

## Revue de presse février 2020

**The only two Indian carriers that fly to China -- IndiGo and Air India-- on Wednesday announced suspension of most of their flights to that country, while India has requested China for permission to operate two flights to bring back its nationals from Hubei province which has been sealed after the deadly coronavirus outbreak.**

A fresh travel advisory asking people to refrain from travelling to China has been issued by the Union government which has ramped up screening across airports, ports and borders, as the virus spread to at least 17 countries.

No case of the novel coronavirus has been detected in India, though hundreds of people remain under observation in many states including as many as 806 in Kerala, according to officials.

With several airlines based in Asia, North America and Europe restricting operations to the region, the Indian carriers too followed suit.

The country's largest airline IndiGo said it has suspended its flights on Bengaluru-Hong Kong route from February 1 and on the Delhi-Chengdu route from February 1 to 20.

Similarly, state-run Air India is suspending its flights on Delhi-Shanghai route from January 31 to February 14 and reducing the frequency on Delhi-Hong Kong route to thrice-weekly only in the same time period.

IndiGo will, for now, continue to operate the Kolkata-Guangzhou flight which it is "monitoring on a daily basis".

The crew of the two airlines working on flights connecting India with South East Asian countries have been asked to wear N95 masks on ground and take other precautions like not visiting public places.

British Airways, Indonesia's Lion Air Group, Cathay Pacific, United Airlines and Air Canada are among the carriers that have reportedly suspended or restricted flights to China, with many citing reduction in demand due to coronavirus outbreak.

The disease which emerged in Wuhan, capital of China's Hubei Province, has spread to at least 17 countries, with the United Arab Emirates announcing on Wednesday its first case of the new coronavirus in a family from Wuhan.

The death toll from the disease in China has mounted to 132 with about 6,000 confirmed infections.

India has requested China for permission to operate two flights to bring back its nationals from Hubei Province, the Ministry of External Affairs said Wednesday.

The Indian Embassy in Beijing on Wednesday circulated registration forms and consent notes for the Indians in Hubei province to be filled by them.

It has appealed to Indian citizens in Hubei who have not yet contacted the mission to do so on the given hotlines or dedicated email ID.

Air India has kept a 423-seater jumbo plane ready in Mumbai to airlift Indian citizens from Hubei.

In Kerala, out of 806 people under observation, 10 are in isolation wards in hospitals, while the rest

are in home quarantine.

Twenty seven people are under observation, including 10 at hospitals in Mumbai, Pune and Nanded.

In Madhya Pradesh, 50-year-old woman and her 20-year-old son who were admitted in a hospital in Ujjain for possible exposure to novel Coronavirus tested negative for the deadly pathogen.

A man, who was found with symptoms of coronavirus in Jaipur, also tested negative and 18 other who were under observation in Rajasthan were also in good health, officials said.

The Union Health Ministry has also asked people to use 24x7 helpline (011-23978046) for queries related to respiratory infection.

"In the view of the spurt of cases being reported in China and travel related cases appearing in many countries....all non-essential travel to China to be avoided," it said.

As part of the preparedness, India has also increased the number of airports from seven to 21 where thermal screening of passengers is being done for a possible exposure to the deadly nCoV.

These include airports at Gaya, Guwahati, Visakhapatnam, Varanasi, Goa, Bhubaneswar and Lucknow besides the seven designated airports identified earlier.

The health ministry also has established four more laboratories apart from the NIV-Pune for testing samples. These labs have been made functional at Alleppey, Bengaluru, Hyderabad and Mumbai.

Special Secretary in the Union Health Ministry Sanjeeva Kumar held a meeting health secretaries of states where the 21 identified airports are located along with the Airport Health Organization Officers (APHOs) to review their preparedness for prevention and management of novel coronavirus.

During the video-conference, he also interacted with health secretaries of the states, including those bordering Nepal (Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, West Bengal and Sikkim), an official statement said.

The immigration and other staff members at the airports have been sensitized and dedicated ambulances are placed at the airports. Deployment of medical and para-medical staff is also being done for round-the-clock service, it said.

Meanwhile, India is placed at the 23rd place among "high-risk" countries where the disease can spread, according to a study based on the number of air travellers predicted to arrive in the countries from the worst affected cities in China.

Researchers from the University of Southampton in the UK compiled a list of cities and countries they believe are at high risk from the 2019 novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV)

The most "at risk" countries or regions worldwide are Thailand (1), Japan (2), and Hong Kong (3). The US is 6th on the list, Australia 10th and the UK 17th.

Novel coronavirus (nCoV) is a large family of viruses that causes illnesses ranging from common cold to acute respiratory syndromes. The virus, which has killed 132 people and affected at least 6,000 others in China, is a novel strain not seen before.

The AYUSH Ministry has also issued an advisory recommending that homeopathic and unani

medicine could be effective in the prevention of novel coronavirus (nCoV) infection.

It also mentioned some Ayurvedic practices which can help recess the symptoms of respiratory tract in possible coronavirus infected cases.

"The Ministry of AYUSH is issuing the advisory as preventive measure and not claiming to be a treatment advice for the nCoV infection. The Research Councils under Ministry of AYUSH are involved in various public health activities and provide lifestyle advocacies time to time for the general public," the ministry said in a statement.

New Delhi, Jan 29 (PTI)

Ministry of Health and Family Welfare

**Update on Novel Coronavirus: one positive case reported in Kerala**

One positive case of Novel Coronavirus patient, of a student studying in Wuhan University, has been reported in Kerala.

The patient has tested positive for Novel Coronavirus and is in isolation in the hospital.

The patient is stable and is being closely monitored.

Advice for travellers returning from China

All you need to know to protect yourself and your family

An outbreak of Novel Coronavirus is on-going in China and exported cases have been reported from other countries internationally. Coronaviruses cause illness ranging from common cold to more severe diseases such as Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS)-CoV and Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS-CoV).

What are the symptoms?

Fever, Cough, Difficulty in breathing are common symptoms

How to protect yourself and others from getting sick?

If you have recently travelled to China (within last 14 days) or had possible contact with an nCoV infected person, it is advised to:

- Stay in home isolation for 14 days after your return
  - Sleep in a separate room
  - Limit contact with other family members and avoid visitors
- Cover nose and mouth when coughing and sneezing
- Avoid close contact with anyone with cold or flu like symptoms (maintain a distance of at least 1 meter from any individual)
- Everyone at home should maintain hand hygiene at all times and wash hands:

- After sneezing or coughing
  - When caring for sick
  - Before, during and after you prepare food
  - Before eating
  - After toilet use
  - When hands are dirty
  - After handling animals or animal waste
- In case you develop fever, cough or difficulty in breathing anytime within 28 days of return from China:
    - Call at Ministry of Health, Govt. of India's control room no +91-11-2397 8046 for further information
    - Wear a mask immediately and report to nearest medical facility as advised

PIB 30/01/2020

**New Delhi: Shareholders of InterGlobe Aviation, the parent company of Indigo airline, on Wednesday rejected a special resolution of co-promoter Rakesh Gangwal to amend the company's Articles of Association (AoA). Gangwal had sought removal of articles pertaining to transfer and acquisition of the company's shares, including 'Right of First Refusal' and 'Tag Along Right'.**

"The Special Resolution has not been passed as the votes cast in favour (48.55 per cent) of the resolution are less than three times the number of votes cast against (51.44 per cent) the resolution," InterGlobe Aviation said in a BSE filing after the extraordinary general meeting held here on Wednesday.

Rahul Bhatia and affiliates -- InterGlobe Enterprises (IGE) Group -- has around 38 per cent stake in the company and Rakesh Gangwal and his related entities own around 36.64 per cent stake.

As per the AoA, if any member of Rahul Bhatia-led IGE Group wants to transfer shares to a third party, then the non-transferring group will have the 'Right of First Refusal' subject to certain conditions.

Similarly, the non-transferring group will also have the 'Tag Along Right' wherein it would have the option to sell some part of the shareholding.

The differences between co-founders and co-promoters -- Rakesh Gangwal and Rahul Bhatia -- came to the fore in July 2019 after Gangwal sought market regulator Sebi's intervention to address alleged corporate governance lapses at the company. In the wake of the feud, arbitration proceedings are also going overseas between the two promoters' sides.

The Economic times of India 29/01/2020

**IndiGo shareholders have rejected amending the Article of Association, according to reports,**

Reports suggest that shareholders were upset with Rakesh Gangwal's absence from the meeting. He had called for the shareholders meeting to amend the Article of Association.

IndiGo held its extraordinary general Meeting (EGM) today to discuss deletion of rules that make it tough for the main shareholders to sell or buy shares in the company. But for the resolution to be approved, Gangwal needed the support of Rahul Bhatia-led group who holds 38.3 per cent along with family in the airline's holding company Inter Globe Aviation.

**The shareholder agreement had expired on November 10, 2019. The shareholders' agreement between Rakesh Gangwal and Rahul Bhatia gave the Right of First Refusal to both the promoters on each others' shares. The shareholders' agreement also contained the tag along clause that allowed a minority shareholder to exit along with a major shareholder who is selling his stake in the company.**

The provisions of the agreement expired on the fourth anniversary of the IPO, that is, on November 10, 2019, except the clause that granted Rahul Bhatia controlling rights over the airline. The Article of Association needed to be amended to reflect the expiry of shareholders' agreement and for removal of Right of First Refusal.

Differences between the promoters cropped up when Gangwal had raised questions over corporate governance practices at IndiGo alleging violation of Related Party rules by fellow promoter Rahul Bhatia-led group.

The Economic times of India 29/01/2020

**Mumbai: IndiGo and Air India have cancelled some flights to China as the count of people affected by the Coronavirus piled up.**

"We have seen a high number of cancellations from China on our Delhi-Chengdu route," said IndiGo in a statement.

"Therefore, we are suspending our flights between Delhi and Chengdu from February 01, 2020 until February 20, 2020. We are also suspending our Bengaluru- Hong Kong flight effective February 01, 2020," it added.

IndiGo said it will continue to operate the Kolkata-Guangzhou flight which it is" monitoring on a daily basis".

An Air India spokesperson said its Mumbai-Delhi-Shanghai flight has been cancelled from January 31 to February 14. He however added its flight to Hong Kong will continue to operate.

Meanwhile global reports said the cases of illness due to the virus have mounted to 6,000. The virus is also showing signs of spreading overseas with people who haven't visited China falling ill in countries such as Japan, Vietnam and Germany, the reports said.

The Economic Times of India 29/01/2020

**Mumbai: State Bank of India (SBI) has taken over as the lead financier for India's costliest airport project planned to be set up in Navi Mumbai, said multiple people aware of the development.**

SBI has agreed to disburse a term loan and facilitate the much-delayed financial closure of the Rs 16,000-crore Navi Mumbai International Airport, to be built by the GVK Power & Infra-led consortium that runs the commercial capital's current airport, which is India's second busiest and most congested.

SBI would be the lead bank for two phases of the project. It will be contributing about Rs 4,000 crore-4,500 crore in the total loan funding of more than Rs 10,000 crore. A few additional domestic financiers could also participate.

People in the know also said that China's Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) has been approached for the funding. It couldn't be ascertained whether AIIB has agreed to be one of the bankers.

Yes Bank, which is facing considerable liquidity problems, was earlier the lead financier of the project.

Emails sent to GVK and SBI remained unanswered. An AIIB spokesperson declined to comment.

GVK Power & Infra has been trying various routes, including the bond market, to raise funds for the Navi Mumbai airport project. Arranging funds was also difficult as many lenders were unsure about the viability of the much-delayed project that has faced land acquisition issues. Besides, GVK that won the contract in 2017 also has sizeable debt on its balance sheet.

While SBI's participation gives a new lease of life to the project, the delay already caused will likely push the first take-off deadline by at least two years beyond 2021, said multiple people aware of the situation.

Meanwhile Larsen & Toubro (L&T), the infra arm of which has been given the EPC contract for the airport, hasn't been given a final letter of approval to start work. Construction was supposed to start in October.

"L&T will take at least six months to start work after getting the final letter of approval. From then, the first phase will take two years to be completed," said one of the people cited above.

L&T did not respond to ET's mailed queries.

Earlier this year, GVK got into binding agreements to sell close to an 80% stake in its wholly owned airports business to ADIA, NIIF and PSP for Rs 7,614 crore.

GVK plans to use the money to retire debt and also to buy additional stake in MIAL from its partners South African firm Bid Services Division Mauritius or Bidvest (13.5%) and the Airports Company of South Africa (10%), taking its stake to 74%. The remaining 26% is with state-run Airports Authority of India (AAI). Adani Group is also keen on the Bidvest stake.

**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 of land in phases. The initial concession period is 30 years from the appointed date and is extendable for a further 10 years.**

[The Economic Times of India 29/01/2020](#)

**MUMBAI: The Supreme Court (SC) on Tuesday directed a Bidvest Group company to go to the Delhi High Court to challenge an arbitration tribunal's interim order that restrained it from transferring its stake in Mumbai International Airport (MIAL) to any third party until further order.**

A division bench of Justices R Bhanumathi and AS Bopanna observed that under the law, petitioner Bid Services Division (Mauritius) has to go to the high court first before approaching the top court.

The court has also directed the Delhi High Court to hear the matter and pass its ruling expeditiously.

**In March last year, Bidvest had entered into an agreement with Adani Group to sell its entire 13.5% stake in Mumbai International Airport (MIAL) for Rs 1,248 crore.**

**GVK Airport Holdings, which owns majority stake in MIAL, had then opted to exercise its right of first refusal and buy Bidvest's stake, but it failed to complete the deal within the prescribed time limit.**

Subsequently, Bidvest decided to sell its stake to Adani, while GVK Group approached the Delhi High Court and the SC to stop the deal.

In December, the SC had directed the arbitration panel to decide the case. The tribunal comprising retired Justices Madan B Lokur, KPS Radhakrishnan and AK Patnaik stayed the stake sale in an interim order issued on January 19.

Bidvest is now challenging it.

A GVK spokesperson claimed that the Hyderabad-based infrastructure company has "always been ready to buy" Bidvest's stake in MIAL. "It is Bidvest which has not acted as per the shareholders agreement and is now restrained by the tribunal," the person alleged in an email response to ET. "We are and have always been ready to conclude the transaction with Bidvest and will do so when they start acting as required by the shareholders agreement."

Email queries to Bidvest remained unanswered as of press time on Tuesday.

"If Bidvest wants to appeal against it, then it must follow the due process of law in terms of Section 37 of the Arbitration Act 1996," the GVK spokesperson said.

Currently, GVK owns around 50.5% in Mumbai International Airport, while Bidvest and another South African investor ACSA Global collectively own 23.5% and the remaining stake is with the Airports Authority of India (AAI).

The Economic Times of India 29/01/2020

**MUMBAI : With Air India preparing to operate flights to evacuate Indians from Wuhan in the wake of the coronavirus epidemic, a pilots' union of the carrier on Wednesday said the airline cannot afford any mistakes and risk spreading the infection.** In a letter to Air India chief Ashwani Lohani, the Indian Pilots' Guild (IPG) said the mission would be quite different from usual rescue and relief efforts, and presents new challenges as well as obstacles to overcome.

"... due to the long incubation period of this virus, post mission support for all personnel and equipment involved in this mission is crucial well after the completion of a flight," it said.

The union has around 600 members.

Two flights are set to be operated to bring back Indian nationals from China's Hubei province, the epicentre of the coronavirus outbreak.

Ministry of External Affairs Spokesperson Raveesh Kumar said the Chinese government has been requested for permission to operate these two flights.

"Given the complex and dangerous nature of this situation, it would be best if the operating crew is accompanied by the ablest and most experienced members from relevant departments like engineering, commercial and medical to ensure the best on ground support to accomplish this mission safely," the union said.

Noting that the airline cannot afford any mistakes and risk spreading the infection, the union said meticulous screening and isolation protocols at both ends of the flight are required.

"All staff and operating crew involved in the exercise need to be given the best protective equipment available and training to keep all men and material safe during the flight," it added.

As many as 132 people have died in China due to the outbreak and there are around 6,000 confirmed infections.

[The Economic Times of India 30/01/2020](#)

**NEW DELHI | MUMBAI: Several Indian carriers banned standup comedian Kunal Kamra for heckling television anchor Arnab Goswami after aviation minister Hardeep Puri asked them to follow IndiGo's example in a tweet.** The airlines were also acting on verbal directions from ministry officials, said people with knowledge of the matter.

**The minister told ET he'd called for a ban as the video evidence was clear and Kamra's actions posed a safety threat. Under the rules, any allegation of midair misbehaviour by passengers has to be investigated by an internal committee set up by the carrier concerned. Based on the findings, the aviation regulator places a person on a no-fly list and other airlines follow suit.**

"In this incident, the guy is shooting a video of the person — Arnab in this case, but it can be anyone — and trying to instigate him and even going to the extent of using fourletter words," the minister told ET. "The person kept quiet in this case, but if the other person got instigated and there was a case of fisticuffs inside the aircraft, it could have become a safety issue. The airline must have done their internal inquiry & took a decision."

He added: "As far the issue of rules is concerned, they are that airlines hold an inquiry upon the complaint of a pilot-in-command before banning anyone. That is to ensure that the airlines do not ban passengers arbitrarily. This case, however, is totally different, as there is a video proof."

AirAsia, Vistara await written directive

After IndiGo banned Kamra for six months on Tuesday, state-owned Air India imposed an indefinite ban the same evening. Lowfare carriers SpiceJet and GoAir followed on Wednesday with indefinite bans. Executives at AirAsia and Vistara said they would wait for a written directive from the government before taking action. Some experts said the ban was excessive for the degree of offence that may have been committed.

**The Civil Aviation Rule (CAR) on such offences "is explicit," a Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) official told ET. "The airlines will have to follow procedures. IndiGo will have to form a committee and decide on Kamra."**

Executives at the carriers that imposed bans said government officials had asked them to take note of the minister's tweet and ban Kamra.

"It's the minister's order. Even if it's in the form of a tweet, we have to follow," said an executive.

An Air India spokesman said its internal committee is looking into the incident and had banned Kamra in the interim. An AirAsia spokesperson said, "Our internal committee is reviewing this case and a decision will be taken soon. We will take action as per due processes."

Another executive said no other carrier can impose interim bans on a passenger until the relevant



airline issues an investigation report.

Kamra had heckled Goswami on an IndiGo flight on Tuesday and tweeted a video of the incident. IndiGo then tweeted that it was banning Kamra for six months. #Kunalkarma trended on Twitter in India with users split down the middle.

Congress politician Shashi Tharoor backed Kamra.

“The truth is that it was time someone gave him (Goswami) a taste of his own medicine,” he tweeted. “These are the words he regularly uses to berate his innocent victims, except he does so in a hectoring, bullying manner & at higher volume & pitch than @kunalkamra88 does in this video.”

The truth is that it was time someone gave him a taste of his own medicine. These are the words he regularly uses t... <https://t.co/Q2tMITEHYg>

&mdash; Shashi Tharoor (@ShashiTharoor) 1580216439000

Kamra was cited by the BBC as saying “It's not shocking at all to me that for exercising my right to speech, three airlines have given me a temporary ban.” He said he had followed the orders of the cabin crew and the only “damage” he had caused was to Goswami's “inflated ego.”

The comedian told ET he didn't want to make further comment. “I have made statements on various social media channels and do not have anything else to add,” he said.

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**Nothing Funny**

Experts say <b>Kunal Kamra's</b> actions can be categorised as a 'level-1 offence'	<b>6-month ban</b> applies to physically abusive behaviour	<b>IndiGo</b> has banned Kamra for 6 months
This includes unruly behaviour, physical gestures, verbal harassment, unruly inebriation, etc	This includes pushing, kicking, hitting, grabbing or inappropriate touching or sexual harassment, etc	<b>AI, GoAir and SpiceJet</b> have banned him for an indefinite period
Such an offence, if proven after a probe, calls for a <b>three-month ban</b>		

Safety aspect

An airline executive said there had been no official communication as of Wednesday evening, apart from the minister's tweet.

“There is no communication from the government on this and the rules say that any ban can happen only after the enquiry is complete,” he said. “The video of the incident is not explicit on whether the act of Kamra, who is heard instigating journalist Arnab Goswami in the flight, endangered the safety of the flight or not.

The minister said this had no similarity with an incident in which Bharatiya Janata Party lawmaker Pragya Singh Thakur is said to have delayed a SpiceJet flight because she didn't get the seat she had chosen.

“In that case, it was a seat allocation issue between the MP and the airline and was later dealt with,”

Puri told ET. “This case, however, is totally different because one person has heckled another passenger inside the aircraft.”

The rules call for airline staff to “observe potential signs of unruly behaviour” and act on them in the initial stages rather than waiting for an escalation. In a statement, Kamra said he went back to his seat once he was asked to do so by the cabin crew.

If an airline gets a complaint from the flight commander, it may be referred to an internal committee, which then has to investigate and decide on the matter within 30 days. Pending the report, the person may be banned from flying for up to 30 days. If the committee fails to come up with findings in the stipulated time, the person can fly again.

To be sure, a serious offence that jeopardises flight safety may lead to a police report and arrest of the offender once the flight lands. Kamra wasn’t arrested. IndiGo imposed the ban hours after he tweeted the video and it went viral on social media.

Experts said that Kamra’s actions can be categorised as a Level 1 offence, which includes unruly behaviour, physical gestures, verbal harassment, unruly inebriation etc. Such an offence, if proven after the investigation, calls for a three-month ban. A sixmonth ban applies to physically abusive behaviour, which includes “pushing, kicking, hitting, grabbing or inappropriate touching or sexual harassment etc.,” according to civil aviation rules.

The Economic times of India 30/01/2020

**This is the third matrimonial classified seeking a rich groom for Air India. The last two attempts drew a blank. The dowry expected, along with restrictive terms, scared away suitors. The government thought grooms would line up to marry into a stifling joint family and take on all the liabilities.**

It has now dawned on them that the idea was delusional. In the new proposed terms, broadly, GoI wishes to offer 100% equity for sale of the airline and has wisely bundled Air India Express (the LCC arm) along with engineering and other subsidiaries. It has excluded all the real estate assets across the country including the prime Air India building in Mumbai. But there’s an astronomical debt of Rs 23,000 crore which is part of the bid.

This is where it may become unattractive and cumbersome. While the debts are determinate, the assets are not. Most aircraft are on lease and many other high value assets including aircraft which have been purchased over the years will be of questionable asset value. There are allegations of corruption and investigations by CBI and other agencies. It will, therefore, be a well high impossible task for the bidders to complete due diligence in a short time frame to get a realistic asset value.

It’s not too late to tweak the final tender conditions. The aviation ministry can announce it’s open to suggestions and could modify the tender conditions after a pre-bid meeting. The failed bid of Jet Airways is an eye opener. It was impossible for any bidder to get a real fix on the airline’s assets and liabilities in a short span of time as many contracts were layered.

Though Air India has lost its sheen, it is still a much loved brand and has huge potential value that can be unlocked by the right strategic investor. It has a vast domestic and global network to key destinations, assured time slots and space in prized airports with airside access, hangars, engineering backbone and infrastructure, trained engineers and flight crew, bilateral rights and assurance of continued protection of those rights (as was done when British Airways, Lufthansa and Qantas were privatised).

Here are some more suggestions that may attract bidders. The bidding process must be a global, open, transparent electronic tender. The shortlisted bidders must first deposit the reserve price in an escrow and the bidding must commence and end within six to eight hours. It must not be a closed 'sealed envelope' bid, which, apart from being vulnerable to malpractice, won't get the best price. It should be an open auction where each bidder can increase the bid price after viewing the offer price of other bidders. As Air India is not listed, this is the best way for true price discovery. The Tatas acquired Corus Steel in this manner.

But to get the highest valuation possible, GoI will do well to hold pre-tender meetings after expression of interest is finalised, listen attentively and understand bidder apprehensions. This is key to attracting the highest number of bidders.

Air India is overstaffed and the total may be more than 30,000 if you include all the contracted employees. The new owner must be allowed to retain only the minimum number of employees per aircraft needed as determined by him. This will be a 'no go' item with bidders, as Air India is overstaffed with indiscriminate recruitment over decades. The staff strength per aircraft in IndiGo is around 70 as against about 470 in Air India. That's many times higher. To be fair, the government must settle laid off employees through an attractive VRS by selling off some of the real estate assets.

One last thing can be considered. The successful bidder should mandatorily be made to list Air India on the stock exchange within 36 months of takeover, prescribing minimum levels of Indian public holding of the stock so that it continues being looked up to as a national carrier. This will allay unfounded fears of selling the family silver.

If the auction is marketed and managed well, Air India will entice many suitors. And someone will surely take the risk and tie the knot.

The writer is the founder of Air Deccan and a retired Captain of the Indian army  
[The Economic Times of India 30/01/2020](#)

### **Airlines around the world altered their schedules because of the Wuhan coronavirus outbreak, significantly curtailing flying to/from China.**

The range of airline reactions varies widely. Some are cancelling all flights to China, while others are only stopping flights to the part of the country most affected. In some cases, the changes are for public health reasons, and in others, the capacity reductions reflect plummeting demand as people cancel travel plans. The situation is fluid—airlines are considering making route adjustments and are likely to announce more changes soon.

"WHO has been working with Chinese authorities and global experts from the day we were informed, to learn more about the virus, how it affects the people who are sick with it, how they can be treated, and what countries can do to respond," the World Health Organization said in a statement. "Not enough is known about the epidemiology of 2019-nCoV to draw definitive conclusions about the full clinical features of disease, the intensity of the human-to-human transmission, and the original source of the outbreak."

The aviation industry must continue to learn from past lessons and work together to curb the spread of the Wuhan coronavirus, said Association of Asia Pacific Airlines (AAPA) director general Andrew Herdman.

Lufthansa, Austrian Airlines and SWISS became the latest carriers to stop all flights to China, following British Airways and Lion Air.

Herdman noted industry's efforts in suspending flights are not necessarily a result of banning passenger travel to China, but are adjustments in capacity based on the public's rapidly falling demand for travel to China. He stressed that the WHO has not yet recommended a travel ban and added the aviation industry has robust procedures in place to screen passengers.

"Air travel does not cause more virus cases, but rather disperses the cases further," he said, pointing out that the Spanish flu killed 40 million people around the globe in 1918 even before the advent of air travel.

Herdman suggested that instead of arrival screening, which is currently in place in most airports, exit screening would more effective in capturing passengers with symptoms and preventing the spread, based on studies following the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) epidemic.

"It appears that we have to relearn that lesson," Herdman said.

Korean Air has suspended four Chinese routes from Seoul, and one each from Jeju and Busan. Frequencies will be reduced on five other Chinese routes. These changes will take effect Feb. 2. Korean Air had already suspended its Seoul-Wuhan route until Jan. 31 and has now extended this until March 27.

Like some other airlines, Korean Air is making changes to inflight services. This includes switching to disposable cutlery on Chinese routes, and items such as pillows and blankets will not be provided. Measures for staff include a recommendation that cabin crew wear masks and plastic gloves on all routes, and cancelling crew layovers in Kunming and Guangzhou in China.

Many airlines are taking similar steps for inflight services. Similarly, several are waiving fees for those changing travel plan to China.

Lufthansa, Austrian Airlines and SWISS are among the latest carriers to stop all flights to China, following British Airways and Lion Air.

Thai Airways and Japan Airlines (JAL) are continuing to operate Chinese flights for now. JAL does not have a flight to Wuhan, but it is believed to be evaluating its Chinese network. The airline has directed cabin crew to wear face masks on international and domestic flights. All Nippon Airways has suspended its Wuhan flight, but as of now has not taken similar steps with its other China flights.

Russia's Ural Airlines has stopped flights from its base at Yekaterinburg International Airport to Munich, Paris and Rome, as well as its Vladivostok-Sapporo flight, the carrier said Jan. 29. This is because the routes were popular with travel groups from China, the carrier said, and it had to cancel them after the Chinese government banned international group travel from Jan. 27. Ural also suspended four of its routes to China, but continues to operate flights to Beijing and Harbin.

Other Russian airlines also made changes. Azur Air suspended flights from seven cities to the Chinese resort city Sanya and Yakutia Airline stopped a Sanya route. S7 Airlines and Aeroflot have not announced any flight suspensions yet.

Many other European airlines have reduced their Chinese flights. French media is reporting that Air France has reduced its frequencies to Beijing and Shanghai as a result of lower demand.

Meanwhile, many countries are continuing to conduct special evacuation flights for their citizens trapped in Chinese cities subject to quarantine.

The US State Department has issued a “Level 4: do not travel” warning for the province of Hubei, where Wuhan is located. The US government has evacuated all non-essential personnel from China.

American Airlines, Delta Air Lines and United Airlines are still serving Beijing and Shanghai, but are rolling back China capacity, citing a severe lack of demand.

State and national governments are considering stopping flights from China. The Malaysian state of Sabah has announced that it will ban all scheduled and charter flights from China with immediate effect. The primary airport in Sabah is Kota Kinabalu International Airport, with AirAsia, China Southern, Malaysia Airlines, Malindo Air and Xiamen Air operating flights from there to Mainland China.

“Although this suspension will have repercussions on the state’s tourism industry, the government is seriously concerned about the health and welfare of Sabahans, and we want to avoid the risk of exposing our people to any possible carrier of the novel coronavirus infection,” said deputy chief minister Christina Liew.

[Routes online 30/01/2020](#)

**The European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) announced on Jan. 29 that it is no longer recommending that European airlines avoid all overflights of Iran and Iraq—precautionary steps it advised following a missile attack by Iran earlier in the month.**

The temporary recommendations issued by EASA and the European Commission on Jan. 8 for Iraq and Jan. 11 for Iran were withdrawn after the Integrated EU Aviation Security Risk Assessment Group met Jan. 28 to assess the most recent information affecting commercial air transport, the safety agency said.

Based on that information, the group “reaffirmed the position” stated in current Conflict Zone Information Bulletins (CZIB) regarding the use of the airspace of the two countries, EASA said.

CZIB-2017-04R5 for Iraq advises that airlines to avoid overflights of Iraq except in two specific air corridors. CZIB-2020-01R0 for Iran advises against overflights of Iran at altitudes below 25,000 feet.

Recommendations to avoid all overflights of the two countries were issued after Iran launched ballistic missiles at two Iraqi military bases hosting U.S. forces on Jan. 8, injuring 50 American service members.

An Iranian surface-to-air missile later downed a Ukraine International Airlines’ Boeing 737-800 after it departed Imam Khomeini International Airport in Tehran, killing all 176 people on board.

On Jan. 27, US FAA issued a third clarifying Notice to Airmen (Notam A0012/20) specifying which airspace it has restricted over the Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman following emergency Notams the agency issued banning all of the airspace, including over Iran and Iraq.

"This new Notam represents a loosening of the total airspace ban on the Persian Gulf and Gulf of Oman initially applied by FAA shortly after the Iranian missile strike," said the Ops Group aviation reporting organization. "It will provide some welcome relief to US operators trying to operate to the major airports in the region."

Routes online 30/01/2020

**MUMBAI: The decision of central government to grant 100% tax exemptions for sovereign wealth funds for their investments in infrastructure sector is expected to give a boost to the infra investments in India. Besides the exemption, abolition of dividend distribution tax (DDT) is also will give benefits to the global yield-seeking infrastructure investors in India.**

On Saturday, finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman had announced the tax exemption for infrastructure investments in India.

"In order to incentivise the investment by the Sovereign Wealth Fund of foreign governments in the priority sectors, I propose to grant 100% tax exemption to their interest, dividend and capital gains income in respect of investment made in infrastructure and other notified sectors before 31st March, 2024 and with a minimum lock-in period of 3 years," said Finance Minister in her budget speech.

India requires enormous investments in infrastructure sector that could be more than \$1 trillion over the next 4 years.

Apart from The National Investment and Infrastructure Fund (NIIF) - the country's only sovereign wealth fund, India has already seen a large pool of infrastructure investments by global sovereign wealth funds such as Singapore based GIC, Temasek Holdings and Middle East based Abu Dhabi Investment Authority.

"A number of SWFs are already significantly invested or are considering investing in the Indian infrastructure sector. The announcement of 100% tax concession to SWFs on investment in infrastructure projects along with the concessional tax rate for power generation companies is significantly positive for new investments in the sector," said Rahul Mody, managing director & head of infrastructure at Ambit Corporate Finance.

NIIF is India's first sovereign wealth fund that was set up by the Government of India in February 2015. It manages over \$4 billion of capital commitments across three funds.

Finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman has also announced abolition of dividend distribution tax (DDT).

"The global yield-seeking infrastructure investors in India will be benefited with the abolition of DDT. Also, the budget is pretty complimentary from infrastructure point of view," said a fund manager with a global infra fund.

ADIA, the world's third-biggest sovereign wealth fund with assets under management (AUM) worth \$700 billion, has been active in several India-focused Private Equity funds as a limited partner or investor, and invested directly in various infrastructure companies recently.

Last year, ADIA and GIC invested about \$329 million in Greenko Energy, a Hyderabad-based renewable energy company. In March 2019, ADIA had committed \$500 million to a new distressed fund backed by Kotak Investment Advisors, the alternative investments arm of Kotak Mahindra Bank.

**Last year, ADIA and NIIF agreed to buy a 49% stake in the airport unit of Indian conglomerate GVK**

**Power & Infrastructure. ADIA also committed to invest \$1 billion in NIIF and an agreement had been signed between NIIF Master Fund and a wholly owned subsidiary of ADIA.**

**GIC and ADIA had injected \$2.2 billion into the company. GIC owns majority stake in the company while ADIA holds a 16% stake.** Last month, GIC owned Greenko, had announced its plans to buy a stake in Teesta Urja Ltd, which operates a 1,200 megawatt (MW) power plant in North Sikkim.

Similarly, Temasek Holdings Pte. has been actively pursuing various infrastructure investment opportunities in India.

Last month, Temasek along with European alternative asset manager EQT have set up O2 Power, a \$500-million renewable energy platform in India. O2 Power will fund both greenfield and brownfield ground-mounted projects in wind and solar electricity.

**The government will provide tax exemptions for a sovereign wealth fund which is wholly owned and controlled, directly or indirectly, by the Government of a foreign country and it is set up and regulated under the law of such foreign country.**

The Economic Times of India 01/02/2020

**Bientôt un an après la fin des opérations de Jet Airways, et alors qu’Air India prépare sa privatisation, les liaisons entre Europe et Inde se reconstruisent et Vistara pourrait bien saisir la balle au bond.**

La compagnie indienne fondée en 2015 et dont une des deux maisons mères n’est autre que Singapore Airlines (l’autre étant Tata Sons) prévoit d’ajouter au moins 6 Boeing 787 neufs cette année à sa flotte, les premiers devant arriver en février et mars 2020.

Un seul but à cette expansion : ouvrir des premières lignes vers l’Europe, d’après ce que révèle le site spécialisé CH Aviation.

Et si London Heathrow semble être sa priorité, **une ligne entre New-Delhi et Paris devrait également voir le jour dans les mois à venir. De fait, depuis ce début d’année, Vistara est représenté en France par APG.**

La compagnie relie déjà 34 villes asiatiques, exploitant plus de 200 vols par jour avec une flotte de 31 Airbus A320 et 9 Boeing 737-800 repris à la suite de la faillite de Jet Airways. Elle transporte déjà 20 millions de passagers annuellement sur son réseau intérieur.

AirMag 30/01/2020

Publication du Plan 2020-2024 de la sécurité de l’aviation civile par l’EASA.

**Ce 20 janvier, l’EASA a mis en ligne son Plan pour la sécurité de l’aviation sur la période 2020-2024 (EPAS). Traitant de toutes les facettes liées de près ou de loin à l’aviation civile – de la gestion du trafic aérien aux menaces de cybersécurité en passant par les différents types d’aéronefs – ce document dresse un tableau de la sécurité pour l’aviation générale, en visant une « gestion des risques de manière proportionnée et efficace ».**

Pour l'EASA, « au cours des dernières années, les accidents dans le domaine des avions légers de loisirs, c'est-à-dire des aéronefs non commerciaux dont la masse maximale au décollage est inférieure à 5.700 kg, ont enregistré en moyenne 86 morts par an en Europe (sur la base des chiffres 2008-2017, à l'exclusion des accidents mortels d'ULM, de planeurs et de ballons) » en faisant ainsi « l'un des secteurs de l'aviation où le nombre annuel de décès est le plus élevé. En 2018, il y a eu 49 accidents mortels causant 95 décès dans des opérations non commerciales avec des avions légers, et 16 accidents ayant fait 17 morts dans le domaine du vol à voile (la moyenne 2008-2017 est de 28,6 morts par an en Europe) ».

Pour l'EASA, l'année « 2018 semble montrer une amélioration pour les planeurs, et une détérioration pour les avions légers ». Mais « bien qu'il soit difficile de mesurer avec précision l'évolution des performances en matière de sécurité en aviation générale en raison du manque de données statistiques consolidées (par exemple, heures de vol accumulées), il est raisonnable de supposer que davantage d'initiatives et des efforts sont nécessaires pour atténuer les risques conduisant à ces décès ».

Après avoir dressé son auto-bilan en la matière (promotion de la sécurité notamment à travers des bandes dessinées Sunny Swift, mise en place d'un prix de la Sécurité, des ateliers de sensibilisation au « voir et être vu » mais aussi sur « la météo à basse altitude », une page Facebook « GA Safety Together »), l'Agence européenne entend mettre en place une « feuille de route » (Roadmap) version 2.0 pour l'aviation générale, en concentrant ses efforts « sur le renforcement du niveau de sécurité et une diminution des coûts grâce à l'innovation et à la technologie, et avec la mise en oeuvre de nouvelles réglementations ».

#### **Parmi les actions clés listées :**

- **Améliorer la diffusion du matériel de promotion et de formation en matière de sécurité par les autorités, les associations, les compagnies aériennes et les organismes de réglementation, les clubs, les compagnies d'assurance, en ciblant les instructeurs de vol et/ou les pilotes et en créant une plate-forme de promotion de la sécurité,**
- **Soutenir l'introduction de nouveaux modèles commerciaux (par exemple les plates-formes de partage des coûts),**
- **Adapter les règles de conception et de production pour qu'elles soient mieux proportionnées aux risques,**
- **Apporter des informations dans les cockpits : météo, services d'information de vol (FIS) et données d'information sur le trafic. L'EASA annonce que cela « devrait progressivement être disponible dans tous les cockpits de l'aviation générale » (c'est le cas depuis des décennies aux Etats-Unis et l'information météorologique est capitale pour la sécurité des vols...).**
- **Soutenir la mise en oeuvre de règlements nouveaux ou modifiés.**

Sur les 180 mesures d'action passées en revue dans ce Plan 2020-2024, certaines concernent ainsi l'aviation générale. En voici quelques-unes :

- **Instruction en vol : élaborer du matériel de promotion de la sécurité visant à utiliser plus efficacement et à maximiser les avantages en matière de sécurité des vols lors du renouvellement de la qualification de classe avec des examinateurs et de la prorogation avec des instructeurs de vol, y compris les différences entre les types d'avions.**
- **Diffusion des messages de sécurité : améliorer la diffusion du matériel de promotion et de formation à la sécurité par les autorités, les associations, les aéro-clubs, les compagnies d'assurance, en ciblant les instructeurs de vol et/ou les pilotes par des moyens tels que des ateliers de sécurité et des journées/soirées de sécurité.**
- **Promouvoir la culture de sécurité : les Autorités devraient inclure des dispositions visant à**



**faciliter et à promouvoir la culture de la sûreté (y compris la culture juste) en aviation générale dans le cadre de leurs activités de gestion de la sécurité de l'État afin de favoriser des comportements positifs en matière de sécurité et encourager le signalement des événements.**

**Un chapitre aborde des sujets tels que les « compétences de pilotage, la sensibilisation des pilotes et la gestion des positions inusuelles ou des décrochages au décollage, en vol, ou pendant l'approche et l'atterrissage, la préparation du vol, l'interruption du décollage et la remise des gaz ». La perte de contrôle intervient grandement dans les accidents, parmi les 409 événements enregistrés entre 2015 et 2017, d'où la volonté de l'EASA de poursuivre ses actions dans ce domaine.**

**Les problèmes liés à l'environnement météorologique sont cités ensuite, avec « l'entrée en IMC, les conditions de givrage, le givrage carburateur et le mauvais temps ».** Les conditions météorologiques constituent un facteur important d'accidents en aviation générale, les pilotes sous-estimant « les risques de changement des conditions météorologiques avant le décollage et pendant le vol, lorsque le temps se détériore. Le mauvais temps peut augmenter la charge de travail des pilotes et affecter la conscience de la situation et le pilotage de l'avion. La prise de décision peut également être compromise, car un biais de maintien du projet peut amener les pilotes à poursuivre leur route vers la destination prévue malgré des conditions météorologiques menaçantes ».

Sur ce point (Conscience des conditions météo de la part des pilotes), l'EASA entend « produire du matériel de promotion de la sécurité (vidéo) traitant de sujets tels que la sensibilisation aux conditions météorologiques, la préparation du vol, la gestion du vol et le débriefing, l'utilisation des services d'information de vol (FIS), l'intérêt d'utiliser des technologies modernes, notamment des systèmes d'information météorologique dans le cockpit (dont le GPS intégré), la communication avec le contrôle aérien (ATC), mais aussi sur entrée par inadvertance en conditions IMC, le TEM (gestion des erreurs et des menaces) ».

Pour promouvoir la pratique de l'IFR, l'EASA va lancer « une campagne de promotion de la sécurité pour faire connaître les résultats de groupe de travail RMT.0677 sur l'accès plus aisé au vol IFR afin de garantir que les avantages en matière de sécurité et d'efficacité se concrétisent dans l'ensemble de l'Europe et que la notation des instruments de base est largement adoptée en Europe ».

**Parmi les risques pris en compte figurent les collisions en vol. Un groupe de travail planche sur les systèmes anticollision et de sensibilisation au trafic pour les aéronefs de moins de 5.700 kg ou qui transportent moins de 19 passagers.** « Cette tâche comprendra une étude d'impact approfondie visant à évaluer le rapport coût-bénéfice des systèmes anticollision, ainsi que des systèmes destinés à améliorer la connaissance de la situation du pilote ».

**Les risques durant la gestion du vol sont également analysés (problèmes de navigation, gestion carburant, connaissance du relief et des obstacles, atterrissages forcés).** La plupart de ces accidents sont « le résultat des actions du pilote, y compris les décisions prises lors de la préparation du vol, ou en raison de changements de circonstances pendant le vol. Les décisions des pilotes, y compris leur capacité à établir des priorités, la charge de travail, affectent la sécurité de l'avion et la survie de ses occupants ». L'EASA poursuivra ses actions dans ce domaine, déjà entamées avec le précédent plan de sécurité.

Aero VFR 30/01/2020

**NEW DELHI : Civil aviation minister Hardeep Singh Puri and the aviation regulator on Wednesday defended the travel ban imposed on stand-up comic Kunal Kamra by four airlines before the institution of internal enquiries, but legal experts questioned the length of the ban and charged the airlines with failing to follow due process.**

IndiGo on Tuesday banned Kamra for six months for heckling news anchor Arnab Goswami. Air India, SpiceJet and GoAir banned him "until further notice" after a tweet by Puri urging other airlines to follow suit.

Puri said offensive behaviour on an aircraft was unacceptable and that authorities were "left with no option but to advise other airlines to impose similar restrictions on the person concerned". Puri told *Mint* on Wednesday that it was up to the airline to take steps to deal with unruly passengers.

"There are flight safety issues here. A scuffle could have broken out there. What was done (by Kamra) was in clear violation of air safety rules. Even inside a restaurant there are rules of admission. The act was designed to provoke. Subjecting anyone (in an aircraft that is in the air) to this type of offensive behaviour is unacceptable," said Puri.

"Misbehaviour inside the aircraft will not be tolerated. This will be the norm because this involves the central issue of air safety."

Director general of civil aviation Arun Kumar said in a statement that the action taken by the airlines was in "complete consonance" with the rules on handling unruly passengers.

The ruling of IndiGo's internal committee on such matters, to be given in 30 days, will be binding on the airline, Kumar said. "Punishment for different types of unruly behaviour is also prescribed in the same civil aviation requirements (CAR) and the internal committee has to adhere to the same," he added.

According to the rulebook, an airline is within its rights to impose a temporary ban during the period of the deliberations—capped at 30 days—by an internal panel led by a retired district and sessions judge. But IndiGo's six-month ban extended well beyond this limit, something lawyers said was not in order.

An email sent to IndiGo remained unanswered.

According to Sameer Jain, founder and managing partner of PSL Advocates and Solicitors, the travel bans by IndiGo and others were not justified as it appears from the timeline of events that the due process mandated by the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) was not followed. "At best he falls under a level 1 threat (verbal assault) as per the DGCA regulations," said Jain, adding that Kamra's fundamental right to travel was being violated.

DGCA classifies unruly passengers into three classes—those indulging in disruptive behaviour such as verbal harassment that warrants a three-month ban; those resorting to physically abusive behaviour warranting a six-month ban and those guilty of life-threatening behaviour warranting a ban of at least two years. People posing a national security threat are banned as long as the threat exists.

Monika Mehalwat, a former pilot and currently a lawyer, said the ban imposed by IndiGo is in clear violation of CAR. **"A temporary ban can be imposed for a maximum period of 30 days. Here the ban imposed by IndiGo is uncalled for and beyond the stipulated protocols. He could have been banned**

**for three months under level 1 for verbal unruly behaviour, but only after the committee held him guilty."**

**No airline is bound by the decision of other airlines but every airline has the right to decide its own list of passengers barred from its flights. It is in an option for them to ban the same person, who has been held unruly as per CAR provisions of CAR, she added.**

According to Ravi Kini, managing partner of MV Kini and Co., Kamra would fall in the first category of unruly behaviour.

Live Mint Aviation 29/01/2020

**KUALA LUMPUR : Malaysia's securities regulator said on Sunday it will examine whether AirAsia Group and unit AirAsia X broke securities laws, after UK prosecutors accused executives of receiving bribes from Airbus for buying planes.**

The allegations came to light on Friday when Airbus agreed a record \$4 billion settlement with France, Britain and the US.

Prosecutors said it had bribed public officials and hidden payments as part of a pattern of worldwide corruption. **Britain's Serious Fraud Office (SFO) said on Friday that between October 2013 and January 2015, Airbus's then-parent EADS paid \$50 million to sponsor a sports team that was jointly owned by two people described as AirAsia Executive 1 and Executive 2.**

The SFO said the executives were rewarded for an aircraft order from Airbus, an allegation AirAsia denied late on Saturday.

"The Securities Commission Malaysia will examine the allegations and review all available evidence to determine if there is any breach of securities laws," Syed Zaid Albar, the regulator's chairman, said in a statement.

Directors who act with the intent to cause wrongful loss to their listed firms can face jail or fines, he said.

Malaysia's anti-graft agency has already launched a separate investigation into the allegations.

Live Mint Aviation 02/02/2020

**The civil aviation ministry will launch 'Krishi UDAN' on domestic and international routes to support farmers, finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman said in her Union Budget speech on Saturday.**

"Krishi UDAN will be launched by the ministry of civil aviation on international and national routes. It will help increase value realization in North East and tribal districts," Sitharaman said in her Budget speech for 2020-21 (Apr-Mar).

UDAN (Ude Desh ka Aam Naagrik) is a regional connectivity scheme of the government which was launched in 2017 when Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated a Delhi-Shimla flight. The scheme aims to improve the connectivity of underserved and unserved destinations in India.

A total of 43 airports have been operationalized since the scheme for operationalizing unserved airports was taken up, of which four were done in FY 2019-20.

The move is part of a 16-point programme of the Narendra Modi government to boost farm income.

Today, Sitharaman also announced that Indian railways will launch Kisan Rail under a public-private partnership as part of a government programme to boost farm income.

"To build a seamless national cold supply chain for perishable good inclusive of meat and fish, Indian Railways will set up Kisan Rail via PPP mode," Sitharaman said in her Budget speech.

Under the scheme, refrigerated coaches in express and freight trains will be available so that perishable goods can be transported across the country.

01/02/20 Anu Sharma/CNBC TV18

Union Budget: 100 new airports to be developed under UDAN scheme Finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman has announced 100 more airports by 2024 under the UDAN scheme.

This is in line with the government's commitment to promote domestic travel and include those areas which haven't been connected so far.

This is a part of the national infrastructure plan. According to the Economic Survey 2019-20 which was presented on Friday, the government has provided a congenial environment so that the government can have 1,200 planes by 2023-24. In the last Budget, the finance minister had announced that the government will take steps to make India an aircraft leasing hub. The Survey also said despite a major airline suspending operations in April, the operators were quick to fill the void and airlines operators in the country have scaled up their aircraft seat capacity from an estimated 0.07 annual seats per capita in 2013 to 0.12 in 2018.

01/02/20 Economic Times

**New Delhi: The Union Budget aims to improve regional air connectivity in the country with announcements on building 100 airports for regional flights and launch of airlines for farmers under the regional connectivity scheme.**

In the Budget speech, finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman announced that **the aviation ministry would launch a flight scheme to help farmers ferry their produce on flights. "Krishi Udaan will be launched by the Ministry of Civil Aviation on international and national routes. This will immensely help improve value realisation especially in North-East and tribal districts,"** Sitharaman announced in the Budget today. This scheme of subsidised international and domestic flights will be an extension of the Ude Desh ke Aam Nagrik (UDAN) scheme that entails providing subsidised flights for Rs 2,500 per hour of flight. For these flights, the government subsidises the cost of operations and also provides other incentives too like no landing and parking charges and low tax on fuel. She also added that the government will add 100 new airports to aid the regional connectivity scheme by 2024.

"Air traffic has been growing rapidly in the country as compared to global average. One hundred more airports would be developed by 2024 to support Udaan scheme. It is expected that the air fleet number shall go up from the present 600 to 1200 during this time. **I propose to provide about Rs 1.70 lakh crore for transport Infrastructure in 2020-21,**" She announced.

01/02/20 Mihir Mishra/Economic Times

**New Delhi: Ministry of Civil Aviation has been allocated Rs 3,797 crore in this year's Budget, 2.62 per cent higher than Rs 3,700 crore which was allocated in the 2019-20 fiscal year.**

For the purchase of two B777 aircrafts - which would be for travel of the prime minister, president and vice president - the government has allocated Rs 810 crore in this year's budget that is significantly higher than Rs 272 crore allocated in 2019-20.

Currently, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, President Ram Nath Kovind and Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu fly on Air India's B747 planes, which have the call sign 'Air India One'. **The government has allocated Rs 465 crore for its regional connectivity scheme Udan, which is 3.1 per cent higher than what was allocated in 2019-20.**

01/02/20 PTI/Economic Times

The country's aviation sector is going through a rough patch and there's an increasing demand that the Centre should bring in FDI (foreign direct investment) to help revive the sector. The combined operating profits of Indian carriers in 2018/19 turned red for the first time since 2015/16. The aviation sector bore the brunt of Air India's failure as it contributed 61 per cent to total operating losses of all airlines put together in 2018/19. The closure of Jet Airways in April last year also left a big dent on the industry as a whole.

**While efforts are on to revive both these airlines -- the government has invited bids for Air India with a sweetened deal this time and Jet Airways is undergoing insolvency -- there's a buzz that the government could increase FDI to 100 per cent, which could help them find suitable buyers.**

As per Care Ratings, there's a demand for "increasing permissible limit of FDI from 49% to 100% in aviation sector thus helping Air India and Jet Airways find buyers". "In the airline operation, there is an issue of substantial ownership and effective control. Thus, the Civil Aviation Ministry will have to see all these to sell Air India, which would require liberalising FDI in the sector," IANS quoted an official as saying.

**Notably, substantial Ownership and Effective Control (SOEC) clause bar overseas companies from taking 100 per cent control of an airline.** In her Budget 2019 speech, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman had also said that the Centre could raise the FDI in aviation.

Foreign investments are considered crucial, which needs around billions of dollars for overhauling its infrastructure to boost growth. FDI helps improve the country's balance of payments situation and strengthen the rupee value against other global currencies, especially the US dollar.

01/02/20 Business Today

**Over 20,000 users have registered their drones with the Union Aviation Ministry in the 19-day period that it had given for enrolment to all those who were operating unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) in India without permit,** a senior government official said on Friday. On January 13, the ministry had issued a public notice, asking all drone users - who were operating the devices in India without permits - to register themselves by January 31 or face action.

"20,531 users have registered themselves with us. The deadline is over now. It will not be extended" the official said.

Punitive action can be taken against unregistered drone users under the Indian Penal Code and the Aircraft Act, the official added.

In a notice on January 13, the ministry had said, "The presence of such drones as well as drone operators has come to the notice of the government which do not comply with the CAR (civil aviation requirements)."

"In order to facilitate the identification of civil drones and drone operators, a one-time opportunity for voluntary disclosure of such drones and drone operators is being provided... All persons in possession of drones are required to complete the process (of online registration) by January 31,

2020," it had added.

The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) had on August 27, 2018 issued the CAR to regulate the use of civilian drones in the Indian airspace.

Under these regulations, a process has been prescribed for drone operators to obtain a Unique Identification Number (UIN), an Unmanned Aircraft Operator Permit (UAOP) and other permissions.  
01/02/20 PTI/Times of India

After a muted domestic passenger growth in 2019, the aviation sector is staring at yet another year of losses in FY20. Though the second half of FY20 has shown some signs of improvement, the weak performance of the first half is going to drag down the financials of the entire year.

**As per rating agency ICRA, the industry's losses are likely to stand at around Rs 7,800 crore in FY20 as against some Rs 10,000 crore in FY19. While a large part of these losses are contributed by national carrier Air India, the rest of industry, which primarily includes private carriers like IndiGo, SpiceJet and Vistara, has not been in the best of health in the first half of FY20.**

**For instance, the industry's losses - excluding Air India - are expected to be Rs 1,500 crore in FY20. The weak balance sheet structure and continued losses for the next few quarters are expected to weigh on the industry which would need about Rs 22,500 crore equity infusions over the next three years, says the ICRA report.**

Kinjal Shah, Vice President and Co-Head, Corporate Sector Ratings at ICRA, said "**Pressure on yields, increased maintenance costs and foreign exchange losses impacted the profitability of the industry during the second quarter of FY20. The two listed airlines [IndiGo and SpiceJet] have together lost about Rs 1.8 crore per day during April-to-September period...**"

Though the third quarter results of IndiGo has given some respite in the backdrop of a gloomy scenario. The largest domestic carrier reported over two-fold rise in net profits to Rs 496 crore in the October-to-December 2019 period. The government has also firmed up plans to sell beleaguered Air India in an attempt to privatise it and possibly turning it into a profitable airline under a new private owner.

**A major reason that has contributed to the losses of airlines in the past year is their inability to increase fares due to the highly competitive scenario. This problem is likely to exacerbate in the next few quarters as domestic carriers aggressively add new capacity on domestic and international routes. For instance, the industry has a pending order book of nearly 790 aircraft as compared to the current fleet of 682 aircraft. It's expected that the domestic capacity in FY20 would be low due to Jet Airways' shutdown last year, grounding of Boeing 737 Max aircraft owing to technical issues with its flight control software, and issues with the Pratt & Whitney engines for Airbus 320 neo planes (flown by IndiGo and GoAir).**

The FY21's capacity additions would likely to better - at around 18 per cent - as most of the capacity issues would likely be resolved in the medium-term.

01/02/20 Manu Kaushik /Business Today

**India plans to leverage its aviation infrastructure to help farmers sell perishable goods in faraway places.**

**In her budget speech today (Feb. 1) finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman announced the Kisan (peasants, small farmers, farm labourers NDCP) Udan scheme. Under the programme, to be overseen by the ministry of civil aviation, agriculture produce such as milk and fruits will be transported by airlines on domestic and international routes.**

**However, Sitharaman did not share the details, including fund allocation, to the scheme.**

The scheme was part of Sitharaman's 16-point action plan to boost the growth of the country's agriculture sector.

The finance minister also announced a Kisan Rail scheme for the transportation of farmers' output by Indian Railways. "To build a seamless national cold supply chain for perishables, the Indian Railways will set up Kisan Rail through PPP (public-private partnership) model so that perishable goods can be transported quickly," said Sitharaman.

In the union railway budget for 2009-10, a proposal to use refrigerated parcel vans to ferry perishable products was announced by then railway minister Mamata Banerjee.

Farmer distress has been a bugbear in the Indian economy, and it was anticipated that the government may announce schemes to address the sector's woes. In her speech, Sitharaman emphasised that the government has a goal of doubling farmers' income by 2022.

01/02/20 Niharika Sharma/Quartz India

**A second Air India flight carrying 323 Indians and seven Maldivians from Wuhan in China landed at Delhi airport on Sunday morning.**

**In the first flight on early Saturday, 324 Indians were evacuated and were admitted to the two quarantine facilities set up by the Army and the ITBP, though none of them have tested positive for the novel coronavirus, according to officials.**

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said in a tweet on Sunday, "7 Maldivians brought back with 323 Indians from Wuhan on the second @airindiain flight today. #NeighbourhoodFirst at work again."

Wuhan is the epicentre of outbreak of novel coronavirus, which has killed more than 300 people in China.

**Two Indians, both from Kerala, have been tested positive for novel coronavirus.**

**Due to the outbreak, IndiGo has suspended all three flights between India and China. Air India has suspended its Delhi-Shanghai flight and curtailed the flight operations on the Delhi-Hong Kong route.**

An Air India spokesperson said at 9.45 am, "323 passengers and seven Maldivians were there in the second special flight from Wuhan, which landed at Delhi airport just now."

Five doctors from the Ram Manohar Lohia (RML) Hospital, who were onboard the first flight, were also present in the second flight, the spokesperson said.

Out of the 324 people that have been evacuated through first Air India flight, 56, 53 and 42 are from Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Kerala, respectively.

Air India has done such evacuations earlier also from countries such as Libya, Iraq, Yemen, Kuwait and Nepal.

The Economic times of India 02/02/2020

## A BUDGET DEAL

- Any Tata bid for AI will be in **alliance with Singapore Airlines**, its partner in Vistara
- **Tatas plan to merge AI Express with AirAsia India**, its low-cost venture with Tony Fernandes' airline
- **Tatas need Fernandes' nod to acquire AI Express.** Indications are Fernandes has said yes in lieu of merging two budget airlines

**The Tatas appear to be moving closer to a decision to bid for Air India in partnership with Singapore Airlines and have already started working on the structure for such an acquisition – including a merger of Air Asia India, in which they hold 51%, and Air India Express, a 100% subsidiary of the government owned national carrier.**

Not just that, the Tata group is reliably learned to have approached Tony Fernandes, the Malaysian entrepreneur who holds 49% in Air Asia India, for his approval to acquire AI Express. The shareholders' agreement stipulated that the Tatas cannot invest more than 10% in another a budget airline without Fernandes being willing to waive the covenant.

People close to the development said a new agreement is expected to be signed soon. In lieu of the waiver, the Tatas have proposed to combine Air Asia India and AI Express. 'The merger will give Fernandes a bigger play in Indian aviation; so, it's a win win for both partners' said a person with knowledge of the discussions.

Air Asia India took to the skies in 2013 as a JV between Tata Sons and Fernandes' airline company, heralding the return of Indian's largest conglomerate to aviation, a business it had pioneered through Air India before the carrier was nationalised. Tatas also operate Vistara, a full service carrier, as a 51-49% with Singapore Airlines. Tata Sons Chairman N Chandrasekaran has in the recent past told TOI that the company 'will not run a third airline unless we merge'. A combination of Air India and Vistara would give the Tatas a monopoly in the full service space.

AI Express flies to 20 Indian cities and 13 international destinations in the Gulf and Southeast Asia with a fleet of 25 B 737 while Air India Asia's fleet of 29 A320 services 21 cities across the country. AirAsia India has been waiting for permission to fly overseas. The wait may get longer as Fernandes, R Venkataraman, a Tata nominee on Air Asia board at the time, and a number of others have been named in criminal conspiracy and money laundering cases. Fernandes has been summoned by the Enforcement Directorate on Feb 5.

It is yet unclear whether Fernandes or Air Asia India will be part of the Tata – Singapore Airlines alliance's bid for AI, the cases against him could be an issue, according to some people.

Nevertheless, a Tata Singapore Airlines bid will be based on the understanding that the budget carrier business world would be run by the Tatas and Fernandes, a person in the loop told TOI, adding to Bombay House's arrangement with Singapore Airlines is only for a full service carrier. The last date to submit an expression of interest for Air India is March 17.

The Times of India 04/02/2020



**SpiceJet, une compagnie aérienne privée indienne, vient de confirmer qu'elle s'est fait pirater les données utilisateurs d'1,2 million de personnes. Selon TechCrunch, un chercheur en sécurité a mis en lumière une faille dans la sécurité informatique du groupe en forçant un mot de passe. Le fichier de sauvegarde de la base de données du système n'était pas crypté, ce qui a permis d'accéder aux informations privées des passagers de la compagnie.** Les données comprenaient des informations sur les vols et des détails sur chaque passager, notamment leur nom, leur numéro de téléphone, leur adresse électronique et leur date de naissance. Certains de ces passagers seraient des représentants de l'État.

«Chez SpiceJet, la sécurité des données est sacro-sainte. Nous prenons toutes les mesures possibles pour sauvegarder et protéger ces données et veiller à ce que la confidentialité soit maintenue au niveau le plus élevé et le plus sûr », a déclaré la compagnie aérienne dans un communiqué, rapporte Selon TechCrunch.

SpiceJet détient environ 13% des parts de marché en Inde, qui est le marché de l'aviation à la croissance la plus rapide au monde. La compagnie exploite plus de 600 vols chaque jour.

L'Echo touristique 03/02/2020

Thiruvananthapuram: **Besides the four international airports, Kerala may soon have a string of airstrips-heliports, which can operate small, single-engine aircraft connecting major tourist destinations.** Unveiling the plan, Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan on Monday said the state had submitted a feasibility study report in this regard to the Civil Aviation Ministry for approval.

The objective of the initiative is the comprehensive development of the state's aviation sector, he told the state assembly during question hour. **Under the plan, the airstrip-heliports would be set up at Ashramam maidan in Kollam, Munnar, Thekkadi, Kalpetta, Bekal, Guruvayur, Palakkad, Alappuzha beach, Varkala and Kumarakom,** he said. "We are planning to commence airline service connecting the state's major tourists spots by operating tiny single- engine aircraft having 8-10 seats. **The plan is to set up the proposed air strips at Bekal, Wayanad and Idukki in the initial phase,"** he said.

**The state government has also requested the Centre to include the proposed air strips under its Regional Connectivity Scheme-UDAN to operate them as feeder ports of the international airports,** the Chief Minister added.

**Steps to set up a greenfield airport to help Sabarimala pilgrims are also progressing,** Vijayan said adding a techno economic feasibility report in this regard is under the government's consideration.

Live Mint Aviation 03/02/2020

**Bientôt un an après la fin des opérations de Jet Airways, et alors qu'Air India prépare sa privatisation, les liaisons entre Europe et Inde se reconstruisent et Vistara pourrait bien saisir la balle au bond.**

La compagnie indienne fondée en 2015 et dont une des deux maisons mères n'est autre que Singapore Airlines (l'autre étant Tata Sons) prévoit d'ajouter au moins 6 Boeing 787 neufs cette année à sa flotte, les premiers devant arriver en février et mars 2020.

Un seul but à cette expansion : ouvrir des premières lignes vers l'Europe, d'après ce que révèle le site

spécialisé CH Aviation.

**Et si London Heathrow semble être sa priorité, une ligne entre New-Delhi et Paris devrait également voir le jour dans les mois à venir. De fait, depuis ce début d'année, Vistara est représenté en France par APG.**

La compagnie relie déjà 34 villes asiatiques, exploitant plus de 200 vols par jour avec une flotte de 31 Airbus A320 et 9 Boeing 737-800 repris à la suite de la faillite de Jet Airways. Elle transporte déjà 20 millions de passagers annuellement sur son réseau intérieur

Tour Mag 30/01/2020

**After three people from the state tested positive for coronavirus, the Government of Kerala today declared the lethal disease caused by the novel coronavirus as a "state calamity".**

Currently, two other patients- both medical students at a university in Wuhan- are being treated in isolation wards at the Thrissur and Alappuzha Medical Colleges respectively. Both the students had travelled together to Kochi from Wuhan.

**The novel coronavirus infection that first broke out in Wuhan, China, has spread to 25 countries so far. At least 361 deaths and 17,205 cases of the virus have been reported from China.**

The virus is believed to have originated late last year in a food market in the Chinese city of Wuhan that was illegally selling wildlife. Health experts think it may have originated in bats and then passed to humans, possibly via another animal species.

Kerala: #CoronaVirus has been declared as a state disaster, on directions of Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan. <https://t.co/04rOXTsAzd>

&mdash; ANI (@ANI) 1580742101000

**The World Health Organization (WHO) was alerted to several cases of pneumonia in Wuhan at the end of December. Chinese authorities confirmed they had identified a new virus a week later.**

The new coronavirus can be transmitted from person to person, although it is not clear how easily that happens. Most cases so far are in people who have been in Wuhan, family members of those infected, or medical workers.

The Economic Times of India 04/02/2020

**THIRUVANANTHAPURAM: The third novel coronavirus case has been reported in India, with another Keralite student who returned from Wuhan university on Monday testing positive for the infection.**

The medical student is in an isolation ward at Kanhangad district hospital in Kasaragod, Health Minister K K Shailaja informed the state assembly.

The condition of the student is "stable", she said.

Out of the 104 samples tested till Sunday, three have tested positive.

This is the third positive case reported from Kerala.

Two earlier positive cases, also of students who came back from Wuhan, the epicentre of the virus,

were reported from Thrissur & Alapuzha districts.

The minister made the statement in the assembly under Rule 300 in the wake of three positive cases reported from the state.

**A total of 1,999 people, who have a travel history from China and other affected countries, are under observation in Kerala, of whom 75 are in isolation wards of various hospitals.**

**The remaining 1,924 are under home quarantine as per a medical bulletin issued on Sunday night.**

The minister has made it clear that those under observation at home should keep away from public functions and should not participate in any events or go out of their homes **during the 28 day incubation period.**

The Economic times of India 04/02/2020

**Un équipage d'Air France doit rester temporairement au sol en France après avoir effectué un vol à destination de Shanghai dans lequel se trouvait un passager souffrant du nouveau coronavirus mais équipé d'un masque**, a-t-on appris mardi de sources concordantes.

"Par mesure de précaution et en attendant des instructions de la Direction générale de la santé concernant ces membres d'équipage, ceux-ci ont vu leur programme de vol temporairement réaménagé", a indiqué par écrit la direction de la compagnie aérienne sollicitée par l'AFP.

Elle confirme ainsi des informations de sources syndicales selon lesquelles un équipage de la compagnie française est "en stop planning", c'est-à-dire provisoirement exclu du programme des vols.

**Cet équipage est composé de 3 pilotes et de 16 hôtesses et stewards qui "ont été informés des mesures à prendre en cas d'apparition de symptômes", précise la direction.**

La présence, à bord du vol AF116 du 27 janvier reliant l'aéroport Paris-Charles-de-Gaulle à l'aéroport de Shanghai-Pudong, "d'un client souffrant du coronavirus a été confirmée par les autorités médicales chinoises", a indiqué la compagnie. "A l'arrivée de l'appareil, ce client a été pris en charge par les autorités sanitaires. Face à cette situation, Air France a décidé de procéder immédiatement au rapatriement sanitaire de l'ensemble de l'équipage, lequel n'avait pas quitté l'appareil".

"Le passager malade ayant porté un masque pendant la totalité du vol, le risque de contamination est considéré comme très faible", affirme Air France qui est en contact avec la Direction générale de la Santé (DGS).

Concernant le vol retour de Shanghai vers Paris, "aucun signalement concernant un passager sur ce vol n'ayant été effectué, il n'y avait pas lieu de mettre en place un suivi par les autorités sanitaires françaises", indique la compagnie.

L'équipage "aurait dû être mis en quarantaine à son retour à Paris", a estimé une source syndicale, qui juge que la compagnie "peine à prendre des dispositions conservatoires" face à l'épidémie de coronavirus.

Les autorités sanitaires ne prévoient pas de quarantaine systématique pour les personnes qui ont été en contact avec un patient infecté par le coronavirus, les mesures à suivre dépendant d'une évaluation individuelle du risque.

Air France assure que "la santé et la sécurité de ses personnels et de ses clients constituent ses priorités absolues et que des mesures ont été mises en place dès l'apparition du coronavirus", comme la distribution de stocks de masques, gants et gels hydroalcooliques "à bord de tous les vols de et vers la Chine jusqu'à leur suspension, effective depuis le 30 janvier".

Journal de l'aviation 04/02/2020

**Une conférence internationale sur l'aviation qui devait se tenir en prélude au Salon aéronautique de Singapour a été annulée à cause des inquiétudes liées à l'épidémie du nouveau coronavirus, ont annoncé les organisateurs.**

Le "Singapore Airshow Aviation Leadership Summit 2020", qui fait partie des événements du Salon aéronautique "ne se tiendra pas cette année", a indiqué la société organisatrice, Experia Events, dans un communiqué.

"Cela permettra aux leaders du secteur de l'aviation qui sont très occupés à trouver les réponses à l'épidémie de nouveau coronavirus de se concentrer sur la situation actuelle", a-t-elle précisé.

**Le Salon aéronautique de Singapour, un événement majeur du secteur, se tiendra comme prévu du 11 au 16 février, malgré l'annulation de certains participants notamment ceux qui devaient venir de Chine.**

La conférence devrait rassembler quelque 300 responsables, notamment des dirigeants des compagnies aériennes, des aéroports et de l'Association internationale du transport aérien (IATA).

Le secteur aérien est l'un des plus affectés par la nouvelle épidémie à cause des multiples dessertes aériennes annulées vers la Chine et des restrictions imposées aux voyageurs venus de Chine pour tenter de juguler la propagation du virus.

Les compagnies aériennes d'Asie Pacifique ont essuyé des pertes de quelque 6 milliards de dollars au cours de l'épidémie de Sras (Syndrome respiratoire aigu sévère) en 2003, selon les données de IATA

Journal de l'aviation 04/02/2020

**L'impact de l'épidémie de coronavirus commence à se traduire dans les chiffres. Sur la seule semaine du 19 au 26 janvier, les réservations auprès des compagnies aériennes étaient en recul de près de 7 % par rapport à la même période de 2019. Le phénomène devrait s'amplifier sur le mois de février.**

Jusqu'au 19 janvier dernier, les réservations auprès des compagnies aériennes pour des déplacements au départ de Chine étaient orientées à la hausse avec une progression supérieure à 7 % par rapport à la même période de 2019. Une semaine plus tard, en raison de l'épidémie de coronavirus, les réservations accusaient un fort recul, soit près de 7 % de moins sur la période du 20 au 26 janvier, indique les données de ForwardKeys. L'Asie-Pacifique, qui attire plus de 75 % des touristes chinois lors des fêtes du Nouvel An chinois, accusait une chute de 15 % par rapport à la même période de 2019. Sur les Amériques, la baisse était encore plus forte (22,5 %) alors que l'Europe enregistrerait une certaine stabilité (+ 0,5 %). Le trafic à destination de la Chine subit la même tendance avec là encore un impact conséquent sur les réservations prises en Asie-Pacifique qui génère 65 % du trafic total vers la Chine. Le recul est de 6,2 % sur la période du 20 au 26 janvier. Les réservations au départ des autres régions du monde sont aussi en nette baisse mais les volumes de trafic sont moindres : Europe (- 7,1 %), Moyen-Orient (- 3,9 %) et Amériques (-13,4 % mais dans des volumes de trafic qui sont les moins importants). Le phénomène va s'amplifier sur le mois de février. Reste à maintenant à savoir quelle sera la durée de l'impact de l'épidémie de coronavirus sur le transport aérien asiatique et mondial.

Air & Cosmos 03/02/2020

**Le transport aérien peut se targuer d'être l'une des industries les plus fragmentées de la planète. Ainsi l'Association Internationale du transport aérien (IATA) recense-t-elle près de 800 compagnies aériennes dans le monde.** Un chiffre faramineux si on le compare à celui de l'industrie automobile, un secteur ultra concentré avec 90 % des parts de marché aux mains de treize groupes, pour une soixantaine de marques. **Si le paysage de l'aérien est morcelé, une douzaine d'acteurs regroupant à eux tous une quarantaine de compagnies sortent du lot et se sont engagés dans un vaste mouvement de consolidation.**

**Tandis que l'existence d'une masse critique est devenue la norme pour survivre, on a une petite idée de ce que l'avenir risque de réserver aux transporteurs aériens qui ne sauraient l'atteindre : disparition, fusion, rachat. Il semble d'ailleurs tout à fait probable qu'à la fin de la prochaine décennie, il ne reste plus qu'une vingtaine de groupes aériens, chacun rassemblant une multitude de marques. En parallèle pourrait subsister une trentaine de transporteurs plus ou moins indépendants et généralement impliqués sur des marchés très spécifiques, allant du low cost au transport régional en passant par la compagnie exclusivement classe affaires.**

Faute, cependant, n'est pas d'avoir tenté dans le passé de mettre un peu d'ordre dans la prolifération des transporteurs aériens. Dans les années 60 déjà, certains y ont songé, mais l'idée de regrouper les forces était alors essentiellement étayée par des considérations plus politiques qu'économiques. L'exemple le plus significatif fut en son temps Air Afrique, dans laquelle pas moins

d'une douzaine d'Etats ouest-africains étaient impliqués. Au sommet de sa gloire, Air Afrique comptait parmi les trois plus grands transporteurs du continent avec un réseau de plus de 35 destinations, incluant même New York.

On pourrait de la même façon citer la constitution de Gulf Air, compagnie nationale de quatre monarchies du Golfe – Abu Dhabi, Bahreïn, Oman et Qatar – jusque dans les années 90, ou encore SAS Scandinavian Airlines, propriété des états danois, norvégien et suédois. De ces compagnies supranationales, seule SAS a conservé dans son capital les gouvernements danois et suédois. Air Afrique a de son côté disparu en 2002, tandis que Gulf Air est devenue le transporteur national du seul royaume de Bahreïn.

**La fameuse dérégulation opérée à la fin des années 70 a réellement amorcé la rationalisation du transport aérien qui se poursuit aujourd'hui.** Pionniers d'une déréglementation totale, les États-Unis ont connu à l'époque la fin des monopoles sur les lignes domestiques et internationales. Mises en concurrence, les compagnies se sont alors battues à coup de tarifs réduits, de lancement de nouvelles lignes et de puissantes plaques tournantes aéroportuaires, des hubs parfois situés à moins de 200 km les uns des autres.

La bataille a été rude et fait de nombreuses victimes. Depuis 1985, ont disparu ou fusionné Continental Airlines, Eastern Airlines, Northwest Airlines, PanAm, TWA et US Airways pour ne citer que les plus connues. Le phénomène de déréglementation a également touché le Canada voisin. Afin de s'armer face aux géants aériens de l'autre côté de la frontière, Air Canada a peu à peu absorbé tous ses concurrents. Après Canadian Airlines il y a 18 ans, ce sera probablement au tour d'Air Transat, dont le rachat devrait être officialisé par les autorités au cours du premier semestre 2020.

Ces fusions-acquisitions ont concentré le transport aérien nord-américain entre les mains de quelques méga transporteurs. Selon les statistiques de l'aviation civile américaine FAA, il y avait aux USA 39 compagnies aériennes transportant au moins un million de passagers par an en 2009. En 2018, ce chiffre était tombé à 26. Autre chiffre éloquent, les dix premiers transporteurs aux États-Unis représentaient 85,5 % de tous les mouvements de passagers en 2018, alors que dix ans plus tôt, cette part n'était que de 73 %.

Cette hyper concentration est encore plus visible si l'on ne considère que les quatre plus grosses compagnies américaines. En 2009, American Airlines, Delta Air Lines, Southwest et United totalisaient une part de marché de 45 %. En 2018, celle-ci s'élevait à 65 % du total des passagers

transportés. Au final, cinq transporteurs historiques – Alaska Airlines, American, Delta, Hawaiian Airlines et United – concentrent désormais l’offre nationale et internationale. Cinq grandes compagnies à bas coûts leur font face : le géant Southwest Airlines, Allegiant, Frontier, Spirit ainsi qu’une low cost “haut de gamme”, Jetblue. Cette dernière a de grosses ambitions sur l’axe Atlantique Nord et lancera en 2021 des vols vers Londres au départ de New York et Boston.

Les 70 autres transporteurs américains recensés par la FAA ont pour leur part une activité très régionale ou ont depuis longtemps perdu leur autonomie, servant à nourrir les hubs d’un ou plusieurs des opérateurs historiques. Il est aujourd’hui peu probable que de nouveaux grands changements interviennent encore aux États-Unis, les compagnies existantes ayant atteint une taille critique. Certains évoquent pourtant la possibilité de voir à terme Hawaiian Airlines fusionner soit avec Alaska Airlines, soit avec Jetblue.

**Ce qui s’est passé aux États-Unis préfigure sans doute ce que sera le transport aérien dans d’autres parties du monde, notamment en Europe où l’industrie, historiquement moins concentrée que son homologue nord-américaine, rattrape aujourd’hui son retard en matière de consolidation.** 2019 restera d’ailleurs comme une année particulièrement meurtrière avec la faillite des transporteurs français Aigle Azur et XL Airways, celles en Angleterre de Flybmi et des compagnies du groupe Thomas Cook ou encore la disparition du transporteur national slovène Adria Airways.

Ces liquidations ont mis en lumière la santé chancelante des transporteurs secondaires. La valse des concentrations se poursuit d’ailleurs, le groupe IAG ayant annoncé début novembre le rachat de la seconde compagnie espagnole, Air Europa. Spécialisée sur l’Amérique Latine, elle laisse entrevoir de nombreuses synergies avec Iberia, un des piliers d’IAG, afin de renforcer le hub du transporteur national espagnol à Madrid.

Cette année noire pour l’aviation, un visionnaire l’avait prévue depuis longtemps : Michael O’Leary, le PDG de Ryanair. Dans une interview accordée fin octobre à l’agence de presse Reuters, il affirmait que l’Europe allait bientôt ne compter que trois grands groupes aériens, en l’occurrence Air France-KLM, IAG – maison mère de British Airways, Iberia, Aer Lingus et Vueling – ainsi que Lufthansa qui regroupe sous son aile Austrian, Brussels Airlines, Eurowings et Swiss. En parallèle subsisteraient deux géants low cost, easyJet et Ryanair.

De fait, sa vision est partagée par d’autres dirigeants de compagnies aériennes. Carsten Spohr, le patron du groupe Lufthansa, est même encore plus radical. En août dernier, le PDG allemand

affirmait à l'AFP que seule une douzaine de compagnies aériennes dans le monde exploiteraient à l'avenir des lignes long-courriers – trois aux États-Unis, trois en Europe, trois dans le Golfe et trois en Chine. Un excès de pessimisme probablement.

Les cinq transporteurs cités par le PDG de Ryanair représenteront 80 % du trafic passagers de l'Europe et devraient peser encore plus lourd à l'avenir. On sait que la compagnie nationale italienne Alitalia devrait bientôt se rapprocher d'un des trois grands groupes historiques. On parle beaucoup d'une coopération très poussée avec Lufthansa, certains observateurs parlant même d'une possible intégration au sein du groupe allemand.

Si Lufthansa avale Alitalia, le groupe européen ferait plus que conforter son titre de champion sur le continent. Le groupe a transporté 142 millions de passagers l'an dernier, devant Ryanair, à 139 millions. Avec Alitalia dans son portefeuille, Lufthansa afficherait un trafic de 165 millions de passagers. IAG totalisait pour sa part 113 millions de voyageurs en 2018. Avec Air Europa, le groupe passerait à près de 125 millions, laissant loin derrière lui Air France-KLM, à 101 millions, et easyJet avec 92 millions de passagers.

Parmi les trois leaders européens, le groupe Lufthansa a pour l'instant parfaitement intégré ses diverses marques. Tandis que Lufthansa et Swiss se positionnent sur un segment premium, Austrian Airlines propose un modèle hybride, alors que Brussels Airlines et Eurowings ciblent davantage le trafic de point-à-point.

La taille du groupe allemand n'empêche pas la faiblesse de certaines de ses filiales. Ainsi, en novembre dernier, Lufthansa présentait un plan de restructuration drastique à la fois pour Brussels Airlines et pour Austrian. Désormais, Brussels Airlines va surtout se spécialiser sur les liaisons entre l'Europe et l'Afrique sub-saharienne, couverte par 17 destinations. Quant à Austrian, elle subit la présence de bases de quatre transporteurs low cost à Vienne, mais peut jouer sur l'excellence de ce hub vers les destinations d'Europe de l'Est, du Moyen-Orient et d'Asie.

IAG a adopté le même modèle multimarques que son homologue allemand. Deux compagnies premium forment ainsi le cœur d'IAG – British Airways et Iberia – avec pour atout principal leurs excellents réseaux vers les Amériques. S'y ajoutent deux transporteurs hybrides, l'Irlandais Aer Lingus et bientôt Air Europa, et deux compagnies pour le trafic de point-à-point, Vueling et Level. Quant à Air France-KLM, "sa première priorité a été la simplification de son portefeuille de marques



avec la suppression de Joon et la réintégration puis disparition de HOP”, expliquait récemment Anne Rigail, directrice générale d’Air France.

Une plus grande flexibilité de gestion à la fois de la flotte et des moyens humains va permettre de peaufiner la stratégie définie début novembre par le directeur général du groupe Benjamin Smith qui s’articule autour de trois marques fortes : **Air France sur un segment premium jouant la carte du raffinement à la française, KLM sur le trafic de correspondance avec son hub de Schiphol et Transavia pour le trafic dit de loisirs.** Un Transavia qui a d’ailleurs l’ambition de devenir la première compagnie low cost basée en France, laquelle ambition est actuellement quelque peu contrariée par l’absence d’appareils et de pilotes. Enfin, si l’occasion d’acquérir un autre transporteur se présente, Air France-KLM annonce vouloir y réfléchir, étant, selon sa direction, “consciente du mouvement de consolidation en Europe”.

Autour de ces trois groupes gravitent encore une quinzaine d’autres compagnies en Europe. Mais toutes résisteront-elles ? Le futur de SAS Scandinavian Airlines, qui a perdu ces dernières années des parts de marché sur le trafic en transfert au profit de Finnair à Helsinki et de KLM à Amsterdam, reste en suspens. Sur le long terme, il lui faudra probablement se rapprocher d’un partenaire – on évoque la compagnie polonaise LOT – ou alors carrément intégrer un mégagroupe.

L’avenir de Turkish Airlines est en revanche bien plus prometteur, son développement étant assuré grâce au nouvel aéroport d’Istanbul, capable de concurrencer les méga-hubs des transporteurs du Golfe. Sixième compagnie d’Europe avec 75 millions de passagers, elle s’enorgueillit d’avoir le plus grand réseau aérien du monde avec plus de 300 destinations couvertes. Autre géant européen avec ses 56 millions de passagers, Aeroflot a elle aussi peu de chance de voir son statut indépendant menacé, la compagnie bénéficiant d’un marché captif – et fidèle – en Russie et dans les anciennes républiques soviétiques.

La pérennité est également a priori assurée pour trois compagnies positionnées sur des créneaux de niche : Finnair, TAP Air Portugal et LOT Polish Airlines. Ces trois transporteurs ont chacun développé leur propre spécificité : Finnair joue la carte d’un axe Europe-Asie, TAP Air Portugal est le chantre du trafic entre l’Europe et le Brésil et LOT Polish Airlines est en train de réussir son pari de devenir le transporteur de référence en Europe Centrale. Sa croissance est même fascinante, la compagnie étant passée de 4,3 millions de passagers en 2015 à 10 millions en 2019. LOT démultiplie les vols vers l’Asie et les États-Unis depuis Varsovie et a lancé un second hub à Budapest.

Au Moyen-Orient, la démultiplication des compagnies constatée ces vingt dernières années a probablement atteint ses limites. Dans un marché local de seulement 55 millions d'habitants se côtoient à la fois trois transporteurs de taille globale –Emirates, Etihad et Qatar Airways – et quatre compagnies challengers que sont Gulf Air, Oman Air et Saudia Airlines.

On entend cependant parler davantage de coopération qu'autrefois – le rapprochement commercial de Gulf Air et Saudia est-il le prémice à une fusion potentielle ? –, sans oublier le serpent de mer régulièrement évoqué que constituerait une fusion d'Emirates et d'Etihad. Il est vrai que le rationnel ne semble pas avoir de prise sur ces deux transporteurs de même nationalité et qui se livrent une compétition acharnée via leur deux méga hubs distants de 130 km seulement !

C'est en Asie que la concentration partout constatée risque le plus d'échouer, les **sentiments de fierté nationale** étant plus exacerbés qu'ailleurs dans cette partie du monde. Seules la Chine et la Corée pourraient rationaliser leur industrie aérienne par de possibles fusions. Les trois grandes compagnies chinoises – China Southern, China Eastern et Air China – transportent chacune plus de 100 millions de passagers par an, représentant plus de 60 % de tout le trafic du pays. Ce qui laisse encore 40 % de parts de marché à d'autres... Du côté de la Corée, les difficultés d'Asiana pourraient à terme conduire à une fusion avec son rival Korean Air. Quant à l'Asie du Sud-Est, chaque gouvernement est trop orgueilleux pour laisser filer son transporteur national. Thai Airways International l'apprend par exemple à ses dépens. La compagnie nationale thaïlandaise a pour principal actionnaire le ministère thaïlandais des Finances. Plans de redressement et nouvelles pertes se succèdent, mais au moins, l'honneur est sauf !

Les alliances sont-elles un phénomène dépassé ?

La consolidation du transport aérien fait une autre victime, les alliances, qui se retrouvent désormais fragilisées. Très marqués "années 90", ces instruments stratégiques remontent à une époque où il était encore difficile, pour un investisseur étranger, de monter au capital d'une compagnie aérienne dans un autre pays. Ce n'est plus le cas aujourd'hui avec l'accélération des fusions entre transporteurs. Par exemple, le rachat du groupe sud-américain LATAM par Delta se traduira par le départ de la compagnie de l'alliance oneworld pour faire son entrée dans celle de Delta, c'est-à-dire Skyteam. à l'inverse, l'acquisition d'Air Europa par IAG verra le transporteur espagnol troquer Skyteam pour oneworld.

En parallèle se forgent de plus en plus de joint-ventures entre les transporteurs aériens. Ces partenariats couvrent à la fois des segments de marchés stratégiques, mais aussi des participations financières à l'instar par exemple du joint-venture d'Air France-KLM avec Delta Air Lines et Alitalia sur

l'Atlantique Nord, ou encore le joint-venture qui inclura Air France-KLM, China Eastern et Virgin Atlantic à partir de 2020. Les alliances y survivront sans doute, car elles apportent tout de même une plus-value au passager. Mais elles devront néanmoins faire preuve d'encore plus de souplesse dans la gestion de leurs membres aux parcours fluctuants.

#### Voyages d'affaires 04/02/2020

Les compagnies aériennes invoquent la santé et la sécurité de leurs clients et personnels pour suspendre leurs vols sur la Chine. De là à pointer du doigt celles qui maintiennent la desserte du pays...

Les compagnies aériennes des grands groupes aériens européens, en raison de l'épidémie de Coronavirus, ont suspendu leurs vols vers la Chine la semaine dernière. Et la liste des autres transporteurs ayant stoppé leurs dessertes n'a cessé de grossir ces derniers jours. Parmi ceux-ci : Finnair, LOT, American, Delta, United, Qantas, Air Austral, El Al, Vietnam Airlines, Qatar Airways, Air India, Air New Zealand, Air Madagascar...

La plupart des compagnies stoppent leurs dessertes de la Chine mais pas celles de Hong Kong, à l'instar de Finnair, Qantas et Qatar Airways. Le territoire commence toutefois à être touché, avec des réductions de capacité. Air Mauritius a été plus loin en supprimant tous ses vols entre Maurice et Hong Kong à compter du 4 février.

Certains transporteurs aériens marquent leurs différences en maintenant leurs dessertes de la Chine continentale, y compris au départ de France. China Eastern, partenaire de Skyteam et d'Air France-KLM (au sein d'une co-entreprise et comme actionnaire), conserve ses dessertes entre Paris et Shanghai, mais réduit fortement la voilure sur Qingdao et Kunming. China Southern conserve certains de ses vols entre Paris et Guangzhou, mais invite dans la mesure du possible à remettre son déplacement à plus tard au vu du manque de visibilité de la liaison dans les prochains jours. Pas d'informations en revanche chez Air China qui maintenait ce lundi son vol entre Paris et Pékin.

La plupart des compagnies qui continuent à desservir la Chine ont toutefois décidé de réduire leur capacité. Aeroflot relie toujours Moscou à Pékin, Shanghai, Guangzhou et Hong Kong, mais supprime toutes ses autres dessertes sur la Chine. Emirates et Etihad ont l'une et l'autre décidé aussi de maintenir leurs vols sur la Chine, tout en réduisant la voilure. La première supprime des fréquences depuis Dubaï sur Pékin et Shanghai. La compagnie d'Abou Dhabi a suspendu ses vols sur Chengdu. Singapore Airlines et sa filiale Silk Air réduisent aussi les capacités sur la Chine continentale, alors qu'une autre de ses filiales, Scoot, a préféré arrêter complètement ses vols. Parmi les autres compagnies ayant décidé de maintenir des vols sur la Chine, on citera Thai Airways, Ethiopian Airlines et Air Algérie.

Toutes ces compagnies suivent les recommandations de l'OMS qui considère qu'il n'y pas lieu de limiter les voyages et le commerce avec la Chine, et «s'oppose même à toute restriction aux voyages», comme l'a rappelé jeudi dernier le directeur de l'organisation, Tedros Adhanom

Ghebreyesus, lors d'une conférence de presse, tout en actant que l'épidémie chinoise était une urgence de santé publique mondiale... Les compagnies aériennes n'appréhendent pas non plus les conseils des ministères des Affaires étrangères de leurs pays respectifs de la même manière. Quid de l'interprétation et du libre-arbitre du voyageur (ou de son entreprise) quand une destination est déconseillée sauf en cas de nécessité ?

Ces compagnies n'ont peut-être pas non plus à répondre à des demandes pressantes de leurs salariés et de syndicats, comme on l'a constaté avec la pression des pilotes de lignes américains chez American Airlines, ou des PNC faisant valoir leur droit de retrait chez Air France. Mais peut-être est-il plus facile d'exprimer ses inquiétudes au sein des compagnies françaises et américaines que chez d'autres transporteurs aériens, dans certaines régions du monde où les traditions sociales et culturelles sont différentes.

La Chine est-elle par ailleurs à même de faire intervenir sa diplomatie pour faire pression sur certains États et tenter d'éviter un trop grand isolement ? Et quid enfin de la dimension économique, sachant que le remplissage sur de nombreux vols sur la Chine est loin d'être satisfaisant...

Autre exemple récent, la décision prise en octobre dernier par Air New Zealand de fermer son escale de Londres – sa seule ligne sur l'Europe – qui a engendré des réactions très fortes parmi les passagers néo-zélandais, certains demandant même à la compagnie de renoncer à cette fermeture. Pourtant, économiquement, plus rien ne justifie ce vol Auckland-Los Angeles-Londres qui, selon la direction d'Air New Zealand, n'attire plus guère que 7 % du trafic passagers entre la Nouvelle-Zélande et le Royaume-Uni, bien loin derrière la part de marché d'Emirates...

Il aura tout de même fallu un siècle d'existence au monde de l'aérien pour qu'une véritable révolution s'opère dans ses structures. En effet, depuis les premiers vols commerciaux, rien n'avait vraiment changé, ou presque, avec des compagnies aériennes soutenues par la grâce d'États qui n'ont eu de cesse de leur offrir un destin. Car, pour chaque nation, la possession d'une compagnie aérienne s'est très vite affirmée comme le symbole d'une certaine modernité, un marqueur de puissance économique et, donc, un vecteur de fierté nationale.

Battre pavillon sur tous les aéroports du monde apparaissait alors comme la panacée. Le temps a à peine écorné ce concept de la "compagnie-aérienne-objet-de-prestige". Les récentes tentatives de vente d'Alitalia ou de Malaysia Airlines se sont notamment heurtées à une opposition liée à la honte de voir le pavillon national passer entre les mains d'un actionariat étranger. On se souviendra aussi de l'hostilité initiale des syndicats d'Air France à l'arrivée à la tête de la compagnie d'un directeur général canadien en la personne de Benjamin Smith.

Déplacements Pro 04/02/2020

**The year of the Rat has not begun auspiciously for Chinese travel. Whatever happens from now on, the Wuhan-originating corona-virus will have a vastly greater impact on the region's aviation and tourism than SARS did in 2003.**

That is simply because in 2003 China's role in international aviation and tourism was a pale shadow of its enormous presence today.

**In the intervening 17 years China has become the powerhouse of the region. Today, its tourists constitute the largest proportion of international visitors for most countries in Asia Pacific; they are also in many cases the biggest per capita spenders. And air services to and from China have in the meantime grown many times over.**

One poignant example, although it seems hard to imagine, in 2003 there were no LCCs operating internationally in Asia. Today they play a major role in China services, both point to point and in connecting to third countries. Also, the number of Chinese airlines flying internationally has multiplied five times over, together making for a much more competitive marketplace.

Already, as the China lockdown continues and airlines cut back on services, both inbound and outbound tourism has staggered almost to a stop. The impact is already massive. What remains unknown is how long and how widespread the virus' spread will continue.

The good news is that all the evidence from SARS was that the industries bounced back very quickly over the following year, once the pandemic was contained. Although, given the lingering questions that remain over a wobbly Chinese economy, other factors might intervene this time around, particularly if the coronavirus becomes extensive in China

**The immediate side effects of the Wuhan corona-virus will be extensive**

The immediate impact of almost closing down the country for business, at the busiest travel time of the year, Lunar New Year, creates waves across both Chinese travel and tourism and a vital portion of the entire region's activity. Aside from the hundreds of deaths already reported, the number of confirmed cases in China itself well exceeds the level experienced during SARS.

In the short term, it is Beijing's (remarkable - and highly responsible) closing down of cities right across China that is having the most marked impact on the movement of people. This did not occur during SARS, allowing the virus to spread more widely and rapidly. Foreign governments are issuing travel warnings and many airlines are either halting service, or significantly reducing capacity into China and Hong Kong.

China's aviation and tourism influence has grown enormously this century

**For several Asia Pacific countries, China has become a vital source of tourism;** for Thailand, 11 million, or 28% of its international visitors came from China in 2019, and a quarter of its international airline seats were to/from China. Vietnam, South Korea, Japan and Taiwan are broadly similarly engaged in the China market.

A near-cessation of tourism, notably at this busiest time of the year, the Lunar New Year, will accordingly cause considerable pain to a wide range of tourism-related operations in those and other countries.

Corporate travel accounts for a disproportionately important level of airline revenue. Here, travel plans may well be disrupted for a considerable period as employers, conscious of their duty of care, are forced to cancel business flying to and from China, as well as other points like Hong Kong where the virus has taken hold.

Unlike private travellers, who may well be quickly lured back into previously infected areas by low fares, corporates will need to take a more cautious approach.

And the shape of the airline market has changed beyond recognition

At the time of SARS in 2003, the airline market was dominated by full service airlines, working in a relatively tightly controlled access regime. Today, with a much more liberal market access regime, LCCs are major drivers of aviation growth in the region and the number of participants in the market has increased greatly. Meanwhile the longstanding foreign full service airlines have grown more slowly, ceding very significant market share to the LCCs on short haul, intra-regional services.

**The biggest change has come from the number of Chinese airlines now operating internationally. Today there are around 30 Chinese airlines flying on international routes, primarily within Asia. 17 years ago, it was a mere handful. (See eg CAPA's Chinese airlines: rapid international growth impacts foreign airlines)**

This has several implications. For airlines it means the burden is more widely spread, and this is perhaps why the financial markets are reacting fairly mildly, with most affected airline share prices down only around 5% for the current week, to 30-Jan-2020 - although there are signs of further decline.

Although LCCs account for only about one in five of international seats to/from China, even that number is well above the total number of international seats flying in the SARS era; and their presence in other regional markets is much more substantial.

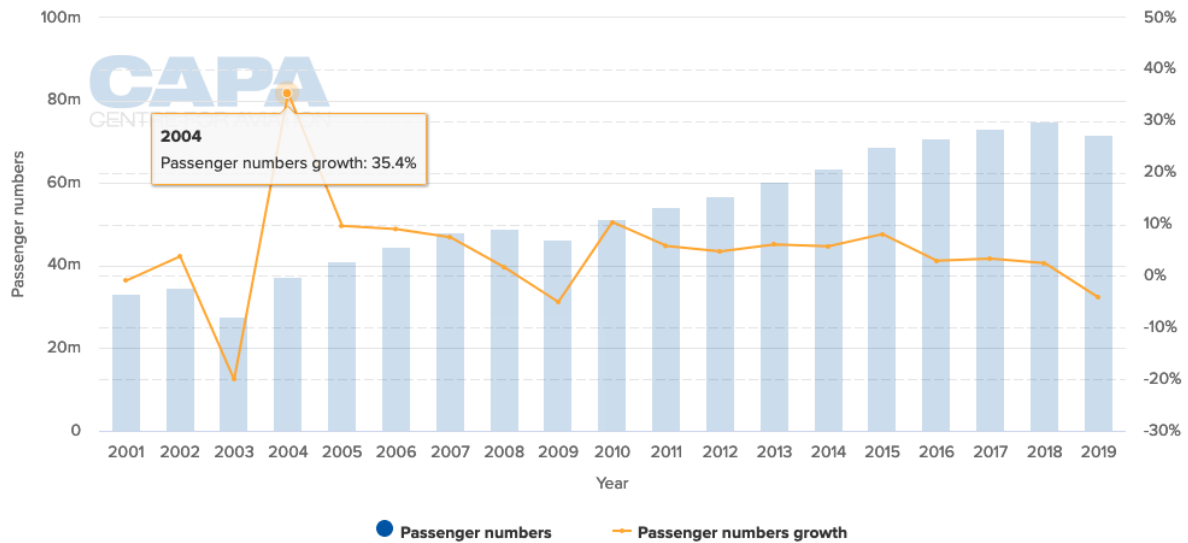
**With the larger number of carriers now flying to and from China, the level of competition is accordingly very much greater. One implication of that is that once the virus is brought under control, encouraging travellers back into the market will involve significant discounting, at least for a period of weeks. As a result, the airlines involved are likely to experience prolonged financial damage.**

The bounceback: post-SARs, recovery was swift

In 2003, Cathay Pacific was only a matter of days from shutting down operations completely, as its flights emptied at the peak of the SARS. One difference at that time was the Hong Kong carrier's much greater reliance on on-carriage to and from China, whereas today direct services account for a much greater percentage of China travel.

For Hong Kong Airport, the setback however comes at a time when the airport is still reeling from the effects of continuing demonstrations in the SAR.

Hong Kong International Airport annual traffic:  from  to



Source: CAPA - Centre for Aviation and Hong Kong International Airport reports

In domestic China, where around 90% of the air traffic at that time was domestic, Beijing Capital Airport rebounded with a 43% increase in 2004, and this picture was repeated to a greater or lesser extent around the region.

Today there is a caveat to anticipating rapid recovery

There is just one caveat to predicting a similar recovery post-Wuhan. In 2004, when travel bounced back so quickly the global economy was thriving and China was experiencing near-double digit economic growth.

Today, that economic growth is flagging and there are questions about where the economy is heading.

**If the Wuhan virus continues to spread, the negative effects on the national economy could be proportionally more marked as a result**

CAPA 30/01/2020

**Guwahati: In view of the Novel Coronavirus threat in China, the Airport Authority of India (AAI) with the help of the concerned state governments has set up screening and testing counters in most of the airports of northeast India, a top AAI official said on Monday.**

Officials in Mizoram capital Aizawl said that two people, who had returned to the state from China early January, have been kept under house quarantine in view of the outbreak of the deadly Coronavirus in the neighbouring country.

An official of Mizoram Health Department said that though both the person did not show any sign of being infected with the virus and both of them tested negative for the deadly virus, they were put under house quarantine as a precautionary measure.

**AAI Regional Executive Director (NER) Sanjeev Jindal said that the Lokopriya Gopinath Bordoloi international airport in Guwahati is the only airport in the northeast region from where the international flight operations took place with Singapore and Bhutan.**

He told IANS that following the standard operating procedure (SOP) received from the central government, a special screening, testing and checking counter with the help of the Assam government has been functioning at the Guwahati airport since last week.

03/02/20 IANS/India Today

**Mumbai: A fire broke out near the airport in Maharashtra's Solapur city and quickly spread to its premises on Monday evening before being brought under control, but no casualty was reported, an official said. According to the official, dry grass around the airport may have been set on fire by someone though the exact cause is being ascertained.**

Once the blaze started, it quickly spread into the airport premises, he said, adding around eight fire tenders were rushed to the spot.

There was no casualty or damage to the airport, around 400km from Mumbai, the official said.

03/02/20 PTI/India TV

**Eying a shrinking number of non-scheduled operators in India, start-up Prince Air is hoping to build an alternative private jet service based on a subscription model that the company's founder believes will dramatically reduce cost and prices.** India's economic slowdown left the business aviation industry with 99 non-scheduled operators (NSOPs) last September, down from 130 in 2018, and more are expected to shut down.

However, founder Sanket Singh said Prince Air's subscription model gives predictive revenue, which he believes will enable the operation to fly members at a fraction of the cost and make the private jet experience accessible to a wider audience than private charters. "We are a good fit between private and commercial jets," he said. "We provide efficiency and speed to our customers. Members will be able to skip airport security lines and get VIP access during check-ins and boarding."



Already, Singh said the response for the service has been strong, particularly from CEOs, doctors, tourists, and executives who travel at least a few times a week. **“The luxury real estate business is booming. Builders are offering our subscription free with homes. We already have 200 inquiries and have to freeze them at the moment.”**

03/02/20 Neelam Mathews/AIOnline

**Dumka: A glider crashed in Jharkhand's Dumka district on Monday, killing the engineer and injuring the pilot on board,** police said here.

Thirty-two-year-old engineer Dharmendra Kumar Singh succumbed to his injuries at a hospital in Dumka while the pilot, Captain J P Singh has been referred to a hospital in West Bengal's Durgapur, Deputy Commissioner Rajeswari B said.

District Superintendent of Police Y S Ramesh told PTI that the glider (light aircraft) crashed at Dumka airport on Monday evening.

**He said the cause of the crash is yet to be ascertained.**

03/02/20 PTI/India Today

New Delhi: **Indians are quick to adapt to newer, advanced technologies. While scientific areas like Artificial Intelligence (AI), the Internet of Things (IoT), and Machine Learning (ML) are flourishing in India, there is one new-age tech that might not function very well with the nation's heavily populated urban areas.**

**Several e-commerce companies have been pitching to introduce a drone-based delivery platform, food delivery firm Zomato has even tested a payload delivery from a hybrid drone.**

**Researchers, however, believe drone-based aerial deliveries is unrealistic in packed Indian suburbs, despite the demand for such functionality sky-rocketing in the e-commerce space, media reported on Monday.**

**The ability to meet the soaring demands of drone-based deliveries for everyday items is currently very low and financial constraints also play a role.**

Experts from the Canadian University of Waterloo analysed differences that might arise between initial investments, the deployment of drones, the landing of the unmanned devices, and revenue extracted from aerial deliveries under possible circumstances like technological limitations, preference of drone deliveries by customers and regulatory restrictions, the report said.

**The study comes at a time when Indian bodies are dealing with the development of advanced technologies and exploring ways to develop drone-based solutions for everyday issues in the country.**

**The Drone Federation of India (DFI) signed a memorandum of understanding with Amazon Web Services in early January, entitling the American company to drive the innovation and development of the drone-ecosystem in India.**

**Against the backdrop of recent drone attacks in Saudi Arabia, the otherwise multi-functional technology has come under scrutiny in India.**

03/02/20 Sputnik

**Lucknow: Around 90 flights in Lucknow will be rescheduled due to the Defence Expo which will be held from February 5 to 9.**

**This rescheduling of flights from February 4 to 8 will impact more than 22,000 passengers.**

According to sources, the Airports Authority of India (AAI) has taken this decision to create a safe zone for high-speed aircraft that can fly at 2,700 km per hour.

Fighter planes like Rafale, which India is soon going to acquire from France, F-35 Lightning II of US defence manufacturer Lockheed Martin, which the US wants to sell to India, will be seen on Lucknow's skyline during the Expo.

Fighter jets - Sukhoi 30 MKI, Jaguar and helicopters like Chinook and Cheetah would also be flying from Lucknow airport and Bakshi Ka Talab airport.

Sanjay Narain, spokesperson, AAI, said: **"The air show would be among the major attractions of DefExpo, which is why such measures have been undertaken. The fighter planes participating in the show would take off and land at the Chaudhary Charan Singh (CCS) Airport in Lucknow.**

03/02/20 IANS/daijiworld

**Bhopal: In a major security breach, a 25-year-old man sneaked into the Raja Bhoj airport in Madhya Pradesh's Bhopal on Sunday evening.**

**The man damaged a parked helicopter before running towards the apron area where a flight was taxiing for take-off. He broke the glass of the helicopter with stones and damaged the front nose of the chopper.**

He even overpowered at the apron area by personnel of the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF). A case will be registered against the man at the local Gandhi Nagar police station, DIG Irshad Wali said.

Due to the incident, a Udaipur-bound flight with 46 passengers on board got delayed by one hour at around 8 pm, CISF Deputy Commandant Virendra Singh said.

The intruder was identified as Yogesh Tripathi, a resident of Bhopal.

He was handed over to the local police.

**Singh said Tripathi appeared mentally unwell, as he shouted slogans like "I want to serve the nation, "I am a commando trying my skill".**

03/02/20 Ravish Pal Singh/India Today

**New Delhi: An Indian Army Cheetah helicopter, flying from Udhampur on a training sortie, crashlanded at Rudkhud near Reasi in Jammu and Kashmir on Monday.**

Indian Army said that the incident took place at 11.30 a.m.

"Both the pilots are safe and out of danger," said India Army, adding that enquiry into the whole incident has started.

03/02/20 IANS/Outlook

**Nagpur: Vidarbha is going to get its second fully operational airport at Amravati soon. With this, the city will get air connectivity with Mumbai next year if everything goes according to the Rs110 crore expansion plan.**

The present airstrip at Belora, 15km from Amravati, was constructed by public works department in 1992.

Gaurav Upshyam, Amravati airport manager of Maharashtra Airport Development Company (MADC), said work on expanding the runway is going on.

"At present, the length of the runway is 1,300 metre. We are lengthening it to 1,850 metre, suited for small aircraft like ATR 72. After the expansion, aircraft with 72 or 90-seat capacity will be able to operate from Amravati. The length of the runway for Boeing 737 or Airbus 320 aircraft is over 3,000 metre," he told TOI. Upshyam further said that tender for construction of the terminal building had been floated and it would be ready after an year.

**"On the technical side, a team of Bureau of Civil Aviation Security (BCAS) had visited Amravati. A team from Director General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) is slated to inspect the airport. We will need green signal from these two authorities before starting the operations,"** he added.

Alliance Air has already promised to start an air service to Mumbai. A team of SpiceJet too visited the airport. Upshyam said that talks would be held with other players too.

03/02/20 Ashish Roy/Times of India

New Delhi: **In a first, advanced Unmanned Combat Aerial Vehicles (UCAVs) will be manufactured in India, with leading aeronautical entity Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd (HAL) set to formalise a partnership with an Israeli firm that specializes in autonomous weaponry.**

The advanced **Heron TP**, which belongs to the Medium Altitude Long Endurance (MALE) class with an endurance of over 36 hours, **will be manufactured to cater both to Indian requirements for a combat UAV and possibly exports to third nations in the future as well.**

**HAL is set to sign a partnership pact with Israel Aerospace Industries (IAI) at the upcoming DefExpo 2020 in Lucknow this week, with estimates that in the Indian market alone, there is a requirement of at least 100 drones of this type.**

The Heron TP is an advanced version of the Heron UAVs that are currently in service with the three forces in a reconnaissance role. HAL, which is India's leading aeronautical company, is looking ahead to commence full production of the armed drones, its chairman and managing director R Madhavan confirmed to ET.

Details of the weaponry onboard are still not clear as the choice of payload is usually left to the user, which in this case would be the three armed forces. Given the flexibility displayed by Israel in joint collaborations in the past, Indian air-to-ground weapons could be integrated with the Heron TPs. **Once finalized, this would be the second range of Israeli UAVs to be made in India, with a joint plant by an Adani-Elbit combine also producing the unarmed Hermes 900 class of drones for export orders from Hyderabad.**

03/02/20 Manu Pubby/Economic Times

**Buyers of loss-making airline Air India and oil firm Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd (BPCL) will not get a free hand to shed excess workforce as the government will build in certain protection to employees in the share sale agreement, DIPAM Secretary Tuhin Kanta Pandey said.**

Public sector companies often have more people on rolls than their private sector counterparts and companies wanting to take them over would likely to right-size them to remove inefficiencies.

In an interview with PTI, the secretary of the Department of Investment and Public Asset Management (DIPAM) said the government will follow a two-stage bidding process for selling its entire holding in Air India and BPCL.

First preliminary interest from potential bidders is invited, followed by them being given access of data room on the companies for due diligence. In the second stage, price bids are invited.

While in the case of Air India, the expression of interest (EoI) has been invited by March 17, an offer seeking the same for BPCL is likely to be floated in the next few days.

Asked if the bidders will get a free hand to right-size the companies after the acquisition, Pandey said, **"There will be certain protection to employees and there will be other conditionalities and**

**this will be listed out in the share purchase agreement (SPA)."**

**He did not give details of the conditionalities. An SPA will signed with the acquirer who offers the highest bid for buying out government stake.**

03/02/20 PTI/Business Line

**Bengaluru: Amitabh Bhatt has taken over as Chief Executive Officer of Bengaluruheadquartered defence PSU, Hindustan Aeronautics Limited's Bangalore Complex.**

Earlier, he was heading the Light Utility Helicopter (LUH) project in HAL as Executive Director.

Bhatt is a Post Graduate in Management and earlier served in SKF India Limited for 15 years before joining HAL.

With his 32 years of professional experience in HAL, he spearheaded marketing, planning and projects.

He led the team as Chief of Projects (LUH), played a key role in setting up an integrated new helicopter factory, a Rs 3,000 crore greenfield project, an HAL statement said on Monday.

03/02/20 PTI/Economic Times

**SpiceJet on Monday said it is offering "hundreds" of "free" tickets, where the base fare will be waived but taxes and other surcharges have to be paid, to select people who want to fly to Delhi to vote in the upcoming assembly elections on February 8.**

The budget carrier clarified that the participants, who will be selected by the airline's internal panel after their online registration, will have to bear all applicable taxes, surcharges, levies and any other additional costs incurred on the air tickets.

**In this "SpiceDemocracy" initiative, the airline stated that if the departure to Delhi and return from the city is on February 8, it will refund the entire base fare on both tickets.** Alternatively, flyers will be offered a one-way ticket, with the base fare waived off, if they plan to fly on February 7 and return on February 8 or fly on February 8 and return on February 9.

The online registration for this initiative will remain open from January 31 to February 5. The shortlisted participants will be informed on February 6, and will be provided a link to book tickets where the base fare is waived.

03/02/20 PTI/Economic Times

**Panaji: Goa Chief Minister Pramod Sawant on Monday told State Legislative Assembly Dabolim Airport will continue its operations even after the commissioning of International Airport at Mopa in North Goa.**

In a response to a questioned tabled by Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) Francisco Silveira, the Chief

Minister said, 'The present proposal is that Dabolim Airport will continue its operations even after the commissioning of new International Airport at Mopa.'

03/02/20 UNI

**Panaji: Every ten days, at least one civilian aircraft landing or taking off at Goa's Dabolim International Airport faces dangers involving birds or stray dogs near the runway, according to documents tabled by Chief Minister Pramod Sawant in the state Legislative Assembly during the ongoing budget session.**

Since January 1, 2014 till date, there have been 224 scares involving civilian flights, most of them involving eagles, pigeons, kites, owls, crows, even peacocks and stray dogs near the runway, states data submitted to the state government by the Indian Navy, from whose base the airport functions from.

In November 2019, a MiG-29K fighter jet had crashed soon after take-off from the Goa airport following a bird-hit.

In September last year, stray dogs forced an Air Asia flight to Delhi to abort take-off after air traffic control personnel spotted stray dogs on the runway.

In August 2019, an Air India flight, while attempting to land at Dabolim at night, was forced also to abort landing after the pilot spotted stray dogs meandering on the runway.

**The Indian Navy has already complained to the local panchayats in the vicinity of the airport to clear garbage dumped in open areas.**

03/02/20 IANS/daijiworld

**Bengaluru: GMR Hyderabad International Airport Ltd (GHIAL) has signed a deal with the Karnataka government to operate the Bidar airport in the state's northern region, its holding firm GMR Infrastructure Ltd said on Monday.**

**"We have signed a concession agreement with the Karnataka government to commission, operationalise and maintain the civilian enclave at the Bidar airport in the state's northern region,"** the New Delhi-based GMR said in a regulatory filing on the BSE.

Under the central government's flagship regional connectivity Udan scheme, a daily service between Bengaluru and Bidar will commence soon from the airport.

"A budget carrier like True Jet is likely to operate the service after the airport's formal inauguration on February 7," a company official told IANS on phone.

State Chief Minister B.S. Yediyurappa told reporters here recently that the Bidar airport would become operational in February first week.

"The operationalisation of the Bidar airport is a testimony to our commitment to support the central government's regional connectivity scheme in partnership with the state government," GMR Airports executive Director and GHAL Chief Executive S.G.K. Kishore in a statement.

**Located in the north-eastern part of the southern state, Bidar is home to important religious shrines and historic monuments, including Guru Nanak Jhira Sahib, one of the holiest sites of the Sikh religion in the country.**

03/02/20 IANS/Outlook

New Delhi: **A Delhi-Mumbai flight of IndiGo received a bomb threat on Sunday (February 2) just after boarding of passengers was completed at the Indra Gandhi airport in Delhi which later turned out to be a hoax, said sources.** As per standard operating procedure (SOP), all the passengers were deplaned and luggage was offloaded for security check.

Indigo staff informed that aircraft was thoroughly checked and no bomb was found. "A call was received around 5.45 pm on Sunday just after the passengers boarded the Delhi-Mumbai flight. All the passengers were then deplaned and the plane was checked. There was no bomb on the plane. The call was a hoax", said a source.

03/02/20 Zee News

Bhubaneswar/Berhampur: **The Budget proposal to develop 100 airports under the Centre's Udan scheme has come as a boost to the prospects of Rourkela, Utkela and Jeypore to find a spots on the domestic flight map. The three smaller airstrips in Sundargarh, Kalahandi and Koraput districts, respectively, have been included under the Centre's regional connectivity scheme.**

In a recent meeting, civil aviation secretary P S Kharola and state government officials said the Rourkela airport would require an additional 41 acres for development of virtual flight rules (VFR) and 143 acres for instrument flight rules (IFR) to enable landing of ATR-72 flights under Udan.

**The Rourkela, Utkela and Jeypore airstrips will be made operational under Udan IV, for which the Centre will start bidding this year.**

**The Birasal airstrip in Dhenkanal, which is now being used by the Government Aviation Training Institute (GATI) to provide flight training for aspiring pilots, may be included under Udan,** as the state government has decided to make the airstrip fully operational soon. The Birsal airstrip had got approval from Director General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) in November last year and started flying trainee aircrafts in December on a temporary basis.

02/03/20 Times of India

**Mumbai: With China reeling from the coronavirus outbreak, an Indian medical student, M Velam from Chennai was the sole passenger on a flight from Tianjin to India via Singapore.** According to reports, Velam wanted to stay put in China to help patients amid an outbreak that has claimed a total of 259 lives and infected 11,791 people. According to reports, the student hailing from Chennai was in her final year of MBBS.

Velam's father reportedly said that his daughter wanted to stay back and help people but they convinced her to come back. The father further added that his daughter had to undergo strict scanning procedures after she landed in India.

Indian Embassy in Beijing expressed its gratitude to China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and local authorities in Hubei province and Wuhan for assisting the evacuation of Indian nationals from the epicentre of Coronavirus outbreak. Vikram Misri, the Indian Ambassador to Beijing, said that he was relieved on the safe return of Indian citizens from Wuhan.

01/02/20 Ruchit Rastogi/Republic

**New Delhi: IndiGo announced on Saturday that it will suspend flights on Kolkata-Guangzhou route from February 6 to 25 due to the deadly novel coronavirus outbreak in China.**

On Wednesday, the low-cost carrier had announced the suspension of flights on the Bengaluru-Hong Kong route from February 1 and on the Delhi-Chengdu route from February 1 to 20.

"In line with the WHO guidelines to contain the spread of coronavirus, IndiGo will be suspending its Kolkata-Guangzhou from February 6, 2020 until February 25, 2020 and Guangzhou-Kolkata from February 7, 2020 until February 26, 2020," the airline said in a statement on Saturday.

01/02/20 PTI/NDTV

**New Delhi: Passengers arriving from Thailand and Singapore will be screened at airports in addition to those coming from China and Hong Kong for possible exposure to novel coronavirus (nCoV), the Union Health Ministry said on Saturday.**

The decision was taken at a high-level review meeting held by Cabinet Secretary Rajiv Gauba here on the preparedness to deal with the virus amid mounting global concern over increasing number of cases in China and several other countries.

"Apart from passengers coming from China and Hong Kong, passengers coming on flights from Singapore and Thailand shall also be universally screened at the airports, henceforth," the ministry said.

The secretaries of Health, Civil Aviation, Textiles and Pharmaceutical ministries among others attended the meeting. The cabinet secretary has held five review meetings so far.

01/02/20 PTI/News18



**Prudent ARC, one of the potential bidders for Jet Airways, has signed the non-disclosure agreement (NDA) with the Resolution Professional (RP). This is the first formal step to acquire a stake in the debt-strapped airline.**

Meanwhile, BusinessLine was given to understand that the RP met with representatives of Jet Airways' pilot body, National Aviators' Guild (NAG) on January 30.

During the meeting, the RP laid out a roadmap and informed the representatives that Prudent had signed the NDA to acquire a stake in Jet.

**Signing an NDA is mandatory for any company to get access to the data room. A data room essentially has all the important documents related to the company on the block, including contracts for aircraft, agreements with vendors, information relating to employees and other financial data. The company will be given some time to examine the books of the airline as part of the due diligence. Once the company completes the exercise, it will place a financial bid for acquiring the assets.**

This is the second time that the RP had invited Expression of Interests (EoI) from parties interested in a stake in Jet. Besides Prudent, South American conglomerate Synergy Group is in race for a stake in the airline. Synergy was the only party which had submitted its (EoI) in the first round as well.

However, Synergy had a few reservations regarding the erstwhile slots of Jet Airways and its past liabilities.

01/02/20 Forum Gandhi/Business Line

Malappuram: **The Air Customs intelligence unit seized 2.81 kg smuggled-in gold** from three passengers who arrived at Calicut International Airport on different flights on Sunday. The gold was worth Rs 1.12 crore.

Customs officers seized 2.447 kg of gold in the form of two discs hidden inside speakers brought by Jafar Kaithapoyil, who arrived from Riyadh on an Etihad flight.

In the second case, 140 gm of gold was seized in the form of 14 buttons concealed inside lipstick. The gold was recovered from Mohammed Habib Khatib from Bhatkal, Karnataka, who arrived from Dubai on an Air India flight.

02/02/20 The Hindu

Kozhikode: **The airport customs at the Calicut International airport here has arrested three passengers for smuggling gold.** Sources said the total value of the confiscated yellow metal would approximately be over one crore rupees.

The culprits, Jaffer, Muhamed Nafi and Muhammed Habeeb, who arrived in two separate flights this

morning, are being interrogated, sources added.

02/02/20 UNI

**Mangaluru: local court on Saturday remanded Aditya Rao, the suspect in the Mangaluru International Airport (MIA) bomb case, to two weeks judicial custody.**

Rao was produced before the Sixth Judicial First Class Magistrate Court after the 10-day police custody expired.

Rao has been in police custody since January 22 after he surrendered before the police in Bengaluru on January 21 and was later brought in Mangaluru.

**He had allegedly planted an Improvised Explosive Device (IED) at the airport on January 20 triggering panic and later made a hoax call to the airport terminal that a bomb had been planted in an IndiGo flight.**

02/02/20 PTI/India Today

**Kochi, Feb 5 (PTI)** The spotlight is now turned on the connect between Wuhan and Kerala as India's all three positive novel coronavirus cases so far are students of a university in the historic Chinese city, the epicentre of the epidemic.

Wuhan has been a popular destination for Keralites and others as an educational hub with quality and affordable medical courses attracting overseas scholars.

Impressed by factors like affordability, amenities and international standards in medical education, offered in English, students from Kerala have been flocking to Wuhan University School of Medicine in China.

Wuhan, over 1,000 km from Chinese capital of Beijing and 800 plus km away from the top class metropolis Shanghai, is a historic city and played a key role in the 20th century history of China.

"I am very happy about the medical education system at Wuhan university. They offer quality education at an affordable fees," a student who had returned from Wuhan said here on Tuesday.

Aiswarya Hariharan, a third year MBBS student, returned to India early January soon after the school was shut for vacation.

According to her, the Wuhan University School of Medicine has become a centre of attraction for MBBS aspirants from Kerala because of its international standard.

The six-year-long education at the university is very thrilling as the classes are in English for the overseas students.

"In our batch, there are about 70 international students.

Interestingly, 50 of them are from Kerala," said Aiswarya from Tripunithura near here.

Parent of another MBBS student studying in the Wuhan said he sent his daughter to Wuhan because of its high standard education system in a fees affordable for him.

"I spent Rs 5 to 6 lakhs for fee, accommodation and food annually for my daughter. This fee amount is very less when compare with many of the self-financing medical institutes with least facilities in India. Besides, studying overseas is beneficial for the students as they get an international exposure," the parent said.

Revathy Krishnan from Thiruvananthapuram is also doing MBBS in Wuhan.

The third year student said she was very happy about her institute and its faculty which offer medical education at par with any other reputed Indian medical institute.

The students claimed that the facilities the institute offer at Wuhan university, which is also recognised by the Government of India, is of international standard.

The students said around 500 from Kerala are pursuing MBBS course at Wuhan University School of Medicine.

They expressed confidence that the Asian giant would overcome the crisis due to outbreak of novel Coronavirus very soon and they would be able to continue their education there.

According to students, though there are about 35 medical colleges in Kerala, not all of them could aspire to get a seat in one of them.

Educational consultant, Jacob George, General Manager of the Asian Educational Consultancy, however, felt the number of students who go to China for MBBS were minimal as several others preferred countries like Russia.

Of the three students who tested positive for coronavirus in Kerala, two are medicos from Wuhan the epicentre of the deadly epidemic which has claimed 490 lives in China.

**The fallout from the Airbus bribery scandal has reverberated around the world as a number of countries formally opened corruption probes following the release of settlement documents by French officials. However, Nepali officials, as of Tuesday, appeared clueless.**

In **Ghana**, a political storm erupted over accusations of Airbus payments to a relative of a government official in connection with the purchase of military transport planes, according to media reports.

**Sri Lankan** President Gotabaya Rajapaksa has ordered a wide investigation after revelations that Airbus hired the wife of a Sri Lankan Airlines executive as its intermediary in connection with aircraft sales negotiations.

In **Malaysia**, AirAsia Group's CEO Tony Fernandes and Chairman Kamarudin Meranun said they would step aside for at least two months to facilitate the government's investigation.

But officials at the tourism ministry and various anti-graft bodies and parliamentary committees the Post spoke to were undecided on the course of action regarding Airbus' payment of bribes to Nepali businessmen and public officials. **The payments were made for the purchase of two planes, according to a settlement document released by the French National Financial Prosecutor's Office. The document says that the European aerospace company paid at least 340,000 euros in bribes to Nepali businessmen and officials to secure contracts for two narrow-body Airbus A320 jets for Nepal Airlines Corporation.**

The settlement, which alludes to a total financial commitment of \$1.8 million, says that this payment is "likely to qualify as bribery of a foreign public official." It is unclear whether the total \$1.8 million, equivalent to Rs200 million, was paid to Nepali intermediaries and officials, but the 340,000 euros paid to a third-party is believed to have been routed to Nepali officials.

"We have come across this issue. We will first discuss it before launching any formal investigation," Tourism Minister Yogesh Bhattarai told the Post.

Former Finance Minister Surendra Pandey, also a member of the parliamentary Finance Committee, said that it's a serious case and the Commission for Investigation of Abuse of Authority would launch a wider investigation.

However, a high-level official at the Commission for Investigation of Abuse of Authority, the constitutional body anti-corruption watchdog, told the Post that the commission has not taken any formal decision over the issue yet.

"The issue will also be raised in Parliament," said Pandey, who was the Finance Minister in the Madhav Kumar Nepal-led government in 2009 when the process to purchase a wide-body A330-200 and a narrow-body A320 jet began.

However, according to a number of government and Nepal Airlines officials, all of whom spoke on condition of anonymity, it has long been a common knowledge that Airbus provides a cut to public officials during the procurement process.

"These are the issues—mismanagement and corruption that plagued Nepal Airlines— what was once the country's largest employer and the largest earner of foreign currency," said a Nepal Airlines official.

Nepali authorities can request their French counterparts to provide them the full report which will include the names of people involved in the case and proceed with legal action, he said.

Lawmaker Dharmasila Chapagain, a member of the parliamentary Public Accounts Committee, told the Post on Monday that if the report suggests bribery or the receipt of commissions in the Airbus deal, the parliamentary committee would take up the issue seriously.

“We cannot keep our eyes shut if it’s a proven case of bribery. Though we have investigated irregularities while procuring two Airbus A320 jets, I don’t know where the report has gone now,” said parliamentary International Relations Committee Chair Pabitra Niraula Kharel.

A retired senior government official, who closely followed the Airbus deal in 2008-09, told the Post that ambassadors from Germany, France and the United Kingdom, along with an Airbus representative, had approached then finance minister Surendra Pandey with a letter to the government clarifying that there’s no commission involved in the purchase deal.

“The letter was a sham, leaving ample room to pass illicit money to officials in Nepal because it mentioned that Airbus will not directly appoint an agent in the deal,” said the official, who asked to remain anonymous so he could openly discuss his knowledge of the dealings at that time.

“While the letter said that Airbus will not directly appoint an agent, it implied that an agent can be appointed indirectly,” he said, adding that the government was not convinced by their plea and the deal was cancelled. “Now, years later, my intuition appears to have been right.”

The former bureaucrat said because Nepal is signatory to the United Nations Convention Against Corruption, if there is a report indicating that Nepali officials are involved in corruption, the country can immediately set up an investigation committee and look into the matter.

In 2009, Sugat Ratna Kansakar, then managing director of Nepal Airlines, signed a memorandum of understanding with Airbus to purchase a wide-body (A330-200) and a narrow-body (A320) planes. As per the agreement, the A330 and A320 jets were to be delivered in two years. But the airlines paid \$750,000 to Airbus as advance. Kansakar was jailed for flouting procedures and being involved in financial irregularities.

Four years later, in 2013, Nepal Airlines revived the \$42 million Airbus deal, which had been revised to \$47 million.

After the 2013 deal, none of the anti-corruption watchdogs, despite complaints of corruption, paid much attention to the deal. Sentiments ruled as the national flag carrier hadn’t purchased a single jet in two-and-a-half decades.

It was around the same time that the European planemaker blipped the radar of the French, British and US authorities, who eventually investigated its books for transactions between 2004 and 2016.

**According to documents filed in court by French prosecutors on January 29, between February 2014 and April 2015, Airbus paid 340,000 euros to Nepali businessmen to facilitate the transmission of funds to Nepali officials.**

Last week, Airbus agreed to pay a record \$4 billion in fines after reaching a plea bargain with prosecutors in the United Kingdom, France and the United States over alleged bribery and corruption stretching back at least 15 years.

Anti-corruption investigators have described the court's decision as the largest ever corporate fine for bribery in the world after judges declared the corruption was "grave, pervasive and pernicious."

The Kathmandu Post 05/02/2020

NEW DELHI: As the government proceeds towards its plan to divest stake in Air India, it has cancelled the proposed divestment of Air India Transport Services Limited (AIATSL), the profitmaking ground-handling subsidiary.

Sources in the know say that the cancellation is just a procedure to start the sale of the ground-handling subsidiary afresh. "With updated numbers, the bid document will be issued soon. This will not impact the current divestment process of Air India," said the source, who did not want to be identified.

The government has issued documents to divest 100% stake in Air India, Air India Express and 50% of Air India's stake in groundhandling company AI Singapore Terminal Services Ltd (AISATS). The last date for submission of bids are March 17, 2020, and the government expects to find takers for the entity this time, unlike a failed attempt in 2018.

AIATSL is a fully-owned subsidiary of Air India that is into ground-handling services that include baggage, cargo handling and all other services provided to airlines on the ground. The subsidiary is a profit making company and the government plans to sell these subsidiaries to repay the debt of Air India, which the government has taken on its books.

**AIATSL is the largest ground-handling operator in the country and provides ground-handling services at 80 airports.**

Business Telegraph UK 05/02/2020

NEW DELHI: As the Indian government temporarily suspended all e-visas issued to Chinese nationals and people of other nationalities residing in China, national carrier Air India cancelled its flights to Hong Kong till the end of March.

"In view of the coronavirus issue, Air India is suspending its flights to Hong Kong starting February 7, 2020, till March 28, 2020," an Air India spokesperson said.

This follows Air India's decision to cancel flights to Shanghai and IndiGo's cancellation of all its flights to China.

**SpiceJet is currently the only Indian carrier that flies to Hong Kong. A spokesperson for SpiceJet said the airline will continue to operate flights to Hong Kong for now.**

**On Monday, India's aviation regulator asked airlines not to honour e-visas issued to Chinese nationals and others living in China.**

"Due to current developments, travel to India on e-visas stands temporarily suspended with immediate effect for holders of Chinese passports and the applicants of other nationalities residing in the People's Republic of China. Holders of already issued e-visas may also note that these have been temporarily suspended and currently not valid," the Directorate General of Civil Aviation said.

**Meanwhile, GoAir has announced a full waiver in cancellation and rescheduling fees for its flights to Singapore and Thailand.**

[The Economic times of India 05/02/2020](#)

Bengaluru: **Delta Airlines (DAL) has touched down in Bengaluru. The US airline has set up a global capability centre (GCC) in the city to expand its tech runway.** It has two other tech hubs, in Atlanta and Minneapolis.

**Delta's Technology Hub will employ over 300 professionals in areas including data science/analytics, cyber security, enterprise architecture, AI/ML and digital channels including Delta.com and the FlyDelta app.**

"The Bengaluru team will help drive Delta's IT transformation and innovation, and help incubate new strategic capabilities, while working with the local startup community to aid in rapid solutioning to business and technology challenges – like our proven approach in the US. We anticipate having between 300 and 500 employees over the next few years," the company's spokesperson said.

Mahesh Sogal, Delta's managing director of IT transformation and international technology, is the executive sponsor for the initiative.

Delta has tied up with Bengaluru-based ANSR Consulting to launch the tech operations in Bengaluru. ANSR has brought over 45 GCCs, including Wells Fargo, Target, Lowe's and Saks Fifth Avenue, to India. They together employ some 60,000 people.

**The Delta spokesperson said they were attracted to Bengaluru's thriving ecosystem of GCCs, startups and service providers that are supported by a large, experienced technology talent pool.**

Delta became the first airline to keynote at the CES 2020 in Las Vegas where its CEO Edward H Bastian talked about technology upgrades like binge buttons for inflight programming and piloting wearable exoskeleton, a robotic gear that allows employees to lift heavy loads by ensuring their safety.

[06/02/20 Shilpa Phadnis/Times of India](#)

**Over 5,900 passengers from 41 flights have been screened for the novel coronavirus at the Jaipur International Airport and till now, no positive case has been reported in Rajasthan, officials said on Wednesday.**

Blood samples of 44 suspects have been taken for examination till date, of which 26 have been found negative and report of remaining 18 suspects is yet to come, Additional Chief Secretary Rohit Kumar Singh said. A total of 5,927 passengers from 41 flights have been screened for symptoms of the virus, he said.

Singh held a review meeting at the SMS Hospital in Jaipur and directed officials to maintain vigil and ensure ample facilities are available at the isolation ward to meet any emergency.

06/02/20 PTI/First Post Tech2

**Civil aviation and airport authorities of Bangladesh, India, Myanmar and Thailand have sat in Dhaka for the seventh meeting of Bangladesh–India–Myanmar–Thailand Air Traffic Management Coordination Group, also known as BIMT/7 in the aviation sector.**

On Wednesday, the inaugural ceremony of the two-day-long meeting was held in a city hotel.

Addressing the ceremony, the Civil Aviation Authorities, Bangladesh chairman Air Vice Marshal M Mafidur Rahman said that Bangladesh sought ‘support of our friends in maintaining safe and secured air operations in our Bay of Bengal region.’

‘From weather diversion to emergency landing or post-accident support from our friendly nations was outstanding,’ he said.

**Representatives from the Airport Authority of India, Department of Civil Aviation, Myanmar, Aeronautical Radio of Thailand Limited, Monitoring Agency for Asia Region and International Air Transport Association were taking part in the meeting.**

**BIMT was an initiative to enhance safety and efficiency to handle cross-border air traffic management.**

06/02/20 NewAge Bangladesh

**Indore: After a week’s gap, Directorate of Revenue Intelligence sleuths once again foiled bid to smuggle gold into country through Devi Ahilyabai Holkar Airport late on Tuesday night.**

**The sleuths seized 612gm gold, worth Rs 25 lakh approximately, from a passenger arriving from Dubai.**

Indore zonal unit of the DRI was tipped off about the carrier travelling from Dubai. Following the information, the sleuths waited for the passenger arriving from Dubai on Air India’s flight AI-904.

Soon after alighting from the aircraft, the carrier was intercepted and the gold was recovered during subsequent search operation.

The gold was concealed in metallic parts of portable speakers and juicer mixer. During subsequent



interrogation, the carrier told the sleuths that he was to carry the gold to New Delhi.

06/02/20 FreePressJournal

**Kasaragod: On Wednesday, Customs officials seized gold worth ₹15.2 lakh from a passenger who arrived from Dubai in a GoAir flight at the Kannur international airport on Wednesday.**

The officials identified the passenger as Muhammed Faisal of Edachaki in Kasaragod.

He tried to smuggle **379 gm of gold** concealed in compound form in his body.

The customs team was led by Assistant Commissioner Madhusoodana Bhat.

06/02/20 The Hindu

Confirmed cases of the coronavirus outbreak in China's Wuhan have crossed 24,000 and the death count is now well over 400. The virus has spread across in geographical boundaries even though the count is still lower in countries other than China.

**Air India and IndiGo — the Indian carriers that operate in China — have said they have withdrawn services completely to mainland China. They have also pulled out of Hong Kong. Indian government has cancelled all e-visas for Chinese and banned all India bound airlines from boarding any passengers from China.**

**The India–China market has been dominated by Chinese carriers, which operate their full quota of flights under bilateral rights, and by airlines from Thailand, Malaysia and Singapore that offer one-stop connections.** Cathay Pacific and Cathay Dragon also serve the Chinese market via Hong Kong.

Chinese aviation has grown multi-fold between 2003 and 2020. Chinese investments and outbound tourism have been very strong in South East Asia.

Carriers in the region such as Thai AirAsia, AirAsia, VietJet and Lion Air group have thrived on Chinese tourists visiting the region in large groups and year-round. The visa-free regime with most countries has helped as well.

06/02/20 Ameya Joshi/CNBC TV18

**Chandigarh: The State Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission of Chandigarh has ordered Lufthansa Airlines, British Airways and a travel agency to pay Rs 70 lakh as compensation and litigation cost to a 60-year-old Chandigarh woman who had to spend a night in the lock-up of airport police at Copenhagen (Denmark) due to re-routing of flights from San Francisco to Delhi.**

In the judgment released Wednesday, the commission held, "If a lady is detained publicly at an airport, it amounts to ignominy and it will gravely lower the reputation of the detainee. In fact her arrest and detention...without her fault and due to sheer negligence of both the airlines requires that the exemplary cost be imposed."

Harsharn Kaur Dhaliwal had made a round-trip booking through Surya Travels and Associates at Chandigarh, with Swiss Air and Lufthansa to travel from New Delhi to San Francisco via Zurich, and return-journey tickets from San Francisco to New Delhi via Frankfurt. Dhaliwal's journey from Delhi was on January 18, 2018, where she claimed was not provided diabetic food and a wheelchair. Dhaliwal alleged that on her return journey on March 19, 2018, she boarded a Lufthansa flight from San Francisco to Frankfurt and was issued a boarding pass. She then remained in the plane for about

three hours but it could not take off.

She was then told to de-board and collect her baggage. Dhaliwal said in her complaint that on de-boarding, she was not provided wheelchair assistance and it was difficult for her to locate and collect her luggage. She however managed to call her son to the airport to collect the luggage.

The woman alleged that Lufthansa Airlines, without consulting her, re-routed her journey from San Francisco to New Delhi and she was handed over a ticket for the same via London on British Airways instead.

As per the new arrangement, the first flight was from San Francisco to London, from where she had to fly to Copenhagen, and then by Air India from Copenhagen to New Delhi.

However, the flight from San Francisco arrived late at Heathrow airport and the connecting flight from London to Copenhagen had already departed. She was then made to board another flight which departed London at 7.05 pm on March 20, 2018, and reached Copenhagen at 10 pm. Again there was no connecting flight to New Delhi, as per schedule, argued the complainant.

Dhaliwal alleged that she was stranded at the airport without visa. She said that it was the duty Lufthansa Airlines and British Airways, which re-routed her return journey, to provide transit visa of Copenhagen.

Dhaliwal alleged that she was “unauthorizedly detained by Airport Police at Copenhagen for a night without her fault and was treated like a criminal.”

With great difficulty, her husband contacted the Ambassador concerned and with his assistance, she was released and again sent to India via Turkish Airlines from Copenhagen to Istanbul and thereafter boarded another flight on March 21 from Istanbul and reached New Delhi the next day at 5.50 a.m, the complainant said.

06/02/20 Jagpreet Singh Sandhu/Indian Express

**New Delhi: The government has nudged sale-bound Air India to bid for undertaking Haj operations, which will force the airline to pull out some of its airplanes from its already set schedule that will lead to flight disruptions.**

Official sources said that the Air India has not been keen to carry out Haj operations as it will either require the carrier to put its grounded jets into operation or take out a few aircraft from the schedule.

**“The Aviation Ministry wants Air India to participate in the bid for Haj operations,” an official said.**

**While in the first case the cash-starved airline would have to garner funds to fix engine and maintenance issues, in the other case its schedule would get affected. In other words, going with either of the two options would mean overlooking its commercial interests. The poor financial health of the carrier can be gauged from the fact that it last month delayed the salary payments of the staff.**

**Air India has 30 of its aircraft grounded with 15 either not operating or not part of Air Operators Certificate (AOC). Unavailability of aircraft for operations is among the reasons for the national carrier’s falling market share in the domestic market.**

**Pulling out aircraft from its operational schedule means adverse impact on connectivity and reduction in frequency.**

An official said that while government makes payment for Haj operations, it becomes an operational nightmare for the carrier given the enormity of the task. In the past, the airline had to take out its plane from scheduled operations and deploy them for Haj operations to ensure the integrity of the commitment.

04/02/20 IANS/Newsd

**Bengaluru: Indian Institute of Management Bangalore (IIMB), in partnership with Toulouse Business School (TBS), France, offers a General Management Programme on Aviation and Aerospace as part of its Executive Education Programme portfolio. Taking this partnership forward, IIMB and TBS will host a conference on the Future of Aviation and Aerospace, bringing together industry leaders, policy makers and scholars, on February 22 (Saturday), to discuss disruption and challenges, and the way forward.**

Prof. G. Raghuram, Director, IIMB, will inaugurate the conference. Speakers include **Amber Dubey**, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Civil Aviation, Government of India, Sunil Bhaskaran, CEO and Managing Director of Air Asia, Hari Marar, Managing Director of Bangalore International Airport Limited, Satyaki Raghunath, Chief Strategy Development Officer, BIAL, Suraj Chettri, Head of Human Resources, Airbus, Sajit T C, CHRO, BIAL, Masood Hussainy, Vice President, Tata Aerospace and Defence, Chandra Shekhar Y, Regional Sourcing Leader, GE Aviation, Kota Harinarayana, former programme director and chief designer of Tejas Light Combat Aircraft, **Dickeli Pierre**, Senior Vice President, SAFRAN, Luigi Celmi, CEO, Lufthansa Technik Services India, Jayaraj Shanmugham, Senior Customer Experience Advisor, BIAL, Vikram Rai, Country Head, GE Aviation, and Shiva Kumar H.S., Senior Sales Director– India, GE Additive.

06/02/20 India Education Diary

**Kolkata: The city will play host to the 23-year-old Thai woman who gave birth to a boy 35,000 feet up in the air inside a Qatar Airways flight on Tuesday till at least February 12.** While the woman, Wassana Promkasikorn, was hoping to fly back home on Wednesday, aviation norms prevent her from doing so till the newborn is at least eight days old. She also expressed her wish to get her son a Thai citizenship, as he was eligible for both Indian and Thai nationality.

The child was named — **Thanakrit (meaning the one born in the sky)** — by her aunt over a video call. Promkasikorn, had been admitted to Charnock Hospital on VIP Road after the flight made an emergency landing at Kolkata airport.

On Wednesday, a senior official from the Thai consulate came to meet Promkasikorn at the hospital and, after a detailed discussion, the official told hospital authorities that they were ready to take responsibility of the woman and would make arrangements to send her home. As Promkasikorn's temporary landing permit granted from the immigration department at the airport on Tuesday will expire on Thursday, the consulate will arrange for it to be extended.

"The woman and the baby are doing well. We have issued a provisional birth certificate for the child and have handed it over to the Thai consulate who have agreed to take responsibility of the two. A consulate official told us that they would make arrangements to pay our bills and send the woman to Bangkok. However, she will remain with us till at least February 12," a senior official of the hospital said.

TOI met Promkasikorn at the hospital on Wednesday. "This is my second visit to Kolkata. The last time I was here in 2018, I was partying with my aunt and friends at a South City apartment. But this visit will be etched in my memory forever," Promkasikorn said.

"I am thankful to everyone for saving me and my child and taking such great care of us. However, I want Thanakrit to get a Thai citizenship," she added.

06/02/20 Tamaghna Banerjee/Times of India

Lucknow, Feb 6 (PTI) **Airbus India and Adani Defence signed an agreement on Thursday to leverage synergies in aerospace and aircraft services, a fast-growing sector that is estimated to generate annual business worth USD 6.3 billion in the country by 2025.**

**The memorandum of understanding (MoU) was signed by Anand Stanley, president and managing director of Airbus India and South Asia, and Ashish Rajvanshi, the head of Adani Defence and Aerospace.**

Airbus and Adani Defence will explore opportunities for collaboration in the area of **aircraft services for Indian and South Asian market**, the Airbus said after signing of the pact at the DefExpo2020 in Lucknow.

Airbus' global services forecast envisages the Indian aircraft services market to grow to USD 6.3 billion by 2025.

**"Airbus is not only the world's leading civil aviation company, but also a major innovator and provider of aircraft services. This MoU demonstrates our commitment to support the development of India as a world-class services hub for aerospace products," Stanley said.**

With Adani's recent foray into airports, this potential collaboration will leverage the synergies between the product and services excellence of Airbus and infrastructure, engineering and mega-project execution capabilities of Adani, the Airbus said.

"India is at the cusp of transformational growth in aircraft services market," Rajvanshi said. "Our collaboration with Airbus is aligned to our vision of nation building and to indigenise critical technologies and services, thus creating a vibrant ecosystem in aerospace capabilities in India."

The Airbus showcased its best-in-class military products and cutting-edge defence technologies at the expo. Models of the highly-versatile C295 aircraft, as well as the H145M and the H225M helicopters, were among its top exhibits.

**The coronavirus outbreak, which has its epicentre in China's Wuhan city, can impact some sectors of India's embattled economy.**

**China is the country's biggest trading partner, accounting for the largest share (14%) of Indian imports in financial year 2019. It is also the third-largest market for domestic goods, accounting for 5% of India's exports last financial year.**

"The disruption caused, if prolonged, could have a bearing on India's imports from the country which is critical for domestic economic activity. Finding substitutes for imports from China in the near term could be a challenge," noted credit agency CARE Ratings in a recent report. **"Further, a slowdown in economic activity in China could impact exports from India."**

There have been three confirmed cases of coronavirus in the country so far, all in the southern state of Kerala. The state government, on Feb. 4, declared the fatal disease as a "state calamity."

In China, the disease has claimed 563 lives, so far. Due to the panic, on Feb. 3, Chinese stock markets faced their worst sell-off in many years, wiping out nearly half a trillion dollars from the value of the country's leading firms.

Impact on industries

**The hit on the Chinese economy is bound to have a domino effect on a host of sectors in India.**

Tourism: In 2019, India's total foreign tourist arrivals (FTA) stood at 10.9 million, of which Chinese travellers accounted for 3.12%. "Despite it being marginal, FTA share from China has been increasing

for the past few years. Therefore the Indian tourism industry is expected to be negatively impacted during 2020," CARE Ratings said in its report.

**Aviation: The sector which could be most impacted is Indian aviation. The outbreak has forced Indian carriers to cancel and temporarily suspended flights operating from India to China and Hong Kong. Carriers such as Indigo and Air India have halted operations to China.**

**Another domestic carrier SpiceJet is offering a waiver of cancellation/change fee for flights booked to China. "The temporary suspension of flights to China and Hong Kong can approximately lead to an Indian carrier missing out on gross revenue of Rs55-72 lakh per flight," CARE stated.**

**Bollywood:** Due to the outbreak, China has closed nearly 70,000 theatres, according to reports.

Recent years have witnessed many Bollywood movies, like Dangal and 3 Idiots, become massive hits in the country and the demand is only growing. Now, many scheduled releases will be impacted due to the fatal virus disease.

**Electronics:** About 6-8% of India's exports of electronic goods is to China. Also, around 50-60% of India's demand for electronics is met by China, as per the CARE report. "In FY19, the share of imports of electronic goods from China declined to about 37% from the share of 57% a year ago," it noted. Based on the decreasing dependence in FY19, the report observed that the impact on the electronics good market will be "limited".

**Auto and auto components:** India's automobile industry is already struggling with falling sales. Car sales fell 19% last year while sales of two-wheelers declined 14%, Reuters reported. Vehicle makers, including market leader Maruti Suzuki, import components and raw materials from China. However, Maruti's chairman thinks this will not impact the sector. "It's not a large amount," RC Bhargava told CNBC, referring to the number of components Maruti and its vendors import from China. "Total imports are small, but the point is that for a car, even if one component is not there, I can't put the car on the road."

The Care Ratings report also echoed Bhargava's opinions. "India's exports of transport equipment to China account for a negligible share of about 0.5% of the total transport equipment exported from the country," it said.

Besides, the coronavirus outbreak has hit the ongoing Auto Expo 2020 in Delhi. The Indian government had issued an advisory temporarily suspending e-visa facility for Chinese travellers and foreigners, following which, Chinese manufacturers decided to let their Indian representatives man the stalls at the auto expo.

Export opportunity, import crisis

The crisis, though presents an opportunity for Indian exporters.

"With local production being affected (due to the coronavirus outbreak), there could be an increase in China's imports from other countries which can provide an opportunity for Indian manufacturers," the CARE report observed. India mainly exports chemicals, petroleum, agriculture, engineering goods, cotton yarn and plastics to China.

However, substituting imports from China can be tricky. India largely sources electronics, engineering goods, and chemicals from China. "Non-availability of such products from China would mean related parties in India will have to scout for alternative markets which can mean higher costs," the report added.

Quartz India 06/02/2020

**Indian aviation has, for long, been plagued by a dearth of pilots, which has hampered the fleet expansion plans of many airlines.**

Between 2017 and 2019, hiring of pilots in India rose 88%, show official data from the ministry of civil aviation. However, this is not enough to meet the additional requirement of 17,000 pilots in the next 10 years, according to a 2019 report by the Sydney-based aviation market intelligence firm CAPA.

The issue came to the fore in February 2019 when the scarcity of pilots forced the country's leading carrier, IndiGo, to cancel as many as 30 flights a day. It tried to make up for the shortfall by aggressively hiring expatriates

A year on, the carrier says it has tided over the problem. "At the moment IndiGo is not affected...we had difficulties in the past because hiring a pilot isn't an easy job. You can't just hire a pilot like you hire a marketing director," said Raj Raghavan, senior vice-president and head of human resources, IndiGo.

Raghavan, an HR veteran who has worked with the likes of Amazon and Genpact, says the grounding of Jet Airways came as a blessing in disguise for head hunters. **"We hired about 400 people from Jet...no airline has been able to hire that kind of a number."**

In a conversation with Quartz, he talked about the jobs outlook in the aviation industry, and the work environment at IndiGo. Edited excerpts.

What is that one job that would be the most crucial to IndiGo in the future?

**There are over 70 different kinds of jobs at IndiGo, from baggage handling and airport security to network planning.** Choosing the most crucial is not easy. I'll come to the skill that is **most in demand**, which is **network planning**. An airline's network is as important as its revenue management capability. **Network planning is basically about which sectors an airline will fly in, and at what frequency. This also helps in determining aircraft utilisation. The more time the planes are in the air, the better it is for managing costs.**

How will you hire a person for network planning? What are the challenges?

**Network planning cannot be learnt through a course, like an MBA. A lot of it is acquired through experience. We can't go to IIMs and ask for a network planner, nobody teaches that. What you need is the numerical ability to understand quantitative analysis.**

Availability of slots (at airports) are important to determine what sectors you plan to fly to. For instance, you'll think there is a great opportunity to fly from Delhi to Colombo (in Sri Lanka). Both these nations have bilateral agreements over how many planes can land in each of these countries and, accordingly, slots are allocated to airlines through a certain bidding process

Thereafter, you need to determine how your planes' utilisation will happen. If you fly at night, then that will impact the productivity of pilots and cabin crew. In most countries, including India, there is a tightly regulated work-hour rhythm for both the corporate crew and cabin crew and all of this is a part of network planning. Also, let's say a pilot needs to fly 1,000 hours a year. This needs to be allotted appropriately. The pilot can't fly 1,000 hours in six months and not be doing anything for the next six.

**A network planner has a key role to play in determining not just what sectors to fly to, but also in how people are utilised efficiently.**

Indian aviation is facing a shortage of pilots. How has this affected you?

Pilots are like oil to the airline industry. For instance, a plane like Airbus A320 needs a captain and a first officer but if you are flying a longer range plane like an Airbus A330, or if it's an intercontinental flight, you need more pilots. **We have had issues with pilot shortage before, but we have been very thoughtful about talent acquisition.**

With Jet Airways shutting down, there is an oversupply of professionals. Have salaries come under pressure?

I don't think there is an oversupply. A huge demand was already there. Pilots can be categorised into captains and first officers. **There isn't any dearth of first officers, but there is a dearth of captains.**

We hired about **400 people from Jet**. The airline's grounding came as a blessing in disguise because no airline company was ever able to hire in such huge numbers. Jet's pilots are quite sought-after since they have flown for long periods. However, you also need to invest a lot in terms of training.

Some of the pilots who flew an Airbus 330 aircraft may find it easier to fly an Airbus 320, but it isn't the same for everyone. It isn't like you leave your job one day, and the next day you can start working at IndiGo. Pilots experienced in flying an Airbus 330, required four months training to start flying with us. And then they had to get their licences renewed and certified again from DGCA (Director General of Civil aviation, the sector regulator).

Quartz India 07/02/2020

New Delhi, Feb 6 (PTI) **Pointing to the lack of efficient overland connectivity between India and the Central Asian countries, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on Thursday said that the two regions should examine the viability of establishing air corridors between them to boost trade and economic engagement.**

He added that India plans to overcome this lack of overland connectivity by using the route passing through the Chabahar Port in Iran.

"Clearly, a great potential exists in enhancing trade and economic engagement between India and Central Asia. There is the challenge of lack of efficient overland connectivity. India proposes to overcome this challenge through the Chabahar route," Jaishankar said in his speech at the India-Central Asia Business Council at the industry body Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI).

India, Iran and Afghanistan believe that Chabahar will become the fulcrum of connectivity for Indian goods to reach Afghanistan and further north to the Central Asian states, he said.

Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan are part of the Central Asia. In the budget presented last week, the government allocated Rs 100 crore for the Chabahar Port for the fiscal 2020-21.

"It shows India's commitment towards the development of Chabahar and our determination to

develop it as a viable connectivity option," Jaishankar said.

**The minister said "we should also examine the viability of establishing air corridors between India and the Central Asian states".**

**While flying time from Delhi for most of the Central Asian destinations is two hours, it may take two months for containers sent overland from India to reach these places, he added.**

**"Availability of air corridors can boost trade in perishable goods, agricultural and food products. I would encourage FICCI to take lead in bringing together stakeholders and conduct a brainstorming session to examine this," he suggested.**

Tourism and higher education are also the sectors that have tremendous potential for collaboration between India and the Central Asian countries, the minister said.

"Indian tourist traffic to destinations like Almaty and Samarkand has been increasing. Tourism industry should come up with attractive and affordable packages for increase of tourist traffic between India and the Central Asia," he stated.

Medical tourism to India from the Central Asia has a great demand and Indian healthcare industry should endeavour to meet it better so that each visiting patient goes back fully satisfied, Jaishankar said.

"In the field of education, a good beginning has been made with the **opening of Indian private universities in Uzbekistan**. We should also try to attract students from the Central Asia to our higher educational institutions by offering quality and affordable education in various technical and non-technical fields," he noted.

<https://doo.net/event/45091/order>

Pour s'inscrire au EU India Aviation Summit 2020 21-22 Avril

New Delhi, 04th February, 2020: **Airports Authority of India is hosting 36th Satellite Based Augmentation System (SBAS) Interoperability Working Group (IWG) meet from 4th to 7th February 2020 at Aloft Hotel, Aerocity, Delhi. Shri Vineet Gulati, Member (ANS), AAI inaugurated the event today by lighting the lamp in the presence of IWG Co-Chairpersons Mr. Greg Thompson & Dr. Didier Flament, senior officials from DGCA, ISRO and delegates from IWG member countries like USA, Europe, Japan, Russia, Australia, New Zealand, South Korea etc.**

**The four-day meet will focus on the status of SBAS Procedures, Implementation and Plans along with various technical sessions by IWG Member Countries like the US, Canada, Africa, Australia and others.** The SBAS IWG meetings are co-chaired by the representative from USA and Europe with the participation from other Air Navigation service providers of the operational Satellite Base Augmentation System (SBAS) -**EGNOS-Europe**, WAAS-USA, C-WAAS-Canada, MSAS-Japan.

The SBAS Interoperability Working Group (IWG) is a forum for SBAS providers to address issues related to the interoperability of SBAS systems, with a goal of providing seamless operations for users. The upcoming SBAS service providers in the world are BDSBAS-China, KASS-South Korea, ASECNA-Africa, SDCM-Russia, SPAN-Australia & New Zealand. With the implementation of SBAS services by said countries, seamless navigation for safe & efficient aircraft operations can be provided all over the world using satellite based technology.



**AAI is also hosting an outreach event on 6th February 2020 with various airlines, receiver/aircraft original equipment manufacturers (OEMs) to deliberate on adaption of SBAS utilization by civil aviation industry. It is expected that various international/domestic airlines, receiver/aircraft OEMs will participate in the outreach event.**

During the inaugural address, Shri Vineet Gulati, Member (ANS), AAI said, "It is an honour for the Airports Authority of India for hosting the 36th SBAS Interoperability Working Group Meet where delegates from multiple countries are participating today. **We are in talks with neighbouring countries for provision of using Indian Satellite based Augmentation Systems-GAGAN.**"

India's Satellite based Navigation program "**GAGAN**" (GPS Aided GEO Augmented Navigation) has been jointly conceived and developed by Airports Authority of India (**AAI**) and Indian Space Research Organization (**ISRO**). GAGAN has been **certified** by Director General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) for enroute (**RNP 0.1**) operations since **December 2013** and for Approach with Vertical guidance (**APV 1**) operations since **April 2015** and joined the elite group of countries like USA, Europe and Japan in the field of satellite based navigation.

Being the sole provider of Air Navigation Services in the country, AAI is taking all necessary steps to be continually responsive to the needs of aviation community. AAI is striving to achieve its mission of matching the other major ANSPs in providing world-class services and taking the leadership position in the Global arena.

**Apart from this, Airports Authority of India is also planning for expansion of GAGAN services to neighbouring countries and also in the process for development of GAGAN based LPV procedures for airports in India.**

**New Delhi: India ranks 17th among the list of countries most likely to import cases of the deadly coronavirus, according to a study conducted by a team of researchers from the Humboldt University in Germany.**

The study, titled '2019 Novel Coronavirus Global Risk Assessment' was conducted by analysing air traffic patterns connecting 4,000 airports worldwide with over 25,000 direct connections between them. The "relative import risk" for India was found to be 0.219 per cent.

The Indira Gandhi International Airport in Delhi has a localised relative import risk of 0.066 per cent, with Mumbai's Chhatrapati Shivaji Airport at 0.034 per cent and Kolkata's Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose Airport at 0.020 per cent.

Other airports in that list include Bengaluru, Chennai, Hyderabad and Kochi.

Explaining the "relative import risk" in the context of the 2019-n-CoV outbreak and global air transportation, the research states, "**The spread of the virus on an international scale is dominated by air travel. Wuhan, the seventh largest city in China with 11 million residents, was the relevant major domestic air transportation hub with many connecting international flights before the the city was effectively quarantined on January 23, 2020 and the Wuhan airport was closed. By then the virus had already spread to other Chinese provinces as well as other countries.**"

By looking at air travel passenger numbers, the study says, one can estimate how likely it is that the virus spreads to other areas. "**The busier a flight route, the more probable it is that an infected passenger travels this route. Using these probabilistic concepts, we calculate the relative import risk to other airports. When calculating the import risk, we also take into account connecting flights and travel routes that involve multiple destinations,**" it says.

The virus, which is believed to have emerged from a seafood market in China's Wuhan, has spread to at least 15 other countries outside China.

09/02/20 News18

**New Delhi: As the outbreak of novel coronavirus has led to the death of more than 800 Chinese nationals, aviation regulator DGCA on Saturday said that foreigners who went to China on or after January 15 will not be allowed to enter India.**

The DGCA, in its circular to airlines on Saturday, reiterated that **all visas issued to Chinese nationals before February 5 have been suspended.**

However, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) clarified, **"These visa restrictions will not apply to aircrew, who may be Chinese nationals or other foreign nationalities coming from China."**

**"Foreigners who have been to China on or after January 15, 2020, are not allowed to enter India from any air, land or seaport, including Indo-Nepal, Indo-Bhutan, Indo-Bangladesh or Indo-Myanmar land borders,"** the DGCA said.

09/02/20 PTI/NDTV

**New Delhi: Addressing Rajya Sabha on the outbreak of the Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV) disease in China and some other countries, and outlining the actions taken by the Government of India in combating the epidemic, Union Minister of Health & Family Welfare, Harsh Vardhan, stated on 7 February that existing visas (including eVisa already issued) are no longer valid for any foreign national travelling from China.** People have been advised to refrain from travel to China through an earlier advisory.

In view of the continuing lockdown of the Hubei Province in China, Harsh Vardhan said the Government of India decided to evacuate Indian students and other professionals working in Wuhan and neighbouring cities in the Hubei Province.

**In a coordinated operation with the Ministry of Civil Aviation, Air India, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, two Special Air India flights were operated between Delhi and Wuhan on 31 January and 1 February that brought back a total of 654 passengers that included 647 Indian citizens (including two Indian Embassy officials who were on the ground in Wuhan to coordinate the evacuation operation) and 7 Maldivian nationals.** The Minister thanked Air India, its crew and the team of doctors and paramedical staff who executed this operation.

**After the evacuation, the people are presently undergoing quarantine at special facilities created by the Indian Army in Manesar and by Indo Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) in Chawla Camp. 10 of the evacuees who were symptomatic have been shifted to isolation. All of them have tested negative for the coronavirus and are stable. All other evacuees are being medically examined on a daily basis and are healthy, the Minister shared.**

The Indian Embassy and Consulates are also in regular contact with the Indian Community in other parts of China and are keeping a track of their well-being.

09/02/20 Indus Dictum

**New Delhi: The deadly Coronavirus has started taking heavy toll on travel sector with national carrier Air India seeing booking cancellation across various routes to the Southeast Asian cities such as Singapore, Bangkok and Seoul.**

Faced with lower passenger load, the airline has replaced B787 with smaller A320 aircraft to serve Singapore.

**"The passenger load has fallen on Southeast Asian routes. There has been cancellation till April by**

**both foreign groups coming to India as well as Indians going outside,"** Air India CMD Ashwani Lohani told IANS.

**"This means our domestic flights also getting affected. The Buddhist circuit traffic has been impacted,"** he added.

Air India operates about 40,000 seats on international routes with Southeast Asian sectors accounting for a little less than 10 per cent of the total.

In the wake of rising toll from coronavirus in the Chinese city of Wuhan and infections spreading fast both inside China and outside, many airlines have suspended their flights to and from the virus-hit country.

07/02/20 IANS/daijiworld

Bengaluru: **Indian Airlines cancelling flights to China in the wake of the Coronavirus epidemic for the next 30 days could be costing them upwards of Rs 25 crore,** said sources. While these are rough estimates, **the actual revenue loss could be much higher or lower depending on a variety of factors,** said insurance sources.

**Both, Air India --which has now suspended its Delhi-Hong Kong and Delhi-Shanghai till March 28, 2020 -- and IndiGo, which has cancelled its three dailies to China, have covers with New India and the three other public-sector general insurers. New India is the leader underwriter for the policies, said sources. SpiceJet is continuing its Delhi-Hong Kong flight.**

The sum insured, sources said is \$1.5 billion in coverage for a range of liabilities including third-party, baggage claim, passenger, cargo, hanger and airmail liability. **While flight cancellations and refunds to customers will be paid by insurers, the overall loss of revenue for the airline from the China shutdowns will be not covered.**

"No airline in India has taken a loss of profit cover. This cover would have provided for business interruptions, loss of earning power from unforeseen events such as the Coronavirus global health emergency," said an insurance official.

07/02/20 Rachel Chitra/Times of India

**India's largest airline IndiGo saw yet another technical snag develop on its Airbus A320neo powered by Pratt & Whitney engines on Friday, a development that bolsters the stand of India's aviation regulator asking the airline and its low-cost rival GoAir to replace all unmodified engines by May 31. On Friday, pilots on an IndiGo-operated A320neo jet en route Kolkata witnessed engine vibrations shortly after taking off from Ahmedabad, following which the aircraft returned back to the airport.**

"On February 7, an A320neo aircraft VT-IVY was involved in air turn-back to Ahmedabad due to high vibrations on No. 2 engine. As per the procedure, the crew reduced the thrust on the affected engine and the vibrations became normal. When the thrust was increased again on the affected engine, the vibrations reappeared and were accompanied by light airframe vibration. Following this, the crew decided to turn back and the aircraft was landed safely at Ahmedabad..." a government official told The Indian Express, adding that the aircraft was powered by an unmodified Pratt & Whitney engine suffering the low-pressure turbine issue.

Confirming the incident, IndiGo said in a statement: "This morning, an IndiGo aircraft operating Ahmedabad to Kolkata was returned to Ahmedabad. During the flight, the pilot momentarily observed a caution message and followed the laid down standard operating procedures. Taking a

precautionary measure, the pilot landed back at the Ahmedabad airport. The aircraft was back in operation after inspection”.

08/02/20 Pranav Mukul/Indian Express

**Civil Aviation Minister Hardeep Singh Puri’s reply in the Parliament on DGCA’s safety audit of airlines has exposed several serious deficiencies in the implementation of aviation safety norms.**

In a written reply to a question by MP RK Sinha in the Rajya Sabha on February 5, Puri said the aviation watchdog found airlines often ignored findings of Flight Operation Quality Assurance (FOQA) system that is supposed to monitor safety and efficiency of flight operations, ATC procedures and aircraft design/maintenance.

FOQA data is recorded by all airlines every month to enable them to take corrective actions before problems occur. FOQA findings are kept confidential. Puri’s reply also mentioned that the airlines were not reporting the safety incidents or occurrences properly due to paucity of skilled staff.

**“The Maintenance Control Centre (MCC) of the airlines were not adequately staffed with technically qualified personnel. Implementation of Safety Management System (SMS) was deficient,”** he said.

Puri also said **the quantum of Flight Data Recorder (FDR) data analysed under FOQA is not as per the Civil Aviation Requirements (CAR).** CAR are detailed laid down procedures by DGCA from safety perspective which are continuously updated.

**“Inspection schedules are not revised. Untrained staff were allocated at check-in counters. Flight Crew rostering software was not upgraded,”** he stated. Pilots have been alleging that the rostering process is manipulated by the airlines maximizing their duty hours and compromising essential rest which could lead to pilot fatigue and endanger safety.

On what the government has done to address the issue, he said that the **DGCA suspended cockpit crew for non-reporting of incidents, maintenance engineers for non-adherence to the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP).**

08/02/20 Satish Nandagaonkar/Mumbai Mirror/Pune Mirror

**Recovering international passenger load factor (PLF) and benign crude price present significant tailwinds to InterGlobe Aviation, the parent company that operates IndiGo, and SpiceJet, a report by ICICI Securities said.**

According to the report, **IndiGo and SpiceJet have the advantage as the crude prices are sub \$60 per barrel and the international PLF reached 88 percent for these airliners during December 2019.**

Further, **the impact of coronavirus on air travel will be limited for IndiGo and SpiceJet as both the airlines have significantly low seat share to mainland China from Indian cities.**

The average fare in Q3FY20 grew by 3 percent for IndiGo based on the total December passenger data as international PLF has been recovering for the company.

A significant portion of lower revenue per available seat-kilometre (RASK) reported by IndiGo and SpiceJet in Q2FY20 was due to lower PLF, the brokerage noted.

However, IndiGo managed to grow international PLFs YoY at 84 percent in November 2019 and 88 percent in December 2019 compared to 83 percent and 85 percent in November and December 2018, respectively.

"International PLFs are lower YoY for SpiceJet but has improved significantly. From the lows of 77 percent in September/October 19, international PLF of SpiceJet has improved to 85 percent and 88

percent in November and December 2019," the report said.

07/02/20 Ankit Gohel/CNBC TV18

**Dehradun: Heli-service from Dehradun to Chinyalisour and Gauchar will benefit all the people immensely,** said Uttarakhand Chief Minister Trivendra Singh Rawat here on Saturday.

Rawat, who was talking to reporters after inaugurating the service, said: "It is a matter of fortune that this service has been started from Dehradun. It will benefit all the people, including the city residents."

"It will also help Uttarakhand tourism. We will try to connect other places too with this service," he added.

Captain Sanjeev Bhatnagar said: **"It is an important step to improve regional connectivity. We will fly to Gauchar first and will come back to Dehradun. On the second trip, we will go to Chinyalisour."**

08/02/20 ANI/Yahoo!

**New Delhi: Air India's second special flight that evacuated 323 Indians and seven Maldivians from Wuhan in China had done an "emergency landing" at Delhi airport on February 2 due to a crack in its cockpit window,** a senior airline official said.

"A windshield was observed to be cracked in the cockpit. Delhi Airport's air traffic control (ATC) was transmitted an emergency message by pilots so that a priority landing can be obtained.

The plane landed safely and without any incident" the airline official stated.

Using its 423-seater B747 planes, Air India conducted two special flights to Wuhan, the epicentre of novel coronavirus outbreak in China, to evacuate total 647 Indians and seven Maldivians.

07/02/20 New Indian Express

**Kolkata: A woman passenger who had concealed gold in powder form in her body cavity was nabbed** at the Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose International (NSCBI) Airport, here on Friday, Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) said.

"The Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) has detected gold in powder form weighing about 500 gm from a lady passenger, concealed in body cavity at Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose International(NSCBI) Airport," CISF posted on their official handle.

07/02/20 ANI/Yahoo!

Indian news outlets reported about the **detention of three Afghan nationals at the Indra Gandhi International Airport for allegedly smuggling heroin worth 1.8 crore Indian Rupees.**

The men, Niamatullah Khaksar, Gul Ahmad and Sayed Mahmood Qitali, were intercepted by the sleuths of the central anti-narcotics agency after they landed at the Indira Gandhi International (IGI) Airport early this month from Kabul, Outlook India reported.

**"A total of 220 capsules containing over 1.8 kg of high-grade heroin was recovered from the three Afghan nationals.** They were kept under medical supervision after which the capsules were extracted," Narcotics Control Bureau Delhi zonal director K P S Malhotra said.

The estimated value of the drug is about Rs 1.8 crore, another official of the agency said.

"The modus operandi of concealment by ingesting drug-filled capsules is a commonly used method to traffic narcotic drugs into India. These carriers are known as 'drug mules' in the narco parlance," Malhotra said.

08/02/20 MENAFN

**Bankrupt carrier Jet Airways India Ltd., once the nation's biggest by market value, faces fresh warning signs as a deadline to avoid liquidation looms.**

Creditors will likely be forced into extending a Feb. 17 deadline for the sale of the airline as the shortlisted bidders have yet to form bidding groups, according to people familiar with the matter. Time is tight as creditors may have to push the company into liquidation if there is no resolution by around mid March.

In a stunning fall, the Mumbai-based airline was forced to suspend operations last year after it fell victim to a cut-throat price war initiated by a slew of budget carriers. It has missed payments to banks, staff and lessors.

**The two shortlisted bidders Synergy Group Corp. and Prudent ARC Ltd. had both submitted expressions of interest in January, but haven't yet cobbled together bidding groups. Synergy is seeking a local partner for its bid, while Prudent is looking to team up with a company with international aviation experience,** the people said, asking not to be identified because the matter is private.

07/02/20 Bijou George/Bloomberg/Economic Times

The coronavirus epidemic has led to the suspension of hundreds of daily flights to mainland China and the shutdown of some of China's largest cities. **India, one of China's neighboring countries has seen nearly all flights to the mainland canceled, resulting in large financial implications.**

Mainland China represents a largely untouched market for Indian carriers. Prior to last year, the only Indian carrier that flew to China was Air India's service to Shanghai. This meant that the newer hub cities such as Guangzhou, Chengdu, and Shenzhen, had no direct Indian services. **IndiGo was the first airline to capitalize on these untapped routes, launching flights to Guangzhou and Chengdu in late 2019.**

Hong Kong, in comparison, has been well serviced by all major Indian carriers such as Air India, SpiceJet, IndiGo, and erstwhile Jet Airways. The island has suffered from violent anti-government protests the past year which led to many temporary flight suspensions.

**The coronavirus has upended all of these routes for the next month or so. IndiGo has canceled both its flights to the mainland and to Hong Kong. Air India has suspended its Shanghai and Hong Kong routes. SpiceJet continues to operate its Hong Kong route but is monitoring the situation closely and is offering refunds to passengers.**

China is India's largest trading partner and this disruption is bound to have repercussions on the economy. With an embattled economy, the aviation market has seen its growth slow heavily in 2019 compared to prior years and the virus is set to add to those woes.

**Airlines will suffer due to dozens of daily flights canceled and refunds to booked passengers. According to risk advisors CARE Ratings, Indian airlines are losing Rs. 52-72 lacks (\$80,000 – \$100,000) per cancelled flight. If these figures hold true, airlines can expect losses in the millions over the next few months. Airbus has also shut down its final assembly line in Tianjin due to the virus. The line produces the A320 family which will slow aircraft delivery to IndiGo and GoAir, both of which only use A320s in their fleets.**

With the spread of the virus showing no signs of slowing down and thousands of cases being added every day, we can expect the suspension of flights to China to continue for the foreseeable future. The virus has also caused anxiety among passengers traveling to other Southeast Asian countries, many of which have reported cases of the virus. This anxiety could lead to lighter demand and cancellations on Indian carriers to popular countries like Singapore, Thailand, and Malaysia, and cause more losses for carriers.

As things stand, most airlines have suspended all their flights to China. With the virus only spreading further, it seems inconceivable that airlines will restart services until the virus is at least contained. Air India has been flying repatriation flights from Wuhan to bring back affected Indians, highlighting the severity of the situation.

Air India has suspended flights till the end of March for Hong Kong and mid-February for Shanghai. IndiGo has suspended flights to its China destinations till the end of February. SpiceJet has offered refunds but is currently operating its Hong Kong route. **The cancellation of flights is bound to affect the airline's bottom line and China expansion plans for the near future.**

Simple Flying 07/02/2020

**Aviation regulator DGCA has stopped the pre-flight breathalyzer (BA) test for the aircrew operating out of Kerala's four airports during the next 15 days in the wake of the deadly novel coronavirus outbreak.**

The breathalyzer (BA) test measures whether a person is drunk or not.

"The mandatory BA test for flight crew who are operating out of Kerala's airports has been stopped for the next 15 days in light of coronavirus situation," a senior official of the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) said.

He, **however**, added that **the crew working in flights departing from any one of Kerala's four airports - Calicut, Kannur, Trivandrum and Cochin - will compulsorily undergo post-flight BA tests at the next immediate city where they land.**

India has so far reported three novel coronavirus cases, all from Kerala. The Indians tested positive for the disease are students who recently returned from China's Wuhan city, the epicentre of the virus outbreak.

The virus has spread rapidly since emerging late last year in China, killing more than 800 people in the mainland and infecting over 37,000. Cases have been reported in two dozen other countries.

The DGCA had stated on Saturday that foreigners who have been to China on or after January 15 won't be allowed to enter India.

The aviation regulator, in its circular to airlines on Saturday, reiterated that **all visas issued to Chinese nationals before February 5 have been suspended.**

However, it clarified, "These visa restrictions will not apply to aircrew, who may be Chinese nationals or other foreign nationalities coming from China."

**Among the Indian airlines, IndiGo and Air India have suspended all their flights between the two countries. SpiceJet, however, continues to fly on the Delhi-Hong Kong route.**

**On February 1 and February 2, Air India had conducted two special flights to Wuhan, evacuating 647 Indians and seven Maldivians.**

Live Mint aviation 09/02/2020

New Delhi, Feb 10 (PTI) **Experts at various airports have so far screened 1,818 flights, covering a total of 1,97,192 passengers, Health Minister Harsh Vardhan informed Lok Sabha on Monday as he spoke on steps taken by the government to deal with Novel Coronavirus.**

He also said that screening of passengers has been initiated at 12 major seaports and all minor ports in the country to identify passengers and crew coming from China and to isolate them in case they are found symptomatic.

"Teams of specialist doctors were sent to all airports to ensure effective screening and arrangement for isolation in attached hospitals.

**As of today, a total of 1818 flights have been screened covering a total of 1,97,192 passengers," he said.**

In view of a confirmed case in Nepal, the government has initiated **screening at all integrated check posts from Nepal in collaboration with Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, West Bengal, Sikkim and Bihar, Seema Shastra Bal (SSB) and Land Port Authorities**, the health minister said.

Gram Sabhas have been organised in villages adjoining borders with Nepal to create awareness amongst people about the disease and precautions to be taken.

**Using integrated disease surveillance network, all persons are tracked and the government is following 9452 passengers across 29 states/UTs.**

The state surveillance officers, district surveillance officers and rapid response teams of health professionals under the leadership of state Health Secretaries are monitoring all such people on a daily basis, he said.

**Sufficient isolation beds have been made available in tertiary facilities across the country to manage any outbreak.**

**Three hundred and sixty nine symptomatic travellers have been referred to isolation facility and are being monitored,** he informed the House.

**Vistara has added Dehradun, Uttarakhand as the 36th destination on its network. The airline will operate daily flights between Delhi and Dehradun starting March 29.**

Passengers from Dehradun can also take connections through Delhi to other cities – including Ahmedabad, Bengaluru, Chennai, Hyderabad, Indore, Kolkata, Mumbai, Pune, Ranchi, Raipur and Varanasi – on Vistara's network.

"Over the past decade, Dehradun has seen tremendous upswing in economic growth following the



establishment of software technology parks and SEZs. We see a significant demand for a full-service flying experience on the Delhi-Dehradun route,” says Vinod Kannan, chief commercial officer, Vistara.

10/02/20 Akanksha Maker/Business Traveller

**Kolkata: The authorities at Kolkata airport will meet airlines’ representatives next week to discuss the preparedness for the roll-out of the much-awaited inline baggage screening (ILBS) system. Once it is introduced, passengers will be able to drop their checked-in bags directly at the check-in counter instead of first getting them scanned at standalone X-Ray machines.**

While Airports Authority of India (AAI) officials in Kolkata are keen to introduce ILBS at the earliest following the nod from Bureau of Civil Aviation Security (BCAS), airport director Kaushik Bhattacharjee said the roll-out could happen in phases between October 20 and 28, with portals dedicated to airlines being commissioned one at a time. In the international wing, though, all portals — F, G and H — will be commissioned at one go since they follow dynamic allocation and are not dedicated to any carrier.

“We know there is a lot of interest in the introduction of ILBS as it will eliminate one queue and save flyers 5-15 minutes. But we have to consult the airline and find out if they have any concerns or issues before finalising the commissioning schedule. Of the five portals in the domestic wing, four will get ILBS while all three portals in the international wing will get the facility,” said Bhattacharjee.

Portal A, used by GoAir and AirAsia, will get the system at a later date as it will require the Spanish baggage handling system supplier to rework the software. The other seven portals — B to H — are managed by German firm Siemens.

According to airport officials, portal D, which caters to SpiceJet and Vistara, and portal E, which has Air India, could be commissioned separately. But portals B and C, which cater to IndiGo, will have to be commissioned at the same time.

**The migration to the new system will be tricky as it requires baggage handling discipline by airline staff and rigorous screening by AAI’s baggage screeners. Airlines will have to ensure a minimum separation between two bags placed on the belt and put small bags, duffel bags and rucksacks that have belts in trays for the system to work seamlessly.**

**Of the 80-plus screeners, 50 have received certification by BCAS. The rest are expected to be certified before ILBS is commissioned.**

10/02/20 Subhro Niyogi/Times of India

**February 10 remains a milestone date in the history of Indian aviation, as it was on this day in 1929, when Jehangir Ratanji Dadabhoy (JRD) Tata received the first flying license in India, labelled No. 1.**

To this day, Indian pilots are issued licenses as a sequence following that license No. 1

Tata Group tweeted:

JRD Tata's aviation dreams came true #ThisDayThatYear in 1929, when he became the first pilot to have qualified in India with No. 1 on his flying license. And that’s how Indian aviation was born!

<https://t.co/ZBLfDNsBH0> #ThisIsTata pic.twitter.com/6hwiHMgClb

— Tata Group (@TataCompanies) February 10, 2020

As an ode to the Father of Indian aviation, Business Traveller India looks at few key highlights of his flying career:

-The first flight in India's aviation history lifted off from Karachi (pre-partition phase) with JRD Tata at the controls of a Puss Moth aircraft. When he landed on the Juhu mudflats that October day in 1932, India's first air service was inaugurated.

-During the World War II period when airline operations were severely restricted and controlled; JRD Tata and Nevill Vintcent a former officer of the Royal Air Force decided to venture into field of the aircraft manufacture. Therefore, in 1942, Tatas submitted a proposal to the British government for the manufacture of Mosquito aircraft in a factory they would build for the purpose in Pune. The project was approved in 1942 and thus was born Tata Aircraft. However, the factory was instead used to make invasion gliders, as per the British government's order.

-As the chairman of Air India, and a director on the board of Indian Airlines, JRD Tata strived hard to bring the carrier on par with the world's best airlines; and was successful in doing so. He was at helm of Air India until 1977.

**-In 1979, JRD Tata became the recipient of Tony Jannus Award, conferred on individuals for their outstanding achievement in scheduled commercial aviation by airline executives, inventors and manufacturers, and government leaders. Exactly, a decade later, he was conferred with the Daniel Guggenheim Medal Award in 1989.**

10/02/20 Sanchita Nambiar/Business Traveller

**New Delhi: Hong Kong's flag carrier Cathay Pacific has reduced flights between India and the special administrative region of China — from 49 weekly flights to 36 till March 29, 2020. The airline has significantly cut its overall schedule for next two months due to reduced travel demand following coronavirus epidemic and the India reduction is part of that. Indian carriers Air India and IndiGo have also suspended flights to Hong Kong.**

Cathay Pacific and Cathay Dragon together operated 49 flights weekly between India and Hong Kong, with Cathay Pacific flying to and from Delhi, Mumbai, Hyderabad and Chennai; and Cathay Dragon to and from Bangalore and Kolkata.

"In view of the Novel coronavirus outbreak, we have rationalised our flight services from India to Hong Kong based on the demand. Effective Sunday (Feb 9) until March 29, 2020, we will be operating as per (this) schedule out of six major ports in India. Delhi: From 14 flights to 10 flights (weekly). Mumbai: From 10 flights to 7 flights (weekly). Chennai: From 7 to 5 flights (weekly). Hyderabad: From 5 to 4 flights. Kolkata: From 6 to 5 flights. Bengaluru: From 7 to 5 flights," Cathay Pacific said in a statement, adding, "Currently the situation is dynamic and evolving constantly..."

09/02/20 Saurabh Sinha/Times of India

**New Delhi: London's Gatwick Airport is offering incentives to attract Indian carriers at a time when airlines such as Vistara and IndiGo are planning to launch flights to the British capital and slots at the main Heathrow Airport are scarce.**

"Particularly with Jet (Airways shutting its operations) last year, we think it is a good opportunity to establish routes from Delhi to start with and Mumbai later," Gatwick Airport CEO Stewart Wingate told ET in an interview. "We have met Air India, Vistara, IndiGo and SpiceJet."

Wingate said Vistara has applied for slots at Gatwick but it is also pursuing Heathrow. "So, if they were to come to Gatwick... there is a competition between us and Heathrow to secure the slots," he said.

While Vistara, a joint venture between Tata Sons and Singapore Airlines, is in the final stages of launching medium-haul international flights and is set to start inducting Boeing 787 Dreamliners from February-end, IndiGo had applied for approvals from the government but has not announced any plans yet.

SpiceJet has said that it would like to operate low-cost flights on dual-aisle aircraft like Dreamliners. Wingate said Gatwick is not just the second largest airport in the UK but is also working to create new slots at the airport by increasing efficiency in the system.

10/02/20 Mihir Mishra/Economic Times

**New Delhi: A severe winter storm 'Sabine' over northern and central Europe could affect flights to and from the region till Tuesday morning. Among the impacted flights to and from India are Lufthansa's flights between Munich to Delhi and Mumbai on Monday. Air India has also rescheduled some of its European flights.** Comments from other carriers that fly direct between India and Europe are still awaited.

"Lufthansa's Munich-Mumbai and Munich-Delhi flights operated on Sunday. But they will not be operating from the return sector (from Delhi and Mumbai to Munich) on Monday. Lufthansa's Munich-Mumbai and Munich-Delhi will not operate on Monday," said an official.

A senior AI official said the airline has rescheduled some of its flights.

10/02/20 Times of India

**New Delhi: The nose gear of a Cessna collapsed while backtracking after landing at Kanpur on Sunday.**

"The aircraft belongs to **flying training school Garg Aviation** and had landed after a training flight. After landing while backtracking on Kanpur airfield runway, nose gear of this Cessna 310 (VT-EJX). An officer from Delhi region is being sent for on-site investigation," said a senior DGCA official.

Luckily no one is learnt to be hurt.

09/02/20 Saurabh Sinha/Times of India

**NEW DELHI : India's aviation regulator Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has temporarily suspended the license of a pilot with the country's largest domestic airline IndiGo for threatening and intimidating a senior citizen on a flight between Chennai and Bangalore during last month,** the agency said in a statement.

DGCA had earlier issued a show cause notice to the pilot in command (PIC), who operated IndiGo flight 6E-806, flying between Chennai and Bangalore, on 13 January, the regulator said in the statement adding that the pilot has been suspended for a period of three months.

"After examining the reply of the PIC to the show cause notice it was established that the PIC's attitude towards the wheelchair bound senior citizen passenger was intimidating, threatening and lacked compassion," DGCA said in the statement.

"His action led to avoidable detention of wheelchair bound passenger. He exhibited lack of ability in managing threat and error situation especially when he had to operate another commercial flight after a short duration," it added.

The IndiGo pilot mentioned above had threatened two woman passengers while disembarking the flight at Bengaluru airport last month. He was taken off duty following an intervention by Union Aviation Minister Hardeep Singh Puri.

The IndiGo pilot misbehaved with the lady and even threatened her with jail after she asked for a wheelchair for her 75-year-old mother.

**According to a DGCA official, the pilot misused his authority in intimidating and threatening the wheel chair bound passenger and her attendant by saying that they will be handed over to CISF and a police case will be registered against them for their unruly behaviour.**

The pilot also exhibited aggression towards the lady passengers and insisted on apology letter from the passengers, which further delayed the matter and led to passengers being detained for more than an hour, the DGCA official, mentioned above, said, requesting anonymity.

On Monday, an IndiGo spokesperson didn't respond to Mint's queries on this issue. This is not the first time the airline's staff has intimidated and harassed passengers. During October 2017, IndiGo ground staff manhandled and dragged a passenger at Delhi airport after an argument. The airline then said that it had apologized to the passenger immediately after the incident.

Live Mint Aviation 10/02/2020

Mumbai: GMR Airports Limited, a subsidiary of GMR Infrastructure, on Friday announced it has achieved the **concession commencement date (CCD) for design, construction, financing, operation, and maintenance of a new international airport at Crete, Greece.**

**GMR Airports Limited (GAL) along with its Greek partner GEK TERNA signed the concession agreement in February 2019.**

The concession period for the project is **35 years**, including Phase-1 construction of five years. The consortium intends to invest over 500 million euros for development of the new airport. The project will be funded through a mix of equity, accruals from the existing airport, and financial grant being provided by the government of Greece, said GMR in a statement.

Greece attracts nearly 33 million tourists per annum. Crete is the largest and most visited island in Greece. Heraklion airport, located in Crete, is the second largest airport in the country and has been registering a traffic growth of 10% CAGR over the past three years.

The current airport is facing a capacity constraint and will be replaced by the new airport at Kastelli.  
The Economic Times of India 11/02/2020

Ministry of Health and Family Welfare

Health Secretary reviews actions and preparedness on Novel Coronavirus

Ms. Preeti Sudan, Secretary (HFW) chaired a meeting with the senior officials of the Ministry to review the actions and preparedness for prevention and management of Novel Coronavirus, here today.

Secretary (HFW) highlighted that while the situation is under control presently, States/UTs shall remain alert and vigilant on a continued basis. The community level awareness activities regarding the updated advisories, guidelines, protocols etc., needs to be enhanced by the States.

At present, the screening of passengers is on in all 21 airports, 12 major Seaports and border crossings. In all 2148 flights and 232613 passengers were screened so far. As of now, 1632 samples have been tested of which 3 samples had earlier tested positive (Kerala). All Indian evacuees from Wuhan have tested negative for nCoV. 11527 persons are presently under community surveillance in 34 States/UTs.

## Measures to control spread of Novel Coronavirus

Government has taken note of the outbreak of Novel Coronavirus in China and has taken measures to monitor the situation in India. As of now, three confirmed cases of novel Coronavirus disease have been reported from Kerala. All the cases are clinically stable.

Screening of passengers has been initiated at all 21 airports. Universal screening has been made mandatory for all flights from China, Hong Kong, Singapore and Thailand. Instructions have been issued to park these flights at earmarked aero-bridges to facilitate screening. Screening has also been initiated at all major sea ports and minor ports wherein crew and passengers from China are expected. Besides this, screening has been initiated in border crossings.

First Travel advisory was issued on 17th January 2020 and as situation is evolving, the travel advisories are accordingly getting revised. Extant advisories provide that:

- i. Existing visas (including eVisa already issued) are no longer valid for any foreign national travelling from China to India.
- ii. People having compelling reasons to visit India may contact Indian Embassy in Beijing or Indian Consulates in Shanghai or Guangzhou.
- iii. People have already been advised to refrain from travel to China through an earlier advisory. People traveling to China henceforth will be quarantined on return.

The government has conducted training for the officers of ports, airports and border crossing points and has sensitized them on management of higher risk pathogens such as Ebola and Coronavirus. Thermal scanners and hand held thermal detectors have been placed at 21 airports. Additional doctors, nurses and paramedic staff have been deployed at the airports for smooth, effective and convenient screening of passengers.

Guidelines on clinical management, infection prevention control, surveillance and sampling etc. have been disseminated to the States and also made available on the website of the Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. An information pamphlet providing relevant information is also provided to the passengers. In-flight announcements are being made and self-declaration forms are being filled up by all passengers. Signages have been displayed at prominent locations at airports and ports. The risk is communicated through media including social media.

A group of ministers consisting of Minister of External Affairs, Minister of Civil Aviation, Minister of State of Home Affairs, Minister of State of Health and Family welfare, Minister of State of Shipping under the chairmanship of Union Health Minister has been constituted and the first meeting held on 03.02.2020. Cabinet Secretary has taken multiple meetings with all related Ministries such as Health, Defense, MEA, Civil Aviation, Home, Textiles, Pharma, Commerce and other officials including with State Chief Secretaries. Ministry of Health and Family Welfare is constantly reviewing the evolving scenario. Video Conferences has been held with Chief Secretaries and also with Secretaries, Health of the States almost every alternate day.

**Integrated Disease Surveillance Programme (IDSP) has been geared up to track and follow up passengers coming from China, Hong Kong, Taiwan and Singapore. National Institute of Virology, Pune is the nodal Laboratory for testing high risk pathogens. 14 other laboratories are also testing samples. Sufficient stock of Personal Protective Equipments (PPE) is maintained. A 24x7 Control Room has been activated. Government is monitoring the situation closely.**

The Minister of State (Health and Family Welfare), Sh Ashwini Kumar Choubey stated this in a written reply in the Rajya Sabha here today.

#### Effect of Coronavirus Outbreak and Precautions taken

Government has taken note of the outbreak of Novel Coronavirus in China and has taken measures to monitor the situation in India.

In view of the fact that large number of cases were recorded in Wuhan City of Hubei province in China, Government of India initiated steps to evacuate students and professionals working in Hubei province. Accordingly, 645 persons were evacuated and have been kept in two Quarantine Centres, [(243 kept at Manesar (DG, AFMS) and 402 Chawla Camp (ITBP)]. The samples collected from all evacuees have tested negative. All evacuees are being monitored and are clinically stable.

As of now, three confirmed cases of novel Coronavirus disease have been reported from Kerala. All these cases have been hospitalized, receiving treatment and are also reported to be clinically stable.

**Screening of passengers has been initiated at all 21 airports. Universal screening has been made mandatory for all flights from China, Hong Kong, Singapore and Thailand.** Instructions have been issued to park these flights at earmarked aero-bridges to facilitate screening.

The government has conducted training for the officers of ports, airports and border crossing points and has sensitized them on management of higher risk pathogens such as Ebola and Coronavirus. Thermal scanners and hand held thermal detectors have been placed at 21 airports. Additional doctors, nurses and paramedic staff have been deployed at the airports for smooth, effective and convenient screening of passengers.

World Health Organization (WHO) has issued various guidelines pertaining to nCoV outbreak. All guidelines are available on the website of WHO.

Ministry has issued guidelines to support states on Surveillance and contact tracing, Surveillance at Points of Entry, Laboratory samples collection, packaging and transport, Clinical management protocol and Infection prevention and control in healthcare facilities.

Screening of passengers has been initiated in 21 airports, all major and minor seaports and borders crossing and integrated check posts. In-flight announcements are being made and self-declaration forms are being filled up by all passengers. Signages have been displayed at prominent locations at airports and ports.

Gram Sabhas have been conducted in villages adjoining the borders to create awareness amongst people about the disease and precautions to be taken in collaboration with Panchayati Raj Ministry.

Integrated Disease Surveillance Programme (IDSP) has been geared up to track and follow up passengers coming from China, Hong Kong, Taiwan and Singapore. National Institute of Virology, Pune is the nodal Laboratory for testing high risk pathogens. 14 other laboratories are also testing samples. Sufficient stock of Personal Protective Equipments (PPE) is maintained.

Risk communication material has been prepared and is widely disseminated even in regional languages through states. Required awareness in community is ensured through technical briefings by experts in radio and Television. Daily Press briefing is being held by Ministry of Health and information is being shared through social media. A 24x7 Control Room is operational (011-23978046).

A group of ministers consisting of Minister of External Affairs, Minister of Civil Aviation, Minister of State of Home Affairs, Minister of State of Health and Family welfare, Minister of State of Shipping under the chairmanship of Union Health Minister has been constituted and the first meeting held on 03.02.2020. Cabinet Secretary has taken multiple meetings with all related Ministries such as Health, Defense, MEA, Civil Aviation, Home, Textiles, Pharma, Commerce and other officials including with State Chief Secretaries. Ministry of Health and Family Welfare is constantly reviewing the evolving scenario. Video Conferences has been held with Chief Secretaries and also with Secretaries, Health of the States almost every alternate day.

Government is monitoring the situation closely.

The Minister of State (Health and Family Welfare), Sh Ashwini Kumar Choubey stated this in a written reply in the Rajya Sabha here today.

#### Press Information Bureau 12/02/2020

Workers are stuck in their hometowns. Officials want detailed health plans before factories or offices can reopen. Assembly lines that make General Motors cars and Apple iPhones are standing silent.

More than two weeks after China locked down a major city to stop a dangerous viral outbreak, one of the world's largest economies remains largely idle. Much of the country was supposed to have reopened by now, but its empty streets, quiet factories and legions of inactive workers suggest that weeks or months could pass before this vital motor of global growth is humming again.

The global economy could suffer the longer China stays in low gear. It has been hampered by both the outbreak and its own containment efforts, a process that has cut off workers from their jobs and factories from their raw materials. The result is a slowdown that is already slashing traffic along the world's shipping lines and leading to forecasts of a sharp fall in production of everything from cars to smartphones.

"It's like Europe in medieval times," said Joerg Wuttke, president of the European Chamber of Commerce in China, "where each city has its checks and crosschecks."

New figures show authorities still have a long way to go before the outbreak can be tamed. On Tuesday, they reported a milestone: the overall death toll from coronavirus in China had topped 1,000. On Monday, the number was 908.

In a sign that China's leaders feel increasing pressure to look like they are in control, Xi Jinping, the country's top leader, toured a Beijing neighborhood and hospital, in what state media described as an inspection of the front line of the outbreak. Chinese officials have been roundly criticized online even in the face of tough censorship for what many see as a slow initial response and the suppression of early warnings.

On Monday, a team from the World Health Organization landed in Beijing to work with Chinese researchers battling the coronavirus. Their arrival could signal a shift in attitude among China's leaders, who had balked at a visit and have long worked to show that they do not need foreign assistance to tackle problems.

The organization's director general, Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, cited with concern instances of infections among people who had not traveled to China, suggesting that even more cases could emerge. "In short, we may only be seeing the tip of the iceberg," he wrote on Twitter.

Chinese health officials have been encouraged that the pace of recoveries among victims has outpaced deaths for more than a week. The rate of infection, however, has continued to soar, suggesting that the worst is still to come.

It is becoming increasingly clear that restarting China — the world's largest manufacturer and a titan of global trade — would be difficult even if the country makes major strides in the next few days toward containing the outbreak.

Until then, the damage is spreading.

On Monday, Nissan of Japan said it would shut down its plant in Kyushu, Japan, for four days beginning later this week "due to supply shortages of parts from China." Other carmakers like FCA in Italy and Hyundai in South Korea have already warned that a lack of parts from China could force them to curtail production in their home markets.

The China Development Forum, the country's premier gathering of business leaders and economists, said its annual meeting, set for next month, had been postponed indefinitely.

Government officials had extended China's official Lunar New Year holiday by three days to Feb. 3 to keep people home. Major business hubs, like the cities of Beijing and Shanghai and the provinces of Guangdong and Shandong, then further extended holidays until Monday.

As the day dawned, it was clear that business as usual had not resumed. Traffic in Beijing was much lighter than normal, stores remained closed, and many residents worked from home or did not work at all.

Daimler, the German maker of Mercedes cars, said it began gradually ramping up production at its Chinese factories Monday. But other major companies said their factories remained closed or were running slower than usual. Ford Motor said that its joint venture with one of China's biggest state-owned firms was restarting some production but that it would "ramp up our production over the following weeks."

General Motors said that it would reopen the first of its huge assembly plants in China only Saturday and would gradually reopen the rest over the following two weeks, "based on local employees' safety readiness, supply chain readiness and product inventory needs."

China's containment efforts are contributing to the disruptions.

Authorities have locked down a region of central China around Wuhan, the city at the center of the outbreak. Local authorities are taking a tough stance with traffic, meaning workers are struggling to return to their jobs. Many towns and cities have begun imposing two-week mandatory quarantines on arriving truck drivers who picked up cargos in cities with disease outbreaks or even just drove through these areas.

Wu Lin, an associate director at a Shanghai advertising company, returned to Wuhan, her hometown, for the holidays Jan. 21 and had a high-speed train ticket back to Shanghai on Feb. 2. But her ticket was canceled soon after Wuhan was locked down, and she has tried and failed repeatedly since then to find a way out.

"There is no point to keep looking," she said.

Shipyards around the country have run into labor shortages, said Tim Huxley, chief executive of Mandarin Shipping, a Hong Kong freighter shipping company. Shipbuilders and ship repair providers



have begun citing these labor shortages to invoke clauses in their contracts that allow them to delay completion of projects for events beyond their control, he said.

Aside from fear of disease, the country's nearly 300 million migrant workers — almost two-fifths of the labor force — now have another reason to be reluctant to travel to distant cities: Their children are still home. Depending on the province, many schools are not scheduled to resume until Feb. 25 or even March 1.

Even factories with enough workers are running into further problems. The packaging industry is almost shut down, so everything from plastic packing to steel drums is running out, Wuttke said.

Local regulators are putting up even more barriers.

Before businesses in big manufacturing hubs like Shanghai, Shenzhen, Suzhou or Nanjing can reopen, they must now verify the travel history and health of every employee over the past two weeks. They must have frequent temperature checks of employees, hand-washing procedures and a plan to isolate and refer to hospitals anyone showing even fevers as low as 99.1 degrees.

Most difficult of all, businesses cannot reopen without prior approval of their health plans by municipal officials — and larger operations also have to wait for a site visit from a health official.

Shenzhen, a vast sprawl of electronics factories and skyscrapers next to Hong Kong, issued new health and safety rules Sunday and said that factories that make iPhones and other Apple products would have to meet them before opening. Foxconn Technology, a Taiwanese company that owns the factories, said it met all health and hygiene rules but declined to comment on when production would restart at specific locations. Apple declined to comment.

It is not yet clear how the ripples from China's slowdown will affect the United States. Businesses that rely on assembling a lot of different parts from various suppliers could become the hardest hit. At the top of that list is the auto industry — a single car may require as many as 30,000 parts from various suppliers.

American businesses have been trying to diversify away from China as President Donald Trump's trade war with Beijing has made it less economical to manufacture there. But a lot of steering parts, electronics and even door hinges still come to the United States from China, said Razat Gaurav, chief executive of Llamasoft, a company in Ann Arbor, Michigan, that handles supply chain logistics for big automakers and aerospace companies in North America.

"If the current coronavirus crisis continues to impact production capacity in China," he said, "it will ultimately impact auto assembly plants in the U.S. and Mexico."

#### The Economic times of India 11/02/2020

Low cost carrier IndiGo on Tuesday announced a four-day special Valentine sale on travel across its network within India with all-inclusive fares starting at ₹999.

**The airline is offering one million seats on discounted fares from February 11 to February 14. The sale is valid for travel from March 1 to September 30,** a company statement said.

"We are delighted to announce the four-day special sale effective from today till February 14, kickstarting the Valentine's celebrations a little early," the chief commercial officer of IndiGo, William Boulter, said.

Both corporate and leisure customers who wish to plan their travel can book tickets via the official website, the statement added.

#### Live Mint Aviation 11/02/2020

**French defence major Thales has decided to expand its presence in India to exploit billions of dollars of military requirements expected to flow from the India's ambitious plan to roll out theatre commands to deal with evolving security challenges.**

Pascale Sourisse, senior executive vice president, International Development, Thales, said creation of theatre commands will fuel the need for radars, electronic warfare systems and weapons and the firm is ready to meet the huge demands, including through joint production of military hardware.

The first batch of RBE2 active electronic scanned array (AESA) radar will come out from the joint venture between Thales and Reliance Aerostructure Ltd next month, Sourisse told PTI in an interview.

The Nagpur-based manufacturing facility of the joint venture is going to produce SPECTRA electronic warfare systems, which are going to be part of the Rafale fighter jets. Initially, the RBE2 AESA radars were being integrated in the facility.

**The JV was set up to develop Indian capabilities to integrate and maintain radars and manufacture high performance airborne electronics, leveraging Thales' offset commitment as part of a deal to supply 36 Rafale fighter jets to the Indian Air Force.**

India plans to reorganise the existing military commands into common theatre commands comprising the Army, Navy and Air Force, similar to the structure followed by the leading western powers.

Chief of Defence Staff Gen Bipin Rawat last month announced that work on establishing theatre commands will be completed within three years and that the new model will significantly enhance India's combat capabilities.

"The Indian market is a very important market for Thales. We are investing in this market considering future growth opportunities," Sourisse said.

Thales, a vendor of Dassault Aviation, has already almost tripled its head count in India to 1,600.

**Sourisse also said Thales will be able to boost technology transfer to India if the Rafale aircraft is chosen by the Indian Air Force in its hunt to procure 114 fighter jets at a cost of USD 18 billion.**

The top contenders for the deal include Lockheed's F-21, Boeing's F/A-18, Dassault Aviation's Rafale, the Eurofighter Typhoon, Russian aircraft MiG 35 and Saab's Gripen.

In 2016, India inked a Euro 7.87 billion (approx Rs 59,000 crore) deal with France for the purchase of 36 Rafale fighter jets. The first four aircraft will arrive in India in May.

"Thales is part of the Rafale team. We hope that Dassault Aviation will get the future orders. Our resolve to share critical technologies with India is fully supported by the French government. There is a clear commitment to transfer critical technology to India," Sourisse said.

She said Thales has offered to produce F90 assault rifles in India.

Sourisse also said that Thales is keen to help India in its multi-billion dollar programme to develop a next generation advanced multi-role combat aircraft and also in the Tejas fighter jet programme.

Thales has also announced joining hands with MKU, an Indian company, to co-develop night vision

devices for the armed forces in India and across the world.

Sourisse said Thales has also offered Indian armed forces a new generation radio solution which could enhance inter-operability among the Air Force, the Navy and the Army in a collaborative combat scenario.

Thales, which has been in India since 1953, provides solutions, services and products to customers in the aeronautics, space, transport, digital identity and security, and defence markets in 68 countries.

**In the last couple of years, Thales has been investing in digital innovations with a focus on big data, artificial intelligence and cyber security.**

Last year, Thales launched its Global Engineering Competence Centre in Bengaluru with an aim to accelerate innovation and digital transformation to serve the needs of the Indian market and the group's global markets.

New Delhi, Feb 14 (PTI)

**A new policy of staggered procurement of major military platforms including for 114 fighter jets for the Indian Air Force will be adopted to address the problem of obsolescence and encourage the domestic defence industry, Chief of Defence Staff Gen Bipin Rawat said on Monday.**

He said going for mega deals at one go may make the platforms redundant after a period of time as technology is advancing at a rapid pace.

**When asked whether the government will follow the new model of staggered procurement for IAF's proposal to buy 114 aircraft, Gen Rawat said, "Yes. It will be under the new framework."**

The chief of defence staff said government is adopting the new approach to encourage the domestic defence industry as total reliance on import will not serve the Make in India initiative.

"I think we should go for staggered approach of placing orders for big-ticket purchases. If we are buying 100 aircraft, then it should be in four packages of 25 aircraft each," he said.

"That is why we ordered only 36 Rafale aircraft," Gen Rawat said without clarifying whether the government will go for procuring more Rafale jets from France.

In April last year, the IAF issued an RFI (request for information) or initial tender to acquire 114 jets at a cost of around USD 18 billion, which is billed as one of the world's biggest military procurement in recent years.

The top contenders for the deal include Lockheed's F-21, Boeing's F/A-18, Dassault Aviation's Rafale, the Eurofighter Typhoon, Russian aircraft MiG 35 and Saab's Gripen.

The chief of defence staff, who has been tasked to prioritise military procurement, said utility and a futuristic approach will be major factors in deciding big-ticket purchases.

The government appointed Gen Rawat as CDS on December 31 to bring in convergence among the three services and restructure military commands to effectively deal with future security challenges.

New Delhi, Feb 17 (PTI)

En 2017, quatre personnes d'une même famille réservent, auprès de la compagnie Air India, des billets Paris-Delhi (Inde), puis Delhi-Bangkok (Thaïlande). Le premier vol doit décoller le 12 août à 22 h 00 pour atterrir le lendemain à 9 h 35. Or, il est retardé en raison de « la maladie soudaine » du commandant de bord, qui nécessite son « hospitalisation d'urgence », et l'intervention d'un pilote de remplacement, venu de Londres. Le vol est finalement effectué le 13 août à 16 h 30 ; il arrive à destination le 14 août à 14 h 10, soit avec 18 heures de retard.

Les X font appel à Flightright, société allemande qui revendique le titre de premier service européen d'assistance aux passagers aériens, pour réclamer à Air India l'indemnité prévue par le règlement européen 261/2004, en cas de retard de plus de trois heures - soit en l'occurrence 600 euros par personne.

Assistance aux passagers

Air India refuse de la verser, au motif que la maladie soudaine du commandant de bord constituerait une « circonstance extraordinaire ». Or, fait-elle valoir, aux termes de l'article 5 du règlement 261/2004, le versement de l'indemnité n'est pas obligatoire, lorsque « l'annulation est due à des circonstances extraordinaires, qui n'auraient pas pu être évitées, même si toutes les mesures raisonnables avaient été prises ».

L'avocat partenaire de Flightright, Me Benjamin Mairesse, assigne Air India devant le tribunal d'instance de Paris. Il conteste que la maladie du commandant de bord soit une circonstance extraordinaire, analogue à celles que prévoit le considérant 14 du règlement : « De telles circonstances peuvent se produire, en particulier, en cas d'instabilité politique, de conditions météorologiques incompatibles avec la réalisation du vol concerné, de risques liés à la sécurité, de défaillances imprévues pouvant affecter la sécurité du vol, ainsi que de grèves ayant une incidence sur les opérations d'un transporteur aérien effectif ».

Événement inhabituel

**Me Mairesse affirme que « la maladie d'un être humain ou son indisponibilité soudaine pour des raisons médicales n'est pas un événement inhabituel », et qu'« elle ne saurait être qualifiée de circonstance extraordinaire ». Ce que le tribunal approuve, le 14 décembre 2018. Il juge que « l'argument d'Air India », selon lequel son siège social se trouvant en Inde, elle n'avait pas de pilotes disponibles en France et que le plus proche se trouvait à Londres, « ne saurait l'exonérer de ses obligations » : en effet, « il appartient à une compagnie aérienne, de quelque nationalité qu'elle soit, de pouvoir faire face à la maladie d'un membre de l'équipage, personnel navigant, depuis l'aéroport où elle opère ».**

Le tribunal précise : « **Prévoir une solution de remplacement d'un membre de l'équipage, surtout lorsqu'il s'agit de personnel navigant, rentre dans les missions d'une compagnie aérienne, à qui il appartient d'abord de prendre en compte la sécurité des passagers mais aussi d'assumer la régularité des horaires des vols qu'elle a programmés** ». Il condamne Air India à indemniser les quatre passagers. La compagnie se pourvoit en cassation, mais la Cour juge, le 5 février 2020 (N°19-12.294), que le tribunal « énonce, à bon droit, que la maladie ou une indisponibilité soudaine pour des raisons médicales n'est pas un événement inhabituel, et qu'elle ne saurait être qualifiée de circonstance extraordinaire ».

Le Monde 13/02/2020

**Two passengers who arrived at NSCB Airport from Bangkok have tested positive for the novel coronavirus**, Airports Authority of India officials said on Thursday.

**With this, a total of three passengers have tested positive for the novel coronavirus in Kolkata.**

A passenger called Himadri Barman tested positive on Tuesday, and Nagendra Singh tested positive on Wednesday, the Director of NSCB Airport, Kaushik Bhattacharjee, told PTI.

Both of them were sent to Beliaghata ID Hospital, he said.

"Earlier a passenger called Anita Oraon had also tested positive during thermal scanning," Bhattacharjee said.

Already two airlines which had direct flights between Kolkata and China have suspended their flights.

Low cost carrier IndiGo has temporarily suspended its flights between Kolkata and Guangzhou from February 6.

"In line with the WHO guideline to contain the spread of coronavirus, IndiGo will be suspending its Kolkata- Guangzhou service from February 6, 2020 to February 25, 2020 and Guangzhou-Kolkata from February 7 till February 26," the airline had said in a statement.

After IndiGo, China Eastern Airlines suspended its flights between Kolkata and Kunming in China from February 10 to February 29.

Passengers of flights coming to Kolkata from Kunming and Guangzhou in China, Hong Kong, Singapore and Bangkok were being screened since January 17.

At present, passengers arriving from Hong Kong, Singapore and Bangkok are being screened as no flights are operating to and from China.

Kolkata, Feb 13 (PTI)

### **Three persons who tested positive for novel coronavirus in Kerala are now stable, Health Minister Harsh Vardhan said on Thursday.**

The 645 Indians evacuated from the coronavirus-hit Wuhan city have all tested negative for the virus and discharge guidelines are being issued, he said.

People at 21 airports are being being screened for coronavirus, he told a press conference.

"All the states have been informed about the guidelines and precautionary measures to be taken," Vardhan said.

New Delhi, Feb 13 (PTI)

**New Delhi: An Air India aircraft on high speed take off roll at Pune airport Saturday morning was forced to get airborne earlier than planned to avoid a possible collision with a jeep that was dangerously near the airstrip. The aircraft had a speed of 220 kmph when an alert Captain Vikram Singh Besoa and first officer Mansika Harlan decided to go for early rotation — lifting nose wheel off the ground — instead of completing the take off roll as planned before doing so. The jeep belongs to Indian Air Force (IAF), which operates the Pune defence airfield, and there was also a man near the runway.**

The rear section of Airbus A321, which has a longer fuselage than A320, scraped the runway in the process. Luckily it (VT-PPU) took off uneventfully at 7.55 am and flew all the 190 on board, including 180 passengers, safely to its destination Delhi as AI 852 where it landed at 10.17 am. "Prima facie, Captains Besoa and Harlan have prevented a disaster," said a senior pilot.

Damage on the fuselage was discovered during inspection of the aircraft before being released for the next flight it was to operate to Srinagar as AI 825. AI has grounded the aircraft for checks and the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) is probing this incident.

In a statement, IAF confirmed that on Saturday morning "a service vehicle was cleared for routine task on the runway at Pune airfield. It reached close to the runway at a time when an Air India flight

was on the take off roll.”

“Due to the presence of the vehicle near runway, the AI pilot had to do an earlier rotation, (earlier) than planned by the crew of the aircraft. The AI aircraft has landed safely in Delhi. The matter is under investigation by IAF,” the statement added.

As per protocol, the crew has been taken off flying duty for so that they are available for the investigation. “We will have interaction with them shortly. IAF has been requested to preserve ATC recording for investigation,” said a DGCA official.

“The average decision speed (V1) — by which any decision to reject a takeoff must be made — for an A321 is 240-250 kmph, depending on various factors like temperature and weight of aircraft. The Pune-Delhi flight may have been below V1 but averting take off might have meant ramming the jeep and a disaster. So the pilots decided to get airborne as soon as possible. The A321 has a longer fuselage (compared to A320) and in almost all tail scrape/strikes involving this aircraft, the same is realised on seeing the marks after landing,” said one of the senior most commanders of AI.

[15/02/20 Saurabh Sinha/Times of India](#)

**Mumbai: The employees of JetLite, a subsidiary of Jet Airways, have moved the dedicated bankruptcy court to be part of the corporate insolvency resolution process of the defunct carrier.**

On Friday, the employees approached the Mumbai bench of the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) with the argument that when they had approached the resolution professional (RP), their claims were rejected.

“Claims submitted to the Jet Airway’s RP are being rejected and JetLite’s employees are being neglected,” argued the counsel for the employees of JetLite. “Jet Airways and JetLite are interdependent entities. The dues of JetLite employees are around Rs 50 crore.”

[15/02/20 Maulik Vyas/Economic Times](#)

**New Delhi: Not ready to take any chance in the wake of the spiraling cases of coronavirus across the countries, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) asked airports and airlines on Friday that passengers arriving in flights from Japan and South Korea must be screened once they step out of aerobridges in order to prevent the spread of novel coronavirus infection.**

Till date, only passengers arriving from four countries -- China, Hong Kong, Thailand and Singapore - were being screened for possible exposure to the respiratory virus at 21 identified airports in India.

The Indian Embassy in Japan said on Friday that a third Indian crew on board a cruise ship off the Japanese coast has tested positive for the novel coronavirus as authorities confirmed that total 218 people have been infected with the deadly virus on the quarantined ship.

Two crew members, out of total 138 Indians on board the cruise ship Diamond Princess, were tested positive for the virus earlier.

**In a circular, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) stated, "Universal screening of all the passengers coming in flights directly from Japan, South Korea, Thailand and Singapore besides the flights from China and Hong Kong shall be ensured immediately once they step out of the specific identified aerobridge."**

"It is advised to place the suitable signages at strategic locations at all the airports and getting the self-declaration form filled by the passengers as per the instructions of the Ministry of Health and

Family Welfare," it added.  
[15/02/20 Pioneer](#)

**Sitar exponent Anoushka Shankar on Friday became the latest victim of the insensitivity of the Indian aviation industry towards musicians, their musical instruments and their equipment.**

Shankar performed at the Sri Shanmukhananda Hall on Thursday night as part of her India tour to promote her latest album, Love Letters. On Friday, at 4.15 pm, she tweeted angrily, "Security at Mumbai airport has gone through my sound man's luggage, removed cables!!! Left our in-ear monitors unpacked, so they are smashed! Delhi show is gonna be fun tonight." Her second show was scheduled at the Siri Fort Auditorium at 8 pm on Friday.

Shankar's India manager Anujita Jain told Mirror from Delhi, "During transit from Mumbai to Delhi, the pelican case was opened without knowledge of the passenger. Two inear monitors were broken, which are important

for our performance today." The in-ear monitors are speakers positioned on stage so as to enable the musician to hear the music during the live performance.

Though Shankar blamed the Mumbai airport security, the airport officials said such equipment is strictly allowed in check-in baggage and airport security, which is handled by the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF), has no role to play. CISF officials were not aware of the incident. Shankar or her manager did not name the airline on which they travelled.

[15/02/20 Satish Nandgaonkar/Mumbai Mirror](#)

**New Delhi: The Adani group on Friday signed agreements with the Airports Authority of India (AAI) for operating the airports in Ahmedabad, Lucknow and Mangaluru. The group had earlier won the bids for operating six AAI airports.** "Over the past 30 years, @AdaniOnline has catered to critical demand gaps in India. Today, as we sign the concession agreements for Mangaluru, Lucknow & Ahmedabad with the AAI, it's the beginning of another historic journey catering to India's exponential airport infra demands," Adani Group chairman Gautam Adani tweeted.

**The AAI said the concession fee would be utilised for the maintenance and development of brownfield airports along with RCS-UDAN and other greenfield airports.** The Regional Connectivity Scheme (RCS) is also known as Ude Desh ka Aam Nagrik (UDAN).

**Three subsidiaries of the group – Adani Ahmedabad International Airport Limited, Adani Lucknow International Airport Limited and Adani Mangaluru International Airport Limited – signed concession agreements with the AAI.**

[15/02/20 New Indian Express](#)

A bunch of residents in Gurugram got an intensive lesson on 'heavenly endowments' on Saturday. The most important lesson: don't put them the refrigerator. What's more, if their experience were to be ever made into a motion picture, a portion of the individuals who saw the daylong drama may even recommend the title, 'Crap li Live'.

The 'blessing' had come out of the blue. Rajbir Yadav, a farmer at Fazilpur Badli town, was out for his wake-up routine in the fields when he saw what appeared to be an "extremely huge stone" collide with the ground close to him and disintegrate. "It hit the ground with a major wreck," he later reviewed. Different locals present in the region gathered around Rajbir. Word spread rapidly. From the farm to the horse shelters to the back streets; within no time, the whole town was discussing it.

Individuals filled the wheat farm for a look.

Among them, a portion of the more educated individuals made an estimate: this could be a meteor. The stone had a white surface and was super cold, with a transparent surface. Some uncommon mineral, at that point? A land treasure? In all the speculative talk, a few townspeople sneaked a couple of pieces into their garments and moved them quickly to their homes. To make sure they weren't caught snoozing if the object is discovered to be an invaluable item. It was cold, so they stored the pieces in the refrigerator, guaranteed that was their most secure place. At that point, they came back to their day by day business.

Meanwhile, word reached the local administration, which dispatched a group from the National Disaster Management Authority and India Meteorological Department to the town, situated in Farrukhnagar. The primary 'intel' that accompanied the discovery was that an ice ball had struck the wheat field. The Meteorological Department experts decision dissolved the interest. The object was no meteor, nor any divine miracle as found in a science fiction film. This was no doubt 'blue ice', a term utilized for frozen toilet waste from planes.

At first sight, it would appear that aircrafts waste. All things considered, we are sending it to the criminological lab in Bhondsi to recognize what precisely it is," said Vivek Kalia, the Pataudi subdivisional officer who went with the expert group to Fazilpur Badli.

Kalia said townspeople trusted it to be a meteor on the grounds that the ice hadn't melted, potentially as a result of the winter climate. Blue ice is a solidified blend of human excreta and liquid disinfectants.

15/02/20 All India Roundup

**Bengaluru: The first batch of Post Graduate Diploma in Aviation Management (PGDAM) has passed out from HAL Management Academy.** Prof Debashis Chatterjee, Director, IIM-Kozhikode, was the chief guest at the convocation held at HMA here today. Professor Chatterjee appreciated the efforts of HAL in offering this unique program relevant to the industry.

**The main objective of the AICTE approved, 15-month PGDAM program has been to develop students who could further contribute in strengthening the aerospace eco-system in India by bridging the gap between industry and academia.**

**The certificates were awarded to 31 students.** Gold Medals were awarded to Kiran Nellore for the best academic performance and to Vineeth Vijayan for the best overall performance. M. Raviprakash bagged the best project award.

15/02/20 India Education Diary

**Thiruvananthapuram: Customs wing at the Thiruvananthapuram international airport foiled two smuggling attempts through an Air India Express flight that landed on Friday morning. They seized over 1,650 gm of gold worth over Rs 68 lakh.** Air Customs officers seized the gold hidden in a juicer from a passenger and the Customs preventive division seized two gold bars hidden beneath the seat of the same flight. However, they did not reveal the identity of the passenger who was apprehended.

The preventive division led by Deputy Commissioner Harikrishnan D found gold bars concealed under the passenger seat of IX 540 Dubai-Thiruvananthapuram Air India Express flight. The gold weighed 1040.72 gm. The officers said they searched the aircraft based on a tip-off and the gold bars were wrapped in masking and insulation tapes. The consignment was glued beneath the seat occupied by a child. The inspection was carried out after the passengers alighted the plane.

15/02/20 New Indian Express



**Mumbai: GoAir Friday said it will appoint former Jet Airways chief Vinay Dube as its CEO as Chief Executive Officer (CEO). The announcement comes a year after its former chief Cornelis Vrieswijk quit. He had been at the position for just nine months.**

Managing director Jeh Wadia had been running the airline in the interim. Dube was CEO of Jet in its most difficult times before the airline shut operations in April 2019 as it ran out of cash and was unable to raise funds.

Its debtors later filed a case in India's bankruptcy court. In its last months, Dube and his team tried to keep operations going, co-ordinated with authorities and angry debtors and even tried to find alternative jobs for Jet's employees.

14/02/20 Economic Times

**New Delhi: A PIL has been moved in the Delhi High Court seeking grounding of all faulty Airbus A320 Neo aircraft, used by Indigo and GoAir airlines, till their engines are repaired or replaced. The petition has contended that the entire fleet of A320 Neo aircraft should be grounded "in larger interest of public safety".**

The plea, by an association, has alleged that despite being aware of "significant technical issues with Airbus A320 Neo", neither the Ministry of Civil Aviation (MCA) nor the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) have taken any concrete steps to ground these aircraft.

Instead, MCA and DGCA have only issued notices extending the timelines for carrying out the repairs or engine modifications by the airlines concerned, it has said.

"It is submitted that respondent 1 (MCA) and 2 (DGCA) have repeatedly extended the timelines for modified versions of the Pratt and Whitney engines to be installed, instead of grounding the entire fleet of A320 Neo aircraft," the petition has said.

It has also contended that despite repeated incidents of mid-air engine faults or problems in these aircraft, the aviation regulator has still not grounded the aircraft, which number more than 130 in India.

14/02/20 PTI/Outlook

**SpiceJet has reported a net profit of ₹73.2 crore for the quarter ended December 31 as against a net profit of ₹55.1 crore reported during the same period previously.**

In a statement, the airline said the results have been achieved despite odds that the airline is facing in terms of additional costs incurred because of the continued grounding of its 737 MAX aircraft. The statement adds that it has received an interim offer of compensation from Boeing for the grounding of the MAX 737.

In a statement, the airline said that its standalone profit from Air Transport Services (airlines) was ₹ 115 crore. Air Transport Services includes passenger transport and ancillary cargo operations from passenger aircraft operations.

**"From this quarter onwards, the airline will declare its freighter and passenger segments separately in its standalone results. This is because the two segments are different from an**

**operating and management point of view and now even the freighter business has assumed materiality,” Kiran Koteshear, Chief Financial Officer, SpiceJet, said.** The latest figures show the airline’s earning of ₹3,590.80 crore from Air Transport Services as against ₹56.32 crore from freighter and logistics services in the quarter ended December last year.

14/02/20 Business Line

**New Delhi: The federal government expects to finish sale of nationwide provider Air India within the first part of the following fiscal, Division of Funding and Public Asset Control (DIPAM) Secretary Tuhin Kanta Pandey stated on Friday.**

All through an interplay with monetary sector mavens to speak about the Union Funds, Pandey additionally stated disinvestment technique has shifted from minority stake sale in public sector gadgets to strategic sale, and a large number of privatisation would occur within the subsequent fiscal.

In November, he stated the federal government determined on large price tag disinvestments whilst regarding sale of stakes in BPCL, CONCOR, and Transport Company of India.

“I feel our motion has been very swift. Even the Expression of Hobby (EoI) for Air India is within the public area... We intend to finish those transactions within the first part of economic yr 2020-21,” he stated.

14/02/20 Christopher Stern/Market Research Record

**Aviation security regulator BCAS has banned e-cigarettes and similar products on all airports and aircraft in India, according to an official document.** "Upon the prohibition of electronic-cigarettes by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, it has been decided that e-cigarettes include all forms of electronic nicotine delivery system (ENDS), heat not burn products, e-hookah and the like devices," stated the Bureau of Civil Aviation Security circular dated January 10.

Distribution, sale, storage and advertisement of such products is prohibited on any airport premises or any aircraft departing or arriving in India, the regulator added. In September last year, the Central government banned production, sale and import of e-cigarettes and similar products citing health risk to people, especially the youth.

14/02/20 PTI/News18

New Delhi: SpiceJet will finally discontinue its daily Delhi-Hong Kong flight from Saturday (February 16). Air India and IndiGo had suspended their flights to Hong Kong earlier this month due to coronavirus outbreak. SpiceJet crew was reportedly very unhappy with the airline’s decision to continue flying to Hong Kong. **“SpiceJet has decided to temporarily suspend its daily Delhi-Hong Kong passenger flight from February 16 to 29, 2020,”** said an airline spokesman.

After SpiceJet’s decision, no Indian carrier currently has flights to mainland China and Hong Kong. AI had earlier suspended its Delhi-Shanghai and Delhi-Hong Kong flights. Similarly, IndiGo has suspended its three dailies to China — Delhi-Chengdu, Bengaluru-Hong Kong and Kolkata-Guangzhou.

Hong Kong’s flag carrier Cathay Pacific has reduced flights between India and the special administrative region of China — from 49 weekly flights to 36 till March 29, 2020. The airline has significantly cut its overall schedule for next two months due to reduced travel demand following coronavirus epidemic and the India reduction is part of that. Among Chinese carriers, Shandong

Airlines and Air China have suspended their flights to India. China Southern has reduced flights.

14/02/20 Saurabh Sinha/Times of India

**New Delhi: The Indira Gandhi International Airport on Friday announced that it has started a doorstep baggage transfer facility for passengers flying to and from its Terminal 3.**

**This service will also be extended to Terminal 1 and Terminal 2 of the airport, stated the press release by GMR group-led Delhi International Airport Limited (DIAL).**

**"The service has been introduced (at Terminal 3) in collaboration with Bengaluru based 'CarterX',** it said.

To avail the facility, a passenger can make a booking through CarterX website or app or counters at the airport for the baggage to be picked from their home in the National Capital Region (NCR).

"Each bag thus booked is then secured in a separate tamper-resistant sealable bags, which are marked and bar-coded for easy identification. On arrival at the airport, passengers can collect their baggage at the departure forecourt area and proceed for check-in," the press release explained.

Similarly, if luggage has to be sent from the airport, passengers can book the service online or at the baggage pick-up and drop counter, located in meters and greeters area of Terminal 3.

14/02/20 PTI/Times of India

**New Delhi: The new German-made full-body scanners being tested at Delhi's Indira Gandhi International (IGI) Airport are providing better results than the previous scanners that have been tested in the past, CISF officials said.** The testing process, which began last year, is expected to continue in the next two months, with officials stating that any improvements required will be made to fine tune the machine.

The airport operator — Delhi International Airport Limited (DIAL) — will meanwhile be responsible for installing these full-body scanners and officials said the process to start installation will begin soon.

"Based on the specifications provided by the Bureau of Civil Aviation Security (BCAS), the new German-made full-body scanner is providing better results than those that have been tested in the past. The next few months will only be able to provide us more data and allow any flaws to be fine-tuned. Information on the machine has already been provided to DIAL, who in the end is responsible for installation at the airport," said Hemendra Singh, assistant inspector general (AIG), PRO, CISF.

DIAL said the process to identify the requirement of body scanners was complete, while the installation process will begin soon. **"A total of 69 full-body scanners will be installed at IGI airport. These body scanners use millimetre wave technology, which is non-intrusive in nature, and takes care of the privacy norms and conforms to all BCAS specifications,"** said a DIAL spokesperson.

14/02/20 Jasjeev Gandhiok/Times of India

Mangaluru: Air customs officers at **Mangaluru** International Airport (MIA), late on Wednesday, caught Mohammed Mahir Patla Majeed of Patla, Kasaragod, who was attempting to smuggle gold.

Mohammed, 24, who arrived from Dubai by Air India flight IX 384, attempted to smuggle **233.2g of**

**gold in strip form worth Rs 9.4 lakh**, concealed inside a rechargeable emergency light and solar sensor wall light.

14/02/20 Times of India

**Chennai: Customs officials seized a total of two kg of gold, worth Rs 86 lakh, from passengers at Chennai international airport** on Thursday and Friday. One passenger was arrested.

On Thursday night, the officials intercepted Syed Ansari, 27, of Ramanathapuram, who arrived here from Colombo in a Srilankan Airlines flight (UL 123), Hammed Ibrahim, 21, of Ramanathapuram, who arrived here from Dubai in an Emirates flight (EK 546), and Masthan Gani, 39, of Chennai and Ahmed Basheer, 34, of Ramanathapuram, who arrived from Colombo in an IndiGo flight (6E 1204).

They recovered eleven bundles of gold paste from their rectums. On extraction, 1.36 kg gold was recovered. One gold cut bit, weighing 48 gram, was recovered from one of them.

A total of 1.417 kg gold, valued at Rs 59.64 lakh, was seized. One of them was arrested.

On Thursday night, Sekar Gundala, 52, of Tirupati, who arrived here from Dubai in an Emirates flight (EK 546), was intercepted and searched. His belt buckle and silver Kada were examined as they appeared to be giving silvery shine. It was found that they were coated with silver powder. When the silver coating was removed, gold was found. A total 240 gram of gold, worth Rs 10 lakh, was recovered.

14/02/20 Siddharth Prabhakar/Times of India

**New Delhi: The Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) in the early hours of Friday seized foreign currency worth Rs 21 lakh at the Indira Gandhi International Airport (IGIA) in the capital, an officer said here.**

According to a CISF officer, after observing a passenger moving around suspiciously in the check-in area of the airport Terminal-3, he was intercepted and, on inquiry, revealed his identify as an Indian national, Afzal Ahmad, bound for Dubai by an Air India flight.

During the pre-embarkation security check through the X-ray machine in Security Hold Area (SHA), the CISF personnel noticed something suspicious inside the passenger's backpack, the physical checking of which revealed 40,000 Saudi Riyal concealed under the false back of the backpack.

14/02/20 IANS/Outlook

**New Delhi: Air India Express, a subsidiary of Air India, has reported a net profit of ₹679.8 crore during April-September 2019, an increase of about 26 per cent over the ₹177.3 crore profit reported during the same period previously.**

“In this financial year, we will exceed the figure of ₹5,000 crore in operating revenues, and this will be for the first time, since the airline’s inception,” said Shyam Sundar, Chief Executive Officer, Air India Express, said in a statement.

Air India Express’ revenue in the financial year 2018-19 was ₹4,171.5 crore and net profit for the year was ₹168.5 crore, the airline’s statement adds.

Meanwhile, Air India Express is all set to introduce maiden non-stop flights on the Tiruchirappalli–Abu Dhabi and the Tiruchirappalli–Doha sectors from March 28. The Tiruchirappalli–Abu Dhabi service will operate four times a week and the Tiruchirappalli–Doha flights will be thrice weekly, the statement adds.

Besides, for the first time Tiruchirappalli will get connected to Delhi by a daily, direct flight which will operate through Madurai. The daily non-stop services to Dubai, Sharjah and Singapore from Tiruchirappalli will continue, offering Tiruchirappalli passengers a total of 35 flights per week, the statement says.

Furthermore, the four times weekly non-stop Madurai – Delhi flight will be increased to a daily service.

13/02/20 Business Line

**New Delhi: The appointment of Rajiv Bansal, currently Additional Secretary, Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, as Chairman and Managing Director, Air India is being viewed as a move to push the divestment of the state-owned airline. He replaces Ashwani Lohani.**

The government initiated the divestment process on January 28 when it announced its plans of selling 100 per cent of its stake in Air India, Air India Express and 50 per cent stake in Air India SATS Airport Services Private Ltd.

A cross-section of retired Air India employees who had worked with Bansal during his earlier short stint as CMD in 2017 the state-owned carrier and interacted with him when he was associated with the Ministry of Civil Aviation told BusinessLine that he is a focussed and decisive person, who is quick to understand and take decisions.

“During his earlier tenure in Air India the airline’s on-time performance (OTP) touched 95 per cent. He had drawn up a phased plan to get aircraft which were on the ground due to lack of spares back in the air in a time bound fashion,” a former employee recalled. After Bansal left the airline OTP again slipped back and currently is at about 50 per cent.

A firm believer in hierarchy and protocol, Bansal was known to meet only the heads of department but was clear that if an employee issue could not be solved by the departmental head, they were free to approach him.

13/02/20 Ashwini Phadnis/Business Line

**New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi has appreciated the 'high level commitment to duty showcased by the officials of Air India and ministry of health who conducted evacuation operation of Indian citizens stranded in the Chinese city of Wuhan.'**

Modi has issued a letter of appreciation to the officials involved in the evacuation operations, said a government statement, adding that the letter would be handed over to the crew by the minister of state for civil aviation.

Air India had conducted an emergency evacuation operation from Wuhan city, which is the epicentre of the widely spreading novel coronavirus.

13/02/20 Saurabh Sinha/Times of India

**New Delhi: US aerospace giant Lockheed Martin has offered to help India in its multi-billion-dollar programme to develop a next-generation advanced multi-role combat aircraft and boost capability of the Tejas fighter jet.**

The offer by the US aerospace firm comes ahead of President Donald Trump's maiden visit to India on February 24-25 during which both strategic partners are expected to further expand defence and military cooperation.

Vivek Lall, vice president of Strategy and Business Development for Lockheed Martin, said the company is "very open" to assisting India in the further development of the Tejas combat jet as well as the ambitious next-generation aircraft.

"We are very open to any requirement from the government of India or the Indian Air Force for any help for the Tejas as well as the AMCA (advanced multi-role combat aircraft) project," Lall told PTI in an interview without divulging specifics.

**The indigenously developed Tejas has been a showpiece project of India being implemented by the Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd (HAL) and the Aeronautical Development Agency (ADA).**

**Both HAL and ADA are now focusing on an upgraded version of Tejas to make it a world-class plane.**

**India is also working on an ambitious USD 5 billion projects to develop a fifth-generation medium weight deep penetration fighter jet to significantly bolster its air power capability.**

13/02/20 PTI/New Indian Express

La France s'engage à soutenir le Make in India dans le secteur de la défense – Interview Ambassadeur « Je suis convaincu que les partenariats industriels concrets dont bénéficient nos deux pays sont l'avenir de nos relations de défense. Notre industrie aussi. Les associations françaises du GIFAS et du GICAN, organisent un séminaire sur ce sujet lors de DefExpo. »

Avec son partenaire local SIDM, **le GIFAS et SIDM explorent les opportunités de développement de partenariats industriels indo-français à toutes les étapes de la chaîne de production. Ce pari à long terme de la France est illustré par les racines de nos industries en Inde: le GIFAS a ouvert un bureau permanent à Delhi en 2018 et 60 de ses membres sont présents en Inde à travers 75 implantations, 20 joint-ventures et plus de 25 sites de production.** De plus, plus de 15 entreprises françaises du secteur naval sont présentes en Inde pour travailler sur des projets en cours.

05/02/2020 The Indian Express

**NEW DELHI : Indian officials have intensified a probe into whether a \$2.2 billion Airbus SE jetliner sale to a state-owned airline involved bribes, according to a person directly involved in the investigation.**

India's Enforcement Directorate is inspecting a payment of ₹142 crore (\$20 million) linked to the 2006 purchase of 43 jets by Indian Airlines, as well as a commitment to provide aircraft-overhaul facilities that were never built, according to the person, who asked not to be named as the matter isn't public.

All told, the investigation is examining benefits to Airbus of ₹1,000 crore, the person said. The Enforcement Directorate didn't respond to two phone calls seeking comment, while a spokesman for Airbus declined to comment.

**The decision to re-invigorate the probe in recent weeks suggests Airbus has more fallout to contend with after its record \$4 billion legal settlement for making payments to win jet orders. French, British and US prosecutors studied deals in about 20 countries including India, though it wasn't among the 12 nations covered by last month's final settlement.**

"The beauty of the situation from any civil claimant's point of view is Airbus has spilled the beans on itself," said Philip Marshall, a trial attorney at Serle Court Chambers in London. "Depending on the detail there are potentially quite a few civil claims that could arise out of this."

India is stepping up a probe that began as a police investigation in 2010, four years after the Indian Airlines order for A320-series narrow-body jets, with a team later sent to Europe to question Airbus executives. The government merged the mainly domestic operator with flag-carrier Air India Ltd. a year after the purchase.

Other countries named in the investigation have also begun examining deals involving Airbus.

Anti-graft authorities in Malaysia and Sri Lanka, two of the countries named in the \$4 billion settlement, have said that they're probing corruption allegations concerning AirAsia Group Bhd. and SriLankan Airlines, respectively.

### **Eurofighter deal**

In Colombia, also on the list, flag-carrier Avianca has said that it's conducting an internal investigation into its relationship with Airbus and will cooperate with overseas authorities.

Austrian Defense Minister Klaudia Tanner said the country could terminate a 17-year-old deal to purchase Typhoon jets from the Eurofighter consortium, of which Airbus is a member, after the deal was highlighted in the US probe.

Airbus agreed in 2018 to pay an £81 million (\$88 million) fine to end a five-year investigation of the transaction by German prosecutors, though the resolution stopped short of saying bribery took place. Austria claims it was overcharged for expenses that included lobbying and kickbacks and received planes that weren't ready on time in the right configuration.

### **Maintenance commitment**

Among other things, the Indian probe is looking at why the specified maintenance provision, worth about \$175 million, wasn't in the final agreement with Airbus, and whether its removal involved impropriety, the person said.

The Enforcement Directorate, part of India's finance ministry, is seeking help from authorities in France, according to the person. It has also reached out to Singapore, where some bank accounts related to suspect transactions were traced.

Airbus anticipates further costs from tax and legal disputes of a "mid-to-high triple digit million-euro amount" this year, it said in an earnings statement last week. That's on top of a £3.6 billion hit from the January settlement.

Now that they're in the public glare, "a number of airlines and countries have something to contemplate and to pursue should they decide it's warranted," said Jefferies International analyst Sandy Morris.

Live Mint Aviation 18/02/2020

New Delhi: **India's largest carrier IndiGo has shelved plans to launch long-haul international flights on dual-aisle Airbus 330 aircraft as it looks to start service to Europe and London on a single-aisle Airbus 321XLR (extralong range) aircraft set to join its fleet by 2023-24, according to a report in Economic Times on Tuesday.**

**This would delay low-fare flights to London, Paris and other cities in Europe for Indian fliers by another three years.**

"There is no precedent of low-cost carriers operating international flights on dual-aisle aircraft and have not been successful even if they have. This is primarily because fundamentals for low-cost carriers do not work on a dual-aisle aircraft. Hence, we will be launching flights to Europe and others only on an Airbus 321 XLR," the ET report quoted a top IndiGo official, who did not want to be identified.

According to the official, the airline would dedicate about 20 of these aircraft, with two-class configuration, for international operations.

"These medium-haul international flights (to Tokyo and cities in Europe and London) would have a business class with flatbed and the economy class for which details are still to be worked out," he added.

In October, IndiGo had announced an order of 300 aircraft that includes Airbus 320, 321 (neos) and Airbus 321 XLR.

A large number of planes on order will provide long-range flying abilities for the carrier and help it expand overseas.

The report said that there are a large number of untapped international destinations and IndiGo would look to connect with Africa and expanding into China.

"While everyone seems to be focused on Europe and London, we see a lot of market in Africa, China and other parts of the world too. We will soon be announcing flights to Moscow," the official said.

He added that they would have loved to add more flights to Turkey but the flying rights between the two countries have been exhausted.

Live Mint Aviation 18/02/2020

**NEW DELHI : Airline passenger traffic grew modestly by 2.2% in January 2020 from a year ago with the end of holiday season and the overall economic slowdown keeping a lid on volume growth.**

Air safety regulator the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) said in a monthly report on Monday that domestic airlines carried 12.78 million passengers in January 2020 against 12.5 million in the same month a year ago.

The DGCA report said that barring Vistara, all domestic airlines reported a decline in capacity utilization in January compared to December. Vistara's capacity utilization moved up from 81.1% in December to 83.5% in January. The country's largest airline IndiGo reported a decline in capacity utilization from 90.1% in December to 87.8% in January.



The muted airline passenger growth coincides with a sharp economic slowdown in Asia's third largest economy. Growth is estimated by the National Statistical Office to decelerate to an 11-year low of 5% in 2019-20 due to sluggish consumption and investment demand. The International Monetary Fund has projected growth to recover to 5.8% in 2020-21. During January, the overall cancellation rate of scheduled domestic airlines stood at 1.69%, the bulk of which was on account of weather related and technical reasons, said the report.

Live Mint Aviation 17/02/2020

**MUMBAI : Budget airline SpiceJet Ltd on Monday said it has added two Airbus A320 aircraft to its fleet, amid uncertainty over its ability to resume operations with Boeing 737 MAX aircraft anytime soon.**

Regulators worldwide have grounded the Boeing 737 MAX aircraft, following two fatal crashes that raised safety concerns.

SpiceJet had ordered as many as 205 of these planes in 2017, of which 13 have been delivered. The planes are, however, grounded because of the ongoing safety review by the US Federal Aviation Administration.

Gurugram-headquartered SpiceJet, which predominantly flies a Boeing 737 aircraft fleet, inducted Airbus A320 aircraft on wet lease effective 14 February from BH Air, a Bulgarian-registered airline based in Sofia, the airline said. This is a significant departure from industry practice as budget airlines around the world prefer to operate a fleet with one type of aircraft to keep costs down. SpiceJet had followed this practice till the end of the December quarter, when it had 119 aircraft, including 82 Boeing 737s, 32 Bombardier Q 400s, and five Boeing 737 freighters.

Boeing said on 20 January that it expects the 737 MAX to return to service by mid-2020. The aircraft maker has not been able to deliver around 400 Max planes it built since grounding began in March.

The grounding of the Boeing 737 MAX, which was designed to deliver 12-15% lower fuel burn and 10% lower maintenance cost, has hurt SpiceJet's financial health.

SpiceJet, India's second-largest budget airline by market share, reported a consolidated net profit of ₹77.97 crore in the December quarter, an increase of 21% from ₹64.44 crore in the year-ago period. It had reported a loss of ₹461 crore in the September quarter. The net profit, however, was largely because of a jump in other income or an 'interim offer' from Boeing Co. to compensate SpiceJet for costs incurred because of the grounding of 13 Boeing 737MAX aircraft.

The expense for grounding the planes for the nine-month period ended December 2019 was ₹537.27 crore, including ₹246.42 crore for Q3, according to SpiceJet's estimates. As such, if the airline had not recognized such other income, it would have reported a loss of ₹173.19 crore for the December quarter. Boeing is yet to release the compensation amount.

Live Mint Aviation 17/02/2020

**NEW DELHI : The winning bidder of Air India Ltd will have to retain existing employees of the state-run airline for a negotiated time-frame so that they do not face any uncertainty after privatization, civil aviation minister Hardeep Puri said.**

The government wants Air India to continue to operate under its own brand, the minister said, adding its viability and success would depend on the workforce that would be an asset to the new owner.

"I do not think anyone can run an airline without the people, the engineering staff, the cabin crew, the commander and all of you. There has not been any recruitment for years and therefore, there is no surplus (workforce)," Puri said at a function to felicitate the Air India crew which evacuated Indians from China following the coronavirus epidemic.

He said a lock-in period to retain the workers at Air India for a particular period would be negotiated with "whoever is the interested player". Puri did not elaborate as the divestment process is underway.

The government had on 27 January invited expressions of interest from investors for its entire stake in Air India, along with subsidiary, Air India Express, as well as 50% stake in Air India SATS Airport Services Pvt. Ltd, a joint venture between Air India and Singapore Airport Terminal Services.

To sweeten the deal, the successful bidder will need to absorb ₹23,286.5 crore of debt after the government transfers about ₹56,334 crore of debt from Air India and Air India Express to a special purpose vehicle, Air India Assets Holding Ltd.

Air India serves 98 destinations including 42 overseas. It has 121 planes, of which it owns 32 while the rest are leased.

It has 9,426 permanent workers, 4,201 contract employees and over 2,867 employees who are on deputation from other companies as on 1 November.

Puri said this time, there is no reason for any doubt about a successful stake sale. An attempt to sell a 76% stake in the debt-ridden national carrier failed in 2018.

"Don't be under the impression that there will be any problem. The amount of interest I am seeing (in Air India), I am reassured," he said without elaborating on the potential investors. Officials in the ministry said they were not supposed to know finer details of the bidding process conducted by transaction advisor Ernst & Young Llp India.

Puri also said the government was determined to do more to make the business environment more beneficial for airlines. He said while airports and ancillary companies in the aviation sector are profitable globally, airlines are more prone to business challenges.

"Maybe it has something to do with the business model. It is unlikely that we will be able to correct the global phenomenon, but let me tell you, **we are determined to correct the ecosystem so far as India is concerned. What the government can do is to make the ecosystem, the business environment in which airlines operate, much easier for them, especially for Indian carriers. We can rationalise the tax structure and make sure aviation turbine fuel (ATF) is available at a more reasonable price,**" the minister said.

**The country's civil aviation regulator, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has ordered a probe into an incident involving tail scraping of an Air India aircraft being operated from Pune to Delhi.**

On Saturday the Air India flight from Pune to Delhi was involved in a tail-strike incident during take-off. Sources said the aircraft's tail struck an object while it tried to dodge a jeep which had entered the runway area at the time of the take-off.

Miraculously, Air India's A321 aircraft VT-PPU operating flight AI-852 safely landed at Delhi.

**"During take-off roll, the crew saw a jeep and a person on the runway. To avoid a conflict, they did early rotation," a source said.**

**"On arrival at Delhi, some damage was observed on fuselage skin and frames. The aircraft has been withdrawn from service for investigation.** Air India has been advised to coordinate with Pune ATC also to find out any marking on runway," the source added.

[Live Mint Aviation 15/02/2020](#)

**New Delhi: The sluggish Indian economy and industries that are heavily dependent on crude oil such as aviation, shipping, road and rail transportation are likely to gain from a sudden drop in crude oil prices due to the coronavirus epidemic in China, the world's biggest oil importer, said economists, chief executives and experts.**

With various industries realigning their strategy amid energy demand forecasts being slashed due to the coronavirus outbreak, major oil importers such as India are seeking to drive a better bargain. India is the world's third-largest oil importer and the fourth-largest buyer of liquefied natural gas (LNG).

The oil market is currently facing a situation called contango, wherein spot prices are lower than futures contracts.

"Estimates by several agencies are suggesting that Chinese Q1 crude demand will be down by 15-20%, resulting in a contraction of global crude demand. This is reflecting in the prices of crude and LNG, which are both benign for India. This will help India in its macroeconomic parameters by containing current account deficit, maintaining stable exchange regime and consequently inflation," said Debasish Mishra, partner at Deloitte India.

The International Energy Agency (IEA) and the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (Opec) have cut global oil demand growth outlook following the coronavirus outbreak.

"Sectors such as aviation, paints, ceramics, some industrial products, etc. would benefit from a benign price regime," Mishra added.

India is a key Asian refining hub, with an installed capacity of more than 249.4 million tonnes per annum (mtpa) through 23 refineries. The cost of the Indian basket of crude, which averaged \$56.43

and \$69.88 per barrel in FY18 and FY19, respectively, averaged \$65.52 in December 2019, according to data from the Petroleum Planning and Analysis Cell. The price was \$54.93 a barrel on 13 February. The Indian basket represents the average of Oman, Dubai and Brent crude.

"In the past, benign oil price has seen airline profitability improving significantly," said Kinjal Shah, vice president of corporate ratings at rating agency ICRA Ltd.

Amid an economic slowdown, India's air travel industry saw a 3.7% passenger traffic growth in 2019 to 144 million passengers.

"This could be a good time for airlines to make up for the losses. Airlines can use this to recoup losses, while travellers can use this moment to plan for travel as the cost of air tickets would become more pocket friendly," said Mark Martin, founder and CEO at Martin Consulting Llc, an aviation consultant.

The outbreak of coronavirus in China has forced energy firms there to suspend delivery contracts and reduce output. This has impacted both global oil prices and shipping rates. Trade tensions and a slowing global economy also have an overhang on energy markets.

Officials at the Indian Chemical Council, an industry body, said India depends on China for chemicals across the value chain, with that country's share in imports ranging from 10-40%. The petrochemical sector serves as the backbone for various other manufacturing and non-manufacturing sectors such as infrastructure, automobile, textiles and consumer durables.

"A wide variety of raw material and intermediaries are imported from China. Though, so far, companies importing these are not significantly impacted, their supply chain is drying up. So, they may feel an impact going forward if the situation does not improve," said Sudhir Shenoy, country president and CEO of Dow Chemical International Pvt. Ltd.

This may benefit domestic producers of rubber chemicals, graphite electrodes, carbon black, dyes and pigments as lower Chinese imports may force end-consumers to source them locally.

Lower crude prices also bring good tidings to the government's exchequer amid a revenue shortfall and a burgeoning fiscal deficit. Given the tepid growth in revenue collections, finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman, while presenting the Union budget, invoked the escape clause to take a 50-basis point leeway in the fiscal deficit for 2019-20, taking the revised estimate to 3.8% of GDP.

RBI governor Shaktikanta Das on Saturday said declining oil prices would have a positive impact on inflation. "The main spike is coming from food inflation, that is, vegetables and protein items. Core inflation has slightly edged up because of revision of telecom tariffs," he added.

Weighed down by a decline in the manufacturing sector, India's factory output contracted in December, while retail inflation accelerated for the sixth consecutive month in January, raising doubts about the recovery process of the fledgling economy. India's economic growth is estimated by the National Statistical Office to hit an 11-year low of 5% in 2019-20 on the back of sluggish consumption and investment demand.

Madan Sabnavis, chief economist at CARE Ratings, said lower oil prices have been a blessing for India. "However, upward pressure cannot be ruled out, with some cuts expected by Opec and other exporting countries. Therefore, we need to focus on how to increase exports and look to leverage the cause of lower oil prices, that is, coronavirus, and push our goods to China, while looking for

alternatives to suppliers on imports. Fortunately, due to steady capital flows, pressure on the rupee is not an issue," he added.

Concerned about the oil demand situation, Opec may advance its 5-6 March meeting, with its technical panel recommending a provisional cut to the Opec+ arrangement.

"Due to the healthy trade imports from the East, the impact on container ports like JNPT (Jawaharlal Nehru Port Trust) will be high, while the impact on Mundra port will be limited," said Jagannarayan Padmanabhan, director and practice lead of transport and logistics at Crisil Infrastructure Advisory. "The flip side is that some of the manufacturing may shift from China to India temporarily."

While the spike in crude prices due to rising tensions between the US and Iran was short-lived, the coronavirus outbreak and imminent output cut by Opec countries have introduced an element of uncertainty.

**"Though the oil prices are low, the exchange rate (rupee against the dollar) is rising, which is also leading to higher costs.** We are comfortable when rupee is about 65-70 against the dollar. Since a large part of our expenses, including that for aviation fuel, is paid in dollar terms, foreign exchange is an important aspect of our costs," a senior executive at a New Delhi-based budget airline said on condition of anonymity.

To be sure, a rebound in oil demand could again stoke prices that could fan inflation and hurt demand.

Higher oil prices also have an indirect impact through higher production and transportation costs and exert upward pressure on food inflation. Any effort to cushion the burden on consumers by lowering the excise duty on petrol and diesel would hamper revenue collections.

Live Mint Aviation 16/02/2020

**Door frame metal detectors (DFMDs) and hand-held metal detectors are used to screen passengers at Indian airports. However, DFMDs can't detect non-metallic weapons, explosives and metal hidden inside shoes. To identify explosives and drugs on a person and in baggage, explosive trace devices and explosive vapour devices are used randomly at airports.**

Though some of these technologies and procedures are available at Indian airports to detect suspicious people or objects, they have limitations and are not foolproof devices, particularly when it comes to detecting explosives hidden on the body of a person.

Body scanners are more reliable than currently available techniques and gadgets to recognize threats involving explosives and contraband items hidden anywhere on the body. Installing them will certainly help security personnel to perform their jobs efficiently with zero error, and help boost airport security.

Besides, passenger traffic is increasing manifold and manual checks of passengers is an extremely time-consuming process leading to delays. Considering all these aspects, **the Bureau of Civil Aviation Security has issued an order to install body scanners at Indian airports in a phased manner.**

Generally, there are two types of body scanners: The millimeter wave scanner and the backscatter X-ray. The millimeter wave scanner uses high frequency radio waves to make an image of the body,

which shows objects hidden under clothes. The backscatter X-ray scanners detect the radiation that reflects from the human body.

Full body scanners have become an important part of the security and threat detection toolkit around the world. The system eliminates the ambiguity of hand searches and detects a range of threats metal detectors simply cannot. It is one of the most effective means of determining and detecting whether somebody is moving a non-metallic device through the system. Metal detector walk-through scanners have an obvious weakness regarding liquid, gel or plastic contraband that could be concealed on the body. Many plastic or liquid items can be highly dangerous.

**At the same time, body scanners are able to screen adequately for security threats that may be concealed inside turbans, hijab, burqas and prosthetics.**

During a trial run of body scanners at Delhi's Indira Gandhi International Airport, it was observed that these scanners do not set off any alarm below the ankles. Gives many false alarms because of thickness of clothing and other such factors, each alarm has to be reconciled by physical checking.

There are, however, some lacunae and perception challenges that need to be addressed. There seems to be a perception that contours of body are seen and recorded—this is incorrect. Also, passengers don't even have to remove all metallic items. The average passenger is not easily ready to remove all metallic items from the body because of religious sentiments and other reasons. In India, especially, women passengers who wear jewellery are required to remove them at the time of scanning—this can be problematic as passengers do not generally agree with this because of the fear of theft of jewellery from their bags.

**The scanners add another layer of security at checkpoints besides metal detectors, explosives-detection systems and bomb-sniffing dogs. And, as they continue to ease congestion, travellers can move faster compared to a pat-down search.**

Live Mint Aviation 18/02/2020

**MUMBAI : Groupe ADP, formerly known as Aéroports de Paris or ADP, an international airport operator based in Paris, will hold 49 percent stake in GMR Airports Limited (GAL), GMR Infrastructure Limited (GIL), the parent of the airport company said in a statement late on Thursday.**

"GIL has signed a Share Purchase Agreement pursuant to which Groupe ADP will hold 49 percent stake in GMR Airports Limited (GAL) for an equity consideration of Rs. 10,780 Crore, valuing GAL at the Base Post Money Valuation of Rs. 22,000 Crore," GIL added.

"This equity consideration comprises of -- Rs. 9,780 crore towards secondary sale of shares by GMR Group and ₹1,000 Crore equity infusion in GAL," the company said adding that Groupe ADP has also pegged earn-outs up to Rs. 4,475 Crore linked to achievement of certain agreed operating performance metrics as well as on receipt of certain regulatory clarifications over next 5 years.

The company said that the total valuation assuming all above earn-outs are successfully consummated, may reach Rs. 26,475 crore.

The first tranche of Rs. 5,248 crore will be received by GMR Group immediately, which will be utilised to deleverage the Group's massive debt.

"As part of the terms of transaction, GMR will retain management control over the Airports

Business with Groupe ADP having the customary rights and Board representation at GAL and its key subsidiaries," GIL added in the statement.

GMR Airports owns and operates Delhi International Airport. It also runs the Hyderabad International Airport.

Mint had in January reported that a Tata Group-led consortium is likely to rejig its investment in GMR Airports Ltd, after GMR decided to dilute its stake in its airport arm by 49% in order to meet the regulatory requirement of 10% shareholding cap for Tata Group in Delhi International Airport Ltd (DIAL).

However, Mint now understands, the deal of GMR Group deal with Tata Group has been scrapped for its airports business, according to the sources.

**In March 2019, GMR had announced that the Tata Group, GIC and Hong Kong-based SSG Capital Management will co-invest in its airports business in a ratio of 44:33:22. Out of the total investment, ₹1,000 crore will come as equity infusion into GAL, which will be used to retire its debt.**

**Last October, the Competition Commission of India (CCI) had cleared the deal. However, the Airports Authority of India (AAI) sought the opinion of the Solicitor General of India on the legality of Tatas plan to take a majority stake in GMR Airports.**

[Live Mint Aviation 20/02/2020](#)

**Groupe ADP a signé un accord portant sur le rachat, pour un montant de 1,36 milliard d'euros, d'une participation de 49% du groupe indien GMR Airports qui compte dans son portefeuille sept aéroports situés en Inde, aux Philippines et en Grèce, a annoncé le gestionnaire aéroportuaire jeudi.**

**L'opération se déroulera en deux étapes, la première "sera réalisée dans les prochains jours pour une participation de 24,99%" et la seconde, pour 24,01%, est soumise notamment à l'obtention des autorisations administratives "en particulier de la part de la Reserve Bank of India et se conclura dans les prochains mois", a précisé Groupe ADP dans un communiqué.**

"A l'issue de cette opération, GMR Airports sera détenue conjointement avec GMR Infrastructure Limited ("GIL"), entité cotée du groupe GMR, qui conservera 51% et le contrôle de la société. Le Groupe ADP bénéficiera de droits de gouvernance très étendus", selon la même source.

Trois des sept aéroports de GMR Airports sont exploités par ce groupe: il s'agit des aéroports internationaux de Delhi et Hyderabad en Inde et de l'aéroport de Mactan Cebu aux Philippines qui ont accueilli en tout 102 millions de passagers en 2019, en hausse de 8,4% par rapport à l'année fiscale précédente, selon Groupe ADP.

Les quatre autres aéroports, qui ont accueilli 22 millions de passagers en 2019, sont soit en cours de développement (Goa en Inde et Heraklion en Grèce) soit gagnés aux enchères (Nagpur et Boghapuram en Inde). Ils seront exploités par GMR Airports une fois les travaux terminés, selon le communiqué.

Groupe ADP gère directement ou indirectement à travers des participations 24 aéroports dans le monde, dont les aéroports parisiens d'Orly et de Charles de Gaulle. Son bénéfice net a atteint 588 millions d'euros en 2019.

Communiqué de presse ADP (AFP) 20 February 2020

#### Aéroports de Paris SA

With the acquisition of 49% of the Indian group GMR Airports, Groupe ADP creates the leading global network of airports

Groupe ADP has signed a share purchase agreement to buy, under certain conditions, a 49% stake in GMR Airports.

The operation will unfold in two phases: a first phase will be realized within the coming days for a 24.99% stake. The second phase, for 24.01%, is subject to certain regulatory conditions, notably obtaining the customary regulatory approvals for that type of project, in particular from the Reserve Bank of India. It will be concluded during the upcoming months.

Once this operation completed, GMR Airports will be jointly owned with GMR Infrastructure Limited ("GIL"), listed entity of GMR Group, which will keep a 51% stake and retain control over the company. Groupe ADP will be granted highly extended governance rights.

GMR Airports is a world-class airport operator

GMR Airports, leading Indian airport group operating in a dynamic region, has a portfolio of world-class assets comprising seven airports in three countries (India, Philippines and Greece) and a subsidiary specialized in project management ('GADL').

Three out of the seven airports are operated by GMR Airports: Delhi International Airport and Hyderabad International Airport in India (fully consolidated within GMR Airports' financial statements), Mactan-Cebu Airport in the Philippines (consolidated under the equity method in GMR Airports' financial statements). They handled a total of 102 million passengers in 2019<sup>1</sup>, an increase of +8.4% compared to the previous fiscal year.

The four other airports, which welcomed 22 million of passengers in 2019, are either currently under development (Goa and Heraklion) or won after a bidding process (Nagpur and Bhogapuram). They will be operated by GMR Airports once the works are completed.

During fiscal year 2019<sup>2</sup>, which ended on March 31st 2019, GMR Airports has recorded a total revenue<sup>2/3</sup> of 715 million euros and reported an EBITDA<sup>2/3</sup> of 205 million euros.

Delhi and Hyderabad airports are carbon neutral (ACA34)

Groupe ADP thus realizes a major acquisition aligned with its strategy

The total purchase price for the 49% stake is 107.8 billion INR (being around 1,360 million euros<sup>5</sup>). The EV/EBITDA<sup>6</sup> ratio of the acquisition stands in the lower range of the average of similar transactions<sup>7</sup>. The internal rate of return (IRR) forecast in Indian rupee is above 10% (low teen).

Groupe ADP will consolidate GMR Airports under the equity method. Groupe ADP's dividend payout policy at a minimum rate of 60% of the Net Result Attributable to the Group for 2019 and 2020 is



confirmed. Groupe ADP expects a limited impact on earnings per share for the next five years with this acquisition, which will then become strongly accretive after 2025. This acquisition will strongly contribute to the growth of the Return On Capital Employed (ROCE) on the medium and long term.

Regarding governance, Groupe ADP will be granted extended rights including the presence of board members at GMR Airports' board equal to that of GMR Infrastructure Limited board members. Groupe ADP will also have the right to appoint predetermined key executives within GMR Airports.

This acquisition is in line with the international development strategy presented during Groupe ADP's Investor day on April 5th 2019. This strategy is based notably on the acquisition of airport clusters located in dynamic regions in terms of economy and air traffic. The acquisition will be financed by Aéroports de Paris' treasury and, if appropriate, through loans.

Driven by a very dynamic economy, air traffic in India is expected to rise by 6.5% per year on average between 2018 and 2038<sup>1</sup>, and the international traffic alone is expected to grow at an average pace of 6.7% per year.

A strategic partnership for three major airport development platforms

The financial operation includes a strategic industrial partnership with GMR regarding business development in aviation, retail, IT, hospitality, innovation and engineering.

This operation also prepares Groupe ADP's future growth, with the existing assets, with the expected air traffic growth, the long run horizon of their concessions<sup>2</sup> and the large capacity reserves, as well as the future acquisitions.

With three major development platforms – Groupe ADP, TAV Airports and GMR Airports – this operation gives birth to the leading global network of airports.

Augustin de Romanet Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Aéroports de Paris SA-Groupe ADP stated:

"The acquisition of a 49% stake in GMR Airports fits within Groupe ADP's strategy. We share with the GMR family a long term vision and a partnership culture. This acquisition comes with a robust industrial partnership and enables Groupe ADP to build, only two years after taking control of TAV Airports, a unique worldwide network of airports with a solid industrial expertise and strong development capacities. Medium and long term growth driver, this acquisition is a transforming position for the group in one of Asia's most dynamic and promising countries."

GM Rao, Chairman, GMR Group stated:

"The partnership with Groupe ADP is in line with GMR's business direction to become a global airport developer and operator. We have been on a journey of defining airports of the future with key focus on passenger experience by leveraging enhanced technology and offering superior amenities. With Groupe ADP, GMR will have smoother access to global markets, opening up newer avenues of business growth."

GMR Group has signed an agreement with Groupe ADP of France to sell a 49 per cent stake in its airport-holding company. The group will raise Rs 10,780 crore from the deal, which will help it pare debt. The deal values GMR Airports at Rs 22,000 crore.

GMR had in March 2019 signed a definitive agreement with a Tata group-led consortium to sell 44 per cent in the company. In January this year, it decided to divest a 49 per cent stake. But despite getting clearance from the Competition Commission of India (CCI), the deal faced hurdles because it violated a clause that prevents airline groups from holding more than a 10 per cent stake in Delhi International Airport Limited (DIAL).

The Tatas hold a majority stake in Vistara and AirAsia India. GMR holds 64 per cent stake in DIAL. The new deal will give a fresh lease of life to GMR Group's debt-restructuring plan, which was held up due to the regulatory hurdle for the Tata deal. GMR Infra has a debt of Rs 25,660 crore in its books.

"The partnership with Groupe ADP is in line with GMR's business direction to become a global airport developer and operator," G M Rao, chairman of GMR Group said. "We have been on a journey of defining airports of the future with key focus on passenger experience by leveraging enhanced technology and offering superior amenities. With Groupe ADP, GMR will have smoother access to global markets, opening up newer avenues for business growth."

According to the company, the first tranche of Rs 5,248 crore will be immediately received by the company.

"This money will help deleverage the group further and result in improved cash flows and profitability," the company said.

The structuring of the deal will unfold in two phases: The first phase will be realised in the coming days for a 24.99 per cent stake. The second phase, for 24.01 per cent, is subject to certain regulatory conditions, for obtaining approvals from the Reserve Bank of India. It will be concluded during the upcoming months, Groupe ADP said.

Analysts said the current deal seemed to be better than the earlier one as it would wipe out additional corporate debt of Rs 18 billion and would alleviate all the concerns surrounding the corporate debt.

"We view this as positive as GMR has been able to enter into a deal at a higher valuation and raising higher cash, which will be utilised to eliminate entire corporate debt. Along with sale of GMR Kamalanga, this will wipe out the entire corporate debt. Key risk is the approval of the deal by regulatory authorities. This is a less problematic than the earlier transaction," said Mohit Kumar of IDFC Securities.

Groupe ADP said the acquisition fit within Groupe ADP's strategy. "This will constitute a growth driver in the medium term, and also a transforming position for the group in one of Asia's and the world's fastest growing country," said Augustin de Romanet, chairman and CEO at Groupe ADP.

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## FLYING HIGH

### **AIRPORTS OPERATED BY GMR GROUP:** IGI

Airport (New Delhi), Rajiv Gandhi International Airport (Hyderabad), and Philippines' Mactan Cebu International Airport (in partnership with Megawide)

### **AIRPORTS DEVELOPED AND MANAGED BY**

**GROUPE ADP:** Paris-Charles de Gaulle, Paris-Orly, and Paris-Le Bourget

## 336.5 million

Combined number of passengers handled by GMR Airports and Groupe ADP in 2019, 'the highest across the world'

Business standards 21/02/2020

**L'épidémie actuelle liée au nouveau coronavirus pourrait entraîner un manqué à gagner de 27,8 milliards de \$ pour les compagnies aériennes, dont 12,8 milliards sur le seul marché intérieur chinois, a estimé IATA. La baisse nette du nombre de passagers par rapport à 2019 pourrait être de 8,2% en 2020 dans la région Asie Pacifique. "Dans ce scénario, cela se traduirait par une perte de revenus de 27,8 milliards de \$ en 2020 pour les transporteurs de la région".**

IATA 21/02/2020

MUMBAI: Global body International Air Transport Association (IATA) on Thursday said it assesses carriers in the Asia Pacific to incur a revenue loss of \$27.8 billion, while global carriers will lose \$29.3 billion in 2020 as an impact of the Novel Coronavirus outbreak.

The impact shows a potential 13% full-year loss of passenger demand for carriers in the Asia-Pacific region.

"Considering that growth for the region's airlines was forecast to be 4.8%, the net impact will be an 8.2% full-year contraction compared to 2019 demand levels. In this scenario, that would translate into a \$27.8 billion revenue loss in 2020 for carriers in the Asia-Pacific region—the bulk of which would be borne by carriers registered in China, with \$12.8 billion lost in the China domestic market alone," it said in a statement.

Carriers outside Asia-Pacific are forecast to bear a revenue loss of \$1.5 billion, assuming the loss of demand is limited to markets linked to China. This would bring total global lost revenue to \$29.3 billion and represent a 4.7% hit to global demand.

The estimated impact of the COVID-19 outbreak also assumes that the center of the public health emergency remains in China. If it spreads more widely to Asia-Pacific markets then impacts on airlines from other regions would be larger.

“These are challenging times for the global air transport industry. Stopping the spread of the virus is the top priority. Airlines are following the guidance of the World Health Organization (WHO) and other public health authorities to keep passengers safe, the world connected, and the virus contained. The sharp downturn in demand as a result of COVID-19 will have a financial impact on airlines—severe for those particularly exposed to the China market. We estimate that global traffic will be reduced by 4.7% by the virus, which could more than offset the growth we previously forecast and cause the first overall decline in demand since the SARS crisis of 2003. And that scenario would translate into lost passenger revenues of \$29.3 billion. Airlines are making difficult decisions to cut capacity and in some cases routes. Lower fuel costs will help offset some of the lost revenue. This will be a very tough year for airlines,” said Alexandre de Juniac, IATA’s Director General and CEO.  
[The Economic times of India 21/02/2020](#)

**L’aviation civile est un secteur de plus en plus décrié pour ses émissions de gaz à effet de serre. Pourtant, son impact climatique ne se limite pas à ces dernières: les traînées de condensation (ou contrails en anglais) jouent également un rôle dans le réchauffement provoqué par l’aéronautique. Dans une étude, repérée par CNN, des chercheurs de l’Imperial College London concluent que déplacer un peu plus haut en hiver et un peu plus bas en été moins de 2% des couloirs de vols suffirait à éviter 80% du phénomène.**

Pourquoi on en parle. On estime que l’aviation civile est responsable d’environ 2% des émissions mondiales de CO2. L’impact réel des contrails, évalué à 14%, reste encore soumis à un problème d’incertitude sur les chiffres, ce que rappelait Heidi.news récemment. A elle seule, une telle approche n’est bien sûr pas suffisante pour atteindre les objectifs que le secteur s’est fixés pour 2050, mais elle pourrait réduire d’environ 20% le réchauffement du secteur. Toutefois, ces gains climatiques possibles pourraient vite être rattrapés par l’augmentation du nombre de vols, qui a déjà bondi de 50% en une décennie.

[Heidi.News 18/02/2020](#)

NEW DELHI: As Chinese authorities try to contain the spread of the deadly novel coronavirus outbreak, **Air India on Thursday announced that it is extending the suspension of its flights to the neighbouring country till June 30.**

Last month, the national carrier had suspended its six weekly Delhi-Shanghai flights from January 31 to February 14. However, it did not restart the flight operations from February 15 onwards.

**The national carrier had also suspended its Delhi-Hong Kong flights due to the coronavirus epidemic that has killed more than 2,000 people in China till date.**

**"Flight operations on both routes -- Delhi-Shanghai and Delhi-Hong Kong -- have been suspended till June 30," an Air India spokesperson said on Thursday.**

**Earlier, IndiGo and SpiceJet had suspended their flight operations between India and China.**  
[The Economic times of India 20/02/2020](#)

**NEW DELHI: IndiGo on Wednesday announced that it has signed a letter of intent with WheelTug, which would provide its electric taxi system that can drive the plane forward and backward without powering up its engines or using external tugs.**

"IndiGo recently signed a letter of intent reserving a large number of WheelTug systems. WheelTug provides onboard electric motors, mounted into the nosewheel of aircraft....These simple systems enable aircraft to travel on the ground without tugs or engines," the airline said in its press release.

WheelTug systems will enable far more "manoeuvrability and independence" for aircraft in the ramp area, the airline stated.

The Economic times of India 19/01/2020

**Mumbai: Russian government-backed Far East Development Fund has shown a preliminary interest in buying bankrupt Indian carrier Jet Airways, a person in the know has said. "They submitted some documents just last week,"** said the person who didn't want to be named.

The fund was established in November 2011 by Bank for Development and Foreign Economic Affairs, or Vnesheconombank (VEB), whose supervisory board is chaired by Russian President Vladimir Putin. A spokesperson for the fund didn't respond to ET's emailed questions as of press time Tuesday.

Bereft of planes, flying slots and staff, India's oldest private carrier is currently undergoing bankruptcy proceedings at the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) after being dragged there by its debtors led by State Bank of India. Jet had stopped flying in April last year after running out of cash and failing to raise more money.

**Indian asset reconstruction company Prudent, too, had shown interest in the airline. On Tuesday, Jet's committee of creditors examined Prudent's request for four weeks to submit its resolution plan for the airline and gave it time till March 9, said the person cited earlier.**

Last year, South American conglomerate Synergy Group, which owns majority shares in some airlines including Colombian carrier Avianca Holdings, had shown an interest in the airline. It submitted a fresh expression of interest in January. Far East Development Fund has total assets of Russian rouble 59.6 billion, or about Rs. 6,675 crore, according to its website. India has pledged its support Russia in its development of the region.

The Economic Times of India 19/02/2020

**Mumbai: The engine of a Bengaluru-Ahmedabad GoAir flight caught a "small" fire at the time of takeoff,** the airline said on Tuesday.

The fire, however, has been doused and all passengers and crew are safe and the plane is being towed off the runway after which the passengers will be deplaned, GoAir said in a statement.

The number of persons on board, however, could not be immediately known.

**"The right engine of GoAir flight G8 802 from Ahmedabad to Bengaluru is suspected to have**

suffered from a foreign object damage (FOD) while on take-off roll. The suspected FOD resulted in a small fire which has been doused," the statement said.

All passengers and crew are safe and no emergency evacuation was deemed necessary, it said. Safety of our passengers and crew is of paramount importance and the airline sincerely regrets any inconvenience caused to its passengers, GoAir said.

The Economic Times of India 18/02/2020

**NEW DELHI: Aircraft stuck on runways will not be able to hold up and delay traffic by September, with major airports set to install six Disabled Aircraft Recovery Kit (DARK) systems.**

**ET had reported in July last year that the aviation regulator had asked operators of Bengaluru, New Delhi and Mumbai, along with the Airports Authority of India (AAI), to buy six such systems.**

**"Bengaluru airport will be the first to install DARK in June. Airports in Delhi, Mumbai and three AAI airports will install the equipment by September,"** said a senior Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) official who did not want to be identified. The official said operators have updated DGCA on status of the acquisitions.

DARK is used to clear aircraft that veer off the runway, blocking it. There is only one kit in India at present, owned by national carrier Air India.



The need for more was felt after a SpiceJet aircraft overshot the runway in Mumbai during bad weather and got stuck, leading to closure of the main runway, last year. Hundreds of flights were cancelled and delayed, leading to a spike in fares too. The SpiceJet plane could only be removed after 90 hours as the kit was in Mangalore for retrieving an Air India Express aircraft.

DGCA chief Arun Kumar took serious note and asked airport operators to have DARK to ensure immediate aircraft retrieval — especially during bad weather — and resume normal operations.

The Economic times of India 18/02/2020

**Mumbai: GoAir Monday said it has appointed Praveen Iyer former Jet Airways executive as is chief commercial officer.**

**Iyer joins barely a week after Jet's previous CEO Vinay Dube took over as the chief of the Wadia group owned low fare carrier.**

At GoAir, Iyer will be responsible for commercial strategy, revenue, sales and network planning. Prior to GoAir and after Jet, Iyer was with visa enabler VFS Global as its chief operating officer.  
The Economic times of India 17/02/2020

**New Delhi: The domestic air passenger traffic in January increased by 2.2 per cent to 1.27 crore compared to the same month in 2019, according to data released by aviation regulator DGCA on Monday. In comparison, the growth in domestic traffic in December 2019 was 2.56 per cent compared to December 2018.**

The passenger load factors of Air India, SpiceJet, GoAir, IndiGo, AirAsia India declined in January 2020 as compared to December last year, as per the DGCA data.

The passenger load factor measures the seat capacity utilisation of the airline.

DGCA stated in its report, "The passenger load factor in the month of January 2020 has shown decreasing trend compared to previous month due to end of tourist season."

With 75.7 per cent, AirAsia India was number one in on-time performance (OTP) measured at four metro cities -- Bengaluru, Delhi, Hyderabad and Mumbai.

IndiGo at 74 per cent and Vistara at 70.2 per cent were number two and number three respectively on OTP performance at these four cities.

**IndiGo maintained its lead position with 47.9 per cent share of the domestic passenger market in January 2020, the data showed.**

**SpiceJet's market share increased from 16.5 per cent in December to 16.6 per cent in January, giving it the number two spot, as per the data.**

**The market share of Air India, GoAir, AirAsia India and Vistara was 11.6 per cent, 9.8 per cent, 6.9 per cent and 6.5 per cent respectively last month.**

In January, a total of 798 passenger-related complaints were received by the domestic airlines, according to the DGCA data.

The number of complaints per 10,000 passengers carried for the month of December was around 0.62.

Among major domestic airlines, Air India topped the list of passenger grievances with 1.9 complaints per 10,000 passengers in September, while GoAir was on number two position with one complaint per 10,000 passengers, as per the DGCA data. DSP DSP AAR  
The Economic Times of India 17/02/2020

**Air India's disinvestment will not face any problems this time as the interest shown by prospective buyers has been reassuring, Aviation Minister Hardeep Singh Puri said on Monday.**

He said the government wants Air India to keep flying as a brand for years to come.

The minister also assured the employees at Air India that their requirements would be foremost in

the airline and factored in whatever arrangement is decided with the successor.

In the Preliminary Information Memorandum issued a few weeks ago for Air India's stake sale, the government had stated that the brand name would have to be kept as it is by the future owner.

"The strongest support that you have on your future comes from the government. We not only want to keep Air India flying as a brand but we want to ensure that continued operation will end the uncertainty of last many years," Puri said at an event.

The fact that Air India has been facing financial challenges is not something that is unknown, he added.

"I don't think anyone can run an airline without the people that actually make it," Puri said.

"Somebody asks what will happen to the staff. The staff will be required by whoever will be the new entity managing or owning it. There has been no recruitment for how many years. There is no surplus staff," he said.

"Don't ever be under the impression that this time around, there will be any problems (in disinvestment). There will not be. The amount of interest I am seeing in the acquisition and the quarters from where I am seeing it, I am reassured," he added.

Various employee unions of Air India in the last few months have expressed uncertainty about their future as the government has moved ahead with the stake sale plan.

"Whoever are the eligible bidders, the requirement of the staff the people who run the airline would be foremost," the minister said.

Addressing the concerns of employees, he said, "Your good work is not only being appreciated but will also be factored into the successor arrangement which will come in after this."

The Economic times of India 17/02/2020

**The aircraft India is sending to Wuhan with medical supplies will evacuate about 100 Indians from the coronavirus-hit Chinese city, the Ministry of External Affairs said on Thursday.**

MEA Spokesperson Raveesh Kumar said the advisories regarding travel to and from China remain in place, but there was no ban on travel.

**India is set to send a C-17 military transport aircraft to Wuhan to evacuate more Indians and deliver a consignment of medical supplies. India is awaiting clearance from the Chinese side.**

"Those interested to come back have been asked to contact the embassy... subject to capacity limitations and other logistics, we will accommodate nationals of other countries as well," Kumar said at a media briefing here.

He said about 100 Indians will be brought back on the aircraft and the exercise of compiling the names is still on.



"We are monitoring the welfare of Indian nationals (in China) on a regular basis. We have advised the people in Wuhan and the Hubei province to take precautions and follow instructions of local authorities," Kumar said.

"You are aware that the government of India has decided to send an aircraft, a consignment of medical supplies on a relief flight to Wuhan and this is just a token way to express support to China as it continues its fight against the epidemic," he said.

India's national carrier Air India earlier this month evacuated over 640 Indians from Wuhan in two separate flights.

On the return flight, the aircraft will bring in Indian nationals who could not board the first two flights, Kumar said.

Asked about details of the medical supplies to China, Kumar said India has always been the first responder for its neighbours and friends in times of crisis and it was in that spirit that Prime Minister Narendra Modi offered assistance to China in a letter he wrote to Chinese President Xi Jinping.

"We are ready to dispatch the relief package as our token of support to China as they fight this outbreak. We are actually awaiting to get clearance to come from the government of China. So the moment the clearance comes, the relief flight will take off," he said.

The death toll in the coronavirus epidemic in China has climbed to 2,118 with the death of 114 more people, while the overall confirmed cases increased to 74,576.

On the quarantined cruise ship off Japan, aboard which eight Indians tested positive for the novel coronavirus, Kumar said the Indian side is in touch with the Japanese authorities to work out the next steps.

"There are several possibilities that are being looked into," Kumar said, without elaborating.

"Our embassy has been putting out regular updates. They are closely monitoring the situation. The quarantine ended yesterday. The disembarkation started and will continue for a few days. The disembarkation starts with the passengers first and the crew will be the last to disembark," he said.

There will be a health protocol in place both at the time of embarkation after the release of the passengers and on arrival of Indian nationals in the country, he said.

A total of 138 Indians, including 132 crew and 6 passengers, were among the 3,711 people on board the cruise ship Diamond Princess that was quarantined off the coast of Japan.

Kumar said the eight Indians affected by the virus were being treated at a local hospital and "the situation is improving".

New Delhi, Feb 20 (PTI)

**Israel Aerospace Industries annonce sa collaboration avec HAL et DTL pour la vente de drones en Inde.**

Dans le cadre du salon DefExpo, Israel Aerospace Industries (IAI) a annoncé la signature d'un MoU (memorandum of understanding) avec HAL et DTL, deux entreprises indiennes. Ce partenariat, qui prend place dans le cadre de la politique gouvernementale du Make in India, se concentrera sur la production de drones d'IAI mais vise également à faire émerger une compétence nationale, passant par la fourniture d'aéronefs spécifiquement adaptés aux besoins des armées indiennes.

IAI rappelle ainsi qu'il est le fournisseur principal de drones en Inde. New Dehli a en effet attribué aux industriels israéliens plusieurs contrats dans le domaine des aéronefs pilotés à distance. Par ailleurs, IAI a également annoncé la mise en place d'un centre de maintenance en Inde dédié aux drones. L'ambition est ainsi de pouvoir garantir un bon taux de disponibilité des appareils et de fournir des services de réparation rapidement, en se rapprochant des utilisateurs finaux.

#### Apps & Drones 18/02/2020

**NEW DELHI: India's aviation ministry has asked flyers to be considerate towards other people's space. The message from the civil aviation ministry comes after a video of a man punching a reclined seat in front of him went viral in the US.**

"A little bit of basic good manners and respect are always worth a thumbs up. Your seat is not a sleeper berth. Don't be inconsiderate of other people's space," said the tweet from civil aviation ministry's handle. The tweet was shared under the ministry's campaign to promote responsible travelling and etiquettes of flying.

A little bit of basic good manners and respect are always worth a thumbs up. Your seat is not a sleeper berth. Don... <https://t.co/xVA3ziCFMV>

— Ministry of Civil Aviation (@MoCA\_GoI) 1582349801000

On February 9, Wendi Williams tweeted from her handle @steelersfanOG a video which shows that the passenger sitting behind her punched her seat repeatedly on an American Eagle, a subsidiary of American Airlines, flight.

"Here's a great jackhole! He was angry that I reclined my seat and punched it about 9 times - HARD, at which point I began videoing him, and he resigned to this behaviour. The other jackhole is the AmericanAir flight attendant who reprimanded me and offered him (a complimentary) rum!"

@BravoAndy Here's a great jackhole! He was angry that I reclined my seat and punched it about 9 times - HARD, at wh... <https://t.co/vtSrZesKOE>

— wendi (@steelersfanOG) 1581218835000

**"It is a good initiative by the ministry to tweet this. While reclining economy seats is an issue globally, our authorities must tackle something uniquely Indian — the habit of passengers to stand up as soon as the aircraft comes to a halt after landing. Our crew has to keep announcing during taxi to terminal, asking passengers to remain seated and not to open overhead bins to take out their bags as that could hurt other flyers," Times of India quoted a senior pilot as saying.**

The Economic times of India 23/02/2020

A new boarding area with at least 10 aerobridges, more security check-in and airline check-in counters and additional parking bays....

**Work is set to start on Phase I of the expansion of the Calcutta airport following the approval of the project by the Airports Authority of India.**

Officials said the Airports Authority of India had recently sanctioned the **master plan of the expansion, designed by Landrum & Brown, a US-based firm which specialises in aviation planning and development.**

“We will appoint a project management consultant for the project. We hope the first phase of expansion will be ready in two-and-a-half years, after which the airport will handle more flights and passengers,” airport director Kaushik Bhattacharya said.

The consultant will come up with an estimated cost of the expansion.

“The second phase of expansion will involve demolition of the air traffic control building and the old international terminal. The designs of the second phase are yet to be finalised,” Bhattacharya said.

In the first phase, a building with 7,000sq m space will come up on the plot where the old domestic terminal stands. The new building will be connected with the integrated terminal in use.

“Almost the entire area on the departure level in the new building will have security hold. This is being done to avoid congestion and long queues for security check and boarding,” an airport official said.

“The new facility will only be used for domestic flights,” the official said.

The airport now has 18 aerobridges, through which passengers board aircraft directly from the terminal building. At least 10 more aerobridges will be installed in the new building, which will be linked to the current terminal.

A number of boarding gates on the ground floor are also being planned for passengers who will take a coach ride to board flights in remote parking bays.

Also as part of the Phase I expansion, the airport will have 25 more parking bays — 15 remote and 10 contact bays. An aircraft parked in a contact bay can be reached from an aerobridge.

The airport now has 63 parking bays, of which 18 are contact and the rest are remote bays.

The integrated terminal, spread across 2,30,000sq m, can handle 26 million passengers annually.

[24/02/20 Sanjay Mandal/Telegraph](#)

**Jaipur: The Airports Authority of India (AAI) Jaipur is geared up to receive Air Force One carrying US president Donald Trump in case weather plays truant in Delhi on Monday.**

As a backup plan, a US Air Force Boeing 757 landed here on Sunday evening to ferry Trump in case there is a technical snag in his plane. In addition, a C-17 Globemaster landed here for the second day

with some more equipment needed for ground-handling.

According to sources, at least 50 people including security personnel, officials of US embassy, technical surveillance experts and others are already in town to take care of arrangements.

Reliable sources from Jaipur airport said security personnel from the US arrived in the Boeing 757. The aircraft landed at 7.48 pm.

However, citing security concerns Jaipur airport authorities refrained from commenting much on the developments.

“We are not much aware on this. We have received a Boeing 757 aircraft of America at our airport. We don’t have any further directions or intimation about it,” said a senior officer at the airport.

24/02/20 Ashish Mehta/Times of India

**Ahmedabad: US President Donald Trump arrived in Ahmedabad on Monday for the first leg of his India trip. The Air Force One plane carrying Trump and his wife Melania landed at the Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel international airport here at 11.37 am.** It was scheduled to land at 11.40 am.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who reached Ahmedabad over an hour before Trump did, was present at the airport to welcome the US president at the airport. In Ahmedabad, Trump will visit Mahatma Gandhi's Sabarmati Ashram, take part in a roadshow with Modi and jointly address over one lakh people at a cricket stadium, before heading for Agra to see the iconic Taj Mahal with Melania.

The US president and Modi will participate in a roadshow from the airport to Sabarmti Ashram and from there to the newly-built Motera cricket stadium, where over a lakh people are expected to be present for the 'Namaste Trump' event.

24/02/20 Kerala Kaumudi

**Passengers commuting to the Delhi Airport are advised to leave a bit early as, starting from January 19, certain roads will be shut for over a year.** The road that connects the airport to Rangpuri roundabout on National Highway 8 is under construction for the Eastern Cross Taxiway, as part of the Delhi Airport’s Phase 3A expansion plan. The traffic will be diverted to the Central Spine Road that connects Terminal 2 and the International Terminal 3 from Mahipalpur. For passengers driving from Dwarka, Gurgaon and Shiva Murti to these terminals, Delhi International Airport Limited (DIAL) has commissioned and constructed the Radisson Bypass Road. This six-lane road will ease up any congestions.

23/02/20 Outlook Traveller

**The Cabinet has approved the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Government of India to upgrade the Jaffna International Airport in Palaly with a Rs.300 million grant,** Minister Prasanna Ranatunga says.

Through the financial grant it is expected to improve the facilities in the areas of airport terminal modification, electricity supply, solid waste management system and utility and transit services.

By now in the Palaly airport a Temporary aviation control tower is fixed. Airport Runaway lighting system is already under procurement.

Facilities at the Passenger Transport Terminal at the Palaly airport will also be upgraded. Accordingly, the Cabinet of Ministers approved the proposal presented by Tourism and Civil Aviation Minister Prasanna Ranatunga to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding for the development of Jaffna International Airport with the Government of India.

24/02/20 Dinuli Francisco/Daily News

**New Delhi: The Customs department on Monday (February 24) seized two gold bars approximately worth Rs 26.52 lakh at IGI Airport** from two Indian women passengers. The two women were coming from Bangkok.

The gold was concealed inside the rectum of the two women in paste form. "On personal search, gold in the form of paste was recovered from their rectum. On extraction, 725 grams of gold worth approximately Rs 26.52 lakh was seized under the Customs Act.

"Both the women have been arrested," Customs Department, Delhi tweeted.

24/02/20 Zee News

**New Delhi: IndiGo is in talks with Sydney-based Qantas Airways and its wholly owned subsidiary Jetstar Airways on codeshare agreements**, which allows an airline to sell other airline's seats, officials said.

**Currently, IndiGo has a two-way codeshare agreement with Turkish Airlines and a one-way codeshare partnership with Qatar Airways.**

In a two-way codeshare agreement, each airline on its distribution system can sell seats on other's flights.

"IndiGo is currently in talks with Qantas Airways and Jetstar Airways regarding codeshare partnerships. With Qantas, it is likely to be one-way but with Jetstar, it is likely to be a two-way codeshare agreement," said an IndiGo official privy to the development.

The official added that IndiGo's relationship with Qantas may be similar to that of Qatar Airways where it can sell 20 seats on each IndiGo flight connecting Doha with Delhi, Mumbai and Hyderabad.

"These 20 seats on each IndiGo flight are blocked for Qatar Airways. It means, as IndiGo operates two daily return flights on Delhi-Doha, Mumbai-Doha and Hyderabad-Doha route, total 240 seats are blocked daily for Qatar Airways' passengers," the official added.

In November last year, Qatar Airways had signed a one-way codeshare agreement with IndiGo that allows its passengers to book seats on the latter's flights connecting Doha with the three Indian cities.

A second IndiGo official stated that the partnership with Melbourne-based Jetstar would likely be a

two-way codeshare agreement, similar to the one it has with Turkish Airlines.

In response to queries sent by PTI, Qantas Airways and Jetstar Airways said in a joint response, "We regularly explore new partnership opportunities to offer our customers more seamless travel experiences, but we currently have no updates to share."

With around 47 per cent share in domestic air passenger market, India's largest airline has been focusing on international traffic for further growth.

23/02/20 PTI/Times of India

**Bengaluru: Within five to seven years, India is set to become the third busiest aviation market in the world, capable of sustaining at least 1.5 billion trips out of eight billion trips globally but this planned increase could potentially wreck the country's commitment to the 2015 Paris Climate Accord.**

**At a conference on the future of aviation and aerospace organised by the Indian Institute of Management (IIM), Bangalore International Airport Limited (BIAL) and Toulouse Business School, France, here on Saturday, aviation industry experts called on the government to institute reforms to help the industry fulfil its potential. Among the recommendations were to upskill aviation workers and attract better talent, while carrying out structural reforms in the sector.**

**"I have every confidence that Indian aviation can take on the Americans and Chinese within two decades. Our aviation is in a great place right now. It is time to make business and money," said Amber Dubey, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Civil Aviation.** At least one aviation insider, however, pointed out that rampant growth could defeat India's other commitments to sustainability.

Manish Raniga, Acting Chief Commercial Officer of South African Airways, said that with a single long-haul flight consuming a person's annual carbon credit, and with India's lack of a sustainability policy for air travel, airliner proliferation may not be the panacea that the government believes it will be. "Is there infrastructure to support an expansion of 300 airliners?"

**In other countries, governments and airlines seek to reduce their carbon print by employing more efficient models of aircraft with quieter engines and less fuel burn, by utilising biofuels and other zero-footprint technologies and by gaining carbon credits such as planting trees. In the Indian context, these measures are totally missing," Raniga said.**

23/02/20 Akhil Kadidal/Deccan Herald

**New Delhi: India's tough stand on replacing Pratt & Whitney's (PW) unmodified — and snag-prone — engines with modified or upgraded ones for the Airbus A320 Neos is paying off.**

**IndiGo, the world's largest A320 Neo customer, and GoAir, have 150 Neos with PW engines between them.**

**"Each (PW-powered Neo) in India now has at least one modified engine. PW has so far replaced 200 engines on Neos. Now, only 100 more unmodified PW engines for Neos — which also meet all standards and are perfectly safe — remain to be replaced," Anand Stanley, president and MD of Airbus (India and South Asia), told TOI on Friday.**

Following a spate of PW engine snags on A320 Neos last year, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) had said no Neo with even a single unmodified PW engine would be allowed to fly after May 31, 2020.

Airbus and PW's in past few weeks have logged a replacement rate of one engine daily after that directive. Asked if this deadline will be met, Stanley said, "We are fully committed to complying with the DGCA directive on replacing the engines and are making rapid progress towards that goal."

Ashmita Sethi, who recently took over as the MD of PW (India), told TOI in her first media interaction: "With the ongoing deliveries of upgraded engines for replacement, the number of engines to be changed is decreasing every day. About 200 engines have already been replaced till now. Only about 100 remain. Very rapid progress is being made."

23/02/20 Saurabh Sinha/Times of India

In a day-long conference hosted by IIM Bangalore and Bangalore International Airport Limited with Toulouse Business School France, here today, senior professionals from the aviation and aerospace industry in India **called for better skill development and talent management, as well as policy and structural reforms in the sector.**

Remarking that the conference couldn't have come at a better time with India set to become the third busiest aviation market in the next 5-7 years, Satyaki Raghunath, Chief Strategy and Development Officer, BIAL, said: "The market size of India is certainly a huge opportunity for MROs (maintenance, repair and overhaul), cargo, logistics, tourism, travel, etc. The impact of what aviation does in terms of driving the economy can never be overstated. Technology has changed the way the aviation industry operates – be it drones, AI, ML, and that creates huge opportunity.

Today, BIAL employs over 20,000 people. The growing industry can create huge employment. There are challenges too – regulatory policies that, among other things, should also prevent airlines from folding up. The dearth of talent is another challenge – the sector is struggling to find the right talent. It is going to be incumbent on all of us to find and deploy the right talent. Third, from an urban growth perspective, in an emerging market especially, where workers migrate when opportunities arise, our primary cities need to gear up in terms of urban planning – providing facilities and transport for the people who migrate for work."

Calling for better collaboration between stakeholders, Satyaki Raghunath wished the conference success. In his welcome address, Professor S. Raghunath, Director, General Management Programme for Aerospace & Aviation Executives at IIM Bangalore, set the context of the conference in a time when the aerospace industry is under pressure both from a slowdown in the sector as well as the threat of the coronavirus outbreak. The silver lining, he observed, was domestic travel in India.

23/02/20 Bangalore Mirror

**New Delhi: Aviation regulator DGCA has ordered screening of passengers from four more countries -- Nepal, Vietnam, Indonesia and Malaysia, as part of efforts to prevent spreading of coronavirus. Now, fliers from as many as 10 countries would be screened at Indian airports.**

Already, passengers travelling in flights from China, Hong Kong, Japan, South Korea, Thailand and Singapore are being screened at Indian airports in the wake of the Novel Coronavirus 2019 (CONVID 19).

Cases of the virus infection have been reported in many countries, including India.

In a communication issued on Sunday, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) said it has

been decided to expand universal screening of all passengers arriving in flights from Nepal, Indonesia, Vietnam and Malaysia.

The screening must be ensured immediately "once they step out of the specific locations at all the airports and getting the self-declaration form filled by the passengers as per the instructions of the health and family welfare ministry, it said.

In this regard, the watchdog said all airlines should make in-flight announcement in flights coming from these countries.

[23/02/20 PTI/Outlook](#)

**New Delhi: A pilot of the Indian Air Force (IAF) was killed on Monday after a microlight aircraft crashed in Patiala, Punjab. The Pipistrel Virus SW 80 trainer aircraft** crashed in the Army cantonment area soon after taking off from the Patiala Aviation Club airport. The killed pilot was identified as Wing Commander GS Cheema.

Two NCC cadets have suffered injuries. An inquiry has been ordered by the IAF to ascertain the cause of the accident.

[24/02/20 IndiaTV](#)

**Panaj: A MiG-29K aircraft crashed off Goa during a routine training sortie on Sunday morning, the Indian Navy said in a statement.**

"The pilot ejected safely and has been recovered. An enquiry into the incident has been ordered," the statement said.

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

[23/02/20 daijiworld](#)

**Beijing: China on Monday said Indian and Chinese officials were in "communication" over the delay in grant of permission to India's special flight carrying medical supplies to Wuhan and to evacuate over 100 Indians stuck in the city worst affected by the novel coronavirus outbreak that has claimed over 2,500 lives.**

India has announced its plan to send Indian Air Force's biggest plane C-17 Globemaster with medical supplies to China and to evacuate remaining Indians numbering over 100 from China's coronavirus-hit Hubei province.

It has also offered to evacuate nationals from the neighbouring countries, depending on the space availability.

"Competent authorities of the two countries have maintained communication and coordination on this matter," Chinese Foreign Ministry said in reply to question from PTI over the delay in granting the clearance for the plane.

The brief reply did not say when the flight will be cleared.



The Chinese Foreign Ministry's fresh statement came after the two countries were locked in a verbal spat over the delay for the special flight from India to bring the stranded Indians home.

24/02/20 PTI/New Indian Express

**Billionaire industrialist Gautam Adani backed diversified conglomerate Adani group is weighing a potential bid for state-run carrier Air India, a source told Moneycontrol.**

If the deal fructifies, it will mark the Adani group's big-bang entry into the domestic airline market. "The Adani group has engaged advisors and is evaluating submission of an expression of interest (EoI) at this stage. Their interest is preliminary and clarifications need to be sought from the government on the bidding process," a source said.

Another source said the Adani group is looking at this opportunity, but is 'yet to take a final call'. "With this transaction, the group can diversify and bolster their presence in the sector."

Moneycontrol could not independently verify if the Adani group would go alone or be part of a consortium that would bid for the beleaguered airline.

In response to a query from Moneycontrol, an Adani Group spokesperson said, "As part of company policy, we do not comment on market speculation."

In 2019, the Adani group forayed into airport operations and maintenance. It created a separate entity -- Adani Airports -- when it bagged bids on privatisation of six airports owned by the Airports Authority of India. The group won a 50-year contract for operation, management and development of the Ahmedabad, Lucknow, Jaipur, Guwahati, Thiruvananthapuram and Mangaluru airports. The six airports together handled 30 million passengers (23.6 million domestic and 6.4 million international) last fiscal, a YoY growth of 22 percent. The group has committed an investment of Rs 10,000 crore for the airport business by 2026.

24/02/20 Ashwin Mohan/Moneycontrol

**New Delhi : One day before the US President Donald Trump is scheduled to land in Ahmedabad for his two-day India visit, the airlines have issued an advisory to its fliers in the wake of VVIP movement and heavy security deployment enroute to airport.**

Congestion and roadblocks are expected during Donald Trump's arrival and the passengers have been asked to carry some extra time with a hard copy of their ticket and photo IDs.

"We expect heavy traffic, roadblocks and stringent security checks en route Ahmedabad Airport between 8 am to 4 pm on Monday, owing to the VVIP movement. Passengers travelling to the airport must carry a hard copy of their itinerary and photo-ID to access the blocked roads. No accompanying persons will be permitted to proceed. Please keep a tab on live traffic and report at the check-in counter at least 3 hours prior to the departure time," SpiceJet said in a statement.

Air carriers Vistara and IndiGo airlines have also issued a similar advisory to their passengers. Earlier in the day, Union Home Minister Amit Shah arrived in Ahmedabad to review the final preparations for Trump's visit to the city.

24/02/20 News Heads

**India on Saturday advised its citizens to avoid non-essential travel to Singapore in the wake of the novel coronavirus outbreak. The government said it was planning to start screening passengers arriving at Indian airports from Kathmandu, Indonesia, Vietnam and Malaysia.**

Passengers from China, Hong Kong, Thailand, South Korea, Singapore and Japan are already being screened at 21 airports in the country for possible exposure to the novel coronavirus. So far, over 3.97 lakh flight passengers and 9,695 travellers at sea ports have been screened, the government said.

India has so far reported three positive cases of coronavirus infection. **Eight Indians have tested positive on board the Diamond Princess cruise ship, quarantined off the coast of Japan.** The ship has more than 630 cases, accounting for the biggest cluster of infection outside China. There are 138 Indians – six passengers and 132 crew members – on the ship.

[23/02/20 Scroll.in](#)

**Mumbai: Pilots and air traffic controllers in India will be screened for consumption of drugs and psychoactive substances as part of a regulatory drive to improve safety. Apart from random screening, the tests will also be carried out prior to hiring and after accidents.**

Pilots and cabin crew undergo pre-flight breath analyser test for alcohol. Last year, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) extended the test to cover ground personnel, engineers and air traffic controllers as well.

To bring Indian regulations in line with global standards, the DGCA has proposed random testing of pilots and air traffic controllers for drugs and opioids. The DGCA released draft rules for testing procedure on Friday.

Random tests will be carried out under the supervision of DGCA officers by laboratories authorised by the regulator. **These random tests will cover 10 per cent employees of each airline in one year. In the first phase, flight crew and air traffic controllers in Mumbai, Kolkata, Chennai, Bengaluru and Hyderabad will be screened.**

**The tests would consist of a screening test and a confirmatory test.** The screening test will be carried out at the airport or the ATC complex and will be recorded on video.

An employee who tests positive will be removed from sensitive duties till a report of the confirmatory test is received. The employee would have to undergo rehabilitation if confirmatory test is positive and can return to active duties following clearance from a psychiatrist and chief medical officer of the organisation.

[22/02/20 Aneesh Phadnis/Business Standard](#)

**The resolution professional (RP) of the grounded Jet Airways on Thursday invited expressions of interest (EoIs) for the third time since the airline went into insolvency in June 2019. The fresh round of EoIs comes after a Russian state-owned fund showed interest in the debt-laden airline.**

**The deadline for submission of EoIs is Sunday, subject to approval from Jet's committee of creditors (CoC) and the adjudicating authority. A resolution plan has to be submitted by March 9, a company notification said. The RP expects to now submit a final resolution plan, if any, before the National Company Law Tribunal on March 15.**

Earlier this week, FE reported that **representatives of Russian state-owned Far East Development Fund met lenders to Jet Airways to discuss investing in the airline. The fund also suggested the possibility of Jet's operations being synergised with that of Russian flag carrier Aeroflot. Mumbai-**

**based Enso Group is in early stages of discussions to partner in the same.**

Jet Airways was grounded in April last year after lenders had refused to extend emergency funding to continue operations. Few months later, State Bank of India took the airline to the insolvency court after lenders failed to sell it off. Under the corporate insolvency process, fresh bids were invited for the resolution of the airline. Since then, multiple entities have expressed interest, but so far none has taken talks forward. In the absence of promising bidders, lenders have also begun the process of partially monetising assets. The RP has been in talks with KLM Royal Dutch airlines to sell Jet's erstwhile flight rights in Schiphol Airport, Amsterdam, along with a Boeing 777 aircraft. The 270-day timeline for Jet's resolution will be over on March 15.

21/02/20 Financial Express

**While New Delhi might face nation-wide criticism for its alarming pollution levels, the city doesn't disappoint in terms of single-use plastic. The Indira Gandhi International Airport has now become free of single-use plastic.**

According to reports, the Confederation of Indian Industry-ITC Centre of Excellence for Sustainable Development (CII-ITC CESD) that supports the business community towards achieving sustainability, has certified DIAL for its successful voluntary implementation of single-use plastic-free airport measures within IGI Airport's operations.

The theme for World Environment Day 2018 was 'Beat Plastic Pollution' and Delhi Airport was the first Indian Airport to make a 'single-use plastic-free' commitment in 2019.

21/02/20 Outlook

**Mumbai airport, run by a joint venture between Airports Authority of India and GVK, on Friday announced the launch of an exclusive terminal for processing and storage of agro and pharma products. Touted as the world's largest airport-based temperature-controlled facility, the 'Export Cold Zone' can hold over 700 tonnes of such cargo at one time with a combined annual capacity of 5.25 lakh tonnes, Mumbai International Airport Ltd (MIAL) said in a release.**

The facility will be operated by cargo handling service provider and MIAL's business partner, Cargo Service Centre, it said.

Mumbai airport is the largest gateway for movement of pharma and agro products in the country, MIAL said, adding that the fully automated infrastructure caters to the rapidly growing demand for pharma and agri goods.

It connects to over 500 cargo destinations across 175 countries through 60 airlines.

The export cold zone is equipped with 12 truck docks with dock-levellers, spacious acceptance and examination area, automated workstations, X-Ray machines, unit load device (ULD) storage, ballmat system for ULD transfer and cold rooms, the release said.

Spread over an operational area of 6,000 square metres, the facility is equipped with 10 ULD build-up workstations and as many as 172 ULD storage positions.

21/02/20 PTI/India TV

**New Delhi: The Competition Commission of India (CCI) has approved the sale of 49 per cent stake in GMR Airports to France's Groupe ADP through the green channel mechanism.**

Green channel is an automatic approval system, whereby a combination is deemed to have been approved by the CCI upon receiving the filing of the notice for the combination by the parties concerned.

"The Competition Commission of India (CCI) received the following green channel combination of acquisition by Atropos de Paris SA (ADP) of equity share capital of GMR Airports Limited (GAL), and GMR Infra Services Limited (GISL)," an official statement said.

Late on Thursday, GMR Infrastructure Ltd (GIL) announced that it has entered into a strategic partnership with Groupe ADP to sell 49 per cent stake in its airports arm for an equity consideration of Rs 10,780 crore.

The CCI said that under the proposed combination, ADP would acquire up to 100 per cent of the equity shares of GISL directly and 49 per cent of the equity shares of GAL directly and indirectly. ADP is an international airport operator based in Paris, and carries out the financing, designing, and operating infrastructure, for a network of 25 airports in 13 countries in Europe, Asia, Africa and South America.

Currently, ADP and its group have no operations in India, and do not have any shareholding or investment interest in any entity that carries on business in India.

22/02/20 IANS/Sify

**Kochi: Cochin International Airport Ltd will soon deploy full-body x-ray passenger scanners in its departure counters. The move is in line with bureau of civil aviation security's (BCAS) decision to install scanners in airports to accelerate the passenger clearance process and end manual frisking without compromising security.**

The scanners will increase the effectiveness of security checks owing to its ability to identify non-metallic as well as concealed metallic weapons and explosives. The plan is to buy nine x-ray scanners at cost of around Rs 27 crore. The tender for their supply, installation, testing and commissioning has been floated.

BCAS had in August 2019 made it mandatory for 84 airports in the country to install full-body scanners to screen air travellers within a year and issued a standard operating procedure for their use. Authorities said Cial, which is one among the busiest airports in south India, is in the list, hence the airport is going with the technological upgrade.

22/02/20 Anantha Narayanan K/Times of India

The customs department at **Chennai** International Airport on Saturday recovered **681 grams of gold, worth Rs 29.4 lakhs** from two passengers. They have been hiding the pieces of gold inside the rectum and after being scanned on their arrival at the airport, customs officials recovered the gold.

One of the two passengers had arrived Chennai from Colombo while the other passenger had come from Dubai.

22/02/20 India TV

Kannur: Customs sleuths on Friday seized **1.5 kg of gold worth around Rs 63 lakh** from a passenger who arrived at Kannur International Airport from Doha in an Indigo aircraft.

Customs Assistant Commissioner E Vikas-led team arrested K M Afsal of Perambra in Kozhikode district in this connection.

The seized gold was kept under his innerwear in capsule form, sources said.

21/02/20 UNI

**New Delhi: A Bangkok-bound passenger has been apprehended at Delhi airport for allegedly carrying US currency worth over Rs 1.5 crore** in an unauthorised manner, officials said on Friday.

Mohammed Ansarudeen A Jalaludeen was intercepted on Thursday evening at the Terminal-3 of the Indira Gandhi International Airport due to his "suspicious behaviour", they said.

US currency worth Rs 1.55 crore, hidden in the false cavity of a bag being carried by the passenger, was recovered from the traveller.

[22/02/20 PTI/Tribune](#)

### **Debt-ridden Nepal Airlines to sell 25 percent state to other state-owned enterprises**

TKP: The Nepal Airlines board has approved the Tourism Ministry's plan to divest a 25 percent stake in the ailing national flag carrier to other state-owned enterprises to raise capital, but many, including board members themselves, do not believe that the plan is going to work. "We have decided to divest a 25 percent stake in Nepal Airlines as this will allow state-owned firms like the Employees' Provident Fund, Citizen Investment Trust, Nepal Oil Corporation and others entities to invest in the carrier," said Tourism Secretary Kedar Bahadur Adhikari, who is also the chairperson of Nepal Airlines Corporation.

<https://tkpo.st/32pshpA 25/02/2020>

### **Govt proposes unbundling of CAAN**

REP: The government has proposed the unbundling of Civil Aviation Authority of Nepal (CAAN) with Nepal Air Service Authority Bill, 2076 tabled in the federal parliament. The federal assembly prepared the act to make air service safe, standard, effective and reliable stating that the establishment of Air Service Authority of Nepal was mandatory to construct airport with facilities, upgrade and operate airport and air navigation service as per the international criteria. According to the bill, the authority will construct, upgrade, operate and manage airports. The authority will be responsible for providing ground handling service, determining visual and instrument flight rules, prepare and implement aeronautical charters, approve flight schedule and permit the operation of flights, prepare the criteria related to helipad and implement working procedure.

<https://myrepublica.nagariknetwork.com/news/govt-proposes-unbundling-of-caan/> 25/02/2020

**A chartered flight is being arranged to repatriate Indians on board the cruise ship off the Japan coast who have not tested positive for the novel coronavirus, the Indian embassy here said on Tuesday as the number of infected Indians on the vessel rose to 14 with two new cases.**

A total of 138 Indians, including 132 crew and 6 passengers, were among the 3,711 people, on board the Diamond Princess ship when it docked at the Yokohama port, near Tokyo, on February 3.

"A chartered flight is being arranged to repatriate Indian nationals on board Diamond Princess, provided they have (a) consented, (b) not tested positive for COVID19, (c) cleared by the medical team," the mission tweeted on Tuesday.

"An email advisory to this effect, with details, has been sent to them," it said.

Two more Indian crew members tested positive for COVID-19, taking the total number to 14, the embassy said on Monday, adding that all of them were responding well to the treatment.

"PCR test results announced, from the samples collected earlier, included 2 Indian crew members, on board Diamond Princess, testing positive for COVID-19. Total number of crew members tested positive so far is 14- responding well to treatment," the embassy tweeted on Monday.

Passengers showing no signs of the deadly disease started disembarking the ship after the quarantine period ended last week. Over 1,000 passengers and crew still remain on board the ship after the disembarkations.

The ship was quarantined after a passenger who disembarked last month in Hong Kong was found to be the carrier of the disease.

The Indian embassy had on Saturday said that Indians, who are still on board the ship, will be tested for the virus infection along with others after all the healthy passengers have disembarked.

Seventy-one new coronavirus deaths were reported from China, the epicentre of the disease, taking the total number of casualties to 2,663, while the confirmed cases rose to 77,658.

Tokyo, Feb 25 (PTI)

**A preliminary probe by the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) has suggested prima facie violations of corporate governance and listing disclosure norms in certain related-party transactions involving budget carrier IndiGo's parent firm, InterGlobe Aviation, sources said.**

While the company said it had not received any communication from Sebi on this, its shares plunged sharply in afternoon trade on Tuesday.

**IndiGo has been facing a probe by Sebi ever since a public spat came to light between the two founders of the airline, Rahul Bhatia and Rakesh Gangwal, including over certain related-party transactions involving one of the warring promoters.**

Sources said that a preliminary probe had now suggested **violations of listing disclosure norms and fair corporate governance practices** at the company.

InterGlobe shares closed 4.68 per cent lower at Rs 1,376.70 on the BSE, after hitting an intra-day low of Rs 1,334 in afternoon trade following a sudden plunge after media reports about the Sebi probe came.

"We would like to state that the news item published in some media is factually incorrect and the company has not received any communication from Sebi in this regard," the company said in a filing to the BSE. This came after the exchange sought a clarification from the company on the reports.

There was no official word on the probe from Sebi. **All agreements between the two warring founders as well as those between the company and its various investors and associates, including related parties, were being looked into by the watchdog.**

The probe had suggested that some of the related party transactions could have been significant and required detailed disclosures and greater vetting by board committees comprising of independent directors, the sources said. **The differences between co-founders and co-promoters came to the fore in July 2019 after Gangwal sought Sebi's intervention to address alleged corporate governance lapses at the company.**

## Turbulent times

- Preliminary probe suggests violations of corporate governance and listing disclosure norms in certain related-party transactions
- IndiGo has been facing a probe by the market regulator ever since a public spat came to light between its founders
- InterGlobe shares closed 4.68% lower at Rs 1,376.70 a piece on Tuesday

Business Standards 26/02/2020

**The second round of privatising six airports in Amritsar, Varanasi, Bhubaneswar, Indore, Raipur and Trichy has been put on the back burner as different arms of the government are debating whether to cap the number of airports an entity can bid for.**

**While the rules framed by the civil aviation ministry and Airports Authority of India (AAI) allow an entity to bid for all airports, the finance ministry and the cabinet secretariat are pressing for a cap, it is learnt.** During the previous privatisation process in 2018 too, the finance ministry wanted a cap on the number of airports a bidder can bid for.

Business Standards 26/02/2020

**International carriers are launching new services to Chennai and Delhi to fill up the vacuum caused by the closure of Jet Airways.**

**On Tuesday, Air France announced Paris-Chennai service from June 14 while Virgin Atlantic Airways will begin Manchester-Delhi flights from October 26.** Both Air France and Virgin Atlantic are part of Delta-led joint venture which controls around 23 per cent of passenger and cargo capacity between Europe and the US.

Jet Airways operated on Mumbai - Manchester and Chennai - Paris routes before it shut operations last April. While Paris is connected with three cities in India at present, Manchester- India service is being re-established with the Virgin Atlantic flight.

Over 300,000 passengers flew between India and Manchester in twelve months ending September 2019 accounting for nearly 10 per cent of the traffic between the two countries. It is second largest destination for Indians after London Heathrow.

"Manchester is the UK's third largest airport and is an ideal gateway to the rest of the UK and Virgin Atlantic will offer seamless connectivity to destinations such as Edinburgh and Belfast with Flybe, soon to be rebranded Virgin Connect. Virgin Atlantic flights from Delhi to Manchester will have also have connections to New York and Orlando," the airline said in a statement. The UK airline launched London-Mumbai service last October and is adding a second Delhi flight in the summer schedule.

**Jean – Noel Rault, General Manager, Air France – KLM, Indian Sub-Continent said "Chennai will be our fourth gateway in India and second in South India. This start emphasises the group's commitment to further strengthen its presence in India. The thrice weekly connection will open more travel opportunities for the Indian customers."**

**Air France-KLM will operate 38 weekly flights from India to its two hubs at Paris and Amsterdam. In the winter season the frequencies will increase to over 40 weekly flights, he said.**

Business Standards 26/02/2020

Plusieurs prétendants potentiels seraient toujours en lice pour l'acquisition de Jet Airways.

**Si aucun n'a respecté la date limite du 17 février 2020 pour soumettre un plan de reprise, l'un d'eux a demandé une nouvelle date limite dans un mois, d'après le Business Standard.**

**Il s'agirait de la société indienne Prudent Asset Reconstruction Company, qui serait en pourparlers avec des investisseurs pour pouvoir relancer le transporteur indien disparu en mars 2019.**

**Le deuxième prétendant est le conglomérat sur-américain Synergy Aerospace n'a pas encore soumis de plan de reprise détaillé à cause d'un manque de clarté sur les anciens créneaux horaires de Jet Airways à Londres-Heathrow.**

A noter que la compagnie indienne Vistara prévoit de lancer cette année des liaisons entre l'Inde et Londres, ainsi que vers Paris-CDG.

**D'après d'autres sources, un grand consortium russe (Far East Development Fund, le Fonds russe de développement de l'Extrême-Orient), basé à Moscou et étroitement lié au gouvernement russe, aurait également manifesté son intérêt au comité des créanciers de Jet Airways.**

Ce dernier a décidé d'allonger une fois de plus le délai de manifestation d'intérêt. Prochaine échéance pour les 3 intéressés : le 10 mars 2020.

Cela fait désormais un an que l'ex plus grande compagnie aérienne indienne, qui volait en France en accord avec Air France, a stoppé ses opérations.

La plupart de ses anciens appareils et créneaux horaires ont déjà trouvé des repreneurs. A son apogée, la compagnie indienne détenait 20 à 30% des créneaux horaires des aéroports de Delhi et Mumbai et exploitait 115 appareils. 11 avions lui appartiennent toujours d'après les chiffres de CH Aviation

CH Aviation 24/02/2020

**The Delhi High Court on Tuesday said aviation regulator DGCA ought not to have "certified" action of the airlines, other than IndiGo, which imposed an indefinite flying ban without an inquiry on stand-up comedian Kunal Kamra for allegedly heckling journalist Arnab Goswami on a flight.**

**"Why did you (DGCA) give a certification on Twitter? Look at your tweet. You said the action by the other airlines was in compliance of the Civil Aviation Requirements (CAR). Not just IndiGo, you gave a certificate to the others also. You should withdraw your tweet," Justice Navin Chawla said to the regulator.**

The court further said, **"You have to now satisfy this court that their (airlines) action was in consonance with the CAR."**

The DGCA's lawyer said she will take instructions on the query raised by the court and urged that the matter be listed on February 27, to which the judge agreed.



**The court, during the hearing, also said that once Kamra moved a complaint before the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) claiming violation of CAR by the airlines, the regulator cannot say it will not look into it.**

The comedian, represented by senior advocates Vivek Tankha, Gopal Sankaranarayanan and Mohit Mathur, has claimed that all the airlines imposed the flying ban on him without there being a complaint as required under the CAR.

In his plea, Kamra has said he was banned by IndiGo for a six-month period before it even received a complaint.

He has further said the complaint, as per CAR, has to be made by the pilot of the flight, but in the instant case it was not done and despite that the airline constituted an internal committee which is scheduled to have a final hearing of the matter on February 26.

Kamra has contended that the other airlines -- Air India, SpiceJet and GoAir -- banned him for an indefinite period without even setting up an internal committee to enquire into the issue.

**During the hearing, the court also questioned how the other airlines acted without a committee and put him on a no-fly list.**

The comedian has sought directions to the DGCA to direct the airlines to revoke the ban and also action against them for alleged violation of CAR.

The DGCA in its defence said it was only a regulator and the airlines had the freedom under CAR to take action against passengers for unruly or disruptive behaviour.

**"As per CAR, it is an internal decision of the airlines," DGCA told the court and added that the other carriers be also made a party in the matter as the regulator cannot answer for them.**

Indigo said its internal committee was already looking into the matter and will give a decision soon.

[LiveMint Aviation 25/02/2020](#)

**Billionaire Gautam Adani's energy and infrastructure conglomerate is considering bidding to buy Air India and is pouring into bid documents before finalising a plan, sources said.**

The government is offering to sell its entire holding in the loss-making carrier along with its entire interest in its low-cost arm and 50 per cent in the ground handling unit.

Sources with knowledge of the development said the mergers and acquisition (M&A) team of Adani Group is scrutinising Air India bid documents and the interest was at a preliminary stage.

Bidding, they insisted, would depend on the due diligence.

**If Adani bids, it will join likes of Tata Group, Hindujas, IndiGo and New York-based fund Interups who are said to be considering putting in an expression of interest (EoI) at the close of the bid deadline next month.**

Adani Group's spokesperson could not be immediately reached for comments.

Sources said Adani sees synergy in Air India and its airport operations. It last year won bids to operate six airports at Ahmedabad, Lucknow, Jaipur, Guwahati, Thiruvananthapuram, and Mangalore.

The deciding factor for Adani to bid for Air India would be the debt and losses.

The buyer will have to take on a fixed debt of Rs 23,286.5 crore along with certain identified current and non-current liabilities. The airline has been in losses during the last few years.

**While the privatization bid document does not place any restriction on Adani from bidding for Air India, Airports Authority of India (AAI) restricts an airline or a group owning an airline to hold no more than 27 per cent in the airports.**

**A similar clause restricting airlines or group owning airlines from owning more than 10 per cent in Delhi airport recently resulted in the collapse of the Tata-GIC group's investment in GMR.**

Air India and its subsidiary, Air India Express own about 120 aircraft at FY18-end and 126 aircraft till September last year.

After its unsuccessful bid to sell Air India in 2018, the government this time has decided to offload its entire stake. In 2018, the government had offered to sell its 76 per cent stake in the airline.

Of the total debt of Rs 60,074 crore as of March 31, 2019, the buyer would be required to absorb Rs 23,286.5 crore, while the rest would be transferred to Air India Assets Holding Ltd (AIAHL), the special purpose vehicle.

As a precursor to Air India sale, the Cabinet in February 2019 approved setting up AIAHL to transfer Rs 29,464 crore worth loans of the national carrier and its four subsidiaries-- Air India Air Transport Services (AIATSL), Airline Allied Services (AASL), Air India Engineering Services Ltd (AIESL) and Hotel Corporation of India (HCI).

Also, non-core assets - painting and artifacts - as well as other non-operational assets of the national carrier too will be transferred to the SPV.

[The Economic Times of India 25/02/2020](#)

**The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has initiated an audit of all 20 Airbus 319 aircraft in Air India's fleet after the regulator found that one of the planes had a broken panel that blocked the access to the emergency exit. ET has seen a copy of the order.**

The regulator had acted on the basis of a complaint from a passenger on a flight operating between Aizawl and Kolkata sector and the DGCA had asked the national carrier to ensure that the problem is fixed.

"As immediate corrective action, an engineering order to inspect and rectify the defect... has been issued for compliance," said an email from the national carrier, seen by ET. "...as a preventive action, all Airbus 319 aircraft will be inspected to ensure the secured and correct installation of the panel during major checks," the email read.

The passenger tweeted a picture showing the broken panel that could have been a hindrance during

an emergency evacuation. The DGCA has been monitoring all passenger-related complaints on social media platforms to ensure they are redressed efficiently and in a time-bound manner. The complaints range from safety aspects as well as passenger issues like refunds and other customer complaints.

The Economic Times of India 25/02/2020

**The government is likely to extend the March 17 deadline for submitting bids to buy 100 per cent stake in Air India and the Home Minister led inter-ministerial panel will later this week decide on the new date.**

Interested bidders can now have access to the "virtual data room" of Air India, officials said adding that more queries are expected to come in, which would be clarified by the Transaction Advisor and the Ministry of Civil Aviation.

**The government has already extended the deadline for bidders to raise queries on the proposed strategic sale of Air India to March 6 from February 11.**

Officials told PTI that the ministerial panel on Air India would meet later this week and decide on the new date for submission of Expression of Interest (EoI) by interested bidders.

The interested bidders can now get access to the virtual data room, which would also have the draft share purchase agreement (SPA), by paying a non-refundable fees of Rs 1 crore.

The ministerial panel - Air India Specific Alternative Mechanism (AISAM)- is headed by Home Minister Amit Shah and comprises Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, Commerce and Railway Minister Piyush Goyal and Civil Aviation Minister Hardeep Singh Puri as other members.

The government on January 27 issued the Preliminary Information Memorandum (PIM) inviting EoI for sale of 100 per cent stake in Air India. On February 21, it issued the first set of clarification answering queries regarding the 'confidentiality undertaking'.

**The Department of Investment and Public Asset Management (DIPAM), which is overseeing the strategic sale of Air India, clarified that bidders will have the flexibility to change the structure of the consortium from the time of signing of non-disclosure pact for access to data room till submission of EoI.**

**It also clarified that a bidder and its affiliate are not allowed to put in bids separately and can only submit EoI as a consortium.**

The government last month restarted the divestment process of Air India and invited bids for selling 100 per cent of its equity in the state-owned airline, including Air India's 100 per cent shareholding in AI Express and 50 per cent in Air India SATS Airport Services Private Ltd.

Interested bidders for Air India should have a net worth of Rs 3,500 crore.

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Of the total debt of Rs 60,074 crore as on March 31, 2019, the buyer would be required to absorb Rs

23,286.5 crore, while the rest would be transferred to Air India Assets Holding Ltd (AIAHL), the special purpose vehicle.

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Also non-core assets - painting and artifacts - as well as other non-operational assets of the national carrier too will be transferred to the SPV.

The Economic Times of India 25/02/2020

**Total opportunity for airport retail to be approximately \$9.3 billion by 2030 from its estimated market size of \$1.4 billion in 2019, said Knight Frank India, a global property consultancy.**

**The real estate opportunity for airport operators in India is projected to be \$1.6 billion by 2030. Duty -free retail, which is about 50% of the total retail opportunity currently at \$0.7 billion, is expected to grow to \$2 billion by 2030, says a study 'Catch them Moving' by the consultancy firm.**

#### Duty-free Revenue

The duty-free market size in India, currently estimated to be at \$0.7 billion, expected to reach \$2 billion by 2030. According to Knight Frank Research, Delhi's Indira Gandhi International Airport earns close to \$10-11 revenue per passenger while Chhatrapati Shivaji International Airport, Mumbai, earns a duty-free revenue in the range \$9-10 per passenger and Kempegowda International Airport, Bengaluru, earns duty-free revenue in the range \$5-6 per passenger.

Across the globe the famous duty-free zones in airports like Singapore's Changi Airport, London's Heathrow Airport and Dubai International Airport have become destinations in themselves with their per passenger spend for duty free as high as \$34 and \$20 for Paris and Dubai airports, respectively.

#### Non-Aeronautical Revenue

In 2019, the share of non-aeronautical revenues for the top privately managed busiest airports for Delhi, Mumbai and Bengaluru for the 2019 financial year stood at 70% and 54% and 49%. While the Airports Authority of India (AAI) managed airports in India stands at 13%, thus emphasising the fact private sector participation opens up avenues for fully utilising the untapped retail untapped at the airports.

Revenue from retail concessions at Indira Gandhi International Airport, New Delhi stands at \$109 million followed by Chhatrapati Shivaji International Airport, Mumbai with \$84 million and Kempegowda International Airport, Bengaluru with \$26 million.

The Economic Times of India 25/02/2020

The Government of India provided 15 tonnes of medical assistance comprising masks, gloves and other emergency medical equipment to China on 26 February 2020. These supplies were delivered by an Indian Air Force C-17 special flight which landed on Wuhan, China in late evening of 26 February.

This assistance has been provided in the wake of the Corona virus (Covid 19) outbreak in China and the request by China to provide supplies such as masks and medical equipment. Prime Minister Narendra Modi had written to President Xi Jinping on 8 February 2020 expressing the solidarity of the people of India and the Indian Government with the people and Government of China and also offered assistance to China in this hour of need as a gift. The medical supplies will help augment the China's efforts to control the outbreak of this infection which has been declared as a Public Health Emergency by the World Health Organisation.

The assistance is also a mark of friendship and solidarity from the people of India towards the people of China as the two countries also celebrate 70th anniversary of establishment of diplomatic relations this year.

On its return from Wuhan the IAF Flight also brought back 76 Indian nationals (including 3 Indian Embassy officials who were on ground in Wuhan to coordinate the evacuation) and 36 foreign nationals including from some of our neighboring countries who had sought assistance in traveling to India in keeping with Prime Minister Modi's neighbourhood first policy. The foreign nationals included 23 nationals from Bangladesh, 6 from China, 2 each from Myanmar and Maldives and one each from South Africa, USA and Madagascar.

A total of three flights have been organised including the one today. Two earlier flights were on 31 January and 1 February. In all 723 Indian nationals and 43 Foreign nationals have been evacuated from Wuhan, China in these three flights.

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Indian nationals on board Diamond Princess cruise ship off Japan coast brought back in a special flight

February 27, 2020

- A special Air India flight arrived in New Delhi from Tokyo, on 27 February 2020 bringing back 119 Indian nationals (113 crew members and 6 passengers) who were on-board the Diamond Princess Cruise ship docked off at Yokohama in Japan. In line with India's neighbourhood first policy and Indo-Pacific vision, the special flight also evacuated 5 foreign nationals—2 Sri Lankans, 1 Nepalese, 1 South African and 1 Peruvian. All the evacuees will undergo a 14 day quarantine at the quarantine facility set up by the Indian Army in Manesar, Haryana.
- 03 Indian crew members didn't board the special flight and conveyed their wish to continue their stay on-board the Cruise ship to complete the period of extended quarantine put in place by the Government of Japan.
- Out of the total 138 Indian nationals originally on-board the Diamond Princess, 16 Indian crew members have tested positive for Coronavirus-2019 (COVID-19) and are receiving necessary medical care and treatment at onshore medical facilities in Japan. Embassy of India in Tokyo has established contact with these individuals and is continuously following-up on their recovery.
- The ship was put under quarantine by Government of Japan on 5th February 2020 for 14 days until 19th February 2020, as one of the passengers who had disembarked from the ship had tested positive for COVID-19. The quarantine period was extended by the Government of Japan as the crew members were performing their regular duties during the initial quarantine period of 14 days.

In view of the evolving situation related to COVID-19 being reported from other countries, besides the travel advisories already issued by Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, Government of India, following additional directions are issued:

1. Indians are advised to refrain from non-essential travel to Republic of Korea, Iran and Italy.
2. People coming from Republic of Korea, Iran and Italy or having such travel history since 10th February 2020 may be quarantined for 14 days on arrival to India.
3. For any technical queries, may contact on 24\*7 Health ministry Control Room helpline number +91-11-23978046 or email at [ncov2019@gmail.com](mailto:ncov2019@gmail.com).