policy and preparing the local industry for a major push into the drone services segment globally,** multiple government officials and industry participants told ET. **Unlike other forms of aviation, drones are cheap to develop and the bulk of their value is in moving away from hardware into services.**

**Another government official working closely on India's drone master plan said drones do not**

require the state to sink billions of dollars into R&D unlike other emerging technologies such as Artificial Intelligence and quantum computing. India's strengths in software, geospatial imaging and services will make it the ideal provider of services atop drones, he added. "Our information technology services giants already work with the world's biggest power generators, electricity transmission companies, oil pipeline companies and offer them end-to-end services to manage their assets. **Why can't we now out of India offer to manage their drone fleets which will reduce their maintenance costs by hundreds and thousands of crores?"**

The ETI 04/06/2020

MUMBAI: The Adani Group has told India's state-run airport developer that it won't be able to take possession of the three privatised airports in Ahmedabad, Lucknow and Mangaluru this calendar year due to the disruption caused by the Covid-19 pandemic. The infrastructure conglomerate has invoked the force majeure clause in the contract, several people in the know said.

The group has also asked the Airports Authority of India (AAI) to defer the deadline for payment of asset transfer fees of over Rs 1,000 crore for these airports from August to beyond December 2020, the people cited above said.

On February 14, the group had signed concession agreements with AAI to maintain, develop and operate the three airports. In 2018, it won the bid for six airports, which also includes Trivandrum, Jaipur and Guwahati but the concession agreement was signed only for only for Ahmedabad, Lucknow and Mangaluru.

The total asset transfer fees for six airports is worth Rs 2,000 crore, said two people in the know. The fees include upfront payments to contractors for development work already assigned by AAI.



Separately, the GVK group has also cited the force majeure clause to nodal body CIDCO in Mumbai indicating it will be forced to delay the start of construction work on the Rs 16,000 crore Navi Mumbai airport project.

Force majeure refers to a clause that is included in contracts to remove liability for natural and unavoidable catastrophes.

Senior executives at AAI and CIDCO confirmed the developments and said their legal teams are looking into requests from Adani and GVK.

**“The concession agreement is signed. Now Adani needs to draw and sign registration and adjudication documents and take possession of the airport. They have requested a deferment. We will try to get the money and transfer possession this financial year. It’s too premature to say anything else,”** said a top AAI executive.

An executive at CIDCO was more specific and terse.

**“We haven’t decided what to reply to GVK but this clause can’t really be invoked. We resumed work on the Navi Mumbai airport project a month back and there is no reason why GVK can’t,”** he said.

An email to GVK remained unanswered. Adani Group declined to comment.

**The Covid-19 pandemic has gravely affected businesses across the world, primarily tourism and air travel. Airlines and airport developers worldwide are staring at huge losses and have taken stringent measures such as laying off vast swathes of workforce.**

In a note on Wednesday, credit rating agency ICRA said passenger traffic at airports will remain under pressure for the first half of FY2021, with some recovery likely only in the second half. On a full-year basis, passenger traffic is estimated to decline by 45-50% in FY2021, it said.

**“Traffic recovery in a meaningful manner is expected towards FY2022 and that FY2019 passenger traffic levels of 345 million are likely to be surpassed only by FY2023,”** it added.

Adani had cited aggressive concession fees while bidding for the six airports. Industry insiders said these now make no sense in the currently impacted business scenario.

According to figures from AAI, **the number of passengers handled in FY20 rose 2.3% for Ahmedabad but declined 2% for Lucknow and 16% for Mangaluru. Similarly aircraft movements climbed 8% for Ahmedabad but declined 7.8% for Lucknow and 19% for Mangaluru.**

**The AAI executive said Adani’s request for delay would lead to a shortfall in revenue targets for the state-run airport developer. In the worse-case scenario, the group can forfeit bank guarantees or so-called performance bids submitted for the three airports. But the executive said it was premature to think on those lines.**

The GVK-led consortium Mumbai International Airport Ltd which runs the current airport in Mumbai has won the bid for developing the Navi Mumbai airport.

In a recent webinar hosted by Sydney-based consultant CAPA-Centre for Aviation, MIAL CEO Rajeev Jain said the **fall in business in its existing airport would impact upcoming capital intensive airport projects.** He didn’t elaborate.

State Bank of India recently took over as the lead financier for the project after the earlier one backed out.

Earlier this year, **GVK got into binding agreements to sell close to an 80% stake in its wholly owned airports business to sovereign wealth fund Abu Dhabi Investment Authority, India's National Investment and Infrastructure Fund and Canadian pension PSP for Rs 7,614 crore.**

The Navi Mumbai airport, first approved by the Maharashtra government in July 2008, is seen as a critical alternative to the existing airport in India's financial capital. The new airport will be built on 1,160 hectares in phases. The initial concession period is 30 years from the appointed date and is extendable for a further 10 years.

The ETI 04/06/2020

MUMBAI: Flight operations at the Mumbai airport will remain shut till 7 pm on Wednesday as a preventive step due to the ongoing landfall of Cyclone Nisarga, Mumbai International Ltd (MIAL) said.

**"Considering the strong crosswinds, it has been decided that no arrivals and departures will take place between 2.30 pm and 7 pm,"** MIAL said in a statement.

It said that the **decision to temporarily suspend flight services at the Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport (CSMIA) was taken in consultation with the Airport Authority of India (AAI)**

AAI holds 26 per cent stake in MIAL joint venture. The majority 74 per cent stake is with a GVK group-led consortium.

The private airport operator had scheduled a total of 19 flights for Wednesday, which included 11 departures and eight arrivals to be operated by five airlines -- Air India, IndiGo, SpiceJet, GoAir and AirAsia India.

It had, however, said that the schedule could change as well depending upon the situation.

**Cyclone Nisarga blew in from the Arabian Sea, making landfall at the coastal town Alibaug at around 12.30 pm and the process will finish by 4 pm, officials said.**

**Mumbai airport was allowed to operate a total 50 flights per day, 25 departures and arrivals each following the resumption of air passenger services on the domestic routes from May 25.**

The operations of commercial passenger services were suspended on March due the imposition of a nation-wide lockdown in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic.

**The government later lifted the restrictions on domestic flights from May 25. International operations by the Indian airlines, however, remain suspended.**

The ETI 03/06/2020

In a research note, ICRA said that passenger traffic at airports will remain under pressure for H1FY2021, with some recovery likely only in H2FY2021, on a full year basis.

**"The aviation infrastructure industry is amongst the most severely impacted sectors to bear the brunt of the novel coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic and the setback on the industry is expected to be substantial in the near term,"** the note said.

As per the ICRA note, decline in air travel globally pursuant to spread of the pandemic and subsequent drastic precautionary measures undertaken by the Centre leading to pan India lockdown and near closure of airport operations, has led to a sharp contraction in air traffic in Q4 FY2020 and negligible passenger traffic in the month of April 2020 and May 2020.

**"Although most airports resumed operations by the end of May 2020 for domestic travel, with restrictions on number of flights as well as passengers, the resumption of international commercial operations remains stalled,"** the note said.

"There have been extremely few international flights, limited largely to operations to bring back stranded Indians or repatriation of foreign citizens."

According to Anupama Arora, Sector Head & Vice President - Corporate Ratings, ICRA: **"With almost negligible air traffic already in the first two months of the current fiscal, possible dilemma amongst travellers to travel amidst continuing pandemic fears and gradual addition of capacities by airlines, passenger traffic at airports is expected to remain under pressure for H1FY2021, with some recovery only likely in the second half."**

**"As a result, passenger traffic is estimated to witness sharp YoY decline of 45-50 per cent in FY2021."**

In FY19, airports in India handled around 345 million passengers, driven by strong growth especially in domestic traffic.

The top five privatised airports in India developed under the Public-Private Partnership model have led from the front, accounting for 55-60 per cent of this passenger traffic.

As for the recovery, ICRA said the same will be contingent on the abatement of the pandemic, with international travel primarily dependent on lifting of travel restrictions by various countries.

"This is likely to happen only in phases. Additionally, availability of viable load factors across specific routes for the airlines would be another consideration for airlines to resume traffic directed towards various destinations," the note said.

**The rating agency thus expects the traffic recovery in a meaningful manner only towards FY2022 and that FY2019 passenger traffic levels are likely to be surpassed only by FY2023.**

**"Given likelihood of weak traffic for a prolonged period and resultant operations conducted at sub-optimal capacities and at the same time necessity to invest in infrastructure to ensure passenger**

**safety and meet preventive requirements against the pandemic, the airports' profitability and cash flows are likely to remain under pressure in the near term," ICRA said in the note.**

Furthermore, **this risk is exacerbated in case of the privatised airports, as most of them are in the midst of undertaking sizeable debt funded capex to expand capacities.**

The ETI 03/06/2020

Civil aviation minister Hardeep Puri said on Wednesday that India would open up skies for international air travel once the situation normalises so that such cross-border travel will not pose any danger to citizens.

**In a series of tweets, Puri sought to reassure a group of non-resident Indians who are normally resident abroad but are currently stranded in India that they could fly out during the third phase of the Vande Bharat Mission** that will operate between 9 June to 30 June. For normal international operations, India has to take into account several factors including the readiness of other countries as well as easing of the domestic travel restrictions that are currently in place in various Indian cities, the minister explained.

"We are continuously monitoring the situation and will consider restarting international flights as soon as situation normalises a bit and poses no danger to our citizens. We will also have to consider that countries where we intend to fly are open to incoming foreign citizens," the minister said in the tweet.

Puri said that stranded Indians can avail of the Vande Bharat flights, for which Air India has announced opening of bookings on 5 June. They also can return by the flights operated by other countries, the minister explained. **The flights that Air India will operate from 9 June would cover destinations in the US and Canada,** the minister said. **"These flights will also carry outbound passengers to countries which have no restrictions on taking them in. So people can also avail these flights to return to the countries they wish to go,"** Puri said.

**"Normal International civil aviation operations will only start when they can. Right now, most of our metro cities are under some form of restrictions due to which people from other cities cannot travel to catch flights and we also have requirement for mandatory quarantine on arrival,"** Puri said. Also, **the behaviour of the virus and its spread will be taken into account before a decision is taken about international travel. Till then flights under Vande Bharat Mission are facilitating both inbound and outbound international passengers,** the minister said.

**Several foreign governments have so far evacuated more than 144,000 of their citizens from India on more than 579 flights since 25 March. These flights have also taken citizens of other countries as well. Several other requests from foreign airlines are in process and will be cleared in coming days, Puri said.**

Live Mint Aviation 03/06/2020

As the aviation minister took to Twitter announcing resumption of flights from May 25, there was frenzy from all aviation stakeholders ranging from airlines to airports to passengers. The excitement died as state after state came up with guidelines, mobile apps, registrations, quarantine rules and restrictions. When it was time to finally fly, **the flights were much lesser than the 33 percent cap that the government had put in place.**

**Anecdotal evidence and numbers declared by airports on social media show that flights have not been running full. From single digit loads to almost full flights – due to cancellations and combinations — the first three days have seen all.** Vistara and Air India even operated wide-body aircraft to cater to the immediate spike in demand.

**As per what the government has worked out, airlines in India will operate at a reduced capacity of 33 percent of the approved summer schedule until August. They would also be bound by a lower and upper fare cap for each route that they are operating.** States such as Maharashtra, West Bengal and Tamil Nadu have put a further cap on the movements without clarity on when they would be open up to all states. Permission for 33 percent movements at airports that currently have the cap is also unclear.

### **How are airlines operating?**

All airlines put together have a fleet of little over 650 commercial aircraft in Indian skies. While all of them were grounded on the midnight of March 25, a couple of airlines started limited non-commercial operations. This included flights to send passengers to quarantine locations, carrying cargo or being a spoke to repatriation flights being organised by different countries from major metro cities in the country.

While a few aircraft were kept active, many more were grounded for a longer time. At the peak of grounding, these planes occupied one of the three runways at Delhi Airport – India’s biggest.

After the government declared resumption of flights and the subsequent slot approvals, airlines started planning how to get the aircraft back in the air.

With only 33 percent schedule being allowed, not all aircraft would be back in the air and airlines look at multiple factors to decide which aircraft to get back to the air. These multiple factors include the cost of getting it back to the air.

**Few airlines have Power By Hour (PBH) deals with the lessor where there is a fixed cost of operation and an additional cost based on the use. Aircraft, which fall under such a type of lease and would have overall lower cost of operation, would come up online first.**

**The mandatory C and D checks are expensive and these come at periodic intervals which are based on hours flown with a combination of flight cycles.** Aircraft which are closer to these checks either by hours or flight cycles are benched to ensure that there isn’t any additional expenditure.

Extra planes

There have been murmurs around airlines’ ability to pay lessors of planes. Considering some additional fleet, cargo operations and engineering needs, at best the airlines in India are operating less than 40 percent of their fleet. The exception here is Air India, which has been involved in Vande Bharat mission for repatriation of Indian nationals.

This has a wider implication on airlines. **While airlines continue to be in discussions with lessors for discounts or waiver of lease rentals, there hasn’t been any definite arrangement which has been made public. The government has not given any sops to the industry. For the two months that the airline recorded zero revenue, the lease rentals and all other charges are still due. What does that leave the airlines with? A lot of extra planes!**

**Nearly 400 aircraft are extra in Indian skies going by this calculation and purely by current notification; this would remain so till the end of August.** Unless there is a miraculous cure prior to



that which kick-starts the travel and airline industry, the notification is unlikely to change. However, going by the rules and regulations around these flights, more flights could be cancelled and planes grounded as people stay away from scheduled flying.

What is the solution?

**Airlines could expedite re-delivery of their aircraft, even if it comes at a cost if the re-delivery cost is cheaper than the rentals and other associated costs of keeping the aircraft grounded. IndiGo had mentioned that it would re-deliver all its A320neos which weren't directly taken from Airbus. A sizable number of the over 100 A320neo would be gone in the next 24 months but it could now be expedited.**

**Spicejet has been holding on to the older B737s in its fleet due to the grounding of B737 MAX8 which were expected in the fleet at a steady rate. GoAir interestingly has nearly 70% of its fleet comprising then new generation A320neo and could end up terminating lease of even the newer aircraft to shrink and right size itself.**

While there is uncertainty on when the passenger traffic will reach pre-COVID levels, one thing is clear that it would be a long recovery, especially after the incidents of finding positive cases on board post landing at destination.

**These are unprecedented times and lessors do not have any other airlines who would want to induct aircraft. Will the lessor agree for very low rentals? The MROs are known to give freebies like free fuel or landing charges to attract business, will these freebies be seen from lessor? Time will tell what happens to the extra planes in India skies – which currently remain grounded!**

Money Control 01/06/2020

**Shares of InterGlobe Aviation, which operates IndiGo, today rallied nearly 10% to ₹1,128, extending their two-day gains to about 20%. Rival SpiceJet's shares also surged about 5% today.**

The domestic air travel resumed on May 25, following the directives issued by the Union Ministry of Civil Aviation.

Civil Aviation Minister Hardeep Singh Puri on Wednesday said that the Central government will consider restarting international flights as soon as the COVID-19 situation "normalises a bit" and poses no threat to people.

"We are continuously monitoring the situation and will consider restarting international flights as soon as the situation normalises a bit and poses no danger to our citizens. We will also have to consider that countries, where we intend to fly, are open to incoming foreign citizens," Puri said in a series of tweets.

**IndiGo on Tuesday reported a net loss of ₹870.8 crore in the three months ended March, due to higher expenses and suspension of flight operations due to coronavirus pandemic took a toll.**

"IndiGo's robust balance sheet and competitive cost structure (set to improve further) is best placed amongst Indian carriers to withstand the current disruption and also be in a position to capitalise on growth recovery," Centrum Broking said in a report while maintaining buy on the stock with price target of ₹1,244.

**"The management refrained from giving any guidance given the uncertainties related to Covid-19 but emphasised on various cost reduction and liquidity enhancement measures,"** the brokerage said.

**Asserting that the company has a healthy balance sheet, energised workforce, efficient fleet, strong cost position and firm market position in India and in neighbouring countries, IndiGo CEO**

**Ronojoy Dutta said the firm is determined to emerge stronger from this crisis.**

[Live Mint Aviation 04/06/2020](#)

**MUMBAI: The Bombay High Court on Thursday sought a clarification from an expert committee appointed by the aviation regulator on whether Covid-19 could transmit through a mere touch of an infected person.**

The court is hearing a plea filed by an Air India pilot, seeking directions to the airline to ensure that it follows the Directorate General of Civil Aviation's guidelines on social distancing, including on keeping the middle seats of the aircraft vacant.

On Thursday, private sector airlines Go Air, IndiGo and SpiceJet approached the court to be parties to the matter. A bench of Justices SJ Kathawala and Surendra Tavade will hear the matter again Friday.

The court in its direction to the regulator noted the observations of the committee at a May 26 meeting. As per it, **the meeting had observed that providing a protective suit to the person sitting in the middle seat could be a "very good means" to prevent the spread of the virus either by droplets or by touch.**

Last month, the Bombay High Court had directed Air India in its interim order to keep the middle seat vacant while operating aircraft, in a petition filed by the same pilot. However, the state-run carrier and the government had challenged the order in the Supreme Court.

**The apex court ruled on May 27 that Air India could fill up the middle seats up to June 6 and then it would have to comply with any ruling passed by the high court.**

**On June 1, the aviation regulator ordered airlines to try to keep the middle seats vacant in flights. If the seats are already booked, it asked airlines to provide a “wrap-around gown” apart from the other protective gear to the passengers in the middle.**

Solicitor general Tushar Mehta and additional solicitor general Anil Singh appeared for the government and Air India, respectively, in the court on Thursday.

The ETI 04/06/2020

Debate erupted on social media platform Twitter on June 6, over allegations that Air India was charging fuel charges twice on fares for flights part of the Vande Bharat Mission.

Twitter users pointed out that the national carrier twice charged for fuel costs. First, as part of the 'fare,' and additionally as fuel surcharge.

Joining the debate, **Shakti Lumba**, an aviation veteran and former Executive Director, Airline Operations (Alliance Air), and Vice President, Ops (IndiGo), **wondered why there was no fare cap on international flights run by Air India. "Vande Bharat is a self-created monopoly market after banning international flights," he said.**

The government had banned international flights after the national lockdown. For Vande Bharat Mission, Air India has got the lion share of flights, with IndiGo being the only private airline to join the exercise.

Contending the charge, Jitendra Bhargava, a former executive director at Air India, said that this was 'not a correct interpretation on fares. "Fares cannot be compared to usual fares, dictated by competition, when costs do not necessarily get covered. Fare being charged is much less than that charged by foreign carriers for operating similar repatriation flights," he said.

Earlier in the month, Civil Aviation Minister Hardeep Singh Puri had also taken to Twitter to comment on the issue:

But a senior executive from the industry disagrees. **"The fare comparison by is highly misleading, as foreign charters are forced to fly their aircraft into India empty. Therefore their fares have to pay for both legs. Air India is charging full fare in both directions, flying full planes at full fare in both directions," he said.**

07/06/20 Prince Mathews Thomas/Moneycontrol.com

New Delhi: **India will take a call on resuming schedule international flights as soon as foreign countries start accepting foreign citizens.** Aviation minister H S Puri on Sunday reviewed the situation for resuming schedule flights as there is huge demand for travel to and from India. With Air India being the only airline doing so currently under Vande Bharat Mission (VBM), passengers who wish to fly out of India face an extremely uphill task for booking tickets whenever AI starts taking bookings due to crores of hits on its website. The site slows down and people have to keep trying for several hours before — and if — they get lucky enough to grab a seat to any destination in the US. “A decision to resume regular international operations will be taken as soon as countries ease restrictions on entry of foreign nationals. Destination countries have to be ready to allow incoming flights,” Puri Tweeted on Sunday.

Puri, in a series of Tweets on Sunday night, said: “Due to increasing demand for resumption of scheduled international flights by people who want to travel abroad due to compelling reasons, I reviewed the state of international flight operations around the world. Globally the situation is far

from normal. Most countries have less than 10% international operations because they are allowing entry only to their own citizens and have placed restrictions on foreign nationals. Many are allowing inbound flights from few countries but have also placed restrictions of quarantine/isolation.”

Apart from AI’s VBM flights, about a lakh people have flown out of India and 38,000 to the country on 640 charter flights since schedule services were suspended on March 22. More charter flights will be allowed in coming days to enable people to travel, the minister assured.

“We have let outbound passengers on VBM flights to fly to countries which allow them entry. More than 13,500 people have flown out of India. Air India has sold another 22,000 tickets for flights to US and Canada (on June 5 and 6). Bookings for Europe and other places will open soon. Potentially these many eligible people will return to India as well. We are adding more flights to VBM.”

07/06/20 Saurabh Sinha/Times of India

**Mumbai: The Air India Express has said that due to strong gusty winds, the fuselage nose section of aircraft VT-AXW was damaged on Saturday.**

The aircraft was parked at Air India NEC hanger at Mumbai airport. No injuries to any person or any other damages to aircraft have been reported.

The Air India Express statement read, "Due to strong gusty winds the nose wheel of Air India Express aircraft VT-AXW parked in the Air India NEC hanger swung to the right. The incident took place around 0630 - 0645 hours yesterday."

**"A ground power unit (GPU) was parked near the aircraft on the right side. Due to Aircraft's nose swing one of the GPU horn pierced the aircraft fuselage nose section on the right side. The damage was assessed by the structural engineer. No injuries to personal or any other damage to aircraft," the statement read.**

07/06/20 ANI/NDTV

New Delhi: The last time Piyanka Chakraborty, senior cabin crew member with SpiceJet, flew in March, the novel coronavirus was an emerging threat in India and flyers had started using masks and hand sanitisers, but weren't as cautious as today. For two months after that, with the implementation of the nationwide lockdown, she spent time indoors. On Monday, she returned to work. But two months had ushered in a lot of changes. **For one, she is required to don a personal protection equipment suit throughout the flight. And then, she doesn't hand out food trays to passengers, only making her only rounds in the aisle to serve water.**

Chakraborty, 26, has been flying for almost eight years now. Her inherent composure as a sky attendant has helped her take the new requirements in stride. "I was nervous to be back, but also more excited than normal," she says. "As soon as I got the roster for the flights this week, I showed it to my mother-in-law, telling her how I would be back in the skies. No matter what the circumstances, you cannot take away the flyer in you."

She has now been on flights to Srinagar and Bengaluru. On Wednesday night, she flew back home to Delhi from Bengaluru. **Comfort and 'looking good' have taken a back seat, the focus of air cabin crews now being on safety — for themselves and the passengers.** She has cut down on the hour she

earlier spent on getting ready. "I love dressing up and doing my hair and make-up before each flight, but that isn't needed now. I make do with basic eye-liner and lip gloss. We sanitise ourselves and then get into PPE suits," she smiles.

**Chakraborty finds it slightly suffocating in the protective gear, especially in hot weather, but she is getting used to it.** "We spend most of our time in the galley these days. We only walk down occasionally to give water and ask flyers if they have any other requirement," she says. She is relieved that passenger behaviour seems to have changed since March. "They would not listen when we asked them earlier to put on the seatbelts," she points out. "In the recent flights, I have not seen a single passenger cribbing about anything. Perhaps people realise the gravity of the situation and no one wants to create trouble. They must be grateful to be able to return home."

The Faridabad resident is grateful for both her husband, who is based in Qatar, and her brother-in-law being in the aviation industry. "We are all involved with airlines or flying. We know what is required and constantly share our experiences," she says.

07/06/20 Jasjeev Gandhiok/Times of India

**Mumbai: Disruption in the airline industry due to COVID-19 has not impacted GoAir's plan to retire its Airbus A320neo fleet and it remains on track, an airline official has said.**

The Wadia group-owned airline has at present 43 A320neo planes and the rest 13 A320s in the fleet of 56 aircraft.

GoAir had launched the airline in November 2005 with A320s but later switched to more fuel-efficient A320neo in 2016.

Of the 19 such planes the airline inducted in the first phase of its fleet expansion, it has already phased out six as part of the plan, which is aimed at cost-cutting by way of fuel saving and low-maintenance cost, the official said.

"Since these planes have already completed their lease period, we had the option to either extend the lease further or return and so we decided for the latter option. Moreover, we are already inducting the more fuel-efficient A320Neo planes, which give us the cost advantage as well," the official said.

Significantly, GoAir's bigger rival IndiGo too has announced of phasing out its 120 A320s from its fleet in the next two years due to high cost.

Stating that the plan to phase out the remaining 13 aircraft remains on track, the official said the exit of these aircraft from the fleet would not have any impact either on the network or operations of the airline.

07/06/20 PTI/Outlook

<https://www.freepressjournal.in/india/taking-a-domestic-flight-here-are-the-state-wise-guidelines-for-travellers>

**Mumbai: A major mishap was averted on Saturday when a ladder of SpiceJet airlines crashed into an IndiGo aircraft at Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport. The collision happened due to strong winds.** The airport authorities are probing the incident.

As per a statement released by the Mumbai International Airport Ltd, the only damage that the IndiGo aircraft sustained in the accident was to its wing and engine cowling.

**"Unpredictable cyclonic storms engulfing India have posed a huge challenge for unattended aircraft parked across airports. Due to strong winds, VT-IHN of IndiGo was hit by a ladder of SpiceJet at Mumbai, (causing) some damage to wings and engine cowling,"** the MIAL spokesperson said.

IndiGo also released a statement saying that SpiceJet's step ladder got detached from its parked position and hit its parked aircraft.

"This incident occurred at Mumbai airport early this morning. A step ladder belonging to SpiceJet got detached from its parked position and damaged a stationary aircraft belonging to IndiGo. The incident is under investigation by relevant authorities," the IndiGo spokesperson said.

Meanwhile, SpiceJet clarified that its step ladder was well secured and with chocks in place. "On June 6, a SpiceJet step ladder was parked on stand C87 (where one of our aircraft VT-SLA was parked) at the Mumbai airport. On stand C86, an IndiGo aircraft was parked. Both aircraft were not in service at that time," a SpiceJet spokesperson said in a statement.

"At around 7.30 am, sudden strong winds picked up. There was no prior weather warning or advisory. SpiceJet's step ladder, which was well secured and with chocks in place, was moved backwards and hit the IndiGo aircraft on the right wing," added the spokesperson.

[06/06/20 Mohammad Adil/TimesNowNews.com](#)

**The Bombay High Court on Friday directed all airlines providing domestic and international services including Air India to abide by the May 31 circular of the Civil Aviation ministry that allowed middle-seats to be occupied provided the passenger wears 'wrap-around' gowns and standard operating procedures (SOPs) issued by the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) are followed.**

The expert panel of the Civil Aviation Ministry, while responding to a clarification sought by the Court, submitted that the novel coronavirus could spread by an inadvertent touch only if the droplet from a sneeze or cough of an infected person comes in contact with a non-infected person.

However, if the persons were wearing proper personal protective equipment (PPE) such as wrap-around gown, the virus could not spread through a mere touch.

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta submitted a clarification note by the expert committee to the Court which said that transmission of the COVID-19 through touch could happen only under certain circumstances if the protective gears are not worn and hands are not being disinfected.

The expert panel said, "If an infected person merely touches a non-infected person, the virus will not be transmitted unless the transmission takes place through droplet carrying the virus sitting on clothes and ultimately these reaching the mouth, nose or eyes of the other person."

**It is necessary that both the infected and non-infected persons are wearing mask and protective face shield and it is mandatory that prescribed protocol for putting on gown and removing it is strictly followed,** the experts said.

A division bench of Justices S J Kathawalla and S P Tavade was hearing, through videoconference, a plea filed by Air India pilot Deven Kanani through advocate Abhilash Panickar, who alleged that the national carrier had violated social distancing norms while evacuating Indians stranded abroad on the special flights.

**Following a May 25 order by the Supreme Court, the DGCA on May 31 had asked carriers to try to keep the middle seats on flights vacant or provide “wrap-around gowns” to passengers who are allotted such seats.** The HC on Thursday had sought clarification from expert committee of Civil Aviation Ministry as to whether the virus can be transmitted by touch.

06/06/20 Omkar Gokhale/Indian Express

**Two Vistara pilots have tested positive for COVID-19 after undergoing flight simulator training, the airline said on Saturday.**

"Two of our pilots on returning to duty, unfortunately tested positive for COVID-19 after undergoing some flight simulator training. As part of our contact tracing efforts, we immediately placed all the direct and secondary contacts in home-quarantine," a Vistara spokesperson said.

Pilots who were in direct contact with these two pilots were sent for RT-PCR COVID-19 test, the spokesperson said, adding, "So far, the results for some of the pilots have been found negative while others are still pending."

While domestic flight operations have begun in India from May 25, scheduled international flights continue to remain suspended.

The Vistara spokesperson said: "The simulator training centre has been duly informed to carry out the necessary sanitisation, disinfection and other laid down guidelines as stipulated by the authorities."

"Vistara is extending all possible support to the two infected pilots and continues to make every effort for the health and safety of its staff and customers that they serve," the spokesperson added.

06/06/20 PTI/The Week

**During IndiGo’s fourth-quarter/the fiscal year-end earnings call, airline CEO Ronojoy Dutta provided investors with some insight into the airline’s performance and his outlook for the future. A year from now, or even further down the road, the airline chief thinks that there may be potential for international expansion—an exciting prospect for India’s largest airline.**

“I think there’s a structure within the international which will work to the benefit of Indian carriers in general. There have been too many foreign hubs all around India with a lot of connecting traffic. Long term, and I’m not talking three or four months but more than a year ahead, we think there will be more opportunities for us to expand internationally.” -Ronojoy Dutta, CEO, IndiGo Airlines

During the call, Dutta went over the financials released, covering results for Q4 as well as fiscal year 2019/20. Overall, the report for the year paints a fairly nice picture due to the airline’s phenomenal growth all the way up to the pandemic. As the fiscal year ended March 31st, some impressive numbers were put up, including a 25% increase in total income compared to the previous year. Of course, with April lockdowns hitting all of India hard, we’re expecting to see a pretty bleak quarterly report a few months from now.

06/06/20 Chris Loh/Simple Flying

**Madurai: Two Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) jawans from Madurai airport and a police inspector from Tuticorin have tested positive for Covid-19.** Madurai airport director S Senthil Valavan said they have been testing airport staff and CISF personnel, who get exposed to passengers,

in batches periodically. One of the CISF personnel tested positive on Friday. After the test report came out, they tested his primary contacts in the airport and barracks. Out of their primary contacts, one more person tested positive on Saturday. Now, testing of second contacts is underway, he said. Officials from Madurai airport said there are more than 250 CISF personnel at the airport who are being deployed on a rotational basis. Meanwhile, Tuticorin reported the first case among police personnel on Saturday. The inspector of Eral police station tested positive following symptoms of fever and cough.

06/06/20 Times of India

**New Delhi: An Air India pilot, 58, who retired from the airline about a month back has reportedly died of COVID-19.** “The captain had retired in April-end and has not flown in AI after that,” an airline official was quoted as saying by the Times of India.

The senior captain was from the erstwhile Indian Airlines who operated the Airbus A320 and had also served as flight operation inspector in the DGCA, as per the TOI report.

**His death has raised some serious concerns for the airline, which already has a significant number of pilots and cabin crew tested positive for coronavirus.**

**“We have 3-4 symptomatic; 30-40 asymptomatic and 150 quarantined pilots and cabin crew members. In all, about 200 of our crew members are either COVID positive or quarantined after passenger/s on the flight they operated tested positive,” an official further told the TOI.**

Meanwhile, AI pilots are very agitated with authorities over the lack and delay of the salary payments while they keep risking their lives to bring stranded people home through Vande Bharat Mission.

06/06/20 Odisha Bytes

**New Delhi: Air India (AI) has sold over 22,000 seats in 15 hours of opening bookings for Vande Bharat Mission-III outbound flights to North America and Europe.** The huge pent-up demand to travel out of India and these Air India flights being the only option this month at least, saw AI website getting crores of hits and people had a tough time trying to grab a seat.

“Sale of tickets commenced at 5 pm Friday for select destinations in USA, Canada, UK and Europe under Phase-3 of VBM. Our website experienced 6-7 times more activity. Over 22,000 seats have been sold overall till 8 am. More seats to more destinations will be added in due course,” AI Tweeted on 9.20 am Saturday.

But given the massive demand and tickets being sold on only AI channels, people faced a difficult time.

“What are these gimmicks ??? I have not been off my screen since 5 pm Friday, have not got any tickets.. where did you sell 22000 seat? Agents? Black marketers?” Chitrakasi Passi tweeted from her handle @PassiChitrakashi.

“Spent 15 hours, IP address blocked, 3 US credit cards declined, Customer service hung up after 2 hour wait. Twice....” tweeted Saurabh from handle @shssince1985.

The maximum demand is for flights to the US, with connections to San Francisco and Chicago being the most sought after there. A senior AI official said people should not panic. The website slowed down and many could not access it. “We will put more flights if required,” said a senior official.

06/05/20 Saurabh Sinha/Times of India



New Delhi: **On the occasion of World Environment Day, the airport authorities have announced the opening of one of India's largest airport nurseries at the vicinity of Delhi Airport.**

Spread across more than **400,000 square feet area, each plantation season at the nursery will have lakhs of air purifying plants which will help cut down the carbon-footprint and maintain the highest standards of air quality level in the airport vicinity,** a DIAL official said.

They say that the nursery homes more than 1.16 lakh indoor plants variety with some exotic plants brought from Thailand and Indonesia. Delhi Airport propagates more than one lakh flowering and foliage plants at its in-house nursery, which includes about 40,000 chrysanthemums and more than 60,000 potted seasonal flowers propagation every year.

Along with creating a green and pollution-free zone in and around the airport, the plants from the nursery also provide for picturesque attractions for passengers. More than 60 plant species grown at the nursery are aesthetically displayed in Passenger Terminal Buildings (PTBs) and other associated areas of the airport.

In Terminal 3 alone, more than 30,000 plants are displayed, which are periodically replaced with fresh plants from the nursery. Besides, plants would also be grown at the nursery for the multi layered plantations on the approach road and Central Spine.

Commenting on the development, Videh Kumar Jaipuria, CEO-DIAL, said, "We are focused at preserving the pollution-free ecosystem at Delhi Airport. In this regard, we have created huge green zone inside and outside the airport terminals and planted several air-purifying trees and plants. The new nursery would not only contribute in improving the air quality in and around Delhi airport but also add to its aesthetic appeal."

05/06/20 Pankhuri Singh/Times of India

Flight operations needed for gathering data for meteorological services have picked up as the government allows resumption of services in a phased manner across the country.

The two-month-long nationwide lockdown had impacted some synoptic observations and flight observations needed for meteorological services, forecasts and predictions.

"Like elsewhere, aircraft observations in India, too, fell appreciably. However, with some flight operations now resuming, the data gathering has picked up. But even during the lockdown, satellite observations were available," said M Rajeevan, secretary, Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES).

He was speaking at a talk organised by the India Meteorological Society on 'Covid-19 and Meteorology', on World Environment Day on Friday.

Barring aircraft observations, other meteorological observations in India were not largely hampered, he added.

**Recently, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) inked an MoU with IndiGo airlines, under which the latter will conduct aircraft observations.**

05/06/20 Indian Express

NEW DELHI : **India will take a decision on resumption of international passenger flights as soon as countries ease restrictions on entry of foreign nationals,** Civil Aviation Minister Hardeep Singh Puri said on Sunday.

Countries like Japan and Singapore have put significant restrictions on entry of foreigners amid the coronavirus pandemic.

"A decision to resume regular international operations will be taken as soon as countries ease restrictions on entry of foreign nationals. Destination countries have to be ready to allow incoming flights," Puri said on Twitter.

A decision to resume regular international operations will be taken as soon as countries ease restrictions on entry of foreign nationals. Destination countries have to be ready to allow incoming flights.

— Hardeep Singh Puri (@HardeepSPuri) June 7, 2020

India resumed its domestic passenger flights on May 25 after a gap of two months due to the coronavirus-triggered lockdown.

"Most countries have less than 10 per cent international operations because they are allowing entry only to their own citizens & have placed restrictions on foreign nationals," the minister stated.

Many countries are allowing inbound flights from a few nations, but have placed restrictions like quarantine or isolation, he said.

**Scheduled international passenger flights continue to remain suspended in India. However, special repatriation flights are being operated by Air India and other airlines to countries across the world under the Vande Bharat Mission.**

On June 1, Puri said several factors like the lockdown in metro cities and the ban imposed by various countries on the entry of foreigners need to be addressed before resuming international passenger flights in India.

Airports in West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Telangana and Tamil Nadu have been allowed to handle a restricted number of daily domestic flights as these states do not want a huge influx of flyers amid the rising number of COVID-19 cases.

[Live Mint Aviation 07/06/2020](#)

**NEW DELHI: The spread of covid-19 pandemic has led to a rise in enquiries and business for private air charter companies with many individuals and families with deep pockets increasingly preferring to book charter flights instead of commercial jetliners for travel to even domestic destinations.**

**India's largest domestic airline, InterGlobe Aviation Limited operated IndiGo, recently upgraded its website to include charter flight booking options, in its quest to explore new revenue model.**

The airline plans to offer such services on both Airbus A320 and smaller ATR aircraft. According to the IndiGo website, passengers are required to submit details, including travel destinations, date and time of travel, passenger details, following which the airline would get in touch to finalize details over the next 24 hours.

"IndiGo always provided the option of charter flights for its passengers. However, this was not a regular thing before," said a senior IndiGo official, under the condition of anonymity.

"Earlier, we used to fly a couple of charter flights in a month, both to international and domestic destinations. Now, we have started getting more queries and the number of such flights have also increased," the official added.

Since, the outbreak of the covid-19 pandemic, enquiries for booking charter flights have increased tremendously, as people want to travel but without compromising on safety, said Sanjay Julka, chief executive officer, technical, Club One Air, one of India's oldest and largest air charter companies.

"Private charter aircraft doesn't take much time to reach destinations, and one doesn't have to report hours in advance like in case of taking a commercial flights," Julka said adding that passengers can arrive at the airport just 30 minutes before the flight's departure.

"Though, enquires for our charter services have increased, business from our traditional clients which include business trips, political trips, etc have taken a hit due to the covid-19 pandemic," he added.

Though the covid-19 pandemic has brought about certain changes even while flying private charter flights, which include mandatory use of personal protective equipment (PPEs) like masks on board a flight, controlled meal services, passengers of such flight no longer have to take special permissions from the government.

"There are no restrictions to flying charter flights. However, passengers will have to deal with requirements of the state, which currently include serving self quarantine period if one is detected with fever, etc," Julka added.

Flying on private charter aircraft can cost a bit though. For instance, the cost of a seat on a Delhi-Mumbai flight can cost up to ₹1,27,219 per seat or ₹10,17,750 for the full flight, according to data from JetSetGo, which operates charter flights and also acts as an aggregator of charter flight services.

Similarly, a flight between Delhi and Bangalore can cost up to ₹1,62,250 per seat or ₹12,98,000 for the full flight. A flight on Delhi-Chennai route can cost upto ₹1,62,250 per seat or ₹12,98,000 for the full flight, while one between Kolkata-Delhi can cost up to ₹1,27,833 per seat or ₹10,22,667 for the full flight. A flight between Mumbai and Kolkata can cost up to ₹1,64,831 per seat or ₹13,18,650 for the full flight.

For charter flights, some of the aircraft that are offered to passengers include Falcon 2000, Challenger 350, apart from helicopters.

People are resorting to charter flights by paying several times over, as there is a lot of confusion with commercial travel, with rising number of cancellations and uncertainties over social distancing, said aviation consultant Mark Martin, chief executive of Martin Consulting LLC.

**"The private charter industry hasn't been over imposed with regulations by government as has been cases with commercial airlines. But, this is momentary due to covid-19 pandemic. Once, things get back to normal, many people who are flying charter flights will go back to commercial flights,"** Martin added.

**Air passenger demand globally will remain severely depressed in 2021 and will not see a substantial recovery before 2023, according to Moody's Investors Service.**

**Health concerns, changes in corporate travel policies, potential restrictions on international arrivals, and lower discretionary spending because of weaker GDP and higher unemployment will constrain air passenger demand into 2022,** Moody's said in its credit outlook released on Monday.

Demand in 2023 could approach that of 2019 but the uncertain timing of the coronavirus receding on a more permanent basis makes forecasting a challenge.

Many airlines have improved liquidity but at the cost of rising debt burdens. Stronger and state-supported airlines have significantly improved liquidity since March.

Rated airlines have sufficient liquidity to survive on average for about 450 days at current low activity levels. For weaker airlines, this may be insufficient if groundings persist into 2021.

Passengers from New Delhi arrive at Jai Prakash Narayan International Airport, Patna, Tuesday. PTI  
Moody's modeled two scenarios assuming a recovery by 2023 or later years. Most airlines will carry substantially more debt in 2023. Our faster and slower recovery cases assume 2023 passenger volumes recover to around 95 per cent and 85 per cent of 2019 levels respectively.

**Moody's downgraded 13 airlines since May 25 and confirmed six. It placed ratings for 22 airlines on review for downgrade in March. The sufficiency of liquidity and the potential for individual companies to retire the debt incurred to restore credit metrics through 2023 were key considerations in resolving the reviews.**

"The industry will undergo substantial permanent structural changes. **Potential for failures of weaker airlines and government intervention to leave fewer, larger companies, polarised between more efficient operators and strategic state-supported airlines,**" said Moody's.

Health screening and risks of denied boarding will affect travellers potentially beyond the pandemic. Corporate travel is likely to be impaired in 2023. Governments may require deeper carbon emissions reductions from airlines.

**There will be deep repercussions across related sectors, particularly commercial aerospace manufacturers and suppliers, airports, travel distributors, and airline service companies. Providers of jet fuel and aircraft lessors will also be deeply affected.**

By contrast, carbon dioxide emissions will reduce by 750 million to 900 million tonnes over 2020-21, said Moody's.

#### Business Standards 08/06/2020

In 2014, Francesco's Pizzeria in Mumbai tried to deliver pizzas through drones. The first flight lasted 20 minutes, but within hours police arrived at the restaurant to question staff because they had no permission to fly the drone.

Six years later, India took the first step towards legalising drones by officially publishing draft rules for drone operations in the Official Gazette on Friday. **The rules, termed The Unmanned Aircraft System Rules, 2020, are open for public consultation for 30 days.**

According to the draft, unveiled by the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), which will be the regulating authority for such vehicles, drones have been classified into five groups: Nano — upto 250 grammes, micro (from 250 gm to 2 kg), small (2 kg to 25 kg), medium (25 kg to 150 kg), and large (greater than 150 kg).

The draft rules specify who will be allowed to manufacture, import, and operate drones and the airspace where these can be operated.

“Drone imports and drone corridors may be established in permitted areas. If warranted by the nature and requirement of the drone operations,” the draft rules say.

However, industry experts say it needs to be implemented soon.

**Government officials say the Prime Minister’s Office and the NITI Aayog have called for increased focus on the industry, and the civil aviation ministry now has a special cell to look into it. “What we now have is a draft legal framework for the industry. But, it is in the interest of all stakeholders to communicate with each other to implement these in a fast and efficient manner,”** says Smit Shah, director partnerships, Drone Federation of India.

The federation was formed in 2017 and now counts India Inc biggies like Adanis, Tatas among its members along with over 2,000 start-ups.

**Executives of these companies say the biggest hurdle is the ‘No Permission No Take Off’ (NPNT) protocol. Vipul Sinha, chief executive officer at Aarav Unmanned Systems, one of the few companies that manufactures and operates drones for state governments and security agencies, says 90 per cent of operators were deemed ineligible because of the policy. The policy says every type of drone should be approved by DGCA.**

**With negligible manufacturing capability within the country, 90 per cent of India’s drones have been manufactured by DJI Drones, which is based in Shenzhen, China. To comply with NPNT, DJI has to tweak the hardware. However, it has refused to do so because the Indian market hasn’t shown numbers convincing enough for it to customise drones. Through a one-time registration window earlier this year, the government registered 19,553 drones.**

“I would say the industry is going through a transition. Every transition brings in a set of challenges for a particular period. What has only changed is that now there is a clear-cut idea how you can operate, where you can operate and where you cannot operate. It also provides a very organised way of doing business,” Singh says.

A government official who is part of the Drone Cell in the government said the registration window allowed it to formalise the process. He says the committee overseeing India’s response to Covid-19 has been impressed by how drones helped combat the virus and locust swarms.

“Multiple options are being explored to streamline the process and make commercial usage of drones viable. On the hand, **we are formalising the industry and trying to formulate rules for commercial usage,”** the official says, pointing out approval given to firms like Zomato and Swiggy to test drones that are beyond visual line of sight (BVLOS). BVLOS flights are flown beyond the visual range. “Nowhere in the world is delivery by drones allowed. India has taken the first step to enable that. **We will collect data from these operations and frame policies based on that,”** the official said.



Business Standard 06/06/2020

**The Delhi High Court has declined to interfere with a central government order fixing minimum and maximum airfares of various sectors for three months till August 24, saying it was a policy decision and a "stop gap arrangement" during the Covid-19 crisis.**

A bench of Chief Justice D N Patel and Justice Prateek Jalan further said that the May 21 order of the Ministry of Civil Aviation for a period of three months clearly stated that a minimum fare was fixed to restrict travel only to the performance of essential journeys.

"It ought to be kept in mind that, in the present circumstances when various restrictions have been placed on the airline operations, and maximum limit for air fare is given by the government, the minimum fare is also prescribed so as to strike a balance between the passengers as well as the airlines agency," the bench said in its order delivered on Thursday.

The bench said that in the present situation of the Covid-19 pandemic, the exercise of this power by the government "cannot be said to be arbitrary or unreasonable".

It further said that it has to be kept in mind that problems being faced during the pandemic are unique and requires experimental solutions.

"There cannot be any mathematical solution for a problem like this. Government has to be given a degree of free movement in joints. We are, therefore, not going into the merits of this case," it said.

The observations of the bench came while disposing of a plea challenging the May 21 order of the ministry by Veer Vikrant Chauhan, who was aggrieved by the minimum cap on the air fare.

Chauhan, represented by advocate Vishal Gohri, had contended that there should be no minimum limit on airfare so that there would be competition between airlines and a much lesser ticket price would be available.

The high court disagreed with the contentions in the petition and said that "the exercise of tariff fixation, and economic matters in general, are issues on which the writ court would generally refrain from exercising jurisdiction, unless found to be totally arbitrary or unreasonable".

"We are not sitting in appeal against such fixation of minimum and maximum fare. It ought to be kept in mind that this fixation of minimum and maximum fares is for the journey to be performed only for essential purposes," it added.

The high court said that the May 21 order would be in operation only for three months and thus, it was "a stop gap arrangement by the government, for which the present public interest litigation is not tenable at law".

It also said that if any aggrieved party approaches the competent authority, a decision shall be taken in accordance with law, rules, regulations and government policy applicable to the facts of the case and without being influenced by the court's observations.

Business Standards 05/06/2020

**India's two most advanced security system Boeing-777 aircraft are set to be delivered in the months of August and September according to Ministry of Civil Aviation officials.**

The two aircraft will be used by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and other top dignitaries.

One of the aircraft is scheduled to be delivered by middle of August while the other one is set for delivery by the end of September. The two aircraft will be delivered by Boeing to Air India.

The planes, earmarked for VVIP travel only were set for delivery in July but the Coronavirus pandemic has caused a bit of a delay, said the officials.

"There has been some delay, primarily because of COVID-19. The two planes are likely to be delivered by September," the officials said on Monday.

**The two Boeing 777 aircraft will be operated by the pilots from Indian Air force.**

**The B777 planes will have state-of-the-art missile defence systems called Large Aircraft Infrared Countermeasures (LAIRCM) and Self-Protection Suites (SPS).**

Live Mint Aviation 08/06/2020

**National carrier Air India Limited and its subsidiary Air India Express has so far ferried 66,831 Indians from abroad on 365 flights on its repatriation flights under the Vande Bharat Mission, while 17,180 passengers have travelled on 369 outbound flights by the national carrier to various foreign nations, civil aviation minister Hardeep Singh Puri said on Monday.**

The national carrier had on last Friday opened bookings for around 300 flights to various countries like the USA and UK under the third phase of its Vande Bharat Mission to repatriate Indians stranded abroad during the covid-19 pandemic. However, the airline faced an overwhelming demand for its tickets with most tickets being sold out within hours. Air India had started the first phase of the Vande Bharat Mission on 7 May.

Those being brought back on Air India planes under the Vande Bharat Mission have to pay about ₹100,000 if they are coming from the US, about ₹20,000 for those coming from Singapore, and about ₹12,000 for people from Bangladesh.

On Monday, the aviation minister Hardeep Singh Puri said that Air India hasn't overcharged for tickets, though fares charged by the national carrier under the Vande Bharat Mission are often much higher than normal commercial fares.

"Civil Aviation operations cannot but reflect the costing. Normal operations are different from evacuation operations. Aircrafts have to be parked for upto 40 hours on long haul routes before the return journey during Vande Bharat Mission. There are other costs involved as well," he said.

"Please remember that unlike special charter, AirIndia is charging these fares for scheduled flights and earning revenue both ways," he said.

**The minister said that charges for tickets under the Vande Bharat Mission is lower than some of the charter repatriation flights offered by foreign airlines.**

"VBM (Vande Bharat Mission) charges ₹13K per passenger on Gulf routes & planes fly empty on one leg. According to information in public domain pvt carriers/charters are charging upwards of ₹20K for same," Puri said on twitter.

"Similarly, the fare on flights to Houston, as engaged by the concerned embassy, was ₹3 lakhs, while our citizens pay ₹1.03 lakhs on a flight to US under Mission Vande Bharat," he added.

Currently, only national carrier Air India Ltd and its subsidiary Air India Express have repatriated thousands of Indian citizens from various nations following the coronavirus outbreak and subsequent lockdowns in several nations. Private airlines will likely be allowed to participate on repatriation mission during the next phase of Vande Bharat Mission.

"On flights between India & Canada, our citizens pay ₹1.07 lakhs as compared to ₹1.62 lakhs to Toronto & ₹1.84 lakhs to Vancouver charged by charters organised by the concerned embassy," Puri said.

"Travelers to Tel-Aviv paid ₹82,500 on the charters organised by the concerned embassy while Indian citizens pay ₹51,938 on flights under Vande Bharat Mission," he added.

[Live Mint Aviation 08/06/2020](#)

**Cash-strapped Indian air carriers are revisiting aircraft lease rental agreements to improve their bottomlines.** The airlines have been affected by the over two-month-long suspension of operations and see a further impact on revenues with services resuming with just a fraction of capacity and extremely low passenger load factors.

**Some airlines have approached lessors seeking a deferment on rentals and also a substantial reduction in rental costs and have got concessions, as per industry experts.**

In several instances, carriers have been allowed to partially delay payment by anywhere between three to eight months, an aircraft lessor said on condition of anonymity.

"The situation remains grim for airlines across the world and Indian carriers are no exception," said a senior official of a global aircraft leasing firm. "This is an extraordinary situation and everyone needs to be cognizant of the challenges faced by the sector."

**Aircraft lease rentals comprise about 15% of a carrier's operating costs. As this is paid in dollars, it is subject to currency fluctuations.**

IndiGo, which is operating at 20% of capacity, has got about 50% relief on supplementary rentals as a large part of its fleet is grounded. Supplemental rent is collected during the term of the lease by leasing companies to cover the cost of maintenance. "Supplementary rentals are purely driven by the



amount of flying that you do. So, if we are not flying, supplementary rentals don't accrue," chief financial officer Aditya Pande said last week.

SpiceJet has also negotiated leasing costs. "Lessor payments, which form the bulk of our fixed costs, have been mutually deferred and waived," the company said recently.

[Live Mint Aviation 08/06/2020](#)

NEW DELHI : Airlines globally will lose over \$84 billion during financial year 2020, the biggest in aviation history, due to the outspread of covid-19 and a muted travel appetite is expected to lead to at least \$16 billion losses for airlines during financial year 2021, Alexandre de Juniac, director general and chief executive of industry body International Air Transport Association (IATA) said on Tuesday.

**"The losses this year will be the biggest in aviation history—over \$84 billion in 2020 and nearly \$16 billion in 2021.** By comparison, airlines lost \$31 billion with the Global Financial Crisis and oil price spike in 2008 and 2009. **There is no comparison for the dimension of this crisis,**" Alexandre de Juniac said during a media briefing session.

**IATA expects the share of world GDP (Gross domestic Product) spent on air transport to be halved in 2020, totaling \$434billion (0.5% of GDP) amidst widespread lockdowns.**

"In the near-term, consumers will face lower real travel costs as airlines are significantly discounting ticket prices to stimulate demand. The average return fare (before surcharges and tax) of \$254 in 2020 is forecast to be 68% lower than in 1998, after adjusting for inflation," IATA said in a statement.

"We expect RPKs are estimated to plummet by 55% in 2020 compared to last year. The recovery in the second half of 2020 is predicted to come initially from domestic markets and then via a gradual opening of international markets," it added.

Revenue Passenger Kilometers (RPK) or Revenue Passenger Miles (RPM) is an airline industry metric that shows the number of kilometers traveled by paying passengers. It is calculated as the number of revenue passengers multiplied by the total distance traveled by them.

**However, IATA expects a global recession and weak consumer confidence, following the outbreak of covid-19 pandemic, to put pressure on the recovery in air travel demand.**

"World trade is also forecast to fall by 13% in 2020 indicating a steep decline in air cargo volumes. However, trade is expected to rebound strongly next year, which will be supportive for air cargo volumes in 2021," IATA added in its statement.

IATA had in May said that Indian airlines will lose \$11 billion in revenue this year and 47% of its air traffic while the domestic aviation industry could record 3 million job losses.

IATA's chief executive Alexandre de Juniac further said that screening measures at departure gates at airports should prevent symptomatic people from flying.

"Precautionary measures through the journey—social distancing, better sanitization and mask-wearing when social distancing is not possible—will keep people safe when traveling," he said.

"And effective contact tracing on arrival should limit the risks of asymptomatic travelers creating new clusters," he added.

[Live Mint Aviation 09/06/2020](#)

**NEW DELHI : InterGlobe Aviation Limited controlled IndiGo operated six special international charter flights since the beginning of June to repatriate more than 1000 stranded Indian nationals in countries like UAE, Oman and Maldives,** the airline said in a statement on Tuesday.

"The IndiGo flight 6E 9092 from Male to Delhi transferred a total of 171 passengers on June 03 and June 04; flight 6E 9174 from Dubai to Delhi brought back 170 Indian citizens on June 04. On June 05, flight 6E 9235 from Muscat to Lucknow and flight 6E 9972 from Muscat to Gaya transferred 167 and 166 passengers respectively and on June 06 an IndiGo flight transferred 177 passengers from Muscat to Kozhikode," IndiGo said in a statement.

"The repatriation flights assisted in seamless and safe return for a total 1,022 Indian citizens, including 170 from UAE, 342 from Maldives, and 510 from Muscat," it added.

**These repatriation flights were special charter flights operated by the airline and not a part of the Indian government's Vande Bharat Mission, which has been primarily operated by Air India Limited and its subsidiary Air India Express.** The national carrier and its subsidiary flew in 66,831 passengers under first two phases of Vande Bharat Mission

"We will likely have several more charter repatriation flights throughout June," an IndiGo spokesperson said without elaborating on the countries some of these charter flights will be carried out of.

Mint had on 4 June reported that the Indian government is likely to rope in private airlines to evacuate stranded Indian citizens from various countries in the Middle East region under the next phase of government's flagship Vande Bharat Mission. All major airlines including IndiGo, GoAir, SpiceJet, and Vistara have offered their services to the government.

[Live Mint Aviation 09/06/2020](#)

**NEW DELHI: Aircraft maker Boeing Corporation expects local air travel to recover faster than international, given the curbs on cross-border travel by governments to prevent the spread of covid-19 pandemic.**

"We are seeing some recovery happening now. Domestic travel is picking up in some Asian countries," said Jim Haas, director of product marketing for Boeing Commercial Airplanes on Tuesday in a media briefing.

"We are however several years away from recovering to pre-covid-19 level," he said, adding that **domestic and short-haul travel is expected to recover faster since restrictions are lesser compared to international air travel.**

**The airline industry is expected to lose up to \$252 billion in revenue this year due to the impact of covid-19 and the ensuing lockdown,** airline industry body The International Air Transport Association (IATA) had said in March after the outbreak.

**IATA said Indian airlines will lose \$11 billion in revenue this year and 47% of its air traffic while the domestic aviation industry could record 3 million job losses.**

Boeing, meanwhile, doesn't see the need for extra spacing inside an aircraft to maintain social distancing as part of preventing the spread of infection.

"The current spacing (inside the aircraft) is adequate as long as we have multiple layers of protection," Haas said.

To this extent, there is no need to block middle seats, Haas added.

**Indian aviation regulator, Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), earlier this month told airlines to keep the middle seats in an aircraft vacant or offer protective gowns to passengers as air travel resumed in the country, after a two-month hiatus, amid a spike in cases.**

Boeing has launched a new cleanliness-focused strategy, Confident Travel Initiative (CIT), to develop solutions to minimise health risks associated with air travel in the times of the pandemic.

The Chicago-headquartered company will work with healthcare specialists, airlines, and partners to promote awareness of various technologies that are being worked on by Boeing, which include prototype versions of self-disinfecting lavatory, ultraviolet light disinfecting systems and antimicrobial coatings for high-touch surfaces.

"We see the need for multiple layers of protection around flying to minimise the risk of transmission on board," Haas said. "The health and safety of passengers and crew is of utmost importance. The best way to protect passengers is to have multiple protection approaches."

[Live Mint Aviation 09/06/2020](#)

**Dhenkanal: A chief pilot trainer and a trainee pilot were killed in Dhenkanal district when a trainer aircraft crashed on Monday morning.**

Sources said the Cessna FA-152 VT-ENF trainer aircraft fell off from a height of nearly 100 feet immediately after it took off from Birasala airstrip under Kankadahada police limits and crashed.

Critically injured chief trainer pilot Sanjib Kumar Jha and trainee pilot Anish Fatima were rushed to Kamakshyanagar sub-divisional hospital where doctors declared them brought dead. Sanjib hailed from Bihar while Anish was a native of Tamil Nadu.

The airstrip, developed on a 50 acre land at a quote of Rs 9 crore was opened for pilot training in May last year after the Civil Aviation Ministry declared the **Birasala airstrip as a Government Aviation Training Institute (GATI)**.

Though it was shut for more than two months due to the COVID-19 pandemic, it resumed operations few days back following relaxation of lockdown restrictions. This is said to be the first such crash in the training air base.

"Cessna FA-152 VT-ENF is a GATI-run aircraft. **Preliminary investigation revealed it developed snags immediately after taking off from the airstrip.** Cause of the snags is being verified. Further investigation is on," said Kamakshyanagar Sub-collector Bishnu Prasad Acharya.

08/06/20 New Indian Express

**Today, Air India is celebrating 72 years since its first international flight. Its very first overseas service took place on June 8th, 1948. The milestone comes as commercial flights to and from India remain banned due to the current crisis.**

Indian airlines are currently restricted in the flights that they can operate. While the country has allowed domestic flights to resume, international flights are mostly off-limits. An exception exists for a limited schedule of government-sanctioned repatriation flights to India. While it remains unclear when international flights will resume, many are eagerly waiting for the opportunity to return to India.

Today marks the 72nd anniversary of Air India's international flights. The first service that the Indian carrier operated flew from **Bombay to London**. However, unlike today's direct non-stop flights, this flight was not undertaken in one hop.

Indeed, it took three stops to complete the 5,000-mile journey to London in 1948. The flight first operated from Bombay (Mumbai) to Cairo, the longest leg at around 2,700 miles. The second leg saw a slightly shorter 1,760 mile hop from Cairo to Geneva.

Finally, the aircraft completed its shortest flight of the journey, just under 500 miles to London. Although the plane departed India on June 8th, it didn't arrive in London until June 10th. The route now takes around ten hours non-stop.

The flight was operated by an Air India Lockheed L-749 Constellation aircraft. With the registration VT-CQP, the plane was known as the Malabar Princess. According to Hardeep Singh Puri, India's Minister for Civil Aviation, 35 passengers were on the flight, including the famous Indian aviator J.R.D. Tata.

**Unfortunately, the original aircraft that operated Air India's first international flight is no more. It was destroyed flying the same route just over two years later. On the leg between Cairo and Geneva, the aircraft crashed into Mont Blanc on its descent. All 48 onboard perished in the accident.**

08/06/20 Simple Flying

New Delhi: **Indian aviation regulator DGCA on Monday advised all airport operators to not ease their wildlife control measures even though air traffic has reduced due to the coronavirus pandemic.**

**Many regular activities such as grass cutting, bird activity monitoring patrols, and dispersal measures may be limited given the current situation of reduced manpower and lower aircraft movements at airfields, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) said in its circular.**

"This may result in an increase of bird/wildlife that forage, feed and rest or even nest within or near aerodromes," it stated.

In the past, there have been many incidents in India where aircraft have hit animals on the runway during take off or landing. There have also been incidents where a bird has hit the engine of an aircraft during its take off or landing or when it is at a lower altitude.

The regulator on Monday said as per its rules, an airport operator must take action to decrease the risk to aircraft operations by adopting measures to "minimise the likelihood of collisions between wildlife and aircraft".

"Therefore, airport operators are advised not to ease bird/wildlife control measures and bird/wildlife monitoring be continued. Particular attention should be given to the increase of bird/wildlife activities as a result of reduced air traffic," it said.

After a gap of two months, India resumed its domestic passenger flight operations from May 25. Scheduled international passenger flights continue to remain suspended in the country.

Cargo flights, medical evacuation flights and special repatriation flights have been operating in the country as usual amid the pandemic.

08/06/20 PTI/Times of India

**The draft drone rules, published last week may allow goods' delivery via drones. This will also be determined by the result of Civil Aviation Ministry's upcoming "beyond visual line of sight" (BVLOS) drone projects, the ministry clarified to MediaNama. "Once the BVLOS experiments are over and the detailed specs are notified by DGCA [Directorate General of Civil Aviation], the regulator may permit delivery of goods in a manner and procedure as may be prescribed," Amber Dubey, joint secretary at the Civil Aviation Ministry, who oversees the drones division said.**

**Dubey also clarified that the Ministry will allow for such operations in a new notification, which "may come as a Civil Aviation Requirement (CAR)", but will be "decided at a later date".** This is an important clarification because the DGCA has allowed several drone and e-commerce companies to carry out BVLOS projects, essentially green-lighting them to test delivery of goods using drones, among other things. BVLOS operations are seen as a cost-effective way for delivering goods over distances, and are a crucial use case of drones, especially for e-commerce companies.

What are the upcoming BVLOS experiments? At least 10 consortia, including Reliance-backed Asteria Aerospace, Nandan Nilekani-backed ShopX, Spicejet, and Google-backed Dunzo, among others have been permitted by the DGCA to carry out "beyond visual line of sight" (BVLOS) drone projects in designated airspaces across the country.

**This is being done under an effort by the DGCA to formulate regulations around commercial BVLOS drone operations, and the regulator is looking at these projects to gain insights into such operations. These consortia have until September to submit a proof of concept to the DGCA about learnings from their BVLOS projects.**

What was the confusion over delivery via drones? Because of two clauses under the draft rules, suggesting that:

No drone will be allowed to carry any payload unless specified by the DGCA [Clause 36], and Nothing can be dropped from a drone except in a manner and procedure specified by the DGCA [Clause 38]

These clauses also seemed to be in conflict with another rule in the draft which talked about licenses for UTM service providers. UTM is a key requirement for carrying out BVLOS operations, such as delivery or remote surveillance, and are essentially an air traffic management system for drones, except that they are an automated tool. **Current drone regulations in India, which were enacted in December 2018, do not allow for BVLOS operations.**

08/06/20 Medianama

**The International Air Transport Association (IATA) has projected \$84.3-billion loss for global airlines in 2020 as travel bans and visa restrictions are set to halve international passenger traffic. Financially, 2020 will go down as the worst year in the history of aviation,** IATA's Director General Alexandre de Juniac said as he released the financial outlook for the air transport sector on Tuesday. Based on passenger estimates, airlines will lose \$37.54 per passenger, it said.

A sharp fall in demand and revenue has forced airlines to slash costs, and governments are stepping in to infuse funds and keep airlines afloat.

On Tuesday, Cathay Pacific said the Hong Kong government will take 6 per cent stake in the airline as a part of a \$5-billion bailout plan. On the other hand, news reports on Tuesday said Emirates is laying off hundreds of pilots and cabin crew to curb expenses.

In India, domestic airlines have not secured any relief from the government and are reporting 50-55 per cent loads as domestic air travel resumed on May 25 after two-month suspension. Near-term travel outlook remains uncertain, but 48 per cent year-on-year fall in fuel price offers a silver lining.

IATA said passenger demand has evaporated as international borders closed and countries locked down to prevent the spread of the virus. This is the biggest driver of industry losses, it said. At the low point in April, global air travel was roughly 95 per cent below 2019 levels. The global airline body said passenger numbers will roughly halve to 2.25 billion, approximately equal to 2006 levels. Capacity, however, cannot be adjusted quickly enough with a 40.4 per cent decline expected for the year.

India is yet to take a decision on opening up international traffic. Civil Aviation Minister Hardeep Singh Puri has said the decision to resume regular international operations will be taken as soon as countries ease restrictions on entry of foreign nationals. Destination countries have to be ready to allow incoming flights.

IATA said passenger revenues are expected to fall to \$241 billion (down from \$612 billion in 2019). "This is greater than the fall in demand, reflecting an expected 18 per cent fall in passenger yields as airlines try to encourage people to fly again through price stimulation," it said.

With open borders and rising demand in 2021, the industry is expected to cut its losses to \$15.8 billion.

"Airlines will still be financially fragile in 2021. Passenger revenues will be more than one-third smaller than in 2019. And airlines are expected to lose about \$5 for every passenger carried. The cut in losses will come from reopened borders leading to increased volumes of travellers. Strong cargo

operations and comparatively low fuel prices will also give the industry a boost. Competition among airlines will no doubt be even more intense. That will translate into strong incentives for travellers to take to the skies again,” said de Juniac.

#### Business Standards 09/06/2020

**Une fierté nationale.** C'est en ces termes que le ministre de l'Économie et des Finances Bruno Le Maire a présenté **l'industrie aéronautique française**. Alors face à la crise, il a alerté et décrété ce mardi, à Bercy, **un «état d'urgence» pour sauver le secteur**. En ce sens, «au nom du président de la République et du premier ministre», il a présenté un plan d'urgence, sur le modèle de celui qui avait été annoncé il y a quinze jours pour l'automobile.

*«Cette industrie ne connaissait pas la crise, elle était habituée depuis près de 30 ans à une croissance continue»*, a entamé Bruno Le Maire, entouré de sa secrétaire d'État, de la ministre de la Défense, celle de l'Écologie et du secrétaire d'État aux transports. Cependant, comme pour une grande partie de l'économie, *«la crise a mis un coup d'arrêt brutal à cette croissance»*. **Rappelant les fermetures d'aéroports, l'inédite réduction du trafic aérien et la chute des commandes, le gouvernement a donc présenté un plan en trois axes, pour un effort total de 15 milliards d'euros. Selon le ministre, 300.000 emplois sont menacés à terme.**

**Le premier axe concerne donc la sauvegarde des emplois.** *«Si nous n'apportons aucune aide publique immédiate, ce sont 100.000 emplois menacés dans les six mois»*, a prévenu de façon plus précise le ministre de l'Économie. Ainsi, il a détaillé une batterie de mesures en ce sens, à savoir plusieurs possibilités de trésorerie pour les compagnies sur les **reports de remboursements de crédit à l'export et sur le remboursement de nouveaux achats d'avions Airbus**. Ces deux mesures représenteront plusieurs milliards d'euros de dépenses publiques et d'importants gains de trésorerie pour les compagnies, assure Bruno Le Maire. Aussi, le gouvernement mettra en place **«une activité partielle de longue durée ambitieuse qui permettra de limiter les licenciements et la perte de savoir-faire»**.

#### Transformation du secteur

Le deuxième volet du plan gouvernemental concerne **«la transformation des PME et des entreprises intermédiaires»**. Pour ce faire, deux fonds seront mis en place. Dès cet été, au mois de juillet, 500 millions d'euros seront libérés pour «renforcer les fonds propres des entreprises». Bruno Le Maire a assuré que ce fonds d'investissement était «historique», dans le sens où, pour la première fois, **«Airbus, Safran, Dassault et Thales ont accepté de mettre de l'argent en commun pour soutenir le tissu industriel français»**. En effet, si l'État, à travers la banque publique Bpifrance apportera 200 millions d'euros, les quatre industriels apporteront également 200 millions. À terme, ce premier fonds sera doté d'un milliard d'euros. Un deuxième fonds, à hauteur de 300 millions d'euros, servira lui à la robotisation et à la digitalisation des entreprises. L'objectif sera de «rattraper le

retard» que nous avons sur le domaine «par rapport à l'Allemagne ou à l'Italie», explique le gouvernement.

**Le dernier volet de ce plan est celui de la décarbonation.** C'est d'ailleurs là, selon les termes du gouvernement, «*le fil rouge de la reprise*». L'objectif affiché est clair : **«parvenir à un avion neutre en carbone en 2035 au lieu de 2050.»** «*Voilà l'ambition collective que nous fixons à la nation française et à son industrie*», lance Bruno Le Maire. **Cet avion devra en partie fonctionner à l'hydrogène.** «*La France doit être dans les années à venir le pays d'Europe où concevront et se produiront les avions de demain*», reprend le ministre. **Ainsi, un soutien d'1,5 milliards d'euros de financement public sera accordé au Conseil pour la Recherche Aéronautique Civile (Corac) sur trois ans pour aider à la recherche et à la construction de cet avion.** «*Cela pourra aussi garantir l'emploi de milliers d'ingénieurs hautement qualifiés*», estime le ministre.

Ce plan, «*voulu par le président de la République*», est «*proportionné à la violence que représente la crise (...) et répondra aux attentes immédiates du secteur*», a conclu le chef de Bercy. **À noter qu'à elle seule, la compagnie Air France bénéficie de près de 7 milliards d'euros d'aide de l'État, via le système de prêt garanti par l'État ou de prêts directs. Une somme qui est comprise dans le total des 15 milliards, qui devrait permettre à Air France de boucler sa commande prévue de 60 Airbus A220 et de 38 A350.**

Un plan relativement bien accueilli, malgré «quelques inquiétudes»

À ce vaste plan, le directeur général de Safran, Philippe Petitcolin, a approuvé les mesures concernant la volonté de préserver l'emploi. «C'est quand même ça la chose la plus importante, on ne préservera l'emploi que si les mesures nous permettent de continuer à vivre», a-t-il indiqué à l'AFP. Il évoque «un niveau d'incertitude» record dans la filière et sa crainte de voir le secteur dégringoler plus encore.

Côté syndical, un message clair est porté : «l'argent public ne peut pas servir à payer les suppressions d'emplois et les fermetures de sites», selon les termes de la Fédération des travailleurs de la métallurgie (CGT), citées par l'AFP. L'organisation réclame ainsi un contrôle sur ces aides. Pour le secrétaire fédéral FO de la Métallurgie, Edwin Liard, «il reste quand même quelques inquiétudes.» Il l'assure toutefois, ce qui a été présenté dans une quête de préservation de l'emploi est «rassurant».

Concernant la décarbonation, l'ONG Greenpeace y est également allée de son commentaire. «L'avion le moins polluant, c'est celui qui ne vole pas», s'est exprimé l'organisation par voie de communiqué. «Le gouvernement continue à se voiler la face sur l'essentiel: réduire le trafic aérien est indispensable», estime Greenpeace France, qui regrette de voir 23 milliards accordés à l'aviation et à l'automobile mais «zéro au ferroviaire». C'est également le message que porte le député Matthieu



Orphelin et président depuis quelques jours du nouveau groupe Écologie démocratie solidarité. «Il est impératif que les acteurs du secteur prennent en compte la modération progressive mais inévitable du trafic aérien dans leurs stratégies d'entreprise», note-t-il dans un communiqué. Selon lui, ce sujet reste «tabou».

Le Figaro 09/06/2020

**BRUXELLES (Reuters) - L'Union européenne a accepté mardi d'aménager le programme de réduction des émissions de CO2 du transport aérien en raison des conséquences de l'épidémie de coronavirus, une décision interprétée par les détracteurs du système comme l'octroi d'un véritable permis de polluer aux compagnies.**

Alors que la plupart des avions restent cloués au sol, ce qui se traduit à la fois par des suppressions d'emplois mais aussi une réduction des émissions polluantes, le secteur a fait pression sur les 27 afin d'obtenir une **modification de l'année de référence pour la réduction des émissions des vols internationaux.**

En vertu du programme Corsia (Carbon Offsetting and Reduction Scheme for International Aviation), les compagnies aériennes doivent acheter des "unités d'émission" si elles dépassent la moyenne de leurs émissions réalisées en 2019 et 2020.

**L'Association internationale du transport aérien (IATA) demande désormais que la base de référence soit uniquement 2019** et non 2020 également, année qui sera marquée par une forte baisse des émissions en raison de la crise liée à la pandémie.

Les 27 membres de l'UE ont décidé mardi de répondre favorablement à cette demande.

Ce changement de règles reflète "les conditions extrêmement difficiles" du transport aérien liées à la pandémie, a déclaré le ministre croate des Transports, Oleg Butkovic, qui mène les discussions européennes.

Le programme Corsia laisse sceptique plusieurs organisations écologistes, pour qui ce système n'empêchera pas les compagnies aériennes d'émettre des quantités importantes de CO2 pendant encore de très nombreuses années.

La Tribune 09/06/2020

Officiellement, elle s'appelle la "liste des transporteurs aériens faisant l'objet d'une interdiction ou de restrictions d'exploitation dans l'Union européenne". Dans les faits, c'est une "**liste noire**" de compagnies aériennes de pays non-membres de l'UE qui, pour le résumer en une formule, "ne satisfont pas aux normes internationales de sécurité requises".

**Ces compagnies ne sont donc pas autorisées à effectuer des vols à destination, à l'intérieur et au départ de l'UE.** Et si elles n'effectuaient de toute façon aucun vol vers l'Europe, ce qui est en réalité le cas pour la plupart d'entre elles, leur présence sur cette liste "peut servir d'avertissement aux voyageurs qui se déplacent en dehors de l'UE", c'est en tout cas ce que dit la Commission européenne depuis la création de cette liste en mars 2006.

### **Avions mal entretenus, vétustes ou dépassés**

A l'époque, cette "black list" avait fait l'objet de négociations parfois tendues entre pays cités et l'UE. Mais une liste comportant le nom de 96 compagnies interdites d'espace aérien européen avait fini par apparaître au cours d'une conférence de presse surréaliste au cours de laquelle Jacques Barrot, à

la fois vice-président de la Commission européenne et commissaire en charge du Transport, n'avait pas semblé avoir une grande maîtrise du sujet, pour l'écrire avec respect.

Pour établir cette liste, la Commission européenne s'était basée sur les "résultats des contrôles effectués dans les aéroports européens", l'utilisation "d'avions mal entretenus, vétustes ou dépassés" ou "l'incapacité des compagnies à corriger les déficiences identifiées lors des inspections".

### **Autorités de surveillance dans le viseur des experts européens**

**Outre les compagnies à proprement parler, l'Union européenne peut aussi estimer que les autorités de sécurité d'un pays ne sont pas en mesure de remplir leurs obligations internationales en matière de surveillance de la sécurité.** Dès lors, tous les transporteurs de ce pays se retrouvent sur la liste. La grande majorité des compagnies interdites par l'UE sont dans ce cas, puisque, dans la dernière version de la liste, mise à jour le 2 juin dernier, seules six compagnies (Avior Airlines, Venezuela; Iran Aseman Airlines, Iran; Iraqi Airways, Irak; Blue Wing Airlines, Suriname; Med-View Airlines, Nigéria; Air Zimbabwe, Zimbabwe) sont visées en tant que transporteur et non pas interdites à cause des autorités de leur pays.

**Dans cette dernière version de la liste noire européenne,** qui est donc la 36e version puisqu'il y a eu 35 mises à jour, on retrouve désormais 96 compagnies originaires de 15 pays, qui vont de l'Afghanistan (2 compagnies) au Soudan (12) en passant par la République démocratique du Congo (10), la Libye (8) ou encore le **Népal** (20), sans oublier les deux compagnies de Guinée équatoriale ou les 7 d'Angola. Pour être tout à fait précis, il faut y ajouter trois compagnies qui font l'objet de restrictions et ne peuvent voler dans l'espace aérien européen qu'avec des avions spécifiques (Air Services Comores, Iran Air et Air Koryo, de Corée du Nord).

### **193 compagnies blacklistées en 2016**

Si le nombre de compagnies interdites est aujourd'hui exactement le même que lors de la toute première version de la liste noire en 2006, à savoir 96, cela ne veut pas dire pour autant que la liste n'a pas évolué. Un regard sur la mise à jour du mois de décembre 2016 suffit pour s'en convaincre. A l'époque, il y avait pas moins de 193 compagnies (originaires de 18 pays).

En d'autres mots, il y a donc 99 compagnies qui sont sorties de la liste noire en un peu moins de cinq ans. Cela s'explique notamment par la disparition pure et simple de certaines compagnies, parfois mêmes dépourvues de certificat d'exploitation par leur propre pays. Il y a aussi quelques exemples d'évolutions favorables, comme ce fut le cas pour toutes les compagnies aériennes du Kazakhstan en 2016 ou encore pour le Gabon plus récemment. Placées dès la création de la liste noire en 2008, toutes les compagnies aériennes du Gabon en sont sorties en décembre 2019, grâce "aux efforts accomplis par les autorités responsables gabonaises de la sécurité aérienne", expliquait l'an dernier la commissaire aux transports Adina-loana Valean.

### **Maintenir des niveaux de sécurité élevés dans l'Union européenne**

**La liste noire européenne aurait donc, au-delà de sa volonté de "maintenir des niveaux de sécurité élevés dans l'Union européenne", un effet bénéfique en "contribuant à aider les pays concernés à améliorer leur niveau de sécurité dans le but ultime de ne plus figurer sur la liste",** précisait le communiqué de presse de décembre 2016, dans lequel on pouvait aussi lire qu'elle "incite les pays ayant des déficiences en matière de sécurité à y remédier avant d'être frappés d'une interdiction et d'être inscrits sur la liste". Après 14 ans d'existence, les compagnies de huit pays ont réussi à sortir de la liste noire.

Quant à savoir quelle autorité effectue les contrôles qui permettent à la Commission européenne et à son comité de la sécurité aérienne de placer ou d'enlever une compagnie sur la liste, ce sont en réalité "tous les Etats membres et l'Agence européenne de la sécurité aérienne (AESA) qui sont tenus

de communiquer à la Commission les informations pouvant présenter un intérêt pour la mise à jour de la liste", nous explique-t-on à la Commission européenne, en ajoutant que "la Commission européenne et le comité de la sécurité aérienne utilisent diverses sources d'information pour évaluer si les normes internationales de sécurité sont respectées ou non".

Ces sources comprennent les rapports de l'OACI (l'Organisation de l'aviation civile internationale), de la FAA l'autorité américaine de l'aviation civile, de l'AESA, des inspections SAFA (Inspection de sécurité des avions étrangers) et du système des autorisations d'exploitant de pays tiers, ce système qui permet par exemple à au groupe Ethiopian Airlines d'utiliser certains avions de la compagnie Ceiba Intercontinental. Mais ceci est une autre histoire...

#### Rtbf 08/06/2020

New Delhi: Imagine approaching a two-runway airport to land on and the pilots not being sure which airstrip to touch down on! This is what happened with the crew operating an IndiGo Mumbai-Male flight last February. The pilots saw a cross mark on the runway they were approaching to land on, indicating that the airstrip is under construction. They performed a go-around and safely landed on the correct runway in the second attempt.

**The Directorate General of Civil Aviation conducted a probe into this incident of February 3, 2019, and on Tuesday made the report available which shows "inadequate flight planning by the operating crew despite (both these pilots) operating for the first time to Male" and "incomplete information given" to the pilots by the airline's dispatch.**

"The operating crew was aware of the existence of an under-construction runway parallel to the existing active runway. However, **there was confusion regarding the actual runway in use during approach and crew made an approach to the under construction runway.** At about 12 feet radio height, the PIC (pilot in command) not being convinced that the runway to which they are approaching is the active runway carried out a missed approach. The aircraft later made a normal approach and landed at Male" by 5.36 pm (Indian time), says the DGCA report.

The confusion started when the Airbus A320 (VT-INY) operating as 6E-783 with 106 people on board was approaching to land. "After intercepting the final approach course the operating crew sighted the two parallel runways and the runway on the right appeared prominent to them.... Even after reaching 400 radio altitude, the PIC had his inhibitions that the approach was being made to the wrong runway as he observed 'X' cross marks on the runway and he announced the same, but the first officer (F/O) insisted that the runway on the right was the correct runway."

"The PIC continued the approach.... The aircraft descended to 12 feet radio altitude above the runway under-construction, by this time the PIC still unable to confirm the active runway performed a go-around," the report said. The flight landed on the correct runway in the second attempt.

Based on the cockpit voice recorder transcript, the report shows the confusion in the cockpit at the time of approaching to land in the first attempt. "...PIC enquired with the F/O that there are cross marks 'X' on the runway and confirmed whether F/O is sure of the runway. PIC asked the FO: 'just ask'. F/O replied that the runway to the right is the correct one.... The PIC still not being convinced of the runway announced 'this is not the one' and performed a 'go-around'."

During the second — and successful — attempt to land "the PIC advised the F/O to confirm with the

air traffic control whether the runway on the left is correct or the runway on the right is the correct runway. To which ATC tower controller replied ‘affirm you aimed for the wrong runway,’” the DGCA report says.

“...PIC is observed to be telling the F/O that ‘I knew that was not the runway, because it had a cross’ and the F/O replied ‘but it was written over there.’... F/O stated that ‘so they told that one which looks like the runway is not the one which is the runway’. To which PIC replied that “no but I saw the cross, but you kept telling me this is the thing. Then when I came close then I knew that this is not the runway”.

09/06/20 Saurabh Sinha/Times of India

**New Delhi: SpiceJet pilot has tested corona positive and the airline has quarantined all crew and staff who came in direct contact with him.**

“One of our colleagues, a first officer, has tested positive for COVID-19. The first officer had been tested as part of SpiceJet’s internal medical testing for crew on June 5. The test report came on June 7. The pilot had last operated a flight on June 3, 2020,” said a SpiceJet spokesperson.

“All crew and staff who had been in direct contact with the pilot have been asked to self-quarantine by staying at home for the next two weeks. All measures are being taken to provide appropriate medical care to the pilot,” he added.

“SpiceJet has been strictly adhering to all SoPs and social distancing norms laid down by the government. All passengers are being provided face masks, face shields and sanitisers by the airline and the operating crew has been taking all necessary precautions and wearing Personal Protective Equipment to ensure a clean and sanitised flying experience. SpiceJet has implemented the best-in-class cleaning procedures on all its aircraft in addition to disinfecting customer touch points and surfaces before every flight. The cleaning procedure for flights includes a thorough wipe down using an effective, high-grade, Boeing-approved disinfectant across aircraft interiors including the places customers touch most – the tray tables, seat covers, armrests, seatbelts, window shades and lavatories and their knobs,” the airline said.

09/06/20 Times of India

**Having been hit hard by Covid-19 restrictions, India’s largest low-cost carrier Indigo has converted 10 of its more than 250 aircraft to freighters and has now started offering aircraft charter under IndiGo Charter Services to boost revenue.**

According to IndiGo chief commercial officer Willy Boulter, “**Charter is a side business as our fleet is not fully utilized for the limited scheduled services at present.**” Boulter added that charter is not a new business for IndiGo—the airline has in the past operated domestic charters and some international services on behalf of various governments and corporations.

“The aircraft are not modified in any way. We are offering both domestic and international charter to those companies and individuals who wish to have an aircraft dedicated to themselves,” said Boulter. **The move to start private jet charter is being seen as an astute move. “Any money is good money these days,” said an airline official. “IndiGo has fixed costs as far as its fleet of ATR and Airbus A320neos go. They have the pilots, slots at airports, operate from the same terminal as commercial flights, and handle their own ground handling. The only extra is fuel cost,”** Vishok Mansingh, CEO of Vman Aero Services, told AIN.

For private charter, he said, the cost of flying a smaller airplane can often be more expensive than a narrowbody airliner. During the pandemic, flying a larger airplane will help in social distancing and

also can be more comfortable, Mansingh added. Private charters are increasingly being used by businesses transporting staff to remote industrial towns, by families, and by high-net-worth individuals, he said.

09/06/20 Neelam Mathews/AINonline

**Only four out of twelve suitors that came forward to submit an Expression of Interest to acquire grounded airline Jet Airways have made the eligibility cut, as per people in the know.**

CNBC-TV18 had earlier reported that Jet Airways received twelve Expressions of Interest (EOIs) in the latest round of bidding. However, most of them did not meet the eligibility criteria set out by the committee of creditors, said people in the know.

**Four players have now been shortlisted to submit bids for the airline, and have been asked to submit binding bids by July 11, CNBC-TV18 has learned. These include UK-based Kalrock Capital Partners along with an individual by the name of Murari Lal Jalan who is a resident of Dubai, people familiar with the matter told CNBC-TV18.**

The second shortlisted player is **another consortium comprising of Abu Dhabi based Imperial Capital Investments LLC (ICIL), Haryana-based Flight Simulation Technique Centre Pvt Ltd (FSTCPL) and Mumbai-based Big Charter Pvt Ltd (BCPL).**

The third shortlisted player is a **Canadian entrepreneur by the name of Sivakumar Rasiah, and the fourth player is Kolkatta based Alpha Airways,** said sources who did not wish to be quoted.

Little is known about these four suitors that now remain in the fray for the airline. **Banks CNBC\_TV18 spoke to are not very confident of these EOIs getting converted into real bids, and say liquidation is a very real possibility.**

**This is the fourth round of bidding for Jet Airways, which was grounded over a year back and subsequently referred to the National Company Law Tribunal in June 2019 by its lenders.**

04/05/20 Ritu Singh/CNBC TV18

**58 more flights have been added to help the stranded Indian Citizens from the Gulf Countries as part of the Vande Bharat Mission, said Civil Aviation minister Hardeep Singh Puri on Wednesday.**

**Starting immediately and till the end of this month the number of flights as part of the Vande Bharat Mission have been increased from the current 107 to 165, the minister added.**

On Monday the minister had said that till now more than **66,000 people** had been **brought to the country** by Air India and its subsidiary Air India Express in 365 flights as part of the Vande Bharat Mission. In addition, **17,180 passengers had left the country** to their respective countries on 369 flights, the minister added.

On the same day, Puri said that Air India hasn't overcharged the passengers in bringing them back to India, although the **fares are higher than what they would be in normal circumstances.**

"Civil Aviation operations cannot but reflect the costing. Normal operations are different from evacuation operations. Aircrafts have to be parked for upto 40 hours on long haul routes before the return journey during Vande Bharat Mission. There are other costs involved as well," he said.

"Please remember that unlike special charter, **Air India is charging these fares for scheduled flights and earning revenue both ways,**" he said.

[Live Mint Aviation 10/06/2020](#)

**NEW DELHI: InterGlobe Aviation Ltd-operated IndiGo has taken delivery of two Airbus A321neo (new engine option) aeroplanes, making it the first set of aircraft deliveries since the government-imposed the nationwide lockdown in March.**

These deliveries are part of the airline's plans to reduce cost by aggressively inducting fuel efficient Airbus A320neo and A321neo planes and replace its ageing fleet of Airbus A320ceo (current engine option) planes, in the next few years.

**IndiGo's decision to continue adding capacity aggressively comes at a time when global travel has been hit due to coronavirus-related bans and lockdowns.** Given the current scenario, travel demand is expected to remain muted in the coming quarters.

"IndiGo operates its A321 fleet on both domestic and international routes. The airline wants to fly to London and other medium haul destinations with A321 planes but its international plans could be delayed due to the ongoing covid-19 pandemic," said an industry source, requesting anonymity.

"IndiGo would likely be using its A321 planes on busy domestic routes before deploying it on international routes, when demand for international travel picks up," the person added.

When contacted, an IndiGo spokesperson confirmed that the airline has taken delivery of two A321neo planes. **IndiGo currently has 261 aircraft in its fleet,** the spokesperson added.

The airline's fleet size was at 262 aircraft, which included 123 Airbus A320ceos, 100 A320neos, 14 A321neo and 25 ATRs, a net increase of five aircraft in the March quarter. The airline has since then retired a few A320ceo planes while inducting two A321neo planes in its fleet.

Indian airlines, including IndiGo, had been grounded from 25 March to 25 May in a lockdown initiated by the government to contain the spread of covid-19. Though airline operations have resumed in a much curtailed manner, the government has currently allowed companies to operate only at a third of their total fleet capacity as fear of the spread of covid-19 looms large.

**"In the midst of every crisis, lies great opportunity. At IndiGo we are determined to emerge from this crisis stronger and more energised than ever,"** IndiGo's chief executive officer (CEO), Ronojoy Dutta, had said in a statement last week.

[Live Mint Aviation 10/06/2020](#)

**NEW DELHI : Airlines are flying at near capacity after India reopened its skies for local travel after more than two months, belying expectations that fear of coronavirus infections will prompt people to skip flights.**

Flights of IndiGo, the country's largest airline, are operating at capacity with overbooking in many sectors, according to the latest passenger load data of the airline. GoAir, which resumed operation from 1 June, has reported 70-80% average passenger load factor across sectors and nearly 100% to destinations such as Lucknow and Varanasi.

"(IndiGo) flights to and from most metros had near full bookings. Patna, Bhubaneswar, Ranchi, Cochin appear to enjoy steady flow of passengers. Some sectors even saw overbooking. The trends show that the fear and apprehension have slowly dissipated as travellers learn to live with the virus," said an aviation industry executive, seeking anonymity.

Robust demand for travel has come as a relief for airlines that have suffered the most during the two-month lockdown. It will also provide some respite to banks that have offered loans to airlines. India suspended all flights from 25 March when the government first imposed a nationwide lockdown to contain covid-19. Local air travel resumed across all major cities from 25 May. Airlines are permitted to operate at up to 33% of the earlier approved summer flights schedule for 2020.

**"Our bookings data shows there is a rise in travel from non-metros to metros as offices resume operations. Bookings across key routes in June have increased by 45-50% as compared to May last week when domestic flights had just reopened. Airfares have also decreased 20-25% week-on-week, making flying an attractive option for all travellers planning their immediate trips,"** said

Aloke Bajpai, chief executive officer and co-founder of Ixigo.

Data from Ixigo showed bookings in the Delhi-Mumbai, Delhi-Bengaluru, Mumbai-Ahmedabad and Mumbai-Kolkata routes have gone up 22-30% in the first week of June, compared with the last week of May. In certain sectors, the jump has been sharper, with Lucknow-Chennai witnessing a sixfold increase and Lucknow-Kolkata reporting a nearly fourfold rise during the period.

Mint reported on 5 June that traffic congestion, power generation, port activity, vehicle registration and other high-frequency data point to the economy perking up as India reopens, recovering from a devastating slump as factories went idle and people were ordered to stay at home amid the pandemic.

"It has been a good restart of operations," said a GoAir spokesperson.

Queries emailed to spokespersons for IndiGo and SpiceJet on Wednesday weren't answered till the time of publishing this story.

**"The flight loads a fortnight into the opening of domestic travel has been near robust. The Airbus A320 comprising the lion's share of the IndiGo fleet has a max capacity of 180 or 186 depending on configuration. The average loads on this fleet were about 128,"** said an aviation industry executive cited above.

IndiGo, India's largest domestic airline, has 262 aircraft in its fleet. This includes 123 Airbus A320neos, 100 A320neos, 14 A321neo and 25 ATRs.

Airlines had expressed apprehension about low passenger loads after an initial rush as India lifted the ban on air travel.

Civil aviation minister Hardeep Puri said in a tweet on Wednesday that operations of domestic airlines were "smooth and steady".

To be sure, the problems for Indian airlines are far from over as they are operating at a fraction of their fleet capacity. **The Indian aviation industry may require funding of up to ₹35,000 crore till 2022-23 as profitability will take a hit due to sharp drop in revenues and high fixed costs during the lockdown period, credit rating agency ICRA said recently.**

[Live Mint Aviation 11/06/2020](#)

**Mumbai: State-run Airports Authority of India (AAI) is extending its contracts with concessionaires at six airports until March 2021, indicating that it plans to run them till then. Adani Group had pleaded its inability to take over three of the airports, and Cabinet approval is pending for privatisation of the other three.**

It indicates a delay in privatisation of Ahmedabad, Lucknow, Mangaluru, Jaipur, Guwahati and Thiruvananthapuram airports. Concessionaires include third party services such as ground handlers, retail/food outlet operators.

Adani Intends to Take Over Eventually

The Adani Group won bids to operate, manage and develop all six in February 2019. In February 2020, it signed concession agreements for Ahmedabad, Lucknow and Mangaluru and was supposed to take over by August 12. But in March, it told AAI it would not be able to take over, citing force majeure because of the pandemic's adverse impact on the aviation sector. ET reported this on June



4. The conglomerate sought time until February 15, 2021.



While Adani won't take over the airports within the stipulated deadline of August, it is understood that the group does intend to do so eventually. **In a letter to directors of all six airports on Monday, AAI said the Adani Group had sought an "extension of time for satisfying conditions precedent to achieving financial closure... In view of the above, it is intimated that all expenditure and revenue contracts of all departments will have to be kept valid up to March 31, 2021, with a provision for extension by another six months for smooth operation of the above six airports."**

ET has reviewed the letter. Adani didn't respond to an emailed query before the story went to press. An AAI executive said the extension of contracts is like an enabling step to avoid legal issues.

The ETI 11/06/2020

New Delhi: **SpiceJet and the Airports Authority of India (AAI) seem to be locked in a dispute over the airline's dues to the state-owned airport operator. The dues have exceeded the no-frills carrier's bank guarantees with AAI**, said people with knowledge of the matter. The airline contested this, telling ET that its claims for damages surpass the money owed to AAI.

The airline owes AAI about ₹186.50 crore, including interest, versus bank guarantees of ₹154 crore, said people cited above.

"We are concerned since the dues amount has exceeded bank guarantees," said a senior government official. "We have raised this matter with the airline and are in discussions."

SpiceJet told ET it has sought compensation from the airport operator on several grounds. "There is a long-outstanding claim of over ₹234.97 crore payable to SpiceJet on account of (i) wrongful charging of interest, (ii) wrongful levy of landing charges and (iii) damages caused due to negligence. The amounts claimed have been disputed by SpiceJet and, in fact, it is AAI which will have net liability towards SpiceJet," the airline said in an email, adding that the matters were under discussion.

An airline executive further said that two SpiceJet planes had to be written off after wild boar and buffalo strayed on to the runways at Surat and Jabalpur airports, respectively. These claims are also

pending with AAI, he said.

**Whose Burden Is It?**

AAI says SpiceJet has run up bills of more than its bank guarantees

Airlines should pay within 15 days

But SpiceJet says its damages claims surpass the money owed to AAI

Airlines, airports financials have been hit due to Covid-19 travel restrictions

IATA estimates airline industry to lose **\$84.3b** In 2020

*(Note: The infographic includes a photo of a SpiceJet aircraft on a tarmac.)*

Aviation secretary Pradeep Singh Kharola discussed the issue via video-conference with officials and airline executives on Monday, said people cited above.

The Covid-19 pandemic has led to a decline in travel and grounding of airlines across the globe. Indian carriers had to suspend flights for about two months due to the lockdown that was imposed to curb the outbreak.

Airlines are required to pay AAI within 15 days of bill generation and are incentivised to pay early. Of the money SpiceJet owes, about ₹46 crore is said to be interest.

**AAI keeps a close eye on bank guarantees. For instance, the grounded Kingfisher Airlines is said to owe more than ₹200 crore. In the case of Jet Airways, the amount is less as AAI was able to encash some bank guarantees.**

**The International Air Transport Association (IATA) has said airlines are expected to lose \$84.3 billion in 2020, while revenues will fall 50% to \$419 billion, from \$838 billion in 2019. In 2021, however, losses are expected to be slashed to \$15.8 billion as revenues rise to \$598 billion.**

The ETI 11/06/2020

New Delhi: **Different quarantine rules in various states for incoming passengers has led to “confusion and uncertainty” that has prevented demand for air travel from being fully realised and led to an uptick in cancellations by the few business travellers that airlines are banking on,** aviation sector players told The Indian Express.

After the resumption of domestic operations on May 25, following the two-month Covid lockdown break, almost all demand has been from those returning home or flying due to exigent situations. But for other segments, the varied and frequent changes in rules has been a dampener, with IndiGo CEO Ronojoy Dutta stating that “an uncertainty of restrictions” is among reasons that are “hugely dampening for traffic”.

Kapil Kaul, CEO & director at aviation consultancy firm CAPA South Asia, said, “Demand is lower than expected largely due to the confusion and uncertainty at the state level regarding resumption, quarantine rules and continuing escalation in the infections. The expected pent-up demand has not

been fully realised largely due to the confusion — which may be settling now.”

States like Goa, Karnataka and Delhi tightened procedures after at least 30 asymptomatic passengers tested positive after landing in several locations across the country in the first seven days since air travel resumed. For instance, Delhi had earlier “advised” home quarantine for 14 days, but later made it “mandatory” for the first seven days. Goa changed its SOP twice. On the other hand, Kerala allows short-term business travel of up to seven days to the state for those who obtain an e-pass.

11/06/20 Pranav Mukul/Indian Express

**Mumbai International Airport minority partner Airport Company South Africa (ACSA) has approached the Supreme Court to challenge the arbitration proceedings initiated against it by majority partner GVK Airports Holdings.**

**The arbitration proceedings were initiated against ACSA over an alleged breach of the shareholder’s agreement,** reported the Economic Times.

People privy to the development told the paper that the South African investor wants either a person of their choice or a Supreme Court appointee to be a part of the three-member tribunal that has been approached by GVK.

Meanwhile, a three-member Supreme Court bench headed by Chief Justice SA Bobde has told Mumbai International Airport Limited (MIAL), GVK, and the Airport Authority of India to file their responses to ACSA’s petition. The petition will be heard on July 8.

A person in the know of the development has said: **“GVK Airport Holdings has approached an arbitral tribunal comprising three former judges members along with MIAL against ACSA for alleged breach of contract in relation to the RoFR (right of first refusal) contained in the shareholders’ agreement.”**

[10/06/20 Moneycontrol.com](https://www.moneycontrol.com)

**In view of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Uttar Pradesh government has deferred the date of signing of a key pact for the Jewar airport with its developer to begin work on the Rs 29,560-crore project, according to an order.**

The decision to defer the "concession agreement" was taken by the state cabinet during a meeting in Lucknow on Tuesday.

"The signing of the concession agreement with selected developer Zurich Airport International AG has been extended by 45 days from resumption of India-Malaysia and India-Switzerland flights plus mandatory quarantine days or by August 17, whichever is earlier," the order stated. Officials said the Zurich airport has floated a special purpose vehicle (SPV) for implementing the project, which has three directors, one of whom lives in India while the other two are based in Malaysia and Switzerland, at its Asia office and headquarters respectively. The state cabinet also authorised Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath to take decisions from time to time regarding the international greenfield airport project, the order said.

According to the officials, the decision was taken in view of the situation arising out of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The concession agreement, in normal conditions, would have been signed by July 2 between the Uttar Pradesh government and the Yamuna International Airport Private Limited (YIAPL) -- an SPV floated by the Zurich airport for implementing the project, the officials said. Shailendra Bhatia, Noida

International Airport Limited's nodal officer for the Jewar airport, said the concession agreement was stipulated to be signed within 45 days of the security clearance for the project.

[10/06/20 PTI/Deccan Herald](#)

**The decision of IndiGo, India's largest airline, last week that it would continue to take delivery of new aircraft and balance it by returning the older A320ceo despite the current situation, raised many eyebrows.** Air traffic has plummeted to new lows and recovery isn't in sight yet, but IndiGo is trying hard to keep costs low.

From grounding of over 650 aircraft on March 25 to excess planes with airlines currently, airlines have come a long way in two months.

The move by some airlines from India to place record orders with both Airbus and Boeing will now haunt them because of the coronavirus lockdown. IndiGo, GoAir, Vistara and Spicejet have aircraft on order with Airbus and Boeing. While Air India does not have any aircraft on order, AirAsia India has not placed any order with any manufacturer directly with all its aircraft leased, a few coming in from its parent in Malaysia and other group subsidiaries and the rest coming in from open market lease. IndiGo has 332 A320neo on order along with 398 A321neo, some of which are the A321XLR – which is yet to have its first flight. With over 100 A320neos already in fleet and 17 A321neo in fleet, the airline has a backlog of 600+ aircraft. The Wadiah-backed Go Air had ordered 144 A320neos in two tranches of which the airline has taken delivery of 43 aircraft, with a hundred more yet to be delivered.

[10/06/20 Ameya Josh/Moneycontrol.com](#)

**New Delhi: The aviation regulator DGCA on Wednesday asked airlines to do meticulous inspection of door seals of their planes as per the procedures set up by aircraft manufacturers to avoid mid-air pressurization snags. The regulator said there have been few cases where an aircraft observed mid-air pressurization snags on consecutive flights and only then the airline identified the problem as "seal failure" and rectified it.**

Aircraft have sophisticated air control systems to ensure sufficient oxygen flow and pressure inside it. If there is a decompression due to seal failure, passengers and crew members could suffer from hypoxia, which may turn fatal.

**"Number of incidents occur every year involving aircraft failure to pressurise after take-off or cabin pressurization failure during flight. At time such failures had serious consequences," the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) said. These incidents were due to several reasons, including faulty or damaged door and window seals, cracked windows or improperly closed doors and improper operational procedure, it noted.**

"The maintenance programme prescribes procedure for the inspection of door seal condition. However, the investigations have revealed that in few cases pressurization snag occurred in number of sectors operated by the aircraft before they were finally identified as seal failure and rectified," the DGCA stated.

[10/06/20 PTI/Times of India](#)

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[10/06/20 PTI/Deccan Herald](#)