

Airports

❖ The **Manohar International Airport, Mopa** is **continuing** to **witness** an **improvement** in the **flight connectivity**. The airport would now have frequent connections to destinations including Jalgaon, Nagpur, and Chhatrapati Sambhajnagar (Aurangabad) through airlines including IndiGo and Fly91. Reportedly, IndiGo alone operates around 275 flights a week from the airport. IndiGo will commence flights connecting Mopa to Chhatrapati Sambhajnagar from July 2, 2024. These direct flights are likely to reduce the travel time to two hours from more than 14 hours, enhancing regional connectivity, trade, and tourism. Further, the airline also announced flights from Mopa to Nagpur via Chhatrapati Sambhajnagar. Daily flights connecting Goa and Jalgaon have recently been commenced by Fly91.

❖ The **new air traffic control tower (ATC)** and **technical block** at the **Raja Bhoj Airport** is **likely** to **commence** the **monitoring** of **flights** from the **first week** of **June 2024**, **gradually shifting** the **work** from the **old ATC** to the **new one**. The facility is 32 meters tall, entailing an investment of Rs 400 million. The technical block features a new radar and modern equipment for enhancing the aircraft tracking system. The ATC is also equipped with state-of-the-art technology and updated air navigation service facilities among others. It is also to be the tallest ATC in Madhya Pradesh. With this, airlines are likely to make the airport a base station, as aircraft would have night parking arrangements at airports that have 24-hour flight operations. The airport currently has a base for 17 aircraft, which include four in the old part.

❖ **Passenger traffic** at the **Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel International airport (SVPI)** has **witnessed** a **rise** in **April 2024** and **May 2024**. This is likely a result of the vacation season and sporting events. The period recorded around 2 million passengers at the airport, in comparison to 1.9 million passengers during the same period in FY23. The busiest day for FY24 was recorded on May 23, 2024, with 38,790 passengers and 279 flight movements. The airport's terminal 2 recently witnessed the operationalisation of a new swing-operated security hold area, new domestic and international flights, opening of new routes, and higher frequencies on existing routes.

❖ The **state government** of **Kerala** has **reportedly expedited** the **proceedings** for the **proposed runway expansion** at the **Thiruvananthapuram airport**. The AAI has requested the state government to provide 22 acres of land for the expansion. The required land is for the extension of the runway end safety area, a mandatory requirement set by the Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA) and the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA). Failure to comply with the requirements by September 2024 would likely lead to the airport losing its operating licence.

❖ The **commercial operations** on the **new terminal** at the **Tiruchirapalli Airport** will **likely commence** by **mid-June**. The project involved the development of a new integrated terminal building including expansion of the runway from 8,000 feet to 12,500 feet at the Tiruchirapalli international airport (Trichy airport) to handle 4.5 million passengers per annum (mppa) in Tamil Nadu with an investment of Rs 11.12 billion.

❖ **L K Builders** has **emerged** as the **L1 bidder** for **apron work** under the **Patna airport upgradation** by **quoting Rs 253.48 million**. Bids for the same were invited by the Airports Authority of India (AAI) in February 2024. Besides, ATR Infraprojects Private Limited has emerged as L2 bidder by quoting Rs 266.94 million. The work is likely to be completed in six months. The project, being implemented by the AAI, involves the upgradation of the Patna Airport in Bihar at an estimated cost of Rs 12.17 billion in three phases. Phase I and Phase II involve the development of a new terminal building and other allied structures whereas Phase III involves the development of an apron.

❖ The **tender** for the **Chennai (Parandur) greenfield airport project** is **likely** to be **floated** by **December 2025**. About 4,563.56 acres of land is required and acquisition is in process and likely to be completed by June 2025. The project involves the development of a 100 mppa airport. It will have two parallel runways (4040 m x 45 m - 07L/25R and 07R/25L), three terminals T1 - (345,758 sq m), T2 (476,915

sq m) and T3 (505,495 sq m), cargo terminal and truck docking area spread over 230,500 sq m, taxiway, apron, isolation bay and associated units. It will be implemented at an estimated cost of Rs 327.05 billion out of which Rs 103.07 billion will be used for passenger terminals. It is likely to be developed in four phases: Phase I (20 mppa, 2029), Phase II (30 mppa, 2036), Phase III (20 mppa, 2043) and Phase IV (30 mppa, 2047).

Airlines

❖ **GoAir's slots and foreign bilateral rights** have temporarily been given to other airlines including **Air India, Vistara, and IndiGo**. The temporary distribution has reportedly been taking place since some time. Given that the airline has no bidders left, airlines are to reportedly ask if Go Air's temporarily distributed slots and bilateral would be put in a general pool and then provided to the airlines as per its needs.

❖ **Interglobe Aviation, operating IndiGo Airlines** has reportedly run trials on a new software for passenger safety and comfort and evaluations for in-flight safety announcements are underway. Another trial is also planned to be launched in the next two to three weeks for the Airbus fleet for the safety and comfort-related software. IndiGo has also developed situational in-flight announcements for incidents including turbulence.

Finance

❖ The **Delhi High Court** has directed **SpiceJet** to pay **\$4.8 million** in four instalments to engine lessors **Team France 01 SAS** and **Sunbird France 02 SAS**. Weekly payments of \$160,000 are to be made to the lessors from June 8, 2024, to September 30, 2024. Defaults in payments would hold the carrier liable for grounding and returning the three engines. Plan for paying the outstanding balance of \$3.6 million is to be discussed.

❖ **Aircraft engine lessor Engine Lease Finance (ELF) BV** has reportedly moved an insolvency plea against **SpiceJet** before the **National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT)** for the non-payment of more than **\$12 million**. The amount claimed, along with interest and rental was around \$ 16 million. ELF has reportedly leased eight engines to the airline.

Miscellaneous

❖ As per sources, two private sector joint venture **Reliance-BP** and **Shell-MRPL** have reportedly recorded a **10 per cent market share** in the **ATF market** for **April 2024**, in comparison to **6.3 per cent** in **April 2023**. The market share of Reliance-BP and Shell-MRPL increased from 3.8 per cent to 6.8 per cent and from 2.5 per cent to 3.5 per cent respectively in April 2024 in comparison to the same month in 2023. An 84 per cent year-on-year increase in their sales volumes in April have been one of the reasons for the increase in the market share. State-run ATF suppliers, who dominate the sector, however witnessed a lower sales growth of 8.3 per cent in comparison to the industry average of 13 per cent in April 2024. These companies witnessed a fall in its share in ATF sales from 93.7 per cent to 89.7 per cent. Reportedly, open access at most airports have aided private players to improve their presence in the ATF market.

❖ According to sources, in the last six quarters, domestic airfares have witnessed a **40 per cent surge** in key routes on higher traffic and capacity constraints. The prices are however among the lowest in the world. As per CAPA India, the average fares on the top 20 domestic routes have not witnessed a significant change in nominal terms over the last two decades, but the last six quarters however witnessed a 40 per cent increase. Capacity shortages have been one of the drivers of the trend, with around 150 aircraft on average grounded due to supply chain and other issues.