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## New airports being constructed in India at unprecedented speed: PM Modi



Prime Minister Narendra Modi said that new airports were being constructed and far-flung areas of the country connected through the UDAN scheme at an unprecedented speed. In his Independence Day speech, the PM said, "Today, the speed with which new airports are being constructed in the country, and the way UDAN scheme is connecting the far-flung areas, it is unprecedented." "Today, we are seeing how better air connectivity is giving wings to people's dreams," he added.

The Centre has accorded in-principle approval for setting up of 21 greenfield airports across the country: Mopa in Goa; Navi Mumbai, Sindhudurg and Shirdi in Maharashtra; Bijapur, Hassan, Kalaburagi and Shimoga in Karnataka; Dabra (Gwalior) in Madhya Pradesh; Kushinagar and Jewar (Noida) in Uttar Pradesh; Dholera and Hirasar in Gujarat; Karaikal in Puducherry; Dagadathi, Bhogapuram and Orvakal (Kurnool) in Andhra Pradesh; Durgapur in West Bengal; Pakyong in Sikkim; Kannur in Kerala; Hollongi (Itanagar) in Arunachal Pradesh.

## CII launches Task Force on tourism In Southern India to bring synergy in the sector

The Confederation of Indian Industry, southern region, has launched a task force to focus on tourism and related sectors. The task force is chaired by Thomas John



**Confederation of Indian Industry**

Muthoot, chairman of Muthoot FinCorp Ltd, and co-chaired by Ligi George, MD of Madras Suspensions Ltd.

The objective of the task force is to bring together all the stakeholders engaged in the tourism ecosystem on a unified approach to work for the revival of this sector in the southern region.

"We wish to bring together all the associations and bodies that have been doing great work across the region and listen to their concern, share solutions and best practices, learn from each other and look at opportunities to best minimize the impact of the pandemic on livelihood" said John Muthoot.

## Air travel becomes costlier, Govt raises caps on domestic airfares by 9.83-12.82 per cent

Domestic air travel is set to become costlier as the Civil Aviation Ministry has raised the lower as well as upper caps on fares by 9.83 to 12.82 per cent, according to an official order. India had imposed lower and upper limits on airfares based on flight duration when services were resumed on May 25, 2020, after a two-month lockdown due to coronavirus.



The lower caps were imposed to help the airlines that have been struggling financially due to coronavirus-related travel restrictions. The upper caps were imposed so that passengers are not charged huge amounts when the demand for seats is high.

In an order dated August 12, 2021, the ministry increased the lower limit for flights under 40 minutes of duration from INR 2,600 to INR 2,900 — an increase of 11.53 per cent. The upper cap for flights under 40 minutes of duration was increased by 12.82 percent to INR 8,800. Similarly, flights with duration between 40-60 minutes have a lower limit of INR 3,700 instead of INR 3,300 now, the order said. The upper cap on these flights was increased by 12.24 percent to INR 11,000 on August 12.

## MADC completes extension of Shirdi Airport, work for night-landing facility

Maharashtra Airport Development Company (MADC) has recently completed the extension of the Shirdi airport, from 2,500 metres to 3,200 metres. Work for the night-landing facility has also been completed. The project cost INR 41.85 crore.

Deepak Kapoor, Managing Director, MADC, said, "We decided to make use of the time we had and completed the extension of the runway and the night-landing facility. The labour force in Shirdi comes from Karnataka and most of them went away when the lockdown was imposed. We got labourers from local areas, extended the runway by 700 metres and constructed two additional taxiways. There was a demand from airlines like IndiGo, SpiceJet and Air India for a longer runway so that they could bring bigger aircraft." He also said now with the night-landing facility about to start, flights can arrive at Shirdi at night and devotees can reach the temple for Kakad Aarti (morning prayers at 4.30 am) and leave the same day.



Deepak Kapoor

## Vaccine Tourism takes off at San Francisco International Airport

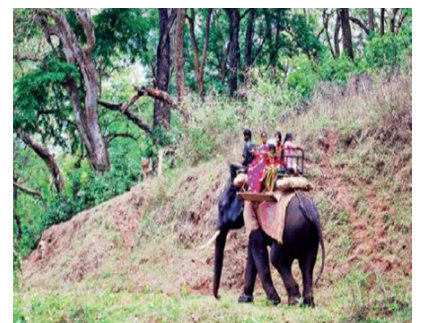
As the San Francisco International Airport (SFO) surpasses 30,000 vaccine doses administered at the Airport, a clear trend has emerged- more and more foreign travellers are making vaccination a part of their visit to San Francisco. Known as "vaccine tourism," this concept represents the fastest-growing category of visitors to the SFO Medical Clinic, where the free Johnson & Johnson single-dose vaccine is administered. At present,



80% of new vaccine appointments at SFO are coming from non-US citizens, and over 1,000 doses have already been administered to visitors from 58 countries around the world. "This trend truly represents a win-win situation for all," said Ivar C.Satero, Airport Director. "It ensures that vaccines doses do not go unused by making them available to those who may have trouble accessing it in their home country. It also stimulates travel and visitor spending for the Bay Area, and – most importantly – it helps protect against community spread of the virus. My thanks go out to the entire team for making this program a reality."

## Tamil Nadu to streamline forest treks, camps to boost Eco-Tourism

The state forest and tourism departments are to work hand-in-hand to promote eco-tourism. While the Tamil Nadu Wilderness Experiences Corporation, functioning under the forest department, has already identified five eco-tourism spots, the tourism department is likely to look at streamlining activities such as treks and camping in forest areas.



Though eco-tourism began in the state a decade ago, its potential remained untapped. Treks and camps are being organised on a small scale informally in hill stations. The tourism department is looking at cashing in on demand by streamlining things. A tourism department official said the idea is to generate revenue for the forest and tourism departments by promoting eco-tourism.