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AIRPORT DEVELOPMENT (South-western Asia)

PAKISTAN

The Civil Aviation Authority has plans to establish airport cities in Karachi and Lahore in a first phase of construction and at the future Islamabad International Airport in a second phase. The firm of Ernst & Young has been appointed consultant for the project and a master plan is being finalized. Cargo facilities at major airports are also being improved and new cargo villages are being developed at major airports. The provision of IT parks in Karachi and Lahore is under consideration. Elsewhere in the country, work on upgrading the Multan and Peshawar airports is under way. Expansion and renovation of the passenger terminal and allied works at Quetta Airport is scheduled to be carried out. Further plans include expansion of the passenger terminals at the Turbat and Chitral airports, and a new terminal and lounges at Skardu Airport. #875.1

According to press reports, the Ministry of Defence has agreed to approve the project of building an airstrip at Islamakot in the Thar area in Sindh near the border with India as an easy way to foreign investors to reach the Thar coal field. The proposed airstrip would be built on the pattern of the Pakistan Petroleum Ltd (PPL) airport at Sui in Balochistan. The Defence Ministry earlier had asked the Sindh government to get clearance from the General Headquarters because the proposed project in Thar is located within 80 km of India. The issue came under discussion at a high-level meeting, held in the Defence Ministry in Islamabad on 25 September 2009 where the General Headquarters and the Defence Ministry agreed to give clearance to the project. The senior officials of the Civil Aviation Authority, GHQ, the provincial secretary of the Mines & Mineral Department of the Sindh government and other officials concerned also participated the meeting. Aijaz Ali Khan, the provincial secretary of Mines & Mineral Department of the Sindh government, said that his government will be the sponsoring agency, while the Civil Aviation Authority will be the executing, tendering and supervising agency of the scheme. After getting the approval required, the project will be completed within two years. #875.2

Defence Minister Chaudhry Ahmed Mukhtar has announced that Islamabad International Airport, the country's first greenfield airport being built at Fateh Jang, about 25 km from Islamabad, will be operational by the end of 2011. The first project phase includes construction of taxiways, aprons and other airside infrastructure. The second phase involves building a parking lot for 2000 vehicles, a covered parking plaza for 200 cars, a control tower, 42 immigration counters, nine baggage-claim carousels, and twelve X-ray machines. It also entails a hotel, convention centre, duty-free shops, airside mall, business centre, food court, leisure facilities and banks. In total the project offers



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180 000 m² of modular terminal space that would initially handle 9 million passengers a year. The modular terminal building will use natural daylight for main lighting and sun shading to cut cooling costs as well as an 'intelligent' main roof for water conservation. The airport will have a linear pier on each side and a central pier extending out to serve the boarding gates. #875.3

The Rawalpindi Development Authority (RDA) has approved the road network for Islamabad's 'Benazir Bhutto International Airport' (BBIA), actually located at Chaklala which technically is a part of Rawalpindi, with the National Highway Authority (NHA) responsible for providing a safe, efficient, time saving and congestion-free access to the airport. The NHA Chairman briefed the participants on the routes and the topographic constraints of the land. The viability of straightening the access route between the Zero Point Interchange and the VVIP entrance point of BBIA was also discussed. It was concluded in the meeting that the most suitable route catering for the VVIP, normal traffic and cargo traffic be recommended and deviations in the newly proposed route with reference to the Rawalpindi Master Plan, if any, may be modified accordingly after seeking approval from the RDA. The NHA had submitted recommendations of design consultants on the road network in July 2009. According to the NHA recommendations, the road length has been reduced by over 650 m, leading to lower construction costs, fewer crossings over natural drainage channels, a reduced travel time when compared with other routes, eliminating the sharp turn near the VVIP entrance and providing straight access to BBIA from the motorway. After reviewing the NHA recommendations, RDA Director General Makeen Shahbaz has approved the project for implementation.

'Benazir Bhutto International', located outside of Islamabad in Rawalpindi, is the third largest airport in Pakistan. It was previously known as Islamabad International Airport but was renamed after the assassinated Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto on 21 June 2008. Being the main airport for the Pakistani capital, it often hosts officials and citizens from other nations. The airfield is shared with the transport and liaison squadrons of the Pakistan Air Force. Due to the ever-growing need for better facilities and services available for passengers, a new airport is being built. #875.4

Singapore Airlines has become the latest foreign carrier to cut back its operations in Pakistan, adding to woes of the country's flagging aviation industry which has been hit hard by deteriorating security and an economic slowdown. SIA had informed the Civil Aviation Authority in January 2010 that it would stop three weekly flights to Karachi and Lahore from 17 February, CAA Director General Junaid Amin said. "It is very sad that this has happened... Singapore Airlines says the flights were not making money but the real reason is the security threat," Amin was quoted by the press. -- Leading foreign carriers have curtailed or stopped flights to Pakistan due to security concerns. British Airways stopped flights in 2008 just months after the German airline Lufthansa curtailed flights to Karachi. #875.5

INDIA

The Airports Authority of India (AAI) is likely to put some of its non-metro airport projects on hold due to delays by the contractor, protracted paper work, and land allocation hiccups (#861.32). The airport projects are in Raipur (Chhattisgarh), Ranchi (Jharkhand), Malda (West Bengal). While there has been no progress on the Malda project as the West Bengal Government is unable to allocate the required land, the contracting agency has been delaying the Raipur project. The Cooch Behar project in West Bengal was to start operations by 1 February 2010. -- The Airports Authority of India



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(AAI) is planning to borrow up to INR 28 billion by 2012 to take up development work at 16 non-metro airports. The proposed funds are likely to be raised either through bonds or private placement. The final decision regarding the route for mobilizing the funds is likely to be taken soon. The airports which are to benefit from the funds raised include at least three in the South - Mangalore in Karnataka, Trichy in Tamil Nadu, and Visakhapatnam in Andhra Pradesh. #875.6

A key component of the modernization project at Kolkata's 'Netaji Subhash Chandra Basu International Airport' will be completed in a couple of months. The INR 21 billion upgrade project was officially kicked off on 29 December 2008, barely 15 months prior to the slated completion of the apron area, taxiway and runway extension. However, the other two components comprising the integrated terminal and airside development has been delayed by a few months from May to August 2011. "We are close to completing the modernization of the operational area. Expansion of the apron area and parking bays is over. Rapid exit taxiways are ready. Work is under way on the secondary runway extension and should be over by 31 March," said Kolkata Airport Director R Srinivasan. While passenger facilities such as comfortable lounges as well as modern flyovers and car-parking lots and landscaping on the landside comprise the airport's visible face and draw all the public attention, it is the operational area that is most critical to an airport's efficiency. And it is here that Airports Authority of India (AAI) has focused from the very beginning. "We have already augmented parking bays from 15 to 49, expanded the apron area and constructed rapid exit taxiways. The job that remains is extension of the secondary runway by 400 m and equipping it with ILS. This should be over by March-end, enabling the airport to increase operations by 50%," the Airport Director said. He added that a single-point security check for passengers at the ground floor of the domestic departure terminal would be introduced in the coming months. There will also be a shopping arcade inside the security hold area, a hotel booking counter, and a business air terminal for crew and passengers of non-scheduled flights. Increasing the secondary runway from 2839 m to 3200 m will not only increase operational efficiency, it would also allow larger aircraft to land at all times. At present, this runway can accommodate E-category aircraft like Boeing B.747s, but is unable to handle F-category aircraft like Airbus A380. Equipping the secondary runway with ILS will keep it operational even at night. "The visibility required for a runway without ILS is 3600 m. Installing the ILS will bring down visibility requirement to 800 m, thereby enabling night operations," Srinivasan explained. With both the primary and secondary runways now available at all times, they can be alternatively used with one handling all take-offs and the other all landings. This will increase the capacity utilization of runway from 23 movements in an hour to 35. After modernization the airport will be able to handle about 20 million passengers annually. #875.7

The AAI has awarded a building contract for the Bhubaneswar domestic terminal project and construction is expected to start soon. The new terminal for the capital of the state of Orissa, to be set up at a cost of INR 1.44 billion, is likely to have a capacity to handle 800 passengers per hour, 400 incoming and 400 outgoing. Meanwhile, Naveen Patnaik, Chief Minister of Orissa, inaugurated a new parking lot at the city's 'Biju Patnaik Airport' on 28 December 2009. -- The INR 2.5 billion plan of the Airport Authority of India (AAI) to upgrade the status of the airport to an international airport by 2010 has yet to take off. The state government was requested to make land available for the extension of the runway from 2750 m to 3200 m to accommodate B.747 aircraft. No land has been made available to date. #875.8



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Passengers taking a flight from Mumbai Airport's domestic terminal can look forward to boarding their flights more conveniently by the first week of April 2010. Mumbai International Airport Ltd (MIAL) will be inaugurating its new terminal 1C, which will link the existing terminals 1A and 1B. Passenger bridges will facilitate quick boarding, making long bus rides from the terminal building a thing of the past. Officials said that Terminal 1C would have six boarding bridges. Currently Terminal 1A, which is the boarding point for Kingfisher and Air India flights, has five bridges. The new terminal will open up the option of a boarding bridge for passengers of other airlines such as Jet Airways, Indigo and Spice Jet, for which boarding takes place from T1B, where there are no bridges. "This terminal will be like a security hold area. After collecting their boarding passes from the ticket counters and passing through security, passengers will move towards T1C through an internally connected escalator to board their flights," an official said. The new terminal will only be in existence for three years. After that time it will be broken down to make way for an elaborate X-shaped terminal for integrated domestic and international operations. #875.9

The proposed Kushinagar International Airport in Uttar Pradesh has finally got a go ahead from the Central Government. The Ministry of Civil Aviation, through the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) and the Airport Authority of India, has cleared the project, which is expected to provide a boost to pilgrim tourism in the state's Buddhist circuit. The airport will be constructed under the Public Private Partnership (PPP) mode and the Uttar Pradesh Tourism Development Corporation (UPTDC) be inviting bids on 4 March 2010. Work is expected to start in the first half of 2010. The Managing Director of UPSTDC, Avanish Kumar Awasthi, who visited the district two days ago, said: "We have all our clearances ready." The environmental clearances are yet to come as the green belt, which was the main hurdle, has been made an integral part of the project.

The Uttar Pradesh Government has shortlisted GMR Infrastructure, GVK Infra, Larsen & Toubro, and Gammon India for the proposed international airport project at Kushinagar located on the East-West Corridor. While the Department is already in talks with the Air Force, Home, Finance and Civil Aviation Ministries for the required clearances, it has already been recommended by the Airports Authority of India and by the DGCA. Meanwhile, the state government has released an INR 1.56 billion loan for acquiring 550 acres of land needed for the airport.

Built under the PPP mode, the airport will place the eastern Uttar Pradesh district on the international tourism map. The UPSTDC had appointed IL&FC as consultant for the project, which has proposed that the company whose bid will be accepted will not just construct a world-class airport, but also provide infrastructure for developing the neighbouring area. Kushinagar may be high on the tourism map, but the district is low on infrastructure, said the Additional Tourism Director (Gorakhpur division), PK Singh. "Hence, the infrastructure facilities to be built by the bidder will include a 51-km connecting road between Gorakhpur and Kushinagar, a rest house near the airport, and a market complex or a mall," said Singh. "All these will make a difference to the economy and provide employment to the locals." -- The greenfield airport, one of the biggest projects being undertaken by the Tourism Development Corporation, will be catering to tourists and Buddhist pilgrims from South Korea, Indonesia, Japan, China, Thailand, Sri Lanka, and Nepal. At present, tourists fly to the Varanasi and Lucknow airports and then travel by road to the Buddhist centres in eastern UP. #875.10

Praful Patel, India's Civil Aviation Minister, has announced that the new terminal at Ahmedabad in Gujarat will begin operations by June 2010. Construction has been on-going for



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three years. Built at a cost of USD 65 million, the terminal was originally to be used for international operations but now will be operational only for domestic flights. The change in plan will cost the Airports Authority of India more than USD 10 million as the existing terminals (both domestic and international) will be merged for international operations. So far, no international airline is willing to announce their operations to the airport, although international services were forecast before the project started. The airport lacks basic amenities but there is hardly any attempt to improve this situation. For example, the Air Traffic Control department has to be upgraded immediately. It needs equipment and a new building, but for the last five years, nothing has happened. #875.11

The Airports Authority of India (AAI) is planning to take up the landside development and maintenance of cargo operation of Amritsar's 'Raja Sansi International Airport' in Punjab under the PPP model. The AAI is likely to call a tender inviting private companies to undertake the project. The scope of the work includes developing and operating cargo facilities and the landside of Amritsar Airport. Currently, cargo operations are handled by the AAI. According to sources, about 25 acres are to be developed on the landside for commercial exploitation, car parking, and other amenities. In August 2007, the AAI had handed over the contract to Mumbai-based JAC Air Services for running cargo operations for five years at the airport. However, the company suspended its services in August 2009, as it was incurring huge losses. #875.12

Two years after a Memorandum of Understanding was signed, the first construction phase of the integrated terminal complex at Chandigarh International Airport at Mohali has started. The first phase has a budget of USD 650 000 and a deadline of six to eight months. The MoU was signed between the Greater Mohali Area Development Authority (GMADA), the Airports Authority of India (AAI), and the Haryana government on 4 January 2008. According to the joint venture company agreement, the AAI will develop the international terminal for full-fledged operations within two years from the date the land was handed over to it. The upcoming terminal will be integrated with the existing Chandigarh airport facilities. The AAI will construct the civil air terminal complex with state-of-the-art facilities such as boarding bridges, escalators, and a cargo complex. The AAI will bear all capital expenditure for developing the terminal. #875.13

Construction work at the Bengal Aerotropolis project at Durgapur (#869.34) will begin in April 2010 and the airport will be operational by the end of 2011, according to Subrata Paul, CEO, Bengal Aerotropolis Project Ltd. Addressing the media on 21 January 2010, Mr Paul said that the company had already floated a tender for selecting the developer for the project. Airline companies will be approached for services after the start of the construction work, he said. Changi Airport International Pvt Ltd, the 26% equity partner and technical support provider at the project, will do the route planning for the airport. The second phase of development at the project, which will include setting up of a science and technology park, electronics hardware manufacturing unit, biotech facility, and residential complexes, will begin after the airport is operational, Mr Paul said. The proposed project on 3500 acres could entail an investment of INR 100 billion over a five- to seven-year period, he added. #875.14

On 18 January 2010, the Karnataka Government signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Chennai-based infrastructure developer MARG for a greenfield airport at the historical town of



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Bijapur. Mr G Janardhana Reddy, Tourism Minister of Karnataka, said that MARG will invest INR 2 billion in the project for which the Government has agreed to provide 728 acres of land. He added that the cost of the land is INR 600 million and that thirteen airports, ten airstrips, and 28 heliports would be constructed in district headquarters to enable air links to all districts. He added that this would not only help attracting investment but also increase tourist inflow. Initially the airport would cater to aircraft like ATR 72 or ATR 42. The Government has also identified 63 000 km of road for development and at least 12 000 km would be developed with private participation. G.R.K. Reddy, Chairman & Managing Director of MARG, said that the project would be completed in 24 months. Ms Manjula Geetha, Undersecretary of Karnataka Infrastructure Development Department, signed the MoU. – India's steel giant ArcelorMittal has already agreed to set up a steel plant in Bijapur or nearby Bagalkot with an INR 300 billion investment. #875.15

Terminal 3 of 'Indira Gandhi International Airport' (IGIA) in New Delhi is expected to start operations before the Commonwealth Games in October 2010. The terminal being built at a cost of INR 89.96 billion has four boarding piers with 48 boarding gates and 78 aerobridges (#872.21). It is expected to have 89 travelators, eight of which will be inclined. The terminal will also have 63 elevators and 31 escalators. T3 is to increase the capacity of IGIA to 60 million passengers annually. The airport is being built by Delhi International Airport Ltd (DIAL), a consortium led by Bangalore- based GMR, comprising the Airports Authority of India, Malaysian Airport Holding Bhd, and Fraport AG. The Delhi Government is planning to have a new six-lane road leading to Terminal 3, about 1.5 km long, with a tunnel portion under the runway being 343 m long. The total cost is estimated at INR 650 million. The state government is likely to fund the project that will be implemented by AAI and maintained by DIAL. Work on the tunnel portion is to be completed when the main runway is closed for repaving from March to September 2010. #875.16

The new integrated passenger terminal at Madurai Airport in Tamil Nadu is reportedly expected to become operational by May 2010. The building is being set up at an investment of INR 1.28 billion. The new integrated terminal with a surface area of 17 560 m² is likely to be centrally air-conditioned and have 20 immigration counters, 27 customs counters, and two boarding bridges. Also, the runway is to be extended to 12 500 ft once the state government acquires the required lands. #875.17

NEPAL

The Ministry of Tourism & Civil Aviation (MoTCA) is considering handing over the management of Kathmandu's Tribhuvan International Airport (TIA) to a private firm, Ministry Secretary Nagendra Prasad Ghimire said in a programme to mark the 65th ICAO day. Nepal became a member of this umbrella organization in 1994. Currently, the Civil Aviation Authority of Nepal (CAAN) is looking after the management of TIA, which will be separated from CAAN soon, he said, adding that CAAN will remain a policy-making and regulating body thereafter. "If we want international standard service in TIA, it should be handed over to an international firm having experience in the sector," he added. Weak management of TIA is hampering the growth of air traffic in the country. "MoTCA and CAAN will work on infrastructure development after giving the TIA management to private hands," he said. However, he was satisfied with safety measures taken in TIA and other airports of Nepal. "We have a good safety record in our aviation history." CAAN Director General Keshav Raj Khanal expressed satisfaction about the country's aviation sector. "We are providing regular training in air safety. We are also expanding international flights from other airports," he said. CAAN is upgrading Bhairahawa and



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Pokhara as international airports. Hari Bhakta Shrestha of the Airlines Operators Association of Nepal voiced concern over expensive airport taxes and air fuel which are hampering the growth of air services in Nepal, he said. #875.18

The Minister for Tourism & Civil Aviation, Sharad Singh Bhandari, inaugurated construction works for an international airport in the western Nepali city of Pokhara in early December 2009. The Government had allocated land for the airport some 34 years back. Lack of funds and political instability had delayed the project. A soft loan from the Chinese government finally helped kick off the activity without any detailed survey and outline. Bhandari said: "The preliminary survey and the grading work would be completed with NPR 1.5 million. Up to NPR 50 million will be spent on the construction of the airport." Surplus from the USD 88 million Chinese aid for the Upper Trishuli Hydropower Project will be spent on the construction work, he added. It is estimated that total cost to build the airport will be around NPR 13 billion. -- The airport is being constructed as an alternative to Tribhuvan International Airport in Kathmandu and would be the second international airport in Nepal. #875.19

BHUTAN

Paro Airport has been rated the second best place to fly in by Wanderlust, a leading British travel magazine, in its Wanderlust Travel Awards 2009. The only airport in Bhutan scored 91.43% for the favourite place to fly in the world just behind Singapore-Changi with 94.18% and before Hong Kong (91.3%), Denver (87.06%), and Kuala Lumpur (86.8%). The Wanderlust Travel Awards were voted for by nearly 3000 consumers and based on customer satisfaction levels over the past year. According to the Bhutanese Department of Civil Aviation, several factors contributed to the rating of the airport, including the majestic experience of flying into the valley. The landing in Paro may be considered one of the toughest in the world, but it also added to the factors which contributed to the rating. The Bhutanese architecture of the terminal complex, reflecting the culture and heritage of the country, the fresh air, and the clean surroundings at the airport were also considered factors for the rating. The easy and quick processing time for passengers, hospitality, fewer formalities at the counters, and the short distance between the aircraft and terminal building proved to be added advantages for the airport. #875.20

MALDIVES

The Government of the Maldives intends to privatize the Maldives Airport Company Ltd (MACL) and the International Finance Corporation (IFC) has been appointed to manage the transaction process. IFC has engaged the U.K. consultant Halcrow to provide full technical and financial support. Halcrow has appointed Ernst & Young to advise on transaction structure options and to undertake the financial modelling element of the contract. The project requires the build-up of future development scenarios for the space-restricted Malé International Airport over a 25-year period. The scenarios must consider the physical limitations and other considerations to ensure the airport is compliant, while minimizing capital expenditure where possible to ensure the airport's attractiveness to potential future owners. Establishing much-improved infrastructure and facilities in keeping with the niche market served, together with sustainable, energy-efficient solutions, will be an important prerequisite of any plan. Halcrow has prepared detailed traffic forecasts for Malé Airport, which gave consideration to the future development of tourism across the islands and potential competition from the proposed development of international operations at the Gan and Hanimaadhoo airports, located to the south and north of the capital. In the near future – and subject to Government approval – tenders



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will be called from prequalified operators (#850.OPS8) for the airport business and its future expansion. #875.21

SRI LANKA

The Government has signed up USD 410 million of funding from China, including money to build an international airport in the south of the island, according to a Foreign Ministry statement. Sri Lanka's Finance Ministry Secretary P B Jayasundera and China's Vice Minister of Commerce, Chen Jian, had signed the deals on 23 December 2009, for 'concessional' funding for several projects, the Foreign Ministry said. An unspecified portion of the funding was for a new international airport at Mattala in Hambantota district. Jayasundera had discussed the progress of power, ports and highways financed by China in Sri Lanka and had said the Government wanted to speed up road and rail links to the North which has just emerged from a 30-year war. #875.22

SriLankan Cargo has taken over the long-awaited new cargo terminal building at Colombo Airport and is set to launch the Cargo Centre's Export Operations through this terminal in the first quarter of 2010. The new facility is expected to double the current handling capacity to 300 000 tonnes per year (the airport had handled 133 693 tonnes of cargo in 2009). The keys to the building were officially handed over by Airport & Aviation Services (Sri Lanka) Ltd, and the facility is now undergoing certain internal modifications in preparation for the launch. Mohamed Fazeel, Head of Worldwide Sales, said: "Cargo is a key area of the airline's business and annually contributes approximately 14% to the group's revenue. The new building will place the airline in an ideal position to capitalize on the expected increased cargo traffic as the country begins an economic revival and the world comes out of its economic crisis."

SriLankan is the main handling agent for all airlines that operate to Bandaranaike International Airport, and is looking forward to a steady growth in its operations with the Dawn of Peace in the country. Janaka Munasinghe, Manager Cargo Operations, said: "This is a giant leap forward for SriLankan Cargo, and indeed for SriLankan Airlines. The new building will greatly increase our warehouse and handling capacity to approximately 300 000 metric tonnes of cargo per annum. The staff of SriLankan Cargo has been eagerly awaiting this new venture."

The new building with 13 300 m² on two floors, will include facilities for perishables, courier cargo, mail, a Customer Facilitation Centre, cool rooms and freezer rooms, cargo acceptance points, customs safe vaults (valuables), animal holding rooms, animal and plant quarantine offices, etc. It will enhance all-round efficiency and handling speed as it will include pallet build-up stations and barcode scanners to further enhance capacity, and CCTV to increase security throughout the premises. The existing cargo terminal building will be dedicated for imports. The Cargo Centre operates at a high level of efficiency which is constantly monitored by a cross-functional committee. Earlier this year, SriLankan Cargo introduced a competition among the centre's four cargo handling teams, which resulted in an even greater focus on efficiency.

SriLankan Cargo has positioned Colombo as the "Hub in the Ocean" strategically placed midway in the East-West trade route connecting Europe and the Middle East to South East Asia and the Far East. SriLankan also provides rapid connections through Colombo for cargo into and out of the subcontinent, serving India's booming economy. In July 2009, SriLankan Cargo had commissioned the new SkyChain Cargo Handling System, which provides advanced features for customer convenience and operational efficiency. The system enables customers to follow the progress of their



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freight by accessing flight schedules well in advance, checking space availability, making booking online in real time, communicating instantly with key personnel, tracking and tracing shipments, passing airway bill details and permitting service providers to update shipment status online. #875.23

The Government has decided to renovate a number of domestic airports including Ratmalana and Trincomalee and some in the Jaffna peninsula following the end of hostilities in the region. Civil Aviation Authority Director General Parakrama Dissanayake said talks had been held with the relevant authorities on the development of domestic airports though nothing has been finalized yet. The Government's aviation policy, which was revived in 2009, gives priority to the development of domestic airports while it includes the integration of airports with other modes of transport such as rail and sea. There are eleven domestic aerodromes in Sri Lanka which are used for military purposes while Ratmalana is used for both military and civil purposes. Another distinct feature is the setting up of a domestic terminal at Colombo Airport. #875.24

BANGLADESH

The government considers opening up Chittagong's 'Shah Amanat International Airport' to international flights, aiming to make it a regional hub in future. "Adoption of an open-sky policy for the Chittagong airport is now under our active consideration. We want that it turns into a major aviation hub in South Asia," according to Hedayetullah Al Mamoon, Civil Aviation & Tourism Secretary. He said a feasibility study is under way to evaluate the policy and expects that such a policy will have a positive impact on trade and commerce at the port city besides attracting foreign tourists to visit the world's longest unbroken sea beach in Cox's Bazar.

The airport in Chittagong, which was modernized earlier in the decade at a cost of more than BDT 5 billion, has a capacity to handle as many as 3 million passengers and nearly 6000 tonnes of cargo a year, as its runway allows wide-bodied aircraft to land. But much of its potential remains untapped due to scanty air movements. Analysts linked the under-utilization of the airport to a lack of infrastructure and poor air traffic, which discourages airlines to fly. They said problems with Departure Control System (DCS), refuelling, cargo handling, and flight catering remain. Domestic carriers - Biman, GMG, United - and two foreign airlines - Air Arabia and Oman Air - are presently operating flights from the airport. Thai Airways once began flights from the port city but discontinued operations in 2008. Officials of the Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh (CAAB) however said it will improve facilities to lure more airlines to use the port. "We will remove all the shortcomings at the airport to attract airlines. We are also receiving positive responses from airlines to operate from there," said CAAB Chairman Air Commodore Sakeb Iqbal Khan Majlis, citing the interests of carriers like Dubai-based budget airline Fly Dubai to operate flights from Chittagong. He said opening up the airport for all carriers will not only help reduce pressures on 'Zia International Airport' in Dhaka but also increase Chittagong Airport's viability. Majlis said CAAB will draft an open sky policy for Chittagong, if the results of the feasibility study are positive. This policy will become effective after a final approval from the Cabinet, he added. #875.25

Other regions

SPAIN

Málaga's new glass, steel and concrete Terminal 3, which raises the airport's annual handling capacity to 30 million passengers, started test operations on 14 January 2010 with 191 'passengers' and their baggage. A total of 22 simulations with some 3000 test passengers will take place



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until early March, and the terminal will be commissioned just before Easter 2010. The EUR 320 million T3 has 179 check-in desks, 48 boarding gates, and can accommodate 9000 passenger per hour. #875.26

KOSOVO

The Government is close to award a concession for Prishtina International Airport (PIA) for a period of 20 years, in exchange for EUR 100 million in investments for modernizing and expanding the airport. This would be the first public-private project implemented in Kosovo. According to Prime Minister Hashim Thaci, the investor selection process will be transparent. He said that investments will be mainly for better services and infrastructure, including a new passenger terminal. Meanwhile, the Minister of Transport & Communications (MTC), Fatmir Limaj, said that the partnership is expected to be for 20 years and that Kosovo's budget will also benefit from the deal. Three of the selected bidders are strong international consortiums. The first competitor is the Turkish-German consortium Fraport /ICTAS that together manage the Antalya Airport. Second bidders are Turkish-French consortium Limak-Aéroports de Lyon. The third bidder for the concession is the Bouygues Bâtiment- Egis-PAIC international consortium.-- Prishtina Airport is Kosovo's only airport with over 1.2 million passengers per year. Its annual profit is currently at around EUR 11 million. #875.27

LATVIA

The Government plans to expand the capacity of Riga International Airport to 12.7 million passengers a year by 2013. The capacity of the existing terminal is to be increased to 5.5 million passengers a year, with a new terminal for the national carrier airBaltic to be built by 2013 and predicted to serve 7.2 million passengers a year. Transport Minister Kaspars Gerhards said that the airport's administration decided in December 2009 on the optimal direction for future development, which foresees an overhaul of the existing terminal, as well as giving the opportunity to Air Baltic Corporation (airBaltic) to build its own terminal. According to Gerhards, the airBaltic terminal will cost around EUR 90 million and will be carried out without the use of state resources. -- Riga served 4 066 793 passengers (+10%) in 2009. #875.28

GERMANY

Ground was broken on 4 February 2010 for Frankfurt Airport's new Fire Station 4 near the future north-west runway. The new structure is necessary because an additional fire station is required near the new runway under the stringent ICAO standards requiring that the airport fire services must achieve response times of no more than three minutes to any point of Runway Northwest and its associated taxiways and taxiway bridges. Featuring 4000 m², the new two-level fire station will be the workplace for some 50 firemen in the future. Completion of the EUR 13 million building is scheduled for the beginning of 2011. The adjacent fire training area allowing Fraport to concentrate all fire training facilities at a single location is expected to be operational at the end of 2011. – With the new facility, airport operator Fraport AG reaches another milestone in its Airport Expansion Programme. "The new building not only meets our stringent safety concept, but also is Fraport's first building to achieve zero net operating carbon emissions," explained Fraport AG Executive Board Chairman Dr Stefan Schulte. As a passive house, it will require 90% less energy for heating and cooling than a conventional fire station. The heating and cooling demand is provided by geothermal heat pumps. The electricity required for the pumps will come from renewable energy sources. A 20-m² solar thermal system on the building's southern façade will ensure hot water generation. #875.29

KENYA

The Civil Aviation Authority has said that between now and 9 April 2010, Nairobi's 'Jomo Kenyatta International Airport' will close its runway between 22:00 and 01:00 hours. The cause is due to rubber removal on the runway. Passengers travelling on late flights out of Nairobi should expect delays. This includes Turkish Airlines and Air Mauritius flights. #875.30

MEXICO

Mexican airport operator Asur will spend MXP 340 million pesos (USD 26.3 million) to expand Huatulco International Airport in Oaxaca state, according to Airport Director Margarita Arroyo. Work has already started on the first phase of the expansion with the widening of the runway so that the airport can receive flights from Europe without restrictions. The runway will be lengthened from 2700 m to over 3000 m, and the expansion will be completed by late 2011. At a later stage, Asur will expand Huatulco's terminal building to double the amount of check-in desks and increase the size of waiting areas. The expanded airport will have a capacity to carry out 22 operations per hour, according to Arroyo. Huatulco handled 388 457 passengers (+6%) during 2009. #875.31

U.S.A.

On 26 January 2010, Washington's Dulles International Airport started operating its new USD 1.5 billion AeroTrain peoplemover system that will shuttle travellers from the terminal to the gate and replaces the airport's mobile lounges. James Bennett, President of the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority, which manages the Dulles and Reagan National airports, said it took about eight years worth of work to make the system a reality. The AeroTrain system features 29 electric train cars, each capable of transporting roughly 50 passengers. Three-car trains are expected to run about every two minutes, with an average ride time of just more than a minute between terminal stops. -- Work is continuing on the expansion of the International Arrivals Building adjacent to the Main Terminal. #875.32

Since 2 February 2010, changes at San Jose's 'Mineta International Airport' in California include the closing of Terminal C, the airport's oldest terminal, and the early partial opening of the new Terminal B. The changes affect passengers on Alaska Airlines, Delta Airlines, Horizon Air, US Airways, and Frontier Airlines. The use of Terminal B is temporary, lasting only until Terminal C, the airport's oldest terminal, closes this summer for demolition. The space will be cleared for a surface parking lot to serve Terminal B. Frontier Airlines will be moved to Terminal A in March. The remainder of the airlines in Terminal C will likely be relocated to Terminal A or Terminal B when it opens. Airport officials believe this is a necessary step to complete the airport's new loop roadway, which runs in front of the terminals.

Terminal B will officially open on 30 June 2010. In the meantime, work will continue behind temporary walls in the building. Airport Deputy Director Dave Maas said: "Using Terminal B now instead of installing temporary equipment in Terminal C helps us reduce the overall construction cost of our modernization programme. It will be a nice opportunity for travellers and the public to get an early peek at the inside of this beautiful new building before we completely open it." -- The changes are a part of the airport's USD 1.3 billion terminal area improvement programme involving the modernization and replacement of terminal facilities, including construction of Terminal B and Terminal B concourse that



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will take the place of Terminal C, originally built in 1965. The programme also includes the transformation of Terminal A, to be completed in February 2010. #875.33

On 27 January 2010, Piedmont Triad International Airport opened a new USD 150 million runway that will set the stage for long-term economic development and airport growth. The runway project was funded primarily by Federal Government grants, along with a contribution of roughly USD 30 million coming from locally generated Airport Authority revenues. Runway 5L/23R, which is 9000 ft long, opened after six years of construction and several more years of planning. It is the airport's third runway, in addition to the main 10 000-ft runway and a 6380-ft crosswind runway. The project - which also involved rerouting part of Bryan Boulevard to make space for the new runway and a new interchange entrance to the airport - was spurred by the 1998 announcement that FedEx wanted to build its 165-acre mid-Atlantic cargo hub at PTI. FedEx needed an additional parallel runway to handle the traffic it would create, and as a back-up in case the main runway had to be closed. Although the new runway is open, for now FedEx likely will still primarily use the old main runway. That's because its hub is not yet in full operation, and the airport has seen its other traffic decline on the main runway because of the economy, said Kevin Baker, PTI's Assistant Director. #875.34

Charlotte Douglas International Airport's newest runway, 18R/36L, became fully operational on 12 February 2010. A ribbon cutting signaled the official opening and full operation of CLT's third parallel runway, the first new runway to open at CLT since the opening of Runway 18C/36C in 1979, more than thirty years ago. Construction of Runway 18R/36L wrapped up in December 2009. For passengers and airlines, the new runway will result in a decrease in arrival and departure delays. "It's been a long time coming," said Aviation Director Jerry Orr of the project that has taken over two decades to come to fruition. The new runway will permit triple independent landings and will save airlines an estimated USD 65 million in annual delay avoidance costs. The new runway's primary purpose will be used for flight arrivals. CLT averages more than 600 arrivals each day. -- Construction began in March 2007 and has cost a total of USD 325 million, including road relocation and adjoining roadway construction. Of the total, USD 124 million came from the FAA in a letter of intent to assist with construction of the new runway. Additional funding for the project came from Federal grants and proceeds of the 2007 and 2009 General Airport Revenue Bonds, which will be repaid with Passenger Facility Charge (PFC) revenues. #875.35

CANADA

Edmonton International Airport (EIA) and Gateway Charters Ltd have introduced a new and improved skyshuttle bus service to and from the airport, which officially launched on 8 February 2010. The new enhanced service now features an on-demand booking system. In conjunction with skyshuttle operator Gateway Charters Ltd, EIA's new airport shuttle service now features lower-emission vehicles; onboard travel, tourism and entertainment information about the Edmonton region; as well as front and rear security cameras to ensure passenger safety. In step with the new service and new vehicles, skyshuttle also features a new look that celebrates EIA's award-winning "we'll move you" brand promise. The new and improved skyshuttle allows for extra vehicles to be added as needed and more closely matches capacity to demand during daily peak and valley periods. Complemented by an easy-to-use online booking system and state-of-the-art scheduling and dispatch software, the flexibility of the service also reduces emissions and skyshuttle's environmental footprint. "The airport shuttle experience is now better than ever," says Phil Strong, President, Gateway Charters Ltd. "We'll be more responsive to



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passenger demand and improve on the exceptional level of service that passengers have come to expect from skyshuttle." #875.36

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

Dubai Airports, the government-owned airfield operator, plans to seek approval for expansion plans costing 'billions of dirhams'. The company will make a recommendation on boosting capacity within the next few months, CEO Paul Griffiths said in an interview in Singapore. He declined to elaborate further on the costs. Dubai plans to press ahead with expanding its current airport and building a new one, even after having to get help from neighbour Abu Dhabi to pay off debts used to finance real-estate projects. Aviation generates as much as 25% of the emirate's economy, according to Griffiths, as Dubai has invested in facilities and Emirates Airline to make up for a lack of oil reserves. "Dubai's vision, attitude towards airport infrastructure is that if you constrain, the growth will go elsewhere," he said. "So we are not going to constrain that growth."

Dubai International Airport, the 17th-biggest worldwide in terms of passengers, handled 40.9 million travellers (+9.2%) in 2009. The airport operator expects passenger numbers to rise 13.6% this year to 46 million. The airport's capacity is due to rise to 75 million passengers a year from 60 million in 2012. That will be followed by an increase to as much as 97 million, Griffiths said. Some 40 km away, the emirate is also building the Al Maktoum Airport, which will eventually have a capacity of 120 million passengers. Dubai pushed back the opening of the first phase of the airport to 2010 because of construction delays. The new airport will cost USD 33 billion, Griffiths has said. Dubai and its state-owned companies borrowed at least USD 80 billion until 2008 to transform the emirate into a tourism and financial hub. #875.37

ISRAEL

The Minister of Housing & Construction, Ariel Atias, and the Minister of Transport, Israel Katz, have decided to work together to vacate Sde Dov Airport in north Tel Aviv. A joint team will submit a proposal to the Cabinet within three months. The vacated site will be available for the construction of 12 000 apartments. Atias and Katz decided to set up an inter-ministerial team to plan the dismantle Sde Dov and find an alternative location for the airport. Ministry of Transport Director General Yaakov Ganot will chair the committee; members will include Israel Airports Authority Director General Kobi Mor, Israel Civil Aviation Authority Director General Giora Rom, Israel Land Administration Director General Yaron Bibi, and representatives of the Ministry of Defence. Katz said that vacating Sde Dov Airport was one of several problems needing a solution, including vacating Herzliya Municipal Airport, finding a supplementary airport for Ben Gurion International Airport, and transferring commercial flights from Sde Dov to Ben Gurion Airport. #875.38