

Minister Ram Mohan Naidu chairs high-level stakeholder meeting at Delhi Airport

Civil Aviation Minister Reviews Readiness for Hub-and-Spoke Operations

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Minister of Civil Aviation, Shri Ram Mohan Naidu, today reviewed the readiness of Delhi Airport for the implementation of hub-and-spoke operations, chairing a high-level meeting with all key stakeholders at the airport. The meeting was attended by senior officials including Secretary Civil Aviation and representatives from the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA), Bureau of Immigration (BoI), Bureau of Civil Aviation Security (BCAS), Customs, Airports Authority of India (AAI), Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), CISF, DigiYatra, Delhi International Airport Limited (DIAL) and leading airlines.



The Minister also led a delegation for an on-ground walkthrough of passenger flow systems and inspected the Security Hold Area (SHA) at Terminal 3 of Delhi Airport to assess operational preparedness.



The National Civil Aviation Policy (NCAP) 2016, formulated under the decisive and visionary leadership of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, laid out a clear roadmap for positioning India as an aviation hub of choice for Indian passengers by 2030 and for the world by 2047. In furtherance of this vision, the Government has developed an International Aviation Hub Strategy, under which several key measures have been undertaken. These include adopting a calibrated approach in granting Points of Call to foreign carriers, particularly for non-metro destinations, renegotiating bilateral agreements in a manner that strengthens Indian carriers and promotes domestic hubs and liberalizing domestic code-share arrangements to enable Indian airlines to expand their global reach.



During the deliberations, the Minister Ram Mohan Naidu stated, “India’s unique geographical location between the eastern and western hemispheres provides a natural advantage in emerging as a global transit hub. And we have developed the strategy after extensive deliberations with all the stakeholders and I am

deeply grateful to Hon'ble Home Minister Shri Amit Shah Ji for his active support in advancing the proposal."



Elaborating on the significance of the hub-and-spoke model, the Minister stated that it will enable seamless connectivity between Tier-II and Tier-III airports developed through visionary UDAN scheme of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi and the international destinations. He noted that while the passengers will benefit from reduced travel time, there will also be optimal utilization of the infrastructure already developed across the country.

The Hub and Spoke Strategy represent a shift in India's aviation landscape from being primarily an end-destination market to evolving into a global transit hub, thereby allowing Indian airports to capture a substantial share of transfer traffic that is currently routed through foreign hubs.

Sharing the Government's hub vision, Minister Ram Mohan Naidu stated, "At present, nearly 35 percent of international passengers travelling from India transit through foreign hubs such as Dubai, London and Singapore. Our aim is to reverse this trend by developing globally competitive Indian hubs like Delhi, Mumbai, Bangalore, Hyderabad, Kolkata and Chennai."

Mentioning the example of IGI Airport, Minister said, "Delhi Airport stands out with its capacity exceeding 100 million passengers annually, handling nearly 50 percent of the total passenger traffic in the northern region and managing around 50,000 daily transfers, thereby positioning itself as a natural hub airport."

In addition to passenger facilitation, the strategy places strong emphasis on strengthening India's position as a global air cargo hub. Measures such as the elimination of re-screening requirements for transshipment cargo and the digitization of cargo-related approvals and documentation processes are expected to significantly enhance efficiency and reduce turnaround times.

Highlighting the significance of the model, Minister Ram Mohan Naidu mentioned, "The hub-and-spoke model is also set to have far-reaching economic implications along with increased connectivity across regions. By 2047, the cumulative impact of this initiative is projected to generate approximately 16 million direct and indirect jobs and contribute nearly USD 1.4 trillion to the Indian economy."

The implementation of the hub-and-spoke model will also enable airlines to deploy their aircraft more efficiently for international operations, while contributing to decongestion at major airports by decentralizing customs and immigration processes to spoke locations.

While appreciating active involvement of all the stakeholders, Minister Ram Mohan Naidu appreciated that Indian airlines have placed significant orders for wide-body aircraft, which will enhance long-haul connectivity and support hub operations. At the same time, Delhi Airport has initiated work on creating slot banks to facilitate quicker and more efficient passenger transfers. The adoption of technology-driven solutions, including DigiYatra, will further streamline the movement of passengers, particularly those transferring between domestic and international segments.

Under the hub-and-spoke model, passengers arriving from various smaller cities will be consolidated in a coordinated manner and routed through major hub airports such as Delhi for onward international connections. Outbound flights will carry both originating domestic passengers and international transit passengers. At the spoke airport, passengers will be issued two separate boarding passes, clearly marked with 'D' (domestic) and 'I' (international) indicators. Customs and immigration formalities for outbound passengers will be completed at the first point of exit from the country, which will be the spoke airport, and passengers on such outbound journeys will not have access to customs declaration facilities during transit.

For inbound passengers, customs and immigration processes will take place at the final point of entry into the country, which will again be the spoke airport. The model further envisages that baggage for both inbound and outbound international passengers will be transferred seamlessly through airside operations at the hub airport, eliminating the need for passenger intervention. In order to maintain operational efficiency and regulatory clarity, combination flights will not be permitted, and separate aircraft will be deployed for the domestic and international segments of hub-and-spoke operations.

Recognizing India's strategic location and rapidly growing air traffic potential, the Ministry of Civil Aviation remains committed to transforming the country into a leading global aviation hub by 2047.

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