

JOINT FORUM OF UNIONS AND ASSOCIATIONS OF AAI

UNIONS : AAEU, IAKU, AAKU

ASSOCIATIONS : AAIEG, CNSOG, IAAIOA, ACOA, AAOA (I), AAI SC & ST EWA

AAEU/Airport Privatisation/2021

Dated:22/03/2021

To

The Chairman

Airports Authority of India
Rajiv Gandhi Bhawan,
Safdarjung Airport,
New Delhi

Subject: Handing over of AAI Airports to Adani Enterprises Limited.
- Notice for Industrial Action reg.

Sir,

On behalf of Airports Authority of India Employees Joint Forum, we wish to bring to your kind notice that the Joint Forum have been writing numerous letters regarding stoppage of privatization of Indian Airports, but the Government of India has not paid any heed to our submissions and have instead gone ahead with the privatization process. In fact three airports have already been handed over to private operators and another set of three airports are being handed over shortly. The mode of privatization this time is also not the usual PPP mode but Management Contract has been preferred.

In the entire privatization process, the employees were the worst sufferers. When Delhi/Mumbai Airports were privatized, the Government had appointed a Tripartite Committee to look into employee related issues. The Committee had deliberated over the issue and employees were knowing what was in store for them. Due to the substandard Terms and Conditions offered to them, majority of staff had not opted for the services of private operator with the result that Airports Authority of India had to absorb these employees in its establishment. AAI was able to manage all this because still quite a few profitable airports were with AAI and this helped in rehabilitation of the staff. As the things stand now, there is no word about the fate the employees will meet if they are asked to join new entity. We understand that inferior terms and conditions are being offered and we anticipate that again large number of employees will not opt for the services of private operators. How AAI will absorb such a huge strength of employees is beyond our comprehension, given the situation that now AAI will be left with only non-profitable airports.

Further, we understand that due to covid-19 pandemic, the growth in the Civil Aviation Sector has been hit the most. With slump in the growth, how the airport operator will manage to undertake development plans is also a question that needs to be addressed. We also understand that even the Banks are not willing to advance loan to Civil Aviation Sector because of the fact that most of the assets at the airport cannot be capitalized, excepting land. In this scenario privatization is not going to be a healthy bargain.

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Address: T-3/1-4, I.N.A. Colony, New Delhi-110023. E-mail: balrajsinghahlawat@gmail.com. M-9871717521

Balrajsinghahlawat

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We have also seen that even big bulls like GMR and GVK have crumbled under the aftermath of Covid -19 and have sought exemption from paying revenue share, which the Ministry has gladly accepted. So, the revenue not forthcoming from Delhi/Mumbai, AAI left with non-profitable airports and a large workforce who will not be willing to join new entity, what is going to be the fate of employees can be well understood. However, the Government is least bothered about this aspect and probably considers it as a non-issue. This is most unfortunate because employee's welfare should have been on the priority list of the government, when the bodies like Planning Commission and NITI Aayog have also opined that employee's welfare should be an integral part of privatization process but this noble thought has been ignored in this case.

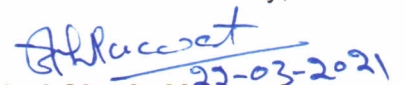
At a time when entire world and especially Aviation Sector is struggling to come on terms, the efforts should have been on improvement through existing agencies like AAI and not pass on the responsibility to those private players who have very little experience of Airport Management. On top of it, unsettling the future of existing AAI employees shall add to already prevailing problems. The pain and agony of the employees who are affected by privatization has to be understood and properly addressed and for this we request you to kindly take appropriate steps and direct the concerned Officers to look into these issues on priority basis and till then the privatization process be kept in abeyance.

We also wish to make it clear Sir, that in case our views are not heard at a proper forum, we shall be constrained to resume our peaceful industrial action against this dictatorial attitude of the government and fight it with all our might to protect the interest of our members. It will be in the form of demonstration apart from raising the issue in various social platform before the regulatory/political arena. To start with one day DHARNA on 31.3.2021 in front of all AAI establishment followed by lunch hour demonstration on every Wednesday. We, however, assure that our agitation shall be peaceful and within the ambit of freedom of expression given to us in the Constitution of India.

We hope for a expeditious action on the issues raised by us and await your favourable response.

Thanking you,

Yours faithfully,



(Balraj Singh Ahlawat)

Convenor Joint Form of Unions and Associat0ins of AAI
General Secretary, Airports Authority Employees Union